

CHAPTER 6

EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN STUDENT AFFAIRS

6.1 Introduction

There are certain outstanding aspects that emerged particularly in the analysis of the results of the main questionnaire.

The following important aspects were identified as key factors with regard to change and conflict management in the literature study and the empirical research. These aspects, namely communication, attitude, change processes and dealing with resistance to change, and conflict resolution processes will receive further attention in this chapter.

Being involved in change management and conflict resolution, the function of a change agent is a management function. That suggests that change agents and conflict managers should be exposed to management aspects, namely planning, organizing, guiding and controlling. It is essential to be skilled in these management aspects because the success of any institution depends on efficiency and effectiveness in these aspects. These management aspects are further indispensable when addressing issues of communication, attitude and actual processes of change management and conflict resolution. In change management and conflict resolution, thorough planning and the organizing of activities and the roles of stakeholders are needed. Giving guidance to stakeholders is essential because not everybody may have insight into change and conflict management. The last activity would be control and that involves evaluating the whole process and determining the weak and strong points of the process.

A brief outline of what each management aspect entails follows:

- **Planning**

Planning is central for any activity to take place meaningfully, efficiently and effectively because it is through the exercise of planning that answers to the following questions are provided:

What is happening?

What is it that is supposed to happen?

How should it be accomplished?

Who should be involved?

Which resources are needed?

What resources are available?

Thus, planning is future-oriented. It focuses on setting goals for an identified activity.

- **Organizing**

The activity of organizing revolves around the intention of realizing the set goals of planning. Organizing looks into relevant structures, modalities, resources and people for particular tasks. It will make it possible for various stakeholders to be involved in different non-conflicting roles, which are aimed at achieving a particular goal.

- **Guiding**

Guiding is intended to help and support participants in a particular activity to achieve their goal. Guiding is characterized by the provision of advice, motivating participants and overseeing the whole process. The following

aspects are central for realizing efficient and effective guidance: Building relationships which are characterized by empathy, and ensuring effective communication.

- **Controlling**

The central activity in control is evaluation, which is aimed at ensuring the success of a process. The following steps will complete a process of evaluation: Monitoring by collecting information related to a specific activity, analyzing the information and judgements being made and reviewing strategies and decisions made. Through the process of control, successes and failures will be identified, subsequently corrective measures may be taken. Thus the management aspect of control regulates, guides and measures activities of a particular process.

Management expertise, including the above aspects, will be needed for the effective implementation of the guidelines on change management and conflict resolution.

As reflected in Chapter 1, change and conflict will continue to be an integral part of human life, thus universities will continue to experience change and conflict. It emerged in this study that communication is central in the management of change and conflict resolution, hence, the importance of investigating how communication could be efficiently and effectively implemented.

6.2 Communication

6.2.1 Introduction

According to the literature study and the findings of the empirical study, communication has emerged to be central in human activities. For instance, according to the respondents, communication has been placed at the top of a basic list of aspects that had to be changed as a result of the diversity in culture. Communication promotes peaceful co-existence, harmony and interaction. That will secure knowledge and understanding about others. Effective communication determines the success of an organization. All human activities, such as expressing feelings of love or hatred, bringing about change, conflict and the resolution thereof; planning and the execution of the plan are based on communication. Thus, human activities are in fact based on communication, for instance:

- How do people think and reason with one another without communicating?
- How is it possible to set processes of change in motion without communicating?
- How is it practically possible to plan, organize, delegate and control without communicating?
- How is it possible to resolve conflict and bring about reconciliation without communicating?

The answer to the above questions is that it is humanly not possible to be engaged in any activity without communicating. As a result, it is important to

look into how to ensure efficient and effective communication in processes of change management and conflict resolution in multicultural student affairs.

The following aspects should be taken into consideration for efficient and effective communication in multicultural student affairs:

- Language,
- Factors for successful communication, and
- Communication model.

6.2.2 Language

The importance of communication dictates that an appropriate medium of communication be employed (a language that is understood by all in a multicultural situation). An appropriate language should be used in verbal communication and also in written notices. In case of failure to communicate through a language that the intended receivers of a message understand, miscommunication will be experienced.

Therefore, the language policy of a multicultural university should be appropriate to its student population. Despite the fact that South Africa at the moment has constitutionally eleven official languages, it is nationally the practice that both Afrikaans and English are the media of instruction. It is therefore fundamental to make even use of both Afrikaans and English at multicultural universities where they are offered as media of instruction. It becomes obligatory to use both Afrikaans and English when it is required by the composition of a student community.

6.2.3 Effective communication across cultures

Cross-cultural communication means communication with people from other cultures. It can either be verbal or non-verbal, which is very important for any organization. Therefore, efficient and effective communication within multicultural student affairs is indispensable.

Before contemplating on a particular strategy of communicating effectively across cultures, the following factors that could facilitate effective communication during processes of change management and conflict resolution should be seriously taken into consideration:

- **Respecting other cultures**
- **Equal consideration of concerns of various cultures**
- **The use of an appropriate medium of communication**
- **Involvement of all stakeholders in processes of change management and conflict resolution**
- **Showing interest in other cultures**
- **Awareness and understanding of the following elements of cultural identity:**
 - Language
 - Behavioural norms
 - Learning styles
 - Family and kinship patterns
 - Gender roles
 - Views of the individual
 - Historical awareness of a cultural community
 - Religious/spiritual beliefs and practices.

- **The reality regarding cross-cultural communication**

- It is impossible to avoid communication. Every human behaviour communicates a particular message
- Communication does not necessarily mean understanding. It is not obvious that what one communicates is understood because understanding depends on interpretation. Two persons may interpret the same message differently. Therefore, always be mindful of how your message is interpreted. This can be done by asking questions.
- Communication is irreversible. Communication cannot be taken back. It can be explained, clarified and restated, but it cannot be wiped out, although we may sometimes wish that it could. Therefore, always being cautious about what is intended to be communicated is essential. Communication occurs in context, i.e. situations and circumstances would determine the form of communication.
- Communication is a dynamic process. It is not static and passive, but rather it is a continuous and active process without beginning or end.

- **Barriers to communication across cultures**

- Fear:

Insufficient knowledge regarding other people and how they communicate cause fear of communicating.

- Focusing on similarities

Focusing on similarities may be because of lack of knowledge about other cultures. Important differences may be missed if focus is only on similarities, which will encourage a major culture to resort to assimilation.

- Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism is a tendency of judging other cultures by the standards of one's own culture. That is actually displaying superiority over other cultures and seeing and judging them in terms of one's own standards.

- Stereotyping, prejudice, and racism

Stereotyping refers to an act of judging others on the basis of inaccurate or wrong information. As a result, stereotyping will lead to inaccurate perceptions and judgements. The end-result thereof is entrenched prejudice, consequently racist behavior is developed.

- **Further hints for effective intercultural communication**

- Acknowledge and accept multiculturalism

An attitude of this nature will assist one to contribute positively towards the promotion of harmony within a culturally diverse organization.

- Preparing for the experience of meeting with people from other cultures

The reality that historically white universities are multicultural and that there is no way cultural interaction within student affairs could be avoided, should be accepted. Such a positive attitude would enable people to prepare themselves for the experience of meeting with people from other cultures.

- Dealing with stereotypes

Stereotypes can be dealt with by way of sincere self-examination. Furthermore, searching for knowledge about others by asking the right questions and getting acquainted with them, can also contribute to dealing with stereotypes.

- Value and protect cultural differences

Cultural differences should be valued and protected because culture is the heritage of a particular people. It would be tragic for people to lose their heritage and identity. Thus, attempts to “make others like us” should be completely avoided.

The information contained in paragraphs 6.2.2 and 6.2.3 is extremely important as it addresses issues of attitude towards other cultures. It is therefore indispensable for the practical application of the model for communication as reflected in paragraph 6.2.4.

6.2.4 Communication model

The proposed model for communication should be understood in terms of hierarchical and integrated collaboration. The two should not be seen as different and separate forms of communication. They are two in one, supplementing each other. The employment of the two would facilitate effective communication as follows:

- Hierarchical co-operation

Hierarchical co-operation as indicated in Figure 6.1, explains the fact that structures for communication will be in place in accordance with

their various responsibilities, areas of performance and the authority that might be attached to the position. The implication would be that a staff member at a lower position would have less authority than the one in a higher position, for an example a vice rector will have more authority than a dean of students. The type of authority will determine the type of decisions one can take.

Furthermore, hierarchical co-operation as reflected in Figure 6.1 implies that student leadership structures are important and should be taken into consideration in a communication structure. Student leaders have some form of authority. As a result, students should be encouraged to make use of student leaders. However, a student should not be forced to use student structures in case there are good reasons. When hierarchical co-operation cannot for some reason be employed, integrated co-operation is implemented.

According to this study hierarchical co-operation cannot be completely avoided because of its importance which is outlined as follows:

- It distinguishes responsibilities

In a work environment every employee should know precisely what her/his role is. Role description is important because it avoids confusing responsibilities and ultimately clashes erupting basically because of operating haphazardly without boundaries. Thus, hierarchical co-operation will inform staff members of their respective responsibilities and the amount of authority attached to the position of authority.

- It saves time

A student may be referred from pillar to post if she/he does not approach the right person for help. The right person would be the one who has the authority to decide on a specific issue. Thus, knowing whom to approach is important. Hierarchical co-operation will assist in this regard.

- It will provide insight in understanding how an organization operates

It will be through this form of hierarchical co-operation that students will be provided with an insight into how student affairs in particular functions. Students in a residence would know that in case of any problem in the residence, they should approach the head of the residence first. In the case of dissatisfaction then a senior person to the head may be approached.

- Integrated co-operation

Integrated co-operation as reflected in Figure 6.2 implies flexibility in communication procedures as outlined in the paragraph on hierarchical co-operation. It implies accessibility of all authorities and it promotes attending to issues jointly when circumstances require. Integrated co-operation should not be seen as an alternative of hierarchical co-operation. It becomes an extension of hierarchical co-operation by supplementing it. Under normal circumstances an issue should be referred to the correct person to handle. However, in the case where an issue is reported at a higher level where it was not supposed to have been reported, but it has been established that it is sensitive and needs urgent attention, it could be handled jointly by the authorities concerned. Integrated co-operation could also assist in a situation where junior authorities are ineffective.

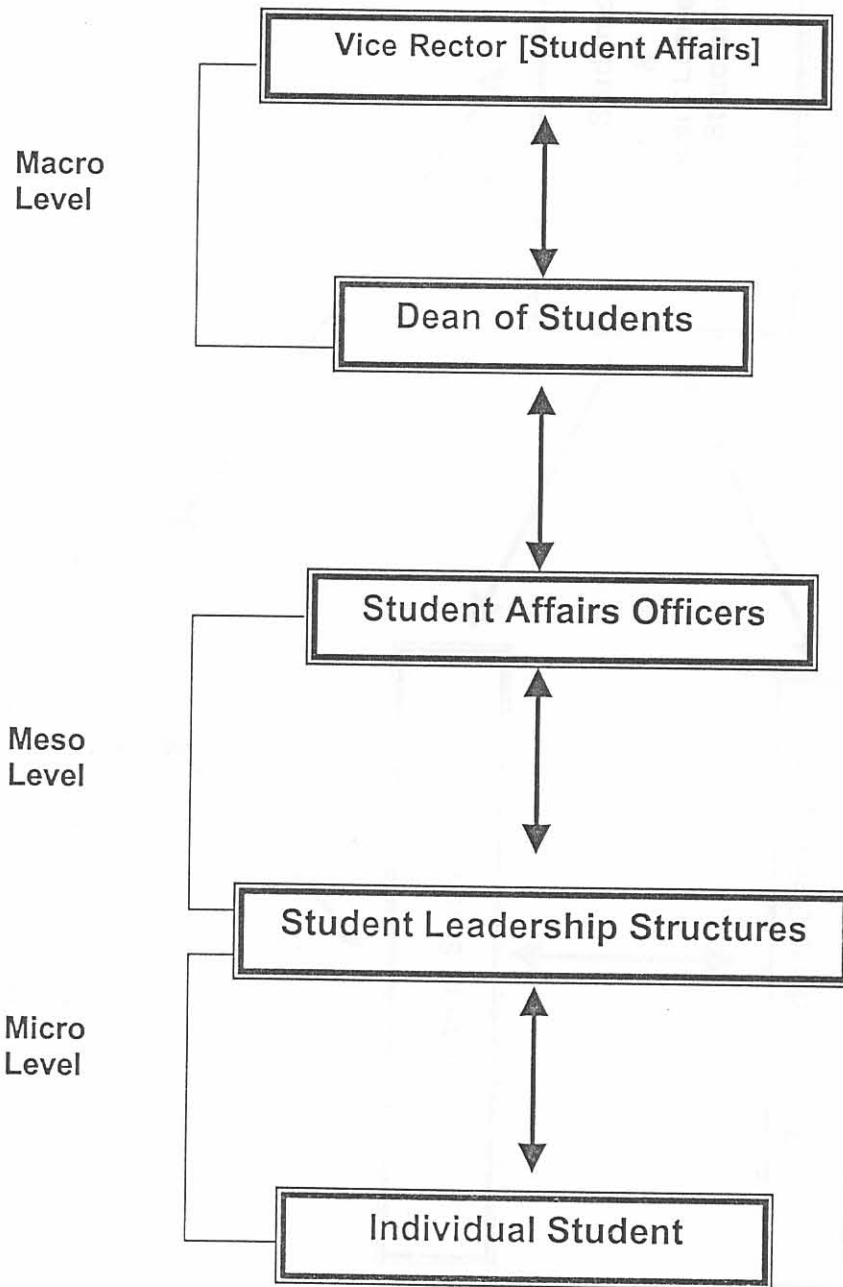


Figure 6.1: Hierarchical co-operation

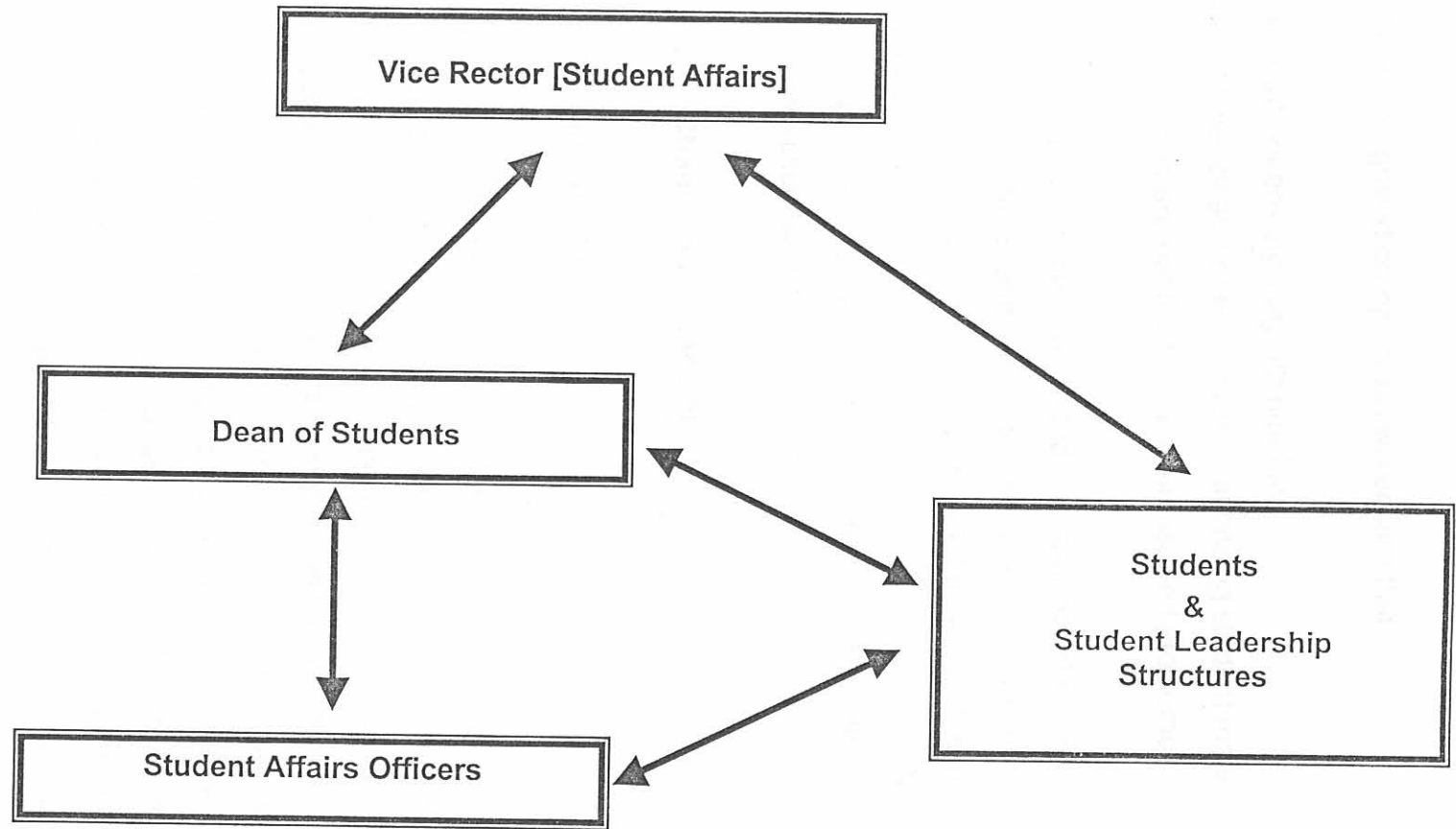


Figure 6.2: Integrated co-operation

Thus, integrated co-operation will ensure that:

- matters are urgently attended to;
- efficiency and effectiveness in attending student matters is observed;
- students are not frustrated by unresolved problems.

In conclusion, a positive attitude of staff members regarding the use of both hierarchical and integrated co-operation is essential. For instance, when an issue has to be jointly attended to, effort should not be wasted on questions such as “Why was it not reported to me?” This method of communication should be seen as a tool that can efficiently and effectively promote client-satisfaction and consequently promote stability.

6.3 Change management

6.3.1 Introduction

Managing change can either be exciting or laborious, depending on strategies that are employed. It is therefore essential that thorough preparations be made to make a change program exciting. Such preparations should include firstly, an acknowledgement of the fact that resistance to change will be experienced and that the only difference will be the extent to which it may be experienced. Therefore, being prepared to deal with resistance to change is the right attitude because approaching a change program with an illusion that people will merely accept change could frustrate and disrupt the entire change program. Secondly, a strategy and procedure of driving a change program, as reflected in Figure 6.3, should be used.

6.3.2 Managing resistance to change

The management of resistance as indicated in the model is placed in the center and it is cyclic just as the entire process of change. It suggests that

University of Pretoria etd – Moraka, R E (2006)

resistance should be continuously addressed by way of continuous provision of information and education on aspects of change and by the inclusive involvement of stakeholders. Thus, increased understanding of every activity should be ensured. Continuous monitoring of resistant behavior will further determine approaches (radical, regulatory, subjective, or objective) of involving stakeholders. Even though the outcome of the contest between supporters and resisters of change may be that supporters of change are victorious, continuous focus should be placed on the resisters of change.

Furthermore, in the process of continual management of resistance to change, the following aspects as indicated in Chapter 2, paragraph 2.7, should be taken into consideration:

- **Factors that may cause resistance to change**
 - Uncertainty regarding change
 - Fear
 - Disruption of routine
 - Loss of existing benefits
 - Conformity to norms and cultures

- **Factors that could minimize resistance to change**
 - Understanding resistant behavior
 - Compulsion
 - Persuasion
 - Fear and security
 - Understanding
 - Time
 - Involvement
 - Criticism
 - Flexibility

- Understanding organizational culture
- Education and communication

6.3.3 Cyclic change management model

The change management model, as reflected in Figure 6.3, is referred to as cyclic because one stage is dependent to the other until the goal of change, which is successful implementation of change, is attained. Thus, various activities, from the first stage to the last stage, will depend on the success in the previous stage. It means therefore that failure in one stage will lead to failure in the other, subsequently the whole process would collapse. For instance, determining the present situation cannot be properly completed if the correct need for change is not identified, clarified and agreed upon. The successful identification and clarification of the need for change can be made only if relevant stakeholders are identified.

In addition, the cyclic nature of this model points to what can be expected from various stakeholders from the first stage to the end. Thus, throughout the stages of change, change agents would identify behaviour and identify negative and positive forces with regard to change. Furthermore, types of people as reflected in Chapter 2, paragraph 2.4.1, whether the drifters, survivors or winners would be identified.

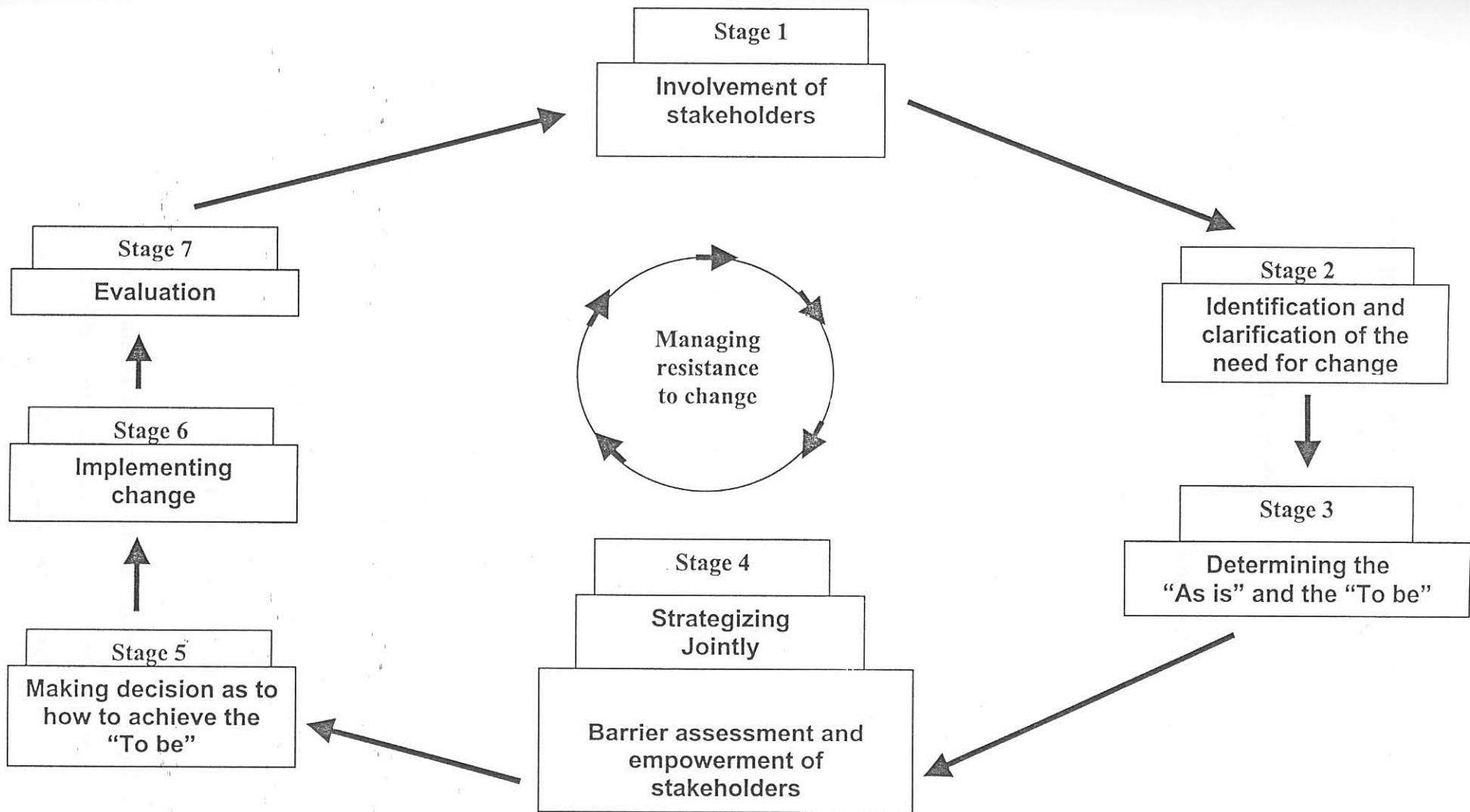


Figure 6.3: Cyclic change management model

The cyclic change management model is explained through the following seven stages:

- Stage 1: Involvement of stakeholders

It is important for change agents to acknowledge the fact that the involvement of stakeholders is the fundamental principle of the management of a change program. The concept *stakeholder* refers to persons or groups of people who would be affected by change, either directly or indirectly. The following reasons justify the involvement of stakeholders as the foundation for efficient and effective change management:

- Ensuring legitimacy

It is crucial that those who would be affected by it in one way or another accept a change program. A change program should be considered genuine. That can only be achieved through the involvement of stakeholders.

- Ensuring ownership of a change program

Ownership of a change program would be encouraged through the involvement of stakeholders at the beginning of a change program. It is important to assure stakeholders that they have started the change program and that they are shaping and directing it by way of contributing to determining the whole process of a change program.

- Ensuring the accommodation of diverse perception

A multicultural student affairs division is comprised of people from diverse cultural backgrounds who are different in many respects. Thus, if a particular cultural group were excluded in a change

program, the perceptions of those who belong to this specific cultural group would definitely be missed. The likelihood would be an inappropriate outcome of a change program. Therefore, it is essential that all stakeholders be involved in a change program so that the product of such a change program can be applicable to the entire student affairs division.

It may not be possible to identify and involve all relevant stakeholders at the beginning of a change program. However, it should be ensured that a session or two is spent with those who could be identified to further identify other role-players. It should be first ascertained whether participants are satisfied regarding who should be involved before a change program is advanced.

After the identification of stakeholders, the second step of a change process, which is the identification of the need for change, can be embarked on.

- Stage 2: Identification and clarification of the need for change

In any situation where change is being effected, not everybody would understand the need for change. That is so because of different perceptions of life, which are based on different cultural backgrounds. Thus, stakeholders will have different interests. As a result, stakeholders should be assisted to recognize and accept the need for change. In cases where after having tried various methods, some students still do not see the need for change, compulsion may be employed to ensure that change is effected.

The process of identifying and clarifying the need for change should be done within the framework of a university policy. That means that the need for change should not contradict a university policy.

The completion of an activity to identify the need for change would require thorough investigation of the present situation. That will then lead to the third stage which deals with determining the present situation and what the future should be like.

- Stage 3: Determining the “As is” and the “To be”

This stage is diagnostic. Through it, the current situation “As is” and the future situation “To be” are examined. In the first instance, the current situation has to be meticulously examined. Thus, establishing “where we are” should be done before attempts to move into the new future “where we want to be” are made. That could be accomplished by asking the following questions:

- What is happening?
- What is it that has to be changed?
- Why should it be changed?

The establishment and understanding of the present situation will facilitate the determination of the future situation. The definition of the future as far as change is concerned, entails an outline of what has to be done in order to correct the present. Furthermore, the “To be” explains where and how the future should be. It is further important to note that the more clarity on the “To be”, the more stakeholders would become positive to participate in the process of change.

After the establishment of the prevailing situation and the identification of aspects that should be changed, all stakeholders should further strategize jointly for action.

- **Stage 4: Strategizing jointly**

Strategizing jointly for action implies an acknowledgement of the need to change as a result of having diagnosed the present situation. In addition, that would imply that there is a consensus that the present situation poses a problem, as a result, something has to be done in order to correct it. Therefore, on the basis of this understanding, strategies, which would make it possible for the achievement of the "To be", are jointly developed.

In the first instance, barriers such as financial constraints, clarification of roles and those who still resist change should be identified and be dealt with urgently so that the process of change could be advanced. The clearing of obstacle to the process of change should be followed by the empowerment of stakeholders. The empowerment could take many forms but the following are considered to be fundamental:

- Educating key players by way of providing them with more information.
- Information should be properly explained.
- Roles of stakeholders should further be appropriately defined and be agreed upon.
- Outputs and targets should be specified.
- A vision should be completed.

- **Stage 5: Making decisions**

The activity of decision-making is crucial, because if wrong decisions are made at this stage, then wrong decisions will be implemented. Consequently, the entire process of change fails.

The following questions will facilitate correct decisions which should be taken in this stage:

- What should be done to redress the present?
- How would that be done?
- Who is doing what?
- When should it be completed?

This activity of making decisions requires that stakeholders be continually provided with emotional, moral and material support. Rewards in the form of acknowledgement should be in place. Thus, in this stage, intensive intervention will be required.

Success in this stage will lead to the next stage of practically effecting change by way of implementing decisions that have been taken.

- Stage 6: Implementing change

Stages 1-5 are actually preparatory steps towards implementing real change. Real change would be the product of the process of change from stages 1-5. The concept *product* implies the decisions that are taken to address the present in order to achieve the future.

In the implementation of change it should be ensured that all stakeholders are involved. It is also crucial at this stage that involved parties become well informed about what the implementation stage entails. More education on the implications of the implementation of change is essential. More information and further clarification of issues could ensure the success of refreezing, which is a process of internalizing and personalizing newly acquired behavior. Through refreezing change may be maintained and an attitude of viewing change as temporary and that it would be possible to revert to the past, will be addressed. In addition, through refreezing stakeholders would be encouraged to positively accept and own the change so that they do not revert to the past. Thus, efficient and effective communication is indispensable.

Furthermore, implementation requires monitoring. Without thorough monitoring an implementation process, regression to a previous state may be experienced. A structure which would be responsible for monitoring the implementation of change should be constituted. That should be the responsibility of all the stakeholders to ensure that such a structure is constituted. Such a structure should be legitimate to all stakeholders, thereby making it acceptable to all concerned.

- Stage 7: Evaluation

Before change is implemented, stakeholders become involved in various stages (stages 1-5) wherein decisions that would facilitate the crucial stage of implementing change are taken. It is therefore vital that the decisions that were made regarding change be taken into consideration during the implementation of change.

The evaluation exercise during the implementation stage would make it possible to find out whether the process of implementation has been within the framework of the decision taken or not. Through evaluation the easy and difficult steps, weak and strong points, successes and failures of the entire change process are identified. The evaluation exercise should be based on the following questions:

- What criteria are used for evaluation?
- Who will do the evaluation?
- How long should it take to evaluate?
- What is going to be done with the results of evaluation?

In conclusion, it is apparent the evaluation exercise will compel the stakeholders to converge again in stage 1 to interpret the results of evaluation and to decide on a way forward.

The other most important aspect as far as change process is concerned, is the management of resistance to change. The following paragraph sheds light on that aspect.

Managing change would therefore require a great deal of planning and particularly the involvement of relevant stakeholders. It should not be a decision of an individual to decide on who has to be involved. It has also been noted that resistance to change will be experienced. Resistance will have some form of conflict, thus it is important to ensure that change and conflict are not handled apart from each other because they are interwoven since one would lead to the other. Paragraph 6.4 provides guidelines on how conflict can be managed.

6.4 Conflict resolution

It is indicated in Chapter 1, paragraph 1.1 that two worlds exist in multicultural universities in South Africa. One world is constituted by students from the historically privileged White race and the other by students from the historically under-privileged Black race. Conflicting perceptions and interests will therefore prevail in such a situation. Hence, as highlighted in Chapter 5, difference exist with regard to various change aspects between White respondents and the other three cultural groups, namely Black, Indian and Coloured. For example, the majority of White respondents are against cultural representation on corridors in the residences while majorities of respondents from the other three cultural groups (Black, Indian and Coloured) are for it (see Table 5.35). In addition, regarding conflict management, White respondents differ from respondents from the other three cultural groups (Black, Indian and Coloured) on prioritizing the causes of racial conflict in the residences (see Table 5.51), and on the medium of communication (see Table 5.52). These are but a few examples drawn from Chapter 5 that indicate prevailing diverse perceptions.

Thus, in a situation as described above, conflict would more often be experienced. Therefore it is essential to identify strategies of averting as well as resolving cultural conflicts efficiently and effectively. Any strategy employed to resolve conflict in a multicultural university should take into consideration the various racial perceptions regarding conflict resolution and the centrality of communication and involvement of the affected parties (Chapter 5, paragraph 5.3.9). As far as communication is concerned, it should be ensured that an appropriate language of communication is employed at the beginning of the process of conflict resolution.

Thus, the following guidelines on conflict resolution as indicated in Figure 6.4 are based on the literature study and the findings of the empirical study. The following six stages of conflict management will provide an explanation of the guidelines on conflict management.

6.4.1 Stage 1: Involving affected parties

Whoever would be responsible for facilitating the resolution of a conflict must ensure that all the affected parties are equally involved. The conflicting parties and those that may be directly or indirectly affected by the conflict should be identified. It is further important to assess the relationship between the disputants and their motivations and sources of power.

Equal involvement of disputants to a conflict resolution process requires that parties to a conflict be involved right at the beginning of the resolution of a conflict and be afforded similar chances of participation. Ensuring that the parties to a conflict are involved is the first and fundamental step in a process of conflict resolution.

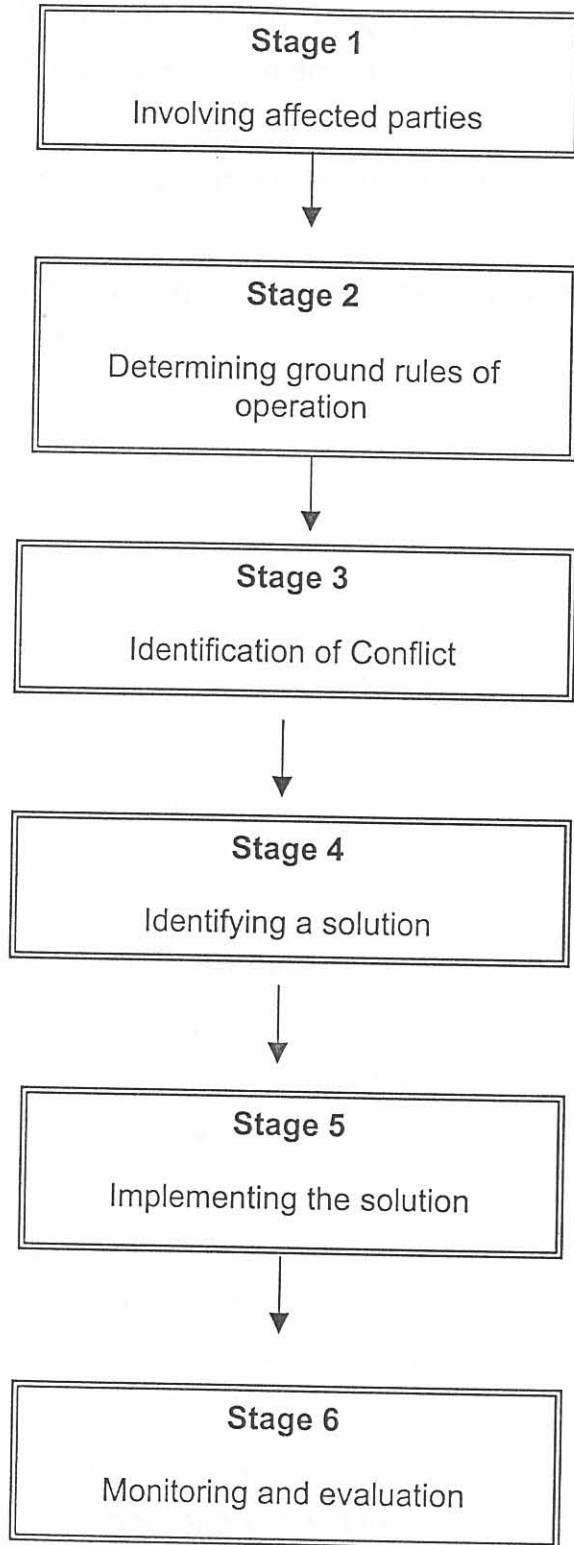


Figure 6.4: Conflict management model

The successful identification and involvement of disputants will lead to the next stage, which is the identification of the actual conflict.

6.4.2 Stage 2: Determining ground rules of operation

It is important that an understanding of how the whole process of conflict resolution will be conducted be reached. The following aspects should be clarified and agreed upon:

- Who will facilitate the process.
- A positive attitude towards the process of conflict resolution is established. Such an attitude includes an acknowledgement of the fact that a problem exists and that it needs to be resolved. Therefore, an agreement on how to work together should be reached.
- An agreement on the medium of communication to be used.
- A neutral place for meetings and the duration of the meetings.

6.4.3 Stage 3: Identification of conflict

In this stage, relevant information about the conflict should be gathered. The crucial aspect in this stage is whether the right conflict has been identified and whether that has been done promptly. In order to identify the right conflict, grievances, goals, concerns and interests of the disputants should be taken into consideration. That can only be done provided that disputants are fully involved in a process of conflict resolution.

Therefore, fully involving disputants in an exercise of identifying conflict is central. As a result, it becomes necessary to establish once more who the involved parties to a conflict are.

The involvement of all disputants would facilitate appropriate response to the following basic questions in identifying conflict:

- What happened?
- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- Who is involved?
- How did it start?
- Is it escalating or dying down?
- Were any resolution attempts made?
- What are the implications of the conflict?

Thus, responses to the above-mentioned questions could assist in identifying what the real conflict is. After the identification of the conflict, it would then be necessary to discuss possible solutions to the conflict. The next paragraph sheds light in that regard.

6.4.4 Stage 4: Identifying a solution

Involving all disputants as well as identifying and understanding the conflict will assist in identifying an appropriate solution to the conflict. Again, as in the first stage of conflict resolution, this stage would require full participation of disputants. A positive attitude would also be required. Disputants should be genuinely prepared to identify an appropriate solution. Furthermore, the interests of the disputants should be taken into consideration. The following steps should be followed when identifying a solution:

- Develop alternative solution

Alternative solutions should be identified and discussed. Brainstorming could be one of the effective methods to be used for identifying alternative solutions. Finalizing the choice of a solution would, to a certain extent, depend on the following criteria.

- **Setting of criteria**

The following criteria against which a solution should be developed should be taken into consideration: Time – when should the solution be implemented? Financial implications – in case the implementation of the solution has some financial implications, it should then be determined whether funds are available; Legitimacy – it should be established whether the solution is acceptable to all parties; Authority – the policy of the institution should be taken into consideration and be established whether the authorities would approve of the solution.

Ultimately, a preferred solution will be weighed against the criteria and should it be found to be suitable, then it can be implemented.

6.4.5 Stage 5: Implementing the solution

In this stage the implementation of the identified solution is executed. This stage is crucial because failure in it will render the whole process futile. Again, disputants should fully be involved in the implementation of the solution. The implementation will be based on the following aspects:

- **A plan of action**

A plan of action, which will be based on the responses of the following questions, as raised by Holton in Chapter 3, paragraph 3.2.3, should be developed: Who should do what? What exactly should be done? When should it be done? What are available checkpoints? When are the involved parties meeting?

In conclusion, the implementation of the solution would require that the whole process of implementation be monitored.

6.5 Summary

This chapter provided guidelines that could be of use in attempts to manage change and conflict resolution efficiently and effectively. The guidelines revolve around the following aspects:

- **Communication**

The 'language policy' as an aspect which could determine an appropriate medium of communication, has been discussed. Aspects that could either inhibit or facilitate effective communication across culture have been pointed out. In addition, a communication model for efficient and effective communication has been outlined.

- **Change management**

An indication as to how resistance to change could be managed has been highlighted. Both factors that could cause resistance to change and those that could minimize resistance to change have been outlined. In addition, a cyclic change management model has been developed.

- **Conflict resolution**

The results of the empirical research regarding conflict management have been briefly highlighted. Furthermore, guidelines on how conflict could be resolved have been provided.