

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS
OF THE
APPLICATION OF TOTAL QUALITY
MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES
IN
TWO SCHOOLS

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BRIAN CARLSON
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ABSTRACT

In recent years, the principles of Total Quality Management, developed by Edwards Deming and others and used with varying degrees of success in the business world, have been used in schools as part of the process to transform education in terms of school management and classroom learning.

This research grew out of my experiences when St. Andrew's Preparatory School participated in a Total Quality Management training programme which highlighted for me the problems and the benefits of such training. This research was undertaken, therefore, to find out how two other schools - one a high school in Grahamstown and the other a high school in Clarke County, U.S.A. - had responded to similar training. Open ended questionnaires were used and the responses were analyzed to detect patterns of thoughts, feelings and attitudes, particularly in terms of human relationships at the school and with regard to various components of school culture. Comparisons were also made between the responses from the two schools, and the findings were compared with the claims made for TQM by the theorists and other educational practitioners who have ventured into TQM in their schools.

The research findings indicate that Total Quality Management training had a positive impact on the participating schools but that there are problems associated with its adaptation for education. Given the necessary leadership commitment, however, these problems are not insurmountable. Total Quality Management may well be able to contribute towards the restructuring of education which seems to be more and more urgently needed both in South Africa and in their countries.

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A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE APPLICATION OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES IN TWO SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION

The environment in which schools now operate, in South Africa and in other countries, is one of turbulence, uncertainty and change. Fundamental questions are being asked about the nature of schooling and about schools as organizations which reflect new and challenging demands from the stakeholders of education. According to Murgatroyd and Morgan, the dynamic underlying these demands and changes is that "school is shifting from a public service driven by professionals towards a market-driven service, fuelled by purchasers and customers" (1989:1). If they are correct, this has profound implications for school management and leadership.

In his foreward to Creating an Excellent School, Cyril Poster wrote:

Excellent Schools are ... the product of good management. Good management, in its turn, depends on a clear understanding of valid management theory and, even more important, the ability to translate that theory into practice.

(Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989:ix)

Few would argue with Poster's statement, but, in the turbulent political context in which schools now find themselves, what precisely is "good management" and what, too, is "valid management theory"? Most important of all, how does one "translate that theory into practice", especially when most management theory is embedded in the business world and may not transfer easily into educational thinking?

There are no simple responses to these questions, particularly in recent years when our understanding of management and leadership has become increasingly complex and an abundance of management perspectives have emerged. One such perspective refers to a set of principles commonly called Total Quality management (TQM) which has

been described as follows:

TQM means that the organization's culture is defined by and supports the constant attainment of customer satisfaction through an integrated system of tools, techniques and training. This involves the continuous improvement of organizational processes, resulting in high quality products and services.

(Sashkin and Kiser, 1993:39)

In March 1992 St. Andrew's Preparatory School in Grahamstown, together with Quality Management Associates, a management consultancy firm in Johannesburg, embarked on a joint project to adapt the Company's Quality business model to suit the needs of a South African school with a view to enhancing school management and classroom learning practices. At the same time, similar initiatives were occurring in other countries, most notably the United States of America and Great Britain. In the state of Virginia in the U.S.A., for example, the Xerox Corporation works with the Virginia Department of Education to provide training and support for what has become known as the Virginia Quality Schools Network.

These efforts at school transformation raise a number of questions. Is there a need for TQM principles in schools? Can these principles lead to profound changes in school management and classroom learning? If so, how should such changes be initiated and sustained? In seeking a response to such questions it must be understood that TQM is not a fixed set of management rules which can be applied simply in any organization. Instead, in the complex environment in which organizations now strive for effective and efficient management strategies, the TQM principles are a part of and overlap and merge with a multitude of other management approaches which are themselves constantly changing and being redefined. To a great extent, therefore, the name "TQM" should be seen as a title given to a broad set of fluid principles which are not rigidly nor universally defined but which rather need to be adapted to suit the changing needs of each individual organization.

As the application of TQM principles in schools is still in its early stages, the nature of this research is tentative in that it attempts to assess the impact of TQM on human relationships and school culture as part of the process of creating effective schools and school systems. In the South African context, the top priority in education is to address the imbalances and injustices caused by the apartheid system. There is a danger, however, that these imbalances may be seen simply in terms of financial, physical and human resources. If this happens, the solution to complex educational problems may be perceived to be no more than the need to provide equal educational resources for all schools. Important though such resources are, especially in schools which have been severely deprived over many years, equal attention, at least, should be given to management and leadership issues, both in terms of practical skill development and in the cultivation of an educational philosophy which is appropriate to the administration of schools in their present dynamic contexts. Such management development is also needed at the classroom level. It is in this situation that the TQM principles may provide a structured but flexible management system which may prove to be of benefit to the restructuring of school management and classroom learning in South Africa and in other countries.

CHAPTER 1

EARLY MANAGEMENT THEORIES

As a concept, organizational management was virtually unknown during the last century, but the early 1900's saw the rise of the scientific management movement exemplified by the writings of Frederick Taylor, a mechanical engineer and later a management consultant. He advocated "...a systematic study of working practices to discover the most efficient means of performing every task, and a corresponding study of management to determine the most efficient means of controlling the workers" (Hughes, 1985:4). His methods included time and motion studies, systematic observation and measurement of workers, incentive payment schemes and maximum specialization and separation of functions. He ignored the human element in his thinking, seeing people, instead, as rational beings who could be trained to operate like machines to increase productivity. The metaphor "man as machine" underpins the entire scientific management approach which became widely accepted and was complemented by the work of people like Henri Fayol, Lyndall Urwick and Luther Gulick.

Adherents of scientific management theory perceived organizations as closed systems in which the rigid application of objective, scientific principles would lead directly to the resolution of management problems and the successful functioning of the organizations. This thinking was consistent with the increasingly specialized division of labour in society which tended to generate a hierarchy of authority and a system of rules. Arising out of this process came a particular type of organizational structure called a bureaucracy, the characteristics of which were articulated by sociologist Max Weber. This process of bureaucratization has become broadly recognized as "...the defining characteristic of modern industrial society" (Haralambos and Holborn, 1980:406).

According to Weber, bureaucracies operate by division of function; the people in them develop technical expertise in carrying out

their specialist tasks; each of the tasks and operating units is co-ordinated into a coherent whole by uniform procedures and lines of communications; each position in the organization is assigned a status which defines the degree of responsibility attached to that position; each position is supervised by having all the parts logically co-ordinated into a hierarchy, with the more senior members supervising the work of those below them and the person at the pyramid ultimately responsible for the integrity of the whole organization; and the service is delivered logically, predictably, impersonally and in the same form regardless of who the customer is and regardless of what persons are filling the organizational roles (adapted from Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989:70-71).

Although Weber recognized various types of action such as emotional, traditional and affective action, he believed that rational action should be the dominant mode in modern industrial society and thus he saw bureaucracy as "rational action in an institutional form" (Haralambos and Holborn, 1980:407). Weber considered that the rational - legal type of authority which existed in the bureaucracy provided the most efficient way of achieving organizational goals as personal emotions and interests were excluded.

Weber's characterization of bureaucracy has had a profound and far-reaching influence on society in general and on organizational practice and theory in particular. It has had a similar effect on the way in which schools operate because the introduction and growth of universal schooling coincided with industrialization in the western world and the development of the bureaucratic model. Schools may well be thought of as the archetype of bureaucracy. The NEPI Report (1992), for example, described the South African education system as "a complex and fragmented administrative system (which) has led to the growth of a large, fragmented, and badly co-ordinated bureaucracy" (Governance and Administration, 1992:11). Although the contribution of bureaucratic thinking towards efficient organizational functioning was considerable, much subsequent research and analysis has focused attention on the

dysfunctional consequences of bureaucracy.

In reaction to these formal, rational traditions of organizational management, the human relations movement developed in the 1930's, initiated by the Hawthorne experiments which were aimed at testing the effect of work conditions on productivity. What emerged unexpectedly from the research was the finding that simply paying positive attention to people in an organization increased productivity. This led to a shift in emphasis in the relationship between management and worker and a change in focus from the individual worker to the worker as a member of various informal social groups within the organization. The fundamental problem in all organizations of "developing and maintaining dynamic and harmonious relationships" (Hoy and Miskel, 1978:11) started to get addressed. What was, perhaps, the major contribution to the human relations movement was the development of Theory X and Theory Y by Douglas McGregor which stated the opposing views that "workers are lazy and need to be driven and, alternatively, that they are creative and should be given responsibility" (Peters and Waterman, 1982:94).

Human relations adherents tended to disregard conflicts of interest between workers and their employers and still tended to view the organization as a closed system, ignoring the external factors that exist in the competitive marketplace. The latter was also true of the behavioural science approach (1950's to 1960's) which looked at organizations from a structural/functional point of view. The Marxist, neo-Marxist and other groups of writers who were grouped under the title of critical theorists rose to prominence from the mid 1960's with the view that organizational life should be interpreted in terms of "power, conflict, contradictions, crisis and class struggle" (Hoy and Miskel, 1978:23). Conflict theories differed from functionalism in that they believed that there were fundamental differences of interest between social groups which resulted in conflict being a common and persistent feature of society. At the same time it became generally accepted, firstly, that organizations could not be seen in isolation but rather as

part of and influenced by their environments, and, secondly, that our picture of "reality" was shaped by our values. Both these points would play an important role in shaping future management perspectives.

NEW MANAGEMENT THINKING

In terms of organizational management, the 1970's onwards have been characterized by complexity, change, technological innovation, competitiveness, ambiguity, uncertainty and conflict. Organizations are no longer widely regarded as rational institutions with little regard for the influence of the environment. The spirit of the age was aptly captured in the title of Tom Peter's book "Thriving on Chaos" (1987), subtitled "Handbook for a Management Revolution".

It was the research of Tom Peters and Robert H. Waterman Jr that led to the publication of a landmark book on management which provided not only a well constructed analysis of the development of management theory but also pointed the way ahead for successful managers. From 1977 to 1980 Peters and Waterman studied sixty-seven highly regarded American companies to find out what constituted organizational excellence/effectiveness. Their findings were published in 1982 and called "In Search of Excellence".

The project showed ... that the excellent companies were, above all, brilliant on the basics. Tools didn't substitute for thinking. Intellect didn't overpower wisdom. Analysis didn't impede action. Rather, these companies worked hard to keep things simple in a complex world. They persisted. They insisted on top quality. They fawned on their customers. They listened to their employees and treated them like adults. They allowed their innovative product and service "champions" long tethers. They allowed some chaos in return for quick action and regular experimentation.

(Peters and Waterman, 1982 : 13)

Excellent companies "create environments in which people can blossom, develop self-esteem and otherwise be excited participants

in the business and society as a whole" (Peters and Waterman, 1982:86). Core management practices in the excellent companies are not just different, "... they set conventional management wisdom on its ear" (Ibid : 118). The problem is, however, that "none of the ideas has yet become mainstream; they have had little or no effect on practising businessmen" (Ibid : 117).

EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

The development of educational management theory has roughly paralleled what has occurred in the business world, except that changes take place more slowly in education than they do in business. According to Poster,

... school administration now takes place in an increasingly turbulent, politically charged environment ... And there has been almost a revolution in the writings and theories about educational administration since about 1975, largely as a result of the same environmental forces which have so complicated the life of school managers.

(Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989:xi)

Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989) describe the so-called "effective schools movement" in several countries as an attempt to discover ways to create outstanding schools, but very much along traditional lines of thinking about the nature of schooling. The effectiveness movement implied "a continuation of schools and schooling in their current form and in their present frameworks" (Ibid : 15). Of greater significance was the "paradigm shift" in educational thinking which introduced the notion of organizational culture:

... what seems to be emerging as a much more powerful factor about the acknowledged 'best' schools is that they have developed a culture, a milieu, environment, atmosphere, a cultus corporis, which in a myriad of ways influence how well children learn.

(Ibid:18)

This notion of school culture which led to an emphasis on factors such as values, cultural heroes, myths and legends, rituals and ceremonies, patterns of social interaction, symbols, metaphors and language, was part of the new thinking about educational management which emerged in the mid 1970's. Although it is now apparent that the theory movement prior to 1975 had been too narrowly based on a structural, logical, analytical approach, it did establish educational management as a serious subject for academic enquiry. The field has become characterised by "creative confusion" (Ibid:24) with a diversity of approaches to educational management. Rather than seeing the organizational world as a system conforming to sets of rules, the new thinking concentrated on a more subjective approach, investigating instead the uniqueness of organization culture rather than looking for all-embracing theories which could be rationally analyzed. Beare, Caldwell and Millikan now acknowledge that "there will never be a comprehensive theory about organizations because all human beings carry about with them their own cultural baggage, and because no human being or human enterprise exactly matches the next" (Ibid:39). They add, as well:

With respect to research, a diversity of approaches and in a variety of settings is now being encouraged. With respect to the needs of practitioners, the present turbulent context calls for the application of a variety of insights and new approaches.

(Ibid:41)

The danger at present, they say, "... is that many people who are in charge of schools know only about the pre-1975 ideas and may not be aware to adapt, change or even replace the structures and procedures which have derived their legitimacy from ideas which may be now severely dated" (Ibid:24).

It would seem that there is a close connection between developments in the world of business management and those that have taken place in education, although education lags behind in terms of the practical implementation of the new thinking. David T Kearns, chief executive officer of the Xerox Corporation, has said that in

America today successful companies hardly resemble those of ten to twenty years ago, but very little has changed as far as schools are concerned, many of which are still characterized by "archaic, outmoded and discredited management practices" (Kearns, as cited in Sergiovanni, 1990:2). Kearns says most large American school districts "are organized like a factory of the late 19th century: top down, command control management, a system designed to stifle creativity and independent judgement" (Ibid:2). In their defence, however, it must also be said that the recent move towards site-based management in many American school districts does represent an effort to provide an alternative approach to traditional school management structures, except that it has tended to be imposed from the top. In spite of this initiative, Thomas Sergiovanni sums up the current situation accurately when he writes:

We have far too long hung on to an inadequate theory of management and a leadership practice that is incapable of turning around failing situations on the one hand and of turning ordinary situations into extraordinary ones on the other. Relying on this theory as the basis for developing school improvement policies and for practising leadership promises at worst further decay and at best continued stagnation.

(Ibid:3).

It is in this business and educational context that the principles of TQM may provide a way forward.

THE ORIGINS OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

There is no clear-cut definition of what TQM means nor is there general agreement as to how it should be approached, probably because of the various personalities who have played a role in its formulation. It achieved wide recognition for the first time in post-war Japan which experienced what can justifiably be called an "economic miracle", but it had its origins in America as a result of the efforts of two men, Walter A. Shewhart and, especially, W. Edwards Deming. M. Sashkin and K. Kiser state three important foundations of TQM:

The first concerns tools and techniques that people are trained to use to identify and solve quality problems. The second factor centres on the customer as the focus of TQM. The third factor is the organizational culture. A TQM culture is based on certain values and leadership vision.

(1993:1)

It was the concern with tools and techniques that led to the beginnings of TQM.

W. Edwards Deming was an industrial engineer who worked at Western Electric's Hawthorne plant where the now-famous Hawthorne Studies were conducted. Here he became convinced that the scientific management method was both counterproductive and degrading. When he was moved to a new department in the early 1920's to study the problem of quality and its control, Deming worked with Walter Shewhart, an engineer, who developed a way of improving worker performance and productivity by measuring the extent to which the items produced fell within acceptable limits of variation. One could then find out the causes of variations beyond acceptable limits and take action and make changes to reduce variability or to bring it within acceptable limits. Shewhart developed what he called a statistical control chart to measure this variation.

In the 1930's and 1940's Deming worked with Shewhart at the Bell Laboratories and by himself, refining and improving upon Shewhart's ideas and tools. In particular, he invented the Deming Cycle (plan-do-study-act) which was based on Shewhart's cycle of quality control. He came to believe that the key to quality control is understanding and controlling the variability in crucial aspects of producing a product or providing a service, especially the variability in work processes and systems. In Deming's experience, however, current approaches to management typically ignored such problem causes and tended to focus instead on blaming the people who operated the processes and systems.

Deming believed that if workers could be educated and

empowered to manage their own work processes, the quality of their output would improve and the costly and ineffective end-of-line inspection process could be curtailed or eliminated. High quality would cost less, not more.

(Bonstingl, 1992:9)

During the war years Deming worked for the American government as a quality control statistician monitoring the production of armaments, a venture which was highly successful in terms of the quality of the military equipment which was produced. After the war American industry entered an unprecedented boom period supported by what seemed like an un-ending demand for consumer goods and services. With the other major industrial countries in ruins, America's economic superiority seemed forever secure. Much to Deming's disappointment, though, quality was no longer important to management. "In the rush to satisfy consumer demand, American manufacturers focused on increasing production, leaving behind the quest for ever-increasing quality" (Bonstingl, 1992:10). Deming and Shewart's work was abandoned. "Nothing was left of it, not even dust," said Deming (Deming seminar, 1992). The inevitable decline that occurred in American industry during the next thirty years came to be symbolized by the virtual demise of the American car industry.

In 1950 Deming was invited to Japan by the Japanese Union of Scientists and Engineers (JUSE) to lecture on statistical quality control. The visit arose out of the concern for the poor quality of Japanese products and the need to change this situation. "Unlike American managers, Japanese top managers paid attention to Deming. They went to work with a passion; they knew they had to prosper in the coming years" (Sashkin and Kiser, 1993:21). The rest is history. In a remarkably short period of time Japan underwent an economic transformation which has enabled that country to attain its current position of strength in world finance and trade. It was not Deming alone who contributed to this transformation but also other American consultants like Dr Joseph M Juran and Armand

Feigenbaum. Within Japan Ichiro Ishikawa and his son, Kaoru, also played important roles in the revitalization of Japanese industry through TQM.

Significant though the contribution of these people was, the desire for change came from within Japan itself. The success of TQM depends not on consultants nor techniques but on making the strongest possible commitment to quality improvement; especially on the part of managers. The strong and cohesive organizational cultures which existed in Japanese society also played an important part in helping companies to focus quickly and successfully on the aim of customer satisfaction. This point is important as it suggests that if we wish to achieve similar success with our industries and schools, we need to construct strong organizational cultures centred on a commitment to a set of core values generated and accepted by everyone in the organization.

In America it was business as usual with the teachings of Deming and others remaining largely unknown or ignored, while even events in Japan seemed to have had little impact on western management thinking. Some American companies had experimented with the concept of "Quality Circles" which had become popular in Japan in the 1960's and 1970's but in most cases they failed, mainly because Quality Circles in Japan were a product of TQM whereas in America they were imposed from above without an organizational nor a societal culture to support them.

On 24 June 1980 NBC-TV broadcast a documentary called "If Japan Can, Why Can't We?" which drew attention to Deming and what had been achieved in Japan. In October 1991 a follow-up series was aired entitled "Quality ... Or Else!" which underscored the urgency of the situation. The articulation of this sense of urgency continued:

We believe that unless many more American organizations follow the TQM path, America will enter the new millennium as a second-rate competitor headed downhill. We do not see this as inevitable. There are choices to be made, important ones.

(Sashkin and Kiser, 1993:4)

WHAT IS TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT?

Although there is a general consensus as to what constitutes some of the fundamental principles of TQM, there is no single simple definition which can accurately describe what it is. This is so not only because our definitions tend to reflect the particular perspective of one or other of the quality gurus, but also because TQM is a dynamic, changing process to which new ideas are constantly being added and this reflects the complex, turbulent environment in which organizations now operate. From among the numerous definitions which have been offered, however, the following is an example:

Total quality management is a philosophy and a set of principles that uses leadership, quantitative methods, systems thinking, and empowerment to improve continuously an organization's capacity to meet current and future customer needs.

(Ingham Intermediate School District, Michigan, quoted in 'Creating Quality Schools', AASA, 1992:3).

The most important point that this and other definitions of TQM have in common is the emphasis on meeting the needs of customers, and it is this more than anything else that has led to the development of a body of theory, tools and applications that has become known as TQM. Reference was made earlier to three factors which are at the heart of TQM : tools and techniques, customer focus and organizational culture (Sashkin and Kiser). Starting with Shewart and Deming, a number of tools have been developed which are intended to aid the TQM process but TQM is not a set of tools and techniques. There is a real danger that we can become over-concerned with them to the exclusion of the more important - and more difficult - aspects of TQM. Deming himself became less concerned with tools and techniques over time and concentrated instead on TQM as a philosophy of management.

A valuable contribution has been made to the theory and practice

of the quality movement by a number of writers and consultants, each with his/her own particular emphasis. The cornerstones of Philip Crosby's philosophy, for example, are what he calls the Four Absolutes of Quality. They are:

1. The Definition of Quality: Conformance to Requirements
2. The System of Quality: Prevention
3. The Performance Standard: Zero Defects
4. The Measurement of Quality: The Price of Non-Conformance

(Crosby, 1984:59-86)

The practical application of these Absolutes is based on the understanding that all work is a process, i.e. a series of actions that produces a result. At every step in the process the requirements need to be clarified for both the supplier and the customer. Understanding the work that people do as a series of processes with inputs, outputs, customers and suppliers is a fundamental concept of quality improvement. At different stages of the work processes people are constantly switching roles from supplier to customer and back again to supplier. This underlines the importance of people within an organization treating each other with as much respect as they should give to their external customers. In the end, quality results from constantly improving processes and not from blaming people when problems do occur.

Crosby's work is firmly embedded in the manufacturing sector and thus concepts such as "Zero Defects" are difficult to apply in educational contexts. John Jay Bonstingl, however, who has specifically applied the TQM philosophy to education, argues that "... a new process - orientated paradigm of continuous learning and improvement is beginning to replace the old Tayloresque, product-orientated, fear-driven paradigm of teaching and testing" (Bonstingl, 1992:33-34). His thinking on TQM is based on four characteristics:

1. A primary focus on suppliers and customers
2. Constant dedication to continuous improvement

3. A systems/process orientation
4. Strong and consistent Total Quality leadership from top management

Other notable theorists include Joseph Juran and Armand Feigenbaum but it is Edwards Deming who has emerged as the leading figure in the quality movement. "Deming's approach comes closer than any other to identifying the cultural issues that define and drive, support and sustain TQM. (Sashkin and Kiser, 1993:38)

Deming's approach to quality management is based on a list of fourteen points which he evolved and modified over many years. They are as follows:

1. Create constancy of purpose for improvement of product and service.
2. Adopt the new philosophy.
3. Cease dependence on mass inspection.
4. End the practice of awarding business on price tag alone.
5. Improve constantly and forever the system of production and service.
6. Institute training.
7. Institute leadership.
8. Drive out fear.
9. Break down barriers between staff areas.
10. Eliminate slogans, exhortations, and targets for the workforce.
11. Eliminate numerical quotas.
12. Remove barriers to pride of workmanship.
13. Institute a vigorous program of education and improvement.
14. Take action to accomplish the transformation.

(Walton, 1986:34-36)

In addition to his fourteen points Deming also draws attention to a number of "deadly diseases" which, if they exist, will undermine an organization's quality efforts. They include a lack

of constancy of purpose, an emphasis on short-term profits/results, evaluation by performance, merit rating or annual review, mobility of management and running a company on visible figures alone.

Sashkin and Kiser sum up Deming's contribution as follows:

Deming's approach is really an approach to management, a prescription for building the sort of culture that will support TQM. By defining positive aims and by identifying the negative barriers that must be overcome, Deming offers management a comprehensive system for achieving TQM. His system starts with but goes far beyond statistical process control and the other tools and techniques that have come to be incorrectly defined as TQM. The ideas expressed in Deming's new philosophy of management are at the heart of TQM.

(Sashkin and Kiser, 1993:38-39)

Deming's contribution to management theory and practice, as well as that of other TQM gurus, is undoubtedly significant, but TQM is not a fixed set of rules and procedures which provide a simple formula for success. Rather, it constantly shapes and is shaped by a dynamic, interrelated variety of approaches towards organizational change and restructuring. One such approach, which has made a considerable contribution towards management theory and practice, is what is known as organizational development (OD). It has been defined by Fullan, Miles and Taylor as:

... a coherent, systematically planned, sustained effort at system self-study and improvement, focusing explicitly on change in formal and informal procedures, processes, norms or structures, and using concepts of behavioural science. The goals of OD are to improve organizational functioning and performance. OD in schools has a direct focus on educational issues.

(Schmuck and Runkel, 1985:4)

OD had its origins in the work of people like Kurt Lewin. According to Weisbord "Lewin's action research on leadership and participation rank with the twentieth century's great social achievements" (1987:88). To bring about organizational change,

Lewin believed in involving all stakeholders, particularly those who had direct control over a situation. Decisions were most likely to be carried out when people participated in making them. Lewin's emphasis on participation and his conceptualization of how change occurs within an organization (the process of unfreezing, moving and refreezing) are clearly linked, according to Weisbord, to Deming's emphasis on quality to achieve higher output instead of setting production targets. He describes Deming's approach as "... one of the most startling insights in management history. It goes against the textbooks. It is part of a new mental revolution that I believe started with Lewin" (1987:92).

With its emphasis on the way in which people behave and the context in which people work, OD is related to the human relations movement which developed largely in response to what was seen to be the impersonality of the scientific management approach. OD gave prominence to the concept of organizational culture as a critical factor in the change process. Long term change needs to come from within an organization with people empowered to work together. As Schmuck and Runkel have said,

The long-range goal of OD is to transmit necessary knowledge and skills to the group members themselves. A school staff that has internalized OD knowledge and skills and that has members who can facilitate the staff's joint work can be regarded as self-renewing and as possessing adaptability.

(1985:7)

OD, like TQM, has its origins in the industrial world. For both approaches to work successfully in schools, therefore, cognizance must be taken of the special characteristics of educational organizations. Schmuck and Runkel, for example, refer to the importance of three conditions which differentiate schools from most industrial organizations: "(1) the nature of educational goals, (2) the amount and types of structural differentiation in schools, and (3) the school's unique vulnerability to short- and long- term pressures" (1985:9). These special features, they claim,

are at least partly responsible for the slowness with which OD has caught on in schools. The same could well prove to be true of TQM in the future. Industrial models do not seem to be easy to adapt for use in schools but, at least in the case of OD, "It has now established sufficient credibility and legitimacy to make it an important part of the educator's repertoire" (Ibid:10).

If, as Weisbord has said, there is a close link between Lewin and Deming, then TQM is not something separate from OD but rather an extension of it. Just as it was inevitable that OD would eventually impact on education, especially as there was and still is a growing concern about the effectiveness and efficiency of school systems, the same is true of TQM. The language of educational restructuring has begun to sound very similar to the language of TQM and to business world thinking in general. Andy Hargreaves describes the need for educational change as follows:

The challenge of restructuring in education and elsewhere is a challenge of abandoning or attenuating bureaucratic controls, inflexible mandates, paternalistic forms of trust and quick system fixes in order to hear, articulate and bring together the disparate voices of teachers and other educational partners (particularly students and their parents). It is a challenge of opening up broad avenues of choice which respect teachers' professional discretion and enhance their decision-making capacity. It is a challenge of building trust in the process of collaboration, risk and continuous improvement as well as more traditional kinds of trust in people. And it is a challenge of supporting and empowering school cultures and those involved in them to develop changes themselves on a continuing basis.

(Hargreaves, 1994:260)

Schools, however, are notoriously difficult to change. As Jean Rudduck has said, "The tight weave of tradition and routines, combined with the loose coupling of their internal communication systems, can make schools almost as impermeable as a fortress" (Rudduck, 1991 :28). TQM is in the forefront of the attack on the fortress.

TQM AND EDUCATION

In 1985 Fox Valley Technical College in Wisconsin, U.S.A. began using quality processes in both its management and instruction. Stanley Spanbauer, President of the College, describes their early experiences as follows:

I soon learned that we were getting involved in the most significant and challenging undertaking I had been associated with during my 20+ years in education. It became apparent that we had embarked on something that would ultimately permeate every single activity in our college ... During those early days, I often wondered if it was worth the effort and the anxiety. It is.

(Spanbauer, 1992:5)

Spanbauer believes that the rebuilding of American schools requires a long-term comprehensive approach to eliminate the cumbersome systems that presently exist. The answer lies in the quality improvement process which, says Spanbauer,

... has been FVTC's greatest initiative since (the school) began in 1967 ... our abbreviated experience causes me to say without hesitation:

- * Techniques and processes of quality and productivity can be transplanted successfully to education.
- * Models from business and industry can be used in the design of curriculum and the scheduling and delivery of instruction.
- * Quality processes can improve the management and operation of educational institutions while improving the learning environment and student achievement.

(1992:xii)

In 1987 Mt Edgecumbe High School in Sitka, Alaska started applying Deming's concepts in the school. In November 1990 Dr Myron Tribus, a colleague of Deming, visited the school to assess the progress which had been made. According to Tribus, this was the first school in the world which was attempting to apply Deming's ideas to the totality of education. He gives a

detailed description of his experiences at Mt Edgecumbe, claiming that what he saw exceeded his expectations:

... those of us who know about TQM in industry have not, heretofore, provided anyone with clear directions on how to apply TQM in education. Frankly, we haven't known how to begin. The experiences of MEHS, however, now change all that. MEHS provides everyone with an example of how to start. MEHS is an important laboratory for the national cause of education and as such deserves the support and encouragement of all who care about the education of the young.

(Tribus, 1990:7-8)

It was only from 1990 onwards that the application of TQM principles in schools started to gain momentum. Dr Charles A Melvin, III, superintendent of the school District of Deloit Turner in Wisconsin wrote in a letter dated 27 May 1993 " ... much of what we're trying to do has yet to be done in education and we're flying by the seat of our pants." In the editorial to "Education Leadership" dated March 1992, Ron Brandt wrote:

When I first heard about Total Quality Management I thought, "Oh no, another gimmick from the management training people". It is indeed the latest hot topic in management training, but now that I have read more about it, I think the idea is crucial to the future of the United States - and every other country that expects to compete in today's global economy. The quality movement is deceptive because most parts of it are familiar. Sadly, they are familiar only in the abstract, because most organizations, including schools, apply them erratically and inconsistently.

(Brandt, 1992(a):5)

"Educational Leadership" devoted most of its November 1992 issue to articles on TQM and education. Brandt commented as follows:

The basic values of the Quality movement, represented in the work of W Edwards Deming, are hardly novel to educators. Our professional literature is filled with tributes to co-operation rather than competition, intrinsic rather than extrinsic rewards, and supervision as helping people instead of evaluating them.

Our practices, though are quite another matter ... Perhaps with continued attention to what Deming and others are saying, more people will come to understand that far from being educationalist fluff, this knowledge has the power to make all organizations more effective. If so, educators can help lead the way to higher quality - in schools and out.

(Brandt, 1992(b):3)

In 1992 Stephen Murgatroyd and Colin Morgan published "Total Quality Management and the School" which they refer to as "the first major articulation of the application of TQM to schools" (1992:xii). The book is structured around four central ideas:

1. A school involves a chain of relationships between 'customers' and 'suppliers' - the school is in fact an organization that manages a chain of customers.
2. All the relationships between customers and suppliers (whether internal or external) are mediated by process.
3. The people best able to make process improvements are those nearest to the customer for that process - a point that carries radical implications for the control, management and design of schools or organizations.
4. The strategy a school operates from involves choices. The response of the marketplace to the strategy the school adopts is central in determining the success of the school. Schools therefore need to know what identity they want in the 'marketplace' of the community.

(Adapted from Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1989:x-xii)

Murgatroyd and Morgan begin by describing the dynamic environment in which schools now operate. Quality is a function of strategy and strategy depends on the decisions one makes about the environmental forces which impact on one's school. They say that "until you have defined the strategy your school is pursuing ... quality is secondary" (1992:23).

After discussing the strategic options which are open to schools,

they describe a model for the application of TQM in schools which is based on the implementation of five critical features which are required to achieve sustainable quality improvements:

1. Alignment within the organization ... and commitment to a shared vision.
2. An extended understanding of the customer-driven and process-orientated basis for quality.
3. An organization designed around teams
4. The setting of particularly challenging or outrageous goals, which commit the organization to significant increases in performance outcomes.
5. The systematic daily management of the organization through the use of effective tools for measurement and feedback.

(Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1992:64)

Just as important are the so-called 'soft' qualities of TQM: culture, commitment and communication, each of which is described as follows by Murgatroyd and Morgan:

A successful TQM organization is one that has created a culture in which: (i) innovation is valued highly; (ii) status is secondary to performance and contribution; (iii) leadership is a function of action, not position; (iv) rewards are shared through the work of teams; (v) development, learning and training are seen as critical paths to sustainability; (vi) empowerment to achieve challenging goals supported by continued development and success provide a climate for self-motivation. This culture minimizes the control role of those in leadership positions and maximizes the power of the employees nearest to the customer. It gains energy from achievement and a sense of ownership of the problems and future of the organization.

(Ibid 1992:65)

A successful TQM organization engenders such a sense of pride and opportunity for development among its people (staff and customers) that there is a great deal of ownership for the goals of the organization among and between all employees. Commitment extends to taking risks so as to achieve goals, as well as

working systematically to keep others informed of the opportunities that exist for innovation and development.

(Ibid 1992:65-66)

A successful TQM organization is one in which communication within and between teams is powerful, simple and effective. It is also one based on facts and genuine understanding, rather than rumour and assumptions. Communication flows freely from one area of an organization to another and between levels of the organization When suggestions are made and communicated, or when improvements are being tested out, the issue is not who gave permission or who is doing the work, but what the work does for process improvement or quality performance.

(Ibid 1992:66)

Clearly, TQM is deeply vested in and is very much a product of the way in which organizational theory and practice have developed since the post-war years in response to a fast-changing and complex environment. It may be argued, on the one hand, that TQM has little to offer that is 'new' but that its strength lies in systematically bringing together a number of important organizational principles which, according to a new set of paradigms, can be used in a flexible manner to transform the management and operation of organizations. On the other hand, many of the TQM principles are not necessarily the preserve of TQM and are widely described and used without any reference to TQM as such. Nor does TQM provide any guarantees of success. In recent months the Japanese economy has experienced a severe decline in spite of its TQM record. This underlines the point that no organizations can afford to stand still. All must remain sensitive and respond quickly to the changes in their internal and external environments.

Also, TQM is not easy to implement. The failure rate for implementation is high. It takes time to secure the basics and even more time to experience some gains, but, in the end, the rewards may well be worth the effort as long as continuous improvement and customer satisfaction become a way of life for the organization.

It will still take some time, however, before the long term effect of TQM training in schools can reasonably be evaluated.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The goals of this research are:

- 1) to investigate the impact of TQM on staff relationships within schools and on school culture as indicators of the reform process in action,
- 2) to gain a clearer understanding of the contribution TQM principles can make to school improvement.

The research was conducted in the post positivist paradigm with the focus on the analysis of language to detect patterns of thoughts, feelings and attitudes. A qualitative study has certain advantages which are applicable to the nature of this particular research project. Miles and Huberman describe these advantages of qualitative data as follows:

Qualitative data are attractive. They are a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes occurring in local contexts. With qualitative data one can preserve chronological flow, assess local causality, and derive fruitful explanations. Then, too, qualitative data are more likely to lead to serendipitous findings and to new theoretical integrations; they help researchers go beyond initial preconceptions and frameworks. Finally, ... Words, especially when they are organized into incidents or stories, have a concrete, vivid, meaningful flavour that often proves far more convincing to a reader - another researcher, a policy-maker, a practitioner - than pages of numbers.

(Miles and Huberman, 1984 : 15)

By its very character, a school constitutes an intricate network of human relationships which define the way in which the organization operates and which reflect the values and beliefs of its members. Although it may be argued that the product of schooling is the education which the children receive and features of this product can be measured quantitatively in various ways, such measurement provides a very limited understanding about schools as organizations and about the nature of education. Of

greater significance to the children and their parents and to the adults who work in schools is the concept of "organizational culture" which, according to Gonder and Hymes, refers to the way in which organizations "differ from similar organizations in the way they make decisions and conduct day-to-day operations" (1994 : 13).

Changes at the level of school culture and in the human relationships that underpin it, may well lead to a greater understanding about education and about the effectiveness of schools as organizations. Such is the complex nature of these changes that this research analyzed them in terms of patterns, descriptions, attitudes and feelings which are all in the realm of qualitative research as described by Miles and Huberman. The concepts of culture and human relationships, as well as that of TQM itself, do not lend themselves to simple solutions or simple generalizations but rather to a deeper understanding of the role they play in limiting or extending the effectiveness of a particular organization. Qualitative research is ideally suited to develop this understanding.

Towards this objective, two schools were "purposefully selected" (Cohen and Manion, 1989 : 103) which have undergone TQM training. They are an independent South African high school for girls and a state high school in Virginia, U.S.A. which I visited in 1994. The choice of schools in South Africa was limited as very few schools have, so far, received any form of TQM training while the training that those schools have received has been strongly business orientated. The same is true of most of the training schools in the U.S.A. have received, but in that country many more schools have been exposed to TQM over a longer period of time. Drawing on information from schools from two different countries does not detract from the focus of the research but rather enriches it by adding the dimensions of a comparative study.

It must be noted that the South African school has a close brother/sister relationship with another school situated close

enough for the two schools to share certain facilities and staff. This relationship between the two schools and especially between the staff of the two schools features in the way in which teachers and administrators view their school. It must also be noted that a new principal has recently been appointed at the American school and this has had an impact on the way in which staff have responded to the research. Reference will be made to both of these factors in the data analysis.

With the co-operation of the school principals, self-completing questionnaires were given to five members of staff who were selected at random from each school in accordance with the following criteria:

- 1) all respondents must have been at the present school for at least one year prior to the introduction of TQM (to ensure that they would be in a position to compare the school before and after the TQM training),
- 2) two of the respondents must be in senior positions in the school and must include the principal as long as he/she meets the first requirement (to ensure that the perspective of people in school management positions would be represented), and
- 3) three of the respondents must be classroom teachers (to ensure that the perspectives of the classroom teacher would be represented).

The questionnaire, which was open-ended (Sanders and Pinhey, 1988 : 81), was designed to encourage personal, qualitative responses and was constructed on the basis of the steps outlined by Sanders and Pinhey (1988 : 28-29):

Step 1 : Statement of Theoretical Problem

The principles of TQM had their origins in the business world where they have been used with varying degrees of success. The focus of

this research was to analyze critically whether or not these principles could be used successfully in schools to produce similar transformations as have, according to their adherents, occurred in the business field.

Step 2 : Research Question

The research was designed to explore critically what changes, if any, in school culture and staff relationships occurred if school personnel were trained in TQM principles. Such changes, it was assumed, would also be dependent upon a subsequent commitment to the quality philosophy, particularly by those in senior management positions. Follow up research would be needed to see if long term changes have been effected, but this research, by necessity, focuses on the comparatively short term impact of TQM training. It was implied in the research that if changes did occur and if they were perceived to be positive by a significant number of the stakeholders of the school, this would lead to an improvement in the school's effectiveness.

Step 3 : Operationalizing Concepts

The research started from the premise that those involved in the survey must have taught at their present school for at least one academic year prior to the introduction of TQM training so that they would be in a position to comment on any changes which might have occurred as a result of the training. The training itself was an essential component although factors such as the nature, duration, appropriateness and quality of the training were beyond the scope of the research except to the extent that respondents commented on it and thereby made it appropriate.

There are a number of approaches which could be used to determine whether or not TQM training has produced any significant changes in a school. According to the TQM philosophy, which is primarily a customer-focused one, change should be measured in terms of greater or less customer satisfaction. In the school context, the external customers would be the children, the parents and the broader community. For the sake of this research, it was decided

not to use customer perceptions as indicators of change as the application of TQM principles in schools is still in its infancy, and thus, changes, if any, may not yet have made a significant difference to their perceptions. Clearly, however, in the long term customer opinions are essential in evaluating the success or otherwise of TQM in an organization.

Before the benefits of TQM can be experienced by customers, there must be changes in the way in which the people in the organization work together. In order for a quality transformation to occur, there must be a commitment to the process of change by senior management which must then filter throughout the entire organization (Crosby, 1984 : 101). The two operationalizing concepts used in this research, therefore, were human relationships and school culture. The research would aim to determine what, if any, changes have occurred within the school as a result of the TQM training in terms of how people related to each other and in terms of how beliefs and values have been affected (Sashkin and Kiser, 1993 : 73-116).

Step 4 : Establishing Indications

The questionnaire was then designed to elicit responses that would reflect people's perceptions of the effect of their TQM training on staff relationships and school culture.

SECTION A

Questions 1-5 : These questions were asked to obtain general information: the name of the school, the number of years the respondent had taught there, the respondent's total years of teaching experience, the position she/he held in the school, and the year when TQM was first introduced at the school.

Question 6: Here the respondent was asked what he/she understood by the term "TQM" to see if there was similarity in the way in which school personnel understood what is essentially a business concept and also to see to what extent educators had a broad view of the philosophy underpinning TQM.

SECTION B

Question 1: The respondents were asked to describe the training they had undergone in TQM to establish the extent to which each person had been trained.

Question 2: This question asked how the educator responded to the training and provided the opportunity for feelings and concerns to be expressed, especially with regard to each person's initial response to TQM.

Question 3: This question continued to develop the personal response to TQM by asking what changes the person felt she/he had undergone as a result of the TQM training.

Question 4: The focus now changed to consider staff relationships in general. An open-ended question was posed to see what factors would be mentioned by each respondent and, overall, whether they perceived no change, a negative change or a positive change in staff relationships.

Question 5: This question led into the concept of school culture by asking the respondent to comment on five specific indicators which are central to the TQM philosophy: leadership, innovation, teamwork, problem-solving, communication and customer focus. Changes in relation to these concepts would reflect changes in the school culture as well as changes in human relationships. Although the five indicators were purposefully chosen, it is not suggested that they are the only ones that could have been chosen nor necessarily the best ones.

Question 6: This question expanded on the concept of school culture by asking the respondent specifically to describe changes to the school culture which resulted from the TQM experience. This provided the opportunity for a more open-ended response.

Question 7: This question asked for a personal response to the changes or lack of changes that followed the TQM training. It was intended to draw together strands from the previous questions and provide some sort of evaluation of the process the respondent has experienced.

Question 8: This question asked the respondent if he/she felt that TQM was or was not appropriate in the school context and, again, it was intended to reflect the educator's evaluation of the TQM process in education.

Question 9: The final question provided the opportunity for the respondent to add any further comments on the role of TQM in improving schools.

The questionnaire was proof-tested at St Andrew's Preparatory School, Grahamstown, by six teachers who had also received TQM training and, on the basis of their responses, some minor adjustments were made to the wording. The final questionnaires were submitted to the respondents in individually sealed plain envelopes together with a covering letter requesting their assistance. A self-addressed envelope was also included so that the questionnaires could be returned confidentially to myself. All five questionnaires were returned by both schools.

The questionnaires have subsequently been analyzed to see what patterns have emerged as to how the personnel of both schools view any changes which have occurred in their schools in the areas of human relationships and school culture following the introduction of TQM training. The responses in both schools were also compared with each other.

Finally, the information generated by the research was compared with the claims made for TQM by various theorists as well as with

the experiences of other practitioners in education, including teachers from three other South African schools which have been trained in TQM principles. They are Pinelands High School, Mary Waters High School and St Mary's Primary School.

CHAPTER 3

DATA ANALYSIS

Five questionnaires were returned by members of staff from both schools where the research was conducted. The questionnaires from the South African school have been labelled A1 to A5 and those from the American school B1 to B5 for ease of reference. All respondents have been employed by their schools for at least one year prior to the introduction of TQM training, and five of them hold promotion posts at their schools while the other five are teachers. The addendum contains a copy of the questionnaire and of the letter sent to the respondents.

The aim of the research is to investigate the impact, if any, of TQM training on staff relationships and school culture. The data has been analyzed under the following sub-headings as per the questionnaire:

1. Definition of TQM
2. TQM training
3. Personal change linked to the training
4. Staff relationships
5.
 - a) leadership
 - b) innovation
 - c) teamwork
 - d) problem-solving
 - e) communication
 - f) customer focus
6. School culture
7. Feelings about the effects of TQM
8. Appropriateness of TQM in a school context
9. General comments

The concepts of staff relationships and school culture are closely intertwined with all these sub-sections, none of which should be seen as separate from the central focus of these concepts.

DEFINITION OF TQM

Among the variety of definitions and descriptions of TQM are the following:

TQM means that the organization's culture is defined by and supports the constant attainment of customer satisfaction through an integrated system of tools, techniques and training. This involves the continuous improvement of organizational processes, resulting in high quality products and services.

(Sashkin and Kiser, 1993:39)

'Meeting customer requirements', 'fitness for purpose' and perhaps even 'delighting our customers'.

(Greenwood and Gaunt, 1994:26)

TQM requires consistent effort by the entire team, working together toward common objectives based upon an accepted vision and mission, and using quantitative and qualitative data to measure how well the system is meeting the needs of all stakeholders inside and outside of the organization.

(Bonstingl, 1992:31)

... there are four essential elements of this new Total Quality educational paradigm ...

1. A primary focus on suppliers and customers
2. Constant dedication to continuous improvement
3. A systems/process orientation
4. Strong and consistent Total Quality leadership from top management

(Bonstingl, 1992:34)

... there are five critical features of successful TQM organizations that are required to achieve sustainable, steep-slope quality improvement. These are:

1. Alignment within the organization ... and commitment to a shared vision.
2. An extended understanding of the customer-driven and process-orientated basis for quality.
3. An organization designed around teams ... to reflect teamwork as the basis for the organization's activities.
4. The setting of particularly challenging or outrageous goals
5. The Systematic daily management of the organization through the use of effective tools for measurement and feedback.

(Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1993:64)

TQM is not a rigid set of rules and regulations but processes and procedures for improving performance.

(Byrnes, Cornestry and Byrnes, 1992:7)

Although there is no definitive definition of TQM, there are elements which are common to many of the definitions, such as customer focus, continuous improvement, team-work, systems/process orientation, commitment to a shared vision, and tools and techniques for measurement.

Respondent A3 defines quality management as "a programme of education and action within the organization, in order to implement a performance standard of excellence through teamwork and a conformance to requirements." Westerman cautions against referring to TQM as a programme, "It (TQM) is not a program, because a program has a beginning, a middle, and an end, and this implies you can finish and move on to something else" (104:77). This respondent, however, focuses on key aspects of the quality philosophy ("education and action", "standard of excellence", "teamwork" and "conformance to requirements") which reflect a sound understanding of TQM. By contrast, A4's definition ("... a practical approach to ensuring standards of excellence in every facet of the organization through careful planning and understanding") describes quality in terms of high standards, but it lacks direct reference to the quality terminology which may suggest a superficial understanding of TQM on the part of that respondent. The other three respondents at school A all refer to the important concept of improving the process instead of blaming people when things go wrong: "Focus on process. Do not target the person" (A2), "... approach each task ... in a logical way using process modelling ..." (A1) and, "It (TQM) aims to get people to solve problems by addressing deficiencies in processes rather than incompetence in people and it aims to get everyone to own the process" (A5).

The emphasis on TQM as a process also emerges strongly in the definitions from school B. "Total quality management is an ongoing

process implemented by all school employees. This promotes involvement of all staff members so that they have ownership and a sense of pride in their work" (B2). Also significant in this statement is the emphasis on "ownership", referred to as well by A5. ("... aims to get everyone to own the process"). This question of ownership is a fundamental part of the TQM culture in contrast with more traditional organizational structures where people are often likely to experience a sense of alienation and lack of ownership. Ownership is also closely linked to teamwork as both imply a commitment to the "big picture" as well as to the organization's vision and values.

This sense of commitment is strongly emphasised in B5's definition:

TQM means commitment to being (or producing) the BEST possible educator/student in today's world. Inherent in TQM are high standards (compare with A3 and A4) and expectations of all people - that by using TQM, one learns how to maximise one's potential to be a positive, contributing member of society.

This description suggests a TQM school would be one where there was a high level of individual commitment, a strong sense of teamwork and an emphasis on high standard. Similar points are also reflected by B3: "administrators and teachers working together to arrive at the better 'product'", "input on major decisions by both teachers and administration" and "a process whereby we all grow to be the best instructional or instructed people ...". Equally, in school B, the educators stress continuous improvement as a critical factor in TQM: "A continuing effort for improvement in every facet of schools/school systems operation" (B1) and "A system for continual improvement that encourages participation by all affected parties, and provides models for a logical problem-solving process and effective program education" (B4).

It is significant that TQM is seen by respondents from both schools as not just a philosophy but also as something practical which needs action in order to produce desired changes: "a programme of education and action" (A3) and "It is not only learning, but

applying what is learned everyday" (B5).

The definitions of TQM supplied by the respondents suggest that they generally seem to have a clear if somewhat varied understanding of the main principles of TQM. It is this vagueness of definition, however, which may be a stumbling block to the introduction of TQM into schools. It may also indicate that TQM is not appropriate in a school context where it may confuse rather than enlighten educators with business terminology which is neither helpful nor appropriate. In their definitions of TQM, for example, none of the respondents made references to the customer/supplier concept which, in respect of the TQM culture, is a crucial principle in relation to both external and internal customers. The ability to understand relationships with colleagues on a customer/supplier basis has particular significance for staff relationships. As Murgatroyd and Morgan wrote:

Customer-driven quality requires providers of services to be constantly enquiring as to the needs of stakeholders and to do so in such a way that stakeholders can see their ideas, concerns and suggestions being implemented on a regular basis. ... Your stakeholders are your customers and, in the belief position of TQM, only they can define quality.

(1992:50)

According to their point of view, a school is an organization that manages a chain of customers and this needs to be acknowledged and acted upon before a school can claim to be transformed by the TQM principles. The omission of any direct reference to this concept by the respondents in their definitions of TQM may reflect an inadequacy in the training they received but it may also point to a more deep-seated problem with regard to the appropriateness of TQM in schools.

TQM TRAINING

The sixth of Edward Deming's fourteen points for a quality transformation is "Institute training on the job." TQM training

is essential, initially, to introduce and teach the quality concepts to all personnel in an organization and then, on an on-going basis, to develop the skills and attitudes necessary to ensure continuous improvement at all levels in line with the TQM philosophy. As Greenwood and Gaunt have said, "Training is not an optional bolt-on extra, it is a vital first-priority investment in your most important resource, your people. This means all staff including teachers, administrators and ancillary staff" (1994:72). Byrnes, Cornesky and Byrnes have further added, "This training will be crucial to the total effectiveness of any attempt to implement TQM" (1992:14).

As TQM has its origins in the business world, educators are, understandably, likely to view it with a high level of suspicion and scepticism when it is suggested that it could be applied successfully in schools. If it is going to have an application in schools, TQM training ideally should be firmly embedded in the educational rather than the business context to facilitate its adoption by school personnel. This has not been the case with regards to both school A and school B.

The training received by the staff of school A was provided entirely by Quality Management Associates, a professional training company which had, until then, had very limited involvement with schools. Although most of the training for school B was done by the Xerox Company, respondents from this school seem to have received a broader and more varied training. Respondent B2, for example, refers to training received at Xerox, Blandy Farm and at Mountain View Uniserve, as well as in-house training at school. The content, duration, style and quality of the respondents' training falls outside the scope of this research, but what is significant is the way in which they responded to it.

Some of the respondents had a problem with the business focus of the training:

There was too much "production line" mentality in the lessons. The whole exercise needs to be streamlined for

education aimed at

- i) teachers and lesson preparation
- ii) teachers and admin -
 - a) their own
 - b) the school admin (reports/records)
 - c) relationship with admin staff
- iii) admin
- iv) games

(A1)

A5 also commented that, "The language was business-orientated" while B4 listed "use of business jargon" as a concern. The business jargon seems to be a major stumbling block for educators, particularly at first, while many teachers may never accept a simple transfer of business language into the school context. B5, for example, wrote as follows:

I continue to feel somewhat uncomfortable with the term "consumer" in reference to students. Unlike lightbulbs, trashbags or other consumer items - students as human beings carry with them a bit more than "packaged" brains! I do not believe that consumer = student - although philosophically I accept the idea - the terminology is very inappropriate.

For other respondents, the business jargon proved to be a concern just initially:

I was concerned at first that the jargon accompanying the course was foreign to the school situation. However I soon realized that the language of Quality management was useful in promoting understanding and communication. TQM management also applied to the whole organization and was/is essential in establishing a system which could/can answer to the needs of every customer.

(A4)

At first it was hard, with the business slant, to see the process's application in education. But, as we applied the process to our problems, it did help us in decision making.

(B3)

B1, however, saw no difference between running a school and running a business:

I see running a school as no different than running a business - you have to deal with people in both aspects and you have to overcome problems and obstacles to reach your goals.

One respondent from each school also felt that the TQM training did not introduce anything new but rather confirmed and reinforced what was already known or in place:

Much of the training was more a matter of clarification and verification of what I already knew rather than being new ideas.

(B4)

I believe our thinking was well in place before the course was given, but the course reaffirmed our commitment to excellence.

(A3)

It is not clear what A3 understands by a "commitment to excellence" and whether or not this is synonymous with the TQM philosophy as he/she seems to imply. It may well be so, but the comment may also reflect a superficial understanding of TQM in relation to a "commitment to excellence".

In addition to the business jargon, other concerns were expressed by the respondents:

My concerns were with time, change and the promises being made by administration.

(B2)

... time involved in fullscale use of the system.

(B4)

... do not see relevance to teaching.

(A2)

The leadership group in the school had failed to persuade everyone else that it was committed to it.

(A5)

These comments reflect concerns in three important areas: time, teaching and leadership. Teachers are busy enough as it is. If TQM is perceived as something extra to be added on to their already busy schedules, it is destined to fail from the start. In addition, teachers need to be convinced that TQM will have long term benefits for them personally, i.e. it will make them more efficient and more effective in their day to day lives as teachers, as well as having benefits for the school as a whole. The time issue would need to be addressed positively and practically.

While most teachers will have no difficulty seeing the benefit and applicability of TQM to school management issues, many will question its relevance in the classroom. If it is not relevant in the classroom, however, TQM can make only a very limited contribution to schools. The training which teachers receive in TQM, therefore, needs to deal simultaneously with classroom and school management concerns.

The first of Philip Crosby's fourteen steps for quality improvement stresses management commitment. "When executives of a company first come to the Quality College they always ask the same question: 'Is our senior management really committed to this process?'" (1984:101). In this sense, TQM is a top-down approach to organizational change. Unless the people at the top are committed ("the leadership group in the school"), others will not be committed. According to respondent A5, the leadership group failed to demonstrate effectively enough its commitment to TQM. A leadership problem may also be seen in the comment of A2, "Tried to adopt TQM in the quality process which we've been forced into" (my emphasis). The word "forced" has connotations of an authoritarian style of leadership which is contrary to the more democratic, empowering style of TQM. If A2 felt "forced" into TQM, it is unlikely that he/she would respond favourably to it (See additional comments on leadership in a later section).

On a personal level, there was also a positive response to the training by respondents:

The feeling of empowerment - of actually helping in decision making that affects my teaching and the students is great!

(B3)

I enjoyed the training. It enabled us to understand how to deal with deficiencies better and to pass on the real problems rather than the imagined ones.

(A5)

(I) was originally extremely enthusiastic.

(A2)

Special note must be made of A2's use of the word "originally", which suggests that a degree of disillusionment has arisen since the initial training. According to Deming and others, TQM is about profound, sustained organizational change. Important though it is to create the initial enthusiasm for the TQM training, its success in the organization will be determined by the long term changes to human relationships and organizational culture that occur. Such change is not easy to effect and requires hard work and commitment on the part of everyone in the organization, particularly those in leadership positions.

The comments of the respondents suggest a mixed response to the training they have received. The major problems experienced seem to refer to the business components of the training which suggests that if it is provided by people with an understanding of the special nature of schools and if it is presented, as far as possible, in educationalists' language, it may succeed in initiating school-based change. Such training has subsequently been given to three South African schools by myself in the form of a two day seminar intended to introduce the quality principles in a school context and stripped, as far as possible, of the business jargon. These seminars alone will not profoundly change the schools in question but the following comments from the teachers' written evaluations of the seminar reflect the generally positive responses to it:

We are ready, I feel, for TQM at our school. This has been a wonderful opportunity for all of us to buy into TQM together and to make a commitment to this at our school.

(Pinelands High School)

I found it inspiring. The pre-reading material helped but this made it more immediate. I have felt the need for this sort of direction for a long time but vaguely and without knowledge of how to proceed. I hope the staff choose this exciting path.

(Pinelands High School)

The presentation was very very good. It was also realistic and applicable. It was definitely not ideological but revealed a lot about human behaviour and how we can live a life of sharing, respecting, helping and always to love one another. One of the most important things I learned was never to point a finger (judge) but to try and understand and help and reach consensus. The seminar was overall very positive and life changing!

(St. Mary's Primary School)

Enlightening experience but the hard work still lies ahead. My view of how a school should run, how it has been running for the last few years and how it is going to run is changed forever.

(St. Mary's Primary School)

It was a very enjoyable seminar which highlighted some of the things that we really know, but yet we overlook it. I am motivated to look at myself as a teacher - and how I can change things in the learning situation in my classroom. I would definitely strive for quality not only in the classroom but also in daily life.

(Mary Waters High School)

The content of the seminar is so relevant to us that it can be easily applicated (sic) in the daily-life of the running of a school in general. I also think that teachers could use it in their classrooms. The content is really easy to understand even if you explain to the pupils that there could be a new way of doing things they would be motivated to change for the better.

(Mary Waters High School)

Further training and follow-up work would be needed to see if these positive responses could be translated into action which would

profoundly change these schools in line with the benefits TQM purports to achieve.

PERSONAL CHANGE LINKED TO THE TQM TRAINING

At the most fundamental level, TQM is about transformation, not about superficial changes. As Aquayo has stated, "A company or organization that wants to transform has to change completely, including fundamental beliefs and practices" (1990:121f). TQM starts to take effect in an organization when people not only think differently but also when they do things differently. Although leaders play a crucial role in this change process, particularly in terms of articulating the new vision, improving the systems in which people work and fostering the continual development of all who work in the organization, in real terms change or lack of change is expressed in the day to day behaviour of everyone in the organization.

One of the objectives of the initial TQM training would be to provide a vision of a different way of doing things, especially with regard to human relationships and corporate culture. In most organizations and with most people, further on-going training would be needed to develop new skills and attitudes before transformation could occur. If people are used to working competitively and individualistically, for example, it will take time and hard work to create cooperation and teamwork instead. The TQM training should, at least, start people moving in a different direction and lead to some changes on an individual level. Whether or not these changes will be sustained will depend largely on what occurs thereafter in the organization.

When asked what changes they have personally undergone as a result of their TQM experiences, some respondents described specific task-related improvements:

I have personally rewritten all my curriculum ... I have moved away from memorization of facts and

computational skills to problem solving techniques.

(B2)

(My) admin has become more methodical as I have tried to foresee problem areas. I think I did this before. It just re-focused the principles.

(A1)

I have prepared much better for meetings, which seem to fill my days. As a result, I believe that we have had more effective meetings.

(A5)

I have personally been involved in the development of master copies of procedures governing the reading system, the organization of reports and a workable format for procedures in various activities.

(A3)

Other respondents described their changes in terms of sensitivity to and the improvement of work processes:

In my personal and professional life I am more process orientated ... as I focus on requirements and articulating these clearer.

(A2)

I have tried to think through processes rather than criticize individuals.

(A5)

Whilst dedicated to excellence, TQM has encouraged us to become far more focused. We have also structured our time in order to re-examine our processes. We have abandoned the temptation to resort to patching and management has tried to encourage a clear performance standard and we expect to meet our requirements.

(A4)

The emphasis on task and process improvement is far more pronounced in comments from school A than it is in school B where the comments about personal change seems to be more introspective and frequently described in terms of relationships with other people:

I believe that I am a better listener and more thoughtful speaker (in my interactions with students) than before training.

I am also more aware/interested in looking at multiple solutions to issues! I tend to look for connections more.

(B5)

- 1) (I am) more aware of tendencies to jump to solution(s), so I've been more retrospect before committing to a solution - sometimes more process is warranted - sometimes not.
- 2) (I am) more aware of needs and means to encourage involvement of all involved in a meeting or project.

(B4)

Rethinking of my teaching ways and evaluations have been the primary ways in which my behaviour has changed. More cooperative work and team problem solving is utilized by me than ever before.

(B3)

An interesting comment was made by respondent B1 who said:

I have a respect for an administration that values my input into the problem solving process and takes me seriously as a human and a professional.

I don't think my behaviour has changed, but rather people's perception of me and my role/responsibilities here ...

Although B1 does not acknowledge any personal changes, the comment accurately reflects the human relationships dimension of TQM. People want to feel valued in an organization and to feel that their contribution is an important one. It is significant that B1 sees change at the school not in terms of changes he/she has undergone, but rather in terms of the way in which he/she is now treated by others, especially those in authority. It seems as if B1 felt that his/her contribution was not valued or taken seriously before but now it is. This is a valid response to the TQM training. It suggests that substantial cultural and/or human relationship

changes are occurring at that school.

Some direct human relationship changes are mentioned by respondents from school A too:

(I am) more tolerant of pupils and their problems (TQM focused me where perhaps I was getting into a rut).

(I have) tried to adopt a 51% give attitude - this (is) difficult as some retreat further asking for 52%, 53% etc.

(A1)

My time management is better. My communication is better.

(A2)

With one exception, all the respondents have described specific changes they have undergone as a result of their TQM training. These changes need to be sustained and expanded over a long period of time before one could claim that a school or a person has been transformed by TQM. It is noteworthy, however, that TQM training does appear to have led directly to task and process changes among some of the respondents and, more important, it also seems to have led towards human relationships that are more caring, sensitive and team-orientated, as well as towards the creation of a new school culture where values such as communication, respect, cooperation, problem-solving, empowerment and innovation are more highly valued.

The evaluations of the TQM training at the three South African Schools mentioned earlier also indicated that people had at least started to change as a result of their TQM experiences:

It made me reflect upon my weaknesses as well as my strengths. (It) also gave me the determination to work towards quality. I know now that I have choices and (I) will definitely use them from now on!

(Pinelands High School)

I will sincerely treasure this weekend. Even if nothing happens at St. Mary's something happened to me.

(St. Mary's Primary School)

I learned to be more open, honest, part of a team.

(St. Mary's Primary School)

Usually we don't want to speak to one another ... This weekend I really wanted to speak and communicate with all.

(St. Mary's Primary School)

I am motivated to look at myself as a teacher - and how I could change things in the learning situation in my classroom.

(Mary Waters High School)

I really need to take a long hard look at my life.

(Mary Waters High School)

CHANGES IN STAFF RELATIONSHIPS

Margaret Wheatley has written, "None of us exists independent of our relationships with each other. Different settings and people evoke some qualities from us and leave others dormant. In each of these relationships, we are different, new in some way" (1992:34). If she is right, our effectiveness in all areas of life - the personal as well as the organizational - is largely dependent upon our relationship with each other. Stephen Covey argues in a similar vein saying that we need to progress along a maturity continuum from dependence to independence and, ultimately, to inter-dependence as it is this last stage which most closely defines the reality of our everyday life:

Independent thinking alone is not suited to interdependent reality. Independent people who do not have the maturity to think and act interdependently may be good individual producers, but they won't be good leaders or team players. They're not coming from the paradigm of interdependence necessary to succeed in marriage, family and organizational reality

Interdependence is a far more mature, more advanced concept. If I am physically interdependent, I am self-

reliant and capable, but I also realize that you and I working together can accomplish far more than, even at my best, I could accomplish alone. If I am emotionally interdependent, I derive a great sense of worth within myself, but I also recognize the need for love, for giving and for receiving love from others. If I am intellectually interdependent, I realize that I need the best thinking of other people to join with my own.

(1989:50-51)

It can be expected, therefore, that significant organizational change and growth will be reflected in human relationship changes within an organization. Such changes do not occur over-night, however. It is a long term, step by step process to transform relationships in a profound sense, even though immediate benefits can be experienced when a new paradigm of thinking is introduced into an organization as, for example, through TQM training. As Wheatley has said:

We will need to stop describing tasks and instead facilitate process. We will need to become savvy about how to build relationships, how to nurture growing, evolving things. All of us will need better skills in listening, communicating and facilitating groups, because these are the talents that build strong relationships. It is well known that the era of the rugged individual has been replaced by the era of the team player. But this is only the beginning.

(1992:38)

In the research, the respondents were asked to give examples of any changes in staff relationships at their schools which they would attribute to TQM. The question was posed in an open-ended manner so as not to prompt a response to any particular relationship or aspect of staff relationships. Changes in specific areas were probed in a later question. School A has a very close connection with a brother school which is situated adjacent to it, enabling the schools to combine classes and share certain facilities with both schools still retaining their independence. Many of the responses made to the questionnaire by respondents from School A, therefore, refer to relationships between the two schools as well

as those within school A itself, a special circumstance which the research highlights and which, in its turn is enriched by this circumstance.

Two respondents from school A referred directly to this relationship between the two schools, both describing an improvement in the relationship:

Closer relationship with colleagues (at both schools).
Willingness to share - see other point of view. Clearer understanding of aims of both schools.

(A1)

Both staffs are much more relaxed in each other's company. The stronger characters no longer loudly put others down during general discussions.

(A5)

Respondents A4 and A5 described positive changes at their school:

TQM has definitely resulted in greater communication between members of the teaching staff and between ourselves and the senior school. There has also been a change in management style - and a determination amongst staff to avoid non-conformances. We share a common language of quality.

(A4)

There is no doubt that the interaction brought about by training together did wonders for the staff. They began to appreciate the competence of their colleagues.

(A5)

This latter comment poses an interesting question: Was it the TQM content of the training that "did wonders for the staff" or was it simply the fact that the training provided the opportunity for staff interaction on a level which had, perhaps, not occurred before? In other words, it may have been the interaction itself that provided the benefit and not necessarily the TQM content. It is likely that the benefit was derived from both factors but one has to guard against the temptation to ascribe a perceived benefit

to TQM whereas the training process itself has a benefit which is, to an extent, separate from the content of the training.

A3's response was more subdued in comparison with A4 and A5, noting that there had been changes on the level of procedures and terminology but, especially in the choice of the word "merely", suggesting that no profound changes had occurred and that the TQM changes amounted to a sharper focus in a system that was already functioning well:

The system (of TQM) has merely sharpened our determination to do things well. However, we have become more aware of the procedures which can be adopted in our planning. We are also more aware of a terminology which unit(e)s our combined understanding.

(A3)

In contrast with the other respondents from school A, A2 states categorically, "I have not noticed any changes," but there is a link with A3's statement when he/she goes on to say, "we have always been caring and considerate on the whole." There is an element of disillusionment in the final part of A2's comment:

Those who have always "sucked" up to the boss continue to do so and their attitude has not changed towards their colleagues.

This statement illustrates the point that TQM is not something that can change the attitude and behaviour of all people, especially not in a simplistic sense. Change needs to start with ourselves through what Covey calls an "inside-out" approach:

The inside-out approach says that private victories precede public victories, that making and keeping promises to ourselves precedes making and keeping promises to others. It says it is futile to put personality ahead of character, to try to improve relationships with others before improving ourselves.

(1989:43)

Change occurs in an organization when a significant number of people in that organization change and then serve as a catalyst for further change. As A2 claims to have undergone some personal changes ("... more process orientated ... time management is better ... communication is better ..."), his/her colleagues may still be influenced through his/her own changed attitudes and behaviours. One of the limits of the TQM philosophy - and, perhaps, of any philosophy - is an inability to convert everyone. It can point in a new direction but organizational and personal change itself is generally a long and continuous process. As part of that process in an organization undergoing a TQM transformation an issue such as "sucking up" needs to be dealt with constructively. It signifies a problem in staff relationships that should be resolved in an open, honest manner.

Reservations about TQM - inspired changes in staff relationships at School B were also expressed by B5:

At first ... the staff seemed to respond to the interactive skills (beyond training) in meetings and general conversations. I have noticed that since then (over 2-3 years) we have reverted to our pre - TQM rudeness! (May be we need to revisit those skills).

Without strong leadership/role models a staff can flounder in maintaining TQM skills. That is what happened here. It's not practical on a daily basis.

A number of important points arise out of this comment. First of all, it seems to be difficult to sustain the TQM changes. This may be a problem with the TQM philosophy itself, especially when applied in schools which, by nature, are in many ways different from business contexts. It is difficult to change people's attitudes and behaviours under most circumstances. It is usually a long, slow process, thus re-training ("May be we need to revisit those skills") is necessary to sustain change. Equally important is the need for "strong leadership/role models." The change process must be led by example from the top. Although the word "strong", when applied to leadership, is often associated with an authoritarian style, "strong" in the TQM context would refer to

qualities such as courage, perseverance, high consideration for others and commitment to the organization's shared vision, values and mission.

B5's final sentence ("It's not practical on a daily basis") poses a fundamental question about TQM and its applicability in a school situation. It may be that TQM is applicable in some schools and not in others, in which case research would be needed to identify the elements that are and are not conducive to TQM succeeding in a school. In contrast with B5's statement, B1's comment describes practical changes at the school which were achieved in "a smooth orderly manner", suggesting good or improved staff relationships:

Implementing a new grading scale, implementing block scheduling and other major changes were accomplished in a smooth orderly manner. This is not to say people were not passionate about their feelings, but we were able to understand and address needs.

The same sense of people working together more sensitively with each other than before emerges from B3's statement:

Openly discussing matters that we all feel a common concern about and reaching consensus has been the biggest change, I feel. We strive for improvement in our teaching, and that may mean extra work, but it is more rewarding. We welcome differing opinions and use the best ideas to better (our school).

Examples of improved staff relationships are described by B2 in terms of, "Open discussions, problem solving and reaching consensus." He/She makes the observation, though, "I have seen some staff relationships strained due to power struggles or individual power trips." This is a very realistic problem, particularly in the early stage of the change process and if the leadership style has previously been authoritarian, making people feel powerless. The more open, democratic, empowering style of the TQM leadership approach may provide the opportunity for some people to try to grab as much power as possible. Again, "strong" leadership would be needed to deal with such problems in a balanced manner which seeks

to cultivate the new style of staff relationships while, at the same time, defusing any power struggles that may emerge. If the school culture changes significantly enough over time, the power struggles may cease to exist as people become more comfortable about working with each other on the basis of mutual trust and respect.

Respondent B4 was emphatic about changes to staff relationships - "They are definitely stronger!" He/she listed the following changes:

- 1) better communication - discussions, in particular, are much more effective. Opinionated faculty are aware of need to let others speak
- 2) strong sense of collaboration and ability to effect change together
- 3) more trust due to the above

Although the research seems to indicate that positive changes in staff relationships are possible as a result of TQM training, not all people undergo change and important questions remain regarding the sustainability of the changes that do take place.

LEADERSHIP

In recent years there has been a radical shift in models of leadership. Gibbon describes it as follows:

There has been a move away from the high profile, heroic form to the transformational and inspirational approach. The heroic leader is out in front of his/her team, using a range of styles and motivation that is largely extrinsic to draw followers towards reaching agreed objectives. Here, the power of the leader and top-down control are assumed.

The transformational leader invites followers into a bonded commitment or covenant based on agreed values which lie at the heart of their enterprise. Direct, overt leadership becomes less important, and followers become empowered to exercise self-management based on the shared covenant and values.

(Gibbon, 1995:1)

According to Covey, in effective organizations management practices are superceded by leadership practices:

To achieve total quality managers must become leaders, drawing from their people their greatest capacity to contribute ideas, creativity, innovative thinking, attention to detail and analysis of process and product to the work place. In other words, management must become empowering leaders.

(1990:264-5)

Glasser describes the need for lead-teachers and lead-managers in schools and underlines the critical role of the principal in the school reform process:

While being an effective leader may initially take more time and effort than bossing, in the end it takes much less time and effort because workers find that when they are managed by a leader, quality work is very satisfying. It is certainly possible to learn how to be an effective lead-teacher, but few teachers will make the effort to do so unless they themselves experience the benefit of this approach. This means that lead-management and the concepts of quality will not flourish in our classrooms unless they are implemented at the level of the school principal. He or she is the crucial element in educational reform.

(Glasser, 1990:36)

Above all else, argues Wheatley, we need to see leadership in terms of relationships. It is at this level that the role of the principal is so important.

Leadership is always dependent on the context, but the context is established by the relationships we value. We cannot hope to influence any situation without respect for the complex network of people who contribute to our organizations.

(Wheatley, 1992:144-5)

The understanding of leadership in the context of human

relationships is a major component of the quality philosophy. As Aquayo says, "It is a leader's job to foster joy in work, harmony and teamwork. The leader must work diligently and conscientiously to assure that everyone is a winner" (1990:182). He points out, however, that this is no easy task:

To most of us, management refers particularly to the way we treat our people. And it is here that I think Deming's lessons are most profound and most radical. And it is here that I believe most managers will have the greatest difficulty in adjusting.

(Aquayo, 1990:217)

Comparing the comments of the respondents from the two schools on the changes, if any, which they feel TQM has helped to initiate with regard to leadership, two different patterns emerge. In School B there is a strong emphasis on "shared" leadership. The word "shared" is mentioned specifically by two respondents:

Leadership is shared because everyone has a vested interest.

(B2)

We have shared leadership between teachers and administrators and all feel vested in the process.

(B3)

People seem to feel empowered in this school and, consequently, they have "a vested interest" in what occurs. The teachers themselves seem to have changed in that they are now more likely to initiate change and take on leadership roles:

Teachers have taken more interest in initiating change rather than waiting for the administration to make us change.

(B1)

(Leadership) has been exhibited by a variety of people - feeling of empowerment has given confidence to take the lead for issues of concern.

(B4)

The comments of B5, however, highlight the importance of the role of the principal in determining leadership perceptions within a school:

With our former principal, TQM was a high priority. She modeled and encouraged us to hone our skills. The training elicited from several members of staff a heightened involvement in leadership roles (sic).

(B5)

In an earlier section of the questionnaire, B5 stated:

Without strong leadership/role models a staff can flounder in maintaining TQM skills. That is what has happened here.

(B5)

In his/her concluding remarks, B5 says the following:

I realize that I have mentioned this several times already, but strong leadership (in relation to TQM) at the bldg (building) level is critical to its integration into schools. W/out strong role models, TQM can disintegrate quickly. With strong leadership, it can become a language for all.

(B5)

These comments seem to suggest that the leadership style of the new principal is very different from that of the previous person. TQM needs to be led from the top down so, as Glasser has said, the principal's role is crucial. If he/she does not share the leadership role by empowering the entire school staff and facilitating the development of their leadership skills; it is unlikely that TQM will succeed in a school.

Taken generally, the comments of the respondents from School B suggest that this school has undergone a transformation with regard to the leadership role. The system has not been improved, it has been fundamentally changed, according to the perceptions of most

of the respondents. A different picture emerges from School A.

A4 states that there has been "a change in management style" and continues as follows:

There has been an attempt to be less dogmatic and keep ever(y)body up to date with areas that need to be investigated. There has been a greater awareness of processes, procedures and measurements.

(A4)

A3 feels that there has been no change as leadership has always been committed to quality:

Leadership is committed to "Quality" in this school - always has been.

(A3)

What seems to be missing from School A compared with School B is a strong concept of shared leadership. While A2 acknowledges that "Certain people have taken on leadership roles in TQM groups to solve problems," A1 states that the "H/M must ultimately decide on what he considers best for the school - has listened more." This point of view seems to be at odds with the transformational style of leadership described by Gibbon where "followers become empowered to exercise self-management based on the shared covenant and values" (1995:1).

In response to other sections of the questionnaire on school culture, perceived changes at the school and general comments, A2 raises leadership issues which suggest that School A and its brother school have unresolved problems in this area:

Staff have noticed that among the 2 principals and 2 vice-principals at (the two schools) only 1 really supports TQM so whenever something is not done correctly or does not follow the TQM methodology then the most frequently heard utterance is: "Well there's quality for you." There appears to be some resentment to us having to spend so much time on "quality" and not see it practiced (sic) from the top.

(A2)

The following four comments also reflect A2's concern with leadership issues:

I have noticed that all of the top 4 only practice (sic) TQM when it suits them.

Favouritism and "arse-creeping" are alive and well at (our school) - I believe that this has no place (here) and should not be tolerated.

The extent to which staff may become involved in decision-making (if decisions are vetoed by the top 4 then we should not have to waste time on processes).

I am very much for TQM but I feel that for it to be successful it is essential that those in top management support it, practice (sic) it and are unified in the direction in which it moves.

(A2)

A2's third comment is supported by A1 who said that 'too often small groups are producing documents to be overruled as "it has already been done".' A1 also raised another related issue:

Among some staff they see TQM as a means of flexing their muscles and grinding their own axes. These people have either not understood TQM principle(s) or cannot see the broader impact of (the) principles.

(A1)

A5, the principal of the school, is aware of this element of cynicism:

In a number of people, there appears to have been a growth in cynicism - as the Quality process has broken down.

(A5)

Of even greater significance is his/her following statement which underlines the tension between the leaders and the other staff with

regard to empowerment issues:

Teachers tend to feel that TQM gives them the right to "run the show". Heads, quite naturally, feel that teachers are intruding on what is their (and the Council's) territory. Neither group has had TIME to do Quality properly.

(A5)

Clearly, there is a vast difference in the way in which leadership is perceived at School B and at School A. In the former, there is an emphasis on "shared leadership," the "feeling of empowerment" and "teachers ... initiating change." Although one respondent feels that a change for the worse has occurred with the appointment of a new principal, School B seems to have undergone a leadership transformation in line with the writings of recent leadership theorists such as Covey, Glasser and Wheatley. No such transformation seems to have occurred at School A where changes in leadership practice, if any, appear to be cosmetic rather than profound. There is an unresolved tension, felt by both leaders and other staff, which, unless it is resolved, will probably undermine any further efforts to implement the TQM philosophy at that school.

Quality is everyone's responsibility, but the comments from respondents at both schools seem to justify the emphasis Deming and others place on the role of leaders if a quality transformation is to occur. As Aquayo said, "Quality is made in the boardroom" (1990:47) while, in the school context, Glasser appears to be right when he says that the principal is "the crucial element in educational reform" (1990:36). Fullan describes the principal's vital role in creating a collaborative school culture as follows:

The role of the principal is not in implementing innovations or even in instructional leadership for specific classrooms ... The larger goal is in transforming the culture of the school. If successful, it is likely that some advanced models of the future will show collaborative groups of teachers organizing and conducting learning, perhaps without the presence of a principal as we now know the role. The principal as the collaborative leader is the key to this future.

(Fullan, 1992:86)

INNOVATION

Murgatroyd and Morgan describe a successful TQM organization as one that has created a culture in which, among other things, "innovation is valued highly" (1993:65). This is frequently referred to as the continuous improvement principle. Thus, Jay Bonstingl describes a quality school as "... a true learning organization in which everyone is dedicated to continuous improvement of self, others, and the processes and systems of everyday life" (1992:38). One would expect innovations to start occurring, therefore, in schools which have embarked on the quality journey.

As to be expected, with the higher level of empowerment apparent at School B, a richer variety of innovations are mentioned by respondents from this school than from School A, although the fact that TQM training was initially held three years earlier at School B may also account for this difference. Innovations listed by School B respondents include the following:

New ideas (more interaction between disciplines, seminar period, advisory groups) are initiated by teachers.

(B1)

Use of scientific calculators, use of TI81 graphing calculators, TI 82's, computer technology, block scheduling changes.

(B2)

Cooperative learning, thoughtful and creative assessment, working on curriculum within our department and K-12 in social studies.

(B3)

We've tackled a major one (innovation) each year for the past 3 (years) - we're much more confident to undertake them if merited.

(B4)

Block scheduling: Discipline issues!! The process worked!

(B5)

There is a vibrancy and richness in these responses which are lacking in those of School A. One respondent (A1) claims that "This school has always been innovative - TQM not responsible in this area" which may well account for the paucity of responses. Two other respondents (A2 and A5) claimed no innovations although in another section, the latter referred to "Better meetings" and "More rapid solutions of problems." More positive responses were given by A3 and A4:

Process model worksheets having (sic) increased our scope and awareness of delivery to the customer.

(A3)

We are trying to examine ways in which we can be resourceful and define a clear performance standard in order to eliminate hassle.

(A4)

A highly innovative school may not necessarily be so because of TQM, but constant innovation or continuous improvement is one of the features one would expect to find in a school which has been effectively changed by TQM training. Innovation seems to be thriving at School B but not to any great extent at School A.

TEAMWORK

A quality organization is one characterized by cooperation and team-work rather than individualistic efforts and competitiveness. As Aquayo puts it:

Quality cannot be obtained, and improvement is impossible, without cooperation: cooperation among workers, among managers, between workers and managers, between the company and its suppliers and even between the company and its competition.

(1990:83)

Katzenbach and Smith argue that people working together in teams achieve superior results compared with people working as individuals:

We believe that teams - real teams, not just groups that management calls "teams" - should be the basic unit of performance for most organizations, regardless of size. In any situation requiring the real-time combination of multiple skills, experiences, and judgements a team inevitably gets better results than a collection of individuals operating within confined job roles and responsibilities.

(1993:15)

Scholtes also claims that an added advantage of teamwork is the mutual support that arises between team members:

As a spirit of teamwork invades the organization, employees everywhere will begin working together towards quality - no barriers, no factions, "all one team" moving together in the same direction.

(1988:2-8)

Murgatroyd and Morgan describe self-managing work teams as "the building blocks and innovation sources in successful TQM organizations" (1993:141). In their opinion, "Only self-managing work teams can bring the range of professional talent, experience and perspective needed to analyze and improve the core processes of the organization" (1993:143) and thus the success of such teams will become more and more evident as TQM becomes more widely implemented in an organization (1993:154)

All the respondents from both schools report positive changes in teamwork which TQM has helped to initiate. The comments from school A are as follows:

Has been better in most respects.

(A1)

People from (both schools) are happier and feel more comfortable in working together.

(A2)

We pride ourselves on our teamwork. The Quality processes have reinforced this.

(A3)

We have always been a good team because there are so few of us (referring to the primary department). Generally we brainstorm ways of bringing about successful change. We are united in our desire to do a good job. TQM has provided the necessary structures for us to work efficiently together.

(A4)

Much better.

(A5)

Similar, positive comments come from school B respondents:

Effort to come to consensus and make changes is evident in every process.

(B1)

Math dept. at our school works as a team to discuss change and student needs. K-12 math curriculum team meets in summer.

(B2)

We revamped, at the high school level, our department's offerings. No longer do we overlap.

(B3)

Knowledge of interactive skills and that we do have the ability to effect positive change has (sic) made teamwork more effective and meaningful.

(B4)

Each correlate committee tries to use the problem-solving process to meet its goals.

(B5)

Teamwork has clearly become a more positive feature at both schools as a result of the TQM training.

PROBLEM-SOLVING

Deming is quoted by Aquayo as having said, "He who thinks there won't be problems is living in some other world, not this one" (1990:203). In many organizations when problems do occur people respond by blaming someone or by instituting quick-fire solutions. This latter response is described by Murgatroyd and Morgan as follows:

A problem is "fixed" by a short-term solution with positive and quick results. While many recognize that this solution is short-term and that a longer term solution must be found, the veracity of the short-term 'fix' is such that their willingness to engage in the work needed for the long-term solution atrophies. The quick fix becomes permanent and the long-term fix is avoided.

(1993:160-1)

In a quality trained organization one would expect to see a move towards a greater understanding of the systematic nature of many problems. According to this perspective, most problems that occur in an organization arise out of the system and are not necessarily the fault of the people who work in the system. There are great advantages to be gained, therefore, from spending time gathering information in order to find long term solutions that improve or change the system. This sort of commitment is not easy to achieve as we tend, rather, to place blame or go for quick fix solutions.

Even in a relatively straightforward situation, problems can arise that seem insurmountable, and the will to spend the time required to understand the problem is not always present in all parties involved. Nevertheless the benefits are real and immediate.

(Aquayo, 1990:204)

In school A there are contrasting responses as to whether or not TQM has helped to initiate any changes with regard to problem-solving. A2 states emphatically, "The TQM methods of problem-solving are not used" while A4 presents an opposite opinion:

This is probably the area in which we have found TQM most valuable. Through education we have been encouraged to adopt the principles successfully in pursuit of efficiency within the organization.

(A4)

The other respondents at school A are also positive about problem-solving practices:

The process models have served to identify problems and create in us an awareness of the need to co-operate in reaching solutions.

(A3)

Staff are solving their own problems and sharing the problem-solving process. No longer do they defer to Heads for solutions to everything.

(A5)

More willingness to listen and look at problems however ultimately H/M's must still decide in some issues.

(A1)

Two respondents at school B highlight one of the major drawbacks of the problem-solving process: it is very time - consuming.

Faculty less likely to jump to solutions. Time element has been problematic - not enough faculty are willing to give time it takes to use the process regularly as a group.

(B4)

We have taken several impt (important) school issues thru (sic) this process. It is very time consuming, though, and we need to refine our skills to be more effective.

(B5)

These views concur with Aquayo's comment. Clearly, time must be made available in any organization if problem-solving is going to get tackled in a systematic and thorough manner. The other respondents at school B comment positively on the issue:

Using the Xerox (or Deming, etc) problem solving process, we have methodically worked through the changes we have worked to incorporate.

(B1)

We use problem solving in faculty meetings, math team meetings, and in our classrooms.

(B2)

More TQM problem solving is done for any problems or concerns we have as a faculty.

(B3)

COMMUNICATION

A successful TQM organization is one in which communication within and between teams is powerful, simple and effective. It is also one based on facts and genuine understanding, rather than rumour and assumptions. Communication flows freely from one area of an organization to another and between levels of the organization.

(Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1993:66)

Murgatroyd and Morgan go on to suggest that schools are particularly challenging places in which to achieve effective communication because of the nature of the workplace where organizational members are widely distributed into separate occupational worlds (1993:66). Covey states that, "Effective communication among people, management and labour, between the company and its suppliers, and between the customers and the organization is essential to Total Quality" (1990:273). His concept of empathic communication or seeking first to understand before being understood is an important component of a quality organization:

Perhaps the most powerful principle of all human interaction: genuinely seeking to understand another deeply before being understood in return. At the root of all interpersonal problems is failure to thoroughly understand each other. The actual disagreements of substance are magnified and compounded by our inability to see the world not only through another's eyes, but also through his or her mind and heart

Through empathic communication we gain not only clear understanding of another's needs, ideas, and basic paradigms, but also assurance that we are accurately understood as well. True empathic communication shares faithfully not only words, ideas, and information, but also feelings, emotions, and sensitivities.

(1990:272-3)

Two respondents feel strongly that communication has improved at school A:

We regard this as having been of the greatest benefit as it allows communication and the understanding of quality processes.

(A3)

We have developed an awareness of quality in the work we do and the importance of making it visible as part of the corporate success. We celebrate achievement and communicate needs in order to develop techniques of co-operation.

(A4)

In a previous section A4 also stated that, "TQM has definitely (sic) resulted in greater communication between members of the teaching staff and between ourselves (primary department) and the senior school." The other three respondents from school A, however, describe only moderate improvements in communication:

Slightly better - because we meet more often.

(A5)

Good in some ways, same in others (i.e. poor).

(A1)

Slightly improved.

(A2)

At school B, B1 also has a mixed response, i.e. "Communication on a professional level has increased but some personal or low level communication has not improved," while B5 refers to communication in terms of improved meetings: "MOST meetings start on time and have agendas!" Other respondents report positively:

Better communication - discussions, in particular, are much more effective. Opinionated faculty are aware of need to let others speak.

(B4)

TQM has opened the channels of communication. People have learned that top-down decisions are not necessarily the right ones and more effective decisions are made from the bottom up.

(B2)

Open discussions and more listening by all has been the greatest communication change. We ini(ti)ate changes now when we feel they are warranted.

(B3)

As Murgatroyd and Morgan have said (1993:66) schools are particularly difficult places to achieve effective communication which seems to be confirmed by the mixed responses from the respondents. Communication can never be perfect but an effective organization strives continuously to improve it, especially in terms of empathic communication.

CUSTOMER FOCUS

Greenwood and Gaunt state, "It must be accepted that the customer is the most important person in the school" (1994:33). Put another way, "The real issue is concern for the customer through quality" (Sashkin and Kiser, 1993:58). Schools are not traditionally thought of as customer focused organizations, but Bonstingl says " ...

schools are in business to satisfy their customers and to maximize opportunities to serve and delight them. Every thriving business must satisfy the needs not only of external customers ... but also of internal customers" (1992:34). Satisfying customer needs in a school situation, however, is much more complex than in a business context. As Schenkaf says, "Customer satisfaction in education is a tricky area. There is a great discrepancy between espoused principles and practice" (1993:77). In addition, among other factors, "Attaining customer satisfaction is further complicated by subtle differences in parental expectations, new work force expectations, and variations in classroom teachers" (1993:78). Nevertheless, market-driven or customer focused quality " ... is at the heart of the quality revolution and is requiring organizations to look again at their own problems and ways of working so as to better meet the needs and expectations of customers" (Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1993:46).

The external environment in which schools operate has become more customer conscious. This change is impacting on all organizations, schools included:

... Consumer stakeholders in organizations are becoming increasingly sophisticated and demanding about the products and services provided by the organization at just the same time as governments are moving to an increasingly market-driven basis for the economy, public services and social services. As these two forces coalesce, stakeholders expect more say not just in what an organization provides but in how it does so, when it does so, where it does so, with what skills it does so and with whom it does so. This gives more emphasis to customer-driven quality than has been the case in the past.

(Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1993:51)

In the quality school, therefore, one would expect to find the personnel focusing on the needs of the school's customers - children, parents and the broader community, as well as the internal customers - and aligning their activities and values so as to meet and exceed these needs.

A5 says it is "Difficult to assess" if there have been any TQM

initiated changes at school A with regard to customer focus but adds "Our reports are much better." A1 feels the school was always strong in this area:

Good - better, if possible, as was always dynamic in this field.

(A1)

This comment suggests that TQM as such is not necessary for a school to have a customer focus. Some schools, if not many, have always had a strong customer focus unrelated to the TQM philosophy. Respondents A4 and A3 feel that TQM has made the school more aware of its customers and their needs:

Identifying the customer has played a very successful part in helping us to identify our responsibility towards one another, and to the wider community. Before TQM we had a very narrow definition of who the customer actually is.

(A4)

Quality Processes have sharpened our focus to the needs of the customer.

(A3)

A2 echoes the previous two comments but adds an interesting after-thought:

All staff I believe are more focussed (sic) on doing the job better to satisfy pupils/parents. (They could also be working harder, namely, there is the threat of losing their jobs - might not be due to TQM).

(A2)

This comment illustrates the point that it is difficult to say what motivates changes in people's behaviour. The changes that respondents have reported in this research may be directly linked to their TQM training but they may also have been caused by completely extraneous factors, as suggested by A2.

The customer concept and other quality terminology is not easily accepted by many educators. It may be justifiably argued that it does not have a place in schools. B5's comment draws attention to this:

Some staff members are resentful of this "consumer" focus since educators do not produce "widgets"!

(B5)

On the basis of a comment such as this one, there are educators who would understandably feel that the TQM philosophy, especially those concepts directly linked to the business world, should not be used in schools. In many ways a school is like a business, but in a profound sense it is definitely not like a business, particularly in terms of the pupils themselves and the education they receive.

Other school B respondents comment positively on a stronger customer focus at their school:

This has increased by virtue of the fact that customer awareness has improved.

(B1)

Focus on the entire product, the end result, and their productivity.

(B2)

We focus on the student's achievement and it is not always grade-based.

(B3)

We are all much more aware.

(B4)

The emphasis on meeting and exceeding customer needs is at the heart of the quality philosophy but, as Schenkrat warns (1993:77), this is a complex issue in a school context and needs to be approached with caution.

SCHOOL CULTURE

John Urquhart, as quoted by Sashkin and Kiser, describes culture as "the cumulative perception of how the organization treats people and how people expect to treat one another" (1993:111). Culture is a complex concept. An important constituent of it is a certain set of values and beliefs which support and reinforce one another. In section B6 of the questionnaire the respondents were asked to comment on any changes to school culture that had occurred as a result of their TQM experiences. The directions were posed in an open-ended manner to give the respondents the opportunity to comment on any of the values and beliefs which seemed to them significant. In addition to their responses to the specific cultural elements highlighted previously, it would now be important to see if they selected beliefs and values that are aligned to the TQM philosophy. As Sashkin and Kiser say, "The values and beliefs that define an organization's culture and direct people's actions must be based on TQM assumptions if they are to support TQM" (1993:76).

Greenwood and Gaunt made the point that, over time, culture influences all key characteristics of an organization. This, they say, is not only true of a school but is even more important than in a business:

This is because the "product" of a school is a living human being, who has acquired as part of his permanent mental equipment some or all the key elements of the culture of the school ... This organizational 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.

(1994:56-58)

The respondents comments should, therefore, be seen in the context of the all-pervading nature of the school's culture and of the values and beliefs that underpin it.

The important factor in determining school culture is the leadership of the principal. Referring to TQM culture, Greenwood and Gaunt comment:

It cannot be stressed too often that commitment from the top is the essential ingredient. It does not matter what brought about the recognition of the need for change, whether success or failure, provided the commitment is total, and the Head is prepared to lead by example.

(1994:63)

B5 agrees strongly with this point of view:

As a staff, we are most conscious of our interactions with one another. We've learned to respect others' opinions - agree to disagree!. Under the leadership of our former principal, the faculty "bonded" more readily and consensus was reached more amicably. I strongly believe that the school leaders play a significant (crucial) role in maintaining the TQM culture. (Note: It's not enough to know the "talk" - it must be modelled everyday).

The positive values of teamwork are stressed in this statement while the emphasis given to the leadership issue highlights the perceived difference between the former and the present principal and, in general, focuses on the crucial role played by the principal in creating school culture. B5 also makes the important point that it is not "talk" that counts but action. This is confirmed by Sashkin and Kiser who say, "In every case ... the key is action. Leaders and managers construct and reinforce the organization's culture by their actions. Culture is created by their daily decisions and behaviour" (1993:110). They accentuate this further by saying:

Culture, the set of shared beliefs and values that define and direct human behaviour in social systems, is created and shaped only by consistent patterns of action. And those action patterns must be carried out over long periods of time. Policies, plans, programs, and procedures can all help define values and beliefs and guide managers in their efforts to make those values and beliefs part of the organization's culture. But in the end only practices - actions - count. ... TQM will

flourish only when there is alignment between what top managers preach and what they practice, as seen by people throughout the organization.

(1993:127)

A similar concern about leadership commitments to the TQM culture is expressed by A2:

Staff have noticed that among the 2 principals and 2 vice-principals ... only 1 really supports TQM. ... There appears to be some resentment to us having to spend so much time on "quality" and not see it practised from the top.

In view of what Sashkin and Kiser say, A4's comment seems particularly pertinent, "Unhappily there is a general feeling that perhaps there has not been enough action." A4 adds that, "Nevertheless positive steps have been taken towards establishing a management team which hopes to encourage all the staff to make quality happen in the school." He/she feels, however, that quality "remains less disciplined (than at other schools) and, "Perhaps a minority of the unconvinced amongst us are having a depressing effect on the good intentioned." A5 says, similarly, "In a number of people, there appears to have been a growth in cynicism - as the Quality process has broken down."

These negative feelings among some of the staff may be directly linked to a perceived leadership problem but, as Sashkin and Kiser explain, implementing TQM successfully is not just a leadership responsibility. It also requires support and action from everyone in the organization:

Top-level leadership is crucial for TQM, but so is lower-level support and action. It is, then, something of a paradox yet absolutely true that the way TQM really works is top-down from the bottom up. As Deming says, it is the role of management to define and design the system and to do so in a way that builds in quality. In a traditional organization, employees are responsible only for operating the system, but they often don't have the authority they need to do so effectively. TQM organizations are designed so that employees have the

authority needed to carry out their responsibilities effectively. But TQM goes even further. Employees are the primary force for continuously improving the system. They are involved in constantly revising, refining, even redesigning work processes throughout the organization to maintain and improve quality.

(1993:130)

In terms of building a common culture, school A's circumstances are rather different because of its close working relationship with its brother school. A number of problems the school experiences are directly related to this situation. A1 says, for example:

The schools have come closer together in many respects but the jealous guarding of one's own traditions and values are still areas of concern. While some still unilaterally make decisions, conflict is going to occur testing this definition (quoted on the questionnaire).

At (our school) I believe the culture as defined has always been open to discussion, perhaps TQM refocussed principle - hard to quantify this.

Given the circumstances of these two schools, it would be difficult to create a common culture with or without TQM - a real challenge for the leaders of both schools. In some respects, the TQM experiences do seem to have improved the situation:

There is no doubt that communication through TQM experiences have strengthened to bonds between the schools and have served to strengthen a common culture.

(A3)

We are sharing more ideas and being more tolerant.

People have a better understanding of why certain processes are what they are.

(A5)

B1 makes a point similar to the one made by Sashkin and Kiser that TQM empowers employees to change and improve the systems in which they operate. It is up to them to use the empowerment that they have been given:

While the rules have changed, some staff do not realize the potential empowerment of the changes, and their responsibilities with that empowerment. We can, without threat of retribution, point out problems and help solve them.

(B1)

B4 also confirms that "we do have the ability to face a problem and systematically work to a solution." He/she also stresses that "good communication is worth the time and effort it takes" and "innovation can achieve good results - it does not necessitate chaos."

Deming constantly emphasised that the spirit of innovation is an essential part of the TQM culture and that it is the responsibility of leaders to foster it. Aquayo quotes Deming as saying:

(A leader) tries to create for everybody interest and challenge, and joy in work. He tries to optimize the education, skill, and abilities of everyone, and helps everyone to improve. Improvement and innovation are his aim.

(1990:117)

An important element of school culture - and one which is strongly aligned with the TQM approach - is the need to involve the entire school community and all stakeholders in contributing to and constantly improving the system of education. Beare, Caldwell and Millikan refer to the quality of interactions between the school and its parents and community as one of the ingredients for a constructive school culture:

The traditional contacts ... have now been expanded to include curriculum information evenings, psychological guidance and advice, open days and fairs, concerts and displays of students' achievements, and a more genuine, open-door policy whereby parents have access to teachers and to the school's administration.

The parent body of any school constitutes a rich fund of skills and expertise, knowledge and experience, which goes well beyond the capacities of its teaching staff, and excellent schools are now creating opportunities to

enrich the educational experiences of their students by tapping this resource. Where the resource is unused, the school may be sending signals to its public that it sees learning as closeted, esoteric, and bound by teacher possessiveness.

(1989:199)

Both B2 and B3 draw attention to this aspect of school culture:

There is a very clear understanding that all children can learn. This learning process is not left to the teachers solely but is the responsibility of the community. "It takes a village to educate a child." We have high expectations for all to meet with success. Our home school relationships and business partnerships are very important in everyone achieving success. We have achieved greater academic success, lower failure rate, lower dropout rate, more students continuing their education, less suspensions but more discipline problems within the school.

(B2)

Our goals as a school system are clearer. We recognize, and involve as a result, the significant contribution of the community leaders and businesses (as well as parental involvement).

Success comes from this total involvement - success for the student, the school system, the businesses who will employ these students, and all taxpayers asked to increase their support through taxes.

(B3)

It is not usually an easy process to construct culture, according to Sashkin and Kiser (1993:129). It takes time and consistent management action as well as support from all stakeholders in the system. "The greatest difficulty is making a continuing, long-term commitment to TQM" (1993:111). But, they claim, the effort is well worth it.

FEELINGS ABOUT THE EFFECTS OF TQM

Section B7 of the questionnaire was designed to gauge people's

feelings about the changes or lack of changes that had occurred at the schools as a result of their TQM training. The responses varied from descriptions of people's own feelings to perceptions of how other people felt.

Respondents A3, B1 and B3 feel positive about the changes that have occurred:

Our TQM training has enlightened us and given us a greater understanding of processes that determine efficiency and communication in dealing with a customer.

(A3)

The changes are for the better. Overall morale of staff improved; an openness to include parents and community has resulted; generally speaking, decisions are fairly arrived at, and when not possible to achieve a consensus fairly, we have a "management" or administrative decision made with the good of all in mind.

(B3)

I am totally in favor of the changes and encourage people to take advantage, in a positive way, (of) the potential for these changes.

(B1)

B5 also comments positively on the changes but points out that the speed of change can be both time consuming and exhausting which underlines the fact that the process of change needs to be managed effectively so that resources are not over-strained, especially people resources.

Change is good! I've been happy (although not always at first) with the changes made here - sometimes change can create momentum and the speed of change can be exhausting. There is always the desire but time and energy are lacking. W/out change we become stale and stagnant - it's the challenge of change that make(s) education exciting.

(B5)

A5 feels that there is a better sense of team spirit and that a

number of advantages have been derived from the quality programme, but he/she is concerned that TQM seems to be directionless:

I'm pleased because I feel that there is a much better "esprit de corps". I am concerned that our Quality programme lacks 'plus' at times which leads to the feeling that it is taking us no where. But, as one who can see "the big picture", I believe that, on balance, there have been a number of plusses from all of this.

(A5)

A similar concern is expressed by A4 who says that there is a feeling among some staff that "the whole thing is a massive waste of time":

Many good things have happened and a number of issues have been resolved. Unhappily there is a general feeling that perhaps there has not been enough action. I would like to see employee education as an ongoing commitment. It is difficult to use the techniques when new members of staff are not acquainted with the procedures. There is still a feeling that the whole thing is a massive waste of time amongst those on the periphery.

(A4)

Although "Almost everyone was enthusiastic to start with", says A2, he/she goes on to describe lack of leadership commitment, favouritism and the feeling that "certain staff ... are getting away with behaviour which is totally contrary to TQM." A1 feels that some staff are mis-using TQM for their own purposes while others are embracing it in a positive and constructive manner:

Among some staff they see TQM as a means of flexing their muscles and grinding their own axes. These people have either not understood TQM principle(s) or cannot see the broader impact of principles. Others have wholeheartedly embraced the system by adapting it for their own and schools better functioning.

(A1)

B4 also draws attention to a leadership issue - "our new principal is newly trained (this year) - we need more top-down encouragement to use TQM" and, as with B5 and A4 respectively, comments on the

time consuming nature of the TQM problem solving process and the feeling among some staff that TQM is not worth this time commitment:

- Problems have arisen due to faculty "burn-out" with meetings - PSP (problem solving process) is time - consuming and several faculty are not convinced it's worth the time.

(B4)

On the other hand, B4 expresses disappointment that "we haven't stressed use of PSP and QIP (quality improvement process) more." B2 feels that the decision making process at the school is causing problems:

Decisions are not always made or achieved by consensus and then we are told this is a management decision. At times, several teachers or administrators dominate or control the issue. This does cause dissension with the faculty and individuals on staff.

(B2)

Strong feelings are expressed by respondents in this section, many of them reflecting concerns and doubts about TQM and the change process. These doubts and concerns raise the question as to whether or not TQM is appropriate in a school context which is what the respondents were asked to comment on in the next section of the questionnaire.

APPROPRIATENESS OF TQM IN A SCHOOL CONTEXT

When considering whether or not TQM is appropriate in a school context, one of the first concerns that gets raised is the question of the business jargon:

I believe the principles of TQM are valuable and applicable to schools. I do not feel that the terminology is appropriate, thus using it (as is) makes application spotty at best. Perhaps by re-naming the TQM principles, educators will feel more comfortable incorporating the very valuable concepts into their

classrooms.

(B5)

This connection with the business world is also seen as a problem that goes deeper than mere terminology and has to do with the very fundamental nature of schooling as opposed to running a business - particularly a production line business:

We are not in a production business but a people business (one could argue that we produce people) so I believe that very often the process models are not applicable to teaching.

(A2)

As schools deal with people (interact/act as thinking individuals) the 'production line' product approach has pitfalls.

(A1)

Another drawback to TQM is the fact that it is very time-consuming, especially if as many people as possible are going to get involved in the problem-solving and continuous improvement process, which does have the advantage, however, of involving the front-line people in making the decisions that directly affect their own processes:

Because teachers have so little time to spend on planning, it is difficult to ask them to spend large amounts of after school time on long term problem-solving processes. When working with a large faculty, the PSP takes even longer. Modifications to the school calendar and/or additional compensations need to be made.

For many years faculty have complained that decisions were made by people who had little to no contact with their classrooms - TQM, if properly planned for can be a vital tool for changing the way we all look at schools. The more all who are involved have a hand in decision-making, the more likely educational institutions will truly meet students' needs.

(B4)

A distinction needs to be made between the appropriateness of TQM in terms of school management and classroom learning. A number of respondents are comfortable with it in the former context but not in the latter one:

TQM is appropriate in a school context in serving to steer the corporate body in the same direction, whilst updating documents and procedures and creating efficiency in the organization.

(A3)

TQM is very worthwhile when trying to sort out day to day managerial problems if the TQM methods are implemented correctly.

(A2)

TQM is appropriate in schools when it is understood that it is a tool that can ease the changes that occur in any inter personal relationship.

I believe in any tool that can make our job easier. As Tom Woodall ... says, anything that makes sense, or is common sense, is good stuff: TQM is common sense.

(B1)

Different feelings are expressed about the classroom situation:

As a staff we feel that children should not be overwhelmed by processes which might serve to blunt creativity. Pupils should be encourage(d) to adopt modes of behaviour which are sensitive to the needs of others. They should be fortified with educational processes which aid them in achieving quality in all they do.

(A3)

Whilst I encourage teachers to adopt TQM in their preparation and their teaching, I hesitate to push TQM into teaching itself. 'Getting it right the first time' could seriously blunt innovation and suppress risk-taking. I would like pupils to strive for excellence without the formal structures or processes of the TQM education. However, I really endorse TQM education for all employees. This will provide a culture which will determine excellence.

(A4)

Two respondents focus more specifically on the pupils themselves:

It is very difficult to incorporate TQM processes with some students that have such a negative attitude or as we would say "learned helplessness." Unfortunately, these students are the ones most likely not to succeed but we have not added enough stuff to help with these at risk students. However, we continue to add academic programs with large price tags attached. If you service the at risk students in the same manner you will achieve the same result you have had in the past.

(B2)

Some students cannot perform in a TQM environment. There is a "learned helplessness" and a lack of responsibility taking at times.(sic).

(B3)

Perhaps A5 has a point, though when he/she comments:

Teachers are an "ornery" lot!. They tend to nit pick and so they fuss about trivia, instead of focusing on the real issues.

(A5)

No clear picture emerges from these comments as to whether or not TQM is appropriate in a school context, but the respondents do highlight many of the problems and difficulties associated with taking a business model and adapting it for use in a school.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Most of the respondents' general comments have already been referred to in the previous sections. For example, B3 emphasizes again that, "Strong team leadership is a must at the classroom or system-wide level." Other respondents' final comments add additional insights. According to Sashkin and Kiser, "TQM requires that achievements be recognized, both symbolically and in terms of material rewards" (1993:87). They claim that there are two

important aspects to this culture element: "First, employees must share in the outcomes of their efforts ... Second, rewards should be designed at all levels, that is, for individuals, for groups or teams, and for everyone (based on organizational performance and outcomes)" (1993:96). This issue is a cause of unhappiness for B2:

In our improvement plan it specifically calls for employee compensation linked to our success. Unfortunately, the school system, the administration, the school board, and the board of supervisors have failed miserably on this issue ... The message that is sent is continue to do more, make necessary adjustments, continue to improve but do it for less compensation and no new benefits.

(B2)

A2 stresses again the need for leadership commitment and alignment as well as the need to clarify the role of TQM in schools so as to provide a greater sense of direction:

More time needs to be spent on:

- establishing what TQM is with regard to its place in education institutions ...
- I am very much for TQM but I feel that for it to be successful it is essential that those in top management support it, practice (sic) it and are unified in the direction in which it moves.

(A2)

In conclusion, a head of department (A4) and a principal (A5) sum up their feelings about TQM as follows:

TQM is an excellent vehicle for measuring nonconformances in schools. The processes implement improvement and encourage the community to contribute towards it. In this way 'ownership' is encouraged and the culture becomes innovative. Being able to share in the implementation of improvement will ensure motivation and commitment: There will be a culture of shared values.

(A4)

The whole TQM training process was too drawn out for us.

I think that it could have been simplified and reduced to more readily understood language. I would have preferred to take staff through "The Seven Habits" and then teach them Quality, Comprehension and implementation would have taken place far more readily.

Would I do it again? Yes, but very differently.

(A5)

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

The methodology used for this research proved to be very effective as the open-ended nature of the questionnaires elicited rich and varied responses from the respondents, highlighting the complexities involved in any process designed to bring fundamental change to an organization. As was to be expected, the way in which the questions were formulated resulted in some repetition in the responses but this was a strength rather than a weakness as the repetition frequently served to emphasise key issues and concerns, for example, the need for strong leadership:

I realize that I have mentioned this several times already, but strong leadership (in relation to TQM) at the building level is critical to its integration into schools.

(B5)

One drawback of the questionnaires was the fact that at times one would like to have had further clarification on or details relating to a point made by a respondent. A2, for example, said, "(I've) tried to adopt TQM in the quality process which we've been forced into." Judging by the words "forced into", he/she has strong negative feelings about the way in which TQM was introduced at school A. It would have been interesting to be able to explore these feelings in more detail with the person concerned. Follow-up interviews would have provided an extra source of information and are to be recommended, where practical, in future research of this nature. In this instance, with schools from two different countries being used, interviews were not a practical option.

In spite of this drawback, it was a strength of this research using a school from South Africa and one from the United States of America as it highlighted similarities and differences in the experiences of the two schools and gave a much broader picture of TQM and its application in education than would otherwise have been

possible with two schools from the same country. The schools obviously operate in very different educational contexts which limits, to a certain extent, direct comparisons between the two of them. Other significant differences with regard to their TQM experiences also need to be noted:

- a) School B has been involved in TQM for about three years longer than school A, a difference which is apparent in some of the responses to the questionnaire as respondents from school B generally seem to have a deeper understanding of the TQM philosophy and a wider range of practical implementation experiences.
- b) The training respondents from school B received was firmly embedded in the work of Edwards Deming while that of school A respondents was based on the work of Philip Crosby. Deming's work has already been widely used in schools but not that of Crosby whose particular emphasis and approach have been seen as more appropriate for production line business than for schools. This means the training the two schools received was very different in terms of content and philosophy, as well as other factors which arose naturally from the individual circumstances of each school's training experiences.
- c) School A has a principal who has been in office for fourteen years while school B has a newly appointed principal. With leadership such a critical issue for the successful implementation of TQM, the circumstances of the two schools are again very different concerning this important factor.
- d) School A has a close working relationship with a brother school. A number of the responses to the questionnaire are interpreted in terms of this relationship which provides a different focus in comparison with school B where no such brother/sister relationship exists.

Although these factors all complicated the research, in a sense, they also added to the richness of the responses that were received, more than compensating for any difficulties which the difference presented.

Organizational change is a process and not an event. A limitation of this research is that it presents a snapshot of the two schools where they happen to be at a particular time in the change process. Research conducted over a longer period of time or at a number of difference time intervals would give a picture of the change process in action, indicating what changes, if any, were occurring in the schools. Follow-up research with the two schools used in this study in a few years time, for example, would be extremely valuable in determining whether or not TQM has had a long term impact on them. As TQM is a customer focused philosophy, its success, in the school context, is determined by the pupils, parents and the broader community. Their perceptions of the impact of TQM on schools also provide another interesting area for educational research.

As the use of TQM principles in schools is a very recent phenomenon, there are numerous opportunities for researchers in this field, either to focus on specific concepts such as leadership or team work, or to investigate the broader issues of school and classroom management in the light of the TQM approach. Schools exist to provide education for young people. If they are to be changed in a profound sense by TQM, then this philosophy must be applicable to classroom teaching and learning. It is in this area in particular that a great deal of research will be of value in the future.

The application of total quality management principles in the two schools selected for this research produced a wide variety of comments from the respondents reflecting, as previously mentioned, the complexity one would expect to find when any organizations embark on profound changes. The responses describe problems with the TQM philosophy as such, with the language in which it is couched, with the way it was introduced at the schools and with the way in which it is implemented - or not implemented - thereafter. This finding is in line with Murgatroyd and Morgan's statement, "When failures are investigated, two major sets of reasons emerge. The first can be referred to as 'initiating' or 'start-up'

problems. The second set of problems are concerned with the 'post-launch' issues that TQM stimulates" (1993:189). On the other hand, many of the responses are positive and enthusiastic, describing beneficial changes in human relationships and in the school culture.

Independent consultant, John Marsh, who has worked with schools in the south west of England, is quoted by Greenwood and Gaunt as follows on his research into TQM and its application in education:

The most important finding is that total quality is applicable in education, if not essential. Schools are in a unique position to influence the whole community and to start to break the vicious circle of decline which affects us all. The author sees quality improvement in education as the single most important application because it affects all the systems which operate in the community.

(1994:172)

Other research has also found that TQM has had a positive effect on schools that have implemented it. For example, the following list of educational impacts of total quality in schools is adapted from the research findings of the Conference Board of Canada:

- Students develop positive attitudes about themselves as learners. They learn more, their SAT scores improve, and drop-out rates and discipline problems are greatly reduced as school becomes a more positive force in their lives.
- The classroom becomes more interactive, with less lecture time and better use of student teamwork. Students learn to apply Quality tools and techniques to meet challenges successfully.
- New ways of learning - including peer coaching, self-evaluation, and peer evaluation - encourage students to take fuller advantage of their opportunities to learn and grow.
- The shift is towards result-focused learning, with great emphasis on process, systems, and relationships as Quality principles and practices are utilized in instruction and curriculum design.

- Administration becomes more effective. Counter-productive irritants for teachers, students, parents and others are eliminated. As a result, the system's effectiveness is dramatically improved.
- Staff morale improves. Labor-management (sic) relations are smoother. Better planning and decision-making lead to continuous improvement and greater satisfaction.

(The Conference Board of Canada, 1993)

The scope of this present research is too limited to confirm or deny, broadly speaking, all the above conclusions, but the positive findings are in line with the pronouncements of both Marsh and The Conference Board of Canada, although there are also problems associated with the use of TOM in schools. The following, then, are the significant conclusions which can be drawn from this research:

1. The initial and ongoing training that school staff receive is a critical factor in the implementation of TOM

I enjoyed the training. It enabled us to understand how to deal with deficiencies better and to pass on real problems rather than the imagined ones.

(A5)

Bonstingl says, "Training is an absolute must" (1992:40) while Marsh, quoted in Greenwood and Gaunt, claims:

Total quality in education is not a quick fix. It will take years of systematic improvement in our schools to deal with the real root causes ... It is also not free and will require some investment, mainly in training. Creative ways will need to be explored to achieve this.

(1994:173)

The training itself must also be appropriate for schools, designed to cater sensitively for their needs and values.

2. The business jargon and the industrial origins of TOM hinder

the acceptance of TOM by some educators.

This was confirmed by A4 ("I was concerned at first that the jargon accompanying the course was foreign to the school situation") and A1 ("As schools deal with people ... the 'production line' product approach has pitfalls"). Greenwood and Gaunt describe the experience of another independent consultant in the field, Terri Wilson, who found that in the schools she was working with the teachers generally took a very negative attitude to the total quality idea. This problem, she feels, can be overcome, but the situation is much more difficult when a principal lacks the necessary commitment and understanding:

This failure would seem to stem from the apparent incompatibility of the language in which TQM is inevitably presented with the deeply held values many teachers hold about education and its relationship to business. This problem can be overcome with patience and persistence, but a greater problem is that head-teachers also hold these values, and find it difficult to provide the right sort of leadership, even if they are superficially convinced of the value of the TQM paradigm.

(Greenwood and Gaunt, 1994:174)

3. Attempting to transform schools through TQM is a long-term, time-consuming process

Bonstingl says in this regard:

Make no mistake about it, a Total Quality culture in schools and communities cannot be created overnight. Effective ongoing communication and teamwork will require investments of time (apart from classroom time) by teachers, administrators and others.

(1992:46)

Problems associated with time were highlighted by a number of respondents, for example:

Because teachers have so little time to spend on planning, it is difficult to ask them to spend large

amounts of after school time on long term problem-solving processes.

(B4)

We have taken several (important) school issues thru (sic) this process. It is very time consuming, though, and we need to refine our skills to be more effective.

(B5)

Schools that wish to follow the TQM path must be aware of the time commitment involved and find creative ways to provide the time necessary for the change process to occur. As Schenkraat says, "Personal leadership and time commitment are essential to the success of TQM in transforming schools: (1993:81). Bonstingl recommends the following:

Make your journey to Total Quality a slow and steady progress. The TQM transformation takes time ... In most cases it takes at least two to three years of constant commitment and hard work to redesign sub-optimizing systems and processes, and another two years to see tangible, long-lasting benefits. Spread the word to avoid the effects of cynicism.

(1992:48)

The cynicism to which Bonstingl refers was clearly evident in this research:

In a number of people, there appears to have been a growth in cynicism - as the Quality process has broken down.

(A5)

There is still a feeling that the whole thing is a massive waste of time amongst those on the periphery.

(A4)

4. TQM training produces some specific task related benefits which generally improve the efficiency of school management practices.

Although many of the theorists would argue that the main purpose of a TQM transformation is not to increase efficiency, this is one of the important benefits as evidenced by the respondents' experiences:

I have prepared much better for meetings which seem to fill my days. As a result, I believe that we have had more effective meetings.

(A5)

My admin has become more methodical as I have tried to foresee problem areas. I think I did this before, it just re-focused the principles.

(A1)

5. The TQM training produces some specific process orientated benefits which generally improve the effectiveness of school management practices.

Process improvements are fundamental to the TQM philosophy as they are the basis for continuous improvement. A number of respondents reported that they have become more process orientated as a result of their TQM training:

In my personal and professional life I am more process orientated ... as I focus on requirements and (on) articulating these (more clearly).

(A2)

I have tried to think through processes rather than criticize individuals.

(A5)

I am also more aware (of)/interested in looking at multiple solutions to issues! I tend to look for connections more.

(B5)

Murgatroyd and Morgan emphasize the need for organizations to move beyond focusing simply on results or outcomes to working on process

improvements instead:

Most major successes in TQM have come from passing the outcome barriers and re-thinking the process - working smarter, not harder. While keeping an eye on outcomes is an important part of understanding process, process improvement will lead to sustainable outcome change.

(1993:195)

6. TQM improves and strengthens human relationships in schools, although poor leadership practices can have an undermining effect.

Schenkkrat claims that "Quality, as explained by W. Edwards Deming, at a deep level of understanding and application, can begin to serve as a vehicle for any organization to create value through people" (1993:87). It is this process of creating value through people that builds positive human relationships in an organization. Respondents in the research reported many examples of improved relationships:

I believe that I am a better listener and more thoughtful speaker (in my interaction with students) than before training.

(B5)

(I am) more aware of needs and (the) means to encourage (the) involvement of all involved in a meeting or project.

(B4)

More cooperative work and team problem-solving is utilized by me than ever before.

(B5)

(I am) more tolerant of pupils and their problems (TQM focused me where perhaps I was getting into a rut).

(A1)

There is no doubt that the interaction brought about by training together did wonders for the staff. They began to appreciate the competence of their colleagues.

(A5)

Balanced against these comments, however, are those of a few respondents who reported no change or negative changes in staff relationships:

I have not noticed any changes. We have always been caring and considerate on the whole. Those who have always "sucked" up to the boss continue to do so and their attitude has not changed towards their colleagues.

(A2)

At first ... the staff seemed to respond to the interactive skills (beyond training) in meetings and general conversations. I have noticed that since then (over 2-3 years) we have resorted to our pre-TQM rudeness! (Maybe we need to revisit those skills).

(B5)

Improvement in staff relationships is one of the key indicators of the successful implementation of TQM in a school, but not all people undergo positive or immediate changes as a direct consequence of their training, and nor will such changes be sustained unless there is commitment from the school leaders continuously to build positive relationships and to model such behaviour themselves.

7. When TQM is successfully implemented, the school culture is transformed in terms of basic beliefs and values which are defined and expressed through leadership and shared by the members of the school community.

Sashkin and Kiser say that organizations must "internalize the underlying values and beliefs needed to make TQM effective. Otherwise, the result will be abandonment of the effort and of TQM" (1993:166). They continue:

Despite the difficulties and obstacles faced by leaders who would shape organizational culture, we are optimistic about the potential for success ... We are beginning to understand how leaders construct organizational cultures. There is nothing simple or

easy about it, but there is hope that, through visionary leadership, organizations can be transformed by cultures founded on total quality management.

(1993:166)

Although it is debatable whether or not the two schools in the research have been transformed as yet by TQM, positive changes in school culture were expressed by the respondents with regard to various specific beliefs, values and practices, for example:

a) Communication

There is no doubt that communication through TQM experiences have (sic) strengthened the bonds between the schools and have (sic) served to strengthen a common culture.

(A3)

TQM has opened the channels of communication.

(B2)

TQM has definitely resulted in greater communication between members of the teaching staff and between ourselves and the senior school.

(A4)

Others, however, describe communication as only "slightly improved" (A2).

b) Teamwork

We pride ourselves on our teamwork. the Quality processes have reinforced this.

(A3)

Knowledge of interactive skills and that we do have the ability to effect positive change has (sic) made teamwork more effective and meaningful.

(B4)

c) Innovation

We've tackled a major one (innovation) each year for the past 3 (years) - we're much more confident to undertake them if wanted.

(B4)

New ideas (more interaction between disciplines, seminar period, advisory groups) are initiated by teachers.

(B1)

Respondents from school A were not as enthusiastic about the concept of innovation with two respondents (A2 and A5) claiming that no innovations had occurred as a result of TQM. The reasons for this difference may be related to the leadership issue at school A and the fact school B has been involved in TQM for three years longer than school A.

d) Customer-focus

Identifying the customer has played a very successful part in helping us to identify our responsibility towards one another, and to the wider community. Before TQM we had a very narrow definition of who the customer actually is.

(A4)

This (customer-focus) has increased by virtue of the fact that customer awareness has improved.

(B1)

Some staff members, however, are not comfortable with the implied business context of this concept:

Some staff members are resentful of this "consumer" focus since educators do not produce "widgets"!

(B5)

f) Empowerment

The feeling of empowerment - of actually helping in decision making that affects my teaching and the students is great!

(B3)

The research has identified two major problems that have arisen as a result of staff being more empowered. According to respondent B1, some people do not use the empowerment they have been given:

While the rules have changed, some staff do not realize the potential empowerment of the changes and their responsibilities with that empowerment. We can, without threat of retribution, point out problems and help solve them.

(B1)

Other members of staff have apparently abused their empowerment for selfish purposes:

Among some staff they see TQM as a means of flexing their muscles and grinding their own axes.

(A1)

Teachers tend to feel that TQM gives them the right to "run the show".

(A5)

Marsh argues that one of the key constraints of TQM in education is the lack of control or empowerment that teachers actually have in practice. Greenwood and Gaunt quote him as saying:

Companies have far greater control and influence over their key processes than schools. Research and development is an essential process for a manufacturing company. However, schools have lost much of their influence, if not all, over a key process, curriculum design.

(1994:173)

e) Problem-Solving

Although problem-solving is an important component of the TQM philosophy, Murgatroyd and Morgan warn against over-emphasizing this aspect and reflecting the broader, holistic issues:

School TQM initiation teams ... seem always to want to launch TQM as a way of dealing with a specific set of issues, rather than as a way of dealing with the strategic future of the school in its entirety. TQM is a whole-school, whole-staff, whole-issue strategy, which can be especially helpful in dealing initially with some long-standing problems. If presented solely in terms of the long-standing problems, then TQM will be seen as a solution box for these problems and not as a general way of working.

(1993:191-2)

Although A2 stated, "The TQM methods of problem-solving are not used", the majority of respondents commented positively about improved problem-solving practices:

This is probably the area in which we have found TQM most valuable. Through education we have been encouraged to adopt the principles successfully in pursuit of efficiency within the organization.

(A4)

More TQM problem-solving is done for any problems or concerns we have as a faculty.

(B3)

8. Leadership commitment is probably the most critical factor for a successful TOM transformation in an organization.

More than any other factor, the research highlighted the importance of leadership in the TOM process:

I am very much for TOM but I feel that for it to be successful it is essential that those in top management support it, practice (sic) it and are unified in the direction in which it moves.

(A2)

Without strong leadership/role models a staff can flounder in maintaining TQM skills. That is what has happened here.

(B5)

Most of the major problems experienced with TQM at the two schools seem to have been rooted in leadership issues:

I have noticed that all of the top 4 only practice TQM when it suits them.

(A2)

Under the leadership of our former principal, the faculty "bonded" more readily and consensus was reached more amicably. I strongly believe that the school leaders play a significant (crucial) role in maintaining the TQM culture.

(B5)

The research also revealed, however, that TQM has led to some positive leadership changes:

(Leadership) has been exhibited by a variety of people - (the) feeling of empowerment has given confidence to take the lead for issues of concern.

(B4)

There has been an attempt to be less dogmatic and keep ever(y)body up to date with areas of concern.

(A4)

Schenkraat makes the point that "Personal leadership transformation will need to precede organizational transformation" (1993:88). This does not appear to have occurred at school A nor with the new principal at school B. Again, the research findings concur with Schenkraat when he says:

Leadership is best evidenced when quality is integrated into all major decisions and leaders talk of personal transformation. Moreover, these transformations are evident to other people, as leaders model growth and show the change they have undergone.

(1993:85)

In summing up his views on the quality transformation in schools, Marsh, as quoted by Greenwood and Gaunt, poses an important question:

Finally, quality starts and finishes with leadership. It is true that everyone contributes to quality but without principle - centered (sic) leadership it is impossible. Are our leaders in education ready for this challenge?

(1994:173)

If the answer is no, it is highly unlikely that TQM will take hold in our schools.

9. TQM is appropriate in a school context as long as there is leadership commitment, and perceived and practical problems regarding issues such as the business jargon and lack of time can be overcome.

The research indicated that educators do have serious misgivings about the appropriateness of TQM in the school context. Their experiences with TQM and the way in which school leaders handle it will either confirm these misgivings or help to dissipate them. It must be said that the leader's task is not an easy one as most teachers are sincerely if, perhaps, blindly, committed to their customary practices. Schenkrat says, in fact:

Little evidence exists that teachers have the job skills or predispositions to act as a learning community in either their individual or collective roles. Thus teachers don't have the skills that easily foster a transition into 'mountain climbing'.

(1993:88-89)

Greenwood and Gaunt are convinced, however, that TQM is appropriate in schools:

We feel that there is enough evidence available already to show that the application of Deming's thinking in schools is capable of producing revolutionary change. But it does require champions who

are themselves revolutionaries, willing to stand the conventional wisdom of fifty years on its head.

(1994:157)

Putting aside the problems that have been referred to, most of the respondents agree that TQM is appropriate in schools:

I believe the principles of TQM are valuable and applicable to schools.

(B5)

TQM, if properly planned for, can be a vital tool for changing the way we all look at schools.

(B4)

TQM is very worthwhile when trying to sort out day to day managerial problems if the TQM methods are implemented correctly.

(A2)

Some respondents accept TQM as an effective school management tool but do not see its appropriateness in the classroom situation:

Whilst I encourage teachers to adopt TQM in their preparation and their teaching, I hesitate to push TQM into teaching itself.

(A4)

Some students cannot perform in a TQM environment. There is a "learned helplessness" and a lack of responsibility taking (place) at times.

(B3)

If TQM is not appropriate in the classrooms, then it is not appropriate in schools because schools exist to provide teaching and learning. As Schenkrat says:

As educators, we face a doubly difficult challenge. While we, too, have to change the work setting, we also must change our core technology - the teaching / learning process.

(1993:20)

The Deming paradigm does double duty for us. It guides the transformation of the workplace for the teaching profession, as it does for all professions. But it also can guide the transformation of education into a constructivist meaning-making, learning environment.

(1993:28)

In applying TQM to schools, Greenwood and Gaunt endorse the following points:

- Schools are not businesses
- Teachers mistrust and fear the language of business
- We must therefore translate the thinking of Deming into a language which reflects the professional aspirations and values of teachers
- The TQM paradigm runs counter to much of the management style and methods which are being imposed on schools by government anxious for results and efficiency. These include grading, league tables of results, testing, appraisal of teachers, performance-related pay.
- There is no substitute for leadership. Leadership in the right direction will occur only if teachers and managers recognize the need for fundamental change in a new direction, and are convinced that Deming was right.

(1994:173)

TQM is clearly not a simple set of procedures which can be followed on a step by step basis by every school to achieve similar results. It deals rather with complexity both in terms of implementation strategies and in the on-going change process that follows thereafter. Each organization is different, as Sashkin and Kiser stress:

The approach that each organization takes to TQM will be, to a degree, unique. This is because every organization has its own culture, with special characteristics that imply specific needs. Moreover, organizations will differ in their applications of TQM simply because it must be the parties themselves who create the plans and actions.

(1993:15)

The TQM journey is not one that should be undertaken lightly, but for those schools that do decide to embark on it, the following points could usefully be borne in mind:

1. The commitment of the school principal and other school leaders is essential.
2. The training that is done - preferably by an outside facilitator - must be sensitive to the special needs and values of a school.
3. The quality transformation is first and foremost about changing human relationships and the way in which people work together.
4. The quality transformation is also about changing and continuously improving the systems in which people work - not about blaming people when things go wrong.
5. School management and classroom learning should be transformed simultaneously through the training process.
6. TQM is not a quick fix but an on-going commitment to continuous improvement so patience, persistence and adherence to the school's vision are required.
7. A level of cynicism, mistrust and doubt can be expected but it must be worked through in a positive, constructive manner - not everyone will be committed at once.
8. Structured periods of time on a regular basis must be made available to tackle the transformation process - this is a leadership responsibility.
9. There is no one way to introduce TQM into an organization - much will depend on the individual circumstances of each school.

10. A set of values and beliefs to which all stakeholders in the school are committed is essential for defining the quality culture which the school wishes to create.
11. Very few teachers naturally see the big picture and how their actions and attitudes fit in or conflict with it - this must be cultivated over time, especially in terms of concepts like the customer focus, systems thinking and continuous improvement.
12. TQM must not be seen as something which is added on to the way in which the school operates but rather as something which is totally integrated and affects all aspects of school life.
13. Success must be celebrated and recognition given to teams and individuals as the quality transformation progresses - core values, beliefs and procedures will also need to be constantly revisited.
14. Schools should network with each other and with other organizations involved with TQM so that they can learn from each other's experience.
15. Schools should not be afraid to take risks and make mistakes - this is the only way that true learning occurs.
16. After the initial training, create a quality improvement team representative, as far as possible, of all the school's stakeholders to lead the quality improvement process.
17. Schools need to agree upon priorities and not try to do everything at once - transformation is a slow, steady, never-ending journey.
18. Parents are likely to respond negatively to the quality concepts unless they are kept fully informed and involved in the changes that start occurring at the school.

19. The quality journey is often a difficult one and the temptation to give up is strong at times - people need to encourage and support each other.
20. Everyone involved in the change process should strive to maintain a sense of fun and adventure - it does wonders for morale and helps to keep the change process on track.

TQM does not offer any guarantees of success on the challenging and complex journey of school transformation, but with persistence and the commitment to create a caring, supportive environment where people are dedicated to continuous improvement, success can be achieved. As Murgatroyd and Morgan conclude:

Not all schools who embark on the road to TQM will be successful: it is a tough road with many opportunities for failure and success. The key to success is commitment, communication and the development of a culture dedicated to making vision a reality through actively pursuing a focused strategy dedicated to meeting and exceeding customer needs.

(1993:201)

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ADDENDUM

Copy of the letter to respondents
and the questionnaire completed by them

P O Box 187
Grahamstown
South Africa
6140
Telephone: (0461) 22922/24017
Fax: (0461) 27044

21 March 1995

Dear Respondent

Thank you for agreeing to complete this questionnaire which forms part of an M.Ed research project to assess critically the application of Total Quality Management (TQM) principles on schools, with particular reference to staff relationships and schools culture.

Your school has been targeted for this research as your staff have been exposed to TQM training in recent years. Your own personal anonymity and confidentiality will, however, be completely respected and guaranteed. Please note that all respondents must have taught at their present school for at least one academic year prior to the introduction of TQM at the school.

Please will you respond to the questions in as much detail as possible. Your feelings and personal opinions are of great significance in this research. Your school will be sent a copy of the findings at the conclusion of the study.

Thank you again for your co-operation and assistance.

Yours sincerely

BRIAN CARLSON

SECTION B

1. Describe fully the training you have undergone in TQM principles.

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2. Describe how you personally responded as an educator to this training:

a) during the training

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b) since the training

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5) Describe briefly the changes, if any, which you feel TQM has helped to initiate in your school with regard to the following qualities or concepts.

a) leadership:
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b) innovation:
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c) teamwork:
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d) problem-solving:
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e) communication:
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f) customer focus:
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