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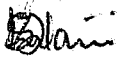
A critical analysis of the development of continuous improvement in teaching and learning in schools: The Total Quality Management (TQM) Approach. Case Study: Swaziland

Zanele Sonto Dlamini



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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Education, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Education.

Johannesburg 1999

ABSTRACT

This study seeks to explore the generic management principles of Total Quality Management (TQM) and their relevance to education. The major principle of TQM proposes continuous improvement as a strategy towards improving quality. In schools where the focus on improving teaching and learning for the benefit of the student, innovative school principals in collaboration with teachers, pupils and parents, have set up procedures and processes to ensure quality education.

The study also considers significantly the extent of the applicability and the effecitveness of seeking continuous improvement in schools. It examines whether some schools in Swaziland use staff development and teamwork to sustain quality teaching and learning. It also investigates the extent to which leadership management contributes towards managing internal and external pressures associated with the policy of the school, and meeting the demands of the customers (puipls, parents, community, stakeholders, institutions). Therefore TQM as a process requires ownership by all parties in an organisation.

Through the study, findings revealed that the TQM principles could to a certain extent work with some schools in Swaziland. This can be affected by the culture of schooling in the country, the participatory approach and the diversity of the school managers' approach towards decision making. Finally, the study recommends some strategies of creating a continuous improvement system to sustain quality education.

DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own work, supervised by the Education Department. It is being submitted for the Degree of Masters of Education in the University of the Wiwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

Zanele Sonto Dlamini 10 **day of** October **1999**

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CHAPTER 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Market forces are now having a much greater impact on education than ever before. Consequently the environment is becoming more complex and uncertain and the organisational structures in educational institutions are having to adapt and change at an even greater pace than in the past. This means competitiveness, and perhaps even future survival in this context will depend to a large extent on the ways in which change and improvement are managed. One model for such adaptation is total quality management (TQM), which is being used in other industrial and commercial sectors as mentioned by Harris et al (1998:162).

Total Quality management (TQM) has many definitions. Essentially it is concerned with customer-focused organisational improvement, achieved through the activities of employees at various levels in the structure. TQM is "a philosophy and a methodology that assists institutions to manage change and to set their own agendas for dealing with the external pressures. To be truly effective it requires organisation-wide consensus, where all staff members are convinced of its value and its benefits to for learners" (Sallis 1996:3). Every organisation is faced with the challenge to achieve excellence and maintain good quality and accountability to the stakeholders. Seeking the source of quality is an important quest in education. When it comes to school development, we need to identify and set in place an accountability system that fosters the fundamental aims of the organisation.

Harris *et al* (1998) describe TQM as consisting of three elements. These include:

(a) Goal attainment that is, how well the organisation achieves its strategic objectives.

(b) Resource utilization that is, how well the organisation makes use of its available resources.

(c) Adaptability that is, the capacity of the organisation to review its performance and match the changing requirements of its environment.

According to Handy (1984), every organisation is different. Each school is different from every other school, and schools as a group are different from other kinds of organisations. Each school has its own mix of cultures, and that the cultural dilemmas which affect other organisations are there in the school as well. Thus the task for school managers is to discover how to change the culture and resources to overcome the barriers, since school culture is determined by many external as well as internal forces.

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a practical but strategic approach to running an organisation that focuses on the needs of its customers and clients. It is a deliberate and systematic approach to achieving appropriate levels of quality, as stated by Sallis (1996:28). As the number of schools is increasing day-by-day in every country, the nation budgets are also increasing and the public is becoming more aware of quality. As an approach, TQM seeks a permanent shift in an institution's focus away from short-term expediency to long-term quality improvement and this could be the best approach for improving the quality of education.

> *" Total Quality Management incorporates quality assurance, extends and develops it. TQM is about creating a quality culture where the aim of every member of staff is to delight their customers, and where the structure of their organisation allows them to do so".* (Wallis 1996:19)

Davidoff and Lazarus (1997), argue that the element of 'strategy' includes stated areas of achievement or goals as well as criteria for measuring those achievements (outcomes), Once goals have been set, planning to achieve them becomes an important set of activities. Also, once plans have been implemented, evaluation relating to the goals and ensuring that the process is evaluated in an ongoing way is known as strategic planning, an important concept in all organisations.

Strategic planning:

- includes the review and development of the school's identity and culture;

- incorporates the development of procedures and structure to support the goals set;
- requires access to and the development of both technical and human resources to achieve the goals and
- is dependent on effective leadership and management. (Davidoff & Lazarus 1997:23).

Planning is essential in meeting the goals of an organisation. However, a common problem results from the heads and senior management being too locked into everyday problems. Bennet et al (1992) emphasizes that the starting point for strategic planning and management is the school's mission. The mission should define purpose and values. Personal values and social responsibilities are extremely important in the formulation of strategic policy because most organisational decisions are strongly influenced by values. Thus, the mission "is a reference point by which schools make decisions, determine implementation strategies and policy, judge behavior and evaluate its performance" as discussed by Bennet et al (1992:168).

A problem often related to setting the goals of the school is the diverse cultures and conflicting needs and requirements of the staff towards improving the quality of learning. Mintzberg(1987) warns that successful organisations do not start out with detailed strategic plans. Instead, they have an implicit view of where it is they want the organisation to go. The strategy to get them there emerges from the pattern of decisions they take in order to move towards their desired objective. Therefore, being strategic is knowing what to achieve, being able to justify the direction and then finding the best ways to get there. This means making a decision on what goals to achieve, plan strategies to achieve these goals, implementing action and finally evaluating the implementation in terms of the goals set.

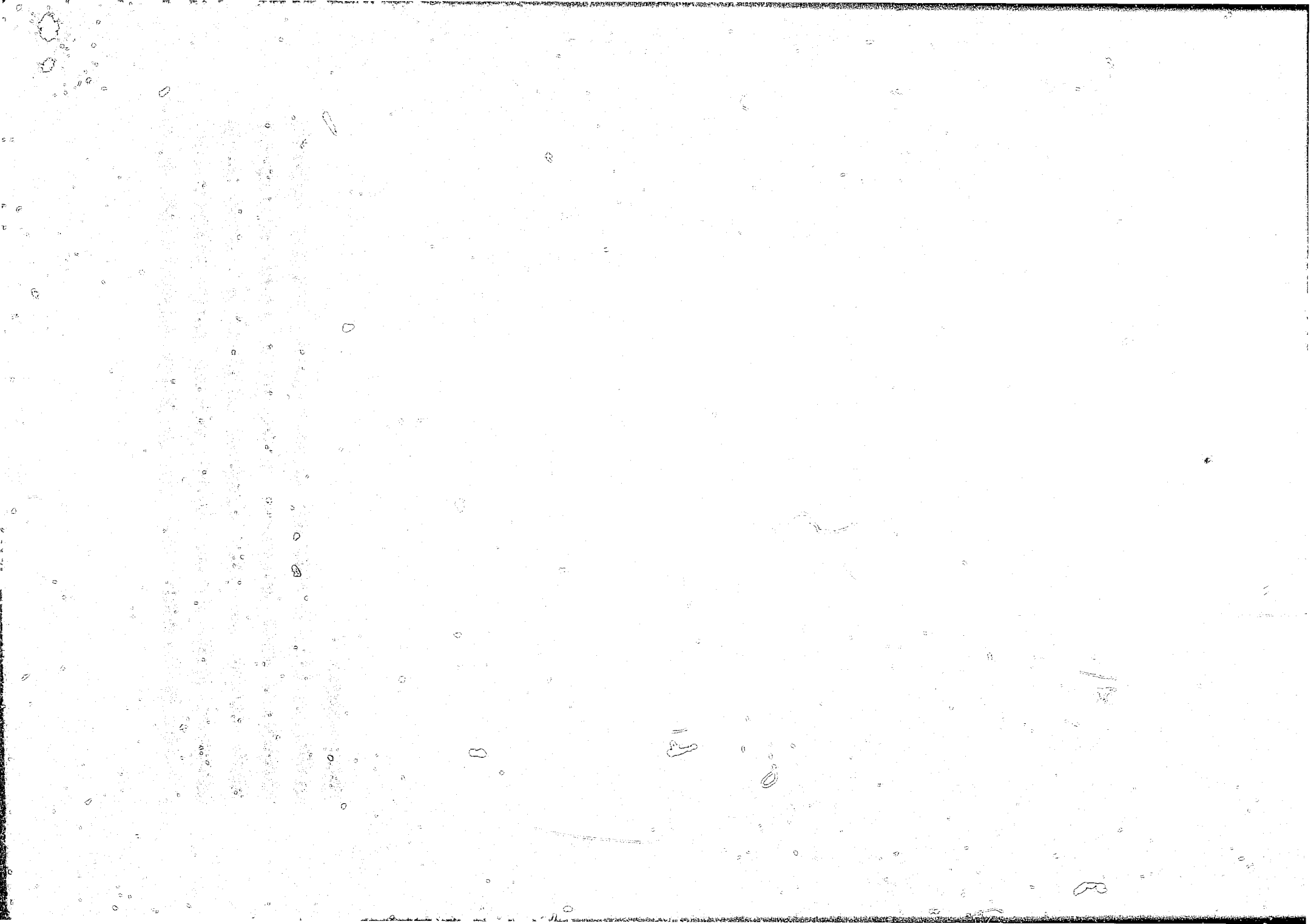
> "*While schools have made considerable progress with School Development Plans as a means of long range planning, they still need to utilize strategic planning to improve their effectiveness*" (knight 1997:90).

Today, strategic planning can be seen as a technique which assists leaders and managers in dealing with the increasingly turbulent environment and the challenges which confront organisations like schools, as argued by Weindling (1997:4). However, the past success of a school can make people blind to the current situation, thus making school managers reluctant to respond positively to change because of fear and uncertainty.

1.2 Generic Total Quality Management (TQM) characteristics

A number of generic TQM characteristics, differently emphasized by various experts can be identified:

- Teamwork is essential: team spirit helps organisations in problem solving. Thus, teamwork throughout any organisation is an essential component of the implementation of continuous improvement, it builds trust, improves communication and develops independence.
- Continuous quality improvement is based on small-scale incremental activity: Kaizen (Japanese term). This is most easily translated as step-by-step improvement. The essence of Kaizen is, small projects that seek to build success and confidence and develop a base for further ventures in improvement.
- Total commitment from management: Leadership from the top is essential.
- The role of management is to release the potential of individuals, allowing them to flourish and grow as people rather than as employees.
- The customers' expectations and requirements are most significant. Customers want their expectations to be met completely and consistently. Customers include pupils, parents, stakeholders, community and institutions.
- Staff participation and commitment based on education and training is essential. Without ongoing programs and processes to encourage and support staff development, schools become out of touch with educational trends and teachers lose the sense of renewal and inspiration which is such an essential part of a meaningful education. (Doherty 1994:17).



CHAPTER 2

2.0 THEORETICAL / CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

According to Bell (1993) it is important to read what other people have written in one's area of interest because, it will help the researcher to gather or collect information that supports or refutes one's arguments and findings. The importance of literature and the development of a conceptual framework in this study lies in this understanding.

Drawing on a wide range of literature about continuous improvement in schools, using the Total Quality Management approach, the researcher has developed a conceptual framework that shows the applicability of this industrially based management approach within a school environment. According to Greenwood (1994:28) TQM is both a mind-set and a set of practical activities - an attitude of mind as well as a method of promoting continuous improvement.

The study is based on the established concepts of quality management and continuous improvement, particularly those expounded by the most famous quality guru W. Edwards Deming. As an approach, TQM seeks a paradigm shift in an, organisations' focus away from short-term goals to long term quality improvement.

> *"To create a continuous improvement culture managers have to trust their staff and to delegate decisions to the appropriate level to give staff the responsibility to deliver quality within their own sphere. Staff need the freedom to operate within a framework of clear and known corporate goals"* (Sallis 1996:29).

The Japanese have a word for this approach to continuous improvement: Kaizen. Translated as step-by-step improvement. The essence of Kaizen is small projects that seek to build success and confidence, and develop a base for further ventures in improvement. For instance, solid and lasting change would require a team to work through the activities of the organisation very carefully, process by process, issue by

issue. Over a period of time more is achieved this way than trying to make larger-scale changes.

TQM supporters the accountability imperative by promoting objective and measurable outcomes of the educational process and providing mechanisms for the improvement of those outcomes as stated by Sallis (1996:5). Schools are part of their communities and as such must meet the political demands for education to be more accountable and publicly demonstrate the high standards of their products (curriculum, learning, graduates) and services. We are in a period where parents and politicians are asking uncompromising question, and this makes improvement a necessity and no longer an option.

Quality improvement becomes increasingly important as organisations achieve greater control over their own affairs. "Greater freedom has to matched by greater accountability" as Sallis (1996) further argues. This means schools too have to demonstrate that they are able to offer a quality education to their learners.

According to Sallis (1996) TQM requires a change of culture. This is difficult to bring about and takes time to implement. It requires a change of attitudes and working methods. Culture change is not only about changing the behavior of staff, but also requires a change in the way in which institutions are managed and led. The latter is characterized by an understanding that people produce quality. Therefore, change must be managed as part of a coherent strategic plan.

The success in a change of culture is highly influenced by the organisation's shared goals. As a result, strategic planning and Total Quality Management incorporates the development of procedures and structures to support the shared goals set for the organisation. These in turn permits shared ownership of decisions on the part of all concerned, encouraging commitment to seeing decisions.

Though organisations need to be clear about their goals and means in which to achieve those goals, the goals of the organisation need to be evaluated time and again. But there is

bound to be resistance to change because of fear and uncertainty. The vision of the organisation is supposed to be collective, meaning that the cultural values are working together towards the same vision or goal. Strategic planning therefore requires access to and the development of both technical and human resources to achieve the goals, for example, adequate resources and staff development.

On this premise, strategic planning can be seen as part of TQM and the two systems emphasize working together as teams and being committed to a common vision. TQM becomes a practical but strategic approach to running an organisation that focuses on the needs of its customers and clients. It is "a philosophy of never ending improvement only achievable by and through people" as stated by Sallis (1996: 29). I school were to employ this approach, staff would inevitably be highly motivated through the joint commitment. But the principal also plays an important role towards achieving this.

Following the tremendous economic and technological developments in society, the expectations on education have become more demanding and more diverse. The school has to change and develop continuously to satisfy the rapidly growing needs of education. So, schools need to monitor the change process and ensure the progress towards the goals. The best way of achieving this is through staff development in order to keep abreast with the latest trends in the global market.

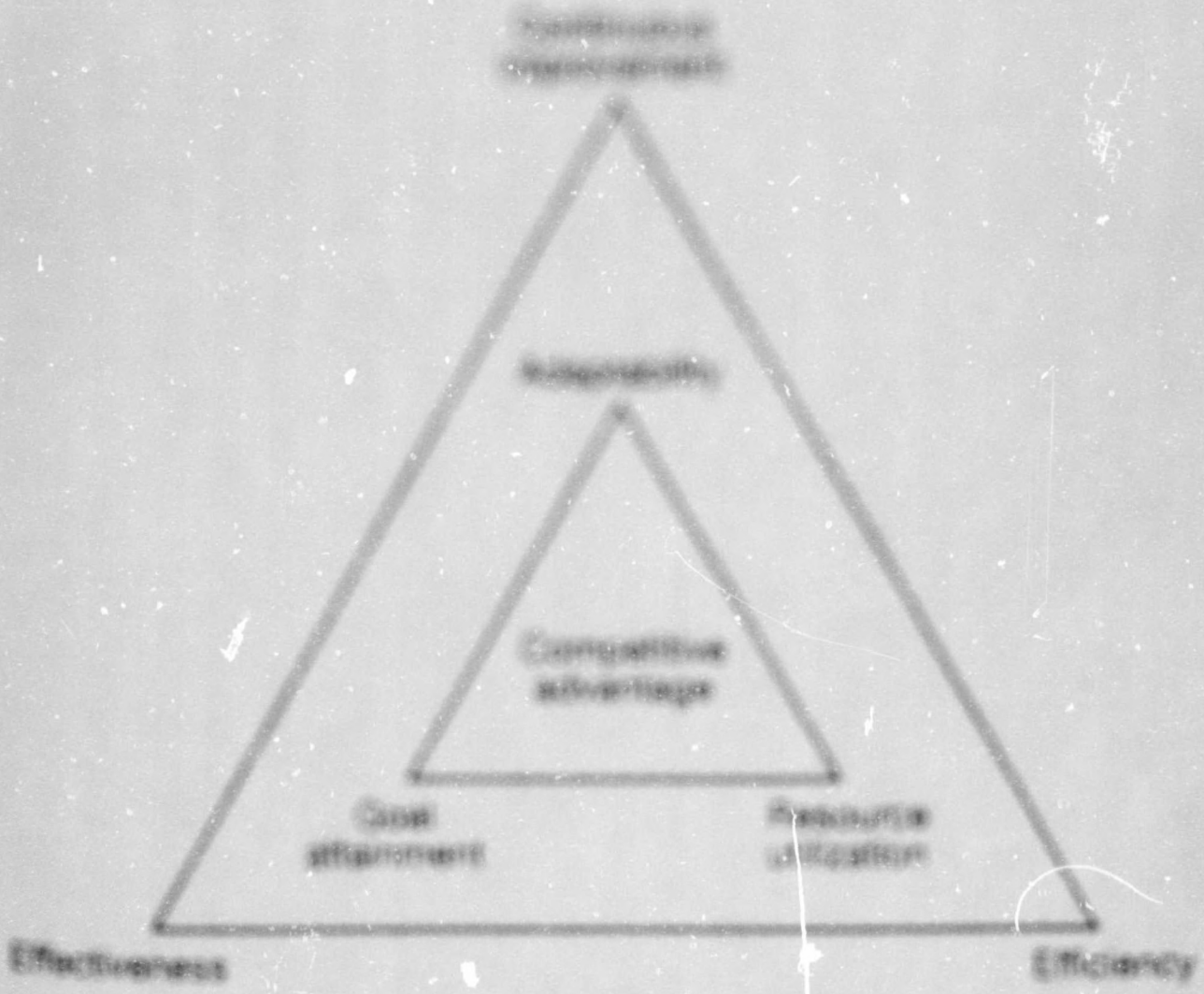
Although TQM is an industry based management approach, I believe that it can be applicable to a large extent in the school environment. It only requires a change in attitude in the minds of teachers and educationalists. It would also require an understanding of the basic differences between school and business as the first step towards achieving continuous improvement in schools. What school need to do is to select the appropriate principles that are in accordance with their school cultural climate as well as their environment. This could make it feasible and effective for the people in the school.

Stewart and Ranson (1988) reminds us that, whatever similarities between some aspects of school and business activity, the state school is not a business. Its aims and objectives, and the rules under which it operates, are different. Therefore, school change is an inevitable trend all over the world. Whether a school should implement changes or not depends on not only the external factors that directly or indirectly push the school to respond but also, the internal factors that cause the school to change its organisational structure. State policies are the most influential external factor posing pressure to the process of change in schools. This can mean the school needs to be strategic in its approach to matters involving the running of the school. For example, having meetings occasionally in order to review and evaluate the present situation.

Christie and Robbins (1997) argue that, state policies have to set a framework and offer resources in order to sustain school quality improvement. They further state that culture plays a pivotal role in conveying a sense of identity and in holding the organisation together while shaping people's attitudes. Practically, implementation of any form of change requires policy makers to consider people's knowledge, background, the socio-cultural environment and their conceptions.

Since policies are detached to reality to some extent, this could result in resistance to change. The nature of policy allows positive effect at surface level without reaching to the source of the problem. Therefore, the best approach to school quality enhancement would be to consider the cultural values and backgrounds of the people the change is intended for. This can be achieved through; communication, agency and responsibility, discipline, active involvement as well as providing adequate resources.

All in all, total quality management seems to be the best way in which school can manage their resources, finances, strategies and activities that affect the running of the school. So long as the activities employed are done in a systematic, stage by stage way that will also allow for a consistent evaluation by everyone in the organisation. In turn, this would make it possible for schools to achieve continuous quality improvement.



TQM and organizational performance

CHAPTER 3

3.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

Cultural change within an organisation requires change in attitude from the top, and therefore it becomes a long-term process that cannot be achieved in a short time. Thus, this chapter will examine the nature of the total quality management (TQM) theory and how it links the ideas from industry to education. Then it will discuss the term customer focus and what it entails, as the key principle of TQM, since organisations need a system through which to produce its product or service for its customers. The chapter will also examine ways of ensuring quality standards in education as well as educational leadership for quality. The chapter will critically assess how an effective team can be used to sustain a continuous improvement journey. Finally, the chapter will discuss how applicable TQM can be in schools and its implications for education.

3.2 Total Quality Management (TQM) Theory

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a new approach to management in education, originating from the world of business. According to Jeffries et al (1992) TQM is a comprehensive and integrated way of managing any organisation, in order to meet the needs of customers consistently, and achieve continuous improvement in every aspect of the organisation's activities. For instance, improving each process so that the overall quality of products and services improves continuously. The TQM philosophy holds that any organisation is a system of interconnectedness processes that must be managed as a whole. Horwitz (1990) argues that:

> " *A total process is one which recognizes that everyone in the organisation contributes in some form or another to the end product or service to the customer. Everyone means that every function and every level in the organisation is involved in the process.*" (Doherty 1994:18)

The most crucial aspect of the TQM philosophy in the education system is, 'who ensures that everyone in the organisation is involved in the process?' If it is top management,

who monitors their performance. In terms of their interactions with their external environment in particular, it is important to note that schools are in some ways different from other organisations in the private sector. This is evident in the nature of their goals, the hierachical structure, the degree of vulnerability to short and long term pressures.

According to Doherty (1994) the successful implementation of a Total Quality Management strategy is very much more concerned with the transformation of 'hearts and minds.' This type of transformation requires a change in attitude of the individual within th organisation. The complexity of change is such that it is totally impossible to bring about widespread reform in any large social system. Fullan (1991) further emphasizes that do not expect all or even most people or groups to change.

Total Quality Management is fundamentally about change. Some organisations, business or educational are already engaged in the struggle for implementing change. The word 'struggle' reveals that there are contradictions incurred during the process of change. Such that one should not assume that his version of what change should be is the one that should be implemented.

On the contrary, one of the main purposes of the process of implementation is to exchange your reality of what should be through interaction with others, as argued by Fullan (1991:105). Schools inevitably contain teams of staff, each of which will have its own culture drawing on its members' views, the nature of its subject or tasks, its history, its location in the school and so on. As a result a variety of different culture in different areas should be respected across a school.

Bennet et al (1992) Teams are committed to situational leadership styles rather than focusing on hierachy and power within the schools in Southern Africa, particularly those who are led by autocratic heads. There is tendency for the teams to be prevented from giving of their best if they have such a leader and it becomes worse if the school emphasizes hierachical principles.

One of the generic TQM principles emphasized, is the importance of the customers' expectations and requirements.

> *"Schools under a market system should produce what the customers want. If parents are pleased with the product they will send or keep their children there and the school will generate income. If not, other school will receive the children and the money that goes with them."* (Greenwood & Gaunt 1994:81).

For example, open enrolment means that parents will be able to indicate a preference for schools from authorities other than their own. Therefore, parental choice procedures will have to be managed. Choice implies competition and competition leads to an increased awareness of the service provided by the school. Greenwood (1994) supports the above mentioned notion by emphasizing that, regardless of whether we are talking about profit or non-profit making organizations, all organisations if they want to succeed they have to monitor customer requirements.

3.3 Moving the TQM theory from industry to education

The Total Quality Management (TQM) theory centers on mission and customer focus; systematic approach to operations; vigorous development of human resources; long- term thinking and commitment. Any organisation must have a 'mission' or objective to which it is totally dedicated. A school might set out with a mission to educate the individual in the context of the needs of its local community as stated by Greenwood (1994:xi). Having such a mission is, however not sufficient to guarantee the achievement of the objective. This is because all organisations are under the same basic constraint.

Consequently, the impact of schools operating within financial and resource constraints which are imposed on them by past history, by their shareholders, by government or by their success or lack of it in the market place, is a cause for concern. Principals must now manage their schools within the allocated budget. Most schools in Southern Africa are still faced with the task of properly managing their finances through appropriate, well

planned and debated budgets, prioritizing according to the needs of each department. The principal becomes accountable, and so she has to monitor the financial and resource development in the school.

According to Doherty (1994), in adapting quality management originally developed for business, it is important to keep in mind certain differences between education and business. A school is definitely not a factory and the students are not products of a factory like cars, instead the product of schooling is education.

> *" Factory thinking is alien and recent use of terms like 'product' and 'customer' make most teachers wince because they run counter to the ideal of an integrated community seeking the welfare of all members."* (Torrington 1992:98).

In contrast with the traditional concept of the factory, which has been dominant in most large commercial employing organisations, the traditional concept of the school is of a community, with the associated emphasis on ideas like ethos, spirit and individual commitment as stated by Bennet (1992:44). It is important that those in schools should try and understand the culture they share: the extent to which it can be changed and how the changes can be made. Even if the changes may be much harder and slower to make than most teachers believe.

The adoption of Total Quality Management could mean new but related language in school management. Davies (1994) observed, that, older ways of professionalism in the teaching of pupils, and the organisation of educational institutions are being replaced by the language of business and the market place. For example: reports, data, appraisal evaluations, planning, allocating resources etc. But some of these practices have not been successful in achieving their goals.

Chapman (1994) contends that schools that 'fail' in the educational market place, are like a bankrupt business, and they simply close. It is not the government that decides to close such schools, but the market forces. What if some schools are run by school managers

who cannot manage and utilize the resources provided effectively? The management itself would be a 'waste'.

Schools are beginning to compete amongst each other for the production of quality education, since they face the danger of losing 'customers' to the competitive market. This competition mushrooming in schools can be compared to the competition that is taking place in the industry. Competition in a school context has proved to be a healthy exercise, especially in encouraging the privilege of continuing to supply customers with quality education.

Marketing strategy is essential for any organisation. Greenwood and Gaunt argue that, marketing was seen as selling. Until recently, the school had no need to even think about marketing. But this does not mean that marketing did not exist completely in most schools, rather it happened spontaneously without people realizing. For example, marketing could be through good pupils' results.

Schools, just like companies, should adopt TQM to improve efficiency. Customers of today are sophisticated and well informed about the type of services they require. They exercise their right to choose the type of schools they want, hence schools should market themselves by amongst other things, providing the best services. This could also be done, not just in management but also at the micro-level of the classroom.

According to Greenwood and Gaunt (1994) key functions such as: production, financial control and marketing all takes place within an organisational structure, whether in a firm or a school. This means that all management is the management of people within structure. Structure consists of lines of communication, accountability, responsibility and authority of units and departments. This combines how they relate to one another and how individuals and the team contribute. Thus, schools should be places where people are encouraged and helped to give of their best. Teachers need to be empowered and entrusted with responsibility of this nature, for example through in-service training.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

> *"Good strategic managers in these circumstances, and in the ability to combine some political and interpersonal skills to manage the disparate interest groups with a clear set of values, in a vision, dressed with the vision of purpose they are then able to act as directors and judgement between conflicting requirements."* (Aungle 1997[illegible]).

In TQM the concept of a customer has been extended to include internal as well as external customers. Moreover, everyone in the organization is not only a supplier but also a customer of someone else. This is just as true for a school as for factory, except that in the school context the picture is more complex. External customers are those outside the organisation to whom the product is "sold". The question is "who then are the customers of a school?" Greenwood and Gaunt (1994) gives a clear and comprehensive description:

- The pupils to whom we supply education.
- The parents who directly or indirectly pay for their children to be educated.
- Institutions of higher education and further education.
- Employers who need to recruit suitably educated and skilled staff.
- The nation which requires a better-educated and skilled and trained workforce if the economic system is to remain capable of generating better standards of living and quality of life.

TQM should not be confined to teaching and academic matters, instead many customer-related activities require considerable interaction between administrative and academic staff during the process of delivery of services to students, for example counseling. Thus, the students' perceptions of the organisation may be heavily influenced by non-academic staff. This internal supplier customer concept needs to be more fully developed in education.

Teachers need to find out exactly what the different needs of the customers are, so that they don't get tempted to make the mistake of offering what they think is appropriate, rather than what the customers require. To be fulfilled teachers need to take steps to find out what they see as requirements. Will the process of teaching and learning give teachers a chance of reconciling the conflicting requirements of the customers?

If this is not achieved, at least we must establish what is desired by the people who choose to send children to us. We must seek to delight our customer by giving them more than they anticipated. How could this be achieved? This may sound impossible, unless we remember that we are talking about a journey, not a destination as stipulated by Greenwood (1994:30). Understanding the significance of the customer-supplier chain, it is a small step forward to recognize that the achievement of quality is a never-ending search for continuous improvement. Total Quality Management introduces a paradigm shift, a shift from a situation where a customer would be told what (s)he wants, to a situation where the customers tell their supplier what they want.

In education, it changes the usual set of relationships to one with a clear customer focus as stated by Sallis (1996:31). For example, instead of looking at students as 'empty' it allows for reasonable degree of autonomy. Students are consulted on issues that need their input. Staff members (internal customers) are not also seen as entirely dependent on instructions from their principal or heads of departments, but their contribution in the running of the organisation is very important. They make decisions and take initiatives in their work.

The school therefore needs to ensure that there is a driving desire existing to focus on satisfying customer needs. To capture and hold customers requires knowing first who and what the customer wants. In education the customers' needs have to be satisfied. But the question is 'how far is that possible especially with regard to handling its diverse culture?'

TQM sees the school as comprising of a chain of customers who mange processes that lead to outcomes. In the typical TQM scenario the students, parents, the staff and other stakeholders work in a network. All the above mentioned people are looked upon as a chain of customers who depend on one another for the successful completion of an important transaction as Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:136) puts it. The internal customers are those customers working directly for the organisation such as supervisors, department heads, staff and co-workers. On the other hand external customers include students attending school and those who are not attending school, community, parents, visitors, parent-teacher associations, international community and grantors.

Customers want their expectations to be met completely and consistently. Both the internal and external customers expect to receive the same high quality service at all times. It is worth considering the concept that, quality is defined by the customer, and meeting the customers' needs and expectations is the strategic goal of TQM. Schools that have adopted TQM in the United Kingdom , like Mt Edgecumbe High school recognized that the customers may need professional help in the form of expert knowledge, especially in choosing what they think they need. Because the implementation of TQM is

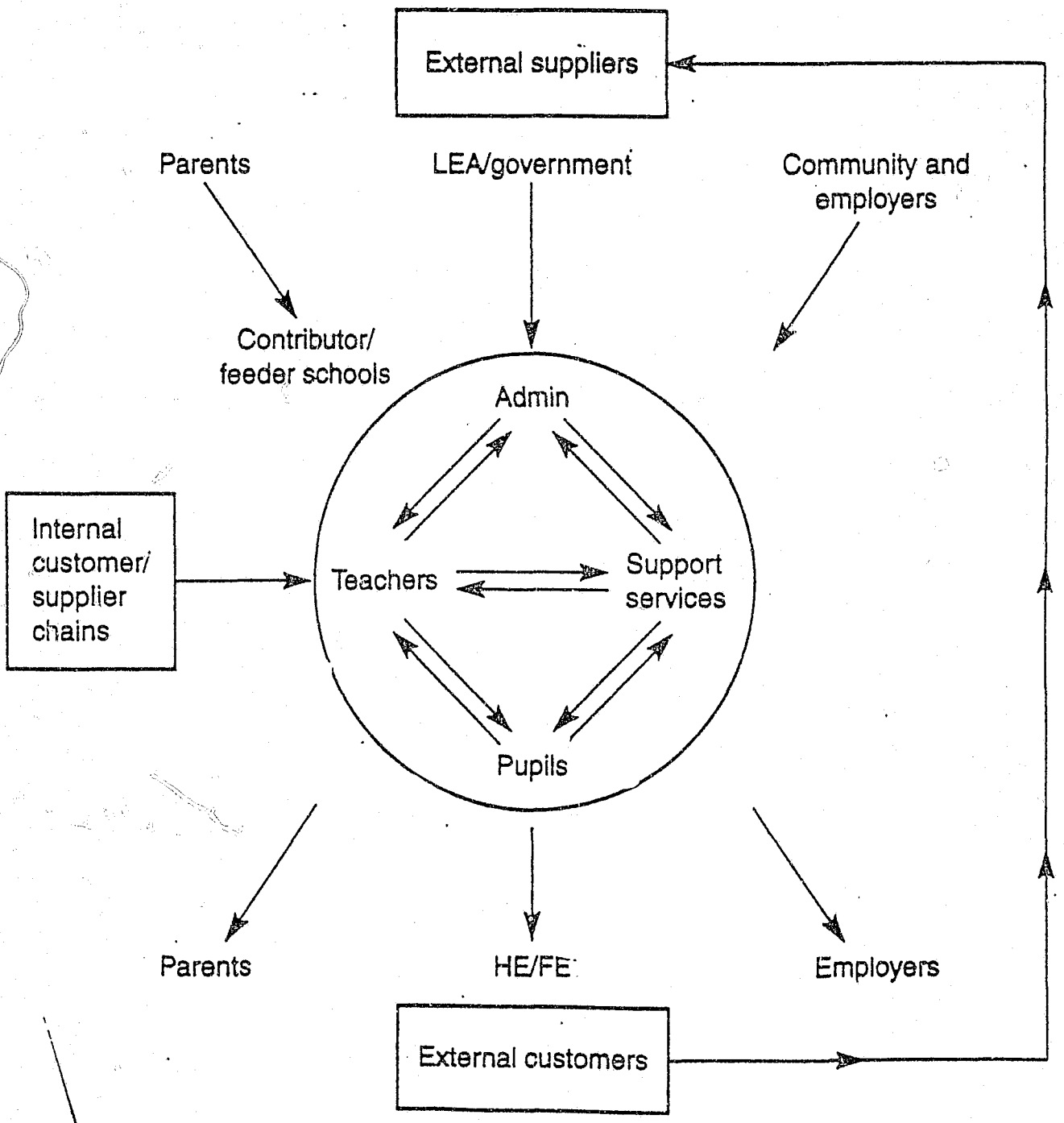
an introduction of change, a transformation, a cultural change, and paradigm shift it requires some form of training as a first step in the implementation of the program.

Doherty (1994) argues that the first and fundamental is the process principle.

> *" The quality of the product is determined by the quality of the process which produces it. If you want to improve a product or service concentrate on improving the process which produces it".* (Doherty 1994:102).

According to Doherty (1994) to the objective of every school should to be to provide for each student opportunities to develop in four categories: knowledge, know-how, wisdom and character. These are the four contents of education. As a result a theory of management for education should consider not only the contents but also the system, environment, style and processes required to deliver the contents. Because the contents will vary from school to school and from community to community, the theory tends to address how the contents are determined. Resources become of major importance in the content of education. The most crucial aspect is how effectively they are utilized. For instance, most teachers possess certain skills and they need to make use of them in handling pupils needs. They also have to commit to academic quality and the goals of the school.

Quality is used to convey status and positional advantage, and ownership of things of quality sets their owners apart from those who cannot afford it. TQM uses quality in a relative concept. It views quality not as an attribute in a relative concept. It views quality as an attribute of a product or service, but as something that ascribes to it as
stated by Sallis (1993:49). The introduction of the National Curriculum means that schools will need extra resources and that more money will be spent on examinations. Time will have to be managed so as to meet all the requirements of the curriculum.



Customer – supplier relationship in education.

3.5 Change of culture

The essence of Total Quality Management (TQM) is a change of culture. The question is, how do cultures change? However, changing the culture of an institution is a slow process. According to Fullan (1991), effective change takes time. It is a process of 'development' in use. So, conflict and disagreement are not only inevitable but fundamental to successful change. What one needs to understand is that, people have to want to be a part of the process. This is problematic because, it is not every member who would be dedicated towards taking the back seat and leaving everything to other responsible people and this move can retard the process of change within the school.

The school turns out to be the centre of change, therefore making teacher being part of the process will only happen if staff are convinced that it is to their advantage, personally and professionally and that it would also benefit the learners. The critical aspect of cultural change is that, transformation to a quality culture would enable us to optimise educational content, delivery and outcomes adaptive to changing personal and societal needs as stated by Greenwood (1994:176).

Change of culture is difficult to implement, since it requires a change of attitudes and working methods. However, culture change according to Sallis (1996) is not only about changing the behavior of staff, it also requires a change in the way in which institutions are managed and led. The environment that surrounds staff has profound effects on their ability to their job effectively, such as the systems and procedures with which they work. But, if the procedures are poor or misleading it makes producing quality extremely difficult. Schools need adequate resources provided they are utilized, skills provided to teachers through in-service training etc.

Staff also needs encouragement and recognition of their successes and achievement. They need leaders who can appreciate their achievements and coach them to greater success. The motivation to do a good job comes from a leadership style and an atmosphere that heightens self-esteem and empowers the individual.

"All organizations have a 'corporate culture'- the way we do things around here. This is determined by external constraints, and the management style of the leader" (Greenwood 1994:59).

This organization culture may be strongly positive, or it may be negative in terms of its value system. Either way it will strongly influence the outcome of the school's efforts on behalf of its pupils and staff are no different from the children. They have enormous reserves of talent and energy and will use them if they feel valued as argued by Greenwood (1994:63). One should bear in mind that, organisational culture is the concern of all members and change in a culture is effective and swift only when there is wide agreement concerning the change to be sought.

According to Green (1995), the way a mangers' task is conceived will depend in part on the way in which the organisation itself operates: its climate and management style. But how does one define the way to which managers possess these skills in relation to the roles they have to pursue. It is common knowledge that, school mangers' competencies will in turn determine the effectiveness of the approach towards meeting the priorities of the customer.

The TQM approach sets up an expectation that managers will seek to empower rather than control the staff in their areas of work. Though possibly helpful, it is not a guarantee of effectiveness in the pursuit or opposition to cultural change. To create a continuous culture, managers have to trust their staff and to delegate decisions to the appropriate level give staff the responsibility to deliver quality within their own sphere as stated by Sallis (1996: 29).

The school turns out to be the centre of change. The main aim of teachers is to enable and empower students to take control of their own capabilities, and find 'joy in learning'. Teachers therefore, must be ever alert to engage the students in a discussion of what constitutes a quality experience. Unfortunately, most teachers have a tendency of not

engaging in negotiations and discussions. The teacher and the student negotiate 'quality on the basis of what conforms to the students' perceived needs form the educational process and system as mentioned by Greenwood and Gaunt (1994).

The negotiated contract should aim to deliver; knowledge, skills, wisdom, character, motivation and teamwork skills. The major problem is a serious culture clash in style of teaching and learning that would result with traditional approaches and methods. Thus, in delivering this course we must be conscious of our objective of continuous improvement, in relation to the education of students as well as the process by which we seek to achieve this objective. To be truly effective, it requires wide consensus, where all staff members are convinced of its benefits for learners. Leaders need to use a variety of management approaches to suit particular situations.

3.6 Educational leadership for Quality

Leadership is the essential ingredient in Total Quality Management. Leaders must have the vision and be able to translate it into clear policies and specific goals. Sallis (1996) argues that total quality is a passion and a way of life for those organisations who live its message. Without leadership at all levels of the institution the improvement process cannot be sustained and commitment to quality has to be a prime role for any leader. It is for this reason that TQM is said to be a top-down process.

In its stress on the central role of leadership in creating a culture within which the TQM philosophy can be generated and self-renewing. It is a top-down view of management, but in its stress on empowerment rather than control, it becomes essentially a bottom-up view, emphasizing the role of junior and subordinate members of staff.

> *" In TQM organisations all managers have to be leaders and champions of the quality process. They need to communicate the mission and cascade it throughout the institution ... it involves a change in the management mind-set as well change of role".* (Sallis 1996:77)

The leader of the TQM organisation is, in essence concerned about values and people setting the direction and allowing people to achieve targets. On the other hand TQM empowers the teachers and can provide them with greater scope for initiative. It empowers all the people involved and encourages less management control. It boosts the morale of the members of the learning organisation, since it considers people as very important within an organisation as mentioned by Bennet (1992:52). Delegation and training allow the individual to develop personal responsibility and control.

According to Dzvimbo (1994) argues that, successful school principals are collaborative decision-making activities that are geared toward articulating and communicating the vision of the school to pupils, parents, the community and other stakeholders especially those critical in financing some of the school's activities. It is schools with a clearly articulated and communicated educational mission that have been the most successful.

For example, if the vision of the school of the future is to press for achievement. An evolutionary approach to planning and problem coping is the best strategy to create energy and support learning. The school vision, would in turn be supported by, a broad-based resources. However, school with inadequate resources could face future threats in the development of teaching and learning in the school.

Although leadership occurs at all levels, principals' educative leadership role is to commit to a management style that enables them to cope with complexity in a resource starved environment. Such principals tend to have developed leadership styles that enhance their ability to cope with change in the context of internal and external pressures as stated by Dzvimbo (1994:13) Does this mean leaders in schools need to be trained in order to attain effective leadership qualities and skills?

Bennet et al (1992) states that, leadership is defined in the context of Total Quality Management as providing and driving the vision. They describe vision as, "the clear view as to where the organisations going. Vision is not the monopoly of leadership but it is their primary responsibility to express it". This means the vision of every school is

evident in the goals laid out by the school. But the tendency is to have a dominant vision and not a shared vision. School managers project their ideas into images thus creating set work standards. The irony is that, energies should be directed to working with staff, and helping them to work with each other, to enable teachers to set their own standards.

School leaders who are life-long learners and combine leadership and management often use these skills and qualities to:

- Focus on the institutional growth of the school by creating conditions conducive to the initiation and management of change.
- Encourage teachers to be involved in reflective practices in school management.
- Communicate meanings to teachers and pupils about the vision and operational goals and strategic plans of their schools.
- Encourage teachers and pupils to be engaged in activities that are morally fulfilling and empowering.
- Work together with all the school's stakeholders to institutionalize and operationalize the school's vision as stated by Duignan & Macpherson (1992:32).

Such leaders are educative, creative and act as sensitive facilitators who encourage their teachers to act in a reflective manner to realize individual and organisational goals as stated in the school's mission. Principals who are change mangers create an enabling environment that eventually creates transformative teachers. For instance, vigorous programs of education and self-improvement balance institutional needs and needs of individuals.

The vision of every school is evident in the goals laid out by the school. Generally, educational goals are what a school is supposed to be doing for its students and society. Such as assessing school effectiveness in terms of pupil outcomes is clearly important for parents and pupils as well as teachers. However, looking at pupil outcomes alone, does not tell us anything about the effects of the school, unless outcomes are assessed in relation to intake characteristics as mentioned by Preedy (1993:2). This means we need to

be sensitive to the situation in individual schools, rather than assuming that, all schools are the same.

3.7 Ensuring Quality Education in schools

In the TQM culture, quality is defined by the customer. Thus, in education, effective management of schools is guaranteed by quality assurance. Quality is too elusive a concept to be managed. According to Green (1995) quality assurance consists in meeting the requirements, specifications or needs of a customer. For many organisations this represents a culture shift away from "we know what quality is" to "your requirements are our only definition of quality" (Green 1995:50).

In schools, quality exists in meeting the actual need of clients and the function of the teacher is seen as to plan and deliver a curriculum to her pupils, and to evaluate its success. But it must be an optimum curriculum for the individual pupil as a member of a class which contains pupils with a range of abilities and needs. The main question is that 'are all the pupils catered for, in meeting their individual special educational needs in a class with a large group of pupils which is typical of most South African schools'.
Schools need to adopt the quality paradigm and can only do so, not just in the management of the whole organisation, but also at the micro level of the classroom. Quality education is the continuous improvement of systems to enable the optimum state of personal, social, physical and intellectual development of each individual. Everyone, in education, wants the services they provide to be of highest quality although they are less likely to agree about how to define and measure quality. "Quality can be judged to exist when a good or service meets the specification that has been laid down for it. Quality can be defined as that which best satisfies and exceeds customers' needs and wants." (Sallis 1993:25).

Quality is at the top of most agendas, and improving quality is probably the most important task facing any organisation these days. Although, organizations are working towards the achievement of good quality, it should be noted that quality implies different things different people with a variety of contradictory meanings.

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a) [illegible]
b) [illegible]
c) [illegible]
d) [illegible]

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In regards the relationship between quality assurance and TQM, the debate is far from resolved. One difference discussed by Harris *et al* (1998) is that TQM implies a truly strategic approach to the alignment of the organisation with its environment, whereas quality assurance can often be a delegated, operational issue. However, today's environment in education has moved to a new position of complexity and relative instability.

Green (1995) argues that "quality assurance the culture of an organisation away from control and power relationships towards a recognition of the trust, responsibility and authority that every employee is entitled to, if they are to work effectively. Thus, the concept facilitates the movement from dependence to interdependence." Quality assurance introduces the notion of confidence into the management of children' learning.

According to Knight (1997) Development takes the form of doing more of the same, only doing it better, for instance, the School Development Plan. If strategic development is sought it is necessary to find a way of learning which will allow the organisation to question and challenge its existing norms of practice, even its sense of fundamental or core purpose. Schools need therefore, to consciously to adopt approaches to the review and reassessment of their chosen structures and systems that will enable them to engage from time to time in double-loop learning.

The Total Quality Management (TQM) organisation integrates personal development into organisational development by enhancing personal capability. The leader needs to create a learning organisation that shifts from reaction to anticipation and which emphasizes appropriate behavior as the basis for responding to the environment. This can be achieved through management by translating principles into practice using planning, delegating, monitoring, budgeting and developing as stated by Sallis (1993:49).

Consequently, schools are faced with the task of reviewing their structures ensuring that they are customer-focused. But practically most school structures in Southern Africa have not fully facilitated real delegation, such that teams and individuals do not enjoy maximum control of their work. Bennet (1992) emphasizes that, there is no one model for the structure of a quality organisation. What is important is that the structure should facilitate task and process. This means the organisational structures must allow task roles and the development process to emerge.

The changing culture in which schools will have to operate is of major importance. "Changing the culture of institutions is the real agenda, that is, focus should be more on observing how the institution is developing or not" (Fullan 1991:107). As the quality movement extends into the commercial and public sectors, so expectations on all providers will change. This will be through increasing specific demands on schools as suppliers. Resultantly, schools with better facilities and are able to attract the best teachers, and continue to produce better results.

3.8 The Continuous Improvement journey: Effective teambuilding

Greenwood and Gaunt (1994) states seven steps to achieve the continuous improvement journey. The following are the seven steps to the development of continuous improvement:

(a) Seek continuous improvement in all activities.
(b) Focus intently on 'customer requirements, both internal and external.
(c) Create a system through which to measure and eliminate 'waste' in all areas of school activity.
(d) Insist on the importance of teamwork.
(e) Insist on open communication systems, top down, bottom up and laterally.
(f) Empower all colleagues, academic and ancillary by constant training.
(g) Recognize and celebrate achievement and achievement and avoid and scape-goating.

One of the most important tools of TQM is teamwork. A team is a quality group. Clarity of purpose and effective interpersonal relationship is the basis for effective teamwork. Both in theory and practice, teams are seen as fundamental to the management of quality in organisations. "Effective teams balance task and process-they get the job done, improve personal relationships and enhance individual members" (Bennet 1992:53). Teams can also be used as a mental resource that can be used to achieve specific projects.

According to Adair (1986) a team is a group in which individuals share a common aim and in which the jobs and skills of each member fit in with those of the others. In some schools, especially in Swaziland, teams of teachers do exist, although they tend to be presented in an informal manner except in some good private schools. A crucial factor in team formation is the amount of time spent together. Problems often arise if the team members have not devoted much of their energy getting to know each other and deciding what needs to be done and how to do it. Even the patterns of participation depend upon the situation.

School-based teacher development was seen by school principals who adopted TQM as one of the most important strategies of making sure that teachers learned from each other

and in the process adopted a collegial approach to teaching and learning. This was also seen as the best mechanism for establishing effective teamwork among the teachers which was conducive to a collaborative approach to decision-making as stated by Dzvimbo (1994:8). Each member of the team is both an expert and skilled team-member in performing functions needed by the task, maintenance and other individuals.

> *" Good leadership makes everybody's work more effective and therefore more rewarding. That is your reward. You will make demands on the team and on individual members; that is what you are there for as a leader. But you should always make more demands on yourself".* (Adair 994:125).

Consequently, an important aspect of leadership is, knowing your-self. Knowing your own strengths and weaknesses is a key step on the path of making the most of what you have to offer. Each individual knows and feels that his part of the task is making a significant contribution to the group's overall task. Adair 91994) further emphasizes that the best leader will be someone who can contribute to the process skills of achieving the task-especially in the areas of decision-making, problem-solving and creative thinking. Thus, transform performance and enhance job satisfaction. In TQM organisations, employees set goals for self-improvement, conduct self-appraisal, then work out and implement personal improvement plans. This can also be very effective for school improvement.

Derm (1990) argues that improvement is one of the main anchor words and principal value in the Total Quality Management movement. It is based on the conviction that everything can become better, and its quality and value can be raised both incrementally and in quantum leaps. The TQM concept of continuous improvement embraces everything-including the personal qualities of all employees and managers. For example, desirable attributes if not essential ones include the ability to listen to others and to build on their contributions. That implies a flexibility of mind. The ability both to give and to inspire trust is related to integrity as mentioned by Adair (1994:132).

Most successful and effective school that use TQM, value teamwork among teachers especially in the areas of curriculum improvement, classroom instruction and extra-curricular activities in the school. Emphasis in such schools is on collegiality among teachers in the realization of a school's instructional and non-instructional goals as discussed by Dzvimbo (1994). He further argues that these are schools that operate as learning organisations and focus on the language of hope and possibilities.

Effectiveness, according to Preedy (1993) is a complex matter with no universally applicable prescriptions. It is often defined in terms of goal achievement. The first Question though is, 'how far do schools agree on realistic goals which they attempt to achieve in practice?' There are three main ways in which effectiveness in terms of goal achievement is conceptualized:

- outcomes such examination results of pupils;
- process factors like culture and the school's success in acquiring inputs e. g financial, pupils, and teacher resources;

According to Preedy (1993) approaches to effectiveness change in response to changing circumstances and needs. Given that, notions of effectiveness are dependent on particular contexts, goals and values and that these are constantly evolving. Effectiveness cannot be static but, must be continually reassessed for each school in its own particular circumstances. The more effective or successful schools seem to know what they are about and where they are going. Teaching and learning are, of course at the heart of any school's activities. Teachers expect their pupils to achieve and in turn, pupils find themselves stretched and challenged in the classroom. There appears to be some mutuality of perceptions between pupils and teachers as a result. Although schools cannot avoid conflict between pupils and teachers, the impact of schools may be different for different groups.

Adequate levels of resources seem to be necessary but not sufficient condition for a school to be effective, Louis and Miles (1990) emphasize the linking of developmental priorities to a balanced appraisal of the resource implications. This means, however resources are available, the key aspect lies in how they are managed and utilized. No

amount of knowledge will ever make it totally clear what action should be taken. So, better knowledge of the change process will improve the mix of resources on which we draw, but it will never and should never represent the sole for making a decision, as stated by Fullan (1991:107).

3.9 TQM applicability to schools

Knight (1997) emphasizes that, schools need regularly to revisit their staring points in order to check that these are still valid, in the sense that they meet the needs of the inevitably altered situations which a continually changing world brings about. This means that schools all around the world are faced with dynamic transformations due to the market demands, they need to re-conceptualize the ways in which they went about doing their work. We would therefore assume that, schools need a plan that addresses the factors known to affect implementation. Although this involves ambiguity, and uncertainty for the individual involved in the change process.

However, problems are bound to arise in poor schools who tend to be experiencing financial and resource constraints. These could be imposed on them by past history, by their shareholders, by government or by their success or (lack of it) in the marketplace. This means that every school must manage her school resources, buildings, equipment and staff in such a way as to most effectively achieve the objective or mission that is set for the school. Thus, the idea of using management styles from business to education can be very helpful, because key functions such as production, financial control and marketing all take place whether in a school or business firm.

TQM is a way of managing to improve the effectiveness, flexibility and competitiveness of a business as a whole. As a result, the management of quality is an important issue in educational circles, since poor management of quality in some schools has resulted in the loss of market. So, the idea of asking customers their expectations and concentrating on those needs in a school can really improve the way those schools function. Preedy (1993) supports the notion that change is inevitable and that a school cannot fend off change until it has recreated its culture. But it can self-consciously make changes to its

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Furthermore, these customers and their needs should be understood by the whole organisation. Stronger feedback mechanisms would need to be developed in order to understand accurately and continuously the external environment. According to Harris *et al* (1998) in view of the variability of students' abilities, closer relationships ought to be forged with school.

This will have two-fold benefit:

(1) the schools will have a greater commitment to the educational institution and will better understand its requirements.

(2) The educational institution will have less of a problem dovetailing its curriculum with that of the schools and it will also be likely to receive more applications for places.

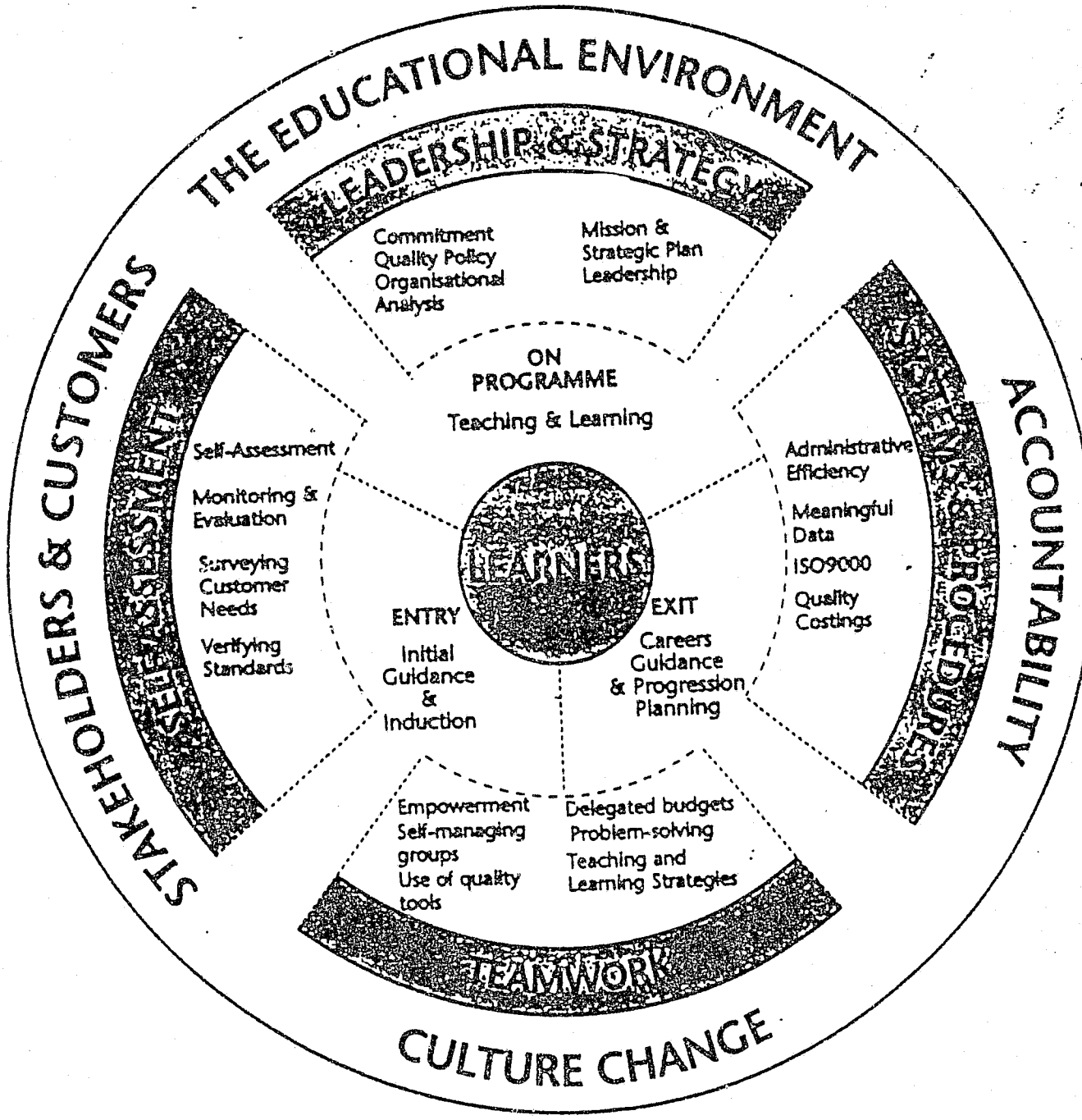
Above all, it must be realized that TQM will not itself improve anything without the involvement and commitment of the vast majority of those in any organisation. A realistic timeframe for implementation would be over a period of years, with significant benefits not likely to be manifested for at least the first twelve months.

3.11 Summary

Total Quality Management Theory has its roots in a total process that involves interconnections between people and the development of change. Its application to the educational setting involves new but related language in school management: the management of people within a structure. These structures in turn, are supposed to become the forum for teachers to apply continuous improvement for quality education.

The role of management is to release the potential of individuals, allowing them to flourish and grow through personal development. TQM contributes a major role in shaping educational goals, managing quality education, and encouraging team work. Therefore, this calls for schools to respond to change effectively and this means the education systems can benefit from business concepts such as TQM.

The quality framework



CHAPTER 4

4.0 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

Today, all the sectors of education seem to be faced with the challenge of the new educational marketplace, the pursuit of quality and the ability to change. On the other hand, competition amongst institutions for students is increasing day by day. Therefore, in facing the 'cutting edge of the coming millennium' teachers and the education authorities need to consider the possibility that any management theory from the business world could to some extent work in particular schools.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the development of some aspects of continuous improvement in teaching and learning in schools. It investigates the key features necessary for success and provides practical suggestions for the development of a strategic plan relevant for the individual school. Therefore, the main aim of the study is to critically analyze the significance of the extent of the applicability and effectiveness of seeking continuous improvement in schools, as one of the essential principles of Total Quality Management (TQM).

4.2 Rationale

Strategic planning is one of the major planks of TQM. So, without clear long-term direction, organisations cannot plan for quality improvement. Quality conscious schools have the potential of attracting its customers. Schools and other organisations are getting more and more concerned with quality management, hence the competition. I hope this study will enforce the value of quality in education. It will also enforce the notion of marketing schools because of the quality competition in the schools. Thus, sustaining continuous improvement in teaching and learning can help reduce the problems faced by different schools in developing countries like Swaziland. The research will examine if the process is practical in some school settings because, schools are not business and some teachers may fear the language of business.

4.3 Aims

(a) To explore the generic management principles of Total Quality Management (TQM).

(b) To analyze the importance of maintaining the customer-supplier relationship.

(c) To discuss the significance of staff development and teamwork in sustaining continuous improvement in schools.

(d) To explore the advantages and disadvantages of using continuous improvement strategies in schools.

(e) To examine the implications of continuous improvement in schools in Swaziland.

(f) To identify the sources of problems in the school, in order to develop solutions to the problems.

(g) To expose school managers to the value of adopting effective leadership styles and strategic planning in improving the culture of learning in schools.

(h) To finally, suggest some strategies of creating a continuous improvement system to sustain the quality of education in schools.

4.4 Methods of data collection

This is a qualitative case study with some quantitative elements. Case studies generate a broad and deep understanding of some aspect of people's lives. According to Maturana (1991) research takes place within the context of human co-existence, that is, research is a social practice and what it says and does is significantly located within that context. But, one can argue that the validity of its knowledge must come from outside of any context.

According to Scott and Usher (1996) to do research in postmodern way is to take a critical stance towards the practice of sense-making (research). What it focuses on however, is not the world that is constructed and investigated by research but, the way in which that world is written, inscribed or textualized in the research text. For instance, to take a postmodern approach to research involves more than generating accurate

representations. It involves focusing on the text and asking certain questions about it. This is an essentially reflexive task.

The case study was conducted in two schools in Swaziland: School A and school B. Information was gathered through documentary evidence, literature, questionnaires, interviews and observation. The nature of the research involved more quantitative research on the topic and empirical data, which helped to answer the questions embedded in the research. In turn, the information gathered through the research was used to examine the extent in which business management principles work in an educational context.

In this study, self-administered questionnaires were given to both principals and the teachers of each school. These were used in order to bridge the gap between the information gathered thus, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the principals. The nature of the interviews took the form of open-ended questions and reflexive questions. As researchers we all have an individual curve, which shapes the research we do, the questions we ask and the way we do it.

The study enabled the triangulation technique to be used. According to Cohen and Manion (1994) triangulation is an approach that allows the researcher to use two or more methods of data gathering. One of the advantages of triangulation is that:

> *"...it can reduce the researcher's bias and distortions which are likely to occur when one method is used and further it overcomes method boundedness".* (Cohen & Manion 1994:234)

Triangulation method can be effective in allowing some diversity in data gathering, but researchers should be cautious and guard against irrelevant material and information that can cause distortions in the study presented. In the study, the triangulation technique was relevant and appropriate in gathering information on the subject.

4.5 Semi-structured interviews

Individual interviews were 20 to 30 minutes in duration. The interviews were structured, following a pre-determined sequence. Open-ended questions were necessary and probes of the responses pursued the details of each particular narrative. This method involves the gathering of data through direct verbal interaction between individuals. Semi-structured interviews were chosen for focus and flexibility. The reason is that they give space "to modify the sequence of questions, change the wording, explain or add to them" as explained by Cohen and Manion (1994;271). The study also considered the attitudes and characteristics of the subjects. The data gathered shows that the interview instrument achieved this objective.

4.6 Questionnaires

Questionnaires were used to collect data because there were too many teachers for individual interviews and for time constraints. Questionnaires are quick and cheap to administer, thus they were used as a complementary strategy to get a broader perspective of management in schools that were selected. The disadvantage of this method is that not all questionnaires are returned. The subjects may not understand what they being asked and therefore, give irrelevant responses or not respond at all to all to certain questions.

What becomes a constraint is that most subjects (teachers) are lazy to respond especially if they are being paid for it, and this presented some problems in data gathering with regard to the time factor. Approximately 75% of the teachers responded and completed all the questions asked in both the schools. All in all this instrument of data gathering proved to present a lot of more relevant information with regard to meeting the expectations of the research topic.

4.7 Observation

In this study, the researcher used non-participant observation. According to Babbie (1992) in a non-participant observation study researchers do not participate in the activity being observed but, rather 'sit on the sideline' and watch and are not directly involved in the situation that they are observing. An observation was not an easy option. However,

once mastered it is a technique that can often reveal characteristics of groups or individuals that would have been impossible to discover by other means. For example, it can be particularly useful to discover whether people do what they claim to do, or behave in the way they report.

The principal in school A was not aware of my presence, but his behavior proved to be consistent. In school B the principal was anxious about the researcher's presence for fear of being exposed, since the school was undergoing serious changes. So, the researcher was strategic in her approach. Therefore, it is likely for this research to collect more valid observation data.

4.8 Validity and Reliability

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (1990) validity refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness and usefulness of the inferences a researcher makes. On the other hand reliability refers to the consistency of scores or answers from one administration of an instrument to another and from one set of items to another. Triangulation ensured that validity and reliability of data obtained from the sources was maintained. For example, if only semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were used, the possibility existed that the data collected may not be valid and reliable. Direct observation data provided reliability to this study because some of the interview was found to be insufficient on its own.

Further, during observation the researcher was able to uncover the attitudes, values and characteristics of groups and individuals that would have been impossible to discover by other means. It was important in this study to employ the procedure of triangulation and relate the interview data and questionnaire data with observation notes. Babbie (1992) observed that "what went on and talking to the workers seems to provide a more valid measure of morale than counting grievances".

"The quality of instruments used in research is very important, for the conclusions the researcher draws are on based on the information they obtain using these instruments". (Fraenkel & Wallen 1990:126)

Therefore, the various methods used in this study enables readers to assess the validity and reliability of the research findings.

4.9 Limitations of the study

(a) While conducting the case studies of two high schools, the election process was taking place in Swaziland. This political move meant that principals and teachers had to cope with national demands as well as school demands concurrently.

(b) The research time frame coincided with the time when principals and some teachers were preparing the pupils for finale examination in the course of the last term of the year (third term). Consequently, this pressure called for sacrifice from both the researcher and the teachers.

(c) Due to time constraints, visits to each school was broken down into: two phases in school A and three phases in school B. Thus, the research into the school took longer than anticipated, taking approximately a month and three weeks to complete the research. This made the study to be expensive due to travel, food and other material expenses incurred.

(d) Due to time limits and other pressures, issues such as workshop and orientation on the subject were not carried out, so they did not prove feasible. Therefore, this meant an adjustment in the part of methodology of the study.

(e) Not all the questionnaires were received from the teachers as a result of the above mentioned constraints.

4.10 Summary

The research design responds to the challenges faced by education authorities, policy makers, teachers and stakeholders. The rationale of the study is to investigate the development of some aspects of continuous improvement and to critically analyse the significance, applicability and effectiveness of TQM in schools. Thus sustaining

continuous improvement in teaching and learning can help reduce the problems faced by different schools in Swaziland.

The methods of data collection include questionnaires, interviews and observations. These methods allow some diversity in data gathering to create the selection of important and relevant information. The main constrain of the interviews was the lack of technical means of recording (tape recorder) but the written notes proved useful. The other most crucial constraint was that the period of data collection in Swaziland coincided with the election process and the schools' final examinations, which left the Principals and teachers disoriented. It also reduced some of the time for detailed observations. But the main focus of the data collected was achieved.

CHAPTER 5

5.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

In this study the research findings were obtained from interview, questionnaires and non-participant observation, as explained in chapter 4. The names of all the case study schools and interviewees have been withheld.

The general aim of this study was to measure the extent to which Total Quality Management (TQM) approach would assist in sustaining continuous improvement in schools. It was also to investigate whether principals and teachers use TQM techniques such as teamwork and staff development.

This study employed both quantitative and qualitative data analysis. According to Fink (1995) the choice of method for analyzing data is dependent on the type of data available. When analyzing the data, similarities and dissimilarities between interviews and questionnaire responses were sought in order to discover whether teachers agreed or disagreed with what their principals said. Non-participant observation established whether principals did what they said they do or behaved differently to their claims. The interviews were gathered through note taking, as both principals preferred not to be recorded but ensured credibility.

In the analysis, the point of departure is a brief description of each school, followed by an analysis of interviews with principals and teachers' responses to the questionnaires. I have also incorporated field notes in presentation of data and the summary of the findings in schools.

In Swaziland, irrespective of specific differences that do occur between different types of schools, the dominant values and norms of the Swazi society reflect themselves in schools. Men tend to be more dominant than women teachers. This reflects a particular way of relating, determined by particular views of social and power relations.

5.3 Description of each school

ITEMS	SCHOOL A	SCHOOL B
Type of school	*Mission*	*State*
Area	*urban*	*semi-urban*
Number of teachers	*31*	*32*
Number of pupils	*565*	*800*

5.4.1 Responses to principal questionnaire and interview

In response to the theme regarding principals' responsibilities, supervision and classroom teaching, in both school A and B the principals had similar responses. The principals' responsibilities included; supervision of teaching and admission of students, budgeting of school finances etc. Both principals said they teach selected classes. I gathered that no evaluation or appraisal is taking place at the school-either in terms of classroom practice or in terms of whole school development plans.

In response to the question on whether the school has management committees that look into issues regarding the running of the school, both principals gave a list of the existing committees in each school. In school A, the principal listed; disciplinary committee, counseling committee and Heads of department (H.O.D) committee. In school B, the principal listed the disciplinary committee, sports and culture, career guidance, H.O.Ds committee and a Students Christian Fellowship (SCF) committee.

The principals gave almost similar responses with regard to defining quality in their schools, in their terms. Their responses viewed results (outcomes) as quality. The principal in school A claimed that teachers and students set the standards of quality, and on the other hand the principal in school B said teachers alone set the standards of quality.

Quality in schools can be diverse, and it can mean different things to different people for different contexts. It can be the quality of teacher, the quality of the process of educating

as well as the results attained by the students. One Principal defined quality as "...having the best teachers, yielding the best results". This means having a committed team that produces quality results at the end of the year. The students and teachers in school A set the standards of quality and the latter is determined by the results.
The problem with this school is that it does not have a management team that monitor the quality of education thus making it difficult to rate its effectiveness. In response to whether the school has management teams that monitor quality in the schools, both principals said "no". But they said they would feel good about the idea, even though it would require a gradual introduction for it to be effective. The principal in school B was quoted saying "Teams assist a lot in management". For example Adair (1986) strengthens this notion by arguing that working as a team can transform performance and enhance job satisfaction.

The indicator of monitoring quality in school A was the availability of resources and their mobilisation. During the interview and observations there was evidence of occasional supervision and class observations by the Principal in the school. The school loans some textbooks to students especially the prescribed ones. The school
Management makes sure that it is compulsory for students to have individual textbooks. During class observations, the students possessed their individual books to avoid sharing. The Principal in school B defined quality in school as follows:

> *"Generally, we refer to passes that we achieve (merit, first class) as well as the mastery of objectives by pupils".*

In the interview the Principal claimed that the teachers set the standards of quality. This is problematic because, however the teachers set the standards of quality education, the criteria they use, should match the one that the curriculum experts and the examination committee. This process therefore, requires a management team that is composed of different individuals from various sectors of education. School B for example, depends largely on Head of Departments for monitoring quality, and they report occasionally to

the staff teachers through meetings. Thus, making it easier to evaluate the school progress.

Both school A and school B achieved good results at the end of the year since the last five years. In Swaziland, they have been amongst the top ten schools with good results by completing classes (Std 8 and Std 10). The infrastructure in the schools is well built and this adds up to the value of the importance of supporting the environment, as it contributes to the quality produce of the school.

In response to what type of model they use for problem solving in the school, both principals used the collective approach, using staff meetings, depending on the seriousness and the nature of the problem. With regard to the barriers experienced in managing problem solving processes, the principal in school A stated that time is the most crucial barrier. On the other hand the principal in school B emphasized that the interference of relatives is the most crucial barrier hindering the progress of finding solution to problems. For example, if a teacher is offered a transfer to another school but is resisting.

Problem solving models help schools to reduce unresolved problems while simultaneously creating strategic ways of problem solving for the future. In both schools, the Principals said that they use staff meetings as a model for problem solving. They use it to discuss the sources of individual and internal problems that hinder the progress of schooling, more serious problems are handled by the school committee. This collective approach to problem solving is democratic but the uncertainty lies with decision-makers on the problem presented.

During observations, the main barrier of problem solving is the difference in opinions, views and values. This tends to cause tension and favouratism. The Principal in school A finds it difficult to make up firm decisions because of the composition of the school committee. For instance, the Head of Departments and the disciplinary committee become responsible for classes that are unattended.

Both school A and B responded that their schools market themselves through good results through teachers and pupils combined effort. As Sallis (1996) states that, "staff cannot convey the message of the organization to potential customers without proper product knowledge and an enthusiasm for the institution's aims". Internal marketing therefore, is a positive and proactive process that demands a commitment to keep staff informed and to listen to their comments.

Both schools claimed they are faced with overcrowding and shortage of pupils and teachers but they had different views towards the main causes of the problem. The principal in school A " The school offers a wide range of subjects amidst school that are purely academic". Unless, the adjacent schools, improve their curriculum. The principal in school B said

> *"Overcrowding in our school is caused by our senior citizens who force their way to getting pupils to be admitted in the school".*

The problem with the increased number of children in one class results in ineffective teaching methods, which result in poor quality results. On the other hand school A experiences infrastructural problems and lack of adequate human resource to cater for the diverse subjects offered. The Principal in school A said;

> *"We are faced with overcrowding and shortage of teachers in the science department. Because the school a wide range of subjects amongst schools that are purely academic."*

Therefore, this requires commitment by the teachers in the school and voluntary services by some staff members and management needs to be strategic by offering incentives to teachers while resolving the problem.

In response to the last question pertaining the principal's response to how they would feel if a continuous improvement program would be introduced, the principal in school A

presented fear and uncertainty about the program if training would not be involved. He said "Unless it is thoroughly explained one would not venture to state that it should be implemented." On the other hand, the principal in school B was positive and he said it would be beneficial "It is a good one because it takes into account all the stakeholders. Pupils with good or sound skills are most likely to be favored by employers".

5.4.2 Teachers' responses to the questionnaire

In both school A and school B all the teachers' responses were centered around the same theme. They all said they play an important role in the school by instilling discipline, teaching, developing pupil, grooming them, offering guidance and also playing the parental role. When asked how they thought the role of a teacher and student could change, from both schools the dominant concern was constant interaction between students and teachers, inside and outside the classroom.

The role of the teachers according to the teacher's responses seems to be diverse and therefore, touches on different aspects of pupils' lives and environment as well as on the management style of school managers.

The teachers' responses in discussing the role of the teacher in school centres around guidance, teaching, discipline, assessment and grooming. One teacher said the role of a teacher is, *"To be a parent, be examplary and to teach pupils to be responsible critical citizens."* This would help pupils to become creative and critical of the environment and how to respond to it. While, guidance prepares them for stakeholders. In school A the career guidance teacher helps the form 4 and 5's to prepare them for leaving school to join colleges and Universities and how to make career choices.

> *"To develop a child mentally, socially, spiritually and psychologically so that he or she is better prepared to face life outside the classroom."*

But for schools to produce such individuals there is a great need to instill discipline as the primary objective of achieving cooperation, respect and a good relationship between

teachers and pupils. Students therefore need some guidance and counselling to help them face the world.

All schools in Swaziland and in neighboring countries do experience internal and external problems. These tend to interfere with the progress of teaching. The teachers' lists' to the responses on the constraints that interfere with the progress of teaching were two- fold: managerial and social. The managerial constraints included a narrow curriculum, bad conditions of service, inadequate salaries, lack of short-term breaks etc. One teacher was quoted saying:

> *"Students lack adequate educational material and other necessary facilities for learning e.g weather stations, library facilities."*

This became evident that such constraints require the school managers to be strategic on their approach towards improving the quality of education. For example, if there is lack of resources in a school, both teachers and pupils become de-motivated towards creating a conducive environment.

On the other hand the social dynamics of the constraints included: travelling long distances to school, students inability to understand English language (making it difficult for the teacher to cover the syllabus in time) increase in the number of children with learning problems. The latter cannot receive adequate attention because of the large number of classes that exist in the schools. One teacher stressed that one big constraint was that of "*slow learners and children with learning problems.*" This could be a contribution by the low socio-economic backgrounds of some students which cause low concentration and failure for some children.

When asked to list at least five constraints the interfere with the progress of their teaching, the most common ones coming from both school were related to: low salaries, large class sizes, insufficient resources, poor housing, travelling long distances, pupils coming from low socio-economic backgrounds.

In both school A and school B most of the teachers understood what teamwork entailed. One teacher from school A defined teamwork as "sharing responsibilities to maximize and improve the quality of the output" (Appendix C). On the other hand, some teachers understood teamwork to involve working together with pupils and parents in order to achieve the same objective. As Harris *et al* (1998) puts it that, it is important that objectives are expressed in a measurable way so that the eventual outcomes can be evaluated against them. One teacher said it means' cooperation within a group faced with the same task, for example, between teachers working across the curriculum or departments. Teams often grow from one person who is their leader. If so, such a person needs to shift the center from himself to the cooperative efforts of the team, as stated by Adair (1986: 123).

> *"Progress becomes faster as obstacles are tackled together especially within departments."* Said a teacher.

Teamwork appears more effective in school A compared to school B, where the majority of teachers claimed that teamwork is very limited in the school. Mainly, because, some teachers are indifferent and ignorant towards working together. Worse still, the principal is not willing to motivate them instead he is the one creating the gab and tension. This can be qualified by one teachers comment, that "teamwork improves teachers' confidence in his or her job" (Appendix C)

The problem erupts if school managers cannot handle situations when teachers are not motivated to be part of the team. This situation in schools can be reduced by using the Head of Departments, since the latter feel entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that teachers do a satisfactory role of meeting the needs of their students.

The principal in school A during the interview claimed that the library was operating effectively but teachers are not motivated to orient students on how to utilise the library facilities. This is a sign of bad leadership because, during the researchers observation

some teachers seemed to be effectively using the library facilities except that students were not fully utilising it for their own benefit. There was no time when students were seen to be using the library under the supervision of a teacher. The principals in schools need to follow up and assess the source behind the de-motivation of the teachers, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the library. The level of availability of resources is important but what is of primary concern is the way those resources are mobilised.

Staff development seemed to be an essential concern with regard to introducing it in both the schools, where findings revealed an absence of any form of teacher development activity. All the teachers in both schools commented that it would be a good idea and it would be mostly appreciated because, it would help teachers in all aspects of the school life, while sharpening their attitudes and approaches to work.

When asked to evaluate themselves, teachers in both school A and school B seemed confident about their teaching methods and they all rated themselves above 50%. But one teacher in school A claimed that he is not sure if the methods work any more. There were mixed feelings in school B with regard to whether the teachers think physical and human resources re adequate for maintaining continuous improvement in their particular schools. Their main reasons included the fact the school had inadequate classrooms because of the teacher-pupil ratio and the schools resources were not fully utilized for school development. In school A all the teachers said 'no' and their reasons included: inadequate facilities, and class numbers were apparently too high whereas classes and teachers were not adequate too.

When asked what they thought strategic planning involved; teachers from both schools had an idea of what was involved and what it meant. Their lists included:

- Planning
- Setting objectives or goals for the year and future
- Fixing the syllabus and schedule for the teachers
- Examining resources
- Evaluating every step and prioritizing

- Cooperation from both teachers and parents

In school A the teachers said strategic planning benefits them in moving towards the same goal rather than divided effort, they are able to control resources effectively and it is convenient if a new staff member is recruited, the hand over tends to be effective. On the one hand, teachers in school B claimed that strategic planning benefits them in monitoring of their schoolwork, coordination, and teachers work under limited supervision. This implies that most teachers in this school felt comfortable working independently.

In response to the question as to 'what are the typical attitudes of your colleagues towards change?' Most of the teachers in both schools felt that the attitudes will always be mixed feelings, depending on the change and its benefit. Mainly the reasons were lack of open communication, different backgrounds, uncertainty, and this tends to result in resistance to change.

Since most problems within school are discussed in staff meetings, teachers were asked how they participate in problem-solving activities. Teachers in school A said there is always little or no participation sometimes. HOD's often discuss issues that affect the direct running of the school and teachers bring their ideas together. Whereas in school B most teachers appeared to take part even though they always had divided opinions. The only problem was that, there were always double standards in decision-making thus, making it difficult to solve most problems.

When asked how the teachers would feel if a continuous improvement was to be introduced how would they feel about it, all the teachers in both school said they would go for it. As long as it would improve teacher participation, benefit the learners, and, as long as they would also know what it entails. This means that the teachers in both schools seemed to be desperate for any program that would motivate and empower them positively.

5.5 Discussion of the findings

The big problems faced by both school A and school B are the large number of classes; the ratio of teachers to students. The imbalance causes a problem for teachers in the way they handle pupils with learning difficulties who require more attention on one-to-one basis in the mainstream classroom. The narrow curriculum tends to limit children's potential skills. For instance, some classes in school B have over 45 students for completing classes like O' level.

The bad conditions of service and low salaries contribute to the production of poor quality education, especially because the Ministry of Education is doing little to avert the situation. Short mid-term breaks, as one teacher suggested would be of an added advantage to strengthen the capacity of teachers and students for revision, studying, in-service training, study tours and to have social breaks after mental exhaustion.

School A and school B seems to encounter problems concerning the welfare of the staff members. It would be helpful if the schools would form a staff association that would look into the affairs of the teachers and make recommendations to the Principal who will discuss these with the school committee for action. Such a move will reduce travelling difficulties. In any situation within these schools there is bound to exist conflict could be poor communication, lack of job delegation and cultural/ background diversity.
Generally , conflict breeds well in such situations as this was evident in school B. The responses from the interviews, questionnaires and the observations showed that superficial conflict is present. The relationships show that management does not seem to communicate the required expectations from teachers. This causes misconceptions, de-motivation and mistrust and it finally kills the team spirit amongst staff members and administration. School managers therefore need to be accountable in such situations.

Management in both schools need to prepare a strategic plan which will involve all teachers especially HODs and subject teachers. In school B, especially had an individual work plan for all the teachers, but through observations I gathered that the school manager is not very familiar with what to evaluate each teacher on for purposes of

guidance for accountability. It is therefore important for school leaders to guard their personal and professional position and values since these influence peoples expectations, and the criteria by which they judge good and bad performance. As one teacher stated that 'high public expectations' as a constraint that tends affect the production of teaching.

A collegial approach is increasingly advocated as the most appropriate way to manage schools and colleges. In essence this model is seen as a process where all professional staff participate actively in negotiating an agreed curriculum and contribute jointly to planning, implementing and evaluating its delivery. However, much of human behavior is irrational and this inevitably influences the nature of decision-making in education. Bearing all this in mind, the bureaucratic model remains valid as a partial explanation of management in education.

5.6 Summary of the research findings

In school A, there seem to be a close relationship between the principal and the teachers. The teachers support their principal because of his democratic style of leadership. This is supported by TQM, that, this approach sets up an expectation that managers will seek to empower rather than control the staff in their areas of work. It become important that one involves teachers in thinking about what should be done, so that when decisions are implemented teachers do not resist.

Although the external environment of school A is still dominated by an authority based system (the Anglican mission) it was not affected or influenced by the system negatively. The principal of the school claims that staff development is an essential move towards introducing in-service training, workshops etc in the school.

In school b there was no close relationship between the principal and his staff. The teachers' attitudes were negative. The interaction between the principal and his staff members was too formal. Thus, causing the teachers to feel intimidated and this led to barriers between the principal and the teachers. It also caused a lot of division among the

teachers themselves. There seems to be an overriding culture of de-motivation in the school.

The culture of the school also reflects a gab between management (the principal in particular) and the staff as a whole. There is also an apparent absence of clear educational (or other) goals that, staff have set for themselves. Whereas, clear planning requires first and foremost a clear vision, mission and aims. The way that people learn involvement is by engaging in the practices associated with any particular role in the school. Therefore, the principal form school B had a negative attunement with his staff members.

The principal in school B should learn to build a close relationship with his teachers because, it is the most important people in the school who are exposed to the daily experiences of the learners. There seems to be little accountability in the school, evidenced by the poor decision-making process, often at the expense of the pupils' needs. Decision-making clearly does not involve all staff members actively, and structures to support, for instance, staff development are non-existent.

CHAPTER 6

6.0 RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will present six of what the researcher recommends to be the most important strategies for continuous improvement in schools in order of importance. These strategies are not the only ones that can improve quality education completely, rather they can be used to alleviate the problems encountered in most organisational settings.

6.2 Open communication

Total Quality Management encourages an environment where there is open communication at levels. Thus, it becomes the duty of the principals to ensure that communication with their staff exist, so that continuous improvement will take place. Communication in a school should be formal and informal. If communication is always formal, it creates tension and tends to result in teachers withdrawing from participating. It is advisable that principals should try to make their communication with their staff informal. Barriers are broken when communication is informal because, there are no lines of demarcation for example, staff room tea parties, sports, etc.

If educational leaders could encourage this kind of interaction, then information will flow freely within staff members and it will also result in good team formation. There is a need for recognized lines of communication between departments and people. Ensuring everyone has access to appropriate information, could also be a way of bringing about a sense of shared ownership of decisions on the part of all concerned.

On the other hand, communication systems can either constrain or empower the efforts of people to participate. Good examples of open communication would be face-to-face information sharing when issues come up or an open door policy whereby key stakeholders have access at all levels within the system to question or criticize. Such a policy recognizes the interdependence of stakeholders striving to achieve agreed goals.

Therefore, the school principals must note that it is vital to remember to circulate information.

6.3 Shared decision-making (SDM)

In any organization, decision-making structures and procedure are necessary and essential. These refer to specific structures, rules and methods developed in the school that provide the framework for making decisions around the various tasks of an organisation such as, schools. Decision-making should clearly involve all staff members actively.

> *" Conversely, TQM with its greater emphasis on problem ownership and decentralized decision-making, would appear to be quite different in approach. It could be described as a process more supportive of a self-evaluating organisation and one which is more likely to encourage sustained long-term improvement".* (Harris *et al* 1998:168).

Davidoff and Lazarus (1997) argue that, "shared ownership is likely to encourage commitment to seeing decisions through because people have been empowered by their knowledge of the situation and participation of the decision-making process". This, in turn is likely to result in a higher level of staff morale, and a reduction in suspicion and uncertainty.

Shared decision-making is one strategy for continuous improvement because it encourages team spirit in any organization. The sense of sharing a common history-people together. It gives them a dimension and often a source of inspiration. This encourages cohesiveness, greater cooperation, and reduces work turnover. As a result, all members of an organisation should work together towards shared decision-making, problem solving and creative thinking. But compromises will almost certainly have to be accepted.

6.4 Planning as a management function

Planning should be understood as rational process of preparing a set of decisions for future actions directed at achieving goals and objectives by optimal means. This aspect of management is an important strategy towards achieving continuous improvement in most organisations. Schools adopt strategic planning with the aim of making education more effective in terms of responding to the needs and goals of students and society as a whole.

Planning, particularly long-term planning helps a manager to manage an efficient and effective school. It is concerned with "deliberately reflecting on the objectives of the organisation, the resources as well as activities involved and drawing up the most suitable plan for effectively achieving these objectives" as stated by Marx (1990:211).
In school planning, school leaders (principal and staff) must identify the objectives. How to achieve the objectives and implement the decision(s) within the planning process one needs to determine priorities and this helps to sift matters in terms of importance.

> *"Prioritization requires using judgement to rank actions in the order of their importance for attaining aims. Aims, therefore, are long term and change infrequently while priorities may well change from year to year".* (Weindling 1996: 33).

Through planning, aspects of greater and lesser importance can be separated from one another. The plan should outline how and in what areas, employees at different levels will be involved in the change process. In this respect, the most important point that teachers must understand is that the principal does not have all the answers about participative management. As the organisation gains experience in the process, corrections to the initial plan may be necessary. Consequently, over time the plan for moving forward should evolve and become clearer and more specific. It is better to plan with colleagues before inviting others such as, students, parents, etc.

6.5 Human Resource development

This element includes the area staff development which, in a school context, usually refers to teacher or professional development. This incorporates education and tra ng opportunities through various forms of in-service programs. Schools, therefore, need to support staff development. The two questions are:

'What opportunities are provided for staff development?'

'Who has access to these opportunities?'

Teacher or staff development programs need to be developed around the particular needs of the individual staff and school situation and should correspond with the vision. For example, if you want to build a democratic school; insight knowledge and skills relevant to participation in such a system should be facilitated. As a result, TQM can provide a framework within which the individual may continuously improve everything he or she does and everything affected by the quality of his or her work.

6.6 Teamwork for quality

Teamwork throughout any organisation is an essential component of the implementation of TQM for it builds up trust, improves communication and develops independence as stated develops independence as stated by Oakland (1989:236). Teamwork needs to be based on mutual trust and established relationships. So, if schools could adopt the team spirit, they are bound to sustain a certain degree of continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

Organisations, which become involved in TQM, discover the benefits of having effective teams at all levels. However to build an effective TQM culture, teamwork needs to be extended and must penetrate and permeate through the institution and be used in a wide range of decision-making and problem-solving situations. The divisions between staff have often prevented the necessary extension of teamwork and these barriers need to be broken down.

Quality improvement is hard work, and this is best approached with the support of others. In particular, principals in schools need to recognize and support a teams effort and contribution. "Teams, like people, need nurturing and mentoring if they are to function well and give of their best" as argued by Sallis (1996:81). This means, teamwork has to be based on mutual trust and established relationships. However, the application of teamwork has often been limited to curriculum and management functions. For a broader spectrum, structured training in teamwork and problem-solving skills is often necessary. Only when a team has an identity and purpose can it deal effectively with its primary function: to be accountable for improving quality, through monitoring and evaluation.

There is no one 'recipe' for successful teams, but the following eight steps discussed by Sallis (1996:84) would be of benefit in schools.

- A team needs the roles of its members to be clearly defined
- Teams need clear purposes and goals
- A team needs the basic resource to operate
- A team needs to know its accountability and the limits of its authority
- A team need a plan to work to
- A team needs a set of rules to work to
- A team needs to use the appropriate tools to tackle problems and to arrive at solutions
- A team needs to develop beneficial team behavior

6.7 Resources and resource management

Resources and fundamental- without resources, teaching and learning could not take place; and yet resource management has been something of a non-existing subject within educational management until the coming of financial delegation. For a school to succeed in sustaining continuous improvement, school managers need to adopt the rational approach to resource management.

The culture of the organisation will influence what particular approach to resource management can be made effective and may itself need modifying in order to improve resource and strategic management practices. According to Preedy *et al* (1998) it is

important, that school resource policies are directed by the institution's overall goals and curriculum plans, rather than, where resource considerations dictate educational proirities.

In essence, the rational approach to resource management consists of three distinct phases, explained by Weindling (1997:Unit 3,p.3):

(a) determining organizational goals (aims)-the ends
(b) gathering information about, and assessing, alternative means of achieving the goals
(c) choosing the optimal means: selecting that pattern of resource use which can be afforded and which is better than the alternatives at achieving the school's goals.

A rational approach to resource management "requires that it be linked to school's aims and objectives which in turn determine the curriculum. This linkage means that financial and resource management must be integrated with curriculum and staff management" (Weindling 1997:10). Resource constraints are inevitable, and this means that all school's aims cannot be pursued to the fullest extent and so priorities have to be established. However, organizations are in many ways non-rational because, goals and the means for reaching them are neither clear nor agreed.

Principals also need to encourage in school-based change, in order to improve quality education. School-based change involves the redistribution of school resources and therefore, influences the relationship between individuals, groups and the school thus, creates conflicts. Leaders should choose appropriate political strategies, and in making the choice for school change, they should put politics in the first place and technology since, goals of the school may change according to the shift of power relationship among conflicts.

Conclusion

There is a need for caution in trying to borrow management techniques from private sector organisations. For example, the main differences between schools and business is that schools do not charge a price upon which they aim to make a profit, but instead have a public service obligation to provide a free service to all those who are legally entitled. This concludes the notion that schools are obliged to strive for quality in order to meet the demands of the public.

According to Keep (1992) schools find it less easy to identity their 'customers'. From the school's perspective, the pupils are likely to be seen as the direct consumer of the services being offered. The interests of these various customers will not always coincide. For example, parents' and pupils' views of what constitute the best subject specialization and career choices to pursue may not watch what employees want.

Perhaps the most fundamental difference is that the management of public sector organisations is part of and subject to private business or not. For public sector services such as education and health, the impact of political considerations is likely to be even greater. In such circumstances, strategic choices about issues such as levels of service and product mix, will not be the result of market forces. But will instead express values determined through the political process in response to a changing environment as stated by Stewart and Ranson (1988:13).

The rapid change and uncertainty in the school environment can make it difficult to predict future external trends and demands. Therefore, school involvement in continuous quality improvement is essential and often this is reflected in their mission statements and strategic plans. Involvement in formulating the plan and the associated mission statement may help to build staff ownership and identification. In this context, total quality management has continuous quality improvement at its heart and is based on the creation of a climate in which everyone shares responsibility for school objectives.

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ABBREVIATIONS

TQM	Total Quality Management
LEA	Local Education Authority
SDP	School Development Plan
HOD	Head of Department
SCF	Students' Christian Fellowship
SDM	Shared decision-making

What are some of the barriers that you often experience in managing problem solving processes?

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9. Marketing is the central feature to accountability and responsibility. Do you market your school?

If yes, how do you do it?

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If no, why don't you do it?

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10. Do you face problems of overcrowding or shortage of pupils and teachers in your school?

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What do you think is the main cause of these problems?

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How do you solve it?

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11. There is a new trend in school management which is a business management called Total Quality Management (TQM). It considers the community of people in the school as customers (i.e the pupils, parents, institutions of higher education, employers and the nation).

How do you feel about the idea?

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION!!!!!!

APPENDIX B

PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How do you perceive strategic planning in improving the school's teaching and learning processes?
2. Do you have a strategic plan in your school?
3. How does the school deal with internal problems as well as external problems?
4. Change often causes resistance. How do your teachers respond to change?
5. Who is responsible for discipline in the school?
6. Do you think resources are an essential tool for school improvement?
7. How would you feel if a strategic plan based on the business perspective would be introduced.

APPENDIX C

TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRE

Aim: To explore the important responsibilities that a teacher can continuously apply for the benefit of the pupils.

1. What is your role as a teacher in the school?

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How do you think the role of a teacher and student could change?

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2. Please list at least five constraints that interfere with the progress of your teaching?

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3. What do you understand by the word 'teamwork'?

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Does teamwork exist in your school?

If yes, how effective do you think it is?

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If no, how would you feel towards the idea of introducing teams in your school?

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4. How do you feel about staff development (in-service training etc).

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Does it exist in your school?

If yes, how has it changed you as person?

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If no, what would be your comment if it were to be introduced in your school this year?

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5. What are the different methods of teaching that you use in the classroom?

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If you were to evaluate your teaching, what would be your comment?

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6. Do you think physical and human resources are adequate for maintaining continuous improvement in all school activities at your school?

Please explain why not?

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7. What do you think is involved in strategic planning?

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Does the school follow the strategic plan?

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What do you think are the benefits of strategic planning?

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8. If certain changes are introduced in the school, what are the typical attitudes of your colleagues towards change?

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Why do you think this is so?

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9. Since most problems within the school are discussed in staff meetings, how do teachers participate in problem-solving activities?

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Does open communication exist amongst everyone involved in the school?

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10. The 'continuous improvement journey' takes time and commitment for it to be observed in a school. If a continuous improvement program was to be introduced in your school, what would be your opinion?

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