

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION

1.1 Introduction

The White Paper on Education and Training published by South Africa's first democratically elected government on 15 March 1995, was the first policy document on education and training. Its implementation, together with that of White Paper 2 on Education Governance and Funding (1996), brought about a series of changes which are meant to restructure the education system in South Africa.

The key elements can be summed up as follows:

- (i) The establishment of a single national ministry of education for South Africa
- (ii) Public school governance and funding
- (iii) Democratic governance of education
- (iv) The establishment of provincial departments of education; and
- (v) The establishment of an outcomes based education as opposed to content based education. (White Paper 1 1995:18)

The significance of these changes lies in the stabilisation of the educational scene and will help in bringing about equity and excellence in education. In other words, the above mentioned changes will bring about equal education, thereby ensuring the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning in education. The reform process is still in progress and it is not easy to identify how schools or institutions are reacting to the changes directed at them, but in time, this will become clear.

With the new political dispensation, the doors of formerly whites only Model C schools are now open to all. These schools are now placed on an equal footing with public schools in terms of the allocation of resources, funding and governance. The public schools, because of these changes are now placed in a better position to offer quality education.

These changes also seek to encourage and to impress on parents that they are important partners in education. Instead of being passive spectators, the changes encourage parents to be active participants in the education of their children. These reforms also seek to change "... the traditional relationship between the suppliers of education (the schools and teachers) and the receivers or clients (learners and their parents). On the one hand, the reforms have encouraged and fostered increased client expectations, and on the other hand they have led to an increased emphasis on marketing by individual schools, often in fierce competition with their neighbours" (West-Burnham & Davies 1994:47).

The changes that the new education dispensation has introduced are aimed at fostering a sense of responsibility and commitment of educators and parents to the education of learners. The key word in all these changes is the democratic involvement of all stakeholders. Central to these educational reforms "... is a profound shift in the notion of accountability and an increasing emphasis on the concept of quality" (West-Burnham & Davies 1994:48). Still on the same note Sallis (1993:7) also contends that "one of the most important contemporary challenges facing schools, colleges and universities is how to manage for quality". Total quality management can be defined as a continuous cycle of detecting defects, identifying their causes and improving the process so as to totally eliminate the causes of defects" (Lewis & Smith 1993:30).

Education is a never-ending process which strives towards continuous improvement in terms of its standards and products. To this end, total quality management clearly fits in as it is "a philosophy of continuous improvement which can provide any educational institution with a set of practical tools for meeting and exceeding present and future customer needs, wants and expectations" (Sallis 1993:34).

It will also lead to our schools being totally committed to higher performance and thereby satisfying all major stakeholders in education. Its ability to provide "... insights, understandings, frameworks and tools from which the leaders can develop their own strategies

for making our schools totally dedicated to high performance quality and the satisfaction of parent and pupil expectations, will enable our schools to produce quality performances in all spheres” (Murgatroyd & Morgan 1993:xiii).

Total Quality Management is a people-focussed management system that aims at the continual increase of customer satisfaction at continually lower real cost. It is a total system approach and not a separate area or programme. It works horizontally across functions and departments, involves all staff members and extends backwards and forwards to include the supply chain and the customer chain. The definition of TQM explicitly states that all aspects of an organisation (or school) have to be dedicated to the goal of achieving the highest standards of performance as required by their customers (Murgatroyd & Morgan 1993:60).

In the South African perspective and educational scene, total quality management is still a recent and novel idea or philosophy although some of its elements like excellence and high standards have been prevalent for some time. The policy initiatives and new legislation put in place since 1994, shifted the direction and vision of the new education system towards continuous improvement (TQM). The provisions of Department of Education White Paper 1 (1995) and White Paper 2 (1996), the National Education Policy Investigation Report (NEPI) (1992) and the South African Schools Act (1996) as well as provincial legislation and policy documents were all aimed at producing a system of education that will ensure the provision of quality education and total quality management by all institutions of learning (Report on Educational Management 1996:12).

1.2 Problem statement

The quality of education in most black public primary and secondary schools in South Africa still leaves much to be desired. With the doors of learning in all types of schools, private, former Model C and public schools now open to all, a remarkable number of learners are flocking from black public schools to private and former Model C schools.

It can be stated that the driving force behind this great exodus is the fact that education standards mostly in black public schools have deteriorated to such alarming proportions that only drastic change can alleviate the situation. However, with all the changes and improvements wrought to public schools by the democratic education system (increasing the

money spent on a black child to equal that spent on a white child, introducing similar curricula for all South Africans, improving facilities in deprived communities) this situation is bound to change.

The problem statement can be divided into two, namely the main problem(s) and sub-problem(s) or other related issues.

1.2.1 Main problem(s)

The following questions can best formulate the main problem(s):

- 1.2.1.1 How can the adoption of total quality management and the effective management of change by school managers help in creating quality schools and providing quality education?
- 1.2.1.2 How can school management teams adopt the total quality management approach as their daily operational philosophy?

1.2.2 Sub-problem(s)

Related issues emerging from the main problem(s) can be formulated by the following questions:

- 1.2.2.1 How can the effective management of change and the adoption of total quality management by schools curb the movement of learners from one school to another?
- 1.2.2.2 Does the adoption of total quality management by schools influence parental choice of schools for their children?
- 1.2.2.3 Did the educational changes as introduced since 1994 in the South African education system contribute to total quality management (continuous improvement) of schools?

1.3 Aims of the research project

This research project has three main aims. The first aim is to investigate whether the educational changes as introduced since 1994 in the South African education system has lead to the adoption of a total quality management approach in schools.

Secondly it is aimed at investigating whether effective management of change can lead to the creation of quality or effective schools.

Thirdly, to determine how the school management teams can adopt total quality management as their operational philosophy to create quality schools and provide quality education.

There are also several sub-aims or objectives to be achieved by this research project:

- 1.3.1 To investigate whether the introduction of educational changes in the South African education system have brought about continuous improvement in the performance of principals, educators, learners and parents in the management of schools.
- 1.3.2 To investigate whether there are schools which are following the total quality management (TQM) philosophy.
- 1.3.3 To investigate whether the implementation of total quality management in schools can finally help in transforming schools into centres of continuous improvement thus ensuring the provision of quality education in schools.

1.4 Hypothesis formulation

In view of the problem(s) being investigated, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

Educational changes and the adoption of total quality management in school management can help improve public schools in the provision of quality education and the creation of quality schools in South Africa.

1.5 Research methods

In order to investigate the above mentioned problems and to determine whether the aims of the research project as outlined above, have been achieved, the following methods will be employed:

1.5.1 Literature review

Total quality management (TQM) is a novel philosophy in the South African education system and more information will therefore be obtained in foreign literature. However, some South Africans, like GM Steyn have started to write extensively on this subject (Educare 1996, 25 (1 & 2); SAJE 1999, 19 (4); SAJE 2000, 20(4)).

A literature review can be described as a summary of the writings of renowned authorities and researchers that provide evidence that the researcher is familiar with what is either already known, unknown and untested. Real and effective research is based upon past knowledge and on what has been done which provide useful hypotheses and suggestions for significant investigations (Van Dalen 1979:31-32).

The search for literature is of paramount importance in research. To this effect Cates (1985:32) contends that "... in identifying, planning, and executing a research study, a researcher performs not simply a single search of the literature, but several searches: a pre-study search to identify areas of concern and general trends in opinion and research, a search in the early stages of the study to identify possible research problems, to refine them, and to explore some writings and research pertinent to them, and a larger, more comprehensive search to identify and examine the multitude of writings and research studies which bear on the specific problem the study seeks to explore."

1.5.2.2 The interview

Therefore, a critical survey of relevant literature on total quality management will be made to gain insight into the theoretical aspects of total quality management and change.

1.5.2 Empirical study

In this research project, use will be made of both the quantitative and qualitative research approach. This approach is followed as the type of data or information required will differ. If the data is obtained in the form of scores (as they are easy to tabulate and analyse) the data will be quantitative. If, however, the information (data) required cannot be expressed as scores but is expressed through words, it will be qualitative research. For instance, if the researcher wants to gain insight into the perceptions of principals, educators and learners on

the realisation of quality in their schools, it will be a qualitative research design (Charles 1988:69; SAJE 2000:268). In the empirical study, the following methods will be utilised:

1.5.2.1 The questionnaire

In order to assess the prevailing situation in schools with regard to total quality management (TQM) the questionnaire method will be employed. This method is employed because "... it is fast and efficient at collecting large amounts of information which enables data to be easily quantified and can thus provide a comparable data basis from different perspectives" (Preedy 1989:41). The questionnaire is composed of "... a list of questions or statements to which the individual is asked to respond in writing, the response may range from a checkmark to an extensive written statement" (Wiersma 1980:142).

These questionnaires will be utilised to get the opinions of school managers (principals), deputies, HODs and educators in order to justify the impact of educational changes in the adoption and implementation of total quality management in schools. Principals, deputies, HODs and educators at selected primary and secondary schools in Region 3 of the Northern Province will be subjected to these questionnaires. Since their responses will be in writing, the information thus provided can be regarded as a more or less true reflection of what is going on in schools.

1.5.2.2 The interview

There are two types of interviews, namely structured and unstructured interviews. An interview can be defined as a "... face-to-face confrontation, an oral exchange between an interviewer and an individual or a group of individuals" (Wiersma 1980:142).

Structured interview schedules require specific answers and this will enable the researcher to solicit specific information from principals. The answers thereof will make a generalisation of the findings possible. Principals, deputies, HODs and educators as key proponents of total quality management in schools will be subjected to structured interviews. The target population comprises principals, deputies, HODs and educators of selected primary and secondary schools in Region 3 of the Northern Province.

Unstructured interviews will also be conducted. These consist of interview questions which do not require specific answers and will enable principals to reveal everything that they know pertaining to total quality management in a carefree way without fear of being channelled into a particular way of thinking. Selected principals in the Northern Province will be subjected to these interview questions.

1.6 Elucidation of concepts

For the purpose of this research project, the following key words and concepts require definition:

1.6.1 Quality

The traditional idea of quality has been expressed "... as the degree of conformance to a standard or the product of workmanship". It is further stated that "... quality is the degree of user satisfaction or the fitness of the product for use". In other words "... the customer determines whether or not quality has been achieved in its totality" (Lewis & Smith 1993:28).

Figure 1 reflects the meaning of quality:

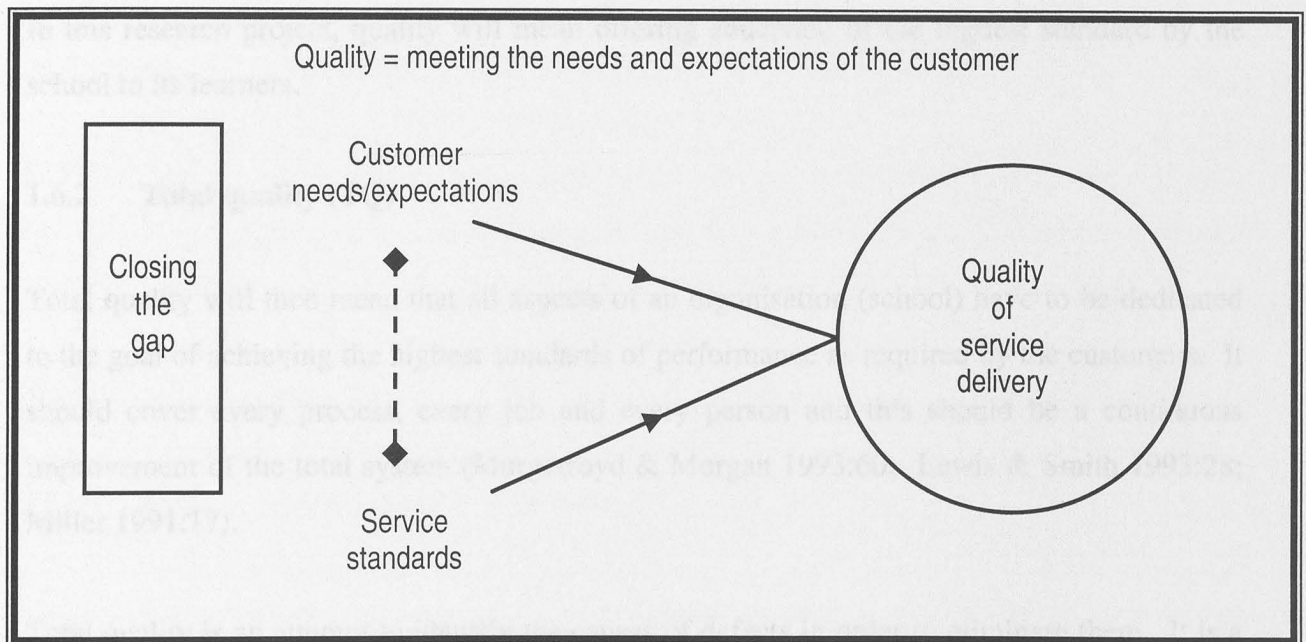


Figure 1: Meaning of quality (Chase 1992:30)

Lawrence Miller (1991:16) defines quality as follows:

“Quality is:

- ◆ Doing the right things right, the first time, every time
- ◆ Anticipating, conforming to and exceeding customer requirements
- ◆ Continuous improvement in product and process
- ◆ Speed
- ◆ Cost competitiveness
- ◆ Creating real wealth”

Goddard and Leask (1992:5) define quality as follows: “... quality then is simply meeting the customer requirements”, while Huge (1990:4) summarises the definition of quality by the following two statements:

- “(i) Conformance to specifications – Quality is defined by the relative absence of defects.
- (ii) Meeting customer requirements – Quality is measured by the degree of customer satisfaction with a product’s characteristics and features.”

In this research project, quality will mean offering education of the highest standard by the school to its learners.

1.6.2 Total quality (TQ)

Total quality will then mean that all aspects of an organisation (school) have to be dedicated to the goal of achieving the highest standards of performance as required by the customers. It should cover every process, every job and every person and this should be a continuous improvement of the total system (Murgatroyd & Morgan 1993:60; Lewis & Smith 1993:28; Miller 1991:17).

Total quality is an attempt to identify the causes of defects in order to eliminate them. It is a continuous cycle of detecting defects, identifying their causes, and improving the process so as to totally eliminate the causes of defects (Lewis & Smith 1993:30).

In this research, total quality will mean a continuous cycle of detecting, identifying and eliminating defects so as to achieve continuous improvement in the process of managing teaching and learning in the school.

1.6.3 Total quality management (TQM)

According to Talley (1991:3) total quality management is the “quest for excellence”. Hand and Plowman (1992:26) regard total quality management as “... a strategic approach to producing the best products and services through a process of continuous improvement of every aspect of a company’s operation”.

West-Burham (1992:15) perceives total quality management as something which “... involves suppliers and customers aiming for continuous improvement, concerns products and processes responsibilities with all workers delivered through teamwork”.

There are many definitions of total quality management as well. Witcher’s definition (Ho & Wearn 1995:2) is most comprehensive:

- Total – Every person in the firm (school) is involved (including customers and suppliers)
- Quality – Customer requirements are met exactly
- Management – Senior executives are fully committed (HO & Wearn 1995:2)

In this research project, total quality management will mean a strategy which, if employed, can lead to excellence in all aspects of schooling, for example results, discipline or sports, through a process of continuous improvement of every aspect of a school’s operation.

1.6.4 Management

Management can be defined in different ways.

Hoyle (1986:8) defines management “... as a continuous process through which members of an organisation seek to co-ordinate their activities and utilise the resources in order to fulfil the various tasks of the organisation as efficiently as possible”.

According to Stone and Freeman (1992:4) management is "... the process of planning, organising, leading and controlling the work of organisation members and of using all available organisational resources to reach stated organisational goals".

In this study, management will mean a process of organising, planning, leading and controlling the efforts of stakeholders in order to realise the set goals of the organisation/school.

1.6.5 Holistic quality management

Holistic quality management is synonymous with total quality management. A holistic quality approach is an integrated one which will strive towards including and involving all stakeholders. Herman (1992:43) regards a holistic quality management approach as one which "... will unify all individual and organisational efforts focused on a clear vision, goals, objectives and a series of action programs".

In this research project, holistic quality management will mean the same as total quality management.

1.6.6 Quality systems

Quality systems are domains of operation. Lewis and Smith (1993:32) give the following explanation: "The people work in a system. The job of the manager is to work on the system, to improve it continuously with their help."

Total quality management entails three subsystems, namely a social (human), a technical and a management system. In this research programme schools are viewed as operating in a system. The workings of these systems will be evaluated in chapter 2.

1.6.7 Quality control

Quality control on the other hand has to do with the techniques and activities which sustain quality to specified requirements. Quality control is based on inspection and "... an important outcome of this statement is that quality control is an 'after the fact' activity which measures a

product that has not been produced to customer satisfaction. In other words, defects are detected through post-production inspection by a quality control system and not prevented” (Bell, McBride & Wilson 1994:2).

Quality control refers to “... the practical means of securing product or service quality as laid out in a specification ...” (Bell, McBride & Wilson 1994:12). In this research project it will mean those mechanisms put in place (like tools and techniques) in order to control and ensure quality in schools.

1.6.8 Quality assurance

Quality assurance has to do with “... the determination of standards, appropriate methods and quality requirements by an expert body, accompanied by a process of inspection or evaluation that examines the extent to which practice meets these standards” (Murgatroyd & Morgan 1993:45).

According to Bell, McBride and Wilson (1994:3) quality assurance “... is based on the principle of prevention of quality problems, rather than the detection of these problems as it is in quality control”.

In this research project, quality assurance will mean the tools and techniques that are employed to prevent quality problems instead of just detecting them.

1.6.9 Quality gurus

Talley (1991:12) regards quality gurus as “experts, consultants or just gurus”.

These were the first people who expounded the ideals of total quality management, for example Crosby, Deming, Juran, Armand, Feigenbaum. They are regarded as authorities or experts in the field of total quality management.

In this research project, quality gurus will refer to the authorities or experts in total quality management.

1.6.10 Quality tools and techniques

In order to improve quality, the use of tools and techniques are imperative.

Sallis (1993:99) reiterates that “... there is a need to turn philosophy into practice and to develop practical means by which teams within education can achieve quality improvement. Quality tools and techniques are the means of identifying and creatively solving problems.”

It is for this reason that Spanbauer (Sallis 1993:99) contends that all “... educators should learn to use and interpret the basic strategies that are most frequently applied to quality improvement”.

In this research project, quality tools and techniques will mean all those tools and techniques that are employed in identifying and improving the quality of services and products.

1.6.11 Customer

A customer can be defined in terms of relationships and processes rather than relative status, role or function.

According to West-Burnham (1992:29) “... a customer is anyone to whom a product or service is provided”.

In this research project, customer will mean learners, parents and stakeholders in education.

1.6.12 Supplier

The one who provides a product or service is a supplier of that product or service.

There are “... internal customers (students) and external customers (parents and stakeholders) and internal suppliers (teachers, schools) and external suppliers (department, donors, stakeholders)” (West-Burham 1992:29).

In this research project, schools and teachers together with the Department and all donors will be regarded as suppliers.

1.6.13 Product/Service

Total quality management believes in providing quality products and services to its customers. The creation of a climate and culture which will be conducive to effective teaching and learning should be one of its aims. The product is education while the service rendered is that of imparting knowledge through teaching.

In this research, a public school will mean community or government schools which are
 In this research project, product will mean education, and the service(s) will mean teaching.

1.6.14 School manager

School managers are “those teachers who have some responsibility for planning, organising, directing and controlling the work of other teachers” (Everard & Morris 1990:5).

In this research a “school manager” will mean principal, head teacher or any member of the school management team acting in that capacity.

1.6.15 School management team

It comprises the three top management partners in a school, namely the principal, deputy principal(s) and head(s) of department(s). In schools where there are no deputy and HOD posts, senior teachers may be co-opted to serve on such positions and thus form part of the school management team as they will be in managerial positions.

In this research, the principal, the deputy principal and HODs will form the school management team.

1.6.16 Quality education

Quality education makes the difference between things being excellent or run-of-the-mill. In education quality makes the difference between success and failure (Sallis 1993:11). In this

research quality education will mean education which meets and satisfy customer requirements which is characterised by high pass rates and high levels of competence.

1.6.17 Public school

This is a school that belongs to the community, government or a state which is accessible to all learners. The Collins Paperback Thesaurus defines public as: “Accessible, communal, community, free to all, not private, open, open to the public, unrestricted” (1995:498).

In this research, a public school will mean community or government schools which are accessible to all learners.

1.6.18 Right sizing

The right sizing committee was a committee established to bring the staff development to the right size in terms of the pupil-teacher ratio. The aim of this was to bring about equity in terms of staff provisions. Their function was to recommend which educators are in excess of the establishment, the vacancies that exist and which of those who opt for severance packages should be regarded as key personnel (The Procedure Manual 1996:2-3).

In this research, right sizing will mean provision of teachers in accordance with the pupil-teacher ratio which is of now at 1:35 for secondary schools and 1:40 for primary schools.

1.7 Research programme

Figure 2 reflects a diagrammatic representation of the research programme.

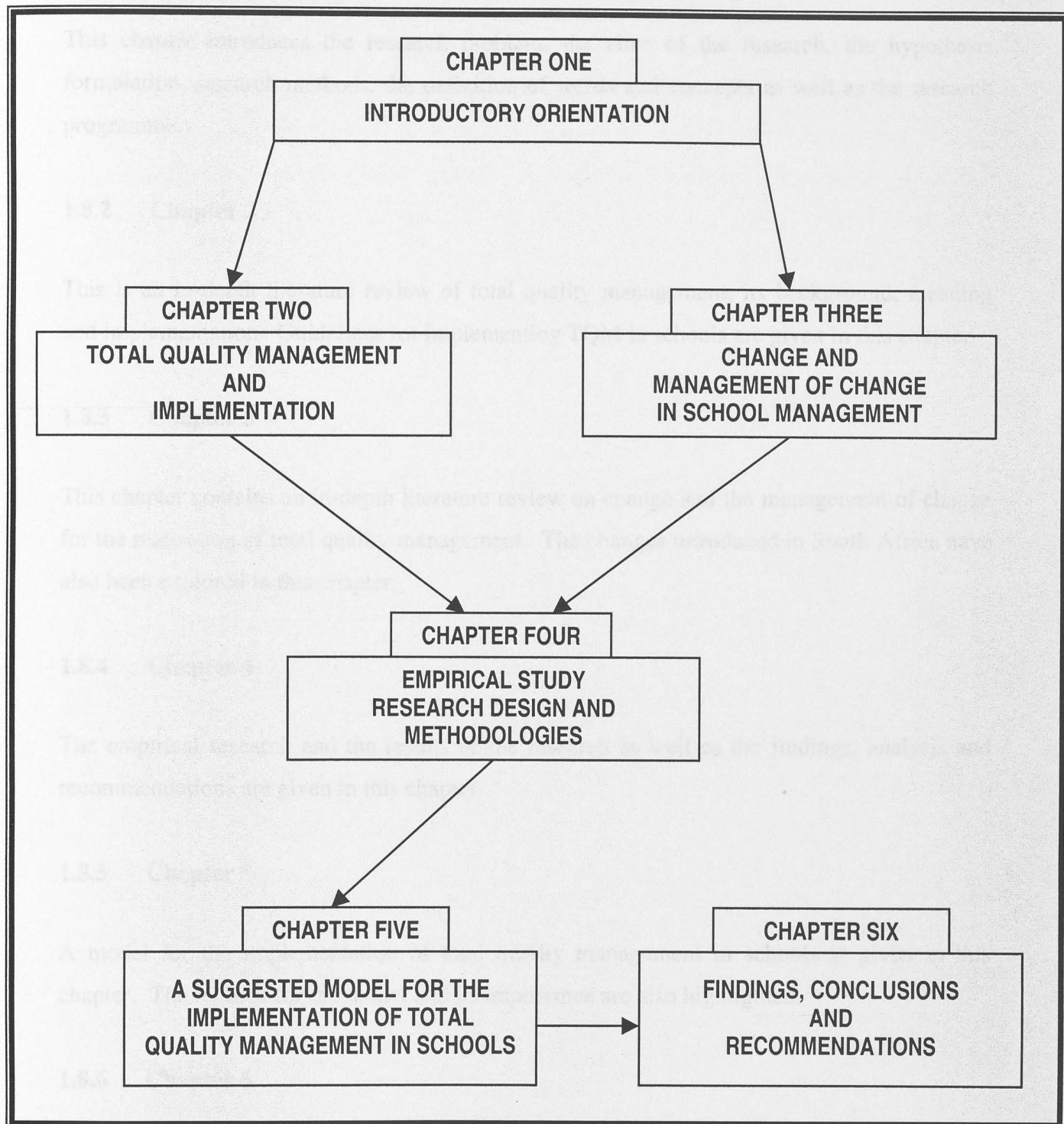


Figure 2: Research programme

1.8 Discussion of research programme

1.8.1 Chapter 1

This chapter introduces the research problem, the aims of the research, the hypothesis formulation, research methods, the definition of words and concepts as well as the research programme.

1.8.2 Chapter 2

This is an in-depth literature review of total quality management, its background, meaning and implementation. Guidelines for implementing TQM in schools are given in this chapter.

1.8.3 Chapter 3

This chapter contains an in-depth literature review on change and the management of change for the realisation of total quality management. The changes introduced in South Africa have also been explored in this chapter.

1.8.4 Chapter 4

The empirical research and the results of the research as well as the findings, analysis and recommendations are given in this chapter.

1.8.5 Chapter 5

A model for the implementation of total quality management in schools is given in this chapter. The reasons for the model and its importance are also highlighted.

1.8.6 Chapter 6

In this chapter the findings and conclusions of the research were given. The limitations of the research were also given and recommendations for future research were made.

1.9 Summary

A brief overview of educational and managerial problems in the contemporary South African public schools has been given.

Total quality management is an approach with great potential for the enhancement of public schooling in South Africa. This is mainly so because as an approach that has assisted business organisations to compete globally, it embodies principles that could be applied to improve public schools and the provision of quality education in South Africa. An in-depth study of the literature pertaining to this research will now be the focus of the next chapter.

There are several aspects of schooling and school management in the South African education system which still pose problems. It is recognised that each need to be improved upon, some of which are:

- Overcrowding in classrooms
- Limited resources
- Lack of training of teachers and school principals
- The high dropout rate in schools
- Shortage of teachers, school infrastructure and technology
- Poor basic education
- Poor educational quality (Van der Merwe 1992:4-5; White Paper on Education and Training 1995:21; Education White Paper 2 1995:10).

One of the unique challenges facing schools today is how to manage for quality. In an attempt to manage the changes which always exist, the principles and components of total quality can be incorporated in a philosophy and methodology which assists institutions to manage change. The notion of quality is not new (Garvin 1993:360). What is new is that the quality philosophy which is already being applied in business and industry, is being adapted to problems encountered in schools (Wilson 1993:22). There are several features of total quality management which are valid in an educational context. In the first instance, the holistic nature of