

CHAPTER 5

A SUGGESTED MODEL FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with the process of the empirical research where all the results and findings of the empirical research were tabled. Further clarifications concerning the findings were explained and verified through a further structured interview probe of five randomly selected school management teams and educators. The results of this probe were also given in the previous chapter.

The purpose of this chapter is to develop a model for the implementation of total quality management in schools. The commitment to introduce total quality management is driven by the findings of the empirical research which indicated that schools view quality as a means to improve customer satisfaction (92,72% in V13) and the interview probe which indicated overwhelmingly that there are schools which engage the TQM-approach (100% in paragraph 4.1.4.1).

5.2 Factors necessitating the development of an implementation model

Besides the findings of the empirical study, there are other factors which prompted the researcher to develop an implementation model as an imperative. The following are the causal factors:

5.2.1 Legislation related to policy passed since 1994

The advent of a new political dispensation in 1994 saw the passing by parliament of several acts, policy documents and laws on education. The following two policy documents contributed to the above as they advocated change and continuous improvement:

5.2.1.1 The White Paper on Education and Training (15 March 1995)

This was the first policy document on education by the new government. The question of providing quality education was hinted at from the onset. In Chapter 4, paragraph 9 of the same Act it was clearly stated: “The improvement of the quality of education and training is essential ... But quality is required across the board” (Department of Education 1995:21). In paragraph 12 it is again stated thus: “The restoration of the culture of teaching, learning and management involves the creation of a culture of accountability.” In the first policy document the then Deputy Minister of Education issued the following message: “The ideal, namely ‘excellence in education for all’ and the cultivation and liberation of the talents of every young South African is still a long way off but we are on our way” (Department of Education 1995:22). The message above is self-explanatory. The new education department had embarked on a continuous improvement process in all schools under its jurisdiction. This new policy document advocated change of attitudes in order to enhance quality performance.

5.2.1.2 The South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996)

The preamble to the SASA of 1996 states: “This country requires a new national system for schools which will provide an education of progressively high quality for all learners and in so doing lay a strong foundation for the development of all our peoples’ talents and capabilities ...” (Department of Education 1996:11). It is evident that the department’s vision is that schools should function efficiently and effectively and this implies that educators and managers should commit themselves and deliver quality service which will result in quality outcomes – good results.

5.2.2 Current situation: 1997 – onwards

5.2.2.1 The grade 12-examination results

From 1998 to 2001 the results of the Northern Province Department of Education were 45,17% (1998), 45,3% (1999), 58,4% (2000) and 60,9% (2001) respectively with an improvement of 0,13%, 13,1% and 2,5% over the past four years. The department is therefore concerned about this trend and wants to put an end to it. However, this can only be

achieved through hard work and commitment – hence the development of a model to help schools realise this dream.

5.2.2.2 “Call to Action”: Mobilising citizens to build a South African Education and Training System for the 21st century

This campaign was launched on 27 July 1999. One of the nine priorities which the Tirisano (working together) campaign wished to accomplish, is that schools must become the centres of community life – be functional. It was aimed at the restoration of the culture of learning, teaching and service (COLTS) and the whole school development programme (Asmal 1999:10). When answering a question on educational matters in his State of the Nation address to parliament, president Mbeki charged: “Teachers must teach. Learners must learn. Managers must manage” (Asmal 1999:6). The aim of all these campaigns is clear: Continuous improvement in the performance of all schools.

5.2.2.3 Implementation plan for Tirisano

This plan was in response to the call to action of 1999 and the nine priorities in the “Call to Action” were organised into five core programmes in the Implementation Plan. Programme two in the Implementation Plan is School Effectiveness and Education Professionalism, the objective of this programme being the development of a school system that functions efficiently and effectively to realise the educational and social goals of the country (Department of Education 2000 – 2004:12). In other words, the outcomes expected after implementation is “improved quality, standards and learner performance” (Department of Education 2000 – 2004:16). Again the aim was clear: quality education and quality performance by all learners and educators.

5.2.2.4 Corporate plan

January 2000 – December 2004

The Corporate Plan spelled out the major strategic priorities for the next five years which the Department seeks to accomplish – still pursuing the attainment of the nine priorities or five core programmes identified in 5.2.2.2 and 5.2.2.3 above, but this time with performance

indicators. For example, the Department will know that they have succeeded in accomplishing Programme 2 of the five core programmes (which is School Effectiveness and Educator Professionalism), when after implementation:

- all learners and educators attend school daily;
- all learners and educators arrive on time;
- all schools have appointed principals (those with no principals), deputies (those which qualify) and HODs (those who still have vacant positions for HOD-posts);
- all members of school management teams attend management training and development programmes;
- all schools have properly constituted and effectively functioning governing bodies and in the case of secondary schools learner representative councils; and
- a culture of non-performance is not tolerated in any school (Department of Education 2000 – 2004:7-9).

All of the above legislation and campaigns were aimed at bringing about improvement in the activities of the whole school. They are aimed at restoring the discipline of both educators and learners, the quality of teaching and learning by both educators and learners and ultimately total commitment to teaching and learning by both, which in turn will lead to quality output – good results. The realisation of the above improvements requires a change in attitude – a paradigm shift. The above legislation and campaigns are all advocating change for the better – continuous improvement. These findings, coupled with the findings of this research study, made it imperative that an implementation model be developed.

The following factors also contributed to pursuing TQM:

- We need to get better at everything we do. We are all aware that there are many areas in which we can do better for the benefit of our learners.
- We want to survive. The government has made it clear that no school has a divine right to exist. We must seek to be the best in our market.
- Increasing competition. This makes it imperative that we benchmark our approach, style and product against world-class schools.
- End crisis management.

- We can only be successful if we all work together.
- Job satisfaction is only possible if everyone's ideas and contributions are valued, recognised and implemented.
- The process of continuous improvement must be ongoing in everything we do (Greenwood & Graunt 1994:196).

Furthermore, stakeholders in education, namely parents, the community, learners and educators want to be associated with quality education and quality performance.

5.3 Total quality management implementation in schools

The factors discussed in 5.2 above emphasised the fact that TQM is recognised by all as being the key to the future of public schools in South Africa. It is more so because it is recognised that total quality is about management, and in particular about a participative type of management. Unfortunately without this participation, without dialogue within organisations, without listening to clients and customers, total quality will never be achieved. Total quality is about changes in the way of thinking, behaviour and culture within schools. It is about shared values and motivating everyone in the school from the top to the bottom to maintain and keep to the highest quality standards. Put in simple terms, total quality is about attitudes, a way of life, achieving excellence. It is about success through people (Collard 1989:178).

The factors outlined in 5.2 above and the findings of this research study in chapter 4, convinced the researcher that the implementation of this improvement strategy can no longer be postponed.

When implementing TQM in a school, the following key issues should, however, be taken into consideration:

- "Just do it." The message is that action is more important than analysis. In other words, if you implement it then you will be able to understand most concepts when you apply them practically.
- A long-term view is needed. TQM is about attitudes and these take long to take shape and can take up to 2 – 5 years until a culture of quality is created.
- Piecemeal involvement is doomed. Total involvement of all in the school is needed.

- Those responsible for managing the implementation must use the quality processes and techniques discussed in Chapter 2, paragraph 2.10.2 (West Burnham 1992:136).

To ensure the successful implementation of TQM in schools, the researcher deemed it necessary that a model of implementing TQM in schools be developed. This is done with a view to aid management teams and educators in implementing continuous improvement programmes with ease in their schools.

5.4 A model for TQM-implementation

5.4.1 Introduction

Based on the findings of the research study in Chapter 4 and the factors discussed in paragraph 5.2 above, the researcher is of the opinion that the development of a model for TQM-implementation was necessary. The researcher believes that this model is of importance for South African schools as they are still affected by changes. The low grade 12-examination results of most schools over the past five years are an indication that most schools are indeed dysfunctional as stated in the “Call to Action” campaign. This model will help schools to regain their status of being effective schools after implementation. The benefits of a total quality implementation programme can be summarised in the following diagram.

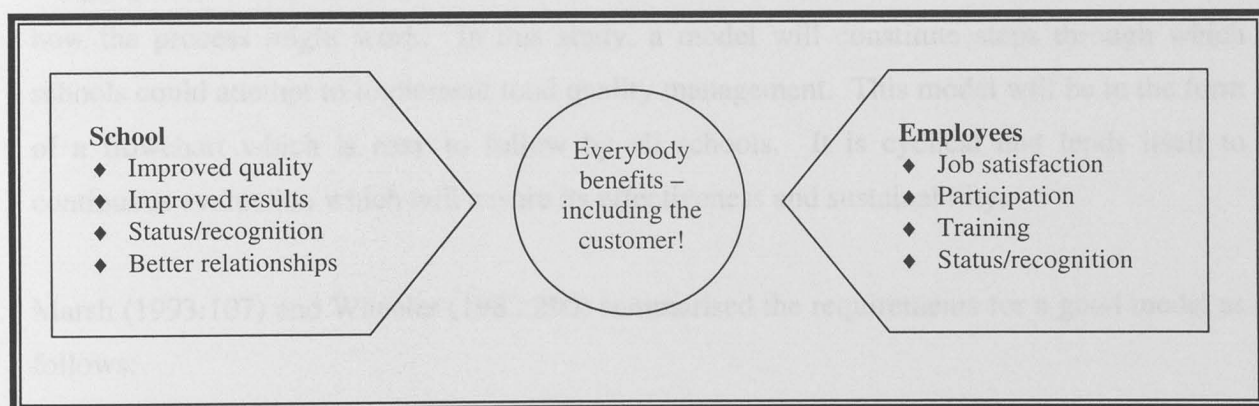


Figure 5.1: Benefits of a total quality programme (Collard 1989:100)

Briefly, this means that once the process is fully entrenched, schools will improve their results by offering quality education which will further bring about stability and better relationships

in the school and amongst all employees. The status of the school and employees will also be enhanced and recognised because of the quality service being rendered. Good performance brings about job satisfaction amongst employees and they participate fully using their expertise and know-how. The training offered empowers them and their status is also enhanced. They become proud of their school and the school is proud of them.

The model presented by the researcher was modified to suit the South African education situation. It is further believed that schools will also adapt it to suit the different situations under which their schools are operating.

5.4.2 Requirements for a model

Before the model can be presented, its requirements should be discussed in order to gauge it. A model constitutes a framework of ideas with the aim of making one understand how the process works.

According to Mouton and Marais (1990:141) a model "... provides explanation sketches and the means of making predictions". They further assert that "... models provide a new language game or universe of discourse within which the phenomenon may be discussed". The Universal Dictionary defines a model as a tentative framework of ideas describing something intangible and used as a testing device, while the Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary defines a model as a theoretical description that can help one understand how the process might work. In this study, a model will constitute steps through which schools could attempt to implement total quality management. This model will be in the form of a flowchart which is easy to follow by all schools. It is cyclical and lends itself to continuous evaluation which will ensure its effectiveness and sustainability.

Marsh (1993:107) and Wheeler (1983:290) summarised the requirements for a good model as follows:

- The model needs to attain an educational purpose.
- The content of the model must be selected.
- The educational content must be organised.
- Procedures to be followed need to be worked out.

- The model needs to be evaluated if it does not produce the desired end results.

The researcher fully concurs with Marsh and Wheeler's requirements for a good model as they are simple and straightforward. That is what we expect of models: that they help us in attaining or understanding or implementing something better. A good model should also make provision for evaluation.

5.4.3 The TQM-implementation model

The Total Quality Management Implementation model follows with explanations as to how this model works in a school situation. The researcher views the model as understandable and easy to follow, making it possible for schools to adopt and adapt it to suit their specific situations and schools.

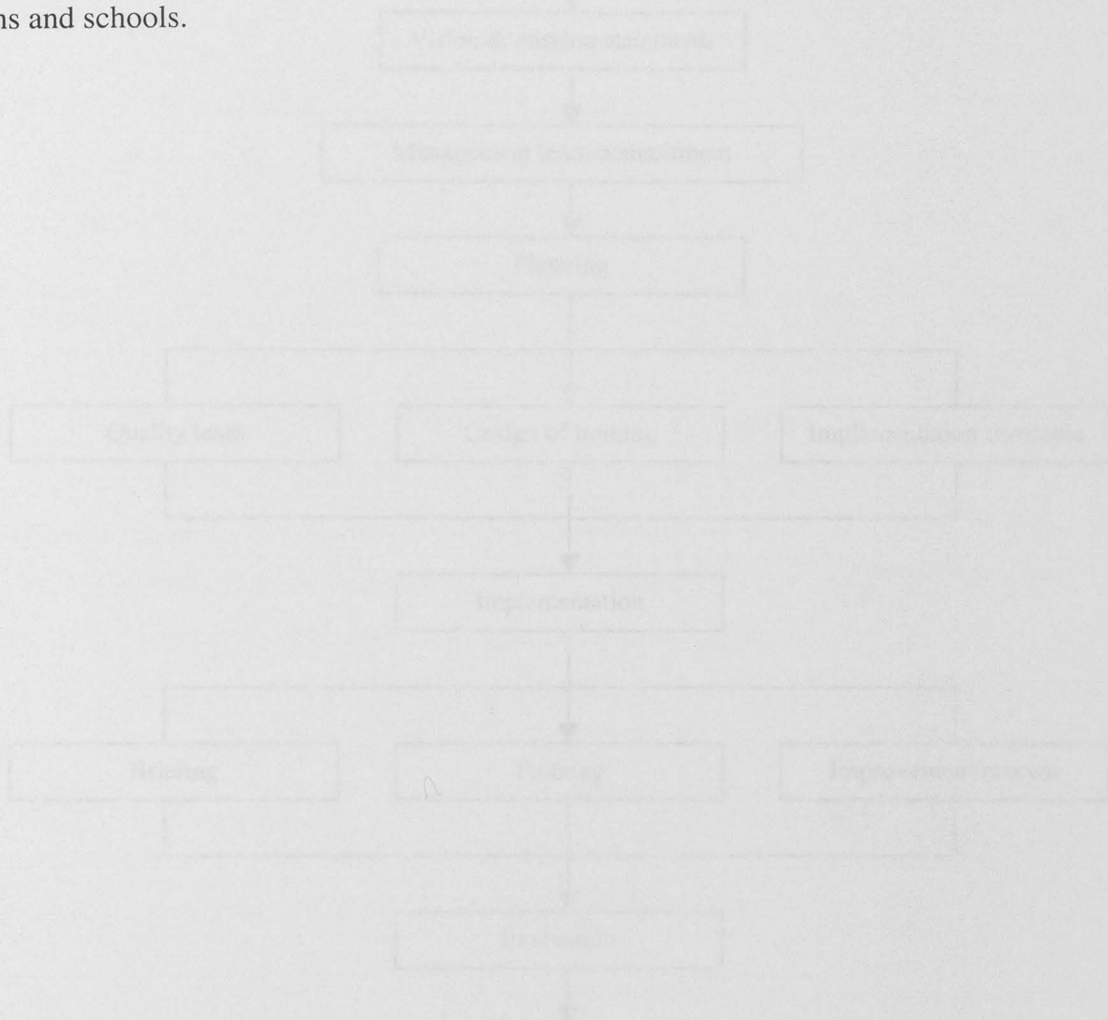


Figure 5.2: The TQM flowchart (implementation model) (Adapted from Colwell 1996:177)

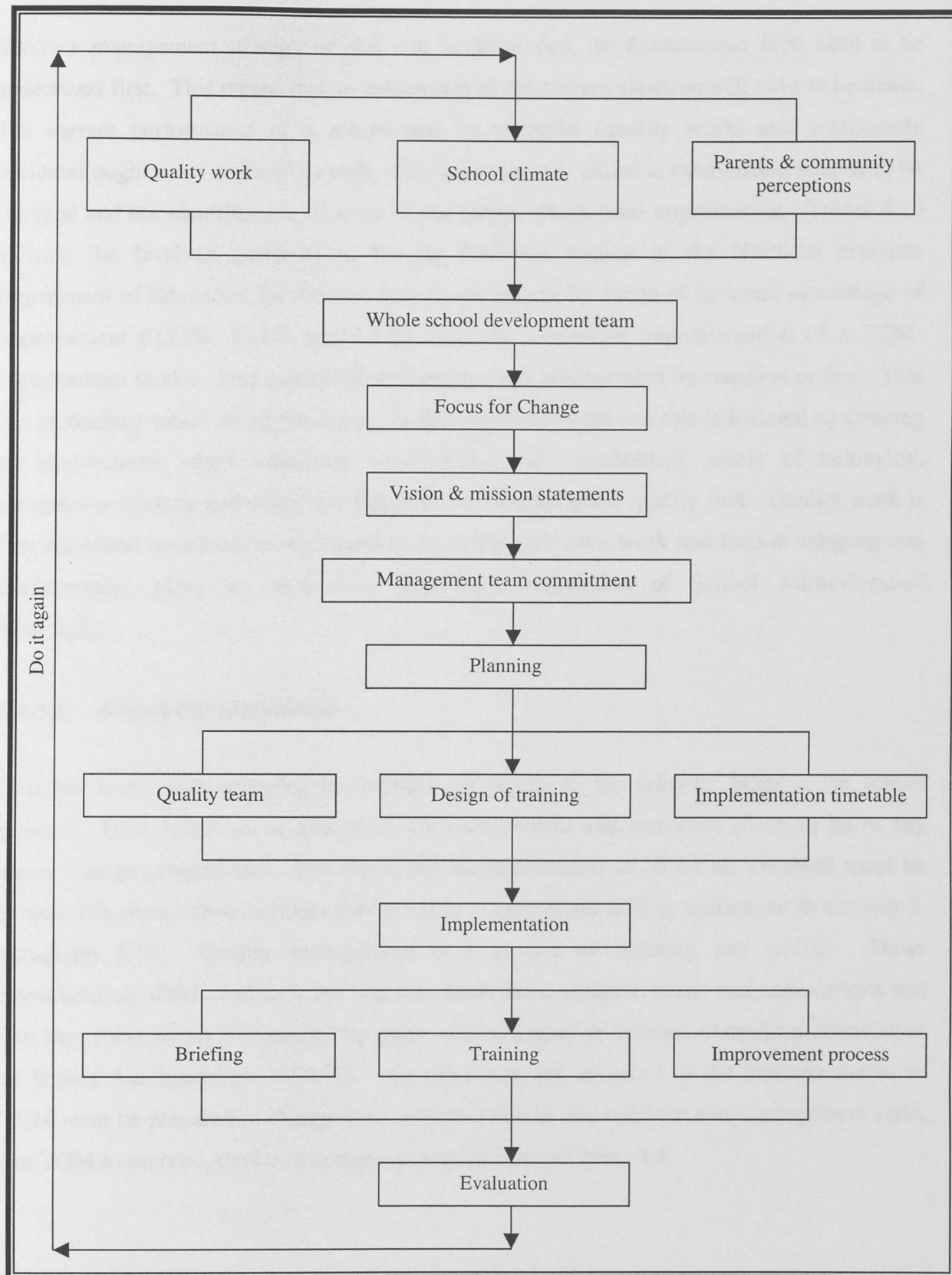


Figure 5.2: The TQM flowchart implementation model (Adapted from Collard 1990:177)

5.4.3.1 Quality work

Before a management strategy or plan can be developed, the fundamental facts need to be understood first. This means that an assessment of the current situation will have to be made. The current performance of a school and its strengths (quality work) and weaknesses (failures) ought to be assessed as well. This assessment is aimed at establishing what is to be changed and the identification of areas in the school which need improvement. Tables 4.16 indicate the level of performance for the Northern Region of the Northern Province Department of Education for the past four years, which, by virtue of its small percentage of improvement (0,13%, 13,1% and 2,5%), calls for immediate implementation of a TQM-improvement model. This cannot be obtained through management by coercion or fear. This can be realised where managers act as coaches and facilitators and this is fostered by creating an environment where educators, learners and all stakeholders' needs of belonging, recognition, choices and safety are fulfilled and all must place quality first. Quality work is best improved by educators and learners assessing their own work and then developing and implementing plans to improve it (American Association of School Administrators 1994:227).

5.4.3.2 School climate/attitude

This has to do with assessing the attitudes of people in the school. What is the school climate? How receptive, or otherwise, are management and educators likely to be to any major change programme? For successful implementation of TQM all involved must be prepared to change their attitudes for the better – a paradigm shift as spelled out in Chapter 3, paragraph 3.10. Quality management is a system of thinking and acting. Those implementing TQM need to know that customers have dynamic needs and expectations and that they (customers) are satisfied by purposeful activities or systems (American Association of School Administrators 1994:76). All those who are involved in the implementation of TQM must be prepared to change their attitude to be in line with the new management style. For TQM to succeed, total commitment is needed from all involved.

5.4.3.3 Parents and community perceptions

They represent the customers of the school. The current parents and community perceptions are also assessed to see what their requirements, needs and expectations are. The departmental perceptions and requirements must also be assessed as they will all help when planning the Whole School Development Plan.

5.4.3.4 Whole School Development Team

After assessing the current situation with regard to the work that the school is doing, the school climate and the views of parents and stakeholders, the Whole School Development Team is set up with the task of first developing the Whole School Development Plan and secondly spearheading the process. This team will identify a task team which will be charged with the task of facilitating, co-ordinating and driving this process. The Whole School Development Team, which will automatically include the school management team, will be the second school management team to be subjected to training. Table 4.29 in Chapter 4 spelled out the importance of teamwork for TQM. This is further explained in Chapter 2, paragraph 2.8.3.1.

5.4.3.5 Focus on change

TQM is about change and all involved in its implementation must be focussed for change and be ready to accept new beliefs, understandings and ways of doing things. They must be prepared to part with the past without reservations and compromises, otherwise the process will falter.

More often than not schools today seem to be preparing young people for a world that no longer exists. That is why schools should focus on change.

The American Association of School Administrators (1994:117) contends that schools basically need to change for three main reasons:

- They need to change because our society is changing in so many ways.
- They need to change because the nation's expectations for the schools have changed.

- Schools need to change because the population of public schools is changing dramatically.

All in the school must be in favour of change which should be in line with the school's mission and vision statements.

5.4.3.6 Vision and mission statements

The changes must be in line with the vision and mission statements of the particular school which will be integrated into the School Development Plan. The formulation of these statements will help schools achieve that which they have set for themselves at the beginning of each year. The vision and mission statements must be shared by all in the school. The mission is the reason why the school exists while the vision spells out the school's commitment to the future. Chapter 2, paragraphs 2.8.1.2 and 2.8.1.3 explored this issue fully.

Vision and mission statements should be displayed throughout the organisation's facilities. These mission and vision statements should be included in documents such as annual targets, reports, newsletters, letterheads and community communiqués (American Association of School Administrators 1994:234).

It is of utmost importance to revisit the mission statement regularly to revitalise employee commitment and to ask individuals and task teams to check their activities for alignment with the mission. All stakeholders should commit themselves to the mission statement of the institution.

5.4.3.7 School management team commitment

Leadership plays a critical role in the initiation and sustenance of the school's improvement process. Apart from commitment, school management team members must have knowledge and demonstrated skills in managing a school. For them to be properly equipped for the task of implementing TQM, in-service training courses should be conducted to equip them with the skills necessary for the execution of the TQM-process. Their commitment is, therefore, crucial for the success of this initiative.

From the moment the school management team was informed or committed itself to the impending changes and were subjected to training on the implementation of these changes, their total commitment was vital for success. They should take the initiative to spearhead this process by monitoring groups, individuals and various task teams identified to execute specific tasks. They should “talk and act quality” without reservation and should work as a team, constantly meeting to discuss issues and iron out emerging problems together. Table 4.32 also emphasises the importance of top management commitment for TQM implementation in schools.

5.4.3.8 Planning

Together with the Whole School Development Team, they plan how the whole process continue until the desired results are realised. It must be realised that as a TQM-process, the planning process will also be ongoing and continuous.

5.4.3.9 Quality team

This team will be comprised of members from the Whole School Development Team and it will be charged with the task of facilitating and co-ordinating the activities of all members. They should make quality happen and should possess knowledge of TQM (through training), possess enthusiasm and commitment. They will have authority to make decisions, thereby facilitating the process. The management team will still have to monitor the activities of this and other teams as well so that they function effectively and meet targets and deadlines.

These quality teams should receive thorough training in the following aspects if they are to make a real impact:

- interactive skills (how to initiate, react, and clarify ideas; do brainstorming, and conduct meetings);
- the problem solving process; and
- the quality improvement process (American Association of School Administrators 1994:235).

5.4.3.10 Design of training

Planning must also indicate who gets training when, and when such training should start and end, and at what time such training will be conducted. All in the school must ultimately be trained so that they all know what is going on and also contribute to the well-being of the school. Management should also budget for such training courses as some courses might be conducted far away from the school and transport allowances must be provided for from the school's budget. Chapter 2, paragraph 2.10.2.3 dwelt much on training for TQM-implementation.

5.4.3.11 Implementation timetable

The commitment to TQM will be shown by the drafting of an Implementation Timetable in the planning stage, reflecting tentative dates and targets for meetings and training dates. This timetable for implementing TQM must include training dates for all, spread over the whole year, dates when certain innovations should have been implemented and dates when awards for excellence shall be awarded if they have been provided for in the planning stage.

5.4.3.12 Implementation

After all the preparations have been made, then comes the point of executing the plans and this should be the culmination of the commitment of all in the school. The launching should be done as a naturally occurring strategy in response to educational changes and it should not be regarded as another management strategy from the west or the USA. It should inspire all and engage all staff and stakeholders by its honesty. Never dare making unrealistic and unachievable promises. Once implementation has been embarked upon, monthly meetings should be scheduled with stakeholders to provide opportunities to identify problems and share ideas for solutions (American Association of School Administrators 1994:219). This calls for a collaborative school-based approach that empowers all stakeholders to identify problems and implement strategies to solve them. Chapter 2, paragraph 2.10.2.5, hinted that once all the preparations have been completed, TQM must be positively launched.

5.4.3.13 Briefing

Once the process has been launched, continuous briefing is necessary. People must receive feedback regularly from task teams performing certain tasks so that they know what is going on and that something is being done. This should also be ongoing and continuous and management must continuously monitor and see to it that briefing sessions are conducted regularly.

5.4.3.14 Training

While the process is under way, training will still be ongoing on various aspects of TQM, depending on the need of the specific school. Successful TQM-implementation will also depend on the extensive training programmes used. Training is the most important aspect of implementation and it should be an ongoing and continuous process whenever the need arises.

All key personnel, including parents serving on school governing bodies must be trained and this training should include training in problem-solving processes, team building skills and the quality improvement process (American Association of School Administrators 1994:218).

5.4.3.15 Improvement process

The improvement process should also be continuously monitored to see if desired outcomes are achieved. The gains made should be acknowledged and permanently established.

For the improvement process to be achieved and sustained, the following factors should be taken cognisance of:

- The principal's leadership and attention to the quality of instruction.
- A pervasive and broadly understood instructional focus.
- An orderly, safe climate conducive to teaching and learning.
- The behaviour of teachers which conveys the expectation that all students will obtain at least minimum mastery.
- The use of measures of pupil achievement as the basis for program evaluation (American Association of School Administrators 1994:120).

If this improvement process is well managed and regularly evaluated, continuous improvement can be achieved and sustained.

5.4.3.16 Evaluation

Evaluation of the whole process should be done regularly and the successes acknowledged. It must be realised that recognition of contribution and achievement creates momentum for the total quality programme and encourages individuals and groups to seek continuous improvement – recognising their contribution will motivate them in the long-term. If objectives have not been met, the whole process is repeated until the desired results are obtained. The use of measures of pupil achievement as the basis for programme evaluation is of importance. Pupil achievement should, however, be continuously assessed and not a once off evaluation. The aim of such evaluation should be to help the learner improve on his/her performance. Chapter 2, paragraph 2.8.2, described the PDCA-cycle which is also evaluation. If you do not meet the desired objectives then you **Plan**, you **Do** again, you **Check** and again **Act** to see if you have succeeded or not, then you repeat the process depending on the outcome of your performance.

Viewed together, the above-mentioned components of a model can help schools overcome the problem of under-performance and elevate them to schools of note in the 21st century.

5.5 Tools that help in identifying and solving problems

As part of the implementation process, several tools and techniques can be used in identifying and solving problems. The value of TQM lies in that problems are perceived and recorded by means of tools to form a database. This database, comprising records of weeks or months of disciplining, or any other perceived problem, can then be used to determine the course of action and to display the information to educators and other stakeholders. A program of action can then be developed to help in bringing the problem to an end (be it a disciplinary problem, branding/denouncing/exposing/unmasking lessons, absenteeism or failure to do homework, etc). Different kinds of tools can be used in this regard depending on the type of problem encountered, for example pareto charts, flow charts, brainstorming and others (see Chapter 2.9.1).

For instance, plotting disciplinary cases on a chart, it will be clear when behavioural problems grew sharply and when they diminished. Courses and solutions can then be arrived at and a recurrence of these problems can be prevented. Drawing data samples periodically by staff helps in preventing backsliding into old habits. Total quality transformation represents a collection of skills and tools that will be used increasingly to solve problems in the school situation (ASSA 1994:185).

5.6 Why this model has been recommended

As stated earlier on, this model has been recommended in view of the information derived from the literature study Chapter 2 paragraph 2.2.2 and Chapter 3, paragraph 3.2 as well as the findings of the empirical investigation in paragraph 4.10.22, V13 and the factors discussed in paragraph 5.2 above.

5.7 Evaluation of the model

This model satisfies the requirements of a good model as set out in paragraph 5.4.2. However, this model cannot be evaluated at this stage to find out whether it does produce the desired end results as research needs to be conducted on when it will practically be implemented. However, what is now being obtained in the South African education system in introducing OBE (outcomes based education) and whole school development programmes is similar to this. For this reason, this model does satisfy the requirements of an effective model, and moreover the researcher followed the requirements of an effective model in its development.

5.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, TQM implementation in schools and the development of a TQM-implementation model were discussed. A total quality model was recommended for implementation and explanations concerning its components were given. Reasons for the recommendation of the model for implementation were given and these were relevant as the South African education system is still reeling under numerous changes. The model is viable although there are aspects which need prior training before this can be implemented.

CHAPTER 6

Continuous improvement goes hand-in-hand with evaluation. This model should be evaluated regularly and continuously because continuous feedback is also necessary to all involved. Success at each stage should be recognised and celebrated while failure enables initiators to redo or revise it until the desired output is attained.

6.1 Introduction

This chapter is aimed at giving an account of what the researcher undertook to do in this study. In this chapter it will be highlighted whether the research objectives as stated in Chapter 1, paragraphs 1.2.1 and 1.2.2, have been successfully served. The aims of this study as outlined in Chapter 1 paragraph 1.3 that is to determine whether the educational changes introduced since 1994 in the South African education system has led to the adoption of the total quality management approach in schools. This study was also to investigate whether effective management of change can lead to the creation of quality or effective schools, and thirdly this study was aimed at determining how the school management teams can adopt total quality management as their operational philosophy to create quality schools and provide quality education. In this chapter the relationships between the statement of intent in Chapter 1 and the findings of this research study will be juxtaposed.

6.2 An overview of the investigation

This section seeks to give a short summary of all the preceding chapters.

Chapter 1 introduced the problem statement for the research project together with the formulation of the hypothesis. This section also reflected the aims of the research study and the methodologies employed. The research programme of the above research undertaking was diagrammatically presented, discussed and all the important concepts in the research project were clarified.

In Chapter 2 the concept of total quality management (TQM) was fully explored and explained. From the various definitions given it was clear that total quality management is an approach of continuous improvement of performance which ensures quality and increases productivity.