ISSUES MANAGEMENT: A STRATEGY TO MANAGE PRO-ACTIVE CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

by

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Thesis

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at the

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UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

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October 1996

PROMOTER: PROFESSOR N. LESSING

DECLARATION

"I declare that: ISSUES MANAGEMENT: A STRATEGY TO MANAGE PRO-ACTIVE CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES is my own work, that all sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references, and that this thesis was not previously submitted by me for a degree at another university."

Signed

.....
D J THERON
JOHANNESBURG
OCTOBER 1996.

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ISSUES MANAGEMENT: A STRATEGY TO MANAGE PRO-ACTIVE CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

SYNOPSIS

Name : THERON D.J.

Thesis : In fulfilment of the requirement for the degree DCom (Business Management).

Title : Issues management: A strategy to manage pro-active change in South African universities.

University: Rand Afrikaans University.

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South African universities (SAUs) will be facing two main challenges in the next decade, namely: continuous change and decreasing predictability of the future. The urgency for change in SAUs flows mainly from conditions of turmoil and pressure, which in turn, emanate from public issues as they emerge within the macro-environment of SAUs. Decreasing predictability stems to a great extent from a lack of foreknowledge of how such emerging macro-environmental public issues will develop, and how they can influence SAUs through the public policy process.

Management of SAUs therefore need to rely on crucial intelligence and foreknowledge concerning events, trends and developments of public issues that affect the future strategic viability of their institutions. They also need to rely on an agenda for understanding change as well as a means of marshalling participation in the public policy process, in order to manage public issues impacting on their institutions in a pro-active manner.

At the onset four management concepts and processes were

emphasised in this study, namely the concept of issues management within a macro-environmental context, issues management from an offensive environmental management perspective, strategy from an issues management perspective, and the concept of strategic change management within an issues management context. A proposed public issues management structure indicating the flow of information and actions within and outside the organisation, and how they could combine in public issues management programmes was also proposed. A macro-environmental perspective of universities in general and SAUs in particular was furthermore presented. It included the nature and function of universities, the history and management of SAUs and public issues impacting on SAUs.

The practical aspect of this study was firstly based on an analysis of the different mission statements and mission goals of SAUs. The analysis was done to determine the management mode of management in SAUs; that is, whether management in SAUs operates in a pro-active management mode with regard to public issues in the public policy process. Secondly, models developed by Human & Horwitz (1992) as well as Ashley & Morrison (1995) and Theron (1994) were used to empirically determine the manner in which SAUs cope with change and to analyze the quality of the management of public issues in SAUs respectively.

Descriptive data indicated that management in SAUs exhibit a pro-active management mode with regard to public issues and a reasonable ability to cope with macro-environmental change. The management of emerging public issues and consequently pro-active change is, however, approached with bland commitment, a lack of strategic orientation and inadequate facilities and skills.

It was concluded that, in view of the need in SAUs for a structured means of managing emerging public issues and consequently pro-active change, and in view of issues management constituting such a process, there is relevance for the implementation of issues management programmes in SAUs. In this regard a number of general recommendations were made with respect to managing the dynamic aspects of change, the implementation of strategies, and the implementation of an issues management

strategy in SAUs. A framework was furthermore suggested for the implementation of an issues management strategy in SAUs in the belief that this framework, and the overall research reported in this thesis could be of theoretical as well as empirical value for managers in SAUs.

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SINOPSIS

Universiteite in die Republiek van Suid Afrika sal, soos in die verlede, in die volgende dekades steeds deur voortdurende verandering, gepaardgaande met toenemende onvoorspelbaarheid van die toekoms gekonfronteer word. Druk vir voortdurende verandering ontstaan deurdat universiteite deur 'n veranderende maatskaplike orde in spanning en konflik gebring word. Die ontstaan van spanning en konflik staan in noue verband met veranderende openbare vraagstukke wat vanuit die makrobestuursomgewing op Suid Afrikaanse Universiteite (SAUs) inwerk. Toenemende onvoorspelbaarheid van die toekoms kan gewoonlik toegeskryf aan 'n gebrek aan toepaslike voorkennis van openbare vraagstukke en hoe sulke vraagstukke deur middel van openbare meningvormings-prosesse, SAUs kan beinvloed.

Ten einde veranderende openbare vraagstukke pro-aktief te bestuur behoort bestuurders van SAUs staat te maak op intelligente inligting en voorkennis van gebeurtenisse, tendense en ontwikkelings wat openbare vraagstukke vooruitloop. Bestuur behoort ook te steun op programme om verandering te verstaan, en deur middel van hulle deelname aan die meningsvormingsprosesse, openbare vraagstukke wat universiteite mag beinvloed pro-aktief te beinvloed.

Hierdie studie was toegespits op die mate waartoe universiteite met veranderinge in die algemeen tred hou en hoe openbare vraagstukke vanuit die sosio-ekonomies an polities-statutere makro-bestuursomgewing deur middel van *issues-bestuur* bestuur kan word. Die voorveronderstelling is dat indien openbare vraagstukke doeltreffend bestuur kan word, dit 'n bydrae kon maak om veranderings in SAUs pro-aktief die hoof te bied. Om hierdie beskouing uit te bou moes die teorie ten opsigte van openbare vraagstukke, die prosesse van *issues-bestuur* en strategiese bestuur in 'n *issues-bestuur* konteks en 'n struktuur vir *issues-bestuur* toegelig word. Omdat die studie op universitiete

konsentreer was daar ook oorsigtelik na die agtergrond van universiteite in die algemeen verwys. Die klem was egter op openbare vraagstukke wat Suid-Afrikaanse universiteite vanuit die makro-bestuursomgewing beinvloed.

Die praktiese aspek van die studie was eerstens gerig op 'n ontleding van die verskillende missie-stellings en doelwitte van SAUs. Dit was gedoen ten einde die ingesteldheid van bestuurders ten opsigte van die pro-aktiewe bestuur van openbare vraagstukke te bepaal. In die tweede plek is die mate waartoe bestuurders in Suid-Afrikaanse universiteite verandering hanteer, hoe hulle openbare vraagstukke bestuur, asook die gehalte van die bestuur van openbare vraagstukke, empiries bepaal. Ten einde hierdie bepalings te kon doen is daar gebruik gemaak van modelle wat deur Human & Horwitz (1992), Ashley & Morrison (1995) en Theron (1994) ontwikkel is.

Daar is gevind dat, alhoewel bestuurders 'n pro-aktiewe houding ten opsigte van die bestuur van vraagstukke openbaar en 'n redelike vermoë het om veranderings te hanteer, gaan die daadwerklike bestuur van groeiende openbare vraagstukke en gevolglik pro-aktiewe veranderingsbestuur, mank aan strategiese orientering, toewyding en genoegsame bekwaamheid.

Daar is gevolglik 'n behoefte aan 'n gestruktueerde vermoë om groeiende openbare vraagstukke en sodoende veranderings in SAUs pro-aktief te bestuur. Aangesien *issues-bestuur* so 'n vermoë daar kan stel word aanbeveel dat dit in SAUs toegepas word. In hierdie verband word 'n issues-bestuur raamwerk voorgestel ten einde die implimentering van issues bestuur programme in SAUs te vergemaklik.

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ACRONYMS

CUP	Committee of University Principals
NHCE	National Commission of Higher Education
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAUs	South African Universities
STEEP	Social, technological, economic, environmental and politico-governmental sectors of the global environment of organisations.

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ISSUES MANAGEMENT: A STRATEGY TO MANAGE PRO-ACTIVE CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

ISSUES

Emerging, current or unfolding conditions of pressure in the business environment of organisations which impact on the future viability of organisations (see Section 2.2.2). The emphasis in this study is on macro-environmental public issues which, through the public policy process, impact on SAUs.

ISSUES MANAGEMENT

A management process determined to identify and analyze public issues which can have a strategic impact on the future viability of an organisation as well as managing an effective response to such issues (Theron 1994:38). This study concentrates on the management of macro-environmental public issues which, through the public policy process, impact on SAUs.

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PUBLICS

Groups of individuals with varying degrees of commitment who face a similar problem, recognise that the problem exist, and unite to some degree to do something about the problem (Hainsworth 1990a:35).

PUBLIC ISSUES

Socio-economic and politico-governmental forces that influence organisations through the public policy process (as mentioned in Section 2.2.1). In this study the emphasis is on the macro-environmental public issues impacting on the future viability of SAUs.

PUBLIC POLICY PROCESS

The mechanism in a free society by which the aspirations and dissatisfactions of the public work their way up through public issue debates into law and regulation (Ewing 1987:38).

STAKEHOLDERS

Anybody associated with a specific university who may feel that they have a legitimate claim to influence the nature and direction of that university.

STRATEGY

The plan or pattern that integrates the goals, policies and actions of an organisation into a cohesive whole (McGuire *in:* Davis, Weller & Lewis 1989:18). In this study strategy includes both the content of strategy and the processes by which strategic actions are decided on, and implemented.

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STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

A set of decisions and actions which give rise to the formulation and implementation of plans and strategies to achieve the objectives of the organisation (Smit & Cronje 1992:107)).

STRATEGIC PLANNING

A process aimed at achieving an organisation's mission and objectives by reconciling its resources with opportunities and threats in the business environment (Smit & Cronje 1992:107).

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION

1.1 BACKGROUND

During the era of the twentieth century, management systems in the Western World evolved in response to two main challenges, namely: continuous change and decreasing predictability of the future. Organisations have indeed been confronted with such novel, unexpected and far reaching issues and challenges during the past decades that Peter Drucker calls this new era the 'age of discontinuity' (*in* Ansoff & McDonnel 1990:5-18).

Management is an integral element of not only private, profit-seeking organisations, but also includes non profit-seeking institutions such as universities. Strategic management practitioners in South African universities (SAUs) are therefore also confronted with continuous change and decreasing predictability of the future.

When faced with meeting the challenge of an unpredictable and discontinuous future most organisations typically depend on strategic management capacity guided by foresight and central strategic vision. In its foresight dimension strategic management practitioners need to rely on crucial intelligence and foreknowledge concerning macro-environmental trends, issues and events affecting the strategic viability of their organisations. They also need to rely on an agenda for, and a strategy of marshalling participation in the public policy process in order to manage macro-environmental public issues impacting on their organisations. For the purpose of this study public issues are regarded as the socio-economic and politico-governmental forces that influence organisations through the public policy process.

The public policy process is described by Ewing (1987:38) as the mechanism in a free society by which the aspirations and dissatisfactions of the public work their way up through public issue debates into law and regulation.

The assessment and management of public issues in the organisation as well as in the public policy process could therefore interrelate with and contribute to the strategic management capabilities in profit-seeking concerns and non-profit seeking institutions. The emphasis in this study is on the latter and concentrates on the management of public issues by management (policy makers and strategic management practitioners) of SAUs.

In line with the view of Van Niekerk (1988:4) the collective term organisation will be used in this study. This is to indicate the universal nature of the management process as applied in profit seeking concerns as well as non-profit seeking institutions such as SAUs.

For the purpose of this study, management of SAUs included policy makers [rectors/principles of member universities of the Committee of University Principles (CUP)] as well as strategic management practitioners (registrars, deputy registrars/ administrators and deans of faculties) of SAUs. Although a distinction can be made between management as a 'cadre' of people, and management as an activity the term 'management' as referred to in this study will include both these perspectives.

1.1.1 Universities: A historical view

Universities, more than any other educational institutions, embody one of man's most distinctive characteristics - his astounding ability to transmit information from one generation to the next by means other than through his genes (Du Plessis & Van der Merwe Smit 1991).

However, academies of learning world-wide have in the past decades come under scrutiny of stakeholders, with management increasingly under sharply conflicting pressures from governments, sponsors, staff and students. Donaldson (1993:12) lists three worldwide developments in higher education during the post-war era: The dismal state of higher education in Eastern Europe having highlighted the damage to scholarship which follows from ideological controls; the decay of universities in Africa which has exposed the gap between expansionary ambitions and sustained excellence in academic standards; and the tightening of labour markets in Europe and elsewhere that expelled the illusion that qualifications are sure routes to privileged careers.

Universities world-wide are today experiencing an education revolution with an urgent need to ensure that they produce the skills that economies vitally need. The same requisite applies particularly to higher education in developing countries, including the Republic of South Africa (RSA), where higher education should not be seen as a status symbol but as an instrument for education and development.

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1.1.2 Universities: a South African view

The South African system of higher education was established, on pre-Union roots, by the Universities Act of 1916. Since then and up till 1948 when the National Party took office, residential universities fell into three distinct categories: English-medium, Afrikaans-medium, and black institutions, with the University of South Africa the only bilingual and multi-racial (non-residential) university. Each category also played a distinct role in the relationship between state and university during the period 1948 to 1990. Even up till 1993 these categories remained significant, although the abolition of formal racial barriers to admission has meant that two new labels have had to be invented, namely the "predominantly white" and the "historically black" universities (Moodie 1994:2).

On February 2, 1990 fourty two years of apartheid ideology was ended and South Africans were given a new sense of alternative possibilities. The alternatives that confronts SAUs in the new democratic dispensation are, *inter alia*, legitimacy; demands for new governance structures, reconstruction and transformation; the circumstances and problems associated with the proposed political transition period such as coping with multi-cultural diversity, diminishing budgets as well as a need to address the educational needs of a disenfranchised population. However, most changes in SAUs having been implemented by 1997 were done in reaction to public issues relating to socio-political changes which took place since 1990. As a result of further ongoing and rapid socio-economic and politico-governmental changes, new macro-environmental public issues are, during the remainder of this decade, bound to emerge through the public policy process with further implications for SAUs. Managing such new emerging macro-environmental public issues with efficiency, effectiveness and social purpose will require new management perspectives including a strategy for managing pro-active change in SAUs. This could possibly be achieved through managing macro-environmental public issues impacting on SAUs as antecedents of change.

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This study concentrates on the public issues that influence organisations through the public policy process. The management of public issues that influence SAUs through the public policy process constitute the central theme of this thesis.

1.1.3 Issues management

In order to manage organisations in a strategic manner various models of strategic management evolved in the past. Implicit within these models are the concepts of strategy formulation, strategy implementation and strategy evaluation and control. Buller (1988:52), Hurst (1986:13), James (1984:57), Morris (1987:51), Smith & Grimm (1987:363), Venter (1988:4) and Weeks (1990:3), however, directly or circuitously question the validity of the traditional strategic management prototype. The

aforementioned authors contend that the era of environmental stability and predictability in which the strategic management paradigm originally evolved, is essentially very different from that of the turbulent and discontinuous environment of today.

It was indeed found that, during the era of stability in the 1970s, almost all organisational planning was primarily structured around the belief of senior managers, that the only planning they had to be concerned with, was the internal planning of their own business futures (Ewing 1987:3-23). Later, whilst strategically managing their organisations, managers mistakenly believed that organisations had near absolute power over their own futures, as long as they could excel competition. The display of such arrogance and unperceptiveness has brought many organisations in conflict with consumer advocates (Ralph Nader), environmental lobbysist (Rachel Carson) and trade unions, with resultant regulations to constrain such organisations. Most managers have since realised that their organisations do not merely operate in an economic arena, but in a much larger socio-economic and politico-governmental macro-environment that surrounds and controls success in the internal and market environments. In the "new" SA, emerging since the election on April 27, 1994, strategic management practitioners are beginning to experience the power of a democratic society which has ultimate power and which can control any organisation through the manipulation of public issues in the public policy process.

Ewing (1987:37) concurs that organisations in democratic societies are being challenged with a new socio-political "bottom line", namely public acceptance. The macro-environmental issues which impact on the new socio-economic and politico-governmental bottom line of SAUs through the public policy process, are referred to as *public issues* in this study.

It was against the background of public issues, the public policy process and public acceptance, that Chase (Chase 1984) provided executives with a basic management process model to deal with

issues in general and public issues in particular, and called it *issues management*. As a result, most management practitioners acknowledge Chase as the father of issues management (Ewing 1987:46).

Various other authors such as Ashley & Morrison (1995); Coates *et al.* (1986); Dutton & Jackson (1987); Dutton & Ottensmeyer (1987); Ewing (1987); Hainsworth (1990b); Heath & Cousino (1990); Lozier & Chittipeddi (1986); Lozier *et al.* (1986); Morrison & Ashley (1994) and Theron (1994) provide literature on issues management. Of the aforementioned authors only Theron (1994) deals with issues management with the South African firm in mind. In the RSA, literature on the management of public issues in SAUs is limited.

1.2 THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The dynamic macro-environment in which universities operate is increasingly being influenced by issues, and particularly public issues through the public policy process. In the United States of America, for instance, universities have during the past decades been dragged into public forums and challenged by stakeholders demanding increased accountability and public acceptance. Executive managers of universities who have had, for instance, previously announced that they will never 'make deals' with students turned out to be the very negotiators in 'smoke-filled' rooms (Baldridge 1971:170).

In the RSA the macro-environment of SAUs has also become more uncertain and discontinuous, in spite of, or in fact as a result of radical political reforms since the general election in 1994. Consequently a new democratic culture emerged in SAUs, with escalating demands for transformation and reconstruction by different stakeholders, particularly students. These demands are only some of the public issues with implications for SAUs. New public issues are bound to emerge in the near future. If management practitioners in SAUs are to prevent themselves from

continuously being dragged into 'smoke-filled' negotiation rooms, they will have to make timeous and deliberate efforts to identify and assess issues, particularly critical public issues, which could in the near future impact on their institutions. They will therefore have to progress beyond hunches and intuitive knowledge about public expectations and demands, and acquire a new type of knowledge which Ewing (1987:2) describes as "foreknowledge". They will furthermore, after having identified and assessed the critical public issues, enhance their capability in managing such public issues in a pro-active and strategic manner.

The problem of SAUs manifests itself as a need for research into a strategy for managing pro-active change in SAUs. Broadly speaking the problem to be researched in this thesis can be posed in the form of the following question:

> What role can issues management play as a strategy to manage pro-active change in South African universities?

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The relevance of the research of this problem will be addressed in the next section.

1.3 THE RELEVANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The relevance of research on issues management as a strategy to manage pro-active change in SAUs can be viewed from a theoretical and empirical perspective. Each aspect is briefly discussed below.

1.3.1 Theoretical research aspects

Five particular theoretical aspects, from an issues management perspective, which are directly relevant to this thesis, require specific attention, namely:

(a) Issues management within a macro-environmental context

Deeply-held assumptions about how managers should strategically manage for the future have been called to account during the last three decades. This has occurred as the business environment in which organisations operate became increasingly influenced and shaped by outside forces in the public policy process. A way to understand and respond to the public policy process (as referred to in Section 1.1), had therefore become necessary in order to keep organisations appropriately matched to their macro-environments, thereby securing their future viability.

Various authors (Ashley & Morrison 1995; Coates *et al.* 1986; Dutton & Ottensmeyer 1987; Ewing 1987 and Lozier & Chittipeddi 1986) have attested to the process of issues management as a management technique to identify and respond to macro-environmental forces in the public policy process. A particular aspect pertaining to this study is the key dimensions of issues management which may be relevant in logically examining the role of issues management in managing public issues in SAUs. This is done in Chapter 2. A more detailed discussion of the process of issues management within a macro-environmental context is provided in Section 2.2.

(b) Issues management from an offensive environmental management perspective

Environmental management refers to pro-active strategies, aimed at changing the environmental context in which the organisation operates, instead of merely positioning the organisation in relation to its environment (Bateman & Zeithaml 1990:228). Taking such an offensive stance is in contrast to the traditional strategic management approach, of merely positioning the organisation within its external environment in the most optimal manner.

If strategic management aspires to achieve more than merely

positioning the organisation in relation to its external environment, the question arises how issues management can actively assist strategic managers in changing or shaping the macro-environment. This question will be answered in Section 2.3.

(c) The concept of strategy from an issues management perspective

In order to consider the role that issues management can play as a strategy to manage pro-active change in SAUs the concept of strategy needs illumination.

The term strategy has its origin in the word *strategos* meaning general. The term was first used as early as 550BC (Chaffee 1985:136). Drucker (Drucker 1955) applied the concept of strategy to business and management in 1955 and in 1962 Chandler (Chandler 1962) linked strategy and structure to planning. The use of strategy concepts in higher education literature and management practice, however, lagged considerably behind that of the business sector. Schendel & Hofer (*in* Pratt 1990:49-50) were the first authors to research the application of strategic planning to higher education institutions in 1979.

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The concept of strategy, the formulation and implementation of effective strategies as well as the link between strategy, strategic management and issues management is further explored in Section 2.4.

(d) The concept of strategic change management within an issues management context

Organisations do not exist in a vacuum, but operate in a changing business environment, as they arise out of the need of society for a specific product or service (Wheelen & Hunger 1989:83). The dilemma for management is how to cope with external pressures for change which emanate from issues within the macro-environment.

The management of strategic changes encompasses the management of the issues which bring about such change. Strategic change management within an issues management context need therefore be considered. This is done in Section 2.5.

(e) South African universities from a macro-environmental perspective

A general aspect which is directly relevant to this study, is an overview of SAUs and a theoretical deliberation of the macro-environment of SAUs. An insight into the public issues impacting on SAUs, and the conditions which necessitates a strategy to manage public issues in SAUs, also needs to be considered. This is done in Chapter 3.

1.3.2 Empirical research aspects

The empirical aspect which is directly relevant to this thesis, is the possible role of issues management as a management technique for managing pro-active change in SAUs.

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As the objective of SAUs should be that of managing change in a pro-active manner, the **first** empirical aspect addressed in this study was to determine the management mode of management in SAUs. The **second** aspect was the extent to which management of SAUs cope with strategic change. The **third** aspect assessed in this study was the quality of issues management as experienced by management in SAUs. The **fourth** and final aspect was to provide a competence profile of management with regard to the effective and efficient management of public issues, impacting on SAUs through the public policy process.
In order to address the aforementioned four empirical aspects four research questions were formulated, namely:

* What is the shared and collective management mode of SAUs with regard to public issues in the public policy process as reflected in the mission statements and

goals of SAUs?

* What is the shared and collective experience of policy makers and strategic management practitioners regarding the management of strategic change in SAUs?

* What is the shared and collective experience of policy makers and strategic management practitioners regarding the management of public issues in SAUs?

* What are the major skills and capabilities in SAUs with regard to the management of public issues impacting on SAUs through the public policy process.

The aforementioned questions were investigated by means of empirical research methods which are discussed and analyzed in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 of this study respectively.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

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This study essentially centres around the gaining of insight into the management of public issues in SAUs. To achieve this purpose the following objectives were set:

Objective 1: To attain an understanding of issues management within a macro-environmental context [as cited in Section 1.3.1(a)].

Objective 2: To gain an understanding of issues management from an offensive environmental management perspective [as stated in Section 1.3.1(b)].

Objective 3: To explore the concept of strategy as a pre-selected means to achieve organisational goals and objectives, from a issues management perspective [as mentioned in Section 1.3.1(c)].

Objective 4: To gain an insight into the theoretical concept of strategic change management, within an issues management context [as mentioned in Section 1.3.1(d)].

Objective 5: To provide a brief overview of the history, the macro-environment as well as the public issues impacting on SAUs with special reference to the need for a strategy to manage public issues in SAUs [as referred to in Section 1.3.1(e)].

Objective 6: To determine whether management in SAUs demonstrates a pro-active management mode with regard to the public issues in the public policy process (as referred to in Section 1.3.2).

Objective 7: To analyze and describe the experience of management in SAUs regarding the management of change in SAUs (as cited in Section 1.3.2).

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Objective 8: To analyze and describe the experience of management in SAUs regarding the management of public issues in SAUs (as mentioned in Section 1.3.2)

Objective 9: To provide a competence profile with regard to the effective and efficient management of public issues in SAUs (as cited in Section 1.3.2).

Objective 10: The pen-ultimate objective determines the relevance of issues management as a strategy for managing pro-active change in SAUs. A conclusion in this regard is reached in Chapter 6.

Objective 11: The final and overall objective of this study was to propose a framework for the implementation of an issues management strategy in SAUs. This

aspect is deliberated in Chapter 6.

The target population demarcated in this study was the management of SAUs as represented by policy makers [rectors/principles of member universities of the Committee of University Principals (CUP)] and strategic management practitioners (registrars, deputy registrars/administrators and deans of faculties) of SAUs.

1.5 THE METHOD OF THE STUDY

In pursuing the objectives of the research, as stated in Section 1.4 a literature survey and study as well as two different and separate market surveys were conducted.

Each step in the process is briefly discussed in the following subsections.

1.5.1 Literature survey

The literature survey was based on two dimensions.

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The first dimension incorporated a literature survey and study to describe the most recent developments in the field of issues management within a macro-environmental context, issues management from an offensive environmental management perspective, strategy from an issues management perspective and strategic change management within an issues management context as referred to in Section 1.3. Issues management, strategy and strategic change management, therefore, provided the theoretical background to this study.

The second dimension included a study of the literature relating to SAUs in order to describe the current and future public issues which can have implications for SAUs. The study also included selected overseas literature in order to supplement the literature relating to SAUs and to describe public issues which might emerge and impact on SAUs in the near future.

In order to accomplish the aforementioned two dimensions of the literature study an extensive literature survey was conducted in order to obtain the most recent literature in the field of study.

The following sources were consulted:

* Literature lists compiled by the subject librarians at Vista University and the Rand Afrikaans University

* The library computer data bases at Vista University and the Rand Afrikaans University

* The "Business Periodicals Index" for Economic & Management Sciences at the Rand Afrikaans University

* ABI/Inform and the "Index to South African Periodicals" (ISAP) at the Rand Afrikaans University

* The "Gesamentlike Katalogus van Proefskrifte en Verhandelinge" (GKPV) at the Rand Afrikaans University

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The literature survey and study as described in this section was directly orientated to achieving the first five objectives [as listed in Section 1.4].

1.5.2 Empirical research methods

The empirical research comprised of two different and separate market surveys.

(a) Market survey 1: Mission statement and goals analysis

The first market survey was applied to SAUs in general and was based on an analysis of the different mission statements and goals of SAUs. This was done against the background of the discussion document (NCHE-DD) of the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE), as a possible pro-active framework for

transformation. It was also executed against the backdrop of identified principles and goals, as deliberated by the NCHE (NCHE-DD 1996:41-44), and socio-economic and politico-governmental issues impacting on SAUs (as discussed in Chapter 3). The analysis of the different mission statements and goals of SAUs was done to determine the management mode of management in SAUs, that is, whether management in SAUs operates in a pro-active management mode with regard to public issues in the public policy process.

A content analysis of the different mission statements and goals of SAUs was conducted. Content analysis was the selected methodology because of its inherent value as a method of systematically analysing qualitative data (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe 1991:10on5).

(b) Market survey 2: Research questionnaire

The second market survey was applied to policy makers and strategic management practitioners in SAUs, in order to determine the shared and collective views regarding the management of strategic change and the management of public issues in SAUs.

* The management of strategic change in SAUs

Various authors (Deal & Kennedy 1976; Goldsmith & Clutterbuck 1986; Human & Horwitz 1992; Peters & Waterman 1982) have dealt with organisational change and how organisations should cope with the change process. Human & Horwitz (1992) developed a four-factor model of South African companies coping successfully with change. Aspects of this model were used in order to describe the shared and collective views of management regarding the management of change in SAUs.

* The management of issues in SAUs

Chase (Chase 1984) developed an issues management model, based

on the assumption that no company can simultaneously manage every issue. Organisations therefore need to develop procedures for identifying, sorting and prioritising issues of primary concern to their operations. Using the Chase model, Theron (1994:136), through a factor analytic study, identified a number of managerial aids being used by managers to assist them in the issues management process. Ashley & Morrison (1995) expanded the Chase model and named it the "anticipatory issues management decision/process model".

Aspects of the aforementioned Chase model, the factorised managerial aids identified by Theron (1994), and the expanded model of Ashley & Morrison (1995) were used to analyze the quality of issues management in SAUs.

The two market surveys described in this section, therefore, fell within the ambit of the established Chase model, an expanded model of Ashley & Morrison (1995), a recent factor analytic research on issues management by Theron (1994) and a unique instrument of measurement by Human & Horwits (1992).

The empirical research was orientated towards achieving objectives 6, 7, 8 and 9 (as specified in Section 1.4) directly and achieving objective 10 (as specified in Section 1.4) indirectly.

1.6 CONSTRAINTS TO THE STUDY

This study was subject to the following possible constraints:

* relevance of the time factor
* relevance of time limits
* reluctance of respondents to participate

These constraints are now discussed in greater detail.

1.6.1 Relevance of the time factor

The theoretical findings of this study are relevant to macro-environmental public issues which can have implications for SAUs in the 1990s. The results may be different if the same study should again be done towards the end of the century. This study, thus, provides a slice of reality regarding the management of public issues, at a specific point in the history of SAUs. It is therefore specific to the state of SAUs at the time the research began. The validity of the research in terms of whether issues management can, or can not be used, as a strategy to manage pro-active change in SAUs will, however, not be affected even if public issues should change over a period of time, towards the end of the twentieth century.

1.6.2 Relevance of time limits

No research can continue ad infinitum. Under normal circumstances, as in the case of this study, time limits must be adhered to and deadlines must be met. A possible constraint of this study was that information, which could have been used in good stead, was not available prior to the completion of the study. For example: The final report of the NCHE. However, the Discussion Document of the NHCE, released in April 1996, was used as a reference source along with other sources such as the Draft Policy Document for Consultation of the Ministry of Education (RSA 1994) and submissions received from the different universities by the NHCE through Internet (hhtp://www.hsrc.ac.za.). The objective of Chapter 3 of this study was after all, to provide a perspective on the macro-environment as well as a number of public issues impacting on SAUs, and not necessarily to comment on the report of the NHCE. The validity of the research was thus not affected by the unavailability of the final report of the NHCE.

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1.6.3 Participation of respondents

Another possible constraint to this study could have been the sensitivity of policy makers to participate in the research questionnaire due to post-election pressures exerted on SAUs for change. Respondents within the CUP could therefore have been reluctant to be directly quoted on personal opinions expressed. In order to draw on their extensive experience the confidentiality of responses was therefore respected and maintained by the researcher.

A further constraint might have been that strategic management practitioners in SAUs could have been reluctant to co-operate. Van de Ven (1987:333) confirms that gaining access to strategic information of organisations is problematic. Participants were, however, not asked to divulge sensitive information, but to respond to questions on a more general basis based on their past experience. Respondents were furthermore not directly identified in this study. A concerted attempt to surmount the reluctance of respondents to participate, were therefore made in order to overcome this possible constraint.

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1.7 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

In pursuing the objectives of the research, the remainder of this study is divided into the following chapters.

Chapter 2 deals with the theoretical management aspects of issues management within a macro-environmental context, issues management from an offensive environmental management perspective, strategy from an issues management perspective and strategic change management within an issues management context. This chapter thus focuses on achieving objectives 1 to 4 (as listed in Section 1.4).

Chapter 3 deals with SAUs. At the onset a short overview of the history of SAUs is provided. The emphasis in this chapter is,

however, on a study of relevant literature in order to conceptualise the macro-environment of SAUs and to describe the current macro-environmental public issues which influence SAUs through the public policy process. Reference is also made to selected overseas literature in order to describe any possible additional public issues which could possibly emerge and impact on SAUs in the near future. The last section of this chapter emphasises the need for SAUs to formulate and implement a strategy in order to manage the public issues impacting on SAUs, pro-actively and efficiently. In this chapter the emphasis is on achieving the final theoretical objective [objective 5] as well as assisting the researcher to achieve the empirical objectives (objectives 6, 7, 8 and 9 as listed in Section 1.4).

Chapter 4 provides an overview of the empirical research methods which were used to obtain answers to the research questions [as cited in Section 1.3.2]. The methodology of content analysis, the questionnaire design, data collection procedures and data processing methods receive particular attention. This chapter concentrates on the means of achieving the empirical objectives relating to objectives 6, 7, 8 and 9 (as stated in Section 1.4).

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Chapter 5 analyse the data obtained from the empirical research. It also summarises the information regarding public issues impacting on, as well as the management of change and the management of public issues in SAUs. Important findings, interpretations as well conclusions are noted. Chapter 5 focuses on the acquired empirical results in order to achieve objectives 6, 7, 8 and 9 (as listed in section 1.4).

Chapter 6 concludes the study with a summary of the findings drawn from the study. Final conclusions are drawn with regard to all eleven objectives set for this study. Special attention is given to the suitability of issues management as a corporate strategy for managing pro-active change in SAUs and to propose a corporate and functional framework for the implementation of an issues management strategy in SAUs. Recommendations are also

made with the view of further study. The empirical and theoretical contribution of the study is finally considered.

1.8 SUMMARY

In this chapter the problem and its setting was briefly discussed. The theoretical background referred to the need for organisations to change and introduced the concept of issues, public issues, public policy process and issues management. The basic problem that emerges is whether issues management as a management process could be used as a strategy to manage public issues, and consequently manage pro-active change in SAUs.

Theoretical and empirical methods of investigation were proposed in order to research the problem. Eleven objectives were set. Management of SAUs were demarcated as the focus of the study. The constraints to which the study was subjected to, were furthermore outlined. In conclusion a structure of the study was presented and selected concepts were defined and acronyms explained.

The next chapter deals with a deliberation of management concepts and processes from an issues management perspective.

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ISSUES MANAGEMENT: A STRATEGY TO MANAGE PRO-ACTIVE CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

CHAPTER 2

MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS AND PROCESSES:
AN ISSUES MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

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CHAPTER 2

MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS AND PROCESSES: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

SYNOPSIS

Organisations are well aware of the fact that they are not only imbedded in a market environment, but in a broader macro-environment. This broader environment comprises of sub-environments, stakeholders and educated publics that challenge the purpose and accountability of organisations through the public policy process. Issues management arose from the recognition by organisations that they need to take account of and participate in the public policy process by managing those issues which impact on their organisations.

The objective of this chapter was to obtain an understanding of different management concepts and processes relating to issues management, strategy, and change. Within an issues management context these aspects are interrelated.

The concepts of issues, categories of issues, the issues management process and how issues emanating from the macro-environment impact on organisations, and how organisations can influence the development of issues within the public policy process were also addressed. Strategies as well as strategic change management and its linkage to issues management were furthermore explained. Finally, an issues management structure to manage macro-environmental issues was proposed.

The value of this chapter lies in obtaining an understanding of the theoretical management concepts and processes which form the basis of this study.

CHAPTER 2

MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS AND PROCESSES: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The first half of the 20th century, especially the period before World War II, was characterised by a stable business environment. After World War II, however, drastic social and political changes made organisations aware of the fact that they were not only imbedded in the market environment, but also in the larger and turbulent socio-political macro-environment. This larger environment comprised of a broadly educated public and public interest advocates, that began to challenge the purpose of organisations beyond price, product and profits for the owners. The public and public advocates also began to examine corporate behaviour, corporate social responsibility and corporate citizenship. This lead to equal power and control of publics over organisations and their eventual viabilities. In response to this awareness senior management and leaders developed 'environmental analysis' as a management technique, and changed the name of long-range planning to strategic planning (Ewing 1987:12-23).

A significant improvement in management processes came in the 1970's with the development of the strategic management paradigm. Strategic management became an important responsibility of general management, and a process aimed at keeping the organisation appropriately matched to its macro-environment. However, inherent in the macro-environment, is the quest for power and control of publics and public advocates over organisations through the public policy process.

Given the importance of the impact of the public policy process, and in view of strategic decision making becoming a subtle

exercise in political skill and social awareness, a number of authors (Coates *et al.* 1986; Dutton & Jackson 1987; Dutton & Ottensmeyer 1987; Ewing 1987; Hainsworth 1990b; Heath & Cousino 1990; Lozier & Chittipeddi 1986; Lozier, Dooris *et al.* 1994.) suggested that the traditional strategic management paradigm might not be adequate to manage public forces. It might also be inadequate in assisting management to participate in the management of issues in the public policy process. Consequently, issues management has been advocated as a complementary approach to strategic planning and strategic management.

A central premise of this study is, that in order to determine the suitability of issues management as a possible strategy to manage pro-active change in SAUs, a clear understanding of the concepts of issues management, strategies and strategic change management must be acquired.

The objective of this chapter will thus be to achieve the first four objectives (as stated in Section 1.4), namely to acquire an understanding of the management concepts and processes of issues management within a macro-environmental context, as well as from an offensive environmental management perspective, and to explore the concepts of strategy from an issues management perspective, and strategic change management within an issues management context. Finally a structure will be proposed to explain the flow of information and actions within and outside the organisation and how they can combine in an issues management programme

2.2 ISSUES MANAGEMENT WITHIN A MACRO-ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

The first objective of this study (as mentioned in Section 1.4) is to explore the concept of issues management within a macro-environmental context. In order to achieve this the composition of the business macro-environment, the nature, extent, process and techniques of issues management need to be explored.

2.2.1 The nature of the business macro-environment

Most authors would appear to be in general agreement with the view of Cronje *et al.* (1995:42) and Smit & Cronje (1992:61) who view the business environment of an organisation as the sum of the factors or variables that may influence the survival and growth of the organisation. The same authors, Cronje *et al.* (1995:42) and Smit & Cronje (1992:29), furthermore tend to list three distinct sub-environments of the business environment on which an organisation depends for its survival and growth, namely the micro-environment, the task- (or market) and the macro-environments. The micro-environment constitutes the internal environment. Outside the micro-environment and the market environment is the macro-environment.

The systems approach to management views an organisation as an open system that continually interacts with its external environment. In this study, SAUs as organisations will also be regarded as open systems that continually interact with the macro-environment.

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The emphasis in this study being on the macro-environment does not, however, preclude the micro-environment. The micro-environment constitutes the internal environment in which some stakeholders operate and management have to manage. For example, the environment, in which students as stakeholders of SAUs normally operate, constitutes the internal environment in which issues and conflict invariably arise and which, if not resolved by management, become crisis issues through the involvement of outside publics in the macro-environment. Conversely changes in the values of society may have a direct effect on the way management directs its internal environment. There is therefore a continuous interaction between the macro-environment and the micro-environment of organisations. Issues management, although obtaining its impetus from the macro-environment, needs to be directed from within and can thus not be divorced from the internal environmental context of organisations.

The way in which management operates is normally either through foresight or through so-called 'crisis management', or a combination of both. It is suggested that it is through the effective use of foresight and the management of foreknowledge that issues management could assist corporate and functional managers to, not only participate and prepare effective responses to macro-environmental issues, but also influence the macro-environmental context in which they operate.

The macro-environment of an organisation comprises of social, technological, economic, environmental (natural) and politico-governmental (STEEP) sectors. Contemporary literature adds another sector, namely the international environment, which the organisation has to monitor and control. These sectors sustain the uncontrollable or semi-controllable macro-environmental forces with a direct and indirect influence on organisations. In the *new* Republic of South Africa (RSA), higher education institutions such as universities are currently experiencing changes which are directly and indirectly being shaped by forces in the STEEP sectors of the macro-environment. Although the new democratic dispensation in the RSA is becoming distinct from that of the *ancien regime,* certain macro-environmental forces will continue to, directly or indirectly, coerce developments in SAUs.

The question can be asked: which STEEP forces are and will in the future have the most profound effect on SAUs? From reviewing the literature and reports in the mass media, it is suggested that it is the combination of social and economic changes as well the alliance of political and governmental forces, currently re-shaping South African society, that will have the greatest impact, through the public policy process, on the identity, nature and viability of SAUs. The emphasis on these combinations of forces stems further from the researcher's viewpoint, that technological developments in STEEP relating to SAUs can be regarded as opportunities to be dealt with through conventional strategic management, and that issues pertaining to the natural environment or ecology in STEEP, have very little influence on

the identity and nature of SAUs. Fundamental economic issues furthermore affect SAUs only indirectly, and mainly through the social and political sectors of STEEP. The latter perspective seems to be a valid one in view of Ewing's (1987:39) belief that publics, because of a lack of wealth and economic power, invariably convert fundamental economic issues into socio-political issues. Similarly, staff and students as stakeholders of SAUs, invariably transform internal economic issues such as remuneration, student fees and funding to socio-economic and politico-governmental issues through the involvement of government, outside publics and pressure groups.

In view of the aforementioned motivation, socio-economic and politico-governmental macro-variables will, for the purpose of this study, be regarded as the two foremost areas of interest within the macro-environment of SAUs. Thus, in examining the nature of the macro-environment of SAUs in this study, only the socio-economic and politico-governmental macro-variables will be considered. These macro-variables, which emanate as forces in the macro-environment of SAUs, will furthermore be referred to as *public issues* in the course of this study.

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2.2.1.1 The socio-economic environmental context of organisations

> People don't live in markets, they live in societies.
>
> -- James Fallows

The aforementioned quote attests to the fact that man is a product of society, and as a member of a particular community, nation or population group he adopts the culture of that society. The cultures of most countries are, however, not homogenous.

Numerous subcultures based on language, religion, population group and geographical area exist, with each subculture emphasising its own goals with implications for management (Smit & Cronje 1992:43).

Man is also a product of economic variables which influence his prosperity or adversity in the social environment. In the RSA people, through society, exert pressure on organisations to be socially and economically responsible, that is, to act responsibly by continually considering the consequences of its decisions and actions.

Socio-economic pressures also provided impetus for the genesis of a new management technique in the 1980's called *issues management*. It was originally developed as an educational task for management aimed at balancing the legitimate goals and rights of the free enterprise system with those of society (Ewing 1987:5). It later developed into a management process for timeous identification and management of public issues.

A more elaborate discussion on the public issues and pressures manifesting within the socio-economic environment of SAUs will be provided in Section 3.3.

2.2.1.2 The politico-governmental context of organisations

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Management's decisions are continually affected by the course of politics, especially political pressures exerted by the ruling government and its institutions on the business environment. As a component of the macro-environment the state influences the business environment and the enterprise primarily as a regulating force. By promulgating and enforcing laws it creates order with measures that are usually politically directed, thus steering economic and social policies in a certain direction (Smit & Cronje 1992:44). The South African government influences organisations such as SAUs both internally and externally: internally through government subsidies and externally through its educational policies which may eventually determine, amongst other things, the international recognition or non-recognition of SAUs.

It therefore remains, to an increasing extent, the task of

management of SAUs, to study the numerous and often complex political currents, activities, legislation and measures of government. This is imperative in order to timeously and pro-actively determine the influence of politico-governmental issues on SAUs.

The different issues which influence SAUs through the politico-governmental sub-environment will be dealt with in greater detail in Section 3.3.

2.2.2 The nature and extent of issues

Decision makers in organisations are confronted with a variety of issues that activate their attention. In colloquial terms an issue is described as a matter or question in dispute, or under discussion and which remains to be decided on, and which involves important consequences (The Oxford English Dictionary 1989:136).

Several other definitions of the term "issues" exist in the literature on issues management. The following paragraphs will deal with some of these definitions and descriptions.

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* Brown (1979:1) describes issues as conditions of pressure, either internal or external to an organisation that, if they continue, will have a significant effect on the functioning of the organisation or its future interests.

* Coates *et al.* (1986:19) regard issues as conflicts of interests or values rather than problems. This deduction is made, because according to them problems have definite answers or solutions, whereas, the essential characteristic of an issue is that it could almost never be definitely and completely be resolved to the full satisfaction of all parties concerned.

* Dutton & Webster (1988:663) view issues as events, developments, or trends that have potential consequence for

an organisation.

* Morrison & Ashley (1994:2-2) describe issues broadly as internal and external developments that may have strategic significance on the way the organisation conducts its business.

* Theron (1994:20) defines issues as emerging, current or unfolding conditions of pressure in the business environment of an organisation which, through the public policy process, impact on the future viability of an organisation.

Considering the consistency of various definitions in the literature, *issues* will be regarded as emerging, current or unfolding conditions of pressure in the business environment of organisations which impact on the future viability of organisations.

The emphasis in this study is not on organisations in general, but on socio-economic and politico-governmental public issues which, through the public policy process, impacts on SAUs.

2.2.3 Categories of issues

Rosch (1978:30) defines categories as cognitive classifications that group objects, events, and the like with similar perceived attributes.

Morrison & Ashley (1994:5-5) argue that issues confronting organisations can be classified into three categories: those requiring immediate external action, those requiring internal adjustments, and those requiring only further monitoring.

Ansoff & McDonnell (1990:369) categorise issues as either welcome or unwelcome. *Welcome issues* imply opportunities to be grasped in the environment, or internal strengths which can be exploited

to advantage. *Unwelcome issues* imply external threats, or internal weaknesses which imperil the continuing success and survival of the organisation. In the same vein Dutton & Jackson (1987:77) describe how category labels attached to issues, for example *welcome* or *unwelcome* and urgent or non-urgent, can translate into predictable organisational responses.

Literature studies by Brown (1979) and Cook *et al.* (1988), suggest that issues can be categorised according to three criteria, namely: their stage of development, their strategic dimension or their social context. The latter classification of issues will be discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs.

2.2.3.1 Issues according to their stage of development

Brown (1979), Coates *et al.* (1986), Ewing (1987), Hainsworth (1990a) and Meng (1992:23) are of the opinion that industry specialists usually divide issues according to their stage of development or what is sometimes referred to as the *time horizon* of issues. Combining the early views of Brown (1979), Coates *et al.* (1986:14-20) and Ewing (1987:43-51) with the more recent observations of Hainsworth (1990a:35-38), Meng (1992:23) and Theron (1994:17), the following categories can be identified:

* **Potential issues** which are events or trends which have the capability of becoming a matter of concern for the organisation but that have not yet captured public attention.

* **Emerging issues** which are signals of evolving disputes under discussion, dealing with matters of conflicting interests, gradually increasing in pressure, but lacking clear definition and yet to have an impact on the organisation.

* **Amplified issues** which are matters of conflicting values that have, through the attention of the mass media, developed into conditions of pressure and which may, or may not, impact on the organisation.

* **Current issues** which are conditions of pressure increasing in intensity, moving toward maturity and resolution and displaying their full potential impact on the organisation.

* **Crisis issues** which are matured conditions of pressure, unconditionally imposed through legislation or regulation on the organisation, and leaving the organisation with no other alternative but to accept the issue and adapt to its imposed demands.

* **Dormant issues** which have followed the full course of development, and have become norms within organisations and society.

* **Unfolding issues** which are matured and dormant disputes, seemingly resolved through negotiation or legislation but which can again, depending on the consequences of their final disposition, unfold as new disputes with subsequent impact on organisations.

Although hard and fast rules about time horizons could not always be applied to issues the basic premise underlying the concept of pro-active issues management is the primary focus on potential, emerging and if necessary, the monitoring of dormant and unfolding issues. Issues management should therefore not concentrate on current issues moving toward maturity and resolution, nor on conflict and crisis issues which are to a great extent already beyond the control of the organisation. Issues management as a pro-active management technique consequently stands in stark contrast to reactive 'crisis management'. This standpoint confirms the contention of the researcher that conflict and crisis management fall outside the

scope of this study.

2.2.3.2 Issues according to their strategic dimension

The concept of issues first appeared during the evolution of strategic planning. Strategic planning lead to the development of strategic management. Both strategic planning and strategic management involve strategic issues likely to have an important influence on organisations, to meet their objectives. Yet, no issue is inherently strategic. Rather, an issue becomes strategic when top management believes that it has relevance for organisational performance. Dutton & Ashford (1993:397-428), for instance, proposed a framework for describing and comparing how issues become strategic, by articulating the process of issue selling.

A relevant question is whether issues relating to issues management should be global or comprehensive in nature, or whether it should be restricted to those issues deemed strategic to the organisation. Freeman (1984:221) points out that the key to successful issues management must be its ability to surface and track real issues that affect the strategic direction of the organisation. Dutton & Ashford (1993:423) agree that top managers, who create the capability of identifying strategic issues, may gain an early advantage as they lead their organisations within increasingly complex and turbulent environments.

2.2.3.3 Issues according to their social context

The social context of issues are described by authors such as Bartol & Martin (1991), Coates *et al.* (1986), Cook *et al.* (1988), Duke (1983), Ewing (1987) and Hainsworth (1990a).

* Bartol & Martin (1991:126) refer to the issues management process as the process of identifying emerging conditions of pressure in the social environment of the organisation,

that is, issues in a social connotation.

* Coates *et al.* (1986:21) refer to issues in the social environment as social issues and quotes R H Jones, retired Chief Executive Officer of General Electric as having said: 'Social issues are not peripheral to business planning and management today, it is the mainstream of it.'

* Cook *et al.* (1988:4) view issues management as an understanding of the public policy development process, which stems from social events and/or trends.

* Ewing (1987:1-6) contends that organisations do not merely move in an economic arena, but in a much larger socio-political environment.

* Hainsworth (1990a:34) claims that where legislation and regulation are concerned, issues are always resolved to someone's advantage and someone else's disadvantage. Consequently, issues should always be resolved in a socially responsible manner.

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In conclusion it could be argued that issues in their social context embrace any social trend that can become a matter of concern for society, and in which people want to have a say, should they think such an issue has a direct bearing on their lives. This corollary to public participation indicates that more of the issues confronting management in general, and management of SAUs in particular will in future be generated at *grass-roots levels*, that is, at local community and neighbourhood levels. This trend of local concern will make it important for management to identify, track, and deal with real issues at a local level.

In line with the pro-active and strategic premises of this study, and in view of the importance of public issues impacting on SAUs, all three of the aforementioned aspects, namely the stages of development, the strategic dimension as well as the social

context of issues are espoused in this study.

2.2.4 The concept of publics

"All business in a democracy begins with public permission and exists by public approval."

Arthur W Page

The aforementioned quotation attests to the power and control, that publics and public interest advocates exert over organisations in the business environment. It is thus of cardinal importance that management should analyze the macro-environment from which publics operate, and plan as well as manage appropriate and pro-active responses to pressures exerted upon their organisations.

Hainsworth (1990a:35) defines publics as groups of individuals with varying degrees of commitment, who face a similar problem, recognise that the problem exist, and unite to some degree to do something about the problem. A public issue can therefore become a point of conflict between an organisation and one or more of its publics. Meng (1992:24) lists six types of publics associated with issues impacting on organisations, namely: the general public, special or general interest groups, employee and other associations, the government and the media.

Hainsworth (1990a:35) contends that publics may vary from ill-organised casual human collectivities to well organised groups of intense commitment and varying degrees of influence. Publics furthermore tend to be dynamic rather than static as members coalesce or change around an issue as it evolves.

In the context of well-organised dynamic publics, issues invariably involve some degree of conflict, which may result in negotiation and adjustment, or civil or criminal litigation. It can eventually, if not resolved, become a matter of legislative or regulatory action. Issues developing through the perpetuating

force of publics through the public policy process, are the primary focus of issues management and therefore also the focus of this study.

2.2.4.1 The public policy process

"Powerful social forces don't give a damn about widgets. To avoid being legislated or regulated out of business, the producers of goods and services must build bridges between themselves and today's prime movers of public policy."

W. Howard Chase

The abovementioned view of Chase emphasises the power that the public policy exert on organizations.

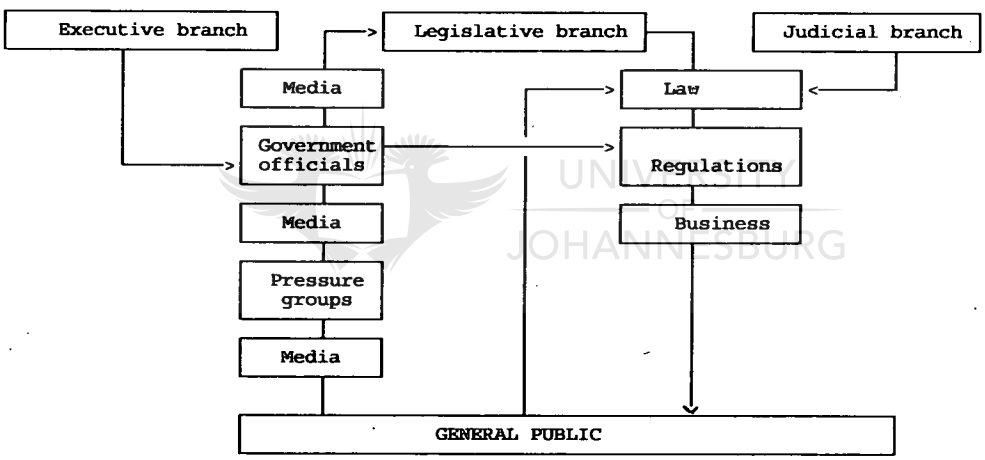
In management terms, a policy constitutes a general statement that mirrors the objectives of an organization and which describes the limits within which managerial decisions fall (Dubrin & Ireland 1993:118). In narrow legal terms, a policy reflects the conviction of government and governmental institutions and the actions to be taken by such institutions in response to dissatisfied publics (Starling 1996:205). In broader public terms, as has been happening with SAUs in a more free society, public policies may reflect the convictions, the strategies and the mass-actions of dissatisfied university stakeholders.

Public policies are normally triggered by a public issue, being placed on the policy agenda of a public after which the process of formulating a specific plan of action begins. Actions could come through the use of legitimate and persuasive means. It could also occur through non-compromising and disruptive mass action. Whatever the end it normally culminates as a law with general legislative concern, and which affects both the organisation and the public at large.

Contrary to Starling (1996), Ewing (1987:39) does not regard

public policy as an end result, but rather as a process of social events, trends and evolving public issues. Ewing (1987:39) labels this process the public policy process, and describes it as the mechanism in a free society by which the aspirations and dissatisfactions of publics, progress through social issue debates, into law and regulation. Ewing (1987:39) furthermore maintains that the public policy process is the main mechanism for the social control of organisations. The public policy process is illustrated in Figure 2.1.

FIGURE 2-1: THE PUBLIC POLICY PROCESS



Source: Adapted from Ewing 1987:41.

The basis of the pyramid as illustrated in Figure 2.1 indicates

public aspirations and dissatisfaction with regard to public issues, for example, the aspiration for accessible and affordable higher education and public concern about the present high cost of higher education in South Africa.

How do the aspirations and/or dissatisfaction of publics develop into public issues? The answer is through the involvement of the news media. From news reports in the media, pressure groups such as trade associations, religious institutions and political parties take note of an issue. One or more of these pressure groups may then decide to initiate pressure on organisations, again through the media which renders the issue a public issue. Should organisations not respond satisfactorily to the demands of pressure groups, influence could the be exerted on legislators to legislate on a public issue. The latter may then yield to the pressure of pressure groups with resultant promulgation of legislation. This may only happen if legislators are of the opinion that sufficient public consensus exists to justify such legislation, that is, only after the issue has become a public issue of major concern.

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Public issues do not, however, have to develop through all the steps of the public policy process. They can emerge and start to develop at any point on the process model. Informed managers should therefore always try to intervene in the public policy process well before the legislative/regulatory confrontation stage of public issue development (Ewing 1987:40-42). This could be done by building bridges between themselves and the "movers of public policy" and by managing the issues impacting on their organisations (Chase 1984).

2.2.4.2 The life cycle of public issues within the public policy process

One of the major causes of problems within organisations is the tendency of management to focus on current issues. Current issues were described in Section 2.2.3.1 as conditions of pressure

already displaying their full potential impact on the organisation. Waiting for the impact of issues constitutes an unsatisfactory re-active management style. A model is therefore necessary to assist management in focusing on issues pro-actively. To do this, management needs to know the cycle of how public issues emerge within society, how some become the focus of political debate, and how some are eventually transformed into public policies or laws which affect the organisation. Understanding the life cycle of public issues within the public policy process, and responding to such public issues are thus critical to effective issues management.

A number of authors [Ewing (1987); Coates *et al.* (1986); Cook *et al.* (1988); Hainsworth (1990a)] have described the life cycle of public issues.

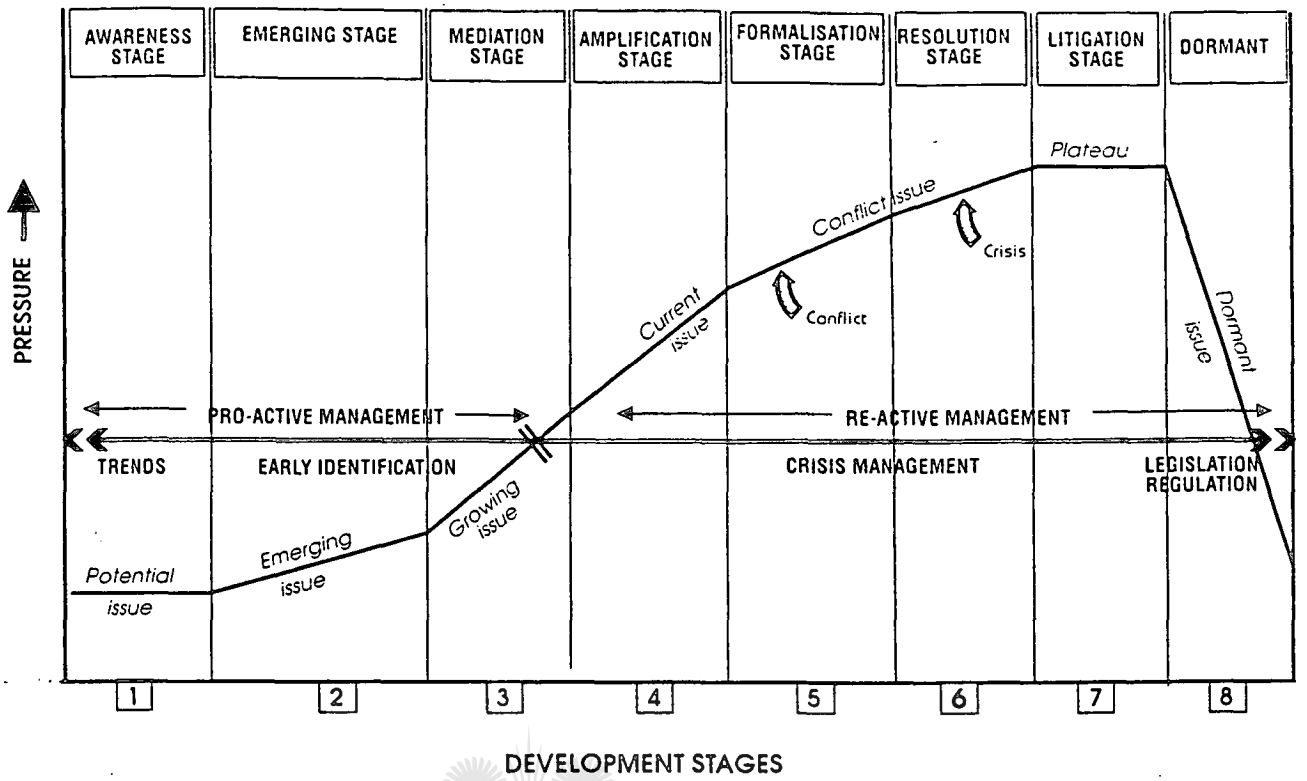
(a) Aspects introduced by Ewing (1987) & Hainsworth (1990a)

According to Ewing (1987) & Hainsworth (1990a) public issues do not remain constant, but develop in a wave-like manner through different development stages, similar to the cyclical development of a product. It commences with an initial potential stage and follows through to a final stage of diminishing public attention.

The origin of the public process relating to a specific public issue, arises in societal expectations, which signals structural changes in society and culminates in a final stage of resolution through negotiation and/or legislation. The different stages in the life cycle of public issues within the public policy process can be viewed in the context of their stages of development (as mentioned in Section 2.2.3.1) and is illustrated in Figure 2.2.

The vertical axis of the diagram represents the level of pressure exerted on an organisation by a developing issue and the

FIGURE 2-2: THE LIFE CYCLE OF PUBLIC ISSUES WITHIN THE PUBLIC POLICY PROCESS



Source: Adapted from Ewing 1987:50 and Hainsworth 1990a:37.

horizontal axis represents the various stages of development. At each stage of development, pressure mounts on the organisation to respond because of the critical significance of the issue.

The following seven development stages in the life cycle of public issues, as depicted in Figure 2.2 are apparent:

* Stage 1: The awareness stage

Public issues may arise when a public, as a consequence of a developing political or social trend, attaches significance to a perceived problem. This trend signals a structural change in societal expectations and concerns, such as improved tertiary education, which gives rise to media recognition (Hainsworth

1990a:34). The pre-cursor to an emerging trend is a signal which is described by Cook (1989:153) as a consistent pattern of behaviour of "something happening" but "not happening enough". The goal of issues management is to identify trends and signals from which public issues at some point may emerge.

* Stage 2: The emerging stage

At the emerging stage there is a gradual increase in the level of pressure from individual influencers and publics on the organisation to accept the significance of public issues. The strengthening of public issues occurs through sporadic coverage in specialised media and/or through networking. It is at this emerging stage in the development of public issues that an organisation can intervene to prevent public issues from evolving any further.

* Stage 3: The mediation stage

During the mediation stage public issues develop into pressures through the attention of interest and social concern groups, industries, professions and the specialised media. The public issue begins to gain definition when publics become concerned about a problem, and plan to do something that could have a consequence for themselves and/or implicated organisation(s). At this stage attempts to resolve public issues through mediation are critical in that it can resolve public issues, and prevent it from developing into conflicts. It is at this development stage that an organisation can and should attempt to have its greatest impact on the further development of public issues.

* Stage 4: The amplification stage

During the amplification stage public issues develop into potential conflicts through the attention of the mass media. It is during this stage that opinion leaders begin to recognise public issues as significant developments, although the public

issues may not yet be seen as a matter of public policy (Hainsworth 1990a:35). Mediation becomes critical to prevent public issues from developing into conflict situations.

* Stage 5: The formalisation stage

The formalisation stage can be seen as a stage of emerging conflict in which groups begin to organise and seek resolutions that are congenial to their best interests or at least to minimise potential damage (Hainsworth 1990a:35). It is at this stage that various publics assume positions and attempt to communicate their respective positions on the public issues. It is also at this stage when public attention motivates influential leaders to become part of the emerging conflict, and when pressure mounts on governmental bodies to seek a resolution to the emerging conflict.

One of the major disruptions is that when public issues are formalised into legislation, control becomes imposed from the outside accompanied with a list of conditions and a timetable with which the organisation must comply. The formalisation of public issues, therefore, invariably lead to conflict. Actual conflict and conflict management should consequently never be a priority of issues management but of "crisis management". Instead, issues management must endeavour to constantly investigate discrepancies between the views and perceptions of stakeholders and management in order to identify emerging public issues and potential conflict issues. It must subsequently manage organisational efforts systematically in order to identify and manage responses to emerging public issues timeously, that is, before they become formalised within the public policy process.

* Stage 6: The resolution stage

The resolution stage signals a peak in public attention with congruent conflict and crises. Efforts to resolve the conflict become pro-tracted and potentially costly (Hainsworth 1990a:36)

as parties to the conflict seek legislation or regulation. Public issues are now defined in operational or legal terms, with conflicts impacting on all concerned (Ewing 1987:50).

* Stage 7: The litigation stage

The litigation stage represents a plateau in public attention in an issue. The issue has now declined and levelled off, much like during the maturity stage in the sales of a product. At this stage the law is tested in the courts and enforcement becomes routine. Penalties are applied to those who ignore or violate the spirit, letter and/or intent of the law concerning the issue (Ewing 1987:50).

* Stage 8: The dormant stage

The dormant stage can be regarded as the point in time when an issue has followed its full course of development, and has become a norm within organisations and society, although not necessarily in every case. Theron (1994:17) refers to matured and dormant public issues, seemingly resolved through negotiation or legislation, but which can again, depending on the consequences of their final disposition, unfold as new disputes with subsequent impact on organisations. Starling (1996:178) also cautions about public issues having been ineffectively resolved, and which could be re-activated in the public policy process. In addition to re-activation another phenomenon could occur, namely "backlash" (Starling 1996:178). This transpires when the laws passed in an euphoric atmosphere of "solving the problem", begin to appear more costly and more troublesome than most role-players imagined at the time when the solution was being formalised.

In closing, the dimensions of pro-active *versus* reactive management with regard to the life cycle of public issues are also demarcated in Figure 2.2.

Pro-active management should occur during the awareness, emerging

and to a certain degree the mediation stages of public issues development. The anticipatory or pro-active management of public issues therefore denotes an opportunity-seeking orientation, rather than a problem-solving one, and can therefore be regarded as *apropos* issues management.

Reactive management, on the other hand, is normally undertaken in reaction to negative external influences and consists of efforts to restore the status quo. The reactive management of public issues should, therefore, be regarded as 'crisis management' as mentioned in Section 2.2.3.1 and considered as irrelevant to issues management.

(b) Aspects introduced by Coates *et al.* 1986

Coates *et al.* (1986:22) refer to a graphical portrayal of the life cycle of a public issue by Work (1984:2) in terms of the ability of an organisation to influence the public issue. This portrayal with regard to the stages of development (as described in Section 2.2.3.1) is illustrated in Figure 2.3.

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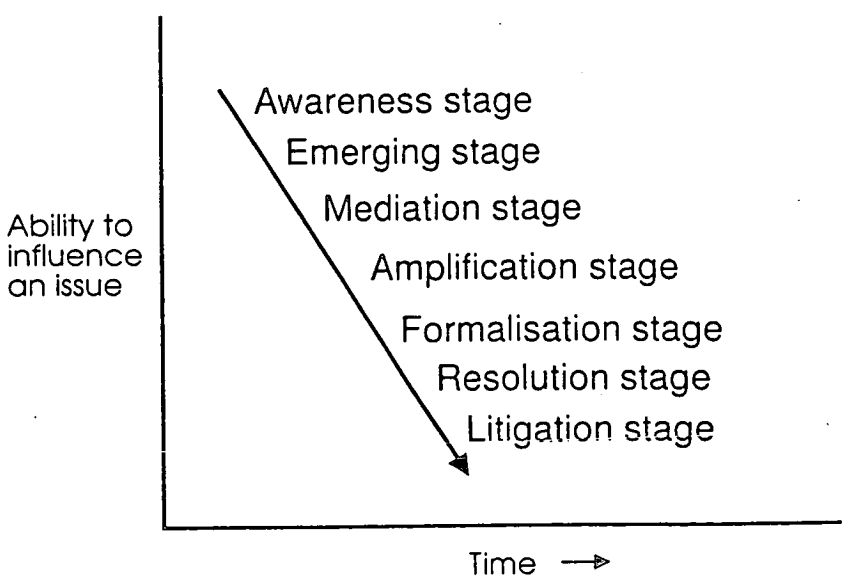
FIGURE 2-3: THE ABILITY OF ORGANISATIONS TO INFLUENCE AN ISSUE DURING ITS LIFE CYCLE



Source: Adapted from Coates *et al.* (1986:22).

From Figure 2.3 it is apparent that the ability of organisations to influence an issue, decreases as the issue matures over time. It is therefore important that, although many public issues at their early stages may not impact on the organisation, public issues should still be identified and monitored in case it becomes necessary to respond to them at a later stage.

(c) Aspects introduced by Cook *et al.* (1988)

Cook *et al.* (1988:8) depict the life cycle of a public issue with the emphasis on the number of people involved in a public issue. Few organisations recognise a major public issue until it is high on the life cycle curve. At that stage a large number of people in public forums are already alerted, and little opportunity remains for strategic management to manage such a public issue. The result is a state of chronic crises, with management responding to one demand after the other. Management should thus attempt to "get ahead of the curve". To do this management should identify public issues while they are in their infancy stage. At this point in time such public issues can still be managed. If they can not be managed the organisation could at least adapt to their influence more effectively.

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(d) Aspects introduced by Meng (1992)

Meng (1992:23) describes three steps to predict the probability that an issue may occur and develop, namely:

* Analysing the characteristics of an issue

There are four fundamental characteristics which apply to all public issues types. These types are similar to those described in the literature on strategic management. As public issues appear in the macro-environment, they may be viewed as either an opportunity or a threat. Within the micro-environment it can be regarded as either a strength or a weakness. The emphasis in this study is on public issues representing opportunities and/or

threats in the macro-environment of SAUs.

* Evaluating the attitude and actions of publics

The assessment of the attitude and actions of publics advancing public issues are critical components in accurately analysing the probable development of an issue.

* Assessing the base and means of influence of publics

The general base of influence of a public can develop through a dependency of the organisation on resources supplied by publics, for example, human or capital resources. Publics could also influence the organisation through legal enforcement of the issue. An evaluation of the influence of publics is therefore critical and can be done through the assessment of activities and the history of the public advancing the issue.

2.2.5 The nature of issues management

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Since the 1960s organisations have been searching for a way to deal more effectively with their turbulent macro-environment. It was in the mid 1970s that issues management first appeared as an identifiable corporate activity. General Electric's early response to the demand for women's rights in the workplace and S.C. Johnson's removal of chlorofluorcarbon propellants from its aerospray products are examples of pro-active management of potential conflict issues (Anon 1981a:28). W. Howard Chase (Chase 1984) introduced the term "issues management" when describing the intrusive demands of a diverse and dynamic macro-environment constituted by oil shortages, rising prices, consumer resentment and multiplying federal regulations.

Since then issues management has become a topic of increasing interest and debate with differences in opinion about theory and practice. One difference of a conceptual nature exists between those who stress the impact of public issues on the organisation

(Arrington & Sawaya 1984) and those who stress the effects of public issues on public policy formation (Chase 1984). Another difference is of a practical nature, that is, between those who view issues management as a subset of futures research (Coates *et al.* (1986), and those who argue that futures research has no defined boundaries [Arrington & Sawaya (1984) and Hainsworth & Meng (1988)]. One reason for the ambiguity on issues management may be as a result of academics not having embraced the concept, and therefore not having established a sound theory for it (Hainsworth & Meng 1988:18).

Although no single definition of issues management has gained widespread recognition, aspects included in the various definitions seem to be reasonably consistent, for instance:

* Ansoff & McDonnell (1990:xvi) define issues management as a strategic management response technique developed to cope with discontinuities in an unpredictable environment.

* Ashley & Morrison (1995:131) describe issues management as a process which allows the organisation to anticipate and manage issues that could drastically affect organisational performance.

* Bartol & Martin (1991:127) define issues management as the process of identifying emerging public issues of particular relevance to organisations, analysing their potential impact and preparing an effective response.

* Coates *et al.* (1986) in their preface define issues management as the organised activity of identifying emerging trends, concerns or issues likely to affect an organisation in the next few years, and developing a wider and more positive range of organisational responses toward that future.

* Ewing (1987:37) views issues management as public policy

research, foresight and planning which is influenced by decisions made by key players in the public sector. It is according to the same author (Ewing 1987:19), the power that controls the new bottom line of organisations, consisting of not only optimal profits, but also public acceptance.

* Theron (1994:24) defines issues management as a management process, determined to identify and analyze issues which can have a strategic impact on the future viability of an organisation, as well as managing a pro-active response to such issues. The definition of Theron (1994:24) allows issues management to be viewed as:

- A (management) process of planning, organising, leading, and control

- A means of identifying, classifying and prioritising the potential impact of issues affecting the survival and growth of organisations

- A programme to formulate, implement and manage effective responses to issues in a pro-active manner.

From the above it can be concluded that issues management is a support system, that systematically links emerging issues to internal decision making, and that the emphasis of issues management must be on the timeous anticipation of issues.

2.2.6 Issues management compared with other management disciplines

Issues management as a management technique can not be isolated from other management disciplines and techniques. Although different, it does in some ways parallel managerial disciplines such as foresight, forecasting, futures research, long-term planning, strategic planning, strategic management, and the

management of change. Comparisons between related management disciplines and issues management are briefly as follows:

* Foresight

  Foresight provides intelligence on STEEP trends affecting the current success and future viability of organisations, and is therefore closely linked to issues management. Foresight is, however, regarded as more of an art whereas issues management is regarded as a consciously systematic effort to identify, analyze and manage issues which impact on the future viability of the organisation. Foresight can at best be regarded as a subset of issues management.

* Forecasting

  Forecasting is a generic term for methods such as trend extrapolation and computer simulations, which are used in estimating future situations. A more recent method of forecasting is the building of scenarios. Forecasting is based on a systematic analysis of historical, current and future data. Forecasting methods can be used as techniques to assist issues management in identifying emerging issues. It was also identified as one of the dimensions of an effective issues management programme (see Section 2.2.11) and was tested in relation to SAUs in Section 5.6.2.1.

* Futures research

  Futures research is an older concept than issues management, and is also referred to as social forecasting. It is the process of tracking social and other trends in the business environment in an attempt to predict their impact on the organisation. Issues management, however, progresses further than social forecasting inasmuch as it relates future findings to action by involving management functions within the organisation with the public policy

process.

* Long-term planning

Long-term planning, also called long-range planning, is a systematic procedure for long-term goal setting, programming and budgeting based on extrapolative forecasts. Issues management is not based on extrapolative forecasts, but is a conscious effort to assist management in managing the organisation into the future.

* Management of change

A variety of major forces influence change and innovation in organisations. Some of these forces stem from external factors, while others arise from factors that are mainly internal to organisations. It can be argued that although management of change contains elements of issues management, the former tends to concentrate more on organisational development. Issues management on the other hand, concentrates on the management of issues that bring about change.

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* Strategic planning

Many corporate executives still confuse strategic planning with issues management. Ewing (1987:18) distinguishes the responsibilities of strategic planning and issues management by describing the first responsibility of strategic planning as the exploitation of corporate business opportunities. The first responsibility of issues management, on the other hand, is to make sure that the corporation is defended against the tactics of organised and/or unorganised public advocates in the public policy process. Strategic planning is, therefore, primarily concerned with producing a business plan for the organisation's economic future, whereas issues management,

as stated before, is concerned with managing issues in the socio-economic and politico-government environment, that will begin to develop, mature, and impact through the public policy process, on the viability of the organisation in the near future. Issues management and strategic planning are, however, related in that both reject the passive approach of predicting the future and merely adjusting the organisation to it.

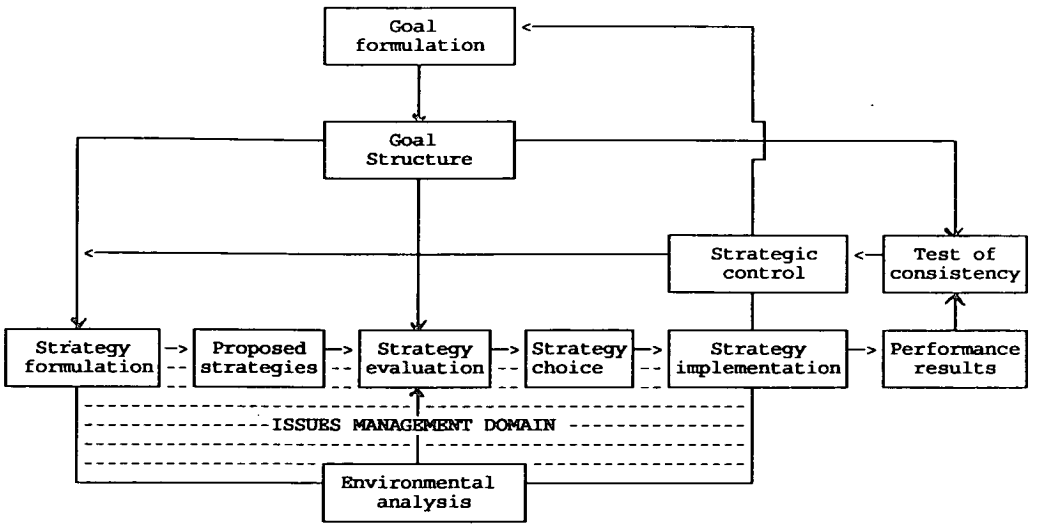
* Strategic management

Strategic management refers to the broad overall process that involves not only strategic planning but also the organising, directing and controlling of strategy-related decisions and actions of the organisation (Smit & Cronje 1992:107-108). It is economic policy foresight and a management process designed to achieve the objectives of the organisation through the implementation of strategies and the utilisation of all available resources. Issues management, on the other hand, is public policy foresight and a management process designed to efficiently use human problem-solving resources of the organisation to identify and formulate responses to public issues impacting on the organisation. According to Dutton *et al.* (1983:308), issues management affects both the process and content of subsequent phases of strategic decision making. In order to keep the organisation appropriately matched to the public issues in the public policy process the issues management process should, thus, be linked to the strategic management process.

2.2.7 The linkage between issues management and strategic management

Lozier, Dooris & Chittipeddi (1986:16) conceptualise the linkage between issues management and strategic management as illustrated in Fig 2-4.

FIGURE 2-4: THE LINKAGE BETWEEN ISSUES MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT



Source: Adapted from Lozier, Dooris & Chittipeddi 1986:16.

There are, according to Lozier, Dooris & Chittipeddi (1986:15), two aspects to the link between issues management and strategic management. In the first instance issues management supports strategic management with updated and organised information on relevant macro-environmental issues, and in the second instance issues management conveys to the members of the organisation a message of having to be attentive to macro-environmental issues. Issues management therefore provides a planning structure around which strategic thinking about issues can be encouraged, less constrained by organisational pre-conceptions.

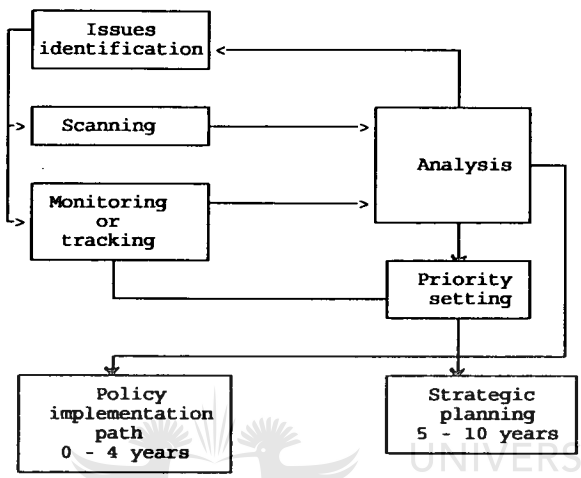
2.2.8 The issues management process

The issues management process is described by a number of authors. Ashley & Morrison (1995) Coates *et al.* (1986), Cook (1989), Ewing (1987), Lozier & Chittipeddi (1986), Starling (1996) and Wilson (1990) all define the issues management process as a set of organisational procedures, routines, and processes

devoted to perceive, analyze, and respond to strategic public issues.

Coates *et al.* (1986:29) propose a conceptual model of the issues management process. This process model is illustrated in Figure 2.5.

FIGURE 2-5: A CONCEPTUAL PROCESS MODEL OF ISSUES MANAGEMENT



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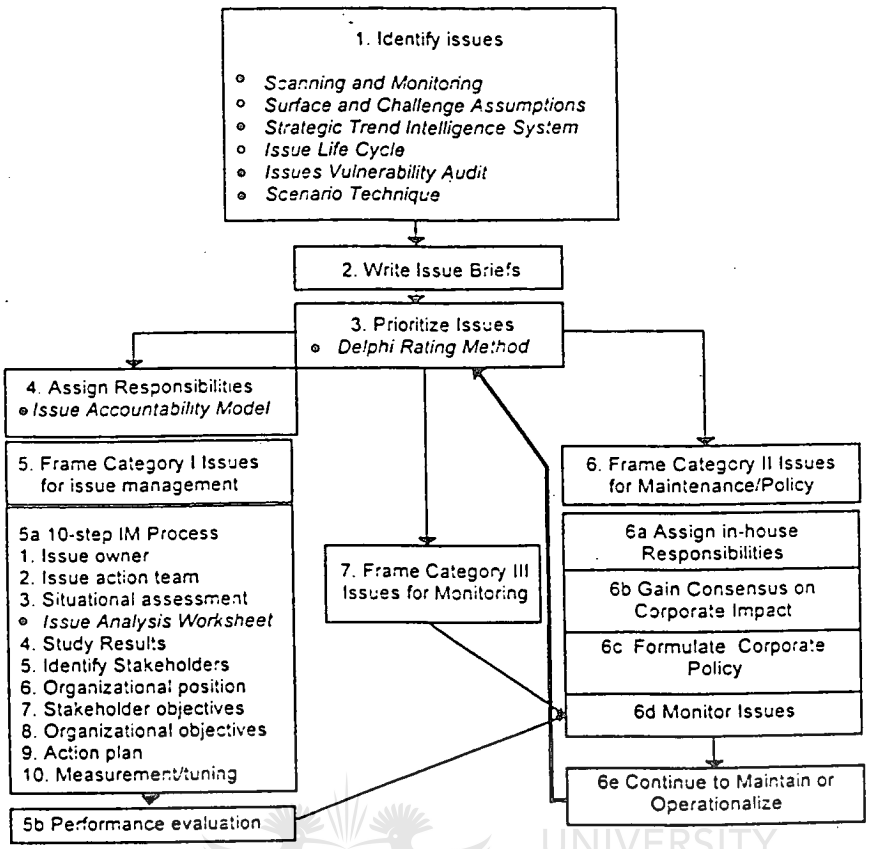
Source: Adapted from Coates *et al.* (1986:29)

Ashley & Morrison (1995:26) separate the identification/ monitoring aspect of issues management from the internal decision-making steps in the issues management process. The latter is presented as a ten step issues management process model which in turn forms part of a wider anticipatory management process. The anticipatory management process is illustrated in Figure 2.6.

Cook (1989:155) views the issues management process as a continuum consisting of issues identification, issues analysis, policy options, program design, and results. This continuum is illustrated in Figure 2.7.

FIGURE 2-6: THE ANTICIPATORY ISSUES MANAGEMENT PROCESS MODEL



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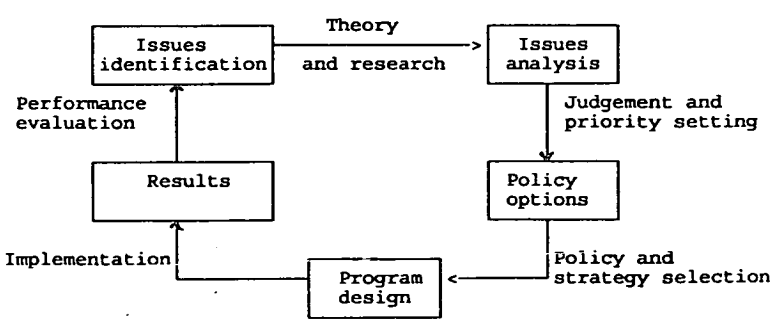
Source: Ashley & Morrison (1995:191)

FIGURE 2-7: THE ISSUES MANAGEMENT PROCESS CONTINUUM



Source: Adapted from Cook (1989:155)

Lozier & Chittipeddi (1986:3) describe issues management as an ongoing organisational process, concerned with the identification and the analysis of issues, as well as the development of appropriate organisational responses to such issues.

Chase (Chase 1984) proposes an issues management model, based on issues analysis, strategy formulation and policy setting, strategy implementation and control, and the evaluation of results.

Integrating the most relevant steps in the different, but related aforementioned models of Ashley & Morrison (1995:26), Chase (1984), Coates *et al.* (1986:29), Cook (1989:155) and Lozier & Chittipeddi (1986:3), it can be suggested that the issues management process model should consist of a number of steps. Eight steps are identified and discussed in the following eight sections. The experience of management in SAUs regarding the management of issues in relation to these eight steps will be analyzed in Section 5.5.

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2.2.8.1 Issues identification

The first step in the issues management process model is the identification of issues, relevant to the viability of organisations. Dealing with an issue early in its life cycle allows management to define the issue. Waiting until the issue is defined by stakeholders, for instance free tertiary education, complicates management responses, because the issue can be defined in such a way by stakeholders that it is invariably difficult, not to agree with it.

Issues identification concerns both the primary identification and the continuous monitoring of issues.

(a) Primary identification of issues

The first priority of issues management is to identify emerging

issues on an early and ongoing basis. This must be done early enough to allow the organisation to reveal significant positive or negative effects on the organisation and its activities, and to pro-actively respond to such issues.

The key to this early and ongoing identification of issues is the scanning of a range of potential areas from which issues may emerge (Ewing, 1987:30).

Coates *et al.* (1986:30) and Cook (1989:153) describe the scanning phase as a mode of information collection with the objective of 'looking over a full range of potential areas, quickly but thoroughly'. A national survey of a hundred active members of the Issues Management Association in the United States of America indicated that they were positively involved with environmental scanning for emerging issues (Ramsey 1993:261).

The scanning function involves some mechanism for broadly sweeping the organisational environment of potentially available information for developments, trends, issues, factors, and forces which could affect the organisation's operation (Coates *et al.* 1986:29).

A number of authors (Kroon 1990; Schoderbek *et al.* 1988; Meixell 1990; Morrison & Mecca 1987; Simpson *et al.* 1987), prefer the term 'environmental scanning' when referring to the systematic collection of information from the external political, social, and economic environment.

Environmental scanning, is according to Kroon (1990:93), a process by which management investigates the environment of the organisation in order to identify its chief characteristics and the most important opportunities and threats to the organisation.

Ewing (1987:76) suggests the term 'media scanning' when this technique is applied by reading current periodicals, trade and scientific journals as well as the broader mass media. The term

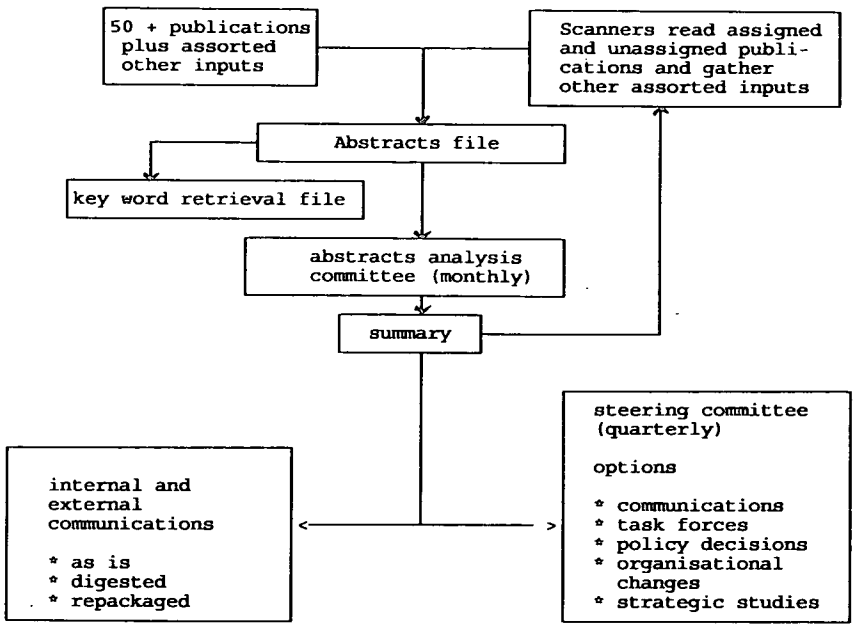
media could include daily newspapers and periodicals. It could also include specialised publications reflecting social, political and economic changes occurring in contemporary society, books, symposia reports and newsletters. The University of North Carolina, for example, publishes a five-times-a year news letter *On the Horizon*, which provides educational leaders with an interactive platform for discussing emerging trends and potential developments in the STEEP sectors. The attendance of both industry and other meetings and conferences, where new developments and trends are discussed by speakers and panellists, is also part of the scanning process.

Discussions with knowledgeable management and professional staff within the organisation, to collect issues which have already been identified, should also be part of the internal scanning process. In this regard Ewing (1987:76) suggests the analysis of the five year strategic plans of the business units of organisations. Although analysis of these plans may result in the collection of hundreds of issues, many duplicative, they could be categorised into 'issue clusters'. This enables issues management staff to see the overall environmental patterns forming about matters of concern to their organisation. Ansoff & McDonnell (1990:373) provides a starting point for issue identification, by listing thirty-seven possible issues, and suggesting a procedure of crossing out the issues which are not relevant to the specific organisation and to add others which are identified from scanning the environment.

The diagrammatic representation of the scanning process is illustrated in Figure 2.8.

Early identification of issues, as illustrated in Figure 2.8, gains time and flexibility for management options and actions such as opportunities to influence legislation.

FIGURE 2-8: THE SCANNING PROCESS



Source: Adapted from Ewing 1987:175.

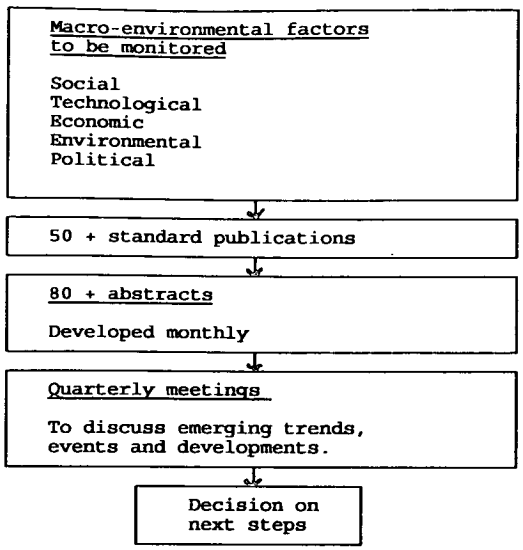
After issues with a potentially positive or negative effect on the organisation have been identified, it remains imperative that these issues should be monitored, and that the gathered information be incorporated in the strategic planning process of the organisation.

(b) Continuous monitoring of issues

Coates *et al.* (1986:31) describe monitoring as to watch, check, and keep up with developments, usually in a well-defined area of interest for a very specific purpose. Ewing (1987:77) defines monitoring as the process of tracking issues and trends identified through the scanning process. It is therefore a more refined process than the scanning process. It is a detailed information search of potentially important issues including current unfolding issues. It is less general and more specifically focused on periodic re-analyses and interpretation of trends and issues and their possible impact on the viability

of the organisation. The diagrammatic representation of the monitoring process is shown in Figure 2.9.

FIGURE 2-9: THE MONITORING PROCESS



Source: Adapted from Ewing 1987:175.

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In can be concluded that the monitoring function of issues management, is an extension and follow-up on the primary identification function of issues management, which often involves similar activities and techniques.

2.2.8.2 Designation of issue owners

Having identified an issue, somebody should take responsibility for determining the significance of the issue and evaluate responses available under different scenarios. Ideally such a person should be a senior manager most closely aligned with the issue. The responsibility for follow-up and facilitation should, however, remain according to Ashley & Morrison (1995:129), with the chairperson of the issue management committee. The ownership of an issue, can subsequently be taken up by an action team, which should consist of front-line managers and managers of

departments who have the biggest stake in the issue. Teams may, according to Ashley & Morrison (1995:132), vary from three people to as many as 30, depending on the importance of the issue. A non-committal approach to the taking of ownership of public issues may contribute to stakeholder perceptions that management are negative, or have something to hide.

2.2.8.3 Issues analysis

The third step in issues management is an analytical evaluation to estimate the impact of each issue, which makes it possible for management to assign priorities, and to reduce the issues management workload to a level compatible with other demands on time and resources.

Ansoff & McDonnell (1990:375) emphasise the importance of assessing the strategic impact of issues and trends on the performance of the organisation. Dutton & Ashford (1993:397-428) go a step further by proposing an issue selling framework for distinguishing between normal issues and strategic issues.

According to Ewing (1987:51) and Bhattacharya (1985:97), the preliminary stage of issue analysis seeks to determine answers to questions such as:

- Is it a false alarm to be dropped from further consideration?
- Is it a new emerging or a current unfolding issue?
- Is the issue primarily internal or external?
- Is it non-urgent, of moderate urgency or urgent?
- Is it a political, legislative, economic or social issue?
- What will or could be the nature of its impact on the organisation?

Non-urgent issues may not have a possible impact on the organisation in the near future. They, therefore, do not require immediate consideration and can consequently be relegated to

merely being monitored in the future. Issues of moderate urgency must be evaluated before the next planning cycle and issues of urgency need to be dealt with immediately. With regard to the nature of the impact of issues, it has to be established whether the organisation will be directly affected or whether the issue will affect the broad public domain, with an eventual, and possibly equal impact on the organisation, its competitors and the business community in general.

Ashley & Morrison (1995:26) summarise the listing of public issues by Ewing (1987:51) and Bhattacharya (1985:97) and propose the ranking of issues according to the following categories:

* Category I: Issues requiring the implementation of the issues management process.

* Category II: Issues that do not require immediate action

* Category III: Issues that require no action

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The aforementioned categorisation serves as a mechanism to "filter" issues in the following manner: Category III issues are unimportant with no future impact on the organisation; Category II status may be earned due to the maturity or the relative insignificance of the issue. The issues management process as proposed by Ashley & Morrison (1995:26) and illustrated in Figure 2.7 only comes into effect when an issue has earned priority status as a category I concern.

It must furthermore be established whether the organisation can influence the development and successful resolution of an issue. If not, the question must be posed whether organised industry can influence it. If neither, it could merely be regarded as an issue to be monitored without resources being assigned to it.

Bateman & Zeithaml (1990:257-259) suggest four elements of issues analysis. These four elements can be applied to assess the impact

of emerging and unfolding issues and are as follows:

- To evaluate the impact of issues on the organisation's entire industry.

- To evaluate the impact of issues on the competitive balance within the industry.

- To evaluate the impact of issues on the operations of the organisation.

- To evaluate the impact of issues on the goals and strategies of the organisation.

According to Wheelen & Hunger (1989:99), a report to senior management on high-priority issues should contain the following aspects:

- A statement of the issue.

- Background and detailed analysis based on research.

- Analysis of any current organisational policy relating to the issue.

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Apart from the scope of issues and the potential impact it will have on the organisation, as stated by the aforementioned authors, the intensity and speed at which an issue develops are also of cardinal importance. Management must weigh the chance of success against the potential damage or gain that a developing issue can create, and act according to the focus of their priorities and the availability of resources. A further matter to be considered is who the major influencers of the issue are. What positions they have already adopted, or what positions they are likely to adopt in the near future.

In summary, issues analysis is critical to management. It is a

mechanism to move forward to the formulation of strategies and policies whereby issues will be managed.

2.2.8.4 Identification of stakeholders

The survival and effectiveness of organisations depend upon successful exchanges with stakeholders who are according to (Dubrin & Ireland 1993:134) individuals or groups who influence the development and achievement of an organisation's mission, long term objectives and strategies.

Ashley and Morrison (1995:136) distinguish between primary and secondary stakeholders. Primary stakeholders are needed for the survival of the organisation, for instance customers, employees, suppliers and the government. It is important for an organisation to create and maintain value for these stakeholders. Secondary stakeholders are special interest groups, who are not directly involved with the organisation, such as the media or pressure groups, and who have the ability to mobilize public opinion on an issue.

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Stakeholders of SAUs are, among others, employees, students, the government and communities that they might serve. It is important for SAUs to identify and understand their stakeholders in order to manage issues well.

2.2.8.5 Development of objectives

It is important that organisations know what they are striving for and set clear, effective and attainable objectives. The basic or main objective of an organisation is its mission. The mission statements of SAUs will be scrutinised in Section 5.3.1 to determine the management mode in SAUs towards change.

Ashley and Morrison (1995:141) maintain that, in an issues management context, there are two sets of objectives, namely the objectives of stakeholders and the objectives of the

organisation.

A pro-active manner to deal with stakeholder objectives is to help them in developing a set of objectives that would support the position of the organisation. Legislators, bureaucrats and interest groups might, for instance, be assisted with timely, accurate, and balanced information (Ashley and Morrison 1995:141).

A pro-active way to deal with organisational issue objectives would be to test them against a clear set of criteria in terms of, not only what it could mean for the organisation, but what impact they could have on each stakeholder group. The development of objectives by management of SAUs will be explored in Section 5.5.2.5.

2.2.8.6 Strategy formulation and policy setting

The results of the issue analysis stage leads to the formulation of a strategy through strategy selection and the setting of policies and action programmes with regard to high-priority issues.

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Organisations can formulate different strategies in order to attain their goals. Literature on management, amongst others Smit & Cronje (1992:88), describe four different generic organisational strategies: market penetration, market development, product development and diversification strategies. Management then selects those strategies that capitalize on the distinctive competencies of the organisation. However, none of these strategies are directed at increasing the organisation's knowledge on public issues and public policy and creating an appropriate pro-active social response to important public issues. If issues management is to be an adopted strategy to deal specifically with important public issues, it needs to culminate in a process of policy setting and operational programmes to guide issues management activities.

Ewing (1987:62-64) suggests that policy setting and operational programmes for high-priority issues can be handled in one of the following two ways, depending on the size of the organisation:

- In smaller organisations, the issues management staff itself does additional research, and develops policies and operational programmes for each issue.

- In larger organisations with more sophisticated managerial and professional staff resources, an issues management steering committee sets up an issues task force to study, develop, and recommend policy and action programmes to deal with each issue.

After having formulated strategies for high priority issues, and after having set policies and operational programmes to deal with high-priority issues, the next step is action through strategy implementation and control.

2.2.8.7 Strategy implementation and control

When a decision is made to take action in respect of an issue, strategies for the action plan should be suggested by all stakeholders, especially those with the greatest expertise in the issue's area of concern or opportunity. There should also be a final measurable goal and each action strategy should incorporate a time-frame, staffing responsibilities, budget provisions and criteria for ongoing evaluation.

The implementation of a chosen strategy for high-priority issues involves the development of a framework for its execution. It also involves the necessary leadership to set the plan in motion and controls to determine whether the performance of activities is going according to plan (Cronje *et al.* 1995:94).

The next step is to communicate issues management policies and programmes for the implementation of strategies to appropriate

stakeholders through company publications, advocacy advertising, shareholder letters or reports, customer news letters and billing inserts.

Coates *et al.* (1986:2) list four conditions for the successful implementation of an issues management program, by stating that issues management must:

- Be tailored to the corporate culture and management dynamics of the organisation.

- Enjoy the full and active commitment of top executives.

- Be implemented gradually.

- Seek and achieve broad participation of functional managers at operating and staff levels.

To ensure the participation of all functional managers, there must be a supporting program and a feedback program to functional managers through a network of internal and external sources of information. Although radical changes in organisational structures have not yet been advocated to ensure such participation, some re-arrangement of managerial responsibilities may be necessary (Ewing 1987:114).

Control necessitates the use of processes whereby actual performance is measured against set standards and deviations are corrected (Van Niekerk 1988:6). Control measures such as preventative, simultaneous, and backward control techniques as well as strategic control points can be applied to control key activities (Van Niekerk 1988:227-231).

Instituting strategic control also include the design of information systems to provide feedback regarding how strategic plans are being implemented, as well as their apparent effects. Such strategic control systems allow managers to make adjustments

in the implementation of strategic plans (Bartol & Martin 1991:218).

In view of the above, it can be concluded that a well-designed program for the implementation and control of strategies to deal with issues is of vital importance to the long-term effectiveness of organisations. The last step in the issues management process is evaluation of results.

2.2.8.8 Evaluation of results

As the issues action plan is implemented, there must be consistent checking of progress and adjustment of the plan. Effective issues management requires responsiveness and the ability to adjust strategies. The inability of management to be flexible and to change as action plans progress seem to be one of the stumbling blocks to effective issues management.

The evaluation of results being the final step in the issues management process, involves the audit of the process of issues management, and a performance appraisal to assess the degree of success achieved, through applying the process of issues management.

(a) Auditing the issues management process

An audit of different functions in an organisation is conducted by assessing the important positive and negative attributes of each functional area (Bartol & Martin 1991:200). In the case of issues management, each step in the issues management process represents a function, which can be audited for effectiveness. The functioning of the issues management department and its co-ordination with other departments must also be assessed to identify internal organisational strengths and weaknesses.

(b) Performance appraisal

Performance appraisal with regard to high-priority issues can be used to evaluate the performance of the organisation over a certain time-period, in terms of pre-determined criteria for a particular issue.

Performance appraisals are done to assess the degree of success achieved through applying the process of issues management, and whether external issues of concern were sufficiently addressed by the issues management process. It is also done to determine whether adjustments in the goals, plans, standards, policies and programmes are required in dealing with specific high-priority issues. Such appraisals are inherently difficult, because of results that can rarely be quantified. Evaluation must therefore occur on a qualitative basis by executive management as well as issues management staff (Arrington & Sawaya 1984:19).

Evaluation of results is therefore a step of critiquing, which is performed to discuss, understand and, if necessary revise the process of issues management to make it as specific and as useful as possible. Evaluation is also done to assess the degree of success achieved through dealing with issues in a pro-active manner.

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2.2.9 Forecasting techniques in issues management

A forecast is a projection of conditions that are expected to prevail in the future by making use of both past and present information (Smit & Cronje 1992:100).

Coates *et al.* (1986:52-88) describe various methods which could be applied as forecasting techniques in issues management. The general feeling of issues managers is that the selection of techniques depends mostly, on the organisation's structure and management style. Coates *et al.* (1986:46) furthermore summarise the status of twenty-five process techniques in an evaluation

matrix, based on ten evaluation factors. With this matrix in mind and considering other research by Ewing (1987) and Theron (1994), only five of the most widely used process techniques applied in issues management will be discussed in the following two paragraphs. For clarity purposes a distinction will be drawn between fact finding and process techniques.

2.2.9.1 Fact finding techniques in issues management

Issues management starts with foreknowledge about issues that might impact on the organisation in the near future. Environmental scanning, issues monitoring and networking are three of the most widely used techniques to acquire foreknowledge and will be discussed in the following sections.

(a) Environmental scanning and issues monitoring

Scanning is a fact-finding technique used for the primary identification of, and information gathering on issues or trends, as early as possible.

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Smit & Cronje (1992:52) describe environmental scanning as a conscious effort to cope with change, whilst simultaneously determining any threats or opportunities in the macro-environment. Cook (1989:153) portrays scanning as an active, conscious search of a large body of information sources for particular information which is then subjected to special attention. Spies (1993:19) extends the purpose of scanning beyond that of merely information gathering for planning purposes. Spies (1993:19) regards environmental scanning as a systematic process of strategic learning aimed at obtaining insight and understanding with respect to the nature and reasons for change, the processes producing and supporting change, the interactions between processes, the main actors and their objectives and the consequences of change to the organisation. The identification of issues through scanning assists management in understanding the context the organisation has to operate in and helps

management in adapting to a rapidly changing environment.

Authors such as Simpson *et al.* (1987) dealing with the aspect of environmental scanning concentrate on the external environment. The scanning of the micro- or internal environment of the organisation is, apart from a monitoring perspective, of less importance to issues management as it invariably only confirms the existence of current issues and problems. The latter is not the focus of issues management but of "crisis management".
The lesser importance of the micro-environment should not, however, preclude internal staff from participation in the environmental scanning process. Involving internal staff in annual issues identification sessions on a voluntary basis have, for example, conditioned staff at Sinclair Community College, Ohio to become more future orientated. A further consequence of the annual issues identification sessions at Sinclair was a self-selected cross-functional scanning committee of 14 to 18 administrators, faculty and staff, that meet seven times a year and assist issues management staff in identifying future emerging issues (Cook 1995).

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Different scanning techniques have been developed by different researchers. The American Council of Life Insurance was the first to create a systemised media scanning process called TAP (Ewing 1987:77). Kefalas (1987:28) developed the ENSCAN computer package to deal with some of the problems of environmental scanning. Nanus (1982:39-45) proposed the QUEST technique which was designed to focus management's attention on critical issues for strategy formulation. Presently an institution such as Sinclair Community College (Cook 1989:155) has its own specialised scanning process and software program, called the Etnograph, to code and cluster issues.

Literature in educational planning has encouraged college and university administrators to use environmental scanning as part of their strategic planning model. Examples of tertiary educational institutions having their own scanning centres are

inter alia Grand Rapids Community College and Michigan State University (Champion 1994:12), the University of Minnesota (Hearn & Heydinger 1985) whilst others may purchase outside scanning services (Simpson *et al.* 1987:6).

Whereas environmental scanning is the process of identifying issues or trends, monitoring is the process of systematically tracking the development of trends and issues identified through scanning. The process of monitoring can also result in identifying new issues, or old issues transformed into other types of challenges or threats.

Coates *et al.* (1985:13) identify monitoring as one of the objectives of environmental scanning in that it alerts management and staff to trends which are converging, diverging, speeding up, slowing down or interacting with one another. Ewing (1987:62) contends that an organisation as a unit can focus on only four or five major multi-departmental issues in any one year. Remaining issues should, however, still be monitored by issues management staff to see if they grow in intensity or change into new issues.

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The techniques used for monitoring of issues can involve environmental scanning, opinion sampling or networking with other parties equally interested in the issue (Ewing 1987:77).

There is no fixed custom or even best practice for issues identification and monitoring. The manner in which issues are handled vary widely depending, among others, on the product or service, stability of the environment and the size of the organisation. Networking for issues identification will be described in the next section.

(b) Networking

Nasta (1993:57) argues that universities and colleges which have responded successfully to change are those that have absorbed the

networking principle into their management styles.

Networking is a formal and/or informal means of sharing issue information (Ewing 1987:78). In the United States of America it is done by issues managers and planners through their traditional professional associations *inter alia* the Issues Management Association, the American Bar Association and the Public Relations Society of America.

Networking can be done through computer technology such as Internet postings where past and potential STEEP articles are posted for focused discussions. Computer networks link individuals and organisations who share a commonality, and can be used as a form of professional support or for gaining access to, and pooling, specialised information, resources and ideas.

Networking is also done through regional issues networks, whose members include issues managers and/or strategic managers from different industries. A factor analysis of statistical results from an empirical survey revealed, for example, that owners/managers of community pharmacies in the Republic of South Africa (RSA) make use of inter alia networking through professional organisational bodies to analyze issues affecting their businesses and to manage responses to such issues (Theron 1994:136). There is strong consensus among successful issues managers that apart from external networking, internal networking among strategic and functional managers within an organisation, that is within the micro-environment, is crucial to the success of any issues management program (Coates *et al.* (1986:53).

2.2.9.2 Process techniques in issues management

Although an extended classification of the different process techniques is possible, only three of the more widely used techniques, namely the delphi technique, cross-impact analysis and scenarios will be discussed.

(a) The delphi technique

Delphi's first use in the early 1950's was in forecasting dates of scientific breakthroughs (Podlesnik 1977:18). The RAND Corporation under Dr Olaf Helmer continued to refine the delphi procedure and used it inter alia on group information utilisation. It was subsequently developed as a method for involving people in decision making who cannot physically meet and to avoid the dominance of forceful individuals over others. Delphi can similarly facilitate the utilisation of experts, such as management of SAUs, who are separated by distance or schedule difficulties.

The results of delphi research by the Rand Corporation, although used for very short periods of time, produced great accuracy and reliability (Anon 1981b:2). As a result of its suitability delphi methodology has been employed many times, in many different situations, to achieve a variety of goals (Kroon 1990:91). Helmer (1994:79-87) concurs that the delphi technique may be the most efficient means of determining the degree of consensus or descensus among decision makers in a democratic society. Ono & Wedemeyer (1994) recently tested the validity of the delphi technique and found it to be reliable in most types of circumstances.

O'Brien (1976) investigated the use of the delphi technique in educational futures research. Various other authors (Fulmer 1985; Fulmer 1988; Hammons 1990; Iverson 1993; Preble 1985) have applied the delphi technique in futures research relating to tertiary education.

However, the conventional delphi technique, incorporating consecutive mailings of questionnaires, exhibit certain limitations such as lack of subtlety in feedback, the inability to achieve exposition on critical points and the procrustean nature of questions (Coates *et al.* 1986:75). This led to the development of the "conversational" delphi technique. The

conversational delphi includes the use of delphi type questionnaires, albeit in a less formal manner and in the construct of a structured interview.

(b) Cross-impact analysis

Cross-impact analysis was developed as a technique to make an assessment of the interaction between trends and estimates of future events developed through the delphi technique by assuming that a trend will continue. With the use of a matrix, the analyst attempts to determine how the occurrence of an event would affect the timing of other events.

(c) Scenario building

A scenario is a written or an oral narration in which the possible future external environment of the organisation is described (Kroon 1990:88). It thus attempts to portray a particular set of future conditions with the emphasis on the macro-environment. A scenario is strictly speaking not a forecast but a possible future structure of the organisation's macro-environment. Schwarts (1991:170-198) as one of the most authoritative international supporters of future scenarios proposes three global scenarios for the world in 2005 and argues that the new driving force in the next decade will be the global teenager with the pressure of their numbers so immense that it will reshape the world (Schwarts (1991:127). By implication this could place new demands on universities worldwide, including SAUs.

Scenarios are needed because, in a profound sense, the future is unknowable. Yet, in a relative sense some aspects of the future are predictable. Managers can thus, to a certain degree "sense" the basic dynamics of the future and the alternative courses it might take. Building on this foundation, scenarios steer managers on a middle course between a misguided reliance on prediction, and a despairing belief that they can do nothing to envision the

future (Wilson 1995:1).

Different authors (Kroon 1990:90; Sunter 1990; Scwartz 1991:226-233; Spies 1993:30) propose frameworks or steps as part of the scenario process. Schoemaker (1995:28-30) proposes ten steps in the process, commencing with a definition of the scope of analysis in terms of key issues of concern and concluding with a decision scenario which addresses real issues and which highlights competing perspectives within and outside the organisation.

The emphasis on the building of scenarios is motivated by inputs from the macro-environment. However, scenario-building also influences the micro-environment in which management operates. According to Cook (1995) scenarios can sensitise management to possible future issues and thereby prepare corporate and functional managers, operating in the micro-environment, pro-actively in formulating possible responses to future issues in the public policy process. Spies (1993:28) refers to this as developing the correct "instinct" with respect to managing change. Sensitising through scenario building also means creating a shared language, as was done by Sunter (1990). Sunters's (1990) "high, middle and low road" scenarios gave polarised people in South Africa a common language for talking about their common future. In the same sense scenarios can also provide a shared and potentially powerful micro-environmental communication link between senior management and planners, by developing a "mind set" (Spies 1993:26), within which planning should be carried out.

(d) Selecting the most appropriate forecasting technique

The choice of techniques depends on considerations such as the nature of the forecast decision, the usefulness and accuracy of available information, the accuracy required, the time available, and the cost and importance of the forecast (Smit & Cronje 1992:119). Although more than 150 forecasting techniques have

been developed, only eight or ten are actually used by corporate issues management managers (Ewing 1987:78). Coates *et al.* (1986:95) contend that mathematical forecasting techniques such as correlation and regression, decision analysis and sensitivity analysis, although appropriate for strategic planning, may not be suitable for issues management. The value of cross-impact analysis relies on the maintenance of historical trends. Weeks (1990:ix) argues that the future can no longer be extrapolated in terms of historical trends or events, as the future rarely resembles the past.

Kroon (1990:91) cites different criteria for the choice of a suitable forecasting technique and concludes that the delphi technique produces good results for short-term as well as medium and long term forecasts. Delphi can also be used as both a fact-finding and a forecasting techniques.

The building of a comprehensive scenario based on an analysis of all environmental variables falls outside the ambit of this study. Instead, an environmental profile (as mentioned in Section 2.2.1.3), is provided. The emphasis in this environmental profile is on social and politico-governmental macro-variables relating to SAUs.

2.2.10 The organisational position of issues management

A number of authors (Bateman & Zeithaml 1990, Coates *et al.* 1986, Chase 1984, Ewing 1987, Cook *et al.* 1988, Ansoff and McDonnell 1990.) position the issues management function at a strategic management level. Coates *et al.* (1986:38-43) is of the opinion that the departments within organisations, where issues management tends to be positioned are either public relations, or strategic planning.

According to Cronje *et al.* (1993:292), the positioning of any management function, within an organisational structure creates a dual problem for management. The first decision concerns the

hierarchical level on which the management function must operate. The second decision concerns the allocation of authority to perform the management function. Considering both the organisational position and vested authority, the position of the issues management function in an organisation could be any one of the following:

* Issues management as a purely advisory role

In this position the issues management manager will have direct access to the chief executive officer, but will largely be separated from the activities of the organisation and will not be regarded as part of the management team and, therefore, ill-informed about activities in the organisation. The issues management manager will, furthermore not be at the same level as functional heads and with no formal authority.

* Issues management as a subdivision of another function

In this instance the issues management manager will also have only indirect access to the chief executive officer. The issues management will furthermore be on a lower organisational level than other functional heads, with limited responsibility, authority and status.

* Issues management as a subdivision of public relations

Bateman & Zeithaml (1990:256) position issues management as one of the functions of the public relations department. Coates *et al.* (1986:38-43), however, contend that, although the public affairs function is good at dealing with external parties, it generally falls short internally in dealing with operating divisions. Allstate's Issues Management Division was, for example, initially located in the public relations department but was later moved to a newly formed corporate planning department.

As in the case of the issues management function as a subdivision

of another function, issues management as a function of public relations could again render the issues management manager with limited access to the chief executive officer, limited responsibility, authority and status. The risk also exists that in a situation like this, public relations will concentrate on those aspects of importance to public relations, namely enhancing the public image, goodwill and support of the publics of the organisation.

* Issues management on par with other functions

In a situation where the issues management function is on par with other functions, the issues management manager enjoys the same status and privileges as other functional heads. In this position the issues management manager might be in a position to make a contribution towards the achievement of organisational goals. This position can, however, not be described as ideal because of certain organisational limitations.

Ewing (1987:71) quotes organisations like Dow Chemical, ARCO, and Shell who developed their own special issues management systems to suite their respective individual needs. A possible issues management system for SAUs will be suggested in Chapter 6 of this study.

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2.2.11 Dimensions for an effective issues management programme

Having defined issues management and having described the issues management process, the techniques involved and the organisational position of issues management, the real quarry commences: how to achieve greater effectiveness (and efficiency) with regard to the issues management process.

Most authors seem to agree that there is a difference between effectiveness and efficiency. Starling (1996:4), for instance, contends that efficiency is essentially an internal standard of

performance involving how one deploys a given set of resources within the organisation. Effectiveness, on the other hand, forms an external standard that involves more than just doing better than what the organisation already does. It involves producing, or the capability of producing results. The emphasis is on "acceptable outcomes and actions". For an organisation this means meeting the demands and expectations of other organisations, groups and individuals that are affected by organisational decisions, policies and operations (Starling (1996:4). In this study the concepts of effectiveness and efficiency will be applied in order to determine a competence profile of managers in SAUs as described in Section 4.3.3.1.

It can furthermore be argued that there are three dimensions closely related to effective issues management, namely forecasting, strategic management and stakeholder relations. This argument will be substantiated in the following paragraphs.

2.2.11.1 Forecasting

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The mention of more than 150 forecasting techniques by issues managers such as Ewing (1987:78 and Coates *et al.* (1986:95) seem to indicate *forecasting* as an important aspect of effective issues management.

A forecast is a projection of conditions that are expected to prevail in the future by making use of both past and present information (Smit & Cronje 1992:100). Two of the aids identified by Theron (1994) to forecast future issues which may impact on organisations are the *use of the media* and *networking*. Managerial skills and capabilities in terms of forecasting emerging issues impacting on SAUs will be analyzed by means of an empirical survey and discussed in Section 5.6.2.1.

2.2.11.2 Strategic management

Strategic management was also identified by Theron (1994) as an

important management aid in the management of issues. Strategic management refers to the broad overall process that involves not only planning but also the organizing, directing and controlling of strategy related decisions and actions (Smit & Cronje 1992:107). It therefore encompasses the formulation, implementation and evaluation of strategies through effective and efficient leadership and communication. The management aid of *communication* as identified by Theron (1994) and the concept of *leadership* will therefore, for the purposes of this study, be included in the dimension of *strategic management*. Management skills and capabilities pertaining to strategic management in SAUs will be investigated and discussed in Section 5.6.2.2.

2.2.11.3 Stakeholder relations

Stakeholders are not just the obvious members of groups such as employees, customers, competitors and suppliers, but anybody associated with a specific organisation and who may feel that they have a legitimate claim to influence the nature and direction of that organisation (Starling 1996:4). For SAUs it means being aware of who their stakeholders are, how they are interrelated, and how to deal with their needs.

Research done by Human & Horwitz (1992:91) suggests that both individual and collective (stakeholder) relations are necessary in coping well with change. The concept of stakeholdership is based on acknowledging the diversity of interests of, and optimizing common interests among stakeholders (Human & Horwitz 1992:122). Management therefore needs to identify and manage any issues which resemble legitimate claims pro-actively in order to prevent them from becoming crisis issues. The ability of management in SAUs to deal with the complexities of stakeholder relations will be empirically tested and discussed in Section 5.6.2.3.

2.3 ISSUES MANAGEMENT FROM AN OFFENSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

Meng (1992:24) contends that the term "issues management" is slightly misleading because an issue cannot be managed. According to the same author an issue in the public policy process can, at best, be influenced, before the issue influences the organisation. Ewing (1987:22) agrees and contends that issues management is neither the management or manipulation of the public policy process itself nor the influencing of public forums within the process. It is rather, the utilisation of organisational resources and the steering of management's efforts to deal with social and politico-governmental issues. The latter contention is a valid one. The former, that is, the non-steering of issues through government (the public policy process), may not be valid and will be further contemplated through a deliberation of the concepts of public relations, advocacy advertising, coalition building and lobbying in the following paragraphs.

2.3.1 The concept of public relations

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Public relations management is a management function supplementary to the marketing function and is a conscious, planned and continuous liaison between the organisation and its stakeholders with the aim of creating, maintaining and improving goodwill (Kroon 1990:5). Ewing (1987:34-36) contends that goodwill is manifested through stakeholders' satisfaction and that the viability and legitimacy of an organisation rest on public opinion and acceptance rather than law. Attempting to change public opinion through public relations professionals is the only example of social environmental management quoted by Bateman & Zeithaml (1990:231). Le Bart (1982:33) emphasises the importance of a public-issues orientation as the wave of the future for both internal and external public relations communications. Bateman & Zeithaml (1990:231) extend the responsibility of public relations managers to include strategic responsibilities such as corporate communications and government

relations.

From the aforementioned, it can be concluded that public relations is primarily a communication function to establish and maintain a mutual understanding between the organisation and its external environment, and to demonstrate organisational goodwill and concern for the needs of society. When used to change public opinion, it can become an offensive technique applicable to issues management.

Many public relations specialists view public affairs, public relations, and government relations as synonymous with issues management. The public relations/public affairs function, although sharing certain techniques of issues management is, however, not similar to issues management. Issues management is not focused on creating a mutual understanding between the organisation and outside publics, but on the understanding, planning and management of public issues in the public policy process. Issues management activities therefore extend beyond the traditional public affairs department operations, although the public relations department can, through its expertise, assist issues managers in environmental management.

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2.3.2 The concept of public advocacy

Apart from promoting the concept of issues management to key personnel, management must also advocate the organisation's position on public issues to outside publics. This is done through personal advocacy and advertising advocacy.

Personal advocacy is done through personal and direct contact and/or correspondence with public decision-makers, media interviews. It is also done through participating in appropriate public forums and belonging to organisations devoted to public policy issues.

Advocacy advertising, according to Ewing (1987:102), is necessary

as a result of journalists invariably seeking to report to the public, without fear or favour, what they think the public should know about any institution or organisation. This is more than often done in a sceptical, arms-length manner with the aim of being the champion of the underdog and the unfairly treated. In the face of this situation, advocacy (or "issue") advertising emerged in the 1970s to give business a voice in public policy debate. It is, therefore, more than institutional advertising for which the public relations department is primarily responsible. Instead it has become a new kind of corporate communication response to the critics of business activities. This stance is rationalised by Bateman (1975:3) stating that: "organisations should not be the silent children of society" and that "organisations should move from an information base to an advocacy position".

Ewing (1987:104) suggests certain advocacy guidelines and rules with regard to issues and media selection and emphasises the importance of advocacy campaigns having to persuade and not merely to inform.

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Finally, advocacy of the position of an organisation on public issues, whether through personal advocacy or advertising advocacy, must always include the aspect of feedback into the issues management process, for evaluation and control purposes (Arrington & Sawaya 1984:19).

2.3.3 The concept of coalition-building

Dealing with an issue is sometimes as simple as changing a policy in time and sometimes as complex as forming a coalition of like-thinking organisations.

Coalition-building is the process of bringing together a credible group of opinion leaders representing varying interests on an issue with the purpose to create focused dialogue, to find some common ground and to advance mutually beneficial agendas (Tucker

& McNerney 1992:28). Coalition-building is thus a relationship-building strategy requiring dialogue and harmony among those sharing a stake in the issues affecting the organisation.

Tucker & McNerney (1992:28-29) describes four types of coalitions. Three of these types are formed as a result of existing disparity and conflicts as well as current issues that already enjoy widespread acceptance. The fourth coalition forms pro-actively when multi-disciplined groups of opinion leaders and/or stakeholders organise because of their likely sensitivity or empathy to a point of view on an emerging issue. In an issues management context, coalition building should ideally constitute the latter, that is, as a support system to anticipate issues, to help management develop a position on the issue and to create a strategy to pursue its position on an issue. A major outcome of any coalition should thus be the creation of ownership among participants, in a common direction for managing an issue.

2.3.4 The concept of lobbying

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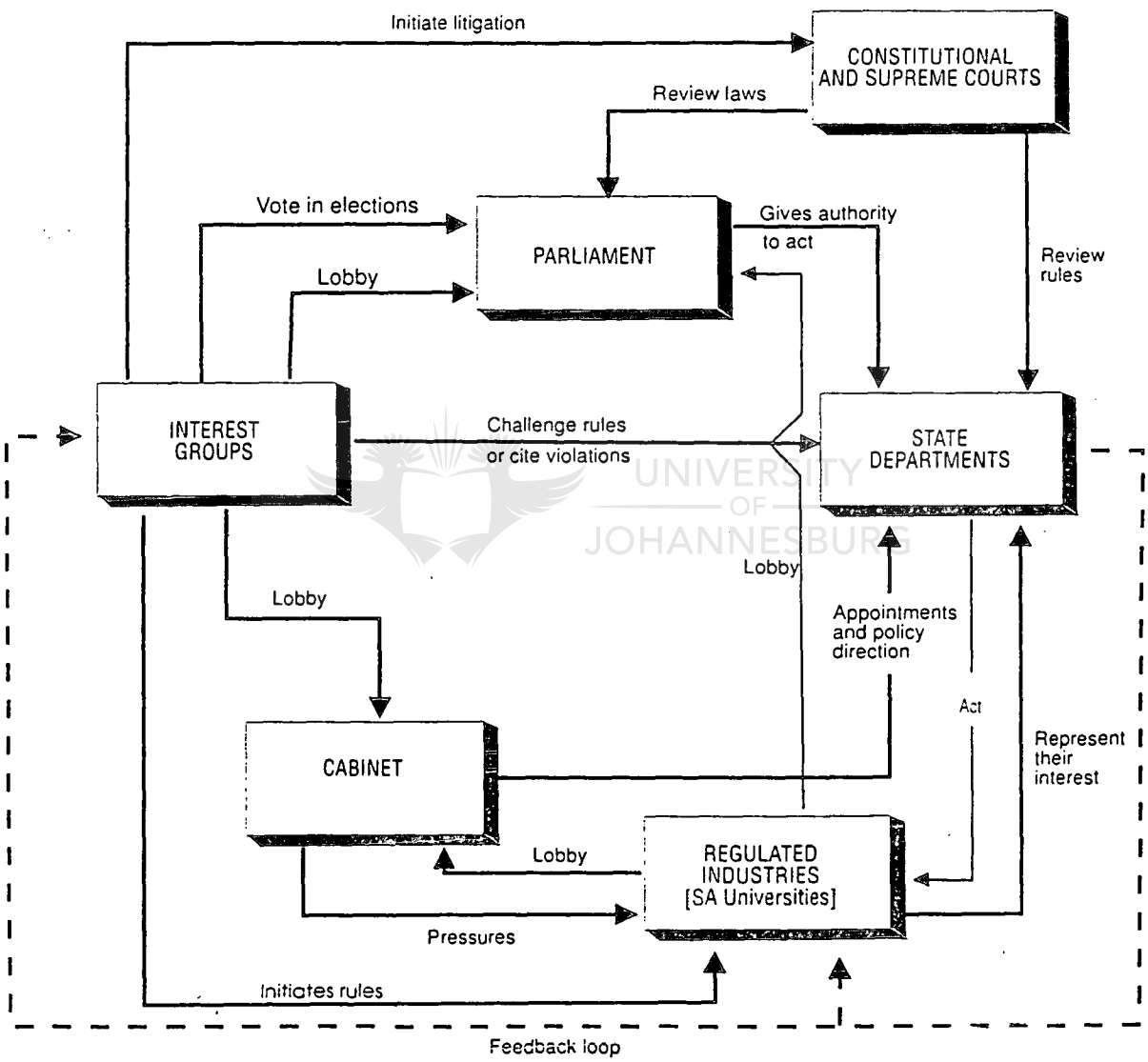
The Oxford English Dictionary (1989:1074) defines lobbying as soliciting the support of influential person(s). In an issues management context lobbying can be viewed as an organisation's attempt to intervene in the development of public issues in the public policy process, through the support of influential people.

The definition of issues management by Hainsworth & Meng (1988:28) emphasises the mobilising and co-ordinating of organisational resources to strategically influence or prevent the development of public issues into public law and regulation and thereby beyond the influence sphere of the organisation. It is thus imperative for issues managers to firstly acquaint themselves with the public policy process as described in Section 2.2.4.1, and secondly, to gain a conceptual view of how public policy is formulated through the structure of governmental decision making, and how it can be modified through lobbying.

Although an adequate description of the decision-making structure of the South African government, with its staggering range of public policies bureaucratic agencies and commissions, is not possible, there is much to be gained from a conceptual view of how public policy is formulated and influenced through lobbying. Such a conceptual view is presented in Figure 2.10.

FIGURE 2-10: THE STRUCTURE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT DECISION-MAKING PROCESS



Source: Adapted from Starling 1996:206

Figure 2.8 identifies six recurring participants in the

formulation of public policy and plots channels of influence among the participants in policy formulation and eventual legislation to regulate specific industries, including SAUs.

Hainsworth (1990:24a) argues that a strategic plan to influence public policies should be well focused and should avoid vague goals like trying to terminate the public issues through defeating or amending the legislation pertaining to the issue. The involvement of professional lobbyists or lobbying companies could be of assistance in this regard.

Berry (1992:220) argues that lobbying company services can be basically divided into two distinct, though related areas:

Firstly, all lobbyists offer a monitoring and information service, whether on the extent or effect of proposed legislation or on the legislators and civil servants themselves.

Secondly, and more important, lobbyists offer a range of opinion-forming services aimed at directly influencing public opinion and/or legislators and civil servants.

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Lobbying is thus a more offensive influencing process than public relations or advocacy advertising. Very few organisations, however, have sufficient resources to warrant the execution of a lobbying programme through their own public relations departments. Instead, larger public relations companies, in which lobbying programmes are often an integral part of a wider public relations strategy, are often employed.

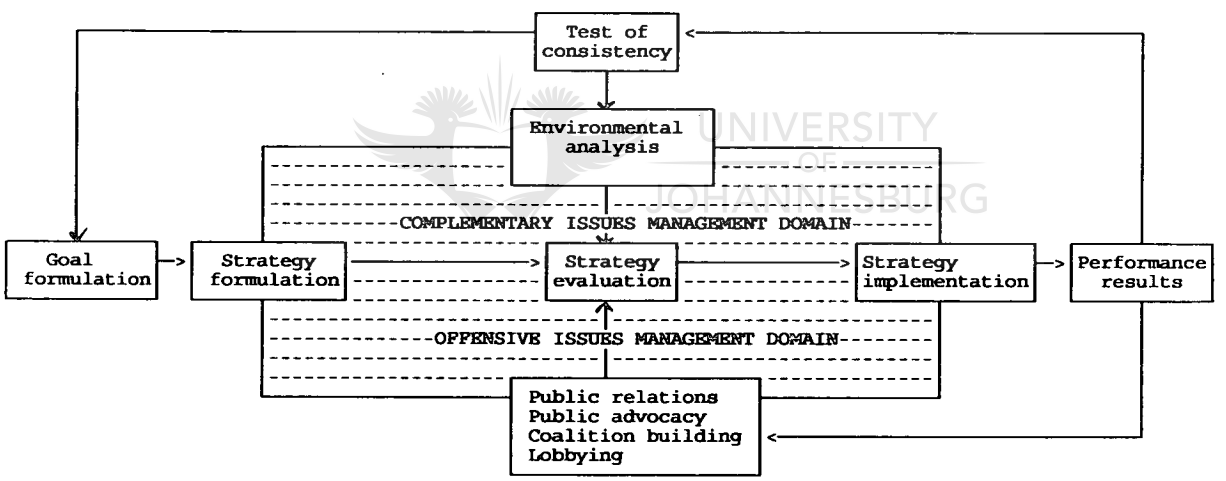
It can be concluded from the preceding cursory discussion that it is through its ability to, directly or indirectly, influence public issues through public relations, public advocacy, coalition building and lobbying that issues management could become an offensive pro-active strategy to change the environmental context in which organisations operate. The same jurisdiction, that is, the ability to influence the task

environment can, therefore, apply to macro-environmental management environment in which organisations operate.

2.3.5 Complementary issues management linked to offensive issues management

The traditional complementary linkage between issues management and strategic management as described in Section 2.2.7 and illustrated in Figure 2.4, may not be adequate to protect organisations against aggressive tactics of publics and public advocates in the public policy process. An offensive issues management strategy, linked to the traditional complementary issues management process, is therefore proposed. Schematically:

FIGURE 2-11: THE LINK BETWEEN COMPLEMENTARY AND OFFENSIVE ISSUES MANAGEMENT



Source: Own compilation

The complementary mode of issues management, as illustrated in Figure 2.11, allows for the outputs of issues management to feed into strategic management. This is done through integrating the issues management process with the strategic management process within the organisation.

The offensive mode of issues management, as illustrated in Figure 2.11, influence issues outside the organisation within the public policy process; that is, actively shaping and influencing the external environment through public relations, public advocacy, coalition building and lobbying.

2.4 STRATEGY FROM AN ISSUES MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

The third objective of this study (as mentioned in Section 1.4) is to explore the concept of strategy to achieve organisational goals and objectives. This will be done from an issues management perspective. In order to achieve this objective, the concept of strategy needs to be defined and an understanding of the different levels of strategy be obtained. A clear perception of the formulation and implementation of effective strategies is also important.

2.4.1 Defining the concept of strategy

A strategy is a pattern of actions and resource allocations designed to achieve the goals of the organisation (Bateman & Zeithaml 1990:179). Bracker (1980:220) contends that actions to achieve organisational objectives are in response to the opportunities and threats within a business environmental context. Ansoff (1980:132) has extended the strategy concept to include two "real time" systems, namely issues management and surprise management, both of which evolved in response to environmental uncertainty, complexity and discontinuity. The fundamental macro-environmental characteristic of a "real time" strategy is the need to respond to external issues pro-actively, by optimally positioning the organisation within a changing and turbulent environmental context.

Digman (1986:5) defines strategy as "the organisation's pre-selected means or approach to achieving its goals and objectives, while coping with current and future external conditions". This definition seems to confirm the congruency between a macro-

environmental approach to strategy as a means of managing issues impacting on organisations within the macro-environment.

2.4.2 Different levels of strategy

Smit & Cronje (1993:109-111) describes three different levels of strategy, namely corporate strategy, business strategy and functional strategy.

* Corporate strategy

  A corporate strategy includes the mission statement of the organisation, and encompasses the course chartered for the total organisation. From an issues management perspective the mission statement, to a certain degree, defines the issue arena by defining the environment and the stakeholders from whom issues may emerge.

* Business strategy

  A business strategy determines how best to compete in a particular industry. Business strategies have little relation to issues management except when an emerging issue creates certain economic opportunities.

* Functional strategy

  Functional strategies are developed for major functional areas in a particular organisation. From an issues management perspective functional strategies can assign responsibility for issues management to senior managers in functional departments.

Although the focus of issues management centres on assisting strategic managers in charting a course for the total organisation, that is, to develop a corporate strategy, it also encompasses specific functional strategies to put corporate

strategies "into action". Issues management can therefore be viewed in the context of both corporate and functional strategies.

2.4.3 The formulation and implementation of effective strategies

The strategies that organisations formulate and implement are attempts to match skills and resources to opportunities and threats in the business environment.

2.4.3.1 The formulation of an effective strategy

It is contended by Smit & Cronje (1993:107-123) that the formulation of an effective strategy is based on a clear definition of the mission of the organisation. Only then will management be in a position to choose a realistic strategy that can lead to the attainment of the mission and goals of the organisation.

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* Mission statements in general

The global view of management of what an organisation is trying to do and to become over the long term is referred to as the mission statement of the organisation (Smit & Cronje 1992:59). Other proponents support this view, and claim that organisations without a mission are doomed, as mission statements: proclaim organisational purpose, are vital statements of intent and give direction to the activities of organisations. Dissimilar views regard mission statements as, at best, fields of dreams (Stershic 1993:7); on average useless, if not harmful (Newman 1992:7); and at worst, reading like ex cathedra pronouncements from the Pope (Anon 1995:12).

Although the efficacy (not the necessity) of mission statements in business organisations remains unproven, they have become increasingly popular with universities in the RSA. This

popularity has stemmed mainly from a desire to avoid conflict, by establishing unity of purpose and culture.

* The scope of mission statements

The mission statement of an organisation typically expresses the reason for the existence of the organisation against the background of the philosophy and values which the organisation purports to follow (David 1989:90). It is furthermore widely accepted as the first step of the strategic planning process and a broad statement of organisational intent which requires a pro-active management style or mode.

Piercy & Morgan (1994:7), however, question management literature that assumes one type of mission statement only, and suggests that there are several prototypes of mission statements reflecting internal/external and broad/narrow dimensions. These different prototypes are illustrated in Figure 2.12.

FIGURE 2-12: PROTOTYPES OF MISSION STATEMENTS

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	ARE THE EXTERNAL DIMENSIONS COVERED? Yes	ARE THE EXTERNAL DIMENSIONS COVERED? No
ARE THE INTERNAL DIMENSIONS COVERED? Yes	GLOBAL MISSION What do we want to be?	ORGANISATIONAL MISSION Beliefs, philosophy and internal values
ARE THE INTERNAL DIMENSIONS COVERED? No	MARKET MISSION Critical success factors	NO MISSION No internal values or external domain

Source: Piercy & Morgan (1994:8)

Global missions as implicitly assumed by various management authors can, according to Piercy & Morgan (1994::8), only be achieved if all the dimensions outlined in Figure 2.12 are covered.

Another aspect that needs to be mentioned is that of mission goals. Although the mission statement clarifies what the organisation is all about, something more specific is required. These are mission goals, or longterm strategic goals, which obviously should not run counter to the mission statement. Mission goals should furthermore reflect consensus, reached by all stakeholders, about what the organisation should achieve in the near future. An examination of mission statements of SAUs indicates appropriate incorporation in, and/or links of mission goals with overall mission statements.

* Factors inhibiting the development of mission statements

Ireland & Hitt (1992:37) list, among others, the following factors inhibiting the development of mission statements:

- The number and diversity of organisational stakeholders.

This constraint applies to SAUs where the number and types of parties claiming a stake in university activities have increased and where different stakeholders strongly vocalize their stake in the future of SAUs. It is therefore vital to firstly, identify all interest groups and secondly, involve all legitimate stakeholders in the development of mission statements.

- The work required to develop an effective mission statement

Developing an effective mission statement requires diligence, tolerance of ambiguous conditions and inputs, as well as the devotion of considerable amounts of time. SAUs should therefore involve devoted, tolerant and diligent employees. Failing that, the developing of an effective mission statement can become a

daunting, if not futile challenge.

- Comfort with the status quo

There is a tendency, as is the case with some SAUs, to retain current conditions. In the face of strong evidence suggesting that fundamental and significant changes are needed, such universities run a risk of the evolvement of inertia over time and coming into conflict with external and internal stakeholders.

* General rules for writing mission statements

In writing a mission statement the following general rules should, as far as possible, be adhered to:

- Application of the KISS (Keep It Short and Simple) principle by refrainment from creating a lengthy document, and thereby keeping it as a simple expression of a clearly defined purpose, that is, devoid of hyperbole and superlatives. The new mission statement of the University of Cape Town sets an example in this regard by being concise and straightforward: "Our mission is to be an outstanding teaching and research university, educating for life and addressing the challenges facing our society."

- Concentration on a single theme (Kurtzman 1993:10) and reducing the mission analysis to four specific areas that represent the internal/external and the broad/ narrow dimensions that can be represented by a mission (as illustrated in Figure 2.12)

- Avoidance of grand announcements while nothing of substance changes at organisational-stakeholder interface. Three large surveys conducted in 1991 (Golzen & Garner 1992:213) have confirmed that most mission statements were distrusted by stakeholders. Darazdi (1993:24) attests to this by warning against flowery platitudes and insincere statements

of intent. Attention should therefore be given to closing the gap in stakeholder perceptions between mission rhetoric and organisational reality.

* Mission statements in South African universities

It could be argued that mission statements of a number of South African universities (SAUs) during the apartheid era were written in part to serve political ends. Missions were therefore formulated, not for the survival of particular universities, but for sustaining particular management regimes.

In moving away from the apartheid era and in formulating a new vision, the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE 1996) assumes an overarching mission for a transformed higher education system. However, the NCHE acknowledges the diversity of purpose and culture of individual universities are, and proposes the development of mission statements and three year plans by individual higher education institutions.

With regard to SAUs the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE), indeed, proposes a rolling three-year programme as key co-ordinating instrument in the higher education system. The planning process should, according to the NCHE include the development by institutions of individual mission statements (NCHE-DD 1996:140)

The analysis of mission statements of SAUs was done by means of an empirical study as described in Chapter 4.

* Articulation and implementation of mission statements

Although mission statements give vital direction, management should furthermore provide fundamental guidance to ensure that staff apply the same clearly defined concept in all decision-

making. Harvey & Lucia (1993:8) believe that the true worth of values as expressed in mission statements comes from the extent to which they are practised rather than professed. Vogl (1995:1) proclaims that the identity of an organisation develops from what

it in reality is, and not from what a company says it is and that it would be a mistake to think that a mission could be a substitute for identity bounded by action. Kurtzman (1993:10) goes as far as to assert that, for the established organi sation, action may have to come before words can help.

Having formulated their missions, the immediate remaining challenge for SAUs would hence be action; that is, the articulation of mission statements to stakeholders and staff and the implementation thereof on different operational levels. Stershic (1993:7) as well as Piercy & Morgan (1994:8) suggest that, in large organisations, each department or division may want to develop its own mission statement, based on or adapted from the overall global mission statement. This should be a matter for management choice and not a prescriptive generalisation. If implemented, the next step would be to translate the key elements of each departmental mission statement into meaningful and relevant performance objectives and to explain, repeat, and demonstrate the statement in communications to employees. In this regard Calfee (1993:56) suggests that every employee should know how his or her objectives are linked to the overall goals of the organisation, and that achievement of individual objectives will in some way be translated into specific measurable behaviour and reflected in appropriate performance awards.

Harvey & Lucia (1993:8) attests to the viewpoint of Calfee (1993:56) by recommending that management should "walk the talk" by setting an example, hire and promote others who are committed to global mission values; and reward people who meet expectations.

2.4.3.2 The effective implementation of strategies

Whereas strategy formulation and choice determines the strategy to be followed the implementation stage focuses on the means to achieve objectives by operationalising the chosen strategy. According to Smit & Cronje (1993:108 & 406) the means of operationalising strategies include policies, procedures, programmes and budgets. It also involves the institutionalisation, control and evaluation of implemented strategies.

If a strategy of issues management is to be effectively implemented in SAUs it needs to result in a serious effort to set corporate policies with regard to issues management, accompanied with functional issues management procedures and budgets. It will also need a programme to control and evaluate the extent to which issues management objectives are achieved. The final objective of this study is to propose a corporate and functional strategy for the implementation of an issues management programme in SAUs. This will form part of the recommendations in Chapter 6.

2.5 STRATEGIC CHANGE MANAGEMENT WITHIN AN ISSUES MANAGEMENT CONTEXT

It is often said that nothing is more certain than the fact that change will take place. However, an organisation that senses the need for change and then plans for that change will be more effective than the firm that waits to be forced to respond to extraneous changes.

The nature, process and the management of strategic change within an issues management context will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

2.5.1 The nature of change

Bartol & Martin (1991:226) refers to change as an alteration of

the *status quo*. Although change commonly occurs because of difficulties or pressures the most constructive change sometimes takes place not because of problems, but because of opportunities (Bateman & Zeithaml 1990:703)

A variety of major forces influence change and innovation in organisations. Van Fleet (1988:451) and Bateman & Zeithaml (1990:702) cite inter alia the following forces that influence change: obsolete technology, changing expectations of people, communication, competitive inroads, legal constraints and economic downturns. Callahan *et al*. (1986:404), argue that there are two types of forces, namely driving forces and restraining forces that pressure organisations. Driving forces are those that encourage change and development whereas restraining forces are those that resist change and encourage the status quo.

The macro-environment of organisations in the RSA is also subject to change. The RSA is in the process of the most comprehensive and profound political and economic change in its history. Events over the past few years have also, dramatically and irreversibly, changed the corporate structures in SAUs. Some of these changes were pre-planned and managed whilst others were made as a result of forces outside the control of policy makers and strategic management practitioners in SAUs.

An obvious but often overlooked question is whether management has a choice with regard to change or not, or whether the only choice management has is how to implement inevitable change. The latter reflects the traditional management view which tends to concentrate on organisational development aimed at solving problems which inhibit performance at all levels of the organisation as a result of change. It also leads to resistance to change which constrains the rate at which the organisation can adapt to change. Traditional change management therefore tends to frame a reactive response to change instead of developing a pro-active response towards the future.

2.5.3 Pro-active change versus reactive change

Inasmuch as organisational change is planned for, it reflects either a pro-active or reactive planning mode. Pro-active change is designed and implemented in anticipation of future events. By contrast, reactive change is a response to circumstances as they develop (Smit & Cronje 1992:238). There have been repeated exhortations for pro-active management of change, yet according to Andrews (1988:12) progress is slow and in general insignificant.

The key to pro-active change is that managers must be able to anticipate the type of change that will be necessary. With strategic changes, which tend to be extensive and lengthy, the pro-active approach requires managers to timeously and consciously identify, analyze, intervene and/or participate in emerging external issues that may force important strategic change onto the organisation. Such a chosen strategy enhances the effective management of change instead of waiting passively for change and eventually becoming a victim of change.

Issues management as an anticipatory strategy can identify issues early and reliably and thereby allowing more time for organisational responses whilst simultaneously widening the range of strategic choices available. Networking as an issues management technique furthermore facilitates the introduction and spread of creativity and innovation. Organisations adopting issues management therefore seek to pro-actively formulate creative alternatives to constraints and regulations, instead of falling victim to conflict, confrontation and change.

2.5.4 Strategic change management

One of the most complex challenges that confronts management in SAUs, is that of strategic change management.

Strategic change management is a deliberate, reasoned and planned

Strategic change management is a deliberate, reasoned and planned process enabling the organisation to adapt to a changing context on a pro-active basis, thereby ensuring the organisation's survival within a turbulent context (Weeks 1990:159).

Key considerations in managing strategic change is firstly the reframing of the organisation's micro-context and secondly the encouragement of pro-active managerial responses to a rapidly evolving macro-environment.

2.5.4.1 The micro-context of strategic change management

The micro-environment of an organisation is the internal environment of the enterprise in which management plans, organises, leads, controls and creates a particular culture of the enterprise (Smit & Cronje 1992:31).

Weeks (1990:172) is of the opinion that the traditional micro-environmental context of organisations is rooted in stability and persuasively argues for the creation of a micro-context which can support the strategic change management process. In this regard the human dimensions of inter alia organisational culture and politics, innovation and creativity, leadership, open communication, employee participation, consensus, empathy, trust and co-operation constitute an integral component of the micro-context.

Although indirectly important for the management of issues a further discussion of the aforementioned human dimensions within a micro-context will, in view of adequate emphasis in other management literature, be superfluous. The human dimension of resistance to change does, however, demand further discussion.

In dealing with resistance to strategic change, pro-active management should attempt to avoid resistance to change rather than overcome resistance caused by change. Ashley & Morrison (1995:27-28) suggest the following steps that issues management

- Supply managers with readable issue briefs to acquaint them with the nature of emerging macro-environmental changes

- Make managers attentive to issues that could affect their areas of responsibility

- Emphasise the importance of foreknowledge and the significance of pro-active preventative action in order to foster innovative and competitive thought rather than mere problem solving proceedings.

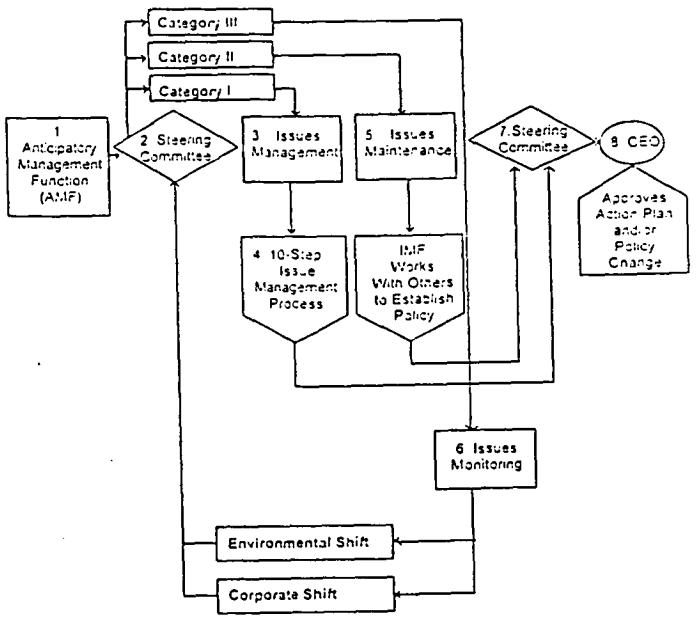
- Foster cross-departmental dialogue

A new and interesting concept to strategic change management is that of commitment. The success of strategic change in SA through the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), for instance, depend heavily on the level of commitment to the programme by leaders, key managers and society *per se*. Reese (1994:66) distinguishes three kinds of commitment and suggests a commitment chart (Reese 1994:67) to be used in order to obtain the minimum commitment of key managers to ensure the effective implementation of strategic change. Ashley & Morrison (1995:150) proposes an issues accountability model which depicts the key participants and their responsibilities in making issues management part of the organisational mind-set. This model is depicted in Figure 2.13.

2.5.4.2 The macro-context of strategic change management

The macro-environment of organisations contain the variables with a direct and indirect influence on the organisation. In the study of the macro-environment the emphasis is on the changes caused by the uncontrollable macro-variables and the implications for management (Smit & Cronje 1992:41).

FIGURE 2-13: THE ISSUES ACCOUNTABILITY MODEL



Source: Ashley & Morrison (1995:150).

Effective management of strategic change depends largely on the ability of management to predict and anticipate issues in the macro-environment that the organisation will face in the future and to prepare, in advance, for the changes that will emanate from such extraneous issues. Consequently, strategic managers need to develop management techniques to identify and analyze emerging external issues that compel change. They also need to frame a positive and pro-active response to manage such issues and trends.

Forces of change do not just happen, but originate in issues which move through life cycles of development. By managing such issues, organisations, including SAUs, could be in a better position to respond pro-actively to the challenges of change and not become victims of forces of change outside of their control.

A management technique which could be used to pro-actively manage

emerging issues and thereby enhance strategic change is the management process of issues management. Although traditional management of change contains elements of issues management, the former tends to concentrate more on organisational development. Issues management on the other hand, concentrates on the management of extraneous issues that bring about change.

2.6 TOWARDS A PUBLIC ISSUES MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

A strategic management structure clarifies the pattern of actions within an organisation in relation to strategy formulation and implementation. In a similar manner a public issues management structure can provide clarification on the flow of information and actions within and outside the organisation and how they combine in public issues management programme. The structure is illustrated in Figure 2.14.

Figure 2.14 , as a structure, presents the linkage in an issues management context between the corporate components of **environmental analysis, issues analysis** and **strategic management responses**.

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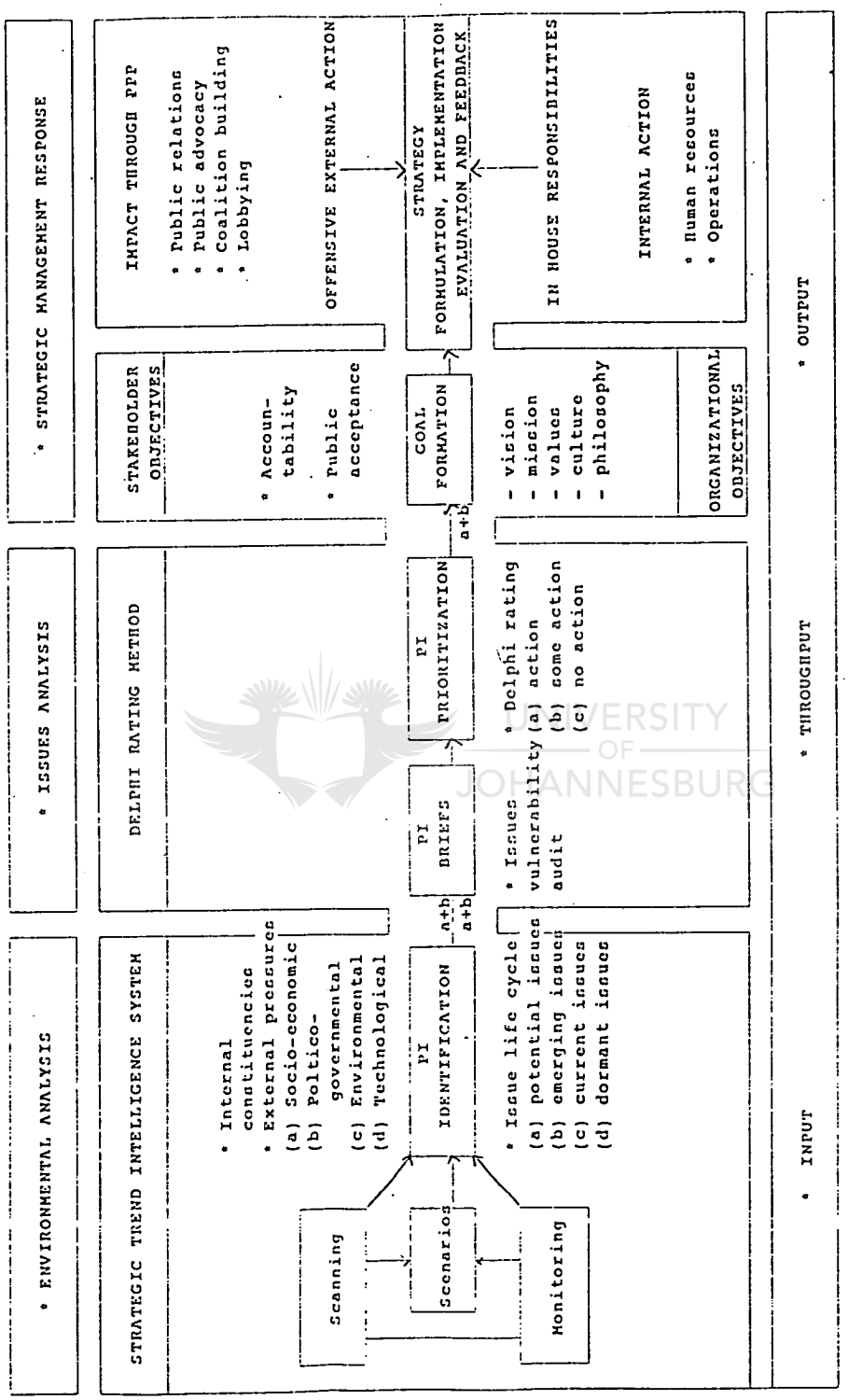
2.6.1 Environmental analysis

The first aspect of the proposed public issues management framework requires a means to provide the organisation with crucial information about public issues. Environmental analysis, being such a step, includes the primary identification and continuous monitoring of issues as discussed in Section 2.2.8.1.

Ashley & Morrison (1995:59) introduce another aspect to environmental analysis, namely scenario building and call it a *strategic trend intelligence system*. This system is presented in Figure 2.15.

The *strategic trend intelligence system* systematically scans and monitor trends and articulates such trends into scenarios. The

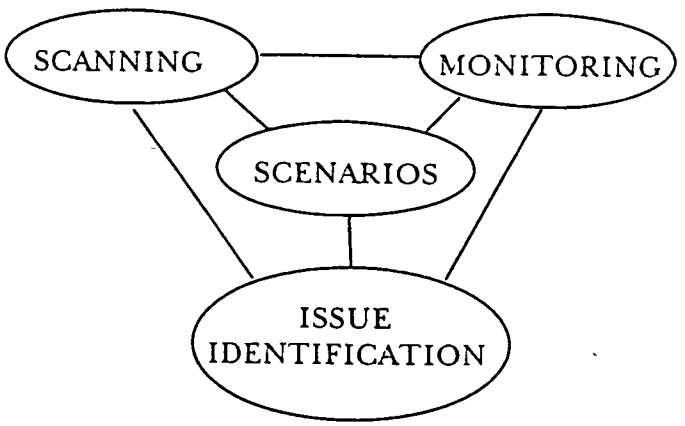
FIGURE 2-14: A PUBLIC ISSUES MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE FOR MANAGING MACRO-ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC ISSUES



Source: Own design

basic premise underlying the concept of a *strategic trend intelligence system*, is the primary focus on potential and

FIGURE 2-15: A STRATEGIC TREND INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM



Source: Ashley & Morrison 1995:60

emerging issues. Issues management should therefore not concentrate on current issues moving toward maturity and resolution, nor on crisis issues which are progressing beyond the control of the organisation.

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2.6.2 Issues analysis

The second aspect of the issues management framework is an analytical evaluation to estimate the impact of each public issue. Ansoff & McDonnell (1990:375) emphasise the importance of assessing the strategic impact of issues and trends on the performance of the organisation. Dutton & Ashford (1993:397-428) go one step further by proposing an issue selling framework for distinguishing between normal issues an strategic issues.

Whilst attempting to analyze an emerging issue a wide range of differing perspectives from different managers and key-persons may be forthcoming. But how can each perspective be independently evaluated and fairly represented? It is suggested that the use of the Delphi technique could assist in overcoming this issues

analyses constraint.

The Delphi technique commences with issue briefs which are distributed to Delphi members by an issues management steering committee. Issue briefs are clear, concise introductory statements of not more than two pages with the purpose of introducing members to an emerging issue. It provides only enough information for members to make an informed judgement on the issue's significance to the organisation (Ashley & Morrison, 1995:113). Members are also provided with issue rating forms in order to indicate their familiarity with the issue and to evaluate the issue according to its stage of development. Members must also comment on the vulnerability of the organisation to outside forces and the desirability for influencing the direction and nature of the issue.

With the issue rating forms at hand the steering committee analysis the issues and decides whether the organisation can and should influence an issue through action. It could also decide that the organisation should comply with the issue from within through some other action. It could also decide on no action, apart from just monitoring the development of the issue.

2.6.3 Strategic management response

As previously mentioned strategic management envelopes both the formulation (strategic planning) and the implementation of unique strategies. The outputs of environmental and issues analysis feed into strategic management responses. Strategic management of an issue can, as previously mentioned, be applied in a traditionally complementary , or in an offensive manner. Complementary strategic management responses commence with issue goal formation with due consideration of the values, culture, philosophy and mission of the organization. It should also encompass corporate communication in regard to stakeholder objectives, public accountability and public acceptance. Stakeholder objectives should therefore be integrated with organizational objectives in

order to assist in the decision-making with regard to planning and management.

The offensive mode of issues management is applied through the formulation and implementation of unique strategies actively attempting to shape and influence the external environment through public relations, public advocacy, coalition building and lobbying as described in Section 2.3.

In summary, complementary and offensive issues management, integrated with strategic management constitutes an important process aimed at keeping the organisation appropriately matched to its macro-environment. It also serves as a key for internal and external action on public issues and consequently assists in positioning the organization for change. The manner in which SAUs cope with change and how they manage public issues will be evaluated in Chapter 6.

2.7 SUMMARY

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This chapter reviewed the literature and identified theoretical management concepts underlying the study.

Firstly, a discussion on the business environment of organisations indicated that the social and politico-governmental macro-environments are the two main variables applicable to public issues impacting on SAUs.

Secondly, the nature, extent and categories of issues were investigated. Issues were defined as emerging, current or unfolding conditions of pressure in the business environment of organisations which impact on the future viability of organisations. It was furthermore established that issues can be viewed according to their stage of development, their social context and their strategic dimension. Publics were identified as dynamic groups of individuals that unite around public issues. It is through the perpetuating force of publics in the public

policy process that macro-environmental issues, if not resolved, influence the viability of organisations. The diminishing ability of organisations to influence issues as they develop in relation to time was described. In describing the stages in the life cycle of public issues it was emphasised that the awareness and emerging stages of issues were the most opportune stages for organisations to manage issues effectively. The issue cycle is furthermore an essential concept of issues management in that it identifies the parameters of the issues management process.

Thirdly, issues management was defined and compared with other management disciplines. The issues management process as well as fact finding and forecasting techniques of issues management were analyzed. It was concluded that issues management as a process can enable organisations to come to an early and constructive understanding of the issues confronting them in a changing business environment as well as managing an effective response to such issues. Issues management, although sharing certain techniques of other management disciplines is not similar to techniques such as foresight, forecasting, futures research, long term planning or the management of change. However, together with strategic planning and strategic management, issues management give senior management the ability to strategically manage an organisation with greater efficiency and effectiveness.

Viewing issues management from an environmental management perspective, it was contended that management can devise an offensive pro-active strategy to influence and change the environmental context in which the organisation operates through applying the techniques of public relations, public advocacy, coalition building and lobbying.

A discussion of strategies emphasised the importance of strategy formulation and effective strategy implementation. It can be concluded that issues management relates to the macro-context of strategic change management and that issues management can assist in effectively managing strategic changes by pro-actively

identifying and managing responses to issues that bring about change. Chapter two concluded with a proposed public issues management structure indicating the flow of information and actions within and outside the organisation and how they could combine in public issues management programme.

The following chapter deals with SAUs. The emphasis will be on relevant literature in order to conceptualise the macro-environment of SAUs and to describe the public issues, from an issues management perspective, which impacts on SAUs through the public policy process.

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ISSUES MANAGEMENT: A STRATEGY TO MANAGE PRO-ACTIVE CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

CHAPTER 3

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CHAPTER 3

SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES: A MACRO-ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

SYNOPSIS

The traditional purpose of higher education has become part of a wider context of political change and demands for equity, redress, reconstruction and accountability in the Republic of South Africa (RSA). South African universities (SAUs) have in the face of a new South African political dispensation also been subjected to major changes. Most of the changes in SAUs having been implemented by 1997, that is, at the end of research pertaining to this study, were done in reaction to pressures for transformation which originated as public issues within the macro-environmental context of SAUs.

The focus of this chapter is on gaining a perspective of universities in general and SAUs in particular. A key consideration is that universities worldwide, as well as in the RSA, exist in a socio-economic and politico-governmental context. In this context a number of forces, emanating as public issues in the public policy process, influence the future viability of universities in general and SAUs in particular.

Inherent in the management of issues is the need to take cognisance of the macro-environmental context and the public issues impacting from within the socio-economic and politico-governmental environment of SAUs. This was done against the backdrop of the first discussion document and final report of the NCHE in which the government's commitment to the realisation of equity, redress and reconstruction of South African society in general, and transformation in higher education in particular was addressed.

CHAPTER 3

SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES: A MACRO-ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

> Education reporting today is like snapping a photo of a moving object. By the time the shutter has clicked, the picture has changed.
>
> James Cass

As inferred in this introductory quotation change is an inherent tenet of education. It is also an inherent tenet of South African universities (SAUs).

Changes in (SAUs) are presently, as in the past, mainly taking place as a result of socio-economic and politico-governmental forces which impact on SAUs as public issues through the public policy process. There is furthermore nothing to suggest that the involvement of publics within the macro-environment of SAUs will abate in future. Public issues emanating from the macro-environment of SAUs will, therefore, continue to impact on SAUs through the public policy process.

At the onset, it must be stated that the intention of this chapter was not to propose ready-made answers to socio-economic and politico-governmental issues impacting on SAUs, but rather to review the broad socio-political background of SAUs in order to consider the process of issues management as it may possibly pertain to universities in South Africa.

It is also important to recognise the fact that universities in the RSA have unique characteristics and cultures and operate

within different social environments and communities with varying governance and management structures. This chapter, therefore, does not purport to be a comprehensive exposition or comparison of universities in SA. It rather attempts to view SAUs from a holistic and philosophical perspective in order to provide a background for considering the process of issues management as it may possibly pertain to SAUs. After all, Nelson (1990:26) describes issues managers as "those few philosophically utilitarian pluralists committed to the notion of pro-active involvement and futurist preparation".

It need also be pointed out that the socio-economic and politico-governmental panorama as well tertiary educational issues relating to it have, since the onset of this study, been changing and that they will still change in the near future. Against this backdrop, it is to be expected that many of the underlying issues, in spite of referring to them in the context of most recent documents such as the discussion document (NCHE-DD 1996) of the National Commission on Higher Education (NHCE), could appear somewhat dated. The basic context of this study, that is, the original research proposal and design, will however remain relevant, in spite of any dated issues.

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In order to achieve the fifth objective formulated in this study, that is, to provide a brief overview of the history, the macro-environment as well as the public issues impacting on SAUs, this chapter commences with a brief overview of the nature and function of universities in general. It continues with a historical overview of SAUs and the implications for SAUs under a new democratic dispensation. It furthermore reviews the governance and management of SAUs. This is followed by a perspective on change as well as a review of the mechanisms to manage change in SAUs. The macro-environment of SAUs and public issues impacting on SAUs are also presented. Lastly, consideration is given to the need and conditions for a strategy to manage public issues impacting on SAUs.

3.2 THE NATURE AND FUNCTION OF UNIVERSITIES

By classical definition, a university is "a body of teachers and scholars engaged in learning and the generation of knowledge". It should be autonomous in its teaching and research and inspired by the pursuit of excellence and social justice. Universities are moreover endowed with specific structures and power such as academic freedom and the right to confer degrees (Maree 1994:26).

Universities in the RSA are elements of a higher education subsystem (having as its main components 21 universities, 15 technikons and about 140 colleges) which forms part of a larger formal education system. The role filled by SAUs is generally accepted to be a valid and central one in society congruent with a particular relationship with government and a commitment to individual students and staff. The validity of universities, their relationships with government, as well as with students and staff, will therefore be briefly reviewed in the following sub-sections.

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3.2.1 Validity of universities

Two compelling perspectives are used to explain the validity of universities:

The **first perspective** is that universities exist for the pursuit of truth, knowledge and learning as an end in itself. The pursuit of truth through knowledge and learning is described in a report of the main committee of the Committee of University Principals (CUP) as being of intrinsic cultural value and "freeing the individual and society from prejudice, superstition and other intellectual constraints that inhibit the intellectual and spiritual development of man" (CUP 1987:3).

The **second perspective** views universities as a place where human skills, knowledge and attitudes are taught and developed for the use by society. The committee (CUP 1987:4) is indeed of the

opinion that it is "the utility of knowledge that forms the basis of the social relevance of university functions, and which has become increasingly important with the passage of time" .

According to Shabalala (1994:2-3) both the aforementioned perspectives are valid: the nature of a university being both instrumental and utilitarian, that is, to acquire and articulate truth, knowledge, skills and attitudinal predispositions, but to do this for the benefit of society.

3.2.2 Relationship with the government

The relation between the government system and the tertiary education system is one of reciprocal dependence, with the former normally the independent variable which shapes the latter.

The apartheid government's perspective on the tertiary education system was based on three models, namely social demand, socio-economic needs and economic growth (Dreijmanis 1988:2-3). These three paradigms are not mutually exclusive and rarely, if ever, occur in their pure forms.

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The **first paradigm** views tertiary education in purely individual terms based on social demand, that is, student numbers are forecast and government then tries to meet expected demand. This paradigm, although not practised in its pure form, receives the greatest support in first and second world countries.

The **second paradigm** views tertiary education in relation to the human resource and socio-economic needs of the country. What this paradigm calls for is overall educated manpower supply and demand forecasting as well as some attempt to ensure that supply and demand are in reasonable balance.

The **third paradigm** is the human capital paradigm with its rate-of-return analysis. This model accentuates education as a means of raising the educational level of the labour force in order to

facilitate faster economic growth.

There is no reason to believe that the post-apartheid government's perspective on the system of tertiary education, as expressed in the foregoing paradigms, has changed substantially from its predecessors. If anything, indications are that the emphasise will be increasingly placed on the first and second paradigms in order to increase and widen student participation (massification) in higher education and simultaneously supply in the broad socio-economic needs of the country.

Massification of SAUs will, according to the NCHE (National Commission on Higher Education) as discussed in its discussion document (NCHE-DD 1994:138), require negotiations between all stakeholders to determine agreed upon participation rates that will accommodate the tensions between social and economic demands and the capacity to maintain a quality system.

3.2.3 Relationship with students and university staff

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From the individual student's point of view, tertiary education is viewed as the mechanism for the acquisition of knowledge and the gaining of credentials in order to practice a certain professions and to strengthen career advancement. There are, however, many students who desire education for self-development or the advancement of knowledge regardless of the economic consequences (Dreijmanis 1988:92). The academic obligation of universities is towards both these categories of students. Apart from fulfilling its academic commitment towards all students, universities also have an obligation to provide a range of non-academic support services to students, especially in response to the academic and environmental concerns of needy and underdeveloped students. The NCHE (NCHE-DD 1994:142) proposes restricted funding (as part of the funding formula) for career, curriculum and personal counselling, guidance services and essential programmes of environmental support for students.

From a university staff perspective tertiary education institutions should offer equal opportunities to all employees to develop their abilities and to realize their career aspirations according to merit. This must be done by applying excellence as the primary criterion in the appointment and maintenance of staff without discriminating on grounds of race, sex or creed. Appointment and maintenance of staff demands better recruitment, selection, planning and development of people, flexibility in work practices and remuneration. It also requires a commitment of staff to organisational goals, sharing of information and improving the work environment. SAUs will therefore have to increasingly seek employee commitment through a number of human resource and quality initiatives including efficient employee communication and appropriate staff development. The NCHE (NCHE-DD 1994:142) recognises the importance of educational development for academic staff in order to enhance their skills in curriculum development, course design and teaching methodologies. In this regard it proposes a national agency/unit to develop and oversee a national policy framework for human resource development in SAUs.

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3.3 SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The historical development of post-secondary or tertiary education institutions in the RSA, except for the University of South Africa (UNISA), occured largely as a result of specific needs of particular communities and population groups. Consequently, the policy of apartheid dominated education policies and practices in the same way that it pervaded almost every sphere of South African life. Although this dispensation is in the process of transition, the legacy of apartheid still exists. The following synoptic overview of SAUs will hence be presented against the background of predominantly white and historically black universities.

3.3.1 Background to predominantly white South African Universities

White university education in South Africa dates back to 1829 with the establishment of the South African College in Cape Town. This institution concentrated on secondary school work and prepared students for matriculation and the higher examinations of the University of London. The South African College became the University of Cape Town in 1918. The first act relating to higher education institutions in the Union of South Africa was the South African College Act (Act 4 of 1911) which was a private law to amend the South African Colleges Act of the late Colony of Good Hope. The University of South Africa Act (Act 12 of 1916) provided for certain educational institutions to be incorporated in a federal university system and was subsequently amended in 1918, 1920, 1941, 1930 and 1934.

In 1873 the University of the Cape of Good Hope was established. It became the University of South Africa (UNISA) in 1918 and extended its education to correspondence courses. In 1951 UNISA became a fully-fledged correspondence university for all population groups. Virtually every predominantly white university and historically black university was at one time a constituent college of firstly, the University of the Cape of Good Hope and later UNISA. The only exceptions were the University of Port Elizabeth which was established in 1964 and the Rand Afrikaans University which was founded in 1966.

The Universities Act (Act 61 of 1955) provided in general terms for some of the internal governance structures of SAUs and enabled SAUs to have private acts and statutes (subordinate legislation dealing with detail). However, the Extension of the University Education Act (Act 45 of 1959) lead to the establishment of separate ethnic universities in order to give expression to the Verwoerdian concept of 'self determination within its own sphere' (Behr 1987:3). Act 45 of 1959 created state controlled universities depriving universities of their

sole right to accept or reject students for admission. It, for instance, prohibited whites from attending universities for non-whites, and de-barred blacks from registering with, or attending white universities, other than as UNISA students.

In October 1981, the De Lange report (De Lange 1981) on education in South Africa was published. The report argued for a single ministry of education and a single department. It recommended as much de-centralisation of authority as possible. As a result of the 1983 National Constitution according to which education, like everything else continued to be structured along rigid racial lines, these proposals were never accepted.

Responsibility for white education until 1986 was divided between central government and the provincial governments. Tertiary education came under the authority of the central government except for white colleges of education which resorted to provincial governments.

Clause 32 of The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1993 (Act 200 of 1993) ultimately allowed every person the right to basic education and equal access to educational institutions. The need to revise and redraft the Universities Act (Act 61 of 1955) has, subsequently, been recognised by the NCHE and stakeholders such as the CUP. In the light of proposal 12 of the NCHE (NCHE-DD 1996:112), a general Higher Education Act will be inclusive of all higher education institutions and will set out relationships at national level and institutional level.

Since the 1993 constitution, predominantly white universities have had to face serious challenges from within and without. They have had to critically examine their role in the complex society in which they are embedded, and at how they should respond to the pressures exerted on them. The Rand Afrikaans University has, for example, decided to extend its services with an accommodating policy towards students whose mother tongue is not Afrikaans, but to retain its basic Afrikaans and Christian character and without

a change of name. According to the rector these decisions are in line with the University's policy of non-exclusiveness and to enlarge the client bases of the University in an evolutionary way (RAU 1994:1).

3.3.2 Background to historically black South African Universities

Black universities started with the creation of the South African Native College in 1916. It was founded by missionaries as a largely private institution for blacks, and was renamed as the University College of Fort Hare in 1952.

The earliest universities, prior to the implementation of apartheid education practices, were theoretically open to all students. However, few black students, because of their subordinate social location, achieved secondary educational qualifications or could afford the costs (Pavlich & Orkin 1993:10).

Within the policy of separate development, the function of the historically black universities was essentially two-fold, namely to provide the personnel required for the homelands and ethic administrative structures; and to secure the necessary ideological support for the emerging black middle class for the project of apartheid.

Apartheid education practices were consequently enshrined in the Bantu Education Act (Act 47 of 1953). Act 47 of 1953 established segregated educational institutions and administrative bodies for each racial group. As a result of Act 47 of 1953, which divided all education in the RSA along racial/ethnic lines and which resulted in decades of apartheid schooling, a multifaceted legacy of credibility crisis, relevance and provision (Mcwabe 1990) was left with many blacks rejecting the education system.

The Extension of the University Education Act (Act 45 of 1959)

provided for the creation of universities for each of the black groups in South Africa. These universities had to be governed along the lines of race or ethnic groups. The same act (Act 45 of 1959) also prohibited blacks from attending white universities without the permission of the Department of Bantu Education. Act 45 of 1959 thus succeeded in establishing a situation where each institution served students from predominantly one racial group. The supposed purpose was furthermore that each segregated group was to develop its own educational and cultural environment, with the ultimate intended result of racial segregation being sustained in the broader society.

As a consequence, Act 45 of 1959 black universities, or 'bush universities' as they were dubbed, were established to cater for the needs of the underprivileged 'non-whites' with a strong third-world bias. The University Colleges of the North (Turfloop) and Zululand were founded in 1959 and became independent of UNISA in 1979. The former was for the Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho, Tsonga, Tswana, and Venda ethnic groups and the latter for Zulus and Swazis. The Medical University of South Africa (MEDUNSA) for black medical and veterinary studies was established in 1976. Fort Hare which became independent of UNISA in 1959, served the needs of the coloured and Indian populations until 1961.

Each of the 'independent' states had their own university. The University of Transkei was founded in 1976 as a branch of the University of Fort Hare and became independent of the latter in 1977. The University of Bophuthatswana was established in 1979 and the University of Venda in 1981.

In 1959 the University College of the Western Cape was established for the coloured population. It became an independent university of UNISA in 1979. The University College of Durban-Westville was formed in the same year to serve the Indian population. It became independent of UNISA in 1970. Vista University, a non-residential institution for urban Africans was established in 1981 at six different black residential areas. It

was the first institution for blacks in white-designated areas and contrary to the Verwoerdian ideal of creating black universities as far away as possible from the urban areas. According to Dreijmanis (1988:37) it was regarded as a major step in the recognition by the National Party Government of the permanence of blacks as urban residents.

Greater autonomy was granted to black universities in 1973 in terms of the Black Universities Amendment Act (Act 6 of 1973). According to this act provision was made for each university to establish branches at other places with the approval of the minister. Provisions relating to the council and senate of black universities were furthermore amended in terms of this act.

A follow-up of Act 6 of 1973, the Black Universities Amendment Act (Act 57 of 1977), brought about further changes to the acts of the various historically black universities. This act was an important step in moving away from the discriminatory practices against blacks by giving them representation on councils instead of merely advisory abilities. It also allowed these councils to appoint rectors with the concurrence of the minister. The process of change was taken a step further by the Universities for Blacks Amendment Act (Act 52 of 1979). The act repealed the restriction imposed on black universities to admit only persons of a specific black ethnic group and made provision for each university to admit every black person who qualified for admission.

The Universities Amendment Act (Act 83 of 1983), also known as the 'quota act', eventually made universities more open to other racial groups. Act 83 of 1983 gave universities under the control of the Minister of National Education (the so-called white universities and the universities for Asians and Coloureds) the right to enrol persons of other population groups but subject to a quota. This was done in order not to disturb the established pattern of the population structure of the relevant institutions. In the end the quota provision was never implemented, allowing universities the freedom of admission of students.

Further powers were subsequently granted to university councils in terms of the Tertiary Education Act (Act 92 of 1982), the Universities for Blacks, Technikons and Education and Training Amendment Act (Act 71 of 1985) and the Universities and Technikons for Blacks, Tertiary Education and Education and Training Amendment Act (Act 3 of 1986).

The struggle over secondary education in the black townships begun in Soweto in 1976 and later spread to tertiary education institutions. The new constitution of 1983, extending political rights to Asians and coloureds but not to blacks, engendered further active hostility on the part of black students. Subsequent changes were not sufficient and politics of protest again surfaced on some university campuses after the democratic election of 27 April 1994. Unrest was related to problems around admissions, academic fees, bursaries and loans, class and exam time-tables. These concerns, however, reflected on more fundamental underlying issues, which eventually culminated in demands for staeholder representation on university councils, and for immediate transformation of management structures.

The NCHE (NCHE-DD 1996) has subsequently provided a framework transforming the higher education system. The major challenge facing SAUs in determining their new role is to effect the internal transformation necessary in order to allow SAUs to leave behind its apartheid legacy in terms of programmes, teaching practice, curriculum, governance, and to fulfil a new mission in a new democratic dispensation.

3.3.3 South African universities: a new democratic dispensation

South Africa has undergone momentous political changes since the beginning of this decade. The demise of apartheid and the ushering in of a government of national unity, underpinned by non-racial and democratic principles, have captured the imagination of the world. These democratic developments

necessitated profound changes in all aspects of South African society including education. Although the democratic developments were not accompanied with a policy framework within which to intervene in educational change, a draft policy document (RSA 1994) provided the first steps of the long road of restructuring higher education in SA. Two other important events for higher education were the publication of the National Qualifications Framework Bill for comment in June 1995 and the New Labour Relations Act.

The policy proposals set out in the draft document (RSA 1994) were directed at initiating fundamental change in the character and content of the education and training system. The proposals were furthermore designed to ensure democratisation, a clear framework for redress, equity, and the transformation of educational bureaucracies. Subsequent to the forementioned draft policy document, the NCHE, as proposed by the Minister of Education, was approved by cabinet and established by presidential proclamation.

The terms of reference of the NCHE were published in the South African Government Gazette Number 5460 of February 1995. The NCHE had to investigate the entire higher education sector, its identity, goals, demography, problems, structure, funding, governance, management, planning, programmes, size, qualifications structure, articulation, intellectual and development role. It was furthermore charged with advising the Government of National Unity on issues concerning the restructuring of higher education, and to make specific proposals designed to ensure the development of a well planned, integrated, high quality system of higher education. A discussion document, was published on April 9, 1996 and the final report was expected in October of 1996.

The discussion document of the NCHE focused on the macro-issues

impacting on higher education. It provides an overview of the South African situation, discussing international trends in higher education, posing some principles and goals and proposing a new framework for the higher education system. The main policy proposals of the NCHE as embodied in the discussion document of the NCHE are clustered into three central components of higher education, namely the system, governance and funding. A number of other issues, such as library and information technology, academic salaries and language policy were to be included in the final report.

The discussion document of the NCHE, as commented on by various stakeholders, was regarded as a milestone in the restructuring of higher education in particular and the continuing process of reconstruction and development in the RSA, in general. The discussion document addressed important issues including collaboration between institutions of higher education, increased coordination and diversification of the education system, support of academic and managerial staff development, the creation of earmarked funding for specific uses, and the nurturing of research capacity at historically black South African universities (as mentioned in Section 3.3.2).

The opportunity of making submissions in response to the discussion document of the NCHE, in a spirit of transparency, was furthermore widely appreciated by individual universities. In general, responses corresponded to the proposals made under the headings: systems, governance and funding. A deliberation of the different submissions and concerns of stakeholders in response to the discussion document of the NCHE, however, falls outside the scope of this study.

Written submissions were followed up by two months of intensive consultation between stakeholders and the NCHE and served to focus and strengthen the final document.

3.4 GOVERNANCE OF SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

The type, or model of institutional governance prevalent in institutions such as SAUs, can either facilitate or obstruct change. A major study commissioned by the Canadian Association of University Teachers, as reported in Cloete & Nazeema (1995:8), concludes, for instance, that the triangle of senate, management and council can manage well during periods of 'tranquillity', but is very poor at responding to demands for rapid change.

This section will firstly review different models of institutional governance and secondly comment on new democratic governance structures suggested for SAUs.

3.4.1 Models of institutional governance

Clarke (1983 *in*: Cloete & Nazeema 1995:8) cites four main models of governance prevalent in university institutions, namely:

* **the collegial model** which emphasises non-hierarchial co-operative decision making, and a significant degree of self determination by academic staff,

* **the bureaucratic model** which accentuates legal-rational authority and formal hierarchies,

* **the professional model** which stresses the authority of experts and the importance of horizontally differentiated units linked in loose confederations, and

* **the political model** which conceptualises governance in terms of political conflict among interest groups or publics with competing views and values.

According to Webster (1991), as cited in Cloete & Nazeema (1995:8), the collegial and the bureaucratic models exist side by side in an uneasy tension in South Africa. However, neither

model has an understanding of change and neither offers a way of responding to change. Furthermore, both these models regard senior academics as the only legitimate policy makers and by implication do not see the legitimate need for different interest groups to negotiate change and to respond to change.

3.4.2 Governance structures for South African universities

The term "governance" refers to the procedures and ways of reaching and carrying out decisions on policy, management, and administration issues by all constituents and actors responsible for the regulation and control of public affairs (NCHE-DD 1996:158)

Universities in South Africa derive their respective governance structures from a general act dealing with university matters (The Universities Act, Act 61 of 1955) as well as private acts and statutes for individual universities.

Governance structures of SAUs under a pre-democracy dispensation were complex. Interaction between government and tertiary education institutions was governed by five ministries and furthermore complicated by a structure of different departments, statutory advisory boards, committees and councils. These divisions resulted in a gross fragmentation of the higher education system with consequent lack of co-ordination, common goals and systematic planning. The need for a commission on higher education was underscored by the necessity to transform this disparate and fragmented higher education system.

Governance of SAUs revolves around two separate, albeit related structures, namely co-operative governance structures and institutional governance structures. These two structures will be reviewed in the following two paragraphs.

3.4.2.1 Co-operative governance structures

Co-operative governance structures comprise of governmental structures of the state (central or provincial) and organs of civil society as external stakeholders of SAUs.

(a) **Government structures**

The present government structure provides for a Minister of Education and a Department of Education.

* **The Minister of Education**

The Minister of Education as part of government has ultimate decision-making authority in terms of departmental policy and governance arrangements involving stakeholders (NCHE-DD 1996:97). The Minister remains accountable to Parliament and is required to take a strong lead in setting the pace for policy implementation and stakeholder participation.

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* **The Department of Education**

The main purpose of the Department of Education is to develop a national policy framework for the promotion and development of education and training in SA. The department which is lead by a Director-General and consists of three branches: policy, support services and programmes, each lead by a Deputy Director-general. Each branch consists of two or more chief directorates lead by chief directors. Each chief directorate, in turn, is subdivided into two or more directorates, each with its contingent of directors, deputy directors, officers, secretarial and administrative staff.

The NCHE-DD (1996:97) is of the opinion that the present system will need a restructured Department of Education which will provide efficient and effective service to the higher education sector. As such, it requires a co-ordinated organisational

structure which can respond to the multiple aspects of a new single, integrated education system. In this respect the NCHE-DD proposes the establishment of a Branch of Higher Education within the Department of Education headed by a deputy director-general.

(b) **External stakeholders**

A relevant issue pertaining to the restructuring of the tertiary education system is, according to Moja *et al.* (1994:113), the respective roles of the state and organs of civil society (stakeholders of SAUs) in securing the coherence, effective coordination and functioning of the system as a whole, the different sectors which comprise it and the institutions within each sector.

A central feature of the broad framework of transformation as proposed by the NCHE in the NCHE-DD is a partnership between, and increased co-operation and participation of stakeholders in the process of firstly, establishing new governance structures and secondly, participating in the management of a transformed tertiary educational system. In this regard the NCHE (NCHE-DD 1996:100) proposes a Higher Education Forum as a new statutory body, which should be consulted by the Minister on policy issues which affect higher education stakeholders.

This new relation will impact on the societal level as all the significant civil society stakeholders acquire a greater interest in the management of SAUs. It will also lead to SAUs adapting to the array of demands for more recurrent, continuing and adult education, and for more flexible modes of delivery, for example contact as well as distance and open learning.

3.4.2.2 Institutional governance structures

Institutional governance structures within SAUs comprise of Senates, Councils, and Faculty Boards of individual universities.

Wolpe *et al.* (1994:121) suggest that new post-apartheid councils in SAUs should comprise of the Rector, the Vice-Rector/s, academic and finance Registrars and members drawn from the following categories: academic staff; administrative staff; service staff; student councils, alumni; local authorities; professional organisations; trade unions; employer organisations and civil society formations. Legislation should furthermore make provision for Councils to function openly and transparently.

The Senate should, according to Wolpe *et al.* (1994:122), be composed of the Rector; Vice-Rector/s and Registrars as well as members of the following categories: Deans of Faculties and Schools; Head of departments; Directors of Research Institutes, and representatives of Student Councils. To this can be added, the participation of the business sector. The tendency for Senates to simply act as a rubber stamp for decisions taken by committees of the Senate could thereby be avoided.

The NCHE (NCHE-DD 1996:106-108) proposes the transformation of institutional structures based on the principle of co-operative governance. It recommends that councils remain the highest decision-making bodies in higher education institutions but that, as a matter of urgency, councils should become more representative with at least sixty percent of their membership from outside the institution. It also proposes smaller and elected senates being concerned with the planning, content and provision of academic programmes with representation from faculty boards, students and executive management. In electing such members, a balance should be kept between representativeness and academic experience and leadership.

3.5 MANAGEMENT OF SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

The efficacy of management structures in SAUs is the function of how well such structures will help in managing pro-active change and thereby minimise unfavourable effects from future societal and political discontinuities.

This section will firstly review different models of institutional management and secondly comment on new democratic management structures suggested for SAUs.

3.5.1 Models of institutional management

Mintzberg (1979) contends that universities exhibit both professional and machine bureaucratic management structures.

Professional bureaucracies being effective in complex and stable environments but ill-suited for complex and dynamic environments. Academic and research departments normally behave analogous to professional bureaucracies.

Machine bureaucracies being effective under simple and stable environments with strategy making essentially top-down with the emphasis on action planning. Under a complex and dynamic environment, however, machine bureaucracies are unable to cope with environmental discontinuities. Machine bureaucracies are found in central administrative management and support systems.

In general, support services, such as public relations, fall under the control of central management. They are usually organised according to what Mintzberg (1979:364) calls " a conventional top-down machine bureaucracy". Issues management has in the past been closely associated with public relations although it is not analogous to public relations management. Should an issues management division be incorporated in a "machine bureaucracy" such as public relations, it could under a complex and dynamic environment be unable to cope with environmental discontinuities and ultimately fail to manage public issues impacting on SAUs effectively.

3.5.2 Management structures for South African universities

Management is a process aimed at the realisation of objectives through the utilisation of the efforts of people (Van Niekerk

1988:3). Management processes and management structures as integral elements of the problem-solving process within SAUs is often referred to in collective terms, as governance and governance structures. Being the case, co-operative and institutional governance principles should be generally applicable to the continuous management cycle of planning, organising, directing, co-ordinating and controlling of human effort within SAUs in order to achieve specific institutional goals.

With regard to governance principles, the NHCE proposes a co-operative governance model in an attempt to democratise governing structures in SAUs. By applying the principles as suggested by the NHCE (DD-NHCE 1996:106), that is:

* acknowledging the existence of competing and complementary interests, interdependence and common goals,

* allocating a variety of roles, powers and functions to participating stakeholders,

* balancing participation with effectiveness, and

* sharing powers, responsibilities and accountability amongst stakeholders,

a new governance model can contribute to the consolidation of professional and machine bureaucracies (as mentioned in the previous paragraph) in order to render more responsive and pro-active management structures in general. The dynamics of individual higher education institutions, however, preclude the NHCE of being prescriptive of institutional governance and management structures at micro-levels.

3.6 UNIVERSITIES: A PERSPECTIVE ON CHANGE

Universities throughout the world have seen social movements,

governments and cabinet ministers of education come and go, with little or no change to tertiary education systems and institutions. A positive aspect of this 'conservatism' is that it provides an important stabilising effect on society. A negative consequence is that virtually all change is resisted (Cloete & Nazeema 1995:2). Nevertheless, in spite of being conservative, institutional changes have occurred, and are still occurring in foreign universities as well as in SAUs. Some of the changes which occurred in foreign universities and in SAUs are as follows.

3.6.1 Changes in foreign universities

Changes which have transpired in a number of foreign university institutions are described in the literature. Some of these changes will be dealt with in the following paragraphs:

* **The United States of America**

Major impetuses for reform in the United States of America since World War II were the resistance to the Vietnam war and the dramatic increase in student numbers. This resulted in demands for new university structures, greater inter-disciplinarity, more accountability and efficiency, improved democratisation and participation as well as an increased responsiveness to society. Since the seventies the emphasis has been on professional issues and the management of decreasing resources. Change became driven by management with strategic planning becoming the favoured management tool (Cloete & Nazeema 1995:4).

During the past decade western universities have increasingly come under attack of small but vocal groups of self-appointed guardians of truth, tradition, purity, and virtue demanding changes for often self-centred reasons. As a result a number of universities are presently at the centre of a series of cultural wars that threaten to undermine and cripple traditional academic

values of creation, discovery, and dissemination of knowledge (Mohl 1993:15).

* **Europe**

In Europe, universities experienced similar demands for transformation as universities in the United States of America with student protests and demonstrations sweeping over universities in France, West Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands and Italy. Dhlamini (1995:43-44) lists a variety of reasons which gave rise to student movements in Europe, among others, that universities were seen as undemocratic, sluggish in times of rapid change and unresponsive to individual students' as well as societal needs.

In response to the pressure for change in Europe, universities started with changes in the 1960's with a planning approach driven by the state bureaucracy. This was followed by stakeholder participation within established policy frameworks. In the 1980's, however, power shifted significantly away from students and junior faculties towards senior staff and a more professional management. This was accompanied with decentralisation and re-professionalisation (Ruin 1991 and Teichler 1994 *in*: Cloete & Nazeema 1995:4).

* **Latin America**

Several factors have promoted and curbed change in Latin American countries. One stereotype of change in Latin American higher education is that it is excessive in its presentation. Another stereotype is that it only serves the elite and that little change has taken place. The reality, according to Levy (1995) is that much transformation has taken place and that currently, the challenge for change emanates from the broad transformation of the political economy and the international movement towards an agenda for higher education.

* **Australia**

Australia has in the last six years successfully managed a transition which saw "Colleges of Advanced Education" (similar to technikons in SA) transformed into universities. The upgrading was initiated by the government in order to increase access with the result that the number of universities increased from nineteen in 1989 to the current forty. The transition posed considerable challenges in terms of transfer of qualifications and setting of standards, but has succeeded in making higher education more professional and more accessible (Udusa 1995:7).

* **Africa**

The single biggest influence in university reform in Africa has been the interventionist role of post-independence governments. The dilemma involved two opposing positions, namely government control and autonomy. Mandami (1993:4) describes these opposing positions as destructive conflict between post independence 'expatriates' calling for autonomy and freedom, and 'locals' demanding justice for the historically disadvantaged. The latter eventually conquered with the state having had to give universities a national character, ensuring Africanisation and the training of human resources for development.

Indicators, according to Owino *et al.* (1995;2-5), seem to suggest that African universities are facing the following major problems as a result of the aforementioned 'reforms': Falling standards, tension because of political appointments, increases in student enrolments for political expediency, impeded academic freedom, curriculum control by the state, strikes, a general brain drain of teachers, paucity of funds and a lack of a planning culture.

The entire climate in universities in Africa does not seem to be conducive to quality education. Politics has devastated the scholarly and professional fabric of universities. Immediate changes are inescapable if these tertiary education institutions

are to assume their role as agents of social, technological, economic, environmental and political development (Owino *et al.* 1995:6-7).

3.6.2 Changes in South African universities

Changes in SAUs, especially black universities, are not new. Historically black universities have, for instance, undergone a complete metamorphosis from the "tribal colleges" that they were when they were established. Predominantly white universities have also changed, albeit slow and incremental.

When black universities were established they were established without support from the communities they were supposed to serve. Black students having had to go to these universities against their will created a legitimacy crisis for these universities. Most students were not proud to be there, and when they left refused to be associated with these universities. Historically black universities lacked autonomy and academic freedom and had dual structures of governance with white councils and black advisory bodies who did not do any advising at all (Dhlamini 1995:41). The situation, however, did not remain static. Evolutionary changes came through various acts of parliament as mentioned in Section 3.3.2 and gave black universities increasingly greater autonomy and self governance structures. The current calls for transformation of universities therefore do not mean that there has been no change whatever. However, with revolutionary changes now at hand historically black universities are decisively breaking from the past in an uncompromising way.

Predominantly white universities, especially white 'liberal' universities, have also been changing with pressure from students for participation in the structures of governance; with expectations for universities to play a more meaningful role in society; and with objections by students who perceive universities as being completely unresponsive to their individual needs. Changes at predominantly Afrikaans-speaking universities

are, however, perceived by black student organisations, such as The South African Student's Congress (SASCO), to be sluggish and of an evolutionary manner in the current climate of momentous change.

The downside of evolutionary change, as perceived by SASCO, is that of a reactive mindset of management rather than a pro-active one. Reactive and evolutionary change is regarded by Dhlamini (1995:39) as incremental and compromising and congruent with human nature's tendency to avoid drastic change.

Evolutionary and revolutionary changes in SAUs have mainly occurred through a range of governmental interventions and responses to student demands respectively. Further changes and revolutionary steps, such as expansion of higher education into a massified system, have been suggested by the NCHE (NCHE-DD 1996). The implementation phase of such changes is, however, bound to produce tensions with regard to time frames and priorities. SASCO indeed declared 1996 as the year of "Operation Access" (Pretorius 1996:2), and threatened liberal white universities to lower their access requirements and pressurised Afrikaans universities to abandon their predominantly Afrikaans medium of teaching.

There is, therefore, evidence to suggest that demands for accelerated revolutionary changes in SAUs in general, and predominantly white universities and Afrikaans universities in particular, will increase in the near future. Changes will probably continue to occur through responses to student demands, government intervention as well as the needs of society. In the light of similar threats in the near future, it is important for SAUs to adopt a pro-active manner to the way they manage changing societal needs and educational demands, instead of having to manage such issues as crisis issues at a later stage.

3.6.3 Mechanisms to manage change in South African universities

The phrase "to manage change" in the title to this study implies that some mechanism seem to advance the change process in SAUs. One mechanism is construed to be the National Department of Education, and various transformation forums as transitional bodies. Another possible mechanism is the process of strategic management linked to issues management as mentioned in Section 2.2.7.

* **The Department of Education**

Moja (1995:6) contends that the present central dynamic in the contestation around change in SAUs is the role of the new ministry and the National Department of Education. As a result of the absence of a policy framework, within which to intervene, the Minister has prioritised the establishment of the NHCE to provide a framework for strategy selection and policy setting.

With regard to the Department of Education the NCHE (NCHE-DD 1996:98) proposes the establishment of a Branch of Higher Education within the Department of Education headed by a deputy director-general. This may according to the NCHE provide a co-ordinated organisational structure which can respond to the multiple aspects of a new single integrated higher education system. The next step towards restructuring should according to the NCHE (NHCE-DD 1996:98) be the establishment of an interim structure, which would serve as a consultative forum for the proposals of the NHCE .

The NCHE (NHCE-DD 1996:100) furthermore proposes the establishment of a Higher Education Forum as a new statutory body, and which should be consulted by the Minister on policy issues. Another salient proposal by the NHCE is the establishment of a new national structure, the Higher Education Council, as a statutory body with an advisory role on policy-making functions.

The Higher Education Council should be represented on structures from other departments within the ministry dealing with higher education issues. The Higher Education Council should furthermore establish regional advisory structures to advise it on mergers, rationalisation and the development of higher education institutions in the regions, as part of regional co-operation (NCHE-DD 1996:107).

* **Transformation forums**

Transformation forums were essentially regarded as pressure groups against apartheid in the past. Later they tended to become *quasi* revolutionary councils guided by political agendas. Leaders of these forums mobilised politicised university stakeholders into placing them (the leaders of transformation forums) into positions of power and control within the university governance and administrative structures. These activists presented themselves as champions for democratisation and saw themselves as having a mandate to also transform curricula, operational processes and employment policies of universities, in what Shabalala (1994:12) calls a "political conspirational" manner.

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The political manner of transformation, also called the "revolutionary transformation model" in which transformation forums became "revolutionary councils", has not been very successful (Soweto Campus Mirror (1995:15). It has de-motivated academics as well as other staff and gave transformation forums a bad name. The "midwife to democracy model" had its most pronounced success in democratising governance structures and the appointment of institutional leadership. Yet, the latter model could not deal with serious problems in university governance, and had no legitimate process of involving all stakeholders in mediation (Soweto Campus Mirror (1995:15).

The most significant achievement of transformation forums was, according to Moja (1995:7), their ability to establish a culture of negotiation. The current emphasise of transformation forums

are to rectify inequities of the past; that is, to frame a reactive response to change instead of developing a pro-active response towards the future. However, changes in the political arena, the adoption of the interim constitution, and the establishment of the National Commission on Higher Education, are reasons why transformation forums *per se* need to redefine their respective roles and change from a reactive to a pro-active mode. A possible future of transformation forums is that they could become advisory councils for restructuring and innovation. They could then identify and agree on problem areas to be addressed, develop policy proposals, provide forums for mediating interests and monitor change. If this should happen transformation forums could influence change, not in a reactive manner, but as pro-active agents of change.

* **Strategic management linked to issues management**

The process of strategic planning is an accepted management tool in most South African Universities. The practice of the extended concept of strategic planning, namely strategic management, although well recognised in many organisations including a number of South African universities is, however, not prevalent. An additional quandary of traditional strategic management is that it does not seem to have been the panacea for the misfortunes and uncertainties that confronted SAUs during previous decades of discontinuous change. The following three possible reasons for this predicament needs to be considered:

Firstly, that managers strived for the achievement of the institutional missions without considering the purpose of the institutions. In an underdeveloped society as in SA, a university must justify the reason for its continuance, that is, the purpose and inspirational reason for its existence. The 'purpose' of a university is what people associate with the university and what they want it to contribute to the external environment. This purpose should thus be clearly defined or otherwise incorporated in the mission statement of universities and be applied as a

philosophy throughout the institution.

Secondly, that strategic change was managed without taking outside publics into account. Shabalala (1994:15) contemplates a possible weakness of strategic planning as focusing on *a priori* articulation of intentions instead of trying to align universities to their evolving internal and external environments.

Thirdly, that the traditional strategic management paradigm might not be valid under conditions of rapid and discontinuous change as mentioned in Chapter 1. It might also be inadequate in assisting management to participate in the management of issues in the public policy process.

Having considered the aforementioned constraints, a new initiative could be to link the concept of strategic management to the process of issues management as described in Section 2.2.7. An issues management programme could then assist in identifying and managing public issues including the public issues of 'purpose' of universities. It can furthermore provide a planning structure around which strategic thinking about public issues can be encouraged without being constrained by organisational pre-conceptions. It can furthermore enhance the pro-active identification and management of public issues as antecedents of change.

3.7 THE MACRO-ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT OF SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

The macro-environment of SAUs comprise of social, technological, economic, environmental(natural) and politico-governmental (STEEP) sectors. As discussed in Section 2.2.1 the combination of social and economic changes as well the alliance of political and governmental forces currently re-shaping South African society will have the greatest impact, through the public policy process, on the identity and nature of SAUs.

This section, therefore, concerns itself with providing an overview of the setting applicable to the socio-economic and politico-governmental issues that influence SAUs through the public policy process.

3.7.1 The socio-economic environmental context

Throughout the world universities are regarded as prominent social entities and often considered as prominent key institutions.

As social entities universities are part of a larger socio-economic system wherein they occupy a unique position, character and function. As a result of this position universities are expected to be development-oriented, that is, to produce students for the important tasks in the advancement of developed societies and to play an important role in the restructuring and growth of underdeveloped and underprivileged societies (Totemeyer 1987:53-55).

Universities can, however, not execute this socio-economic mission if they are not deeply rooted in society and if they do not relate to the situational context of communities. The orientation of universities must therefore be in agreement with the environment in which it operates. It is powerless when it contradicts the same (Hanf & Mitler, 1979:14; *in* Totemeyer 1987:55).

Mazrui (1978:229), however, cautions about universities becoming the sole instrument for social and material satisfaction in underdeveloped societies. Universities cannot guarantee economic prosperity, power, prestige and status. What it must guarantee is an understanding of professional socialisation and social responsibility without deserting its responsibility to solidarise with the underprivileged and underdeveloped.

In broad terms the obligation of a university within its socio-

economic environment is therefore:

* a responsibility in broad terms towards society
* a responsibility towards its more immediate communities

For universities in the RSA to respond appropriately, effectively and pro-actively to their socio-economic environment, there need to be an inter-active process between SAUs and society. In doing so SAUs must firstly develop a clear image of their place and role as a societal institution, and secondly, not ignore the complexities, constraints and demands on policy formulation in a changing, but underdeveloped society like that of present-day South Africa.

The inter-active process between SAUs and society therefore leads to certain demands and expectations which require attention and appropriate responses in the planning, management and control of university activities. The ultimate legitimacy and efficiency of SAUs is therefore the function of how well SAUs position and manage themselves within a socio-economic environmental context and thereby minimising possible adverse effects from future societal discontinuities.

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3.7.2 The politico-governmental context

The politico-governmental sub-environment is a segment of the global macro-environment of SAUs. As a component of the politico-governmental sub-environment, the state should ideally influence SAUs primarily as a guiding and at most a regulating force. The state has, however, in the past, and will inevitably again in the future, transgress these guiding and regulating responsibilities and influence SAUs through political pressures exerted by ruling politicians and government institutions.

Although there is currently a commitment of the state to decrease its influence on the business sector, as well as a pledge to curtail growth in the public sector, SAUs will still be

influenced by the thrust and specifics of different public policies. These policies, in turn, will reflect societal expectations and political pressures and will impact on SAUs as public issues through the public policy process.

It will therefore be advisable for SAUs to approach its politico-governmental sub-environment with the same degree of commitment and expertise as is routinely devoted to other aspects of functional management. It should furthermore seek to formulate creative alternatives to bureaucratic constraints by framing a pro-active response to possible governmental demands, interventions, regulations and stipulations.

3.7.3 Competing perspectives within the macro-environment of South African universities

The RSA is perceived to have inherited a "colonial" perspective of education. This results in basically a First World versus a Third World scenario, which is characterised by certain problematic tensions (Moulder 1991:1).

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Considering some of the basic tensions as described by Moulder (1991:1) and other opposing factors as depicted by the CUP (CUP 1987:3-14), an outline of competing perspectives within the macro-environment of SAUs, as portrayed in Figure 3.1., is proposed.

Davey (1991:25) refers to the tensions mentioned by Moulder (1991) as "potentially explosive" and that they form, at the base, the essence of debate on educational renewal. The CUP (1987:3) describes the opposing factors as extreme positions between the maintenance of the traditional character of the university and the demand for contemporary relevance.

The tensions and opposing factors as outlined in Figure 3.1 stand

FIGURE 3-1: A MACRO-ENVIRONMENTAL OUTLINE OF COMPETING PERSPECTIVES WITHIN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

TENSIONS		
Socialist solutions	vs	capitalist solutions
Education for all	vs	centres of excellence
Education for many	vs	education for few
Education for self-reliance	vs	education for self-actualization
OPPOSING FACTORS		
Traditional identity	vs	contemporary relevance
Universality	vs	particularity
Autonomy	vs	limitation
Elitism	vs	egalitarianism
Corporation	vs	community

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Source: Compilation of CUP 1987:3-14 and Moulder 1991:1

in a relation of polarity to each other, each of which forms a continuum on which different answers can be found to question of the place and role of the university.

This continuum furthermore extorts issues to which no definite answers or solutions exist and in which a dynamic balance of interests, or mutual accommodation, must be sought through negotiation, compromise, trade-offs and exchanges (Coates *et al.* 1986:19). This dynamic balance of interests could only be achieved by identifying possible issues of tension and conflict timeously and influencing such issues in the public policy process before they become formalised.

3.7.4 Macro-environmental scenarios for higher education

A scenario is a written or an oral narration in which the possible future external environment of an organisation is described [as referred to in Section 2.2.9.2(c)]. It thus attempts to portray a particular set of future conditions with the emphasis on the macro-environment. Scenarios have therefore become an essential part of strategic thinking.

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Ogilvy (1994:25-68) presents three possible scenarios for education in the 21st century. One scenario, named "*The new educational order*", focusses on the socio-political context of issues and is therefore presented in this study. Although it originated in the United States of America, it is presented in this study, in the context of a new RSA, which is once again part of the international community.

The NHCE (DD-NHCE 1996:30), indeed, confirms that the the RSA is moving towards global trends. However, in order to compete economically on global markets, increasing numbers of skilled workers would be needed. To build the necessary skills many thousands of new or retrained professionals in the next generation will have to come from the disadvantage black communities. Developments in the "global village" and vibrant

international debates about future socio-economic and politico-governmental policies are therefore bound to influence the higher education sector in SA.

The logic of *The new educational order* scenario is based on a paradigm shift from the current concept of higher education (as taking place in an ivory tower far removed from the day to day concerns of society), to something closer to a service institution more directly engaged with the problems of the day. In *The new educational order*, both the context for high technology and the dynamics of the market place are pressed into the service of an increased concern for social justice and quality of life by redrawing the boundaries between the personal and the political, the private and the public. Debate over an evolving social contract addresses trade offs between public necessities and private liberties, rights and responsibilities, universal needs and particular privileges.

One aspect of the new paradigm is a heightened appreciation for the systematic interconnectedness of concepts and an equal appreciation for long-term consequences. History teachers, for example, will teach the relationships not just of the past and the present, but rather of the past, the present and the future.

In *The new educational order*, "learning" has replaced "shopping" as a leisure activity and the "university" has replaced the "mall" as a favourite hangout. The gratification of knowing is enhanced by a paradigm shift that transforms knowledge from a passive, spectral representation of objects at a distance (like watching television) to a much more active - interactive - involvement with the world and with other people. From participatory knowledge it is then a short step to participatory democracy: an active involvement in the civic life of the communities with the communities as the laboratories of learning.

Scenarios such as the foregoing involves publics of institutions

as well as the aspirations of society. Scenarios can thus sensitise management to possible future challenges of publics and society and thereby prepare planners and issues managers to pro-actively formulate possible responses to future public issues in the public policy process.

3.8 MACRO-ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC ISSUES IMPACTING ON SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

Before reviewing the macro-environmental public issues impacting on SAUs the following two aspects need to be reconfirmed.

Firstly: Public issues are macro-environmental socio-economic and politico-governmental forces that influence organisations through the public policy process (as defined in Chapter 1). The concept of public issues does therefore not include internal micro-environmental and often inadequately defined or articulated issues in SAUs such as rationalisation, quality, productivity and efficiency, all of which have become lexicon within government circles and principals of universities.

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Secondly: The basic premise underlying the concept of pro-active issues management is the primary focus on emerging and possible unfolding public issues and not on public issues moving toward maturity, formalisation and resolution (as deliberated in Chapter 1). Certain major public issues in South African society such as non-racialism, non-sexism and democracy are already formalised and enshrined in the interim constitution. Other public issues appertaining to SAUs will be formalised by the National Commission on Higher Education. However, in spite of being formalised and moving towards maturity, certain public issues may still in the future unfold as matters of contention. Reference in this study to public issues in the process of being formalized by the National Commission on Higher Education will therefore be in the context of becoming possible unfolding issues and new matters of contention in the near future.

The following sub-sections attempt to give a brief overview of selected public issues (socio-economic and politico-governmental macro-variables) which drive an agenda for change in SAUs through the public policy process. It is neither the intention to exhaust the full range of public issues impacting on SAUs or to debate selected public issues in detail; nor is the intention to propose ready-made answers, or to unravel all the dynamics involved in such public issues. The intention is rather to attempt to provide a public issues background for considering the process of issues management, as it may possibly pertain to SAUs, in subsequent chapters of the study.

3.8.1 Socio-economic public issues

The following seven socio-economic public issues may impact on SAUs through the public policy process:

3.8.1.1 Socio-economic needs and demands

No social institution functions in a vacuum. In this regard SAUs, as other tertiary education institutions throughout the world, are an integral part of wider communities. Universities should therefore be responsive to the current and future needs and demands of society in general, and communities in particular.

The current basic **social need**, of especially the historically deprived majority of citizens of the RSA, is a just society. The basic **economic need** is fair distribution of wealth and equitable opportunities for all.

The combined socio-economic demands and pressures being imposed on SAUs are as follows (CUP 1987:16-17):

* From the state which expects the system to yield high-level manpower as well as leadership and expertise in cultural, political, economic and social fields.

* From the private sector which needs scientifically and occupationally trained personnel to sustain economic growth.

* From professional bodies, including churches, that are to an extent dependant on university-trained manpower for their effective functioning.

* From parents and students who expect tertiary institutions to provide the training that is necessary for a successful career in the modern world and the accumulation of wealth.

* From the broader group of academics who expect universities to sustain a culture of learning and contribute to the gathering, expansion, dissemination and conservation of knowledge.

Higher education is according to the NCHE (NCHE-DD 1996:31) a key allocator of life changes for individuals in society. In this respect higher education faces the imposing challenge of serving as a major instrument for the advancement of equal opportunities for members of disadvantaged groups.

SAUs have a special responsibility to work towards and support individuals in society in the achievement of the forementioned basic socio-economic needs. In doing so SAUs have a moral obligation to lead rather than to follow, that is, to innovate, to question and debate socio-economic issues, and through relevant research find possible solutions to socio-economic dilemmas. Stakeholders, however, allege that some of the most pressing problems and needs of society are not on the research agendas of major universities in SA.

It is foreseen that the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of the government will constitute the means of addressing current societal needs and demands and a procedure to transform, and promote a just and prosperous society. According to Moja *et*

al. (1994:96) transformation of the tertiary education system should focus on the RDP, as the RDP is an example of how tertiary education can "relocate and reorganise itself in relation to the lives and livelihoods of the people of South Africa". Since 1994 economic growth and the implementation of the RDP have, however, been retarded by the lack of sufficient high-level personpower (NCHE-DD 1996:31).

Essential components of the RDP are people, skills and finance. For the RDP to be effectively realised, well trained people with innovative perspectives and pro-active problem-solving orientations are required. Managers responsible for planning and implementing RDP initiatives must also have the necessary skills of projecting future trends in societal needs and demands and to manage issues relating to such needs and demands pro-actively.

Apart from the responsibility of tertiary education institutions to train capable managers, it will furthermore be essential for each university to have a clear vision of its place and role as a social institution in order to support socio-economic needs and demands. Shabalala (1994:19) supports this view by urging universities to reconsider their mission statements in terms of stakeholder and societal needs and to position their universities within the social, cultural, technological, economic and political matrix of the entire clientele/beneficiary participants. Clear institutional mission statements as mentioned in section 2.4.3.1 by each university therefore constitute an imperative starting point for strategic change management and the management of public issues by managers in SAUs.

3.8.1.2 Equity and affordability

In general, the term 'equity' refers to universal values of fairness, impartiality and justice. In South African terms it refers to the redress of inequities of the previous 'apartheid' government. In specific higher education terms, the principle of equity concerns the distribution of opportunities and

privileges in an impartial and fair manner with a commitment by the Department of Education to the realisation of justice through the accelerated development of black students and staff.

Measured against the yardstick of equity the inherited system of higher education is characterised by unjust inequalities resulting from racial and gender-biased policies, structures and practices (NCHE-DD 1996:41). Even during the period after 1976, also called the period of 'reformed' apartheid, enrolment growth in SAUs was distorted by deliberate segmentation along racial lines with very little rational planning enforced by the state. This resulted in the duplication of facilities and a crisis in respect of equity and funding.

The current university problems still tend to be defined in terms of two areas of thought. One is the problem of equity, especially the problem of "at risk" black students. The other is the need to save money without jeopardising a sense of outreach to, and inclusion of the "black community" (Freund 1993:184). A strong emphasis should therefore be placed on the need to redress institutional inequalities and funding and thereby the affordability of higher education for disadvantaged students.

Regarding affordability, the current (1996) Minister of Education contends that no potential student of any race, with academic ability and having passed certain criteria, should be deprived of tertiary education because of limited financial means. The Technical Committee of the Finance Task Group endorses this view and asserts that students who cannot afford tertiary education should be assisted with a combination of loans and bursaries (Ngqiyasa 1995:4). The NHCE (DD-NHCE 1996:144-146) proposes a new funding framework for higher education with a mix of formula funding and earmarked funding; public policy on tuition and residence fees, and student financial aid by the Department of Education in collaboration with appropriate higher education interest groups. Such a new funding framework should be developed consistent with the principle of equity.

Student financial support is therefore a crucial financial issue. The extreme shortage of resources and the sheer needs of a largely economically disadvantaged student population, however, indicate a looming predicament which will challenge the "new bottom line" (Ewing 1987:37) of SAUs, namely public acceptance through student contentment, stakeholder's support and public approval.

The aforementioned two issues of equity and affordability are serious and real with no 'quick fix' solutions. Resolution will have to be achieved through the identification of inequalities and a programme of transformation. Such transformation will have to include the abolition of all forms of unjust differentiation and the empowerment to bring about equal opportunities for the disadvantaged through well defined higher education policies, structures, pro-active strategies and well managed procedures with due recognition of the interests of both outside publics and stakeholders of SAUs.

3.8.1.3 Access and admission

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Access and admission patterns over the past five years, while reflecting some positive change, continue to mirror a South African university system which remains largely differentiated on racial lines with white and black universities. The CUP has, however, committed itself to working towards a situation where there are no longer white universities and black universities but only South African universities (File *et al.* 1994:139).

The challenge facing SAUs is to provide meaningful access opportunities to potential and existing students within their financial means. SAUs will furthermore have to target special efforts to attract and admit students who have historically been under-represented in higher education. To reach such individuals the CUP (1994:97) suggests that the concept of access should extend beyond traditional admission criteria in order to overcome academic, financial, logistical, psychological and cultural

barriers. Certain limitations should, however, apply in order to preserve academic standards.

At present admission policies in SAUs (or the lack thereof), are resulting in an increase in numbers of under prepared black students. An unplanned increase in admissions, without a concomitant increase in resources stand to threaten output quality and eventually the university system as a whole. File *et al.* (1994:139) petition for the development of a national access policy and broad institutional admission targets, which will allow for planned growth and a changing student composition in the university system as a whole. Such an access and admission policy will have to be integrated with policies for financing, governance, quality control and accreditation.

However, in spite of clear policies as suggested by File *et al.* (1994:139) certain stakeholders and publics are bound to demand that the benefits of a university education should be accessible to anyone who commands the required capacity, talent and interest in spite of financial constraints and a possible lowering of standards. It will therefore be in the interest of SAUs to identify any possible future demands timeously and to manage public issues transpiring from such demands in a pro-active manner.

3.8.1.4 Legitimacy and accountability

As the South African society begins to focus increasingly on interrelated issues of legitimacy, accountability and change, most tertiary education institutions in the RSA are facing high uncertainty with respect to their relevance.

The perception as to the legitimacy of institutions such as universities in a society is highly ideological, being expressive of the internalised values of society by its members (Shabalala 1994:15). As these values change so does the legitimacy of universities as social institutions. In a changing RSA with a

substantial underdeveloped society the balance between values of pursuit of knowledge and learning (wisdom) on the one hand, and the development of knowledge and skills (science) for the use by society on the other hand, may need to be temporarily sacrificed in favour of the latter. If not it may seriously jeopardise the perceived legitimacy of universities amongst publics within society.

Accountability refers to a relation of reporting and monitoring. It is concerned with evidence that the individual, department, faculty or institution is properly fulfilling its designated functions (Wolpe *et al.* 1994:120). Kirsten (1994) concurs that the accountability of SAUs will in the future not depend exclusively on fulfilling certain designated functions, such as the academic standards they uphold in teaching and research. Instead, accountability will also be influenced by the perceptions which publics have of a university's social structure, organisational culture and overall commitment to redress, and social reconstruction, that is, its accountability towards society.

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As a legal entity the university should also acknowledge its dependence on and accountability to the state and its legal institutions. This should, however, be done in such a manner that, as a community of truth seekers, SAUs simultaneously maintain a free and open dialogue, conducted with academic integrity and in a spirit of constructive criticism in order to fulfil its role as conscience to the state and society (CUP 1987:14).

3.8.1.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

The NCHE (NCHE-DD 1996:43) narrates the concepts of effectiveness and efficiency as follows:

Effectiveness describes a system or an organisation which is structured and functions in such a way that it leads to desired

outcomes or achieves desired objectives, with regard to content and quality. An effective system is in other words one that does the right things in terms of a given framework of expectations.

Efficiency, on the other hand, describes a system or an organisation which works well, without unnecessary duplication, overlap or other forms of waste, and within the bounds of affordability and financial sustainability. An efficient system is a system which does things correctly in the sense that it makes optimal use of available means.

The NCHE (NCHE-DD 1996:43) is of the opinion that effectiveness and efficiency together constitute important principles for the assessment of past and future systems of higher education. Effectiveness demands the continuous review of aims and objectives in the light of changing higher education needs. Efficiency demands continuous improvement of the methods and instruments needed to achieve these educational aims and objectives.

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3.8.1.6 Standards and quality

There is overall agreement among management in SAUs that standards are important and that they are what give universities good reputations, self-respect, a sense of worth as well as international recognition and acceptance.

There is, however, a vague but general perception amongst stakeholders and outside publics that standards in "liberal" universities have dropped, and that standards in other universities will in future decline because of affirmative action. This is repudiated by Professor Charlton (Financial Mail 1993a:28) of the Witwatersrand University. The perception of dropping standards could, however, stem from a cultural shock at how some universities have changed and the confusion about how affirmative action has been, and will in the future be implemented in SAUs.

Universities in South Africa are, under their statutes, responsible for their academic standards and quality assurance. Standards at SAUs represent the following dimensions: input, output, quality of staff, the effectiveness of teaching, and the demonstrated attainment of excellence (CUP 1987:42). However, in the final analysis the perception of standards prevailing at any university and the reputation any individual university upholds, depend on the quality of its graduates (Financial Mail 1993a:28).

The pursuit of quality implies, according to the NCHE (NCHE-DD 1996:42), the maintenance and application of academic and educational standards, both in the sense of minimum expectations and requirements that should be complied with, and in the sense of ideals of excellence that should be striven for albeit in a specific context for a specific purpose. The application of the principle of quality entails evaluating services and products against set standards, with a view to improvement, renewal or progress. In any system of higher education a finding of poor quality would, according to the NCHE (NCHE-DD 1996:42), be a source of concern and a reason for reform.

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In striving for high academic standards and quality higher education SAUs will need to be realistic about, and at all times fully conversant with the needs and aspirations of the whole multi-cultural society in which they exist and in which they are obligated to serve. Standards and quality are thus not solely an internal institutional matter but also a societal issue. If not managed with foresight and planning it can become an issue of stakeholder and public dissatisfaction leading to public issue debates and new demands through the public policy process.

3.8.1.7 Democratisation and development

Democratisation refers to the structural and procedural arrangements of those processes in which decisions are made on policies and priorities as well as on the implementation of plans and programmes (NCHE-DD 1996:41).

It requires, according to the NCHE (NCHE-DD 1996:41), that those affected by decisions on higher education should have a say in making them either directly or through elected representatives. It also implies that decision-making processes should be open and transparent in that there should be no hidden agendas and all interested persons or parties should have access to relevant information and be able to follow and access the arguments for and against resolutions and actions.

Democratisation entails accountability in the sense that those taking and implementing decisions should be answerable to stake-holders regarding the manner in which they perform their duties and use resources at their disposal. It is regarded as one of the cornerstones of the Reconstruction and Development Programme of the present government. The ideal of democratisation is not confined to the realm of state politics alone, but should permeate civil society and become the hallmark of the way in which authority and power are exercised in every organisation or social sphere where the interests of citizens and their common good are at stake (NCHE-DD 1996:41).

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Development in general means a set of programmes or actions initiated and implemented to create the conditions for a system to improve through the gradual realisation of its potential (NCHE-DD 1996:42).

The national agenda as it finds expression in the Reconstruction and Development Programme has, according the NHCE (NCHE-DD 1996:42), a policy of development with regard to all factors regarded as vitally important to the well-being and prosperity of the entire South African society. As such its prime focus is on mobilising the potential of all resources of this country, for the common good. These resources include material assets and human capacity.

It is clear that higher education is indispensable for realising the socio-economic and socio-cultural potential of the RSA.

Higher education contributes to the mobilisation of resources through the production and application of knowledge, the building of human capacity and the provision of life-long learning opportunities. In this way, the NCHE (NCHE-DD 1996:42) is convinced that higher education in general and SAUs in particular can play a significant role in improving the economic, social and cultural conditions of all South Africans.

3.8.2 Politico-governmental public issues

The following seven politico-governmental public issues may impact on SAUs through the public policy process:

3.8.2.1 Academic freedom and institutional autonomy

Although some of the root ideas of academic freedom date back to the humanists of the 16th Century Renaissance, the concept in its present form is essentially from the 19th Century. During the 19th Century higher education structures were organized to provide a socially protected environment within which individual scholars could work, unconstrained by social, economic or political constraints (De Winter-Hebron 1993:15).

Academic freedom is regarded as a pre-condition for critical, experimental and creative thinking and therefore, for the advancement of intellectual inquiry, knowledge and understanding (NCHE-DD 1996:42). Academic freedom is furthermore a fundamental right in institutions of higher learning in the RSA and is enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 200 of 1993), [section 14(1)]. It is moreover proposed (Van Wyk 1994: 164) that the new Universities and Technikons Act, which will provide for appropriate governance and management structures, should ensure that institutions of higher learning enjoy freedom and autonomy in their relationship with the state at all levels of government.

Whilst academic freedom is a widely accepted dictum there seems

to be a contrast regarding institutional autonomy of universities in the RSA from the state.

Autonomy of universities refer to the freedom to seek out and discover without having to constantly obey the unilateral commands of others (Jacobs 1995:B1). On the one hand autonomy is seen by some stakeholders as a means of defending the status and reputation of SAUs. On the other hand certain groupings regard autonomy as an obstruction to change, insisting that the new Minister of Education instigate changes that were demanded during the liberation struggle without delay (Moja (1995:6). This demand is seen against the background of a university system which was, in the past, not adequately accountable to stakeholders, and in which autonomy was often regarded as absolute and frequently abused to disguise hidden agendas on the part of government or powerful individuals.

In spite of shortcomings and abuse, institutional autonomy of universities has always been regarded as indispensable for the effective exercise of academic functions and thus in the determination of the place and role of universities in tertiary education. Du Preez (1990:4), however, argues that the intensive struggle for institutional autonomy and status in the past has led to distortions in internal structures and academic programmes in tertiary education institutions. Universities constructing degree programmes around essentially practical skills, and technikons structuring numerous programmes around degree-like diplomas are examples of such distortions.

The concept of autonomy in the context as it now exists in the RSA may, however, be outdated. What might be needed is a new kind of relationship based on communication and dialogue which would, of necessity, include more stakeholders of SAUs. Moja (1995:4) attests to this perspective by stating that the government's viewpoint on universities is not in terms of autonomy but rather in terms of "close collaboration in order to assist universities to become agents of change". Contrary to

the view of the government, student organisations such as SASCO regard SAUs as public institutions, claiming that the Minister of Education has the full right to interfere in the daily operations of universities and even insisting that the Minister should do so whenever necessary (Mathatho 1995).

It stands to reason that neither academic freedom nor institutional autonomy occur in an absolute or unqualified form. There are, according to the NCHE (NCHE-DD 1996:43), other relevant principles and factors that impinge on the scope of academic freedom and the exercise of institutional autonomy. To what extent such impingement presents legitimate limitations is a question which will have different answers in different contexts.

It would therefore seem as if the matters of academic freedom and institutional autonomy have the potential of becoming continuous issues of conflict in the future. As it is unlikely that definite answers or solutions will be found, a balance of interests through negotiation and compromise would be needed. This balance could only be achieved by identifying potential conflict situations relating to academic freedom and institutional autonomy timeously and influencing such potential issues of conflict in the public policy process effectively.

3.8.2.2 Transformation and restructuring

The call for transformation of SAUs has its roots in the liberation struggle for a democratic society. Later, in the late 1980's and early 1990's, when political liberation was at hand, the need for transformation and restructuring of SAUs gained increasing significance.

There are substantial differences of opinion among politicians, university personnel and students as to the meaning of the term transformation. There seems to be even more confusion about its actual implementation in SAUs.

Transformation simply means *renewal through change*. In the political context of a new SA, however, the term was augmented to assert change in order to ensure transparency and representativeness.

The mechanism of intervention to achieve transformation and a new democratised system of governance, requires an integrated strategic plan to make the composition of students and staff in SAUs increasingly representative of South African society . The system should be linked to national and provincial reconstruction in order to service the economic, political, cultural and intellectual development of South African society in general and communities in particular (CEPD 1994:114).

Shabalala (1994:3) contends that the formalisation of current strategic planning processes at SAUs represents efforts to respond to demands for transformation and restructuring. Kirsten (1994), however, cautions about transformation and restructuring of universities being exclusively linked to strategic planning. This could, according Kirsten (1994), create the impression that transformation and reconstruction of SAUs are merely a "tactical move designed to cover the hidden agenda of calculated survival". Transformation and reconstruction should thus be more than just a strategic move. It should be a commitment to acquire values and skills associated with a democratic way of thinking and acting.

In the system of transformation and reconstruction the maximum participation of all stakeholders is a condition *sine qua non*. This fact coupled to aforementioned conviction of Wolpe *et al.* (1994:114) and the view of Kirsten (1994), are indicative of the public nature of such a system, and consequently the possibility of stakeholders and public contentions regarding the system transpiring into public issues in the public policy process.

3.8.2.3 Affirmative action

Affirmative action is regarded as an intervention to change

certain practices; a means of addressing the inequities of the past; and a formula to ensure social upliftment, redistribution of wealth, income and control (Kemp 1995:38). Robertson, Sachs & Wang (*in* Claassen 1993:149) describe affirmative action as "the insistence on action programmes to promote parity between citizens by increasing the participation of disadvantaged groups or individuals in the educational, economic, political and social structures of society". This applicability to various aspects of social life is, however, regarded as one of the major confusions surrounding the definition of affirmative action (Human 1995:52).

It is often argued that affirmative action could widen rather than narrow the inequality gap, that it can lead to tokenism and that it is a form of reversed discrimination. Freesen (1993:7), for instance, characterises affirmative action as morally indefensible on grounds of *spectemur agenda* (let people be judged by their deeds) and argues that affirmative action violates the principle of compensatory justice, the ideal of non-racism and the hope of a fair and just society. It could therefore be suggested that affirmative action could lead to grave injustices in all sections of society, creating tension, resentment, anger, mistrust and insecurity.

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Affirmative action procedures in SAUs are likely to include, inter alia, policies on appointments and access to rectify the racial mix of staff and students which currently does not reflect the broader society (Financial Mail 1993b:27), as well as adapting curricula and degree structures to suit the needs of the new S A (Moody 1992). One of the demands as expressed in the African National Congress' discussion document on education and training (ANC 1993:112), is that "black students ought to enter and succeed in higher education in proportion to their strength in the population". This demand was succeeded by a proposal in the RDP document (ANC 1994:16) that affirmative action should be enforced through legislation. However, a lack of clarity about the form of any prospective legislation appears to hamper the implementation of affirmative action programmes in SAUs.

It can be argued that affirmative action could be a pro-active development tool to mobilize latent resources. As the *rationale* for affirmative action in SAUs, it would primarily be to correct previous iniquities, a response to circumstances of the past and reactive in nature.

Considering the forementioned terms alluding to affirmative action, such as social structures, intervention, insistence, enforced legislation, tokenism and confusion, seem to indicate the presence of possible future contentions. The exponential rise in interest in affirmative action will furthermore contribute to the existing "quagmire of muddled debate" (Human 1995:51). It therefore seems as if the current issue of affirmative action could become a future public issues, with important consequences, through the involvement of outside publics in the public policy process.

3.8.2.4 Africanisation

The legitimacy crisis which historically black universities experienced in the past, led black academics to advocate the Africanisation of black universities by means of black control (Dhlamini 1995:43). More recently other exponents (The Star 1995:8); Van der Meulen & Moller 1995) have expressed convictions that all universities in the RSA should capture and encapsulate the cultural essence of Africa and that it should define the essential character of SAUs versus similar institutions in other continents and cultures.

Habermas (1971:123 *in*: Totemeyer 1987:53) agrees that universities have to develop and interpret the cultural tradition of society. In this respect they may be guided by the same general principles as universities in Europe, the United States of America or Japan but the specific objectives should be different.

Manning (1995) asserts that the RSA, not being a clone of other

countries, has its own character, complexities and challenges. Manning (1995:29), however, criticises the current trend to condemn anything "Eurocentric" in favour of an "Afrocentric" approach and condemns the argument that foreign concepts are the cause of most problems at SAUs. Manning (1995:29) also criticises the view that the key to the future of South Africa is primarily held by local traditions.

Totemeyer (1987:55) believes that the indiginisation of SAUs can be very helpful but can only be relevant if teaching programmes and attitudes by teachers and students alike have been made more relevant to the needs of society. Similarly, Van der Meulen & Moller (1995:73) propose a transformation model that allows for indigenous variance and cultural expectations.

Bunting (1994:123-127), on the other hand, contends that universities cannot fulfil their primary functions relative to the "cultural and value framework" of a specific population group. Bunting argues that the primary functions of universities are instruction and research which are intrinsic values in any society, and hence "culture neutral".

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With the aforementioned background of increased internal and public pressure for the indiginisation of SAUs, the following questions may need to be answered:

* What is unique about South Africa and what special advantages might this environment offer to SAUs?

* How can cultural diversity be made valuable to SAUs and how can cross-cultural discussion and interaction be promoted?

Even if answers should be found to the forementioned questions, the Africanisation of SAUs could most probably never become completely resolved to the full satisfaction of all parties concerned. It will consequently prevail as "conflicts of interests or values" (Coates *et al.* 1986:19), and continue to

transpire as public issues in the public policy process.

3.8.2.5 Racism

Racism can be regarded as a theory stating that human abilities are determined by race and a belief in the superiority of a particular race.

In the past a racially based ideological framework have influenced the establishment of university structures, faculties, departments and programmes in the RSA. This resulted in distorted relations between, and alienation of, particular population groups from certain educational institutions.

In the new RSA, students of all races are entering universities where they have the opportunity to interact freely with one another in a non-racial environment. While universities purport to provide the opportunity of free interaction between races, inter-action cannot occur automatically. It requires a pleasant, positive, intimate and sustained contact between races. Such a sustained action, in turn, does not happen automatically. It requires multi-cultural education and equal status relations between races through institutional support.

Education institutions, however, tend to regard multi-cultural education as an additive rather than a reformative process by adding ethnic content to existing curricula instead of encouraging a paradigm shift by staff and students (Hillis (1993). Hillis (1993:50-53) argues in favour of multicultural education and curriculum transformation as possible means of "penetrating the intellectual and moral roots of racism and weaken them".

Leon & Lea, 1988 [*in*: Gray & Bernstein (1989:39-47)] attest to the argument of Hillis (1993) by supporting the restructuring and redesign of courses and curricula in order to assist students to adjust to their new environment and each other in an informed and

discerning way. To facilitate this process, students need to be sensitised to each other's different world views and to develop knowledge of the inequalities inherent in the social system of which they are part. This has in fact been done by the department of social work at the University of Natal through a racial awareness programme (Gray & Bernstein (1989:39-47), designed to sensitise students to racial issues and at the same time enhancing their ability to work co-operatively with one another. Racial awareness programmes can furthermore be used to equip people with the necessary skills to assert their rights and exercise their interpersonal influence in the performance of valued social roles. SAUs can therefore, through racism awareness training, fulfil their educational role as well as ensure its relevance to the changing social context of SA.

Racism will, however, as in the past and as all over the world remain to be a public issue of concern. This will happen in the RSA even if students and staff should learn to understand and accept the customs and behaviour of people from different races and cultures through awareness programmes and multi-cultural education. No university in the RSA could therefore afford to ignore the issue of racism as a public issue of social structure and the possible consequences for SAUs through the public policy process.

3.8.2.6 Cultural diversity

The problem confronting most universities is how best to increase the diversity of their student and staff populations, while attempting to provide quality education in the context of limited resources (Pavlich & Orkin ed. 1993:10)

Diversity denotes being unlike in nature and of different kind (Oxford 1989:550). In a South African context cultural diversity refers to the human composition of the environment of which the norm is based on gender, race, ethnicity and other categorical representations.

It is generally foreseen that an improvement in the diversity of students and staff in SAUs will be effected through a process of affirmative action as mentioned in Section 3.8.2.4.

Kemp (1995:37-50) debates the concept of diversity (cultural and individual) and states that there is a symbiotic relationship between affirmative action and managing diversity. Kemp (1995:38) argues that once affirmative action has achieved its aim it will cease to be necessary, whereas managing diversity will continue as long as there is a diverse workforce.

The management of diversity could therefore be designed and implemented in anticipation of future events and to gain the cooperation of all members of the social system in achieving goals in spite of differences. In a South African context, managing diversity can therefore be regarded as long-term and pro-active in nature.

3.8.2.7 Financial sustainability

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Most institutions in the RSA are currently grappling with the challenges posed by the rapid pace of political change and modifications in resource allocation within the budget of the state.

The current debate on the funding, and therefore the financial sustainability of SAUs revolve to large extent around the financial subsidies which were based on the so-called "Van Wyk de Vries formula" which in turn incorporated some of the elements of earlier formulae (Melck 1994:128). Various problems in the financing of universities have arisen through the formula at times not being applied, or being applied to different circumstances than those for which it was designed. According to Bunting (1994:124), a major problem of the current formula for funding is the limited number of output measures to determine the extent of the "public benefits" generated by universities.

Bunting (1994:123-127) furthermore sketches key financial issues which are likely to confront the South African university system over the next three years. The same author also outlines some of the main problems which exist in the current government subsidy formula as well as the revised funding principles which the university system will probably have to accept. One of the current assumptions used in deciding on "subsidisable" or "non-subsidisable" activities is that universities should be neutral to the socio-economic inequalities which exists in SA. Continuing with such a university system will, however, inevitably lead to elitism. Any future government which accepts such a system will consequently be committing itself to a system which is differentiated largely on racial grounds.

Expectations of escalating subsidy cuts have already precipitated universities to respond by implementing rationalisation exercises to reduce costs, by activating schemes to expand revenues and by fund-raising projects to add to capital reserves. McGrath (1993:70-71), however, questions the value of *ad hoc* institutional rationalisation and contends that there is a need for national guidance to co-ordinate the process of rationalisation which appears inevitable in SAUs.

The financial sustainability of SAUs will ultimately depend on the financial ability of the state which will again depend upon the *per capita* rate of economic growth in the country. Another crucial question is whether the finances of the state can continue to be allocated by the "unfettered choices of students" (Melck 1994:128) or whether greater restrictions on the numbers admitted and the subjects chosen will become necessary . As it is, universities have already suffered from declining subsidies as more money is allocated to schools and technikons. The irony is that as subsidies decline there is greater pressure than ever on universities to compensate for the inadequate school system in the RSA.

When considering the financial sustainability of SAUs through

state subsidies financial aspects remain important. However, other social connotations such as "public benefits", "socio-economic inequalities", "elitism", "restrictions on students" as previously mentioned, are indicative of the public nature of university funding. Public interests and possible discontent of stakeholders and outside publics regarding funding of universities may therefore, if not managed effectively, transpire into confrontational issues in the public policy process.

3.9 THE MANAGEMENT OF MACRO-ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC ISSUES IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES: THE NEED FOR A STRATEGY

A strategy is a pre-selected means or approach to achieving organisational goals and objectives while coping with current and future external conditions (Digman 1986:5). It is therefore a useful management tool, the need of which is enhanced by distinctive environmental conditions.

3.9.1 The usefulness of strategies

Ansoff (1979:101-104) debates the alternative to having an organisational strategy, namely total flexibility, that is, to have no rules beyond the simple decision of looking for advantageous opportunities. The same author concludes that for most firms the advantages of organisational strategies, especially integrated organisations, will outweigh those of total flexibility. Without a strategy, whether corporate, business or functional, managers in organisations will either do nothing or risk the danger of acting at cross-purposes. Organisations will furthermore lack an internal ability to anticipate change and to search for emerging issues as antecedents of change. In the absence of a strategy there will moreover be no guidelines or rules to manage important issues pro-actively. It could therefore be argued that managers in SAUs would need a strategy to manage issues, and particularly public issues, that impact on the future viability of their institutions.

3.9.2 Conditions enhancing the need for a strategy

The conditions which will, amongst others, enhance the need for a strategy in an issues management context, are conditions of rapid and turbulent change as well as the complexity and interrelatedness of issues.

* **Rapid and turbulent macro-environmental change**

Change refers to an alteration of the *status quo*. Political events in the RSA during the last five years have dramatically and irreversibly altered the macro-environmental *status quo* of SAUs. Some of these changes were evolutionary. Most changes were of a revolutionary manner with almost every dimension of the environmental context of SAUs in a state of rapid and turbulent change. In times of rapid and turbulent change, management in SAUs will need to reduce organisational flexibility and manage their institutions with the purpose of coping with change. Management in SAUs will therefore need to have a functional strategy, that is, a *modus operandi* to deal with the future and to manage change pro-actively and effectively.

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* **Complexity and interrelatedness of public issues**

The number of issues that organisations have to face and the factors to be taken into account contribute to the complexity of issues. Almost all the public issues described in the previous section are complex. They are also interrelated, for example, autonomy and accountability, academic freedom and standards, affirmative action and quality. The public issues confronting SAUs in the future will not only increase in number but will also become increasingly interlinked in what Mason & Mitroff (1981: *in* Human & Horwitz 1992:3) call a "wicked" management context. Thus, a change in one public issues can cause a change in another and since most issues become interrelated it could become virtually impossible to predict the full consequence of a particular issue decision or action as a whole. The complexity

and interrelatedness of public issues therefore enhance the need for managers in SAUs to have a functional strategy to manage public issues pro-actively and efficiently.

* **Further conditions enhancing the need for an issues management strategy in SAUs**

Ewing (1987:124) lists the following questions and considerations as a practical guide to determine whether an organisation could use an issues management strategy for the management of public issues in the public policy process:

- How relevant is the public policy process to the organisation?
- Is the organisation in a regulated industry?
- Is the organisation vested with public interests?
- Is the organisation regularly targeted by consumer advocates and politicians?
- Could the way in which the organisation operates make it the object of legislative or regulatory interest in the future?
- Is the perceived products or services of the organisation questioned by organised constituencies?

Considering the abovementioned questions and the context of different public issues impacting on SAUs as discussed in this chapter, it would seem as if SAUs could benefit from a formal issues management system. The fact whether such a formal system exists in SAUs, as well as the quality thereof will be determined by means of an empirical survey. The design and methodology of the survey will be described in the next chapter.

3.10 SUMMARY

It was not the intention in this chapter to provide a comprehensive exposition of all contextual dimensions shaping the future of SAUs. It was rather an endeavour to provide a brief

overview of the history, the macro-environment as well as the public issues impacting on SAUs with special reference to the need for a strategy for managing public issues in SAUs. The following important aspects were addressed in this chapter:

Universities in the RSA are legal entities which are brought into existence by the state in fulfilment of an obligation to serve the welfare of all its people.

Universities in the RSA are elements of a post-secondary education subsystem and the role filled by SAUs is generally accepted to be a valid and central one in society, that is, to acquire and articulate truth, knowledge, skills and attitudinal predispositions, but to do this for the benefit of society.

The validity of SAUs is based on the transfer and dissemination of knowledge to the advantage of society as a whole and communities in particular. There should furthermore be a symbiotic relationship with government to assist in providing in the socio-economic needs of the country and an institutional culture to facilitate a dynamic environment for the development of students and staff.

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Since the 1960s universities worldwide have found themselves in a confidence crisis due to increasing internal and external pressures for change. The historical development of tertiary education institutions in the RSA during the same period of change, was overshadowed by apartheid dominated education policies and practices. It has since become necessary for universities in the RSA to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances and with the view to long-term development define their role and functions in relation to the changing world around them.

It was neither practical nor the intention of this study to provide a comprehensively detailed exposition of all issues impacting on SAUs. A number of pertinent public issues from an

issues management perspective, within the socio-economic and politico-governmental macro-environment of SAUs were, however, considered. From the discussion of pertinent public issues it is clear that the enhancement of management in SAUs cannot be addressed without timeous knowledge as well as pro-active management of wider socio-economic and politico-governmental issues in SAUs.

In view of these public issues impacting on SAUs, and possible other emerging issues due to influence SAUs in the future, the desideratum for managers in SAUs would be to produce timely identifications of emerging public issues. They will furthermore have to intoduce timely forecasts of probable evolutions of issues, in order to permit their institutions to develop policy positions and programs for pro-active intervention, that is, to effectively manage public issues in the public policy process.

It was finally argued that managers in SAUs would need a strategy to manage issues, and particularly public issues, that impact on the future viabilities of their institutions through the public policy process. The complexity and interrelatedness of public issues furthermore amplify the need for managers in SAUs to have a functional strategy to manage public issues pro-actively and efficiently.

The next chapter will provide an overview of the empirical research methods which were used to obtain answers to the research questions as cited in Section 1.3.2.

ISSUES MANAGEMENT: A STRATEGY TO MANAGE PRO-ACTIVE CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

CHAPTER 4

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CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS USED

SYNOPSIS

Research is valid if it measures what it sets out to measure (Easterby-Smith *et al.* 1991:121). A properly planned research project, designed according to empirical requirements, was therefore necessary to achieve the empirical research objectives set in Section 1.4 and to ensure that the information obtained would be relevant and reliable.

In this chapter the demarcated research target, being universities registered as statutory members of the Committee of University Principals (CUP) is described. Policy makers (rectors/principals of member universities of the CUP) as well as strategic management practitioners (registrars, deputy registrars/administrators and deans of faculties) constituted the elements of the target population.

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It was decided that management in South African universities would not be sampled, but that the study would be completed for all policy makers as well as strategic management practitioners in SAUs. In this way wider participation would be achieved, and the problems emanating from sampling could be avoided.

The questionnaire design, format, accuracy and pre-testing were considered. The coding of questions, the confidentiality of the questionnaire, data collection procedure, data processing and the methods used were furthermore outlined. Matters regarding the response rate received attention and the problem of non-response was addressed. Satisfactory response rates to all three sections of the research design made it possible to continue with the analysis and interpretation of results in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS USED

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The empirical research objectives of this study, as cited in Chapter 1 were to:

* Determine the management mode of management in SAUs with regard to public issues in the public policy process

* Analyze and describe the experience of management in SAUs regarding the management of change in SAUs

* Analyze and describe the experience of management in SAUs regarding the management of public issues in SAUs

* Provide a competence profile regarding the management of public issues impacting on SAUs through the public policy process.

The empirical approach in this study was of a quantitative nature. This was done in spite of criticism against the possible superficial nature and other limitations of quantitative surveys. The reason for using a quantitative survey in this study was the confidence it gave the researcher in the generality of patterns of practices and views. It also provided the support for further qualitative interpretations and conclusions.

This chapter deals with the demarcation of the study, the research design and the methods used to carry out the study. The results of the research will be dealt with in Chapter 5.

4.2 DEMARCATION OF THE RESEARCH

Universities registered as statutory members of the Committee of University Principals (CUP) were demarcated as the research target of this study. The CUP was established by virtue of the Universities Act (Act 61 of 1955). The twenty-one universities within the borders of the Republic of South Africa (RSA) are all statutorily full members of the CUP. The university of Namibia has observer status with no voting rights (see Annexure A).

Policy makers (rectors/principals of member universities of the CUP) as well as strategic management practitioners (registrars and deputy registrars/administrators and deans of faculties) constituted the elements of the target population. A population is a complete group of entities sharing the same common set of characteristics (Zikmund 1984:356), or the aggregate of all elements from which a sample is drawn (Nel *et al.* 1988:291).

As a result of the small target population a total enumeration of population elements was done, that is, a census instead of a sample. A census is an investigation of all the individual elements that make up the population (Zikmund 1984:356). A listing was made of the population elements by identifying all policy makers as well as strategic management practitioners in SAUs. This list constituted the population frame of the study.

4.3 THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH DESIGN

The design of management research needs to be appropriate to the task at hand, and not just to follow elaborate rules and procedures. It should furthermore be concerned with developing deeper insights into the techniques of management and has to be conducted in parallel with the pragmatic interests of the researcher [Easterby-Smith *et al.* 1991:(ix)].

The research design regarding the aforementioned four empirical objectives were therefore grouped into three pragmatic sections:

* Section 1: The determination of the management mode in SAUs with regard to public issues in the public policy process.

* Section II: The experience of management in SAUs regarding the management of change as well as the management of public issues in SAUs.

* Section III: A competence profile of management regarding the management of public issues impacting on SAUs through the public policy process.

The three different sections will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

4.3.1 **Section I**: The management mode of management in SAUs with regard to public issues in the public policy process

The first practical aspect of this study was based on a content analysis of the mission statements and goals of SAUs in order to determine the existence or non-existence of a pro-active mode of management in SAUs, with regard to public issues in the public policy process.

4.3.1.1 The management mode as reflected in the mission statements of organisations

The mission statement of an organisation typically expresses its reason for its existence against the philosophy and values which it purports to follow (David 1989:90). Smit & Cronje (1992:63) defines goals as particular future state of things to be achieved and states that goals should flow directly from the mission statement of an organization. Per definition, a mission statement is therefore a forward-looking statement of intent and goals are focused on the future. By implication, the mission statement and the goals flowing from it should both be instruments which position the management of an organisation in a pro-active

management mode.

4.3.1.2 The management mode as reflected in the mission statements of South African universities

The overall goal and terms of reference of the NCHE (NCHE-DD:149) were to formulate a vision for higher education, to identify certain key principles and goals, and to put forward specific policy proposals for the future transformation of the system of higher education in the RSA (NCHE-DD 1996:41-44). It could therefore be argued that the discussion document of the NCHE constitutes a pro-active mode document.

It could furthermore be argued that the management in SAUs exhibit a pro-active management mode with regard to the restructuring of universities in the RSA if the goals, as expressed in mission statements of SAUs, are congruent with the transformation goals of the NCHE.

The content analysis of the mission statements and goals of SAUs [as mentioned in Section 1.5.2 (a)] was consequently executed against the background of the discussion document of the NCHE as a pro-active management framework. It was also administered against the backdrop of socio-economic and politico-governmental issues impacting on SAUs as discussed in Chapter 3.

The rationale behind this method of research was to determine the management mode of management in SAUs in an issues management context, that is, whether management in SAUs operates in a pro-active management mode in relation to public issues in the public policy process. Should management not operate in a pro-active management mode with regard to public issues as antecedents of change, it would emphasise the need for a strategy to manage change in SAUs pro-actively.

The research methodology pertaining to the management mode in SAUs (Section I) will be discussed in paragraph 4.4.1.

4.3.2 **Section II**: The experience of management regarding the management of change as well as the management of public issues in South African universities

Two models were used in this study to describe the experience of management in SAUs. The first model was that of Human & Horwitz (1992:33). This model was regarded as an objective, quantitative and systematic four-factor model of South African organisations coping successfully with change. The second model used was a combination of frameworks developed by Ashley & Morrison (1995:26), Chase (1984), Coates *et al*. (1986:29), Cook (1989:155) and Lozier & Chittipeddi (1986:3) and the issues management aids identified by Theron (1994). The second model was used to describe the shared and collective views of management regarding the management of public issues in SAUs.

4.3.2.1 The model of Human & Horwitz

Coping with change involves managing many different organisational priorities. According to Human & Horwitz (1992:132) it implies being able to create synergy from a range of often opposing organisational issues such as long-term and short-term, internal organisational aspects and environmental issues; people development and technical priorities.

The same authors constructed a descriptive model based on two axes with four different classifications (typologies) of organisations. The model of Human & Horwitz (1992:33) also includes the use of a measuring instrument: the *Coping with Change Capability* (CCC) instrument. The use of the CCC instrument enabled the researcher to empirically use the model of Human & Horwitz (1992:33) and thereby assessing the ability of SAUs to cope with change.

The two-axes descriptive model, the different typologies of organisations as described by Human & Horwitz (1992:33) and the

CCC instrument used in this study will be discussed in the following three sub sections.

* **Descriptive model of organisations**

Human & Horwitz (1992:33) developed, through factor analysis, a "sense-making" two-axes model of *environmental focus* and *organisational orientation* to explain how organisations cope with change. This descriptive model is illustrated in Figure 4.1.

FIGURE 4-1: A DESCRIPTIVE MODEL OF ORGANISATIONS

Source: Human & Horwitz (1992:33)

The descriptive model as illustrated in Figure 4.1 can be seen as representing a particular framework for capturing the essential features of an organisation coping well with change.

The first axis is called organisational orientation with the dynamic *strategic orientation* factor at the one end of the continuum and the stable *control orientation* factor at the other end. Similarly, the second axis of environmental focus relates

to a formal ***institutional focus*** and the more informal ***social focus*** at opposite ends.

It would appear that the successful organisation will have to cope well with all four of these elements. Too much emphasis on the strategic aspects will inevitably lead to control problems and *vice versa*. The same holds for an organisation which over-accentuates institutional factors at the expense of social relationships (Human & Horwitz 1992:32).

Theoretically speaking, organisational effectiveness (and coping with change) would thus be a function of achieving a balance in terms of organisational orientation and environmental focus. Human & Horwitz (1992:36-39) found that the profile of organisations coping well with change is quite well balanced in terms of organisational orientation irrespective of size. A significant difference was, however, found in terms of environmental focus: the bigger the organisation, the greater the concern with the external environment; which makes sense as larger organisations are more visible and more integrated into the institutional fabric of society. A sectorial analysis by the same authors (Human & Horwitz 1992:36-39) revealed that the service sector appears to be more strategically orientated and less institionally focused than the primary and secondary sectors. No significant differences were found in terms of social and control orientation.

In general, SAUs can be regarded as large service orientated organisations. It was therefore regarded as prudent to construct a two-axes profile for large service organisations coping well with change and to compare such a profile with the profile of the experience of management in SAUs, obtained through an empirical survey. Such a comparison could be a useful management tool to determine the capability of SAUs to cope with change, and to indicate possible strengths and weaknesses in the strategy formulation processes of SAUs.

In order to construct a two-axes profile of large service organisations coping well with change, a further averaging of the average four-factor scores of large and service orientated organisations coping well with change, as depicted in Table 2.6 of Human & Horwitz (1992:37), were performed. As Human & Horwitz (1992:37) used an inverted Likert scale (1 = very appropriate and 5 = inappropriate) as compared to the Likert scale used in this study (1 = strongly disagrees and 5 strongly agrees), reciprocal values in Table 2.6 of Human & Horwitz (1992:37) were used to graphically illustrate the data in Figure 4.2.

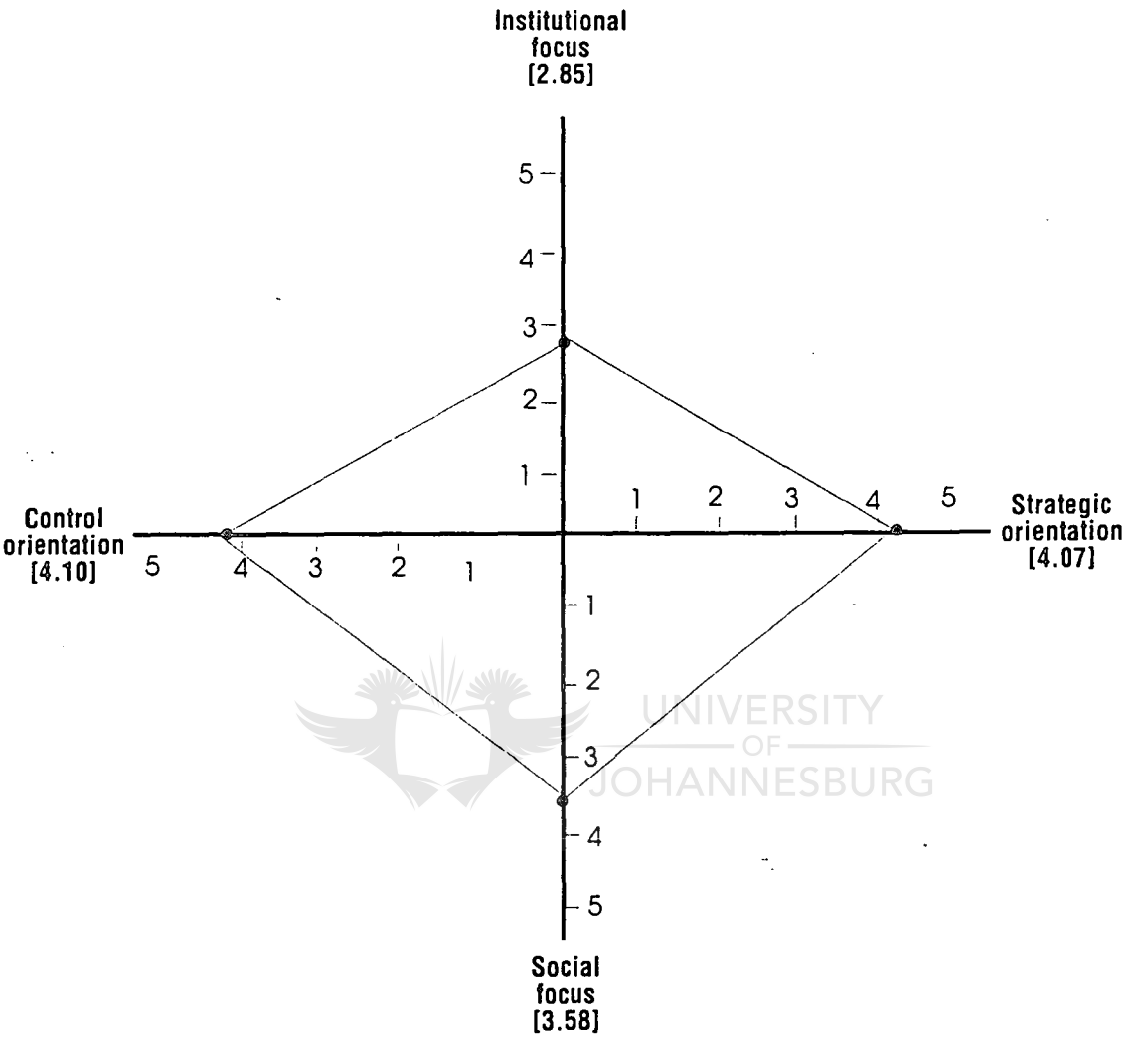
In general, Human & Horwitz (1992:36) believe that organisations in the RSA, coping well with change are well balanced in terms of organisational orientation, that is, maintaining control structures fairly well, and at the same time, managing the dynamic aspects of the organisation. More specifically, the profile of large service organisations coping well with change was found to be well balanced in terms of organisational orientation (a score of 4.10 for control and 4.07 for strategy as illustrated in Figure 4.2). The same analysis reflects that service organisations coping well with change are more strategically orientated (4.07) than socially (3.58) and institutionally (2.85) focused, as illustrated in Figure 4.2.

A comparison of the two-axes profile of large service organisations coping well with change, as illustrated in Figure 4.2, with a two-axes profile of SAUs (being large service organisations) will be presented in Chapter 5.

* Typologies of organisations

Human & Horwitz (1992:34) developed four typologies of organisations based on the two-axes descriptive model, as illustrated in figure 4.1, namely the ***boardroom organisation***, the ***hardhat organisation***, the ***technocracy*** and the ***missionary organisation***.

FIGURE 4-2: A TWO-AXES PROFILE OF LARGE SERVICE ORGANISATIONS COPING WELL WITH CHANGE



Source: Results obtained from the analysis of Table 2.6 of Human & Horwitz (1992:37)

The ***boardroom organisation*** is characterized by institutional focus and strategic orientation. It is a dynamic organisation managed by visible and visionary leaders with a top-down approach and with strong direction from the boardroom. Its shortcomings

are operational control and stability and it may be beset with social relationship problems such as employee dissatisfaction, low morale, labour strife and legitimacy problems in the community. The boardroom organisation is an elitist though dynamic type of organisation, with strong central co-ordination or control.

The ***hardhat organisation*** stands in contrast to the boardroom organisation. There is a strong emphasis on outputs and action, problem solving and performance, at the operational level, with a practical consciousness of "real world" organisational issues. The hardhat organisation is more sensitive to changes and stimuli from below. The issues facing it will be a lack of dynamic vision and strategic leadership and an inability to manage institutional arrangements well. The hardhat organisation attempts merely to react and adapt to formal institutional issues as they occur.

The ***technocracy*** is good at managing formal institutional arrangements (regulations, contracts and formal aspects of competition) and is control-orientated. The technocracy has a technically orientated culture. Controls are quantitative and performance is measured continuously. Relationships are formalised in a bureaucratic structure and spirit. It lacks the "humanizing" effects of a social focus and the dynamism of strategic orientation.

The ***missionary organisation*** contrasts most vividly with the technocracy. It is sensitive to social issues such as industrial relations, working conditions and black advancement, at the same time being characterised by a strategic orientation. The missionary organisation is led by charismatic leaders who emphasize informality and are responsive to employee demands. It emphasizes the people side of the organisation at the expense of controls and formal institutional arrangements.

None of these types will according to Human & Horwitz (1992:35) be found in a pure form in reality, as most organisations have

elements of all four types in them. The same authors propose that the organisation that copes best with change achieves a relatively good balance between all four elements.

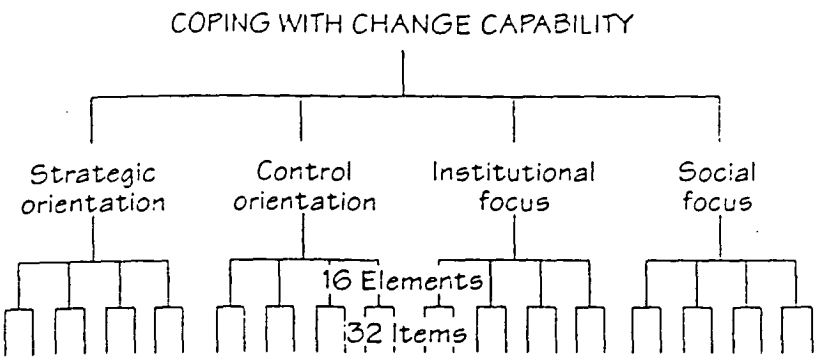
The structural variety of SAUs relating to the four typologies described in this section will be tested in terms of the data gathered in this study, that is, the experience of management in SAUs. The results and conclusions with regard to the typology appertaining to SAUs will be described in Chapter 5.

* The Coping with Change Capability Instrument

The model of Human & Horwitz (1992:33) includes the use of a measuring instrument: the *Coping with Change Capability* (CCC) instrument. The CCC instrument was used to empirically assess the ability of SAUs to cope with change. The instrument was tested and found to be reliable with Cronbach's Alphas ranging from 0.708 to 0.843 for the four indices in the instrument. Cronbach's Alpha essentially calculates the average of all possible split-half reliability coefficients and is used as a measure of internal reliability (Bryman & Cramer 1990:71). The same authors (Bryman & Cramer 1990:71) suggest that the results of the average Cronbach's Alpha should be equal to, or greater than 0,80, to indicate the internally-reliable measures of the variables. Bohrnstedt & Knoke (1982:361) consider a lower average Alpha of 0.70 as acceptable. The overall Alpha of the CCC instrument was calculated to be 0.710 (Human & Horwitz 1992:172) and was therefore considered to be a reliable instrument.

The CCC instrument consists of the four major dimensions of business organisations coping with change, namely strategic orientation, control orientation, institutional focus and social focus. Each of these dimensions consists of four underlying elements and each element in turn of two items, that is, sixteen elements and thirty two items in total (Human & Horwitz 1992:165) as illustrated in Figure 4.3.

FIGURE 4-3: A COPING WITH CHANGE CAPABILITY STRUCTURE



Source: Human & Horwitz 1992:165.

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The CCC instrument was applied to management of SAUs as Part A of a questionnaire. Part A of the questionnaire consisted of thirty two items as indicated in the bottom line of Figure 4.3.

In this survey the basic structure and intention of the CCC instrument was retained, although certain statements were modified in order to render them more appropriate to SAUs. For example, statement number eight of the original CCC instrument reads as follows: "We consistently pay good dividends." This was modified to read: "We apply our resources effectively." The modification was regarded as valid as the original intention of determining the control dimension in SAUs was maintained. Similar contextual changes were made to the following CCC statements: 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 25, 31 & 32. The validity of these changes were furthermore confirmed by means of a pretest of the questionnaire as described in Section 4.4.2.4.

In summary it can be stated that, although the CCC instrument was developed for business organizations, its ability to measure change in "non-business" organizations such as SAUs were retained and not affected by the aforementioned changes to statements in the questionnaire. The results of Part A of the survey will be discussed in Chapter 5.

4.3.2.2 Models developed by Ashley & Morrison and Theron

Models developed by Ashley & Morrison (1995) and Theron (1994) were used to describe the shared and collective views of management regarding the extent and quality of management of public issues in SAUs.

* The model of Ashley & Morrison

Ashley & Morrison (1995) combines the futurist concepts of pro-active thinking with the hands-on disciplines of issues management. The centrepiece of their research is the Anticipatory Management Process which resembles the issues management process model crafted by Howard Chase (1984). Ashley & Morrison (1995) furthermore expand Chase's "issue identification" components into a much more thorough scanning technique which they call the Strategic Trend Intelligence System. They also identify a ten-step process model for the management of Category I issues (requiring the implementation of the issues management process) as previously described in Section 2.2.8.2 and illustrated in Figure 2.6 of this study.

* The model of Theron

Theron (1994) elaborates on the pre-determined steps in the process model of issues management as described by Chase (1984). A factor analysis by Theron (1994) of responses relating to the steps in the issues management of this elaborated process model furthermore reveals that managers are using four aids in managing public issues effectively. These aids are:

* Use of the *media*
* *Communication*
* *Networking* at meetings and conferences
* *Strategic management*.

The validity and reliability of selected measures used in the study by Theron (1994) using Cronbach's Alpha as criterion revealed an average Cronbach Alpha value of 0.9095. It was therefore tested and found to be reliable.

Aspects of the aforementioned process model of Ashley & Morrison (1995:26) were incorporated in the steps in the issues management process model as described in Section 2.2.8.

The steps as described in Section 2.2.8, as well as the four managerial aids as identified by Theron (1994) formed the basis for Part B of the questionnaire. The results of Part B of the survey will be discussed in Chapter 5.

4.3.3 **Section III**: A competence profile regarding the management of public issues impacting on South African universities through the public policy process

The last practical aspect of this study was based on a competence analysis regarding the management of public issues which impacts on SAUs through the public policy process.

4.3.3.1 The competence profile of organisations

The competence profile of an organisation is a list of the major skills and capabilities in the organisation. It is a strength and weakness profile only relative to specific areas of competencies and skills (Ansoff 1968:92). It is therefore not as elaborate as evaluating all the potential strengths and weaknesses of the total organisation as is often advocated for the strategic planning process.

More recent authors, among others, Dubrin & Ireland (1993:594) refer to this process as *competitive benchmarking* and a process to compare one's own competitive performance to that achieved by competitive organisations. The object of this research was not to compare different universities but to ascertain the major managerial skills and organisational capabilities relevant to management of stakeholder relations within SAUs as a whole. The rationale was that, should managerial skills and organisational capabilities exist it would adhance the efficient implementation of an issues management programme, should such a strategy be necessary. If not, the development of managerial skills and organisational capabilities would be a pre-requisite for the effective implementation of an issues management programme.

4.3.3.2 A competence profile of South African universities

In order to design a competence profile with regard to the management of public issues in SAUs, a framework was devised. This framework exhibits the three essential dimensions for effective and efficient issues management programme, as described in Section 2.2.11, namely ***forecasting***, ***strategic management*** and ***stakeholder relations***. These dimensions were furthermore organised along the two competence parameters of efficient management, namely ***managerial skills*** and ***organisational capabilities*** as mentioned in Section 4.3.3.1 . The framework is depicted in Figure 4.4.

Part C of the questionnaire was compiled to provide specific information regarding a number of managerial skills and organisational capabilities in SAUs. Other selected statements relating to these two parameters in SAUs and having been elements of Part A and Part B of the questionnaire were also considered in order to deliberate the competence of management to manage public issues impacting on SAUs.

FIGURE 4-4: A FRAMEWORK FOR AN ISSUES MANAGEMENT COMPETENCE PROFILE OF SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

Issues management dimensions (Effectiveness)	Competence parameters (Efficiency): Management skills	Competence parameters (Efficiency): Organisational capabilities
Forecasting:	Use of media Networking Brainstorming Delphi Scenario building	Internet Data processing Public advisors
Strategic management:	Leadership Plan formulation Plan implementation Plan evaluation Communication	External planners Internal planners Internal management departments
Stakeholder relations:	Publics Government Personnel Students	Public relations Lobbyists

Source: Own compilation

Conclusions drawn in respect of the competency profile of SAUs will be discussed in Chapter 5.

4.4 METHODOLOGY OF THE SURVEY

The discussion of the methodology used in this study is divided between methods relating to Section I and methods pertaining to Section II and Section III of the questionnaire.

4.4.1 Methods relating to Section I of the survey

Content analysis of mission statements and mission goals of SAUs was the selected methodology because of the inherent value of this technique to systematically analyze qualitative data. It involves the selection of certain key words or phrases and counting and analysing the frequencies of such key phrases or words in the body of information (Easterby-Smith *et al.* 1991:105). The mission statements and goals of SAUs were used because of their relevance as the formal chartered strategic courses applicable to each individual university.

Registrars of SAUs were contacted telephonically with requests to submit their mission statements and mission goals for analysis. The analyses were restricted to university mission statements and mission goals which were available to the researcher as at the end of June 1996.

4.4.1.1 Data capture and manipulation

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Each individual mission and goal statement was consecutively numbered in order to facilitate the capturing of data.

The aim of the survey was to determine whether management in SAUs demonstrates a pro-active management mode with regard to public issues in the public policy process. Two groupings of words and phrases were therefore of relevance to this survey.

The **first** grouping referred to phraseology relating to public issues impacting on SAUs. Seven socio-economic and seven politico-governmental public issues were described in Section 3.8.1 as crucial issues impacting on SAUs. These fourteen public issues formed the core of the analysis.

The **second** grouping was directed at terms and expressions relating to the public policy process. The public policy process is the main mechanism for the social control of organisations as

discussed in Section 2.2.4.1. Relevant terms to the public policy process in a new democratic dispensation, namely stakeholders, society, environment, constraints, communities, challenges, redress, government, intimidation, accountability and public posture, as discussed in Section 3.3.3, were identified as relevant to this segment of the survey.

4.4.1.2 Analysis of returns

The analysis of the returns of mission statements and goals in numerical terms are as follows:

- Eighteen of the survey population of 21 universities submitted mission statements and mission goals.

- Two universities declined to submit mission statements and mission goals on grounds of their mission statement being obsolete and in the process of updating.

- One university failed to submit its mission statement and mission goals in spite of several reminders.

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The results pertaining to Section 1 of the survey will be discussed in Chapter 5.

4.4.2 Methods relating to Section II and Section III of the survey

In this section attention is given to the methodology pertaining to Section II (the management of change and the management of public issues in SAUs) and Section III (the competence profile of management in SAUs) of the research design. The questionnaire design, format and pretesting is explained. The coding of questions, the confidentiality of the survey, the explanatory letter, the posting format, the improvement of the response rate, data capturing, the treatment of non-respondents and the analysis of returns are furthermore addressed.

4.4.2.1 Questionnaire design

As already mentioned in Section 4.4 the questionnaire relating to Section II and Section III of the research design was divided into three parts: Part A, Part B and Part C. Each part of the questionnaire consisted of groupings of questions relevant to each section of the survey. Questions from different groupings were, however, used in the analysis of the data.

* **Part A** of the questionnaire dealt with the experience of management in SAUs regarding the management of change in SAUs.

The CCC instrument as developed by Human & Horwitz (1992:165) was used to empirically assess the ability of SAUs to cope with change. Part A of the questionnaire consisted of thirty-two questions (as referred to in Section 4.3.2.1 (a). Respondents were asked to respond to each constructed statement in part A of the questionnaire in terms of degrees of agreement, varying from "strongly disagrees" to "strongly agrees", along the continuum of a five point Likert scale. The Likert scale for measuring attitudes, as in the case of the CCC instrument, is extremely popular among researchers because of its ability to evoke a wide response, its ability to discriminate among those with positive and negative attitudes and its simplicity to administer (Zikmund 1984:301-303). It was therefore regarded as an appropriate measuring instrument for this study.

* **Part B** of the questionnaire dealt with the experience of management in SAUs regarding the management of public issues in South African universities

The process of issues management includes a number of steps as discussed in Section 2.2.8. Responses to questions on these steps in the issues management process were used to determine the extent to which the issues management process is formerly applied by management in SAUs.

Deductions made from the application of the steps in the issues management process as well as management aids used, as described by Theron (1994), furthermore assisted the deliberation of a competence profile with regard to the management of public issues in SAUs.

Respondents were asked to respond to each statement in part B of the questionnaire in terms of degrees of agreement, varying from "strongly disagrees" to "strongly agrees" along the continuum of a five point Likert scale.

* **Part C** of the questionnaire dealt with specific elements with regard to the management of public issues impacting on SAUs through the public policy process.

The purpose of this part of the questionnaire was to ascertain the existence of managerial skills and organisational capabilities relevant to the issues management process within SAUs.

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Respondents were asked to respond to each statement in part B of the questionnaire in terms of degrees of agreement, varying from "strongly disagrees" to "strongly agrees" along the continuum of a five point Likert scale.

4.4.2.2 Questionnaire format

The questionnaire commenced with a short explanation of the way in which it should be completed. A 'cross' should record the response to each statement on a rating scale from 1 to 5 in respect of all questions in the questionnaire. Respondents were asked to give their honest and considered opinion and to ensure that every question was answered.

The questionnaire furthermore consisted of Part A, Part B and Part C as discussed in Section 4.4.1.1. A copy of the questionnaire is provided in Annexure C of this study.

4.4.2.3 Questionnaire accuracy

The criterion of accuracy is a primary concern in the design of a questionnaire as a measure of research. Accuracy means that the information is reliable and valid (Zikmund 1984:323).

The **reliability** of a measuring instrument refers to its consistency in supplying results (Emory & Cooper, 1991:185). This entails two separate aspects, namely external reliability and internal reliability. External reliability refers to the degree of consistency of a measure over time and is assessed by administering a test on two occasions to the same group of subjects (Bryman & Cramer, 1990:72). As this study was not repeated using the same group of respondents, it was not possible to assess the external reliability of the measurement. It was, however, not the objective of this study to develop a measurement instrument, but rather to ensure that the instrument which was used, was internally reliable. Although the instrument was not measured for internal reliability in its entirety, the internal reliability of the CCC instrument (Human & Horwitz (1992:165) and the measures of Theron (1994), which were incorporated in this instrument, were at their inception tested and found to be reliable [see Section 4.3.2.1(a) & (b)].

The **validity** of a measuring instrument is a question of how far it can be certain that the instrument measures the attribute which it is supposed to measure (Easterby-Smith *et al.* 1991:121). The face validity of the questionnaire, that is, whether the questionnaire and its items were accurate, was tested in accordance with the guidelines of simplicity, length, understandability and unambiguousness (Zikmund 1984:323). Prestige-loaded questions, which could suggest social-desirability answers, were un-avoidable. Consequently the probability of biased answers because of ego-threatening or the so called "halo-effect" (Easterby-Smith *et al.* 1991) was considered a possibility. The researcher therefore had to rely on the honesty (as appealed to in the questionnaire), the

confidentiality of respondents (as assured in the covering letter) and the integrity of management in SAUs (for which there was no reason to question). The research instrument furthermore maintains legitimacy when the respondent can comprehend the relationship between a given question (or section of the questionnaire) and the overall purpose of the study (Zikmund 1984:340). A questionnaire pre-test undertaken before the main survey assured a satisfactory degree of expected comprehension from respondents.

In view of the above, the measuring instrument could be regarded as reliable and valid.

4.4.2.4 The questionnaire pre-test

A questionnaire pre-test was undertaken before the main survey was conducted to ascertain the following:

- The time required to complete the questionnaire and comments on the length of the questionnaire

- Whether there were any ambiguities and/or misunderstanding in the phrasing and format of the questions

- General comments and recommendations from pilot respondents.

Pretesting of a questionnaire is usually done on a group that is selected on a convenience basis and similar in make up to the one that will ultimately be sampled or used as a census (Zikmund 1984:345). Five managers (two vice-rectors and three deans) from selected universities in the RSA were used as pilot respondents for personal evaluation of the questionnaire. All five managers completed a questionnaire. None of the pilot respondents regarded the questionnaire as too long. The average time taken by the five pilot respondents to complete the questionnaire was 15 minutes.

Three managers suggested changes to certain phrases and/or words. As a result, four questions in the questionnaire were rephrased.

4.4.2.5 The coding of questions

Each question was coded for the purpose of data processing. The coding of questions was done in a separate column in order to avoid confusion on the part of the respondent.

4.4.2.6 Confidentiality

It was decided to conduct the study on an anonymous basis in order to maintain confidentiality with regard to the identity of respondents or the universities they represent. However, the main disadvantage of using a mail survey is a possible low response rate. Each questionnaire, therefore had to be coded for the purpose of identifying non-respondents with the view to a possible follow-up survey. Respondents were, however, assured in the covering letter, as well as at the onset of the questionnaire that their identities would not be disclosed, or in any way linked to any results or conclusions.

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4.4.2.7 Explanatory letter

Each questionnaire was accompanied by an explanatory letter written in English or Afrikaans, depending on the presumed language of the respondent. The explanatory letter briefly set out the purpose and importance of the research and was printed on the Rand Afrikaans University (RAU) stationary under the name and signature of the researcher and the promoter. This was done in order to elicit a better response rate amongst managers of SAUs.

4.4.2.8 Posting format

Each envelope contained the following:

* an explanatory letter
* a questionnaire
* a reply-paid envelope addressed to:
  University survey
  P O Box 780
  Florida Hills
  1716

Two hundred and ninety six envelopes were posted on June 21, 1996. Respondents were requested to return their completed questionnaires on or before July 10, 1996.

4.4.2.9 Improvement of response rate

The main disadvantage of using a mail survey is a low response rate. Steps to ensure the best response rate possible were the following:

- A pretest which resulted in certain words and phrases having been either reformulated, shortened or re-arranged.

- Elements of the target population (as described in Section 4.2) having been identified by name and having been addressed as "prominent policy maker/strategic management practitioners in SAUs" in the covering letter.

- Address envelopes to respondents having been hand-written to indicate a measure of personal appeal and thereby preventing envelopes to be discarded as *junk mail*.

- Anonymity of returns by respondents and their universities, which was ensured in the covering letter as well as the beginning of Part A of the questionnaire.

- Reply-paid envelopes which were included with the questionnaires to facilitate the return of questionnaires.

- The name of the researcher and promoter which appeared in type and in signatures at the end of each covering letter.

- A follow-up survey to non-respondents

4.4.2.10 The treatment of non-respondents

An analysis of returns, three weeks after the initial survey, revealed that 118 managers responded. This constituted an initial response rate of 40%. As a result of the coding of questionnaires it was possible to identify non-respondents with the view of a possible follow-up.

A follow-up survey was done four weeks after the initial survey. It was possible to contact 27 non-respondents by telephone and to remind them about the survey. Additional questionnaires were posted where necessary. As a result of the follow-up another twenty six completed or partially completed questionnaires were returned.

From all the returned questionnaires three were rejected because of the omission of answers to five or more questions. Five or more unanswered questions was an arbitrary cut-off figure used by the researcher. The rejected questionnaires constituted a small percentage of the total returns.

4.4.2.11 Analysis of returns

An analysis of the returns of questionnaires in numerical terms discloses the following:

- Sixty-nine per cent (144 out of 296) of the survey population returned completed or partially completed questionnaires.

- Forty eight per cent (141 out of 296) of all posted questionnaires were used for analysis of data. This figure

constitutes the final response rate of the survey.

Although the research elements comprised of individual managers in SAUs there was no intention to process or compare the empirical data of individual respondents or individual universities that they represent. The intention was, rather, to establish data in order to reach collective conclusions in respect of management in SAUs as a whole. The question that could, however, be asked is: are the responses from respondent universities representative of universities in the RSA? As a result a profile of respondent universities was compiled. This profile is reflected in Table I in Annexure D.

It must be emphasised that the numerical order of the twenty one universities in the RSA as reflected in Table I of Annexure D bears no resemblance to the order in which the names of SAUs are listed in Annexure A. The number of respondent universities in Annexure D is also one less than the number of universities reflected in Annexure A because of the University of Namibia not having been included in the survey. It must also be borne in mind that some universities are significantly bigger than others and hence a number of high percentages. From the the table it can be concluded that there was a relative good representation of respondents from individual respondent universities.

A customary step in the analysis of questionnaires is to edit the raw data. This is done in order to detect errors and omissions (Emory & Cooper 1991:450). Each returned questionnaire was accordingly scrutinized to ensure that minimum data quality standards were achieved. As previously mentioned, five or more unanswered questions was an arbitrary cut-off figure used by the researcher. Questionnaires which did not meet this criterion were disregarded for the purpose of this survey.

4.4.2.12 Data capture and manipulation

The data obtained from returned and edited questionnaires were

captured on a database created in a Lotus 123 spread sheet. The data was subsequently translated into the database of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS-X) computer package. The SPSS-X computer package is a statistical package for social sciences, developed to perform statistical calculations. The final analysis of the data, which was done with the aid of the SPSS-X computer package, as well as the interpretation thereof, will be dealt with in Chapter 5.

4.5 SUMMARY

It was the intention of this study to empirically examine four research questions. To achieve this, a planned empirical research design consisting of three sections was proposed. In this chapter aspects relating to the research design and methodology were discussed, in order to illustrate how research information was obtained.

The first section of the survey was based on a content analysis of the mission statements and goals of SAUs, in order to determine the management mode of management in SAUs in relation to public issues impacting on SAUs through the public policy process. Mission statements and goals were requested from all universities registered as members of the CUP. The method of analysing the acquired mission statements and mission goals of SAUs was furthermore described in this chapter.

The second section of the survey was aimed at investigating the experience of management in SAUs, regarding the management of change as well as the management of public issues in SAUs. The management of SAUs, as represented by policy makers and strategic management practitioners of full members of the CUP were demarcated for the purpose of the study and constituted the elements of the target population. The models developed by Human & Horwitz (1992:165) was used in an attempt to describe the shared and collective views, of management regarding the management of change in SAUs. Models developed by Ashley &

Morrison (1995) and Theron (1994) were used to describe the shared and collective views of management regarding the extent of management of public issues in SAUs.

The third section of the survey constituted an attempt to design a competence profile with regard to the management of public issues in SAUs. The competence profile of SAUs was regarded as a list of the managerial skills and organisational capabilities with regard to the management of public issues in SAUs.

A satisfactory response rate of eighteen out of twenty one mission statements and goals (86%) was achieved for section one of the survey. A final response rate of 48% was achieved in respect of section two and section three (the questionnaire) of the survey. This was also regarded as satisfactory with the result that the researcher could continue with the analysis of the data.

Descriptive data and analyses relating to Sections I, II and III of the research design will be presented in the next chapter, that is, Chapter 5.

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ISSUES MANAGEMENT: A STRATEGY TO MANAGE PRO-ACTIVE CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

CHAPTER 5

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CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

SYNOPSIS

This chapter analyses, interprets and discusses the empirical results achieved through two different surveys, as described in Chapter 4. Descriptive data and statistics supported a number of qualitative interpretations and conclusions.

The first conclusion was that management exhibits a pro-active management mode with regard to public issues impacting on SAUs. The new challenge would now be the articulation of their mission strategies to all stakeholders, and the implementation thereof on different operational levels.

The second conclusion was drawn against the background of a *diagnostic profile* and a *coping of change profile* of SAUs. There seems to be a reasonable ability in SAUs to cope with change. This ability is, however, exasperated by a lack of strategic orientation, which in turn could lead to an inability to manage the dynamic aspects of change.

The third conclusion drawn was that management in SAUs do attempt to manage critical public issues impacting on their institutions. They do, however, seem to manage such issues in an informal and uncommitted manner, instead of in a well structured issues management system.

The fourth and last conclusion related to a competence profile of management in SAUs and was done against the backdrop of three key dimensions of issues management, namely forecasting, strategic management and stakeholder relations. The analyses of strategic issues management skills and capabilities, with this profile in mind, exposed a number of positive and negative issues management features in SAUs.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH DATA AND ANALYSIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this chapter is to gain an insight into the management of change and the management of public issues in South African universities (SAUs). To accomplish this purpose a number of theoretical and empirical objectives were formulated in Section 1.4. To achieve the empirical objectives data had to be collected from management of SAUs, who was the purpose of this study defined as policy makers [rectors/ principals of member universities of the Committee of University Principals (CUP)] and strategic management practitioners (registrars and deputy registrars/ administrators and deans of faculties) in SAUs.

The previous chapter outlined the research procedure used to obtain the necessary data. In this chapter the empirical information obtained will be analysed and interpreted.

5.2 DESCRIPTIVE DATA OF THE SURVEY

Parasuraman (1986:576) states that a researcher should, at the onset, get a feeling of the research data by summarising the data for inspection purposes. Descriptive statistics used to obtain this goal were obtained by using the SPSS-X computer package (see Section 4.4.2.12).

Descriptive research attempts to define or describe a subject, often by creating a profile of a group of items, concepts, problems, people or events. Frequency tabulations (frequency distributions and percentage distributions), measures of central tendency (means, medians and modes) and measures of variability

(standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis) are some of the common statistics used to summarise and describe groups of items (Emory & Cooper, 1991:472). The following descriptive statistics were selected for the purpose of this study:

5.2.1 Frequency tabulations

Frequency tabulation is the counting of the number of cases falling into the various categories in order to summarise a set of data (Nel *et al.* 1990:337).

Constructing frequency counts and percentage distributions are two of the most common means of summarizing a set of data (Zikmund 1984:387). Frequency counts are the recording of the number of times a particular value of a variable occurs. Percentage distributions are constructs of relative frequency expressed in percentages.

Frequency counts and percentage distributions were applied to Section I, Section II and Section III of the research questionnaire. The results are shown in Table II of Annexure E.

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5.2.2 Measures of central tendency

The most common descriptive statistic suggested by Dillon *et al.* (1990:458) is the measure of central tendency (the most likely response to a question). The techniques used to measure central tendency are the mean, median, mode, skewness and kurtosis. In this study the mean will be used as a measure of central tendency.

Emory & Cooper (1991:472) describe the mean as the arithmetic average, that is, the sum of the observed values in the distribution divided by the number of observations. Kenkel (1989:96) interprets the mean as the centre of gravity of a distribution of data. The descriptive statistic of the mean was applied to Section I, Section II and Section III of the research

questionnaire. The results of this section are presented in Table II of Annexure E.

5.2.3 Measures of variability

Another common descriptive statistic suggested by Dillon *et al.* (1990:458) is that of the measure of variability (the dispersion of data around the mean). It is a quantitative index of the square root of the variability or dispersion around the mean (Zikmund 1984:393). The standard of deviation is perhaps the most valuable index of dispersion around the mean and was therefore applied in this study.

Standard deviations were applied to Section I, Section II and Section III of the research questionnaire. The results are presented in Table II of Annexure E.

5.3 DATA ANALYSIS: THE MANAGEMENT MODE WITH REGARD TO THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC ISSUES IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

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This section includes an orientation, an interpretation as well as conclusions with regard to the management mode in SAUs.

5.3.1 Orientation with regard to the management mode in South African universities

The sixth objective as stated in Section 1.4 was to determine whether management in SAUs demonstrates a pro-active management mode with regard to the public issues in the public policy process. A pro-active management mode in SAUs would be of extreme importance in order to survive a turbulent macro-environment.

A question linked to the sixth objective is: Are the priorities of SAUs in line with the priorities identified by the NCHE (DD-NCHE 1996:41) for the restructuring of the current system of higher education, namely the public issues of equity,

democratisation, development, quality and academic freedom/institutional autonomy? It could be argued that it should, because of inputs of SAUs being reflected the discussion document. It must, however, be born in mind that the NCHE document was compiled, not only as a result of university inputs, but of 123 different submissions from various stakeholders.

The empirical research method comprised of a market survey to analyse the mission statements and goals of SAUs. As mentioned in Section 4.4.1, the selected methodology used for this analysis was the systematic method of content analysis. The aim of the survey was to determine whether management in SAUs demonstrates a pro-active management mode with regard to future public issues in the public policy process.

5.3.2 Interpretation of results obtained

The survey involved the selection of certain key expressions, phrases and terms and counting as well as analysing the frequencies of such phraseology in the body of information. Two groupings of phraseology were used in the survey, namely phraseology relating to public issues impacting on SAUs as discussed in Section 3.8, and phraseology relating to the public policy process as discussed in Section 2.2.4.1. The results are presented in Part A and Part B of Table I in Annexure E.

5.3.2.1 Interpretation of phraseologies in mission statements of South African universities

From the analysis of phraseology relating to public issues and interpretations associated with such phraseologies in the researched mission statements of SAUs the following can be concluded from Part A of Table 1 in Annexure E:

* Universities in the RSA are committed to become open/more open and transparent institutions of higher learning with the empowerment of individuals and stakeholders through a

process of consultative and democratic dialogue, development, involvement and representation. They are also dedicated to human advancement in general, and the fostering of student and staff development in particular through affirming and intellectual exchange programmes in the RSA and abroad (Democratisation/development: rating 1).

* The pursuit of academic excellence through upholding universal standards associated with universities and the promotion of quality teaching and student performance are perceived to be important bench-marks for what universities aim to achieve (Standards/ quality: rating 2).

* Redressing the imbalances of the past, by meeting the socio-economic needs and demands of especially the historically disadvantaged majority, seems to be one of the main priorities of SAUs. This would, according to mission statement goals, be fulfilled through the advancement of knowledge and the conduct of fundamental and applied research and would contribute to the general welfare of, and meet the special needs of citizens of the RSA (Socio-economic needs/demands: rating 3).

* Universities in the RSA are inspired by the pursuit of excellence and social justice. They are committed to a ceaseless review of their aims and objectives in the light of changing higher education needs and to continuously improve the methods and instruments needed to achieve such educational objectives. They furthermore strive to restructure and transform their institutions to address the inequalities and inefficiencies inherited from the apartheid era and to respond to the new social and cultural demands of a changed South Africa including support for the implementation of the national Reconstruction and Development Programme (Effectiveness/ efficiency as well as transformation/restructuring: rating 4).

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* A high premium seems to be placed on academic freedom and institutional autonomy, that is, to learn and work without fear of any harm, in an open, empowering and creative organisational structure, and to determine on academic grounds who may teach, who may be taught, what may be taught and how it should be taught. This universally accepted principle is accepted with full recognition of concomitant responsibilities to publics, stakeholders and employees (Academic freedom/autonomy: rating 6).

* Flexible access and admission of students from disadvantaged communities and special programmes and courses for under-prepared and exceptionally gifted students are emphasised as mission goals in some mission statements (Access/admission: rating 7). Less urgent, however, is the necessity to overcome all forms of gender and race discrimination and the need to redress institutional funding and thereby the affordability of higher education for disadvantaged students (Discrimination as well as equity/affordability: rating 8). This is seen as a goal to be achieved through affirmative action aimed at equalising opportunities and outcomes for all (Affirmative action: rating 10).

* The augmentation of cultural diversity (Rating: 11) of student and staff populations, and Africanisation (Rating: 12) in order to capture and encapsulate the cultural essence of Africa in SAUs seem to be of even lesser importance.

* The legitimacy crises which especially historically black universities experienced in the past do not seem to be of great concern to management of SAUs; neither does the accountability of SAUs to the state and the possible adverse perception which publics may have of the accountability of SAUs towards society (Legitimacy/accountability: rating 13).

* Although most institutions in the RSA are currently grappling with the challenges posed by the rapid pace of political change and modifications in resource allocation within the budget of the state, financial sustainability (rating: 14) is hardly expressed.

The aforementioned analysis indicates strategic priorities within SAUs. The question that flows from this analysis is: Are the priorities of SAUs in line with the priorities identified by the NCHE (DD-NCHE 1996:41) for the restructuring of the current system of higher education, namely equity, democratisation, development, quality and academic freedom/institutional autonomy?

From the analysis of mission statements of SAUs it can be seen that the aforementioned priorities of the NCHE are included in rankings one to six (14 rankings in total). It can therefore be concluded that the priorities in SAUs are appropriate in the light of the transformation priorities as expressed by the NCHE. As the discussion document of the NCHE (DD-NCHE 1996) was considered to be a pro-active framework for restructuring, it can furthermore be concluded that management in SAUs exhibit a pro-active management mode with regard to the restructuring of universities in the RSA and that they make excellent benchmarks against which future endeavour can be judged.

5.3.2.2 Interpretation of phraseologies associated with the public policy process impacting on South African universities

With reference to Part B of Table 1 in Annexure E, it is interesting to note that the ratings of phraseology associated with the public policy process seem to follow a comparable pattern with the ratings of phraseology relating to public issues as listed in Part A of Table 1 in Annexure E. For instance, the prioritisation of stakeholders, the interaction with society and the obligation towards communities, as registered in Part B (Rating: 1, 2 & 3) compare well with democratisation/development

and socio-economic needs/demands as registered in Part A (Rating: 1 & 3). At the lower end of the scale, the seemingly disinterest in the development of a favourable public posture in Part B (Rating: 8), compares well with the perceived lack of accountability of SAUs to the state and the possible adverse perception which publics may have with regard to the accountability of SAUS towards society, as listed in Part A (Rating: 11). Similarly, the lack of reference to constraints experienced by SAUs in Part B (Lowest rating: 8) compares well with the seemingly lack of concern for financial sustainability of SAUs as specified in Part A (Lowest rating: 14).

From the foregoing analysis of mission statements of SAUs it can be seen that the priorities of the NCHE are included in rankings one to six (12 rankings in total). The priorities in SAUs are therefore in line with the transformation priorities as expressed by the NCHE. There is furthermore a significant connection between public issue priorities and public policy processes concerning such priorities in SAUs.

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5.3.3 Conclusions with regard to the management mode in South African universities

In view of the aforementioned observations and in view of the discussion document of the NCHE (DD-NCHE 1996) having been considered a pro-active framework for the restructuring of SAUs (see Section 3.3.3.1); as well as the transformation and restructuring of SAUs having been regarded as important public issues (see Section 3.8), it can be concluded that management in SAUs exhibit a pro-active management mode with regard to public issues impacting on SAUs through the public policy process. The immediate and new challenge for universities now seem to be the articulation of their pro-active strategies as contained in their mission statements to all stakeholders, and the implementation thereof on different operational levels.

5.4 DATA ANALYSIS: THE EXPERIENCE OF MANAGEMENT REGARDING THE MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

This section includes an orientation, and interpretation as well as conclusions with regard to the management of change in SAUs.

5.4.1 Orientation with regard to the management of change in South African universities

The seventh objective as stated in Chapter 1 was to analyse and describe the experience of management in SAUs regarding the management of change in SAUs. The empirical research method comprised of a market survey in the form of a research questionnaire consisting of Part A, Part B and Part C. Only results pertaining to part A of the questionnaire will be considered in this section.

Part A of the questionnaire consisted of thirty two statements which were reduced to sixteen elements and ultimately condensed into four dimensions as illustrated in Figure 4.3. The purpose of this method of analysis was to provide a broad view of the experience of management regarding the management of change in SAUs. This was done in the following manner:

* Presenting a score sheet of the sixteen elements and listing the results in Table III of Annexure E.

* Presenting a score sheet of the four dimensions, that is, averages in terms of strategic orientation, social focus, control orientation and institutional focus. These averages are included in Table III of Annexure E.

* Presenting illustrated profiles of how SAUs cope with change. This was done to establish what the practices-in-use are in explaining how SAUs cope with change, that is, the real as opposed to espoused principles and activities alluded to in mission statements and mission goals of SAUs.

5.4.2 Interpretation of results obtained

The interpretation of results is firstly done by plotting the scores from Table III of Annexure E to present a *diagnostic profile* of SAUs, and secondly, by displaying a *coping of change profile* of SAUs.

5.4.2.1 A diagnostic profile of South African universities

By plotting the scores of the sixteen elements (see Figure 4.3) as reflected in Annexure E, Table III on a ten-axes profile (eight-axes plus the horizontal axis of and vertical axis), a *diagnostic profile* of SAUs can be presented. This profile is depicted in Figure 5.1.

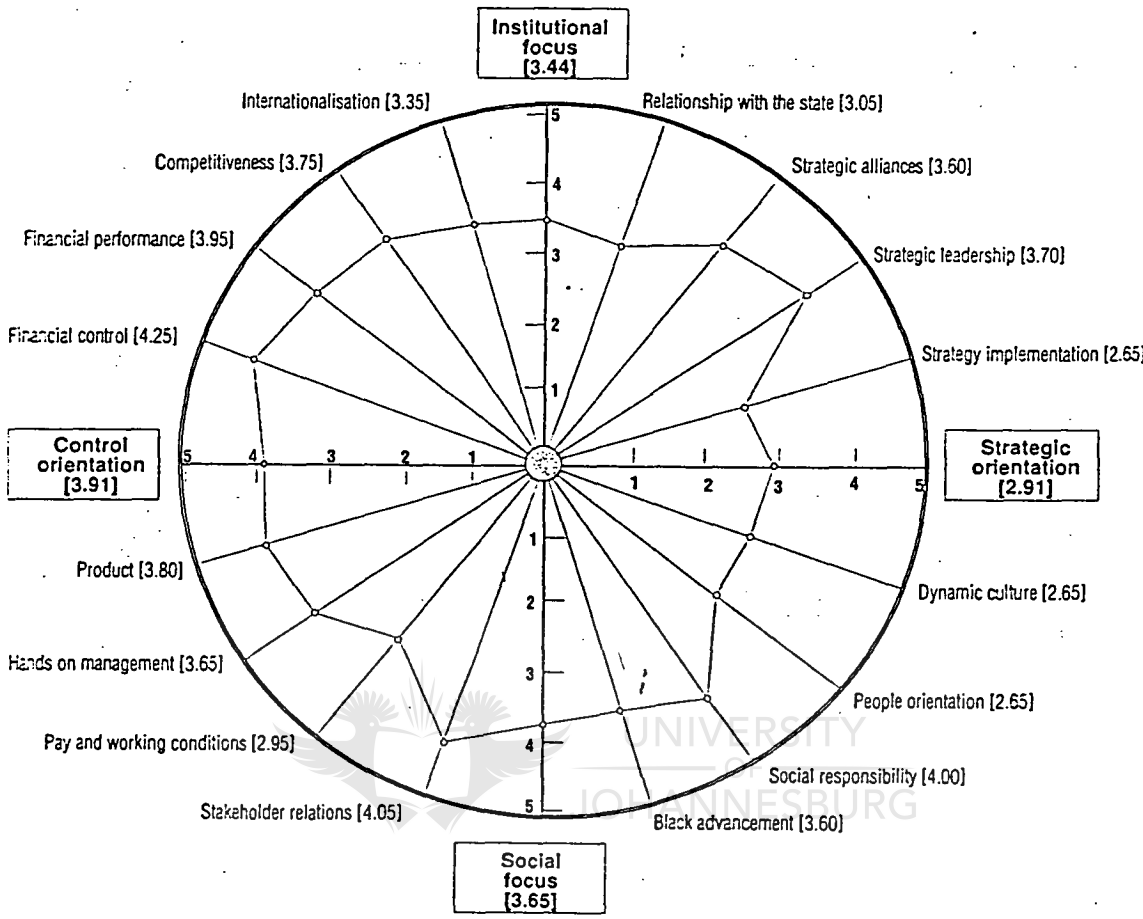
The values of the sixteen elements as reflected in Figure 5.1 enabled the researcher to make the following provisional diagnosis of how management in SAUs cope with change:

* Dynamic culture (Value = 2.65)

The culture of an organisation is according to Human & Horwitz (1992:62) not about what people think or like to say, but about real attitudes, beliefs and behaviour. It is thus the sum total of all system values, procedures, rules, behaviours, leadership styles and structures. A dynamic culture, being essential for change, would furthermore be a culture where innovation, entrepreneurship and risk-taking would be accepted as important corporate values (Human & Horwitz 1992:64).

Results with regard to SAUs (Dynamic culture = 2.65), however, reflect a more conservative view where consensus is valued higher than diversity. This is not surprising as universities are generally regarded as institutions of stability, habit and certainty and where personnel are mainly loyal salary earners with little or no risk-taking. Adapting to changes is therefore

FIGURE 5-1: A DIAGNOSTIC PROFILE OF SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES



Source: Results obtained from the analysis of Part A of the questionnaire.

slow with resistance to innovation and an emphasis on loyalty and trust.

* Strategic leadership (Value = 3.70)

Strategic leadership is according to Human & Horwitz (1992:20)

the capacity to create vision, to provide visible leadership, to have the quality in management which shapes the future and to act as change agents. It is also the factor that translates needs into action by means of implementation of strategies (Human & Horwitz 1992:69). Implementation of strategies furthermore implies a dynamic culture, structure (the most manageable instrument in strategic management), a positive attitude to change and a people orientation.

In spite of a lack of a dynamic culture (dynamic culture = 2.65) in SAUs top management seem to exhibit strategic leadership (3.70) with a positive attitude towards change, accompanied by quality of thinking. Top management can therefore, through strategic leadership, change the culture within SAUs to a more dynamic culture (as discussed in the previous paragraph) and thereby enhance the capacity of SAUs to implement strategies of change.

* People orientation (Value = 2.65)

A people orientation represents an important facet of strategic orientation. The below average score (2.65) reflects a sign of aloofness to employee needs and a degree of indifference to student needs.

As a people orientation constitutes one of the important aspects of strategy implementation, the gaining of trust, co-operation and involvement of staff and students are considered to be a key factor for effective strategy implementation in SAUs.

* Strategy implementation (Value = 2.65)

Strategy implementation is an extension of strategic leadership and concerns the transformation of intentions into actions (Human & Horwitz 1992:60). The logic of strategy, that is, the link between values (abstract) and objectives (tangible activities) as often expressed in mission statements of SAUs and the

implementation of such strategies was measured as below average (2.65).

The mission statements of organisations typically express the philosophy and values (abstract) which they purport to follow. Having formulated their missions, the immediate remaining challenge for SAUs would hence be action, that is, the articulation of mission statements and mission goals to stakeholders and staff and the implementation thereof on different operational levels.

* Social responsibility (Value = 4.00)

Coping with change has a vital social dimension in terms of policy choices for organisations. It includes social responsibility and sound human resource management relations (Human & Horwitz 1992:83). The social focus is therefore both internal and external to the organisation.

Management regards SAUs as being socially responsible (4.00) by participating in community projects and contributing to social welfare programmes. This is line with the national agenda as expressed in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), accentuating the development of both potential material resources and human capacity (DD-NCHE 1996:42).

* Black advancement (Value = 3.60)

Human & Horwitz (1992:89) regards black advancement as a feature of companies coping well with change. Managers in SAUs are reasonably focused (3.60) on changing attitudes towards blacks and in promoting blacks to management levels through affirmative action.

Affirmative action is regarded as an intervention to change certain practices; a means of addressing the inequities of the past; and a formula to ensure social upliftment, redistribution

of wealth, income and control as discussed in Section 3.8. An even sharper focus on affirmative action in SAUs could therefore enhance the participation of disadvantaged groups or individuals in the economic, political and social structures of society.

* Stakeholder relations (Value = 4.05)

Research done by Human & Horwitz (1992:91) suggests that both individual and collective (stakeholder) relations are necessary in coping well with change. Given the particular prominent role that student bodies have played in pressing for political change in the past, a collective bargaining (where there is a mutual recognition of needs) and a flexible rather than a legalistic approach seem to be necessary for sound student/management relations within SAUs. In this regard management in SAUs seem to acknowledge the importance of students as stakeholder of SAUs. They have also developed an ability to deal with the complexities of stakeholder relations in general through information sharing and a willingness to accommodate the interest of other parties.

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* Pay and working conditions (Value = 2.95)

Coping with change is viewed by managers as an emphasis on individual empowerment in organisations, largely through training, development and creating a culture where the ideas of people are listened to and encouraged (Human & Horwitz 1992:88). Working conditions where managers do the thinking and workers do what they are told is therefore unacceptable if there is to be a sincere emphasis on employee development. Paying unacceptable low salaries and wages is furthermore regarded as inappropriate in organisations coping well with change.

An average score on salaries/wages and working conditions for all employees (2.95) indicates a vulnerability of SAUs towards labour action and competition from the private sector.

* Financial control (Value = 4.25)

Financial control reflects the most basic concern of the organisation, that is, to know where the money is in the organisation and how efficiently this scarce resource is utilized (Human & Horwitz 1992:76). This scarcity of resources requires some degree of competition, which in turn necessitates a dynamic and strategic outlook. In order to prevent organisational failure, organisations therefore need to cope with financial resource changes by knowing the state of existing and future financial flows in the organisation.

SAUs seem to have tight financial controls with strong control over financial reporting which indicates a high degree of regulation and structure, which in turn provides the stability necessary for change.

* Hands-on management (Value = 3.65)

Hand-on management indicates the ability within the organisation to receive feedback and, more importantly, to actively use information about the quality of its products (Human & Horwitz 1992:78). The emphasis is on detail, efficiency and a strong operations orientation. In this regard SAUs reflect an above average score with an emphasis on efficient teaching and research as well as attention to detail in all activities.

* Financial performance (Value = 3.95)

Financial performance is according to Human & Horwitz (1992:78) a reliable and quantifiable indicator of how well a firm is coping with change. It is not only an indicator of past performance but also an enabling resource and thus an indicator of future performance. A strong financial base and cash flow provide the organisation with financial slack and more autonomy in decision-making.

SAUs have operated within operating budgets over the past five years and seem to be able to apply their resources efficiently. The result of this could be a greater degree of freedom in strategic choices, an ability to think longer term and consequently a readiness to cope with more change in the near future.

* Product (Value = 3.80)

Although product is an output of the organisation, it is, according to research done by Human & Horwitz (1992:76), seen in terms of a result of a number of input activities and not just of marketing. The quality of products are furthermore subjective and closely linked to what the customer wants. The task of management is to design, produce and market products which will satisfy those wants.

The products of SAUs were, for the purpose of this study, regarded as study courses designed to fulfil the needs of students. In this regard SAUs seem to recognise the importance of new product innovation and the improvement of quality of existing courses. It therefore exhibits a pro-active management mode with regard to stakeholder needs and hence an aptitude towards change.

* Relationship with the state (Value = 3.05)

Managers do not see beneficial relations with the state as a very important feature of organisations coping well with change (Human & Horwitz 1992:120). There is furthermore a tendency to remain neutral and impartial in dealings with the state. However, the willingness of the state to tolerate a culture of democracy from below will depend, according to Human & Horwitz (1992:128), on the rate of advancement of black employees, co-operative relationships with unions and community organisations, moving away from control to co-operation as well as the willingness to engage in significant social investment.

In the light of substantial funding of SAUs by the state, beneficial relations and collusion with the state could well be an important factor for coping well with change. Another important aspect will be the final recommendations of the NCHE. In view of the assertive manner in which the state intends to guide SAUs through the transformation process, the average score (3.05) as recorded in this research indicates a possible weakness in the ability of SAUs to cope well with change.

* Internationalization (Value = 3.35)

Years of isolation and the development of strategies appropriate to isolation in most SAUs now demand an adjustment to internationalization. In this respect the NCHE (DD-NCHE 1996:44) encourages the interaction among institutions of higher education and between such institutions and all sectors of society, both nationally and internationally.

SAUs seems to be aware of the importance of international perspective and contact (score 3.35). The challenge for the management of SAUs will hence be to adapt to international co-operation by overcoming the legacy of inwardly focused, total onslaught strategies of the 1980's.

* Strategic alliances (Value = 3.60)

The formation of strategic alliances with competitors or suppliers is seen as a feature of companies coping well with change (Human & Horwitz 1992:115). It has become more prominent as organisations seek greater flexibility and competitive advantage in facing pressures from competitors.

The above average score (3.60) indicates that SAUs are reasonably connected to outside institutions through strategic alliances with other universities. In the light of the demise of apartheid and sanctions, it would seem appropriate to extend alliance formation even further, in order to cope very well with change.

* Competitiveness (Value = 3.75)

Research by Human & Horwitz (1992:118) shows the nature of competition to be a fairly neutral factor in explaining what characterizes ability to cope with change. Though not considered very appropriate, a market monopoly is seen as an advantage in coping with change. In such a situation the organisation can focus its attention on priorities associated with change instead of fighting off competition.

The above average score (3.75) in respect of SAUs indicates an awareness of competitive forces with a simultaneous pride (perception of being the best) by the majority of managers in their institutions. Conditions such as these can be regarded as catalysts to enhance the capability of SAUs to cope well with change.

The aforementioned sixteen elements provided a *diagnostic profile* of SAUs. For interpretation purposes this *diagnostic profile* as illustrated in Figure 5.1, now needs to be compared with the *industry norm*, that is, the profile of large service organisations coping well with change. This is done by presenting a comparative profile, namely the *coping of change profile* of SAUs in the next section.

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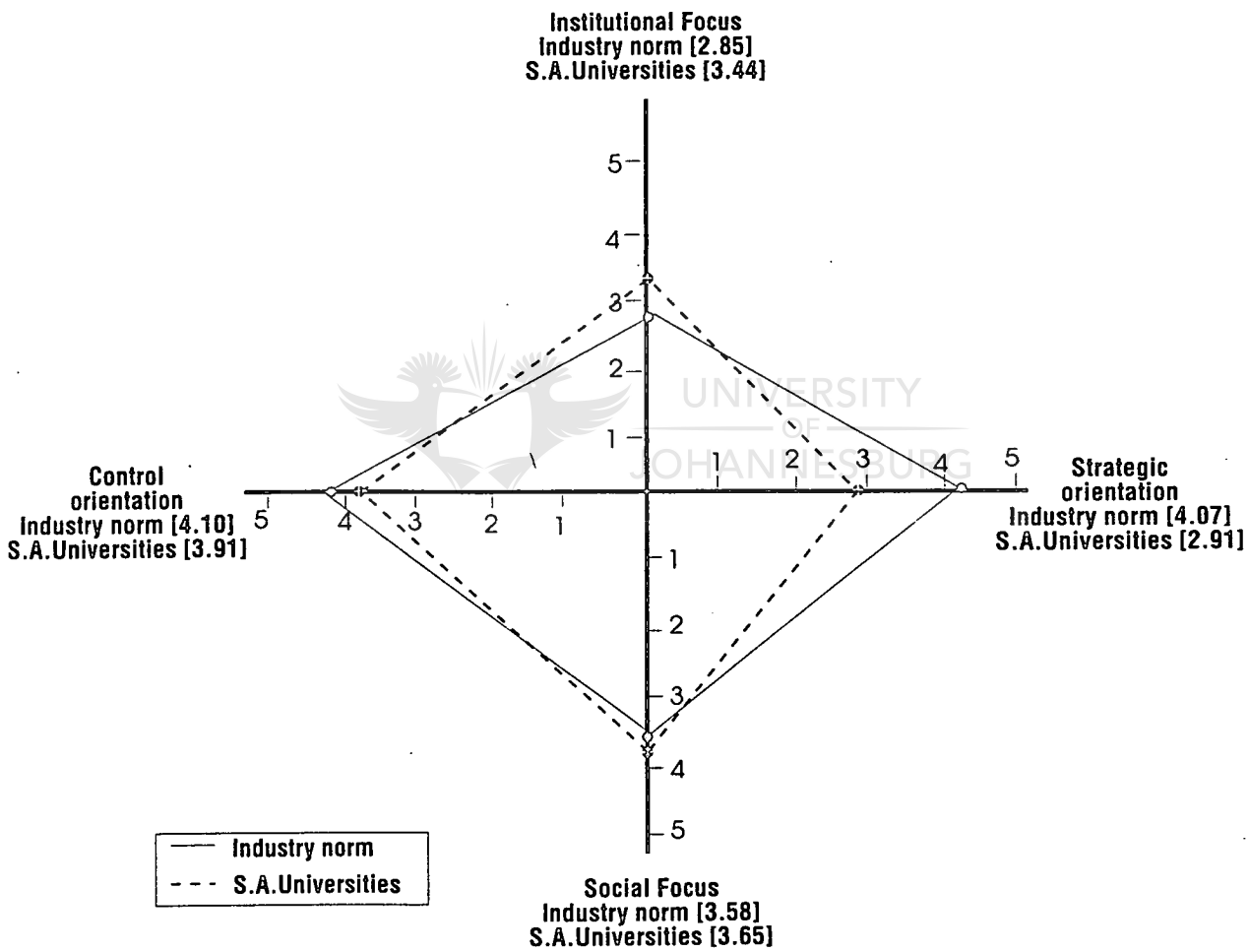
5.4.2.2 A *coping with change* profile of South African universities

A graphical illustration in the previous chapter (Figure 4.2) depicted a two-axes profile of large service organisations coping well with change. This profile was, for the purposes of this study, regarded as the *industry norm*. It could therefore be argued that if large service organisations, such as SAUs, display a similar profile to the *industry norm*, they are coping well with change.

In order to make a meaningful comparison of SAUs with the *industry norm*, an extract from Figure 5.1 consisting of the four dimensions of strategic orientation, social focus, control orientation and institutional focus were compared with the four dimensions on the two-axes profile (the *industry norm*) as illustrated in Figure 4.2. This profile was termed the *coping with change profile* and is portrayed in Figure 5.2.

FIGURE 5-2: A COPING WITH CHANGE PROFILE OF SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES



Source: Results obtained from the analysis of Part A of the questionnaire compared with Figure 4.2 in Chapter 4.

By analysing the information in Figure 5.2 the following interpretations can be made in terms of the four dimensions of strategic orientation, social focus, control orientation and institutional focus. This analysis was done against the idea of Human & Horwitz (1992:32) that organisations coping successfully with change, manage all four dimensions well.

* Strategic orientation (Value = 2.91)

The strategic dimension of SAUs (2.91) is less visible than in other large service organisations (4.07) coping well with change. This is as a direct result of lower scores registered in terms of the fundamental aspects of strategic orientation, namely dynamic culture, strategic leadership, people orientation and strategy implementation as discussed in Section 5.4.3 (a).

According to Human & Horwitz (1992:67) the strategic orientation links the internal world of the organisation to the external world of customers/stakeholder. It is through strategic dimension that visions are created and that organisations fulfil their societal function. Strategic orientation also creates synergy and initiates action from the more passive elements of the organisation. It also expresses the dynamic nature of organisation, namely the inevitability of change in organisational life.

The reflected score on strategic orientation, being lower than the *industry norm*, indicates a possible lack of this important managerial aspect in SAUs. It is therefore suggested that a sharper focus of SAUs on strategic orientation, could enhance the long-term strategic vision of SAUs. It can also assist management of SAUs to recognize important public issues in the external environment timeously and to respond to such issues pro-actively.

* Social focus (Value = 3.65)

The social focus aspect of SAUs (3.65) is slightly higher than

the *industry norm* (3.58). This is as a direct consequence of scores reflected in respect of the elements of social focus, namely social responsibility, black advancement, stakeholder relations, and pay and working conditions in the questionnaire.

Social focus is therefore regarded by university management as a primary feature of SAUs. This is congruent with the view of Human & Horwitz (1992:114) that for organisations coping well with change, it is important to gain the co-operation and involvement of people, to develop the potential of individuals, to remove all forms of discrimination and to effectively manage conflict, stakeholder relations and social responsibility.

* Control orientation (Value = 3.91)

The control orientation concerns the less glorious aspects of the organisation, that is, the activities of throughput, output, costs, quality, efficiency and productivity (Human & Horwitz 1992:73), by many regarded as the only authentic activity of the organisation. This essential aspect was also rated as the most important aspect of large service organisations coping well with change.

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From the analysis of scores relating to SAUs (3.91) it would seem that the importance of control orientation, as derived from scores on financial control, hands-on management, financial performance and product orientation, is slightly less the *industry norm* (4.10). This suggests an opportunity for an improvement in control orientation in SAUs. Such an improvement, however, needs to be balanced with the improvement of strategic orientation as previously mentioned. This would be congruent with the view of Human & Horwitz (1992:80) who caution against a disproportionate emphasis on control to the detriment of strategic orientation. Such an imbalance could, according to the same authors (Human & Horwitz 1992:80) lead to stagnation and eventual organisational failure.

* Institutional focus (Value = 3.44)

The institutional focus is concerned with the context in which organisations operate in respect of relationships with the state and with other organisations including both competitors and allies. This factor seems to be related to institutional connections or relationships and the management of such connections (Human & Horwitz 1992:30).

The institutional focus of large service organisations coping well with change (2.85) is regarded as less important than the dimensions of strategic orientation, social focus and control orientation. The institutional focus of SAUs (3.44) is, however, markedly higher than the *industry norm* (2.85). This higher score was derived from higher scores on the elements of relationship with the state, internationalization, strategic alliances and the experiencing of competition in the market place.

The high sore on institutional focus, as compared to the *industry norm*, suggests SAUs as being focused on the interest of outside stakeholder as a strategy for coping with change. This intimates a stakeholder approach which, in the current climate of conflict with internal and outside stakeholders, needs to be commended. However, if SAUs are to cope with change on the longer term, it could be suggested that the institutional focus in SAUs will have to be adjusted towards improved strategic orientation.

5.4.3 Conclusions with regard to the management of change in South African universities

Figure 4.1 was based on a two-axes model of ***environmental focus*** and ***organisational orientation*** of organisations, which in turn depicts four typologies, namely the ***boardroom organisation***, the ***hardhat organisation***, the ***technocracy*** and the ***missionary organisation*** as discussed in Section 4.3.2.1.

The results of the research with regard to these characteristics

indicate that the following typologies seem to prevail in SAUs:

* There is a reasonable balance between the elements of social focus (3.60) and institutional focus (3.44) in SAUs. This indicates a moderate balance in the **environmental focus** of SAUs which in turn suggests a reasonable ability to cope with changes in the external environment.

* There is, however, an imbalance between strategic orientation (2.91) and control orientation (3.91) in SAUs, with a bias towards the latter. This bias results in an imbalance in the **organisational orientation** of SAUs, which in turn suggests tight controls on organisational structures but a lack of dynamic focus in spite of a reasonable ability to cope with change.

* The aforementioned bias towards tight controls on organisational structures in SAUs indicates an inclination towards the '**hardhat**' type of organisation. The 'hardhat' type of organisation has a tendency to react and adapt to external institutional issues as they occur.

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* There is also a tendency towards the '**technocracy**' type of organisation in SAUs as a result of an above average institutional focus (3.44) and the strong control orientation (3.91). The technocracy is good at managing formal arrangements and relationships and tends to be bureaucratic in structure and spirit.

* There is furthermore an inclination towards the '**missionary**' as well as the '**boardroom**' types of organisation as a result of the strong social (3.65) and reasonable strong institutional (3.44) focus in SAUs. The 'missionary' inclination in SAUs indicates an emphasise on the people side and a sensitivity to social issues such as stakeholder relations, community projects, and black advancement. The 'boardroom' inclination in SAUs indicates

an elitist top-down management approach with strong central co-ordination and control in SAUs. The typical visionary leadership component of a 'boardroom' type of organisation, as described by Human & Horwitz (1992:34) is, however, impeded by the lack of strategic orientation (2.91) in the management of SAUs.

In summary, there seems to be a reasonable ability in SAUs to cope with change. This limited ability to change is, however, exasperated by a lack of strategic orientation, which in turn leads to an inability to manage the dynamic aspects of change. As a result, changes in SAUs tend to be slow with an inclination of management in SAUs to adapt to public issues as they occur, instead of managing such issues timeously and in a pro-active manner.

5.5 DATA ANALYSIS: THE EXPERIENCE OF MANAGEMENT REGARDING THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC ISSUES IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

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This section includes an orientation, an interpretation as well as conclusions regarding the experience of management with respect to the management of public issues in SAUs.

5.5.1 Orientation with regard to the management of public issues in South African universities

The eighth objective as stated in Section 1.4 was to analyse and describe the experience of management regarding the management of public issues in SAUs.

Statements contained in the first two sections (Q33 to Q44) of Part B was used to attain this goal. Descriptive analysis of the items provided a broad view of respondents' ratings of activities relating to the steps in the issues management process [as characterized by Ashley & Morrison (1995), Chase and Jones (Chase 1984), Theron (1994) and Ashley & Morrison (1995:129)], as

referred to in Section 2.2.8.

For the purpose of providing a broad indication of answers, the descriptive percentages relating to statements in Table II of Annexure E were summarized in the following manner:

* Percentages of respondents having scored one and two are grouped together.

* Percentages of respondents having scored three are reported on as measured.

* Percentages of respondents having scored four and five are grouped together.

Percentage figures were furthermore rounded to the nearest whole number for clarity and are reflected in Table IV of Annexure E.

5.5.2 Interpretation of results obtained

Answers pertaining to statements 33 to 44 will be considered for the purposes of this section. The interpretation of results will be done in the same statement sequence. The construct also constitutes the sequence of steps in the issues management process, namely:

5.5.2.1. Issues identification

The first priority of issues management is to identify emerging issues on an early and ongoing basis as mentioned in Section 2.2.8.1. This must be done early enough to allow the organisation to reveal significant positive or negative effects on the organisation and its activities, and to pro-actively respond to such issues.

The survey indicates that the distribution of respondents becoming aware of public issues impacting on SAUs by scanning the

mass media (Q33 = 64%), institutional publications (Q34 = 62%) and by attending formal meetings/conferences (Q35 = 61%) is almost equal. A significant higher percentage (Q36 = 86%) of respondents become aware of issues through informal interaction or meetings with colleagues.

5.5.2.2 Designation of issue owners

Once an issue is identified it becomes important for a senior manager to take ownership of the issue and to be responsible for its successful resolution (Ashley & Morrison 1995:152).

In 46% (Q37) of issues management programmes in SAUs a senior manager most closely aligned with the issue, will take responsibility for the issue and in 41% (Q38) of cases a management team is formed by involving knowledgeable and influential people. In most instances management remains either neutral or does not align an issue owner or management team to a public issue.

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5.5.2.3 Analysis of public issues

An important aspect of an issues management programme is to define an issue from the organisation's perspective and to determine its background through a situational assessment (Ashley & Morrison 1995:133).

The percentage of respondents that analyse issues (Q39) through the gathering of information with a view of a situational assessment is 48%. That means that just over half of the managers in SAUs do not gather information with the view of conducting a situational assessment of public issues.

5.5.2.4 Identification of stakeholders

Identifying and understanding primary stakeholders (that the organisation needs for survival e.g the government, staff and

students) and secondary stakeholders (which include special interest groups such as the media and communities); and effectively handling such stakeholders are crucial to managing an issue (Ashley & Morrison 1995:136).

Forty seven percent (Q40) of respondents have a formalised system of identifying all stakeholders with a possible interest in a public issue and to liaise with such stakeholders regarding the issue. Eighteen percent are neutral and 35% does not operate such a system at all.

5.5.2.5 Development of objectives

Since the agenda of stakeholders and organisations may vary it is important to develop specific objectives that support both the position of stakeholders as well as the organisation (Ashley & Morrison 1995:141).

With regard to the management of SAUs, only 42% (Q41) of managers develops specific organisational objectives with respect to public issues impacting on their institutions.

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5.5.2.6 Strategy formulation

Successful organisational objectives produce a specific set of ideas (a strategy) to be implemented over a specific period of time with regard to high-priority issues (as discussed in Section 2.2.8.3).

Forty six percent (Q42) of respondents develops specific ideas (strategies) regarding public issues. Should any strategies be formulated the next step for management in SAUs would be action through strategy implementation and evaluation.

5.5.2.7 Strategy implementation

Strategy implementation is according to Ashley & Morrison

(1995:143) a doing process of several parts. These parts include actions with regard to communication programs, co-operation with other organisations, the use of quantitative data, involvement of staff and the building of credibility.

Forty seven per cent (Q43) of respondents implements action plans in order to deal with public issues. This is slightly less than the 42% (Q32) implementation of other strategic plans as assessed in a previous section of the questionnaire. Thirty seven percent (Q43) of respondents are of the opinion that no strategies are implemented with regard to public issues impacting on their institutions.

5.5.2.8 Response evaluation

As discussed in Section 2.2.8.5 the evaluation of results is the final step in the issues management process. It involves the audit of the process of issues management and a performance appraisal to assess the degree of success achieved through applying the process of issues management.

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The percentage of respondents that evaluates the effectiveness of action plans with regard to public issues (Q44) is only 37% with 63% either neutral or negative. This should be a matter of concern for SAUs as effective issues management requires the evaluation of achieved results, coupled to the responsiveness of management to adjust strategies if necessary (Morrison & Ashley 1995:145).

5.5.3 Conclusions with regard to the management of public issues in South African universities

The following constitute a key point summary of conclusions reached regarding the experience of policy makers and strategic management practitioners with respect to the management of public issues in SAUs:

* In most cases management becomes aware of public issues impacting on SAUs through informal interaction or meetings (networking) with colleagues. Public issues are to a lesser degree identified through the scanning of the mass media, institutional publications and through attending formal meetings.

* Once an issue is identified there seems to be a bland commitment on the part of individual managers or management teams to accept ownership of the issue and to be responsible for its successful resolution.

* The importance of timeous evaluation, as to the nature and background of public issues impacting on SAUs, through situational assessment is not viewed as a vital aspect of issues management in SAUs.

* Although the identification and understanding of all stakeholder are regarded as important, it is not regarded as a crucial component by managers attempting to manage public issues impacting on SAUs.

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* There seems to be a tendency in SAUs to regard the development of specific organisational objectives to deal with public issues, as slightly more import than other general management objectives.

* To be successful in the implementation of issues management programmes, a higher percentage of management on different management levels in SAUs needs to become involved in specific action plans with regard to the management of high-priority issues.

* Management is either neutral or negative regarding the evaluation of action plans with respect to the management of public issues in SAUs. This might make them less responsive and reluctant to adjust their issues management

strategies if necessary.

In summary it can be concluded that management in SAUs, in spite of a number of weaknesses, do attempt to manage critical public issues impacting on their institutions. They do, however, seem to manage such issues in an informal and uncommitted manner, instead of in a well structured issues management system.

5.6 DATA ANALYSIS: A COMPETENCE PROFILE WITH REGARD TO THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC ISSUES IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

This section includes an orientation, an interpretation as well as conclusions regarding a competence profile of management in SAUs in respect of the management of public issues.

5.6.1 Orientation with regard to a competence profile of South African universities

A competence profile is a list of the major skills and capabilities in an organisation. It is a strength and weakness profile only relative to specific areas of competencies and skills as discussed in Section 4.3.3.

The ninth objective, as stated in Section 1.4, was to provide a competence profile with regard to the management of public issues in SAUs. The achievement of the ninth objective will now be considered against the background of the competence framework as proposed in Section 4.3.3.2 and illustrated in Figure 4.4. This competence framework exhibits three key dimensions of an effective issues management programme, namely ***forecasting***, ***strategic management*** and ***stakeholder relations***, in congruence with the two competence parameters of efficient issues management, namely ***managerial skills*** and ***organisational capabilities***. The interpretation of results was consequently done with this framework in mind.

5.6.2 Interpretation of results obtained

For interpretation purposes a number of selected statements in the questionnaire were re-arranged in accordance with the three key dimensions of an effective issues management programme, as illustrated in Figure 4.4. The results belonging to these statements were summarised in the same manner as described in Section 5.5.1. and are listed in Table IV of Annexure E.

The discussion of the results on management skills and organisational capabilities will be done against the backdrop of the three key dimensions of an effective issues management programme, namely forecasting, strategic management and stakeholder relations.

5.6.2.1 Forecasting managerial skills and organisational capabilities

A forecast is a projection of conditions that are expected to prevail in the future by making use of both past and present information (Smit & Cronje 1992:100). It is also a means of identifying critical issues which might in the future impact on an organisation. This section provides a basic checklist of forecasting management skills and organisational capabilities in SAUs.

(a) Forecasting skills

As mentioned in Section 4.3.2.1(b) a factor analysis by Theron (1994) revealed that managers are using four aids in effectively managing public issues impacting on their organizations. Two of these aids relate to the dimension of forecasting and issues identification, namely *use of the media* and *networking*. The survey results which are depicted in Table IV of Annexure E reveal the following:

* Use of the media

Just over 60% (Q33 & Q34) of managers makes use of the media by scanning newspapers and articles in university publications and research papers for public issues impacting on their institutions.

* Networking

Most networking takes place through informal interaction/ meetings with colleagues (Q36 = 86%) with less networking through connections with outsiders (Q19 = 74%). Networking by means of formal meetings/conferences (Q35 = 61%) and through strategic alliances with other universities (Q28 = 60%) is also regarded as important.

* Delphi, scenario building and brainstorming

Only 7% (Q53) of management in SAUs makes use of the Delphi technique and 39% (Q55) of scenario building. Brainstorming seems to be the most prominent technique amongst management of SAUs (Q52 = 52%).

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(b) Forecasting capabilities

The survey results which are depicted in Table IV of Annexure E reveal the following in respect of forecasting capabilities:

* A high percentage (Q51 = 68%) of respondents uses internet and its related components of the World Wide Webb and E-mail to facilitate their forecasting abilities.

* A lower percentage of respondents utilises public advisors (Q59 = 30%) and data processing facilities (Q54 = 15%), such as cross-impact analysis, are hardly used at all.

5.6.2.2 Strategic management skills and capabilities

Strategic management is an important responsibility of general management and a process aimed at keeping the organisation appropriately matched to its macro-environment. The use of strategic management as one of four management aids used in the effective management of public issues was furthermore confirmed by Theron (1994) through factor analysis. Management skills and capabilities pertaining to the strategic management process were therefore investigated.

(a) Strategic management skills

Strategic management refers to the broad overall process that involves not only planning but also the organizing, directing and controlling of strategy related decisions and actions (Smit & Cronje 1992:107). It therefore encompasses the formulation, implementation and evaluation of strategies through effective leadership and efficient communication.

The survey results which are depicted in Table IV of Annexure E reveal the following in respect of leadership, issue communication, plan formulation, plan implementation and plan evaluation.

* Leadership in an issues management context

Seventy eight percent (Q15) of leaders in SAUs exhibits visionary abilities and in almost the same percentage (Q30 = 68%) the quality of thinking is outstanding. Leadership in SAUs therefore exhibits an ability to conceptualize the future and a reasonable proficiency to bridge the gap between where their institutions are, and where they want their institutions to ultimately be.

* Communication of public issues

Various formalised communication channels are found in SAUs of

which the channel from higher to lower levels of management (Q45 = 61%) seems to be the one mostly used. Formalised channels which begin at lower levels and which flow upwards to top management (Q46 =33%), and communication between decision-making centres/management at the same management level (Q47 = 44%) as well as at different horizontal management levels (Q48 = 45%) are to a reasonable extent utilised in SAUs. A greater emphasis seems to be on informal and incidental personal contact (Q49 = 57%) between management in SAUs. A priority in SAUs seems to be the communication of public issue matters with stakeholders such as government, community leaders, students and personnel (Q50 = 73%).

* Plan formulation

Plan formulation includes the gathering of information and the evaluation of responses available under different scenarios. It also requires that ownership of an issue should reside with a senior manager most closely aligned with it (Ashley & Morrison 1995:131). Only 46% (Q37) of senior managers, aligned with the public issue, takes responsibility for, and subsequently becomes the "owner" of the issue. Forty one percent (Q38) of "issue owners" then forms management teams consisting of knowledgeable and influential people. Forty seven per cent (Q40) of management teams identifies and liaises with stakeholders with a possible interest in the public issue. In 48% (Q39) of cases the management team gathers information regarding the importance of the public issue. Following the identification and evaluation of public issues, 42% (Q41) of management teams develops organizational objectives regarding the public issue and only 46% (Q42) formulates specific strategies for the management of the public issue.

* Plan implementation

Once a strategy is formulated the next phase is operationalizing the strategy (Smit & Cronje 1992:405). It would seem that the

implementation of strategic plans with regard to public issues (Q43 = 47%) enjoys a slightly higher prominence than the implementation of other general strategic plans (Q32 = 42%).

* Plan evaluation

Once a strategic plan with respect to an issue is implemented, there should be a consistent evaluation of progress and an adjustment of the plan if necessary. Effective issues management therefore requires responsiveness and the ability to adjust issues management strategies. The survey reveals that there is a limited evaluation of strategic plans regarding public issues (Q44 = 37%).

(b) Strategic management capabilities

The survey results which are depicted in Table IV of Annexure E reveal the following in respect of strategic managerial abilities:

* A big percentage (Q56 = 70%) of universities avail themselves of internal strategic planners/divisions in their universities for the management of critical public issues.

* A smaller percentage (Q58 =35%) of universities utilises external strategic planners for the management of public issues impacting on their institutions.

* In only 30% (Q57) of cases do top management in SAUs avail themselves of the services of internal business management departments in order to assist in the management of public issues impacting on their institutions.

5.6.2.3 Stakeholder relation skills and capabilities

Stakeholders were defined in Chapter 1 as anybody associated with

an organisation such as a university and who may feel that they have a legitimate claim to influence the nature and direction of that university.

(a) Stakeholder relation skills

The main stakeholders in SAUs are the government, communities, staff and students. The survey results which are depicted in Table IV of Annexure D reveal the following in respect of stakeholder skills:

* Government as a stakeholder

Sixty four per cent (Q13) of SAUs maintains beneficial relations with the government.

* Community involvement

Seventy per cent (Q27) of SAUs asserts that good community relations are maintained through significant contributions to community projects.

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* Human potential of staff

The relatively low development of human potential of staff at all levels in SAUs (Q14 = 36%) indicates a possible lack of good relations between top management and non-management staff in SAUs.

* Student trust

Of great concern is the lack of trust that management seems to experience from students in SAUs. Only 33% (Q20) of management feel that students trust management. Forty three per cent does not experience any trust from students and 24% is neutral on the issue.

(b) Stakeholder relation capabilities

Universities have during the past decades been dragged into public forums and challenged by stakeholders demanding increased accountability and public acceptance. The results which are depicted in Table IV of Annexure E reveal the following in respect of the capability of SAUs to deal with stakeholder demands:

* Sixty five per cent (Q25) of management in SAUs maintain that it has developed a sound ability to deal with stakeholder relations.

* The aforementioned 65% (Q25) does not seem to be high enough. In spite of this, a low percentage (Q60 = 11%) of management in SAUs utilises experienced external lobbyists to promote and improve the relationship between their institutions and its stakeholders.

5.6.3 Conclusions regarding the competence profile of South African universities

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The competence profile of an organisation is a list of the major skills and capabilities relative to specific areas of competencies and skills; in this case of skills and capabilities relative to the management of public issues impacting on SAUs and specifically the dimensions of forecasting, strategic management and stakeholder relations.

* Forecasting

From the aforementioned analyses and discussions, it would appear that the forecasting skills and capabilities of SAUs seem to be of a limited and informal nature. Most managers, for instance, become aware of issues impacting on their institutions through informal networking and/or meetings with colleagues and by

informally scanning the mass media. This conclusion is supported by the limited and even insignificant application of forecasting techniques such as Delphi and scenario building and the modest use of public advisors. The argument is furthermore substantiated by the fact that the identification and understanding of all stakeholders are not regarded as a crucial component by managers attempting to identify and manage public issues impacting on SAUs. The conclusion can therefore be drawn that the competence of management in SAUs to forecast major public issues in a well structured manner seems to be limited. This limitation could render SAUs vulnerable to new public issues that may influence their institutions in the near future, which in turn could force them to react to, instead of managing such issues pro-actively.

* Strategic management

The foregoing analyses of strategic management skills and capabilities expose a number of positive and negative management features in SAUs.

The first positive aspect is that leadership in SAUs seem to exhibit visionary abilities and quality thinking and therefore the ability to conceptualise the future. Another positive aspect is the communication of aspects relating to the future as well as possible issues associated with the future within SAUs. This however, seems to occur either from higher to lower management levels without adequate feedback, or through informal and incidental personal contact between managers. A further positive aspect is the communication of public issue matters to stakeholder such as the government, community leaders, students and staff. This seems to happen in spite of a lack of good relations between top management and non-management staff and amidst a lack of trust between management and students as were indicated in a later section of the survey.

A negative aspect seems to be the bland commitment on the part of individual managers or management teams to accept ownership

of public issues. This non-committal approach could hamper the formulation and implementation of plans for the successful resolution of public issues. It could also, as was indeed pointed out in the survey, lead to a lack of consistent evaluation of action plans, which in turn could hinder the ability of management to adjust issues management strategies if necessary. The worst scenario would be that a lack of ownership of public issues could inhibit clear demarcation of authority, responsibility and accountability in respect of such issues, which in turn constitute a recipe for failure.

A positive aspect is that the majority of universities avail themselves of internal strategic planners/divisions in their universities. This is a direct consequence of a smaller percentage of universities utilizing the assistance of external strategic planners for the formulation of plans regarding public issues impacting on their institutions. A peculiar aspect is the under-utilisation of business management departments, within individual universities, to assist top management in the management of public issues. Business mamagement departments within universities deal with the fundamentals of the theory and science of management and purport to have the necessary management knowledge and expertise. They are, however, not acknowledged in crucial management matters such as assistance in the identification and the management of public issues impacting on their own universities. Whether this would be by choice, through lack of time, or lack of trust by top management remains un-answered and a possible topic for further investigation. It is furthermore suspected that this phenomena may extend further to a lack of general strategic management assistance to top management by business management departments within universities. The latter aspect was, however, not empirically established in this study and therefore remains mere speculation. It could, however, be recommended as a topic for further study.

* Stakeholder relations

A relevant issue pertaining to the restructuring of SAUs is the respective roles of different stakeholders including the government, communities, staff and students. From the survey it is evident that SAUs maintain a reasonably good relationship with the state. It also recognises the importance of excellent relationships with local communities. A matter of concern, however, is the lack of good relations between top management and non-management staff in SAUs. An even greater concern is the lack of trust that management seems to experience from students in SAUs.

5.7 SUMMARY

This chapter commenced with a discussion of a number of descriptive statistics which was selected for the purpose of this study. These descriptive statistics and subsequent quantitative data supported the qualitative interpretations and conclusions reached in this chapter.

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The analysis of data was done in line with the four main objectives of this chapter. Firstly to gain an insight into the management mode of SAUs; secondly to ascertain the experience of management regarding the management of change in SAUs and thirdly the management of public issues in SAUs. The fourth and last objective was achieved by compiling a competence profile of management regarding the management of public issues in SAUs.

In order to gain an insight into the experience of management of SAUs regarding the management of change, an empirical research method was applied to analyse the mission statements and goals of SAUs. The aim of the survey was to determine whether management in SAUs demonstrates a pro-active management mode with regard to future public issues in the public policy process. The conclusion was drawn that management in SAUs exhibit a pro-active management mode regarding public issues impacting on SAUs through

the public policy process. The challenge for universities would now be the articulation of their pro-active strategies as contained in their mission statements to all stakeholders, and the implementation thereof on different operational levels.

The insight into the management of change in SAUs was done against the backdrop of two different but related profiles, namely a *diagnostic profile* and a *coping of change profile* of SAUs. From these two profiles the deduction could be made that there seems to be a reasonable ability in SAUs to cope with change. This ability is, however, constrained by a lack of strategic orientation, which in turn leads to an inability to manage the dynamic aspects of change. As a result, changes in SAUs could tend to be slow with an inclination of management in SAUs to adapt to public issues as they occur, instead of managing such issues timeously and in a pro-active manner.

In order to get an insight into the management of public issues in SAUs a descriptive analysis of activities relating to the steps in the issues management process [as characterized by Ashley & Morrison (1995), Chase and Jones (Chase 1984), Theron (1994) and Ashley & Morrison (1995:129)] was done. The conclusion was drawn that management in SAUs do attempt to manage critical public issues impacting on their institutions. They do, however, seem to manage such issues in an informal and uncommitted manner, instead of in a well structured issues management system.

The last objective in this chapter was to provide a competence profile with regard to the management of public issues in SAUs. This objective was considered against the background of the competence framework which exhibited three key dimensions of an effective issues management programme, namely *forecasting*, *strategic management* and *stakeholder relations*, in congruence with the two competence parameters of effective issues management, namely *managerial skills* and *organisational capabilities*. The research pointed to a number of positive and negative issues management features in SAUs.

It would for instance appear that the competence of management in SAUs to forecast major public issues in a well structured manner seems to be limited, which in turn could force them to react to, instead of manage public issues pro-actively.

A positive aspect is that leadership in SAUs seem to exhibit visionary abilities and quality thinking and therefore the ability to conceptualise the future. The non-committal approach of management with regard to critical public issues could, however, constrain the formulation and implementation of plans for the successful resolution of such public issues.

The majority of universities avail themselves of internal strategic planners/divisions in their universities for the formulation of plans regarding public issues impacting on their institutions. The assistance of external strategic planners is being used to a lesser extent. On the other hand, business management departments within individual universities seem to be completely under-utilized. The reason for the latter state of affairs could, however, not be established as such an investigation fell outside the scope of this study.

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The final conclusions and recommendations relating to this study will follow in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6

ISSUES MANAGEMENT AS A STRATEGY FOR PRO-ACTIVE CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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CHAPTER 6

ISSUES MANAGEMENT AS A STRATEGY FOR PRO-ACTIVE CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SYNOPSIS

Two major aspects were emphasised in this study. Firstly, the theoretical concepts of issues management and how they relate to other management concepts. Secondly, the relevance of issues management in managing pro-active change in South African universities (SAUs).

It was determined that issues management, linked to strategic management, is an appropriate management process to manage public issues in a pro-active manner. It was furthermore resolved through empirical surveys, that management in SAUs exhibits a pro-active management mode with regard to public issues and that there seems to be a reasonable ability in SAUs to cope with macro-environmental change. The effective management of public issues and consequently pro-active change is, however, approached with bland commitment, a lack of strategic orientation and inadequate competence.

It was subsequently concluded that, in view of the need in SAUs for a structured means of managing emerging public issues and consequently pro-active change, and in view of issues management constituting such a process, there is relevance for the implementation of issues management programmes in SAUs. In this regard a number of general recommendations were made with respect to managing the dynamic aspects of change, the implementation of strategies and the implementation of an issues management strategy. A framework was furthermore suggested for the implementation of an issues management strategy in SAUs in the belief that this framework and the overall research reported in this thesis could be of theoretical as well as empirical value for management in SAUs.

CHAPTER 6

ISSUES MANAGEMENT AS A STRATEGY TO MANAGE PRO-ACTIVE CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The century of Lenin, Einstein, Freud, Hitler, The Cold War, Civil Rights movements and Apartheid is drawing to a close. As the world, including the Republic of South Africa (RSA), heads into the 21st century, the challenges of managing technological advances, social conflicts, cultural animosities, ecological damage, regional rivalries, and ethnic and religious tensions will become more prevalent. Such forces for change inevitably culminate as politico-governmental and socio-economic issues (public issues), and eventually impact on the nature and management of organisations, including the management of South African universities (SAUs).

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In the present post-apartheid RSA changes in organisations are also made as a result of conditions of pressure, culminating as public issues within the macro-environment of organisations. Similarly the need for change in SAUs are flowing mainly from conditions of pressure, which culminate as public issues within the macro-environment of SAUs. The need for change is exasperated by the fact that even fundamental internal issues in SAUs, are invariably transformed into socio-economic or politico-governmental issues, through the involvement of government and outside publics. Corporate success, including the successful management of SAUs, demands that public forces of change be identified and analysed timeously. It also requires that public issues be managed pro-actively. The timeous identification, analysis and management of public issues are the key ingredients of *issues management* and were addressed in this study.

6.2 SUMMARY

The changing macro-environment and public issues flowing from it pose various challenges to management in SAUs. The implication of this statement is twofold. Firstly, that a strategy should be formulated to manage public issues and, secondly, that such a strategy should be a pro-active method of managing public issues impacting on SAUs. To this end, a programme was developed to form the basis of this study. This programme encompassed a literature study and two empirical surveys. The background to this programme, and the procedures used to accomplish it, are outlined in the following paragraphs.

* Background

A decade ago the concept of issues management was created as a means for improving the effectiveness of public relations managers when Howard Chase (Chase 1984) designated it as a "new science". Other authors (Arrington & Sawaya 1984, Coates 1985, Coates *et al*. 1986, Cook 1989, Cook *et al*. 1988 and Ewing 1987) argued that organisations could not plan wisely or operate independently of their public policy environments. However, as late as 1990 issues management was still regarded as something new (Heath & Cousino 1990:16) with little understanding about what the function ought to be and what it should entail. It was thus, at the onset of this study, of primary importance to obtain a clear explanation of what issues management is.

* Procedure

To describe issues management and what the process involves, various literature sources were consulted. Chapter 2 outlined theoretical conceptions of what issues management is, what it does, how it relates to other management concepts and pro-active strategies. It was established that issues management is a management process determined to identify and analyse issues which can have a strategic impact on the future viability of an

organisation as well as managing an effective response to such issues. It must be pointed out that although a distinction can be made between management as a 'cadre' of people, and management as an activity, the term 'management' as used in this study included both these perspectives.

The study concentrated on the management of macro-environmental public issues which, through the public policy process, impact on SAUs. It was therefore necessary to provide a macro-environmental perspective of SAUs. This perspective was presented in Chapter 3 and included a description of the nature and function of universities, the history and management of SAUs and public issues impacting on SAUs. Discussions of some of the public issues affecting SAUs provided a useful foundation to establish the management mode of SAUs in respect of public issues impacting on SAUs through the public policy process. It also facilitated the analysis and discussion of the extent to which management of SAUs copes with strategic change.

Chapter 4 outlined the empirical research methods which were used to obtain answers to the research questions (as cited in Section 1.3.2). The research design regarding the aforementioned research questions was grouped into three pragmatic sections. The research was subsequently executed by means of two different empirical surveys.

The first empirical survey comprised of a content analysis of mission statement of SAUs. The second survey entailed the use of a questionnaire. The questionnaire design, data collection procedures and data processing methods received particular attention. It was decided that the demarcated research target would be universities registered as statutory members of the Committee of University Principals (CUP). Policy-makers (rectors/principals of member universities of the CUP) as well as strategic management practitioners (registrars and deputy registrars/administrators and deans of faculties) constituted the elements of the target population.

It was furthermore decided that management in SAUs would not be sampled but that the study would be completed for all policy makers as well as strategic management practitioners in SAUs. In this way wider participation would be achieved, and the problems emanating from sampling could be avoided. Satisfactory response rates to both the empirical surveys made it possible to continue with the analysis and interpretation of results in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5 provided an orientation, analyses and interpretation of the empirical results achieved through the two different empirical surveys. Descriptive statistics supported a number of qualitative interpretations and conclusions. It must be emphasised that, at no stage was the intention that empirical data be processed for individual universities. The intention was rather to establish data in order to reach collective conclusions in respect of management in SAUs. It was concluded that management in SAUs exhibit a pro-active management mode with regard to public issues impacting on SAUs through the public policy process. An analysis of management in SAUs indicated a reasonable ability in SAUs to cope with change but in an informal way. A competence profile of management furthermore exposed a number of positive and negative issues management features in SAUs. These practical and other theoretical conclusions will be reviewed in the next section dealing with conclusions.

6.3 CONCLUSIONS

This study centred around gaining a theoretical and practical insight into the management of public issues in SAUs. To achieve this purpose eleven objectives were set in Section 1.4. In pursuing these objectives a literature survey and study as well as two different and separate empirical surveys were conducted. Conclusions relating to ten of these objectives will be reviewed in this section. The eleventh objective will be dealt with in Section 6.4.2.

The results will be presented in the form of key point

conclusions and will be discussed in the same order as the set objectives.

6.3.1 Understanding issues management within a macro-environmental context

Objective 1 constituted the first theoretical objective of the study and comprised of a deliberation of issues management within a macro-environmental context. The results lead to the following conclusions:

* The macro-environment consisting of socio-economic and politico-governmental factors is the non-market environment applicable to public issues impacting on organisations.

* Public issues are emerging, current or unfolding conditions of socio-economic and politico-governmental dimension that influence organisations through the public policy process.

* The public policy process is the mechanism in a free society through which the aspirations and dissatisfactions of publics work their way up through public issue debates into law and regulation.

* Publics are groups of individuals with varying degrees of commitment who unite around public issues.

* It is through the perpetuating force of publics in the public policy process that public issues, if not resolved, influence the viability of organisations.

* There is a diminishing ability of organisations to influence public issues as they develop in relation to time.

* There is therefore a need for a management process to identify and analyse public issues which can have a

strategic impact on the future viability of organisations timeously, as well as orchestrating an effective response to such issues.

* Issues management, integrated with strategic management, is a management response technique that can assist management to cope with public issues in an unpredictable macro-environment.

* Issues management, in a public issues context, is a management process of identifying emerging public issues of particular relevance to organisations timeously, analysing their potential impact accurately, and preparing appropriate responses pro-actively. By doing so it can strengthen pro-active strategic change in organisations.

6.3.2 Understanding issues management from an offensive environmental management perspective

Objective 2 dealt with issues management from an offensive environmental management perspective, that is, issues management as an offensive strategy to change the environmental context in which the organisation operates instead of merely positioning the organisation in relation to its environment. In this respect the following conclusions were reached:

* An offensive mode of issues management can influence issues outside the organisation within the public policy process, that is, actively shaping and influencing the public policy process through public relations, public advocacy, coalition building and lobbying.

* The viability and legitimacy of an organisation rests on public opinion and acceptance rather than on law. There should therefore be an emphasis on a public-issues orientation for both internal and external public relations communications, that is, an offensive approach for changing

the environmental context in which the organisation operates and not merely creating a mutual understanding between the organisation and its outside publics.

* Instead of just defending its position on key public issues, management must advocate its posture on public issues in order to give the organisation a voice in public policy debate, that is, a corporate communication response of persuading and not merely informing. This should be done through public advocacy which involves personal and direct contact and/or correspondence with public decision-makers, media interviews, participation in appropriate public forums and belonging to organisations devoted to public policy issues.

* Coalition building with like-thinking organisations should be a support system which can anticipate public issues and help management develop and pursue a position and a strategy on such issues. A major outcome of any coalition should thus be the creation of ownership among participants and a common direction for shaping public issues in the public policy process.

* Organisations need to lobby and solicit the support of influential person(s) in an attempt to intervene in the development of public issues in the public policy process, that is, mobilising and co-ordinating organisational resources to strategically influence or prevent, if necessary, the development of public issues into public law and regulation.

6.3.3 The concept of strategy from an issues management perspective

Objective 3 was set in order to consider the aspect of strategy from a issues management perspective. It was concluded that:

* Organisations are in need of "real time" strategies, that is, a pattern of continuous and timeous actions and resource allocations in order to respond to public issues pro-actively and thereby positioning the organisation optimally within a changing and turbulent environmental context.

* The focus of issues management should not only centre on chartering a course for the total organisation through corporate strategies. It should also encompass specific functional strategies to put corporate strategies "into action". Issues management should therefore be viewed in the context of both corporate and functional strategies.

* The formulation of an effective strategy to manage issues in the public policy process should be based on a clear definition of the mission of the organisation. Only then will management be in a position to choose a realistic strategy which can enhance the attainment of the mission and mission goals of the organisation.

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6.3.4 The concept of strategic change management, within an issues management context

Objective 4 dealt with the deliberation of strategic change management within an issues management context. Conclusions drawn in respect of this objective were:

* The macro-environment of organisations in the RSA, including the macro-environment of SAUs, is in the process of comprehensive and profound socio-economic and politico-governmental change.

* Traditional change management tends to frame a reactive response to change instead of developing a pro-active response towards the future.

* Strategic change management is, however, a deliberate, reasoned and planned process enabling organisations to adapt to strategic changes on a pro-active basis.

* Pro-active strategic change management depends largely on the ability of management to predict and anticipate pressures for change in the macro-environment.

* Pressures for change tend to culminate as public issues in the public policy process. A pro-active process is therefore required to timeously and consciously identify, analyse, intervene and/or participate public issues that may force important strategic changes onto the organisations.

* A management process which could pro-actively manage emerging public issues, and thereby enhance pro-active strategic change, is concluded to be the management process of issues management.

6.3.5 An overview of South African universities from a macro-environmental perspective

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Objective 5, being the last of the theoretical objectives, was set to obtain an overview of South African universities from a macro-environmental perspective. A study of literature sources produced the following conclusions:

* By classical definition, a university is "a body of teachers and scholars engaged in learning and the generation of knowledge". Universities are semi-autonomous in teaching and research and generally inspired by the pursuit of excellence and social justice.

* Universities are generally regarded as conservative institutions. A positive aspect of this 'conservatism' is that it provides an important stabilising effect on

society. A negative consequence is that virtually all change is resisted.

* Universities in the RSA are elements of a higher education subsystem of universities, technikons and colleges, which forms part of a larger formal education system.

* The historical development of post-secondary education institutions in the RSA occurred largely to serve the needs of particular communities or population groups.

* Since 1994 universities have had to face a number of serious challenges. This necessitated a critical examination of their role in the complex society in which they are embedded, and how they should respond to the pressures exerted on them.

* The NCHE (NCHE-DD 1996) provided a framework for transforming the higher education system. The major present challenge facing SAUs is to effect the internal transformation necessary in order to leave behind its apartheid legacy and to fulfil a new mission in a new democratic dispensation. Another challenge is the instrumental and utilitarian validity of SAUs, that is, to acquire and articulate truth, knowledge, skills and attitudinal predispositions, but to do this for the benefit of society.

* Present changes in SAUs are, as in the past, mainly taking place as a result of politico-governmental and socio-economic forces which impact on SAUs through the public policy process.

* There is nothing to suggest that the involvement of the government and publics within the macro-environment of SAUs will abate in future. Public issues emanating from the macro-environment of SAUs will, therefore, continue to

impact on SAUs through the public policy process.

6.3.6 The management mode in South African universities with regard to the public issues in the public policy process

Objective 6 was the first of the empirical research objectives. Its aim was determine the management mode in SAUs with regard to the public issues in the public policy process. A comparison of the mission statements/goals of SAUs and the public priorities expressed by the NCHE revealed the following:

* Management exhibits a pro-active management mode with regard to public issues impacting on SAUs through the public policy process. There is therefore a perceived need for managing such issues pro-actively in SAUs.

* The immediate and new challenge for universities is the articulation of their pro-active strategies as contained in their mission statements, as well as the implementation of their mission strategies on corporate, and functional levels.

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6.3.7 The experience of management regarding the management of change in South African universities

Objective 7 involved the experience of management in SAUs regarding the management of change in SAUs. Interpretation of results in terms of a *diagnostic profile* and a *coping of change profile* of SAUs provided the following conclusions:

* The 'hardhat' and 'technocracy' types of organisation dominate in SAUs. There is therefore a tendency to react and adapt to external institutional issues as they occur, with a tendency to manage formal arrangements and relationships in a bureaucratic spirit within bureaucratic structures.

* There is an inclination towards the 'missionary' as well as the 'boardroom' types of organisation with an emphasis on the people side and a sensitivity to social issues, but with an elitist top-down management approach.

* There seems to be a reasonable ability in SAUs to cope with macro-environmental change but with a lack of strategic orientation, This in turn leads to an inability to manage the dynamic aspects of change. As a result, changes in SAUs tend to be slow with an inclination to adapt to public issues as they occur, instead of managing such issues timeously and in a pro-active manner.

6.3.8 The experience of management regarding the management of public issues in South African universities

Objective 8 concerned itself with the experience of management in SAUs regarding the management of public issues in SAUs. Analysis of data relating to the steps in the issues management process [as characterised by Ashley & Morrison (1995), Chase and Jones (Chase 1984) and Theron (1994), produced the following results:

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* Most managers in SAUs become aware of public issues through informal interaction or meetings with colleagues. There is therefore a lack of formal structures for the timeous identification of issues impacting on SAUs, which in turn may impede SAUs in defining problematic issues clearly and to manage such issues pro-actively.

* There seems to be a bland commitment on the part of individual managers and/or management teams to take responsibility for public issues impacting on SAUs. Such a tardy approach may contribute to the perception that management is circumventing the issue, or at worst, that it has something to hide.

* There is a fair but insufficient assessment of public issues, which may result in a lack of perspective and insight into the present and likely future direction of public issues affecting SAUs.

* The moderate approach to the identification and understanding of issues, may deny management of SAUs the opportunity to change the perceptions of stakeholders, while those perceptions can still be changed.

* The luke warm commitment of managers to develop specific organisational objectives that support the position of their institutions as well the interest of their stakeholders makes it difficult for SAUs to go beyond standard public relations solutions to deal with public issues.

* As a result of clear organisational and stakeholder objectives there is difficulty in formulating and implementing specific strategies with regard to high-priority issues. A lack in the evaluation of implemented strategies, furthermore impedes judgement on whether there should have been changes in specific strategies, and whether the ultimate resolution of a problematic issue was in fact in the interest of the institution.

6.3.9 A competence profile with regard to the management of public issues in South African universities

Objective 9 was the last of the empirical objectives. The purpose was to provide a competence profile with regard to the management of public issues in SAUs. The results of empirical data lead to the following conclusions in respect of the three key dimensions of an effective issues management programme, namely *forecasting*, *strategic management* and *stakeholder relations*:

* *Forecasting*

Although managers in SAUs use the mass media, university publications and research papers to identify public issues impacting on their institutions, it is mostly done through informal networking with colleagues and outsiders and less through formal meetings and strategic alliances with other universities. An informal approach to the identification of public issues is in itself not meaningless as it could serve the purpose of understanding the present status of public issues and making informed guesses of how issues might unfold in the near future. Such crystal ball gazing, however, tend to lead to eventual *crises management*. It furthermore constitutes only part of the equation of present and future information and could therefore not be compared to logical, reproducible methods to forecast, in explicit terms, the character and direction of emerging public issues.

Why do managers in SAUs then downplay formal quantifiable and systematic forecasting methods like those presented in Section 2.2.9.2? One reason could be that managers lack practical training and guidance to help them choose the method, or combination of methods, that will best fit the needs of their institutions. Another reason might be that there is a psychological resistance to change. This possibility can however be discounted in view of the foregoing research findings, which indicate a pro-active management mode, and a reasonable ability of management in SAUs to cope with change.

Given the importance of public issues impacting on SAUs it remains important for managers in SAUs to look beyond what stakeholders *say they want today*, to what *they will need tomorrow*. If nothing else, formal quantifiable and systematic forecasting methods can help managers to cultivate a sense for such future needs. The ideal would be a combination of informal and formal methods in order to improve the competence of managers to forecast trends and emerging public issues that can impact on

SAUs in the near future.

* *Strategic management*

Strategic management encompasses the rational process of formulation, implementation and evaluation of strategies. The question that can be asked is: What are the strategic managerial capabilities of management with regard to these components in SAUs?

As previously concluded in Section 6.3.8, management in SAUs seems to experience difficulties in formulating (planning), implementing and evaluating specific strategies with regard to high-priority issues. The deduction could therefore be made that there is either a lack of effective planning within the internal strategic planning divisions of SAUs, or that these divisions do not become involved in the implementation and evaluation of strategic plans. The lack of evaluation could lead to inadequate feedback which in turn could lead to a breakdown in issue communication between management and students. The worst situation could be that neither is done, that is, no effective strategic planning and no implementation and evaluation of strategic plans with regard to crucial public issues.

Further analysis of one of the aspects of strategic management, namely strategic planning, reveals that a large percentage of universities avail themselves of internal strategic planners/divisions in their universities in an attempt to manage critical public issues. However, effective planning does not necessarily guarantee the effective implementation and evaluation of strategic plans. In fact, without the latter two aspects there could be no mention of strategic management at all.

One of the questions which remains unanswered is: What could be the reason why only a small percentage of universities avail themselves of the services of internal business management departments in order to assist top management in the management

of public issues impacting on SAUs? This question becomes pertinent when viewed against the background of a diagnosis made in Section 5.4.2.1 that the gaining of trust, co-operation and involvement of staff (and students) are considered to be key factors for effective strategy implementation in SAUs.

Strategic management is, however, not just about a rational quantitative process. It is in the view of Burns (1992:111) about the outcome of a process shaped by leadership, visions and human creativity through communication. In an issues management context, it is also closely linked to the aspect of "ownership" of public issues (Ashley & Morrison 1995:131).

Analysis of data revealed that leaders in SAUs do exhibit visionary abilities and that the quality of thinking is outstanding. Leadership in SAUs therefore exhibits an ability to conceptualise the future and to think creatively. In the current socio-economic and politico-governmental climate, such abilities would be of cardinal importance for the transformation of both individual universities and the tertiary education system as a whole.

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Why would it then be that the creative ability of leadership in SAUs are not exploited to the advantage of their institutions? One reason could be that management is becoming increasingly demoralised as the appropriateness of their transformation efforts remains under attack, with constant campus conflicts pitched against them in unruly and undirected protest. Another reason could be that there is no common understanding of what transformation really is. Different interpretations in this regard often lead to protesters, barricades and trashed campuses. In a further contradiction the Minister of Education claims that transformation remains the "primary responsibility of institutions themselves" (The Star 1996:3) whilst allowing the African National Congress to use the committee system of parliament to transform universities in the way it sees fit. An additional reason could be that SAUs, in spite of efforts to the

contrary, are becoming increasingly racially polarised through promotion programmes based on affirmative action. This tends to enforce existing insecurities in many managers in SAUs. The recent Mokgoba debacle at the University of the Witwatersrand (Finance Week 1996:4) has for instance done nothing but to demean universities in general and to racially polarise students, lecturers and management of the University of the Witwatersrand in particular.

With regard to communication, the survey indicated an emphasis on informal and incidental personal contact between management in SAUs. The communication of public issue matters with stakeholders such as government, community leaders, students and personnel was furthermore measured as one of the priorities in SAUs. This seems to be in contrast with an observation in Section 6.3.8 that there is a moderate inclination of management to liaise with stakeholders of SAUs. This paradox seems to indicate that, although communication with stakeholders do take place, it is more often done in an informal and haphazard way, than in a well structured manner.

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In respect of "ownership" of issues the analysis of data revealed that management aligned with public issues are to an extent reluctant to take ownership and responsibility for the strategic management of issues impacting on SAUs. They are furthermore averse to identify and liaise with stakeholders with a possible interest in the public issue and reluctant to formulate specific strategies for the management of such issues.

The question that could be asked is: Why would managers avoid ownership and concomitant commitment to managing issues impacting on SAUs? One reason could be that management does not have enough information about public issues, which leaves them with an uncertainty of how to manage such issues. Another reason might be that management does not have adequate negotiation skills to face up to well organised pressure groups, stakeholders or students with an intense commitment on the issue. The first

reason, namely inadequate information about emerging public issues have already been dealt with. The consideration of the other possible reason, namely how to handle intense commitment from stakeholders, pertains to *crises management* of current issues and falls outside the scope of this study.

Even if current issues should be resolved through *crises management*, it would not negate further pressures being placed on management in SAUs in the future. As other public issues emerge on the turbulent macro-environmental horizon of the next millennium, existing and future management in SAUs will have to keep on searching for effective ways to deal with issues impacting on their institutions. It is suggested that issues management aided by strategic management may be one of the options available to strategic management in SAUs.

* *Stakeholder relations*

As stated in Section 5.4.2.1 favourable relations with all stakeholders of SAUs is a necessity for coping well with change.

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Research done in this study indicated that management in SAUs acknowledge the importance of students as stakeholders of SAUs, and that good relations are maintained with communities through contributions to community projects. However, there seems to be a lack of good relations between top management and other staff in SAUs and a neutral and impartial relation with the state. These two lower relationship levels could, firstly discourage the co-operation of all managers and non-management staff in the implementation of issues management strategies including strategies proposed by the NCHE and, secondly impact on state-higher education linkages as proposed by the NCHE.

A question that arises is: If SAUs have developed an ability to deal with the complexities of student relations as stated in the foregoing paragraph, why is it then that student unrest seem to prevail on the campuses of SAUs? This question is relevant in

view of the fact that SAUs seem to display characteristics of both 'technocracy' and 'missionary' types of organisations. The former being good at managing formal arrangements and relationships, and the latter indicating a sensitivity to stakeholders, community projects, and black advancement, as previously dealt with in Section 5.4.3.

The answer may be found, firstly in the implementation of student negotiated strategies pertaining to public issues in SAUs and, secondly, flowing from this, a lack of trust in the management of SAUs. It must be pointed out that it would be presumptuous to claim that these two aspects constitute the core reasons for student unrest in SAUs. It may, however, enhance perpetuating student unrest in SAUs and will therefore be discussed, in an issues management context, in the following paragraphs.

It has been pointed out that there seems to be a weakness in the implementation component of strategic management in SAUs. Implementation is the doing process, without which the best strategies are useless. In an issues management context Ashley & Morrison (1995:143) propose an action programme of which effective communication, involvement of staff and trust (credibility) seem to be the most relevant to SAUs.

With regard to communication in SAUs, the dominance of informal communication with students as important stakeholders seems to evolve from a relaxed, if not a *'laissez faire'* type of leadership style. On the other hand, formalised channels of management communication with a topdown approach, as established in the survey, seem to foster an *'autocratic'* style of management. Whether this contradiction denotes ineffective management, or flexible and effective management, is another argument. In an issues management context the topdown management approach could be regarded as a shortcoming, resulting in a lack of commitment of functional managers and non-management staff in the resolution of issues.

Informal and haphazard communication with students may especially be true for the stage of communication before *emerging issues* become *crises issues*, and consequently part of crises management. The lack of formalised and structured communication programmes, in order to identify and analyse emerging issues, can consequently be viewed as a weakness in the issues communication programme, and consequently as a constraint for the eventual implementation of issues action plans.

The aspect of involvement of staff, on other functional management levels of SAUs, and the involvement of non-managerial staff are closely linked to the aspect of *ownership* of issues as discussed in Section 5.5.2.2. It was already mentioned that top management aligned with public issues are to an extent reluctant to take ownership and responsibility for the strategic management of issues impacting on SAUs. This attitude of reluctance of top management to face contentious issues and to take ownership for their implementation, could consequently permeate to other functional management levels and non-management staff of SAUs. This in turn, could render the implementation aspect of strategic issues management problematic.

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The aspect of trust is, according to Human & Horwitz (1992:93), closely linked to effective people orientation. However, results from the survey indicate that management seems to experience a lack of trust from students in SAUs. The survey also indicated a degree of indifference of management to student needs, and therefore a further lack of people orientation in spite of reasonable relations with students. A people orientation, as discussed in Section 5.4.2.1, also represents an important facet of strategic orientation, which in turn encompasses the important aspect of strategy implementation. As an effective people orientation requires developing trust, the gaining of trust of students is considered to be a key factor for effective strategy implementation in SAUs.

The aforementioned shortcomings with regard to effective

communication, involvement of staff and trust (credibility) during the emerging stages of issues as well as during the implementation stage of strategic change management, may be some of the reasons why unrest, in spite of reasonable relations with students, seem to prevail on the campuses of SAUs.

6.3.10 Issues management as a strategy for managing pro-active change in South African universities

The tenth objective of this study was to determine the relevance of issues management as a strategy to manage pro-active change in SAUs. The relevance of issues management is closely linked to change and how management copes with change and how they manage public issues associated with change.

The inadequate ability of SAUs to cope with change and public issues has often lead universities into *crises management*, with managers exposed to public and stakeholder demands, adversity and conflict. This in turn has emphasised the growing realisation that management needs to manage public issues timeously and that the traditional strategic management paradigm might be essentially restricted in managing emerging public issues which impact on SAUs through the public policy process. It was, for instance, previously argued that strategic management is mainly economic policy foresight, and not people policy foresight and that the traditional strategic management process is designed to achieve organisational financial objectives in the first place and not the people objectives of the organisation.

As the objectives of SAUs are more people orientated than financially driven there is a need for people foresight and an urgency for a management process to efficiently identify and formulate responses to people expectations. Such expectations normally emerge as public issues and invariably impact on SAUs through the public policy process. It was established, through an empirical survey, that managers in SAUs do attempt to manage emerging public issues impacting on their institutions, but that

they do so in an informal and uncommitted manner, instead of in a well-structured system. It was furthermore empirically established that management in SAUs cope reasonably well with macro-environmental change, but with a lack of strategic orientation. There is thus a moderate, but inadequate, ability to manage macro-environmental change and the public issues associated with such change in SAUs.

There is thus a need for management in SAUs to manage macro-environmental change through the identification and the analysis of emerging public issues in the macro-environment and to manage an effective response to such issues through a well-structured procedure. There is furthermore a need to manage such public issues before they become crises issues, that is, in a pro-active and not a reactive manner.

It was argued in this thesis that issues management constitutes a management process determined to identify and analyse emerging public issues which can have a strategic impact on the future viability of organisations as well as managing an effective response to such issues. It can therefore be concluded that, in view of the need in SAUs for a structured pro-active means of managing emerging public issues in the public policy process, and in view of issues management constituting such a process, there is relevance for the implementation of an issues management programme in SAUs.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The analysis of how well management in SAUs cope with change and how they manage public issues has identified aspects which need particular attention. These aspects will be discussed in the following sections.

6.4.1 General recommendations

6.4.1.1 Managing the dynamic aspects of change

Although it was established that management in SAUs exhibit a pro-active management mode with a reasonable ability to cope with change, there seems to be a lack of strategic orientation, which in turn could lead to an inability to express and manage the dynamic nature of change in SAUs. It is therefore suggested that a sharper focus of SAUs on strategic orientation, could enhance the long-term strategic vision of SAUs, as well as assist management to recognise important public issues in the external environment timeously and to respond to such issues pro-actively. In order to improve on the strategic orientation in SAUs three aspects need to be emphasised: an improvement in the environmental scanning functions of top management, the use of qualitative futures research and an action orientation of all managers in SAUs.

Environmental scanning could be enhanced by either improving the strategic planning function (which seems to be done inefficiently in SAUs) or as part of an issues management programme linked to strategic management. Qualitative futures research could be enhanced by the selection and application of the most appropriate procedure/s for individual universities, for example, scenario building. To become action orientated managers need to analyse the amount of their day-to-day management time being spent on specific issues. They also need to make sure that actions are authentic and in congruence with previously created expectations. If not it may be a recipe for disaster.

6.4.1.2 Implementation of strategies

It was established that strategy implementation is a doing process consisting of several parts. These parts include, amongst others, actions with regard to the use of quantitative and qualitative data obtained through environmental scanning,

communication programs, co-operation with other organisations, involvement of staff and the building of credibility. It was also established that a significant percentage of managers are of the opinion that strategies, with regard to public issues, are not effectively implemented in SAUs.

The aspect of the use of quantitative and qualitative data has already been mentioned in the previous section. In respect of communication, it is one of the ways to build political advantage and to influence the development of issues in the public policy process. The question that arises is: how many managers in SAUs regard communication with stakeholders as part of their job descriptions? It is suggested that they should as stakeholders have a legitimate claim in the affairs of SAUs. It is also suggested that managers in SAUs be trained in effective communication and negotiating skills. A lack of confidence with regard to the latter may lead to inappropriate submissions to intense demands and intimidation from committed stakeholders. In fact, without a communications program based on thorough research and professional communications skills any strategic action plan is bound to be stillborn.

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With regard to co-operation with other organisations, the development of national and international strategic alliances need to become one of the priorities in SAUs. Universities that do so will be coping well with change in the near future while remaining competitive in respect of academic capabilities.

To be successful in the implementation of issues management programmes, a higher percentage of management on different management levels in SAUs needs to become involved in specific action plans with regard to the management of high-priority issues. It is suggested that the articulation and implementation of pro-active mission statement goals and strategies be regarded as an immediate challenge for all universities in the RSA.

The building of credibility is all about trust and people

management. There seems to be a lack of trust between management and staff/student stakeholders in SAUs. There also seems to be an aloofness to employee expectations and a degree of indifference to student needs. If managers are to obtain the co-operation and loyalty of staff, students and other stakeholders of SAUs, they need to be skilled in dealing with people needs in a sincere and committed manner.

6.4.1.3 Implementation of an issues management strategy

It was concluded that management in SAUs do attempt to manage public issues impacting on their institutions. They do, however, seem to manage such issues in an informal and uncommitted manner, instead of in a well structured issues management system. Having reiterated this observation, it is suggested that the implementation of an issues management strategy, in a public issues context and linked to strategic management, could render the following advantages for SAUs:

* Conveys to managers a message of having to be attentive to macro-environmental issues.

* Encourages strategic thinking about public issues, less constrained by organisational pre-conceptions.

* Identifies trends and signals from which public issues at some point may emerge.

* Identifies emerging public issues from which potential conflict may emerge.

* Tracks public issues that can affect the strategic direction of universities.

* Analyses the potential impact of public issues that are of particular relevance to universities.

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* Assists management in becoming opportunity-seeking rather than becoming problem-solving aspiring.

* Prepares effective responses to public issues that could drastically affect universities.

* Assists managers to participate and prepare effective responses to intrusive demands of stakeholders.

* Balances the legitimate goals and rights of universities with those of society.

* Assists management to lead their universities to public acceptance.

* Defends universities against the tactics of organised and/or unorganised public advocates.

* Assists management to influence the macro-environmental context in which they operate.

* Assists management to cope with change and the discontinuities of an unpredictable environment.

* Assists management with managing strategic change in a pro-active manner.

* Supports strategic management with updated and organised information on relevant public issues.

Having listed the possible advantages of a well-structured issues management strategy in SAUs, the next step would be to suggest a framework for the implementation of such a strategy.

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6.4.2 Recommendations in respect of a framework for the implementation of an issues management strategy in South African universities

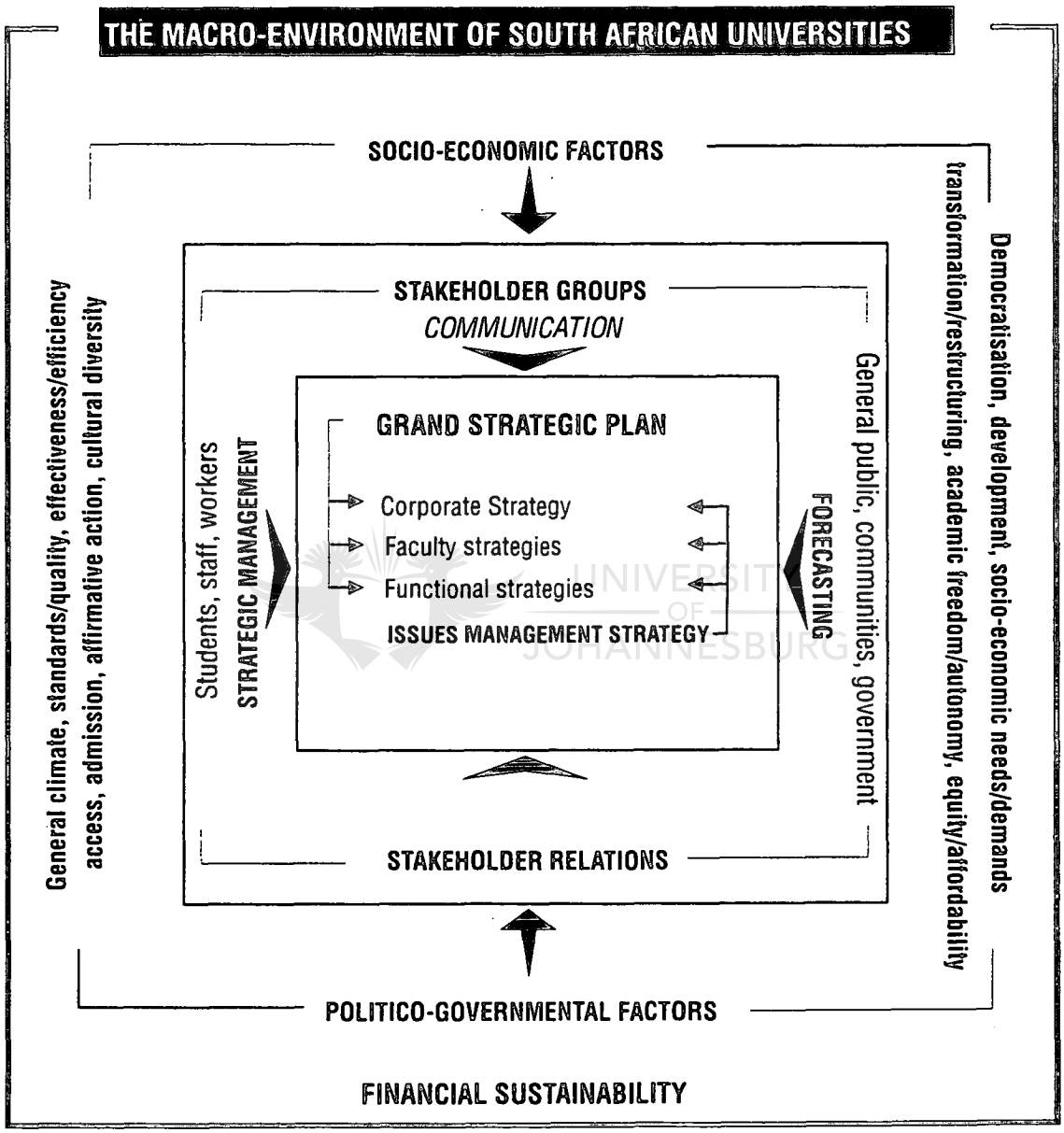
The eleventh and last objective of this study was to propose a framework for the implementation of an issues management strategy in SAUs.

At the onset it must be pointed out that, in view of the dissimilarity in the needs, structures, resource availabilities and existing strategic planning facilities of different universities, it would have been presumptuous to propose a uniform programme for the implementation of issues management strategies in all universities. Instead, a basic framework for the implementation of issues management strategies is proposed in this study. The framework will be conveyed by means of three different but interrelated insight slides which could be used as a basis for the implementation of specific issues management programmes in individual universities where such a need exists.

The use of insight slides are two-fold. Firstly to convey the insights acquired in the course of this study and, secondly to facilitate the relationship between theory and practice as exposed through the theoretical and empirical procedures. The details of different concepts portrayed in the insight slides have already been dealt with in the course of this study and will therefore not be discussed again in this section.

Insight slide A demonstrates the fact that organisations, especially organisations such as SAUs, do not merely operate in an economic arena but in a much larger macro-environmental environment of socio-economic and politico-governmental factors. In this environment internal and external stakeholders, public interest and pressure groups, have ultimate power to control SAUs through the manipulation of public issues in the public policy process.

FIGURE 6-1: INSIGHT SLIDE A: AN ISSUES MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK WITHIN THE MACRO-ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT OF SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES



Source: Own design

It also demonstrates the integration of effective forecasting, strategic management, favourable stakeholder relations, and good communications in order to render a strategy to manage pro-active change in SAUs. This strategy which is suggested to be the implementation of an issues management programme in SAUs should furthermore be integrated with the grand strategic plan of individual universities and pervade other strategies on corporate, faculty and operational levels.

Insight slide B illustrates the inter-disciplinary context of strategic management with issues management, the formulation of mission statements and goals, the formulation and selection of strategies and, finally the implementation and evaluation on corporate, faculty and functional levels. It also indicates the aspect of strategic fit, that is, the alignment of human, material and financial resources to the demands of the environment of SAUs. It furthermore indicates the importance of consistency of actions with important goals, such as those espoused in mission statements of SAUs. Failing these actions the alternative remains a rescue net, fraught with reactive strategies and unimaginative organisational adjustments.

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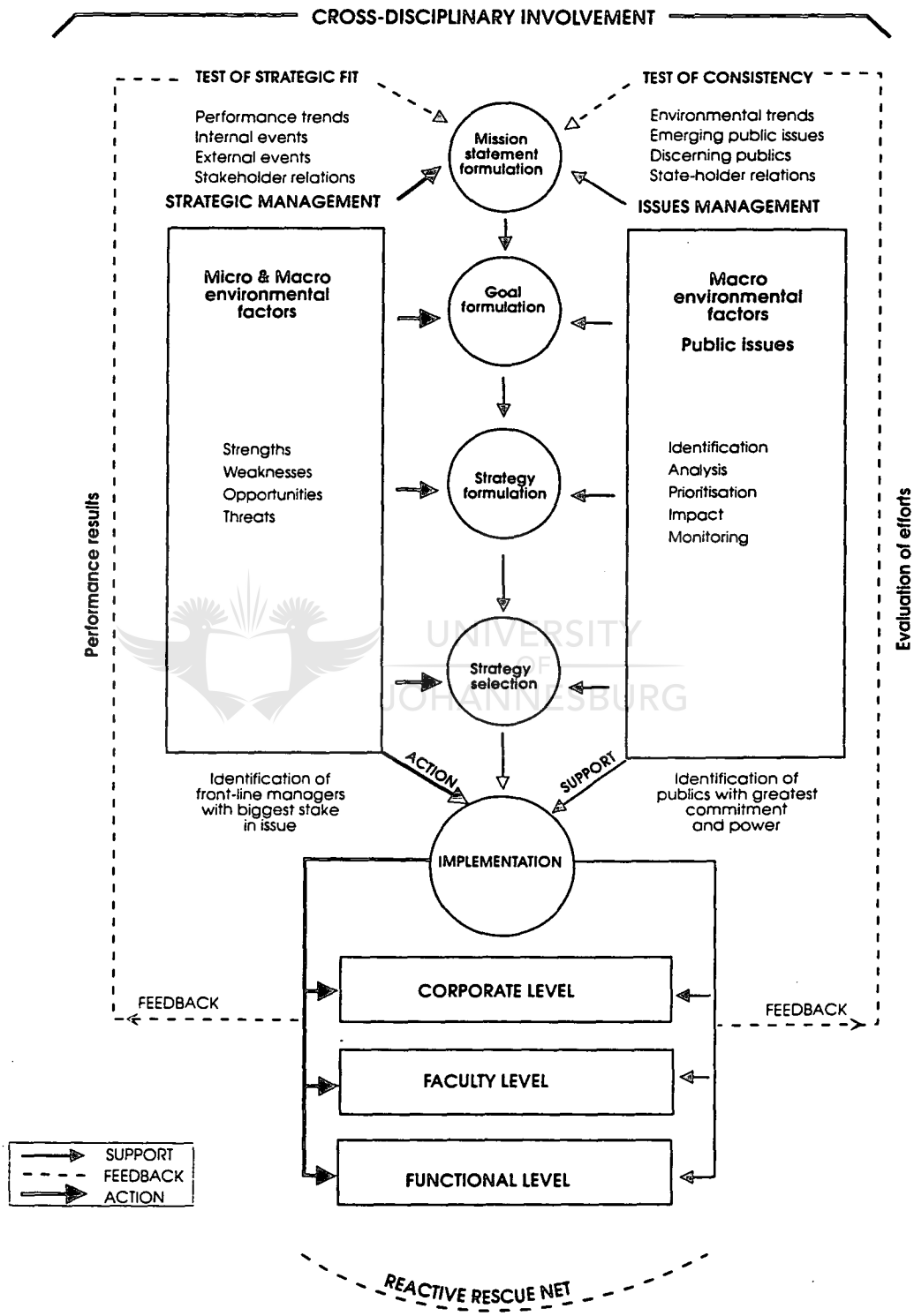
Insight slide B emphasises the importance of "ownership" of issues and the management of issues at top management level, divisional level, faculty and departmental levels. It also emphasises the involvement of different faculties and departments in relevant issues. Only those faculties and departments and their functional heads or teams with the greatest stake in the resolution of a specific issue need to be involved.

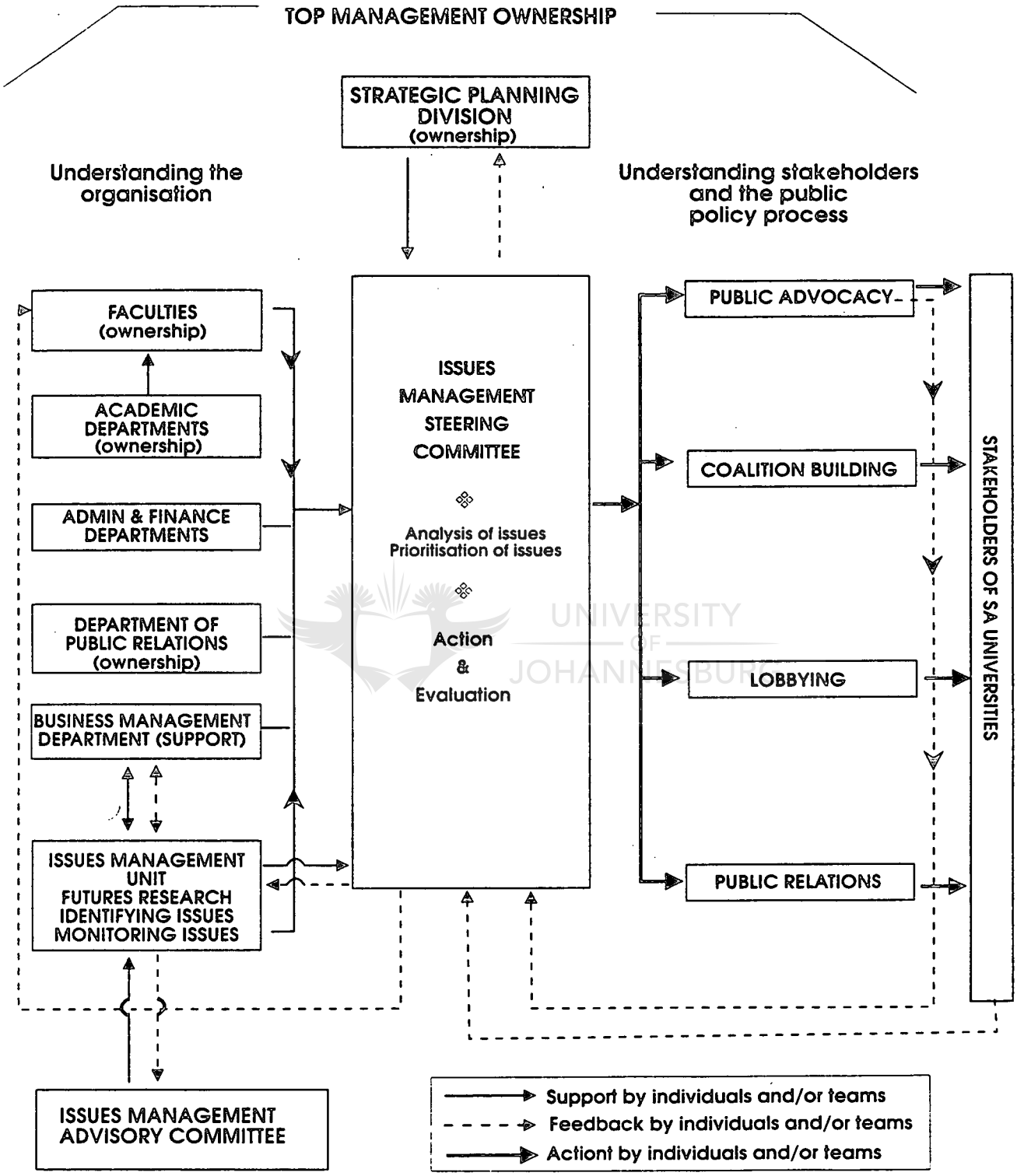
The slide also proposes the establishment of an issues management unit within the business management department of universities. Such a unit should comprise of issues management staff headed by an Issues Management Director. The work-program of issues management staff would involve futures research, scanning and monitoring of the environment for issues, using techniques such as Trend Analysis Programmes (TAP), Delphi, ENSCAN, networking,

FIGURE 6-2: INSIGHT SLIDE B: A COMPLIMENTARY ISSUES MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK WITHIN THE MICRO-ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT OF SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES



Source: Own design

FIGURE 6-3: INSIGHT SLIDE C: AN OFFENSIVE ISSUES FRAMEWORK STRATEGY WITHIN THE MACRO-ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT OF SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES



Source: Own design

precursor analysis, media analysis, publications, conferences, polls, surveys, and legislative tracking to name but a few possibilities. The programme should furthermore involve the preparation of issues-briefs and liaison with members of the Issues Management Steering Committee.

The Issues Management Steering Committee could be a standing committee consisting of four persons only, namely a chairman (who should ideally be the rector or vice-rector), the head of the Strategic Planning Division, the head of the Issues Management Department, and the chairman of the Issues management Advisory Committee. Deans and Departmental heads with the greatest stake in an issue can be co-opted to serve on the Issues Management Steering Committee as and when required. If necessary there could even be *ad hoc* Issues management Sub-committees for each different major issue. The first responsibility of the Issues Management Steering Committee would be to increase awareness of public issues amongst functional heads and to provide advice on the nature of issues which are bound to impact on the university as a whole or individual faculties/departments. The second responsibility would be the formulation and selection of strategies on high priority issues.The third responsibility would be to link decision-making, implementation, accountability and control of the management of issues to the relevant functional heads. This will ensure responsibility with those functional heads with the greatest stake in the implementation of strategic options relating to their relevant issues. It will also ensure integration of issues management into organisational line activities.

The offensive mode of issues management is furthermore demonstrated in the slide. It involves the active involvement of the university, *via* the Issues Management Steering Committee, in directly or indirectly influencing public issues through public relations, public advocacy, coalition building and lobbying and thereby rendering issues management an offensive pro-active strategy to change the environmental context in which

universities operate.

The Issues Management Advisory Committee serves as external individual external scanners and/or monitors of issues. The Issues Management Advisory Committee comprises of knowledgeable individuals and/or volunteer members of organisations in the industry and/or academics. Abstracts from newspapers, magazines, as well as industry and academic publications are prepared by these external monitors in accordance with guidelines prepared by issues management staff. These abstracts, and if necessary comments, are then coded according to topics and entered into the issues management computer database by issues management staff. Abstracts and comments are then analysed and trend reports prepared by the issues management staff for submission to the Issues Management Steering Committee via the Issues Management Director.

In summary it is contended that the implementation of an issues management strategy orchestrated by an Issues Management Unit with Business Management support and expertise, and with Issues Management Advisory Committee inputs, co-ordinated and implemented by an Issues Management Steering Committee could assist in effectively managing public issues, or for that matter any major issue, impacting on SAUs. It must, however, also be stated that no one model, technique, or set of procedures need to be rigidly followed. It is contended that issues management is a process, driven by public policy foresight and action planning, and that it should be adapted to the management style, organisational structure, and resources of individual organisations.

It is finally concluded that issues management can in effect become an ongoing macro-environmental process in SAUs for the timeous identification of emerging public issues, the analysis of their potential impact and the preparation of pro-active responses. The orchestration of such a process in itself constitutes a strategy to manage pro-active change in the

turbulent macro-environment of South African universities.

6.4.3 Recommendations for further study

This study has indicated certain areas which need further investigation. The following research topics can be proposed:

* The extent to which issues management can enhance institutional social responsibility in SAUs.

* The extent to which issues management can enhance the effective implementation of change strategies in SAUs.

* The extent to which issues management can enhance effective communication, involvement of staff and students and building of trust between all stakeholders in SAUs.

* The optimal methods and techniques for environmental scanning in order to effectively and efficiently identify, monitor and analyse public issues impacting on SAUs.

* The optimal organisational structure for the functioning of issues management programmes in SAUs.

6.5 CONTRIBUTION OF THIS STUDY

It is contended that the research reported in this thesis is of theoretical as well as empirical value.

From a theoretical perspective, literature scanning led to a better understanding of issues management concepts and processes, strategy as well as strategic change management from a macro-environmental perspective. It also provided some insight into universities in general and SAUs in particular. Literature scanning furthermore led to the identification of two models. The one model was the model of Human & Horwitz (1992). This model was regarded as an objective, quantitative and systematic four-factor

model of South African organisations coping successfully with change. The second model is a combination of models developed by Ashley & Morrison (1995) and Theron (1994). The underlying elements which emanated from these models formed the basis of two empirical surveys.

From an empirical perspective it is believed that the research design, incorporating the two surveys, allowed for a realistic assessment of the ability of management of SAUs to cope with change, and their proficiency to manage socio-economic and politico-governmental issues impacting on their institutions.

It is finally contended that the issues management framework proposed in this study can be elevated to, and utilised by managers of individual universities as a strategy plan for managing emerging public issues impacting on their specific institutions. The implementation of specific issues management strategic plans in individual universities could as a consequence become, in themselves, strategies to manage pro-active change in SAUs.

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

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ANNEXURE A

A LIST OF UNIVERSITIES REGISTERED AS MEMBERS OF THE CUP

MEMBER UNIVERSITIES OF THE COMMITTEE OF UNIVERSITY PRINCIPALS IN SOUTH AFRICA

University of Cape Town
Vice-Chancellor: Dr SJ Saunders
Private Bag — Tel: +27 21 650 9111
7700 RONDEBOSCH — Fax: +27 21 650 2138

University of Durban-Westville
Vice-Chancellor & Rector: Dr MM Balintulo
Private Bag X54001 — Tel: +27 31 820 9111
4000 DURBAN — Fax: +27 31 820 2383

University of Fort Hare
Vice-Chancellor & Rector: Prof MV Mzamane
Private Bag X1314 — Tel: +27 404 32 011
5700 ALICE — Fax: +27 404 31 643

Medical University of South Africa
Vice-Chancellor & Principal: Prof ET Mokgokong
PO MEDUNSA — Tel: +27 12 529 4111
0204 — Fax: +27 12 58 2323

University of Natal
Vice-Chancellor & Univ Principal: Prof BM Gourley
Private Bag X10 — Tel: +27 31 260 1111
4014 DALBRIDGE — Fax: +27 31 260 1189

University of the North
Vice-Chancellor & Rector: Prof NS Ndebele
Private Bag X1106 — Tel: +27 152 268 9111
0727 SOVENGA — Fax: +27 152 267 0142

University of the North West
Vice-Chancellor & Rector: Prof MJ Melamu
Private Bag X2046 — Tel: +27 140 89 2005
8681 MMABATHO — Fax: +27 140 24 285

University of the Orange Free State
Vice-Chancellor & Rector: Prof FP Retief
PO Box 339 — Tel: +27 51 401 9111
9300 BLOEMFONTEIN — Fax: +27 51 401 2117

University of Port Elizabeth
Vice-Chancellor & Rector: Prof JM Kirsten
PO Box 1600 — Tel: +27 41 504 2911
6000 PORT ELIZABETH — Fax: +27 41 504 2574

Potchefstroom University for CHE
Vice-Chancellor & Rector: Prof CJ Reinecke
POTCHEFSTROOM — Tel: +27 148 299 1111
2520 — Fax: +27 148 299 2799

University of Pretoria
Vice-Chancellor & Rector: Prof P Smit
PRETORIA — Tel: +27 12 420 9111
0002 — Fax: +27 12 342 2712

Rand Afrikaans University
Vice-Chancellor & Rector: Prof JC van der Walt
PO Box 524 — Tel: +27 11 489 2911
2006 AUCKLAND PARK — Fax: +27 11 489 2191

Rhodes University
Vice-Chancellor & Principal: Dr DS Henderson
PO Box 94 — Tel: +27 461 31 8111
6140 GRAHAMSTOWN — Fax: +27 461 25 049

University of South Africa
Vice-Chancellor & Rector: Prof M Wiechers
PO Box 392 — Tel: +27 12 429 9111
0001 PRETORIA — Fax: +27 12 429 2533

University of Stellenbosch
Vice-Chancellor & Rector: Prof AH van Wyk
Private Bag X5018 — Tel: +27 21 808 9111
7600 STELLENBOSCH — Fax: +27 21 808 4499

University of Transkei
Vice-Chancellor & Rector: Prof AT Moleah
Private Bag X1 — Tel: +27 471 31 2267
5100 UMTATA — Fax: +27 471 23 884

University of Venda
Vice-Chancellor & Rector: Prof GM Nkondo
Private Bag X2220 — Tel: +27 159 21 071
THOHOYANDOU — Fax: +27 159 22 045

Vista University
Vice-Chancellor & Rector: Dr Hugh Africa
Private Bag X634 — Tel: +27 12 322 8967
0001 PRETORIA — Fax: +27 12 320 0582

University of the Western Cape
Vice-Chancellor & Rector: Prof CA Abrahams
Private Bag X17 — Tel: +27 21 959 2911
7535 BELLVILLE — Fax: +27 21 959 3126

University of the Witwatersrand
Vice-Chancellor & Principal: Prof RW Charlton
PO WITS — Tel: +27 11 716 1111
2050 — Fax: +27 11 716 8030

University of Zululand
Vice-Chancellor & Rector: Prof CRM Dlamini
Private Bag X1001 — Tel: +27 351 93 911
3886 KWA-DLANGEZWA — Fax: +27 351 93 130

University of Namibia
(holds observer status only)
Vice-Chancellor: Dr PH Katjavivi
Private Bag 13301 — Tel: +264 61 207 9111
WINDHOEK, Namibia — Fax: +264 61 207 2444

QUERIES MAY BE DIRECTED TO:

Chief Director CUP: Prof JW Grobbelaar
PO Box 27392 — Tel: +27 12 429 3168
0132 SUNNYSIDE — Fax: +27 12 429 3071

ANNEXURE B

A COPY OF COVERING LETTER

RAND AFRIKAANS UNIVERSITY
P.O. Box 524
Auckland Park
Johannesburg
Republic of South Africa
2006

RAND AFRIKAANS UNIVERSITY
Telegraphic address Rauniv
Telex 424526 SA
Telephone (011) 489-2911
+ 27-11-489-2911
Fax (011) 489-2191
+ 27-11-489-2191

June 20, 1996

Dear Prof/Dr/Colleague

MANAGING PUBLIC ISSUES IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

The management of socio-economic and politico-governmental forces impacting on South African universities is of vital importance to university policy makers and strategic management practitioners.

To address this problem, a research project has been launched by the departments of Business Management at RAU and Vista universities.

Your name was provided to us by the CUP as a prominent policy maker/strategic management practitioner in a South African university. Your help is therefore requested to complete the research.

Attached please find a questionnaire which at first glance might seem long. It should, however, not take more than fifteen minutes to complete. You are assured that, although a control number is allocated to each questionnaire for follow-up purposes, respondents will remain anonymous. The identity of any university will furthermore, neither be disclosed nor linked to any results and/or conclusions.

We earnestly appeal for your co-operation in this project. Kindly complete the attached questionnaire and return it in the reply paid envelope at your earliest convenience before July 10, 1996.

Thank you for your co-operation.

.....
D J THERON
RESEARCHER: VISTA

.....
PROF N LESSING
PROMOTOR: RAU

ANNEXURE C

A COPY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE BE ASSURED THAT YOU WILL REMAIN ANONYMOUS AND THAT THE IDENTITY OF YOUR UNIVERSITY WILL NEITHER BE DISCLOSED NOR LINKED TO ANY RESULTS OR CONCLUSIONS

PART A: COPING WITH CHANGE

The purpose of part A of the questionnaire is to assess the capabilities of your own university to cope with change. Please indicate your disagreement/agreement with each of the statements, using the following 5 point scale: (Mark your response to each statement by means of a cross on the relevant numbers).

The following scale is used:

1 = strongly disagree
2 = disagree
3 = undecided/neutral
4 = agree
5 = strongly agree

Make sure that you have answered every question

Consider your university as a whole. Think about past events as well as more recent events. Please give your *honest* and *considered* opinion.

My university is characterized by the following:

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International perspective/contact is emphasised	1	2	3	4	5	Q1
We experience a lot of competition from other universities	1	2	3	4	5	Q2
We adapt swiftly to rapid changes	1	2	3	4	5	Q3
We have tight financial controls	1	2	3	4	5	Q4
We continually innovate new courses for students	1	2	3	4	5	Q5
We are actively engaged in changing attitudes to blacks, coloureds & Indians (programmes; workshops)	1	2	3	4	5	Q6
We acknowledge the importance of student bodies (e.g. Sasco; Paso)	1	2	3	4	5	Q7
We apply our resources (financial & human) effectively	1	2	3	4	5	Q8
We give attention to detail in all our activities	1	2	3	4	5	Q9
Our teaching courses are of excellent quality	1	2	3	4	5	Q10
We are recognised as highly participative in community projects	1	2	3	4	5	Q11
We pay above average salaries/wages compared to other universities	1	2	3	4	5	Q12

We have beneficial relations with the government	1	2	3	4	5	Q13
We develop human potential of our staff at all levels	1	2	3	4	5	Q14
Our leaders have vision	1	2	3	4	5	Q15
We encourage entrepreneurial qualities in all our employees	1	2	3	4	5	Q16
It is often said that we are in collusion with the government	1	2	3	4	5	Q17
We have well-developed capabilities for obtaining foreign aid/assistance	1	2	3	4	5	Q18
Our management (rectors, registrars, deans) are well connected to outside institutions	1	2	3	4	5	Q19
Students trust management	1	2	3	4	5	Q20
The working conditions for all employees are excellent	1	2	3	4	5	Q21
Efficiency in teaching & research is continually emphasised and rewarded	1	2	3	4	5	Q22
Strong control over financial budgets/reporting is exercised	1	2	3	4	5	Q23
We have been successful in promoting blacks, coloureds and Indians to management levels	1	2	3	4	5	Q24
We have developed a sound ability to deal with the complexities of stakeholder relations	1	2	3	4	5	Q25
We have operated within operating budgets over the past five years	1	2	3	4	5	Q26
Our contribution to social welfare and support of community organisations is significant	1	2	3	4	5	Q27
We have many strategic alliances with other universities	1	2	3	4	5	Q28
The link between abstract values and specific objectives are well understood by all employees e.g. equity & affirmative action.	1	2	3	4	5	Q29
The quality of thinking amongst top management is outstanding	1	2	3	4	5	Q30
We are one of the best universities in South Africa	1	2	3	4	5	Q31
Our strategic plans are implemented throughout the university	1	2	3	4	5	Q32

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PART B: THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC ISSUES

The purpose of part B of the questionnaire is to assess the extent and quality of the management of ***public issues*** in South African universities (SAUs). ***Public issues*** are defined as politico-governmental and socio-economic forces (pressures) which impact on SAUs through the public policy process such as socio-economic needs and demands, equity, access, legitimacy, autonomy, transformation, restructuring, affirmative action, Africanisation, racism and cultural diversity. ***Public issues***, therefore, **do not include** internal micro-environmental issues such as rationalisation, quality of teaching and courses, curricula, internal efficiency etc.

The following scale is used:

1 = strongly disagree
2 = disagree
3 = undecided/neutral
4 = agree
5 = strongly agree

I become aware of *public issues* which could possibly impact on my university by:

Scanning the mass media (newspapers)	1	2	3	4	5	Q33
By scanning articles in university publications and research papers	1	2	3	4	5	Q34
By attending formal meetings/conferences	1	2	3	4	5	Q35
Through informal interaction/meetings with colleagues	1	2	3	4	5	Q36

Once a *public issue*, which can impact on my university, has been identified the following happens:

A senior manager closely aligned with the public issue takes responsibility for, and becomes the "owner" of the issue	1	2	3	4	5	Q37
The "issue owner" forms a management team consisting of knowledgeable and influential people	1	2	3	4	5	Q38
The management team gathers information regarding the public issue and assess the importance of the public issue	1	2	3	4	5	Q39
The management team identifies and liaises with stakeholders with a possible interest in the public issue	1	2	3	4	5	Q40
The management team developes organizational objectives regarding the public issue	1	2	3	4	5	Q41
The management team develops a specific set of ideas regarding the management of the public issue	1	2	3	4	5	Q42
The management team implements an action plan in order to deal with the public issue	1	2	3	4	5	Q43
The management team evaluates the action plan	1	2	3	4	5	Q44

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In my university transfer of information about *public issues* impacting on my university occur through:

Formalised channels within the university structure from higher to lower levels of management	1	2	3	4	5	Q45
Formalised channels which begins at lower levels in the hierarchy and which flows upwards to top management	1	2	3	4	5	Q46
Communication between decision-making centres/manmagement at the same level within the university	1	2	3	4	5	Q47
Communication between decision-making centres/management persons at different horizontal levels within the university	1	2	3	4	5	Q48
Informal and incidental personal contact during which factual information interpretations, rumours and half truths about *public issues* are transferred	1	2	3	4	5	Q49
Communication with stakeholders such as government, community leaders, students and personnel	1	2	3	4	5	Q50

PART C: FACILITIES AND SKILLS

The purpose of Part C of the questionnaire is to determine the facilities and skills in your university with regard to the management of ***public issues***.

The following scale is used:

1 = strongly disagree
2 = disagree
3 = undecided/neutral
4 = agree
5 = strongly agree

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Please answer the following questions:

In my university executive management make frequent use of the following:

Internet (WWW & E-mail)	1	2	3	4	5	Q51
Brain storming	1	2	3	4	5	Q52
Delphi	1	2	3	4	5	Q53
Cross-impact analysis	1	2	3	4	5	Q54
Scenario building	1	2	3	4	5	Q55
An internal strategic planning division	1	2	3	4	5	Q56
The Business Management departments/personnel within the university	1	2	3	4	5	Q57
External strategic planners	1	2	3	4	5	Q58
Well connected outside public advisors	1	2	3	4	5	Q59
Experienced external lobbyists	1	2	3	4	5	Q60

THANK YOU

ANNEXURE D

TABLE I

PROFILE OF RESPONDENT UNIVERSITIES

University	Number	%
1	6	4
2	7	5
3	4	3
4	7	5
5	2	1
6	8	6
7	6	4
8	7	5
9	3	2
10	9	6
11	5	4

University	Number	%
12	8	6
13	11	8
14	6	4
15	8	6
16	4	3
17	7	5
18	9	6
19	8	6
20	6	4
21	10	7
Total	141	100

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ANNEXURE E

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE
RESULTS OBTAINED IN THE STUDY

TABLE 1

FREQUENCY COUNTS AND FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS
REGARDING THE MANAGEMENT MODE IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

PART A: PHRASEOLOGY RELATING TO PUBLIC ISSUES

Values and priorities expressed in phraseology	Frequency count	Frequency percentage	Ranking number
Democratisation/development	47	19	1
Standards/quality	45	18	2
Socio-economic needs/demands	28	11	3
Effectiveness/efficiency	21	8	4
Transformation/Restructuring	21	8	4
Academic freedom/autonomy	18	7	6
Access/admission	16	7	7
Equity/affordability	12	5	8
Discrimination(overcoming of)	12	5	8
Affirmative action	10	4	10
Cultural diversity	6	3	11
Africanisation	5	2	12
Legitimacy/accountability	4	2	13
Financial sustainability	3	1	14

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ANNEXURE E

TABLE 1

(continued)

PART B: PHRASEOLOGY RELATING TO THE PUBLIC POLICY PROCESS

Phraseology (words & terms) relating to the public process	Frequency count	%	Ranking number
Stakeholders (involvement with)	35	35	1
Society (interaction with)	21	21	2
Communities (obligations towards)	19	19	3
Environment (sensitivity towards)	10	10	4
Challenges (meeting the)	5	5	5
Redress (committed to)	3	3	6
Intimidation (rejection of)	2	2	7
Accountability (within all areas)	2	2	7
Government (contact with)	1	1	8
Constraints (experienced by)	1	1	8
Public posture (development of)	1	1	8

Source: Survey results

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ANNEXURE E

TABLE II

FREQUENCY COUNTS, FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS, MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS REGARDING THE QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN THE STUDY

PART A: COPING WITH CHANGE

My university is characterised by the following:

	Strongly disagree Count Distribution		**Neutral** Count Distribution		**Strongly agree** Count Distribution	Mean Std-Dev	
International perspective/contact is emphasised	0 0%	7 5.0%	7 5.0%	77 54.6%	49 34.8%	4.2 0.6	Q1
We experience a lot of competition from other universities	0 0%	14 9.9%	20 14.2%	92 65.2%	15 10.6%	3.8 0.6	Q2
We adapt swiftly to rapid changes	36 25.5 %	31 22.0%	25 17.7%	41 29.1%	8 5.7%	2.7 1.7	Q3
We have tight financial controls	1 0,7%	6 4.3%	14 9.9%	36 25.5%	84 59.6%	4.4 0.8	Q4
We continually innovate new courses for students	3 2.1%	12 8.5%	17 12.1%	94 66.7%	15 10.6%	3.8 0.7	Q5
We are actively engaged in changing attitudes to blacks	2 1.4%	8 5.7%	17 12.1%	79 56.0%	35 24.8%	4.0 0.7	Q6
We acknowledge the importance of student bodies (e.g. Sasco; Paso)	0 0%	2 1.4%	11 7.8%	42 29.8%	86 61.0%	4.5 0.5	Q7
We apply our resources (financial & human) effectively	5 3.5%	12 8.5%	21 14.9%	52 36.9%	51 36.2%	3.9 1.2	Q8
We give attention to detail in all our activities	4 2.8%	16 11.3%	26 18.4%	82 58.2%	13 9.2%	3.6 0.8	Q9
Our teaching courses are of excellent quality	1 0.7%	13 9.2%	15 10.6%	92 65.2%	20 14.2%	3.8 0.7	Q10
We are recognised as highly participative in community projects	2 1.4%	11 7.8%	19 13.5%	54 38.3%	55 39.0%	4.1 1.0	Q11
We pay above average salaries/wages compared to other universities	10 7.1%	43 30.5%	54 38.3%	23 16.3%	11 7.8%	2.9 1.0	Q12
We have beneficial relations with the government	3 2.1%	8 5.7%	40 28.4%	85 60.3%	5 3.5%	3.6 0.6	Q13
We develop human potential of our staff at all levels	36 25.5%	23 16.3%	31 22.0%	46 32.6%	5 3.5%	2.7 1.6	Q14
Our leaders have vision	6 4.3%	7 5.0%	18 12.8%	86 61.0%	24 17.0%	3.8 0.9	Q15
We encourage entrepreneurial qualities in all our employees	35 24.8%	26 18.4%	42 29.8%	31 22.0%	7 5.0%	2.6 1.2	Q16
It is often said that we are in collusion with the government	28 19.9%	43 30.5%	35 24.8%	35 24.8%	0 0%	2.5 1.1	Q17

We have well-developed capabilities for obtaining foreign aid/assistance	10 7.1%	81 57.4%	26 18.4%	17 12.1%	7 5.0%	2.5 1.0	Q18
Our management is well connected to outside institutions	3 2.1%	12 8.5%	22 15.6%	85 60.3%	19 13.5%	3.7 0.9	Q19
Students trust management	41 29.1%	20 14.2%	34 24.1%	41 29.1%	5 3.5%	2.6 1.3	Q20
The working conditions for all employees are excellent	5 3.5%	28 19.9%	73 51.8%	33 23.4%	2 1.4%	3.0 0.8	Q21
Efficiency in teaching & research is continually emphasised and rewarded	4 2.8%	16 11.3%	18 12.8%	84 59.6%	19 13.6%	3.7 0.9	Q22
Strong control over financial budgets/reporting is exercised	2 1.4%	11 7.8%	13 9.2%	53 37.6%	62 44%	4.1 1.0	Q23
We have been successful in promoting blacks to management levels	6 4.3%	41 29.1%	27 19.1%	55 39.0%	12 8.5%	3.2 1.1	Q24
We have developed a sound ability to deal with stakeholder relations	3 2.1%	13 9.2%	34 24.1%	82 58.2%	9 6.4%	3.6 0.8	Q25
We have operated within operating budgets over the past five years	2 1.4%	21 14.9%	14 9.9%	39 27.7%	65 46.1%	4.0 1.1	Q26
Our contribution to community projects significant	0 0%	18 12.8%	25 17.7%	50 35.5%	48 34.0%	3.9 1.0	Q27
We have many strategic alliances with other universities	1 0.7%	18 12.8%	38 27.0%	79 56.0%	5 3.5%	3.5 0.8	Q28
The link between values and specific objectives are well understood by all employees	34 24.1%	33 23.4%	41 29.1%	31 22.0%	2 1.4%	2.5 1.1	Q29
The quality of thinking amongst top management is outstanding	4 2.8%	14 9.9%	27 19.1%	82 58.2%	14 9.9%	3.6 0.9	Q30
We are one of the best universities in South Africa	6 4.3%	14 9,9%	26 18.4%	60 42.6%	35 24.8%	3.7 1.1	Q31
Our strategic plans are implemented throughout the university	36 25.6%	22 15.6%	24 17.0%	47 33.3%	12 8.5%	2.8 1.4	Q32

PART B: THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC ISSUES

I become aware of *public issues* which could possibly impact on my university by:

	Strongly disagree Count Distribution		**Neutral** Count Distribution	**Strongly agree** Count Distribution		Mean Std- Dev	
	4 2.8%	37 26.2%	90 6.4%	64 45.4%	27 19.1%	3.5 1.2	Q33
By scanning articles in university publications and research papers	3 2.1%	38 27.0%	12 8.5%	69 48.9%	19 13.5%	3.4 1.1	Q34
By attending formal meetings/conferences	2 1.4%	38 27.0%	14 9.9%	63 44.7%	24 17.0%	3.5 1.1	Q35
Through informal interaction/meetings with colleagues	2 1.4%	3 2.1%	15 10.6%	67 47.5%	54 38.3%	4.2 0.8	Q36

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ANNEXURE E

TABLE II

(continued)

Once a *public issue*, which can impact on my university, has been identified the following happens:

	Strongly disagree Count Distribution		Neutral Count Distribution		Strongly agree Count Distribution	Mean Std-Dev	
A senior manager closely aligned with the public issue takes responsibility for, and becomes the "owner" of the issue	37 26.2%	18 12.8%	21 14.9%	54 38.3%	11 7.8%	2.9 1.4	Q37
The "issue owner" forms a management team consisting of knowledgeable and influential people	38 27.0%	21 14.9%	25 17.7%	49 34.8%	8 5.7%	2.8 1.3	Q38
The management team gathers information regarding the public issue and assess the importance of the public issue	36 25.5%	13 9.2%	24 17.0%	56 39.7%	12 8.5%	3.0 1.4	Q39
The management team identifies and liaises with stakeholders with a possible interest in the public issue	36 25.5%	13 9.2%	26 18.4%	59 41.8%	7 5.0%	2.9 1.3	Q40
The management team developes organizational objectives regarding the public issue	35 24.8%	16 11.3%	31 22.0%	53 37.6%	6 4.3%	2.9 1.3	Q41
The management team develops a specific set of ideas regarding the management of the public issue	35 24.8%	17 12.1%	24 17.1%	58 41.1%	7 5.0%	2.9 1.3	Q42
The management team implements an action plan in order to deal with the public issue	36 25.5%	14 9.9%	25 17.7%	58 41.1%	8 5.7%	2.9 1.3	Q43
The management team evaluates the action plan	36 25.5%	23 16.3%	30 21.3%	45 31.9%	5 5.0%	2.7 1.3	Q44

Transfer of information about *public issues* impacting on my university occur through:

	Strongly disagree Count Distribution		Neutral Count Distribution		Strongly agree Count Distribution	Mean Std-Dev	
Formalised channels within the university structure from higher to lower levels of management	0 0%	39 27.7%	16 11.3%	71 50.4%	15 10.6%	3.4 1.0	Q45
Formalised channels which begins at lower levels in the hierarchy and which flows upwards to top management	35 24.8%	33 23.4%	27 19.1%	40 28.4%	6 4.3%	2.6 1.2	Q46
Communication between decision-making centres/manmagement at the same level within the university	3 2.1%	44 31.2%	32 22.7%	53 37.6%	9 6.4%	3.1 1.0	Q47

Communication between decision-making centres/management persons at different horizontal levels within the university	1 0.7%	41 29.1%	35 24.8%	57 40.4%	7 5.0%	3.2 0.9	Q48
Informal and incidental personal contact during which factual information interpretations, rumours and half truths about public issues are transferred	6 4.3%	24 17.0%	30 21.3%	45 31.9%	36 25.5%	3.6 1.2	Q49
Communication with stakeholders such as government, community leaders, students and personnel	4 2.8%	10 7.1%	24 17.0%	58 41.1%	45 31.9%	3.9 1.0	Q50

PART C: FACILITIES AND SKILLS

In my university executive management make frequent use of the following:

	Strongly disagree Count Distribution		**Neutral** Count Distribution		**Strongly agree** Count Distribution	Mean Std- Dev	
Internet (WWW & E-mail)	5 3.5%	25 17.7%	17 11.3%	41 29.1%	53 37.6%	3.8 1.2	Q51
Brain storming	5 3.5%	43 33.5%	16 11.3%	60 41.6%	17 10.1%	3.3 1.1	Q52
Delphi	53 37.6	35 24.8%	42 29.8%	10 7.1%	0 0%	2.1 1.0	Q53
Cross-impact analysis	52 36.0%	23 16.3%	46 32.6%	19 14.5%	1 0.7%	2.3 1.1	Q54
Scenario building	41 29.1%	17 12.1%	28 18.9%	47 33.3%	8 6.7%	2.7 1.2	Q55
An internal strategic planning division	9 4.4%	17 12.1%	18 12.8%	47 33.3%	50 37.5%	3.8 1.2	Q56
The Business Management departments/personnel within the university	44 31.2%	35 24.8%	19 13.5%	36 25.5%	7 5.0%	2.5 1.3	Q57
External strategic planners	7 4.0%	58 41.1%	27 19.1%	39 27.7%	10 8.1%	2.9 1.1	Q58
Well connected outside public advisors	7 5.0%	59 41.8%	32 22.7%	35 24.8%	3 5.7%	2.8 1.0	Q59
Experienced external lobbyists	47 33.3%	50 35.5%	28 19.9%	13 9.2%	2 1.4%	2.1 1.0	Q60

Source: Survey results

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ANNEXURE E

TABLE III

Strategic orientation

Dynamic culture	=	Q3 + Q16	2.65
Strategic leadership	=	Q15 + Q30	3.70
People orientation	=	Q14 + Q20	2.65
Strategy implementation	=	Q29 + Q32	2.65
Total			11.65
Dimension average (divide by 4)			2.91

Social focus

Social responsibility	=	Q11 + Q27	4.00
Black advancement	=	Q6 + Q24	3.60
Stakeholder relations	=	Q7 + Q25	4.05
Pay and working conditions	=	Q12 +Q21	2.95
Total			14.60
Dimension average (divide by 4)			3.65

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ANNEXURE E

TABLE III

(continued)

Control orientation

Financial control	=	Q4 + Q23	4.25
Hands-on management	=	Q9 + Q22	3.65
Financial performance	=	Q8 + Q26	3.95
Product	=	Q5 + Q10	3.80
Total			15.65
Dimension average (divide by 4)			3.91

Institutional focus

Relationship with the state	=	Q13 + Q17	3.05
Internationalisation	=	Q1 + Q18	3.35
Strategic alliances	=	Q19 + Q28	3.60
Competitiveness	=	Q2 + Q31	3.75
Total			13.75
Dimension average (divide by 4)			3.44

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ANNEXURE E

TABLE IV

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS REGARDING A COMPETENCE PROFILE OF SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

FORECASTING (SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES):

	Disagreement Distribution	Neutral Distribution	Agreement Distribution	
Skill: Use of the media by scanning the mass media (newspapers)	29%	6%	64%	Q33
Skill: Use of the media by scanning articles in university publications and research papers	29%	9%	62%	Q34
Skill: Networking through connections with outside institutions	11%	15%	74%	Q19
Skill: Networking through strategic alliances with other universities	13%	27%	60%	Q28
Skill: Networking by attending formal meetings/conferences	28%	10%	61%	Q35
Skill: Networking through informal interaction/meetings with colleagues	4%	10%	86%	Q36
Skill: Use of Brainstorming	37%	11%	52%	Q52
Skill: Use of Delphi	63%	30%	7%	Q53
Skill: Use of scenario building	41%	20%	39%	Q55
Capability: Use of Internet	21%	11%	68%	Q51
Capability: Use of data processing	52%	33%	15%	Q54
Capability: Use of public advisors	47%	23%	30%	Q59

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STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT (SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES)

	Disagreement Distribution	Neutral Distribution	Agreement Distribution	
Leadership skills: Leaders with vision	9%	13%	78%	Q15
Leadership skills: Outstanding quality of thinking amongst top management	13%	19%	68%	Q30
Plan formulation skills: Senior managers aligned with the public issue takes responsibility for, and becomes the "owner" of the issue	39%	15%	46%	Q37
Plan formulation skills: The "issue owner" forms a management team consisting of knowledgeable and influential people	41%	18%	41%	Q38
Plan formulation skills: The management team gathers information regarding the public issue and assess the importance of the public issue	35%	17%	48%	Q39
Plan formualtion skills: The management team identifies and liaises with stakeholders with a possible interest in the public issue	35%	18%	47%	Q40
Plan formulation skills: The management team developes organizational objectives regarding the public issue	36%	22%	42%	Q41
Plan formulation skills: The management team develops a specific set of ideas regarding the management of the public issue	37%	17%	46%	Q42
Plan implementation skill: Strategic plans are implemented throughout the university	41%	17%	42%	Q32
Plan implementation skills: The management team implements an action plan in order to deal with the public issue	35%	18%	47%	Q43
Plan evaluation skills: The management team evaluates the action plan	42%	21%	37%	Q44
Communication skills: Through formalised channels from higher to lower levels of management	28%	11%	61%	Q45
Communication skills: Through formalised channels which begins at lower levels and which flows upwards to top management	48%	19%	33%	Q46
Communication skills: Between decision-making centres/management at the same management level	33%	23%	44%	Q47
Communication skills: Between decision-making centres/management persons at different horizontal management levels	30%	25%	45%	Q48

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Communication skills: Through informal and incidental personal contact	21%	22%	57%	Q49
Communication skills: With stakeholders such as government, community leaders, students and personnel	10%	17%	73%	Q50
Capability: Making use of external strategic planners	46%	19%	35%	Q58
Capability: Making use of internal strategic planners	19%	13%	70%	Q56
Capability: Making use of internal business management departments	56%	14%	30%	Q57

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ANNEXURE E

TABLE IV

(continued)

STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS:

	Disagreement Distribution	Neutral Distribution	Agreement Distribution	
Skill: We have beneficial relations with the government	8%	28%	64%	Q13
Skill: Our contribution to community projects significant	13%	17%	70%	Q27
Skill: We develop human potential of our staff at all levels	42%	22%	36%	Q14
Skill: Students trust management	43%	24%	33%	Q20
Capability: The development of abilities to deal with stakeholder relations	11%	24%	65%	Q25
Capability: The use of experienced external lobbyists	69%	20%	11%	Q60

Source: Survey results

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