

**ACTION RESEARCH ON TOTAL QUALITY EDUCATION IN**

**A SOUTH AFRICAN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

by

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**PROMOTER: PROFESSOR G M STEYN**

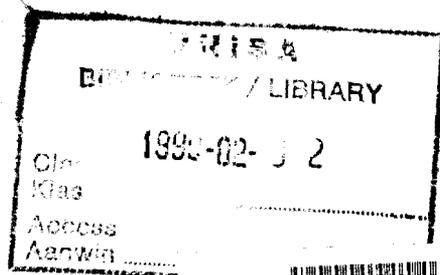
**JUNE 1998**

**DEDICATION**

The children, parents and staff of IRG

Our school motto that encourages the quality philosophy:

Climb high, climb far  
Your goal the sky, your aim the star



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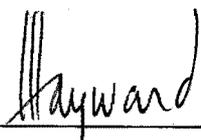
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**DECLARATION**

I declare that *Action research on total quality education in a South African primary school* is my own work and that sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



R P D HAYWARD



DATE

## SUMMARY

The principles of Total Quality Management (TQM) have been used in the business, commercial and industrial sectors to improve both product and service. In a limited number of schools worldwide, there have been attempts to adapt TQM theory and practice to the educational management of institutions.

In this thesis there has been an attempt to adapt the TQM philosophy to the field of educational practice. Quality tools and techniques used in TQM organisations have been studied to ascertain their applicability in schools. During the course of the study, the researcher discerned the need to give TQM a distinct identity within the domain of educational management. In the management of schools, there are philosophies and practices which are different from those encountered in non-educational settings. The concept Total Quality Education (TQE) was used to acknowledge this reality.

Action research was done over a three-year period at a South African co-educational public primary school. During the four research cycles of looking, thinking and acting, TQE principles were implemented in the school. Stakeholders such as parents, learners and teachers identified areas for improvement of the quality of education. Areas identified included the curriculum, physical resources, extramural activities, staff development, learning and financial management of the school. Quality tools and techniques were applied by all stakeholders to effect the desired improvements. In the fourth and last cycle of the research a questionnaire was given to a sample of the parent community. Progress made in the improvement of the quality of education provided was noted and areas to be improved further were identified.

The researcher submits that TQE can be meaningfully applied in South African schools. The various stakeholders can make contributions to the betterment of schools. Through the application of the principles of the TQE philosophy, it is possible to transform South African schools into institutions

where all learners can experience education of true quality.

#### Key terms

action research, apartheid education, continuous improvement, educational management, primary school management, quality education, quality toolkit, quality tools and techniques, total quality education (TQE), total quality management (TQM), ubuntu.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### ORIENTATION

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

At the start of the twenty-first century there is an acute awareness of the concept of quality. Management in the business, commercial and industrial sectors has been making concerted efforts to improve performance by paying particular attention to the quality of services and products given to the customer. The customer is the life blood of the organisation. Without a customer, the organisation is dead.

In the field of education, the quality of education provided by schools is coming under increased scrutiny. Parents of the third millennium will be expected to pay far more for their children's education than they did a decade ago. The State in many societies no longer provides free and compulsory education. In South Africa, the Hunter education commission report recommends that parents will have to declare their earnings (Bulbring 1995:4). Compulsory fees will be determined on a sliding scale, according to the parent's income.

As parents pay more, they become "customers" of the schools and wish to ensure that they receive "value for money". The staff of a school need to address customers' (learners and parents) needs. Dissatisfied customers move to alternative schools (Abbott 1998:9-10; Daniels 1998:10; Sallis 1993:11-12; West-Burnham 1992:4-5).

The South African school, particularly in the public sector, must make a paradigm shift in its management principles if it is to be a survivor of the new economic realities. No longer will the provincial or central government be able to meet all the financial needs of the institution. The governance of the school has devolved on to the local community which needs to meet the

increasing financial demands of the institution. To survive and develop as a good school, principles hitherto the pre-occupation of the business sector, will become critically relevant in school management. The school needs to "deliver the goods": to provide a sound and relevant education to every learner. Care will have to be taken to ensure that the school is administered on sound financial principles. There is competition amongst schools. They need fee-paying parents who will bear the costs of maintaining the facilities, building new physical resources and paying for additional staff (in the public schools) who are not on the provincial payroll. As customers of the education system, parents can compare what schools offer as regards human and physical resources. Learners are also customers. Their impressions of competing schools can have an influence on the school finally chosen by the parents. In a competitive marketplace, schools need to be inviting to encourage prospective customers to enter their doors.

Historically, South African education has had two major groupings of schools with regard to the allocation of physical and human resources. One group consists of schools which are in an easier position than the other to provide a quality education. Such schools have had relatively low teacher:learner ratios, well-qualified staff as well as modern and plentiful teaching aids. These schools often have had sufficient facilities for a wide range of extramural activities. Many of these schools received disproportionate funding in the apartheid and colonial eras. In 1994, 44% of the per capita expenditure spent on a White learner in a House of Assembly school, was allocated for a Black learner in a Department of Education and Training (DET) school (Cooper et al. 1994:241). The second major group consisted of schools which have been deprived, to a large degree, of human and physical resources. These schools are still characterised by under-qualified teachers who are teaching huge numbers in a single classroom. One illustration is in the 1994 classroom of a former DET (Black) school, the teacher:learner ratio was 37:1. In the former House of Assembly (White) schools, the figure was

20:1 (Cooper 1994:251).

It is important to note that, particularly since the 27 April 1994 democratic elections, these inequalities of educational resourcing are being addressed. On 15 March 1995, a White Paper on education was published (South Africa:1995). A single new national department of education was established in 1995 to replace seventeen former education departments. The document stated that a uniform teacher:learner ratio would be phased in. Equity of staffing of schools began in 1995 (South Africa 1995:62).

There is a critical need to improve the overall quality of South African education. Ten aspects of the school system that reflect the need to improve the quality of education provided, are described below:

- Poor matriculation results

South African education is characterised by high failure rates as indicated in Figure 1.1.

**Figure 1.1** Matriculation pass rates in 1996 and 1997  
(Cresswell et al. 1998:1).

	1996	1997	% Change
Gauteng	55.6%	51.5%	-4.1%
Free State	51.1%	42.3%	-8.8%
W Cape	80.7%	77%	-3.7%
E Cape	46%	50%	-4%
KZ Natal	61%	54%	-7%
N Province	37.8%	31.8%	-6%
NW Province	66%	50%	-16%
Mpumalanga	50.9%	54%	+3.1%
N Cape	72.9%	67.3%	-9.2%

Out of an estimated 805,425 candidates who registered for the 1997 matriculation examinations, only half passed (Naidu 1998:17). For every matriculation candidate who writes

supplementary examinations or repeats the matriculation year, great financial demands are placed on education budgets. Also, there are intangible costs to these results such as making so many more young South Africans unemployable, as well as ineligible for vocational training or tertiary education. The emotional damage done to the self-respect and self-esteem of these learners can be considerable.

- High teacher:learner ratios

Low teacher:learner ratios can impact positively on the quality of education provided. The converse applies. The teacher:learner ratios in 1993 reflected the discrepancies amongst the segregated education departments. The figures below indicate the number of learners per teacher (Cooper 1994:711):

Department of Education and Training (Black learners)	44.4
House of Assembly (White learners)	18.0
House of Delegates (Indian learners)	21.9
House of Representatives (Coloured learners)	22.2

Schools that had lower teacher:learner ratios were able to provide better quality education. In the 1994 matriculation examinations, the pass rates for the different racial groups were (Cooper 1994:228):

Black - 49%      Coloured - 88%      Indian - 92%      White - 98%

- Low teacher morale

Professor Renfrew Christie, Dean of Research at the University of the Western Cape, gives low teacher morale as one of the reasons why the overall 1997 matriculation result was only 47.1% (Christie 1998:7).

Teacher morale is low. The redeployment scheme pleased no one. Teachers no longer get better pay for improving

their qualifications. Drunkenness and AWOL rates seem to have increased. The State and the unions seem to have allied, to try to drive highly qualified, experienced and therefore expensive teachers out of the system. Of course the pass rate is lower. We should be very troubled if it were otherwise.

- High repetition rates

As a result of the poor quality of many Black schools, there are high repetition rates, especially in Grades One, Ten, Eleven and Twelve. (Shindler 1997:145). On average, Black learners spend twelve years in schools but attain just under ten years of education. At the other end of the results scale, White learners also spend twelve years in school but attain eleven years of education (Shindler 1997:145). These figures do not include the drop-out rates from the school system.

- Poorly qualified teachers

Of all teachers in South African schools in 1994, only 64% were properly qualified (Shindler 1997:144). There were 7% who were professionally unqualified, while the remaining 29% were underqualified. The underqualified teachers had less than a matriculation and a three-year qualification. Poorly qualified teachers adversely effect the learners' scholastic performances. Hofmeyr (1997) cites the results of an international Maths and Science study for thirteen-year olds. The international average was 500 points. Singapore took first position in both Maths (643 points) and Science (607 points) respectively. South Africa was bottom in both Maths (354 points) and Science (326 points).

- Inadequacy of curriculum for 21st century

Ramphele (1997:25) states that if one accepts that Bantu education discouraged and in some cases prevented the teaching of Maths and Science in most schools, it follows that:

...one would not be surprised, let alone embarrassed to admit that most teachers would not have the requisite skills to perform at the appropriate level to prepare pupils for the twenty-first century's knowledge-driven society.

The 1997 World Competitiveness report rated South Africa in 44th position out of 53 competing nations (Hofmeyr 1997). The South African education system is not providing its learners with the quality of education to make them meaningfully contributing and productive citizens of the twenty-first century.

- High illiteracy rates

Different literacy rates for the various population groups in South Africa reflect the discrepancies in the quality of education. The Development Bank of Southern Africa estimates that in 1993, 46% of the Black population was illiterate, 34% of the Coloured population, 16% of the Indian and 1% of the White population (Cooper 1994:24).

Illiterate adults impact negatively both socially and economically on society (Shindler 1997:147). The majority of illiterate adults have less access to waged employment and, should they be employed, they tend to be concentrated in low-paid, unskilled work or in the informal sector. As illiterate parents, they are often unable to help their children with their formal learning (Shindler 1997:147).

- Unsatisfactory school management

With the introduction of the South African Schools Act in 1996, provision has been made for the establishment of governing bodies at schools (Reeves 1998:13). Such a body consists of the principal, parents of the school, learners and teachers and other staff members. Traditionally White schools had governing bodies prior to the introduction of the Act. Many former Black, Coloured

and Indian schools did not have these bodies. As a result, education departments like the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) launched workshops in 1997 to train school governing bodies in their rights and responsibilities. Modules in financial management, school constitutions, functions and powers were presented (Reeves 1998:13).

In her article titled *Making educational ends meet*, Reeves (1998:13) highlighted the discrepancies of management know-how between a school such as King Edward VII (KES) in Houghton, Johannesburg and Belle Primary in Orlando West, Soweto. At KES, among the parent community will be chartered accountants, management consultants and lawyers available to assist in the governance of the school. In contrast, Belle School will not have these human resources. Thousands of other schools will be in a similar situation to that of Belle School.

- Racial conflict

As South African schools desegregate, tension amongst the different races will become a reality. An example of racial clashes is at the Vryburg High School in North-West Province. Patrick Laurence (1998:38) compares the police patrolling the entrances to Vryburg High School to that of Little Rock, Alabama, in the 1950s in the United States. Black learners have boycotted classes because of a fear of physical assault and the demand for significant changes in the school management.

When there is racial conflict in a school, the educational process is adversely affected. Teachers and learners are unable to perform at optimal levels. The quality of education offered to learners is lower.

- Lack of educational equity

Colonial and apartheid-era education departments skewed human and physical resources in favour of former Whites-only schools.

Professor S M E Bengu, the Minister of Education, outlined ideals for the new South African education system in the White Paper on Education and Training (South Africa 1995:5):

It is essential for us to build a system of education and training with which all our people can identify because it serves their needs and interests. Such a system must be founded on equity and non-discrimination.

A dilemma faces the government as it strives to bring equity into the resourcing of all South African schools. Parents of children in former privileged schools perceive a drop in the standards of education offered in public schools. Daniels (1998:10) observes:

In the 90s, restructuring in education has led to such enormous policy changes that parents have scrambled to enrol their children at private schools.

A growth in the private school sector could mean that less parental money and management expertise are available for public schools. The principle of equity would be undermined in the post-apartheid South Africa. Public schools, in the main, would have less resources than private schools with which to provide quality education.

Preceding paragraphs have highlighted ten areas where South African education is lacking if it is to provide an effective quality education to its learners. There is a desperate need to transform our education system. Total Quality Management (TQM) theory and practice has brought about significant and permanent improvement to organisations and industries world-wide. It is submitted by the researcher that TQM and allied quality theories need to be studied in the context of South African education. The quality philosophy has a pivotal contribution to make to the betterment of education. President Nelson Mandela has highlighted the benefits of quality education for the whole of South Africa (McKenzie 1997:5):

As parents we all want our children to have access to quality education and quality skills. Quality education will equip South Africans to raise their own living standards, to participate in the economic growth of the country and to compete in the global economy.

## 1.2 NEED FOR THE STUDY

As mentioned in the introductory paragraphs, the researcher maintained that the majority of South African schools provides education of poor quality. There is a need for a study on how the education system can be improved.

A second need for the study was the researcher's endeavours to upgrade the quality of education at the case study school. The researcher has been principal of the school since July 1993. The previous principal held the post for eighteen years. He and his predecessor (the first principal of the school), had given the institution a good name in the local community and in educational circles. TQM was seen by the researcher as a means to develop further the areas of strength of the school as well as deal with possible challenges to its future success.

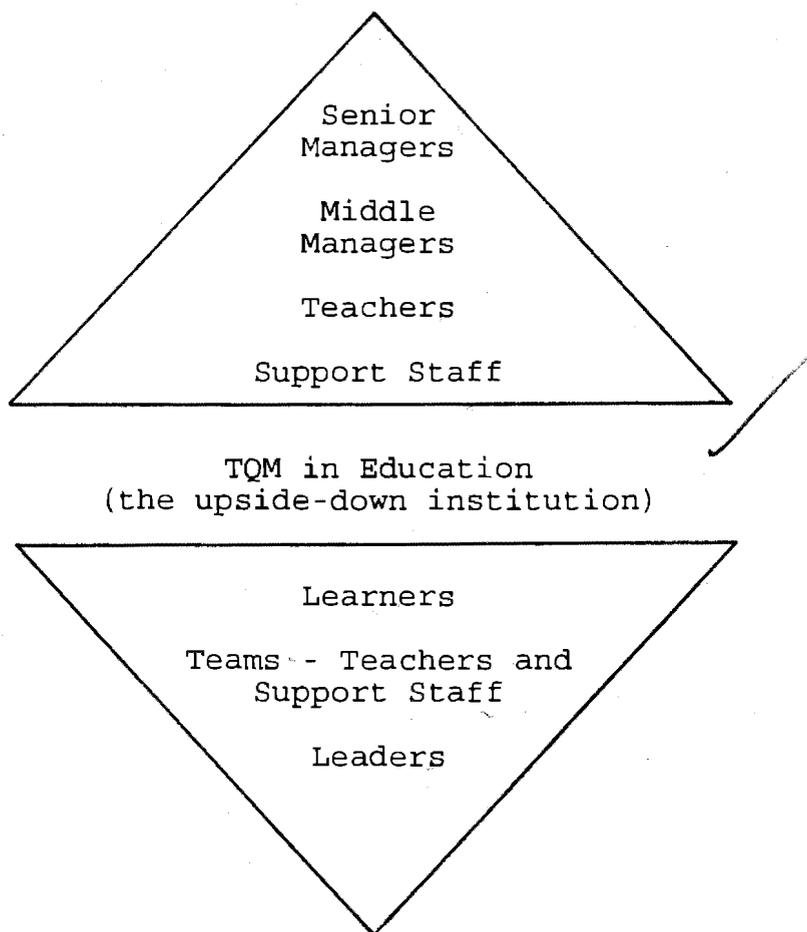
TQM philosophy encourages all stakeholders to participate in the continuous improvement of the relevant organisation. The researcher's initial perception on his arrival at the school was that not all the stakeholders were contributing ideas to the improvement of the school. Many parents seemed passive and hesitant to recommend possible areas of improvement at Parent-Teacher Association and Governing Body meetings.

At staff level, management was characterised by a top-down hierarchy where most of the ideas and initiative were emanating from the executive staff which consisted of the departmental heads, deputy and principal. Few ideas and new projects were driven, for example, by teachers in non-promotion posts. Amongst the learners, there was no forum for them to convey their needs

and requests to the staff. The prefect body made no recommendations to the teachers on possible areas of school improvement.

*Dynamics part marker*  
TQM theory rejects the traditional hierarchy institution, with the senior managers at the top of the pyramid and the teachers towards the base (Sallis 1993:38). In TQM as applied to education, it is an upside down institution with the learners (or customers) at the top of the inverted pyramid. In Figure 1.2 the structure of a TQM institution is illustrated in diagrammatic form:

Figure 1.2      **The hierarchical institution and the upside-down TQM institution (Sallis 1993:38).**



The researcher wanted to implement the upside-down TQM organisational structure to ascertain its impact on the quality of education being offered at the school.

On his arrival at the school, the researcher noted that certain physical facilities were lacking, such as a Computer Centre, Tuckshop, Arts and Crafts room, as well as a Media Centre with sufficient information technology resources to meet the needs of eight hundred learners. Five excellent primary schools are within a radius of about ten kilometres from the researcher's school. These schools are competing for learner enrolment. As the school increasingly desegregated after the 1994 elections, the issue of multiculturalism came to the fore. It was necessary for all stakeholders in the community to look at such issues. Accordingly, the researcher maintained that there was need for action research.

All areas of the school, for example, learner management, teaching methodology and administrative management called for review, according to the researcher. There is an ongoing requirement to improve the quality in these and every other facet of the school. The action research findings at this school may be of benefit to other schools up against similar issues.

### 1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

TQM has benefited a small number of overseas (mainly United States, Australian, British and Canadian) schools that have implemented its theory and practice. Aspects of management in the business and manufacturing sectors have been identified as having distinct parallels in the education sector.

*Supervision models*  
If TQM and allied quality theories are found to be effective management strategies for South African schools, problems or challenges come to the fore. Are there unique adaptations to theory and practice required for the South African situation? Given the racially compartmentalised and vastly disproportionately resourced educational structures until 1994, would there be the need, initially at least, for distinctive strategies to be adopted for different sectors of the society? An illustration would be the different issues to be addressed in improving the

quality of education in a typical under-resourced Sowetan school compared with that of a financially well-funded Johannesburg suburban school.

A high school in Soweto might need to spend money on repairing vandalised classrooms and installing an effective security system for the school. Such action would improve the quality of the learning environment. By contrast, at a high school in the Johannesburg northern suburbs, there might be a need to identify and respond to an ever-increasing multicultural learner-body. This action would further improve the quality of the school day for those learners. Every school will have unique issues to address on the improvement of the quality of education that it provides.

For many South African teachers, TQM would be a significant paradigm shift from the traditional style of school management. There would be a change from the hierarchical, authoritarian style to that of a participative and democratic approach. A challenge is how to communicate effectively such major paradigm changes to all stakeholders in South African education.

At the outset of the study, the researcher used the concept of TQM. On reflection, he found the concept of Total Quality Education (TQE) more relevant to this study and the discipline of educational management. An explanation of the switch from TQM to TQE is given in 1.7.2.

The main problem posed in this study is:

How can educational management in a South African school be improved through the implementation of Total Quality Education (TQE) principles and practices?

The specific research sub-problems related to this study may be phrased as follows:

- What is the philosophy behind TQM?
- How viable is the application of TQM principles in schools?
- How can TQE be introduced into a South African primary school?
- What lessons were learnt? ✓
- What are the implications of the implementation of TQE for other educational institutions?

#### 1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

##### 1.4.1 General aims

There are general and specific aims to this study. The aims are set out below.

- To give a literature review of certain of the major quality theorists' philosophies.
- To indicate the applicability of quality theory and practice in the field of education.
- To discuss the application of Total Quality Management and Total Quality Education towards the improvement of educational practice in a South African primary school by means of action research.

##### 1.4.2 Specific aims *aimed*

Specific aims are:

- To apply quality theory and practice by means of action research in a Gauteng public primary school.
- To identify customers' (for example, learners', parents' and teachers') perceptions on how to improve the quality of education provided by the school.

- To identify challenges encountered in endeavouring to implement quality principles in the school used for the case study.
- To outline advantages of the application of quality principles in a primary school for learner, parent and teacher.
- To describe processes used in a school to make learners, parents and staff both aware and supportive of quality principles.
- To describe the contributions that various stakeholders such as the learner, parent, teacher, governing body and district management team can make to ensure quality education within a school.

#### 1.5 METHODS OF RESEARCH

There are two major traditions of research, namely, the quantitative and the qualitative (McMillan 1992:9). The emphasis in quantitative research is on numbers, measurements, deductive logic, control and experiments. Qualitative research, by contrast, emphasises natural settings and there is a "focus on understanding and meaning through verbal narratives" (1992:9). This thesis will adopt an essentially qualitative methodology. Rogers (in Hosford 1984:86) states that qualitative researchers believe that any social entity or institution is enormously complex and subtle. The school being used in the action research consists of nine hundred people whose ages range from six to sixty-eight. There is a need by the researcher to unravel general trends and identify essences. Qualitative research allows the subject matter to be studied over a period of time and thereby helps arrive at a genuine understanding of the phenomenon.

Two other comments by Rogers (in Hosford 1984:86) are pertinent. People and institutions must be studied holistically and not in

isolation from other forces that may influence them. So, for example, the rapport a Grade Three learner has with the teacher and the school policy on learner management is related when determining the quality of education being offered by the school. Secondly, the most effective way to study a given phenomenon is through direct face to face contact with the people and the events. People often act differently to what they say. What people write on questionnaires is not always a fair reflection of their actions.

The subjects in educational research, which are, the learners and the teachers, often uncritically do as requested by the researcher. They are often disinterested in quantitative data. As Rogers notes, "Teachers play little or no role in the development or design of research, in the data gathering process, in the formulation of hunches and hypotheses ..." (in Hosford 1984:90). In qualitative research, the subjects become involved and are able to make valuable input. Teachers as well as the researcher, will hopefully improve their professional skills by being personally involved in the action research.

Both qualitative and quantitative research methodology have been used in this study. In view of the comments of the preceding paragraphs, there is greater use of qualitative tools and techniques. The research design is discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

#### 1.5.1 Literature review

At the outset, the researcher carried out a literature review of quality theorists and practitioners beyond the educational sector. Pioneers from the United States of America of the quality concept were W Edwards Deming, Joseph Juran and Walter Shewhart. Fellow Americans who followed in their footsteps were Philip B Crosby and Armand V Feigenbaum. The Japanese put into practice the quality concepts articulated by the Americans. West-Burnham (1992:20) has identified Kaoru Ishikawa and Genichi Taguchi as

the two most significant Japanese contributors.

Once the researcher had grasped major tenets of quality theory, their applicability to education was analysed. In the 1980s, a small number of United States, Australian, British and Canadian schools started adopting TQM principles in their education systems. The researcher has reviewed the writings of J J Bonstingl and W Glasser from the United States. There was a spate of British literature in the early 1990s on quality education in the school system. Amongst the British literature studied are the writings of C Bowring-Carr, T Burk, B Dale, M S Greenwood, S Murgatroyd, E Sallis and J West-Burnham. Commentaries on the adoption of TQM principles in Australian and Canadian schools were also studied by the researcher.

Much South African literature on the quality concept or TQM is to be found in the daily or Sunday papers. An example is *The Star* newspaper survey on World Quality Day (Schurink 1994:22-24). Publications such as *Financial Mail* and *Insig* give a business world perspective on the quality movement. Isolated articles on the use of TQM principles in South African educational institutions have been found in educational publications such as *Educare* (Steyn:1996) and *Stimulus* (Goss 1995).

Overseas journals and publications such as *Educational Leadership*, *School Organisation* and *Times Educational Supplement* are further sources of ongoing information about the nascent world-wide quality movement in schools.

#### 1.5.2 Action research

In Chapter Four there will be a discussion on action research used in this thesis as regards its principal characteristics, as well as cycles or stages of implementation. There will also be a description of how research tools such as questionnaires, interviews, observation, records and documents were used to obtain relevant data.

A case study will be made of the action research done at a Randburg, Gauteng, public co-educational primary school. The study will extend from the period of July 1993 to December 1996.

Action research has been selected by the researcher as a means of determining whether or not the application of quality theory can be of benefit to school management. Hill (cited by Johnson 1994:120) comments that action research functions best when it is cooperative action research. He further notes (1994:120):

This method of research incorporates the ideas and expectations of all persons involved in the situation. Cooperative action research has the concomitant of beneficial effects for workers and the improvement of the services, conditions and functions of the situation. In education this activity translates into more practice in research and problem-solving by teachers, administrators, learners and certain community personnel, while the quality of teaching and learning is in the process of being improved.

The researcher has endeavoured to involve all stakeholders in the school community. The success, or otherwise, of the improvement of educational management has been influenced by the level of input of all associated with the school.

#### 1.6 LIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

The research study was carried out in a single public primary school in the Gauteng province of South Africa. At the time of the writing of the thesis, the researcher was unaware of another public primary school in Gauteng explicitly applying TQM and TQE principles. Therefore, the research findings cannot be compared locally for either verification or refutation. Whether or not these principles will be effective in dissimilar South African schools cannot be ascertained with certainty in this research study.

A case study is a form of qualitative research. In such research the data are soft and are based on the impressions, interpretations, perspectives and prejudices of the participant-observer. This is in contrast to the positivist dimension of the quantitative approach where research is based on empirical observation, experimentation and statistical fact.

The researcher is the principal of the school being used in the case study. Although learners, parents and teachers were encouraged to speak and write with absolute candour about the issues raised in the research project, the principal might have been given "filtered" information - information that they perceived he would have liked to have heard rather than the whole truth. At a personal level, he strove to be a dispassionate observer of the implementation of quality principles at the school. He would personally have liked to have seen quality principles being implemented successfully to improve further the effectiveness of the school. As he endeavoured to record accurately and even-handedly his observations, he found the words of Kozen quoted by Hosford (1984:92) to be undisputably true:

All qualitative researchers recognise that while it is possible to limit observer bias, it is not possible to eliminate it. The results of such research inevitably consist of both what is out there and what is in the observer.

## 1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Certain terms that will be used in this thesis are defined. These terms are defined as they are applicable within the framework of both TQM and TQE theory and practice.

### 1.7.1 Total Quality Management (TQM)

Sallis (1993:35) comments that TQM is used to describe two slightly different but related notions:

- i) philosophy of continuous improvement
- ii) tools and techniques used to implement the theory

In the use of the word "total" in TQM, the commonly understood meaning pertains. Every process and system within the organisation contributes to the overall quality, whether good or bad, in the organisation. Every person in the organisation is important because each person is an integral part of the processes and systems which produce the goods and services (Paine 1992:7). Every resource, human, physical and financial, is to be made available to the organisation committed to continuous improvement.

In TQM theory "quality" is not viewed in absolute but rather relative terms. The issue is whether the product or service is "fit for purpose", whether it fulfils the expected function. On the relative concept of quality, Sallis (1993:23) observes:

Quality is not the end in itself but a means by which the end product is judged to be up to standard. Quality products or services, in this relative or ascribed definition need not be expensive and exclusive. They may be beautiful but not necessarily so. They do not have to be special ... Overhead projectors, ballpoint pens and the school catering service may all exhibit quality if they meet simple but crucially important standards.

In defining quality management, Drummond (1992:55) cites Crosby: "A systematic way of guaranteeing that organised activities happen in the way that they are planned." Drummond (1992:55) states that the system must be designed to guarantee that requirements will be met. Should the system be unsound, defects and even catastrophe are inevitable.

Sashkin and Kiser (1993:3) regard culture as an important aspect of TQM. Organisational culture consists of shared values and beliefs expressed by leaders that define and support quality. The

definition of TQM that is used in this thesis is that of Sashkin and Kiser (1993:39):

TQM means that the organisation'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 organisational processes, resulting in high quality products and services.

#### 1.7.2 Total Quality Education (TQE)

In the process of conducting this action research study, the researcher became increasingly dissatisfied with the uncritical use of the TQM concept in the field of education.

The researcher posits three reasons for using the concept Total Quality Education (TQE) instead of TQM. Firstly, the term would give a distinct identity to those endeavours that improve the quality in the educational sector - as against any other sector of the society.

Secondly, the educationist would be made conscious that to bring about TQE, considerably more is required than simply improving the management of the institution as might be incorrectly inferred in the concept of Total Quality Management. There is also a need to change the philosophy of education as presently found in countless classrooms. These changes are more subtle and difficult to implement than management ones (for example, changing a process in an institution), but their impact on the quality of education is far more profound. TQE acknowledges the contributions of TQM to bring about quality education. What TQE does is adapt TQM theory and practice to the field of education.

The third reason for the researcher preferring the term TQE rather than TQM, was his personal response to a quality workshop in Pretoria during November 1995. The workshop was conducted by

John Jay Bonstingl, an expert of the American Quality in Education movement. He titled his workshop "Creating schools of quality in times of challenge and change". Although Bonstingl himself had written a book on TQM in education (1992), it was obvious that TQM was not to him, by 1995, the core of school improvement. Rather, it was a quality philosophy as he articulated in a paper titled "Quality as a way of life" (1995:no pagination). He described quality thus:

Quality is a way of being. It is a very personal lifelong journey of the spirit, body and mind that permeates all aspects of life. Quality grows first inside our hearts and souls. Then it grows in our relationships with others... Ultimately, quality becomes the essence of our schools, our work places and our communities ... People of Quality know that the quality philosophy adds immeasurable richness and value to their lives. Only by becoming dedicated practitioners of quality in all aspects of their being will they advance the quality of life within themselves and within their environments... When quality becomes a way of life, we rise to a state of being characterised by what Deming called a natural "pride and joy" in the process and products of our lives through a learning that is life-long, life-wide and life-deep.

TQE would be able to incorporate a viewpoint such as espoused by Bonstingl (1995:no pagination). The concept is more holistic than that found in contemporary TQM literature.

To help distinguish TQM as found in the business, industrial, manufacturing and service sectors from that found in the field of education, the researcher uses the term TQE (Total Quality Education). In their book *Total quality in education*, Paine et al (1992:14) also use the term TQE rather than TQM. Their rationale is that by the use of TQE, the authors are mainly adapting TQM principles to education, in particular to schools.

English and Hill (1994:xiv) also discarded TQM because:

In the end we abandoned TQM (Total Quality Management) as too superficial for deep educational change. We prefer TQE (Total Quality Education). The management changes are the easiest to make. The education changes are of a far different magnitude. But they are the ones that ultimately will make the most difference for learners.

For the purpose of this thesis TQE is defined thus:

TQE is both a philosophy and a practice. The philosophy is that there should be continuous improvement in the quality of every person and of every process in the educational institution. Continuous improvement is brought about through the implementation of TQE principles. The practice involves using tools and techniques which can identify, meet and exceed the expectation of every internal and external customer of the institution.

### 1.7.3 Customer

The customer in the TQM organisation has been defined by West-Burnham (1992:29) as: "anyone to whom a product or service is provided". Within the quality theory, two broad categories of customers are identified, namely, internal and external. ✓

Internal customers are found within the institution. Learners are obvious internal customers of the school. Staff members are also internal customers. They provide products or services to colleagues. An illustration would be the secretary who types an examination paper for a teacher. The teacher is a customer of the service to be provided by the secretary.

Greenwood (1994:27) has described external customers who are outside the organisation as people to whom the product is "sold"

(1994:27). Examples of customers would be parents who directly or indirectly pay for their children to be educated, institutions of higher education and further education, employers who need to recruit suitably educated and skilled staff and the nation which requires a better-educated and trained workforce.

The concept "customer" in the context of TQE theory has been defined as:

the person, internal or external to the educational institution, to whom a product or service is provided. ✓

#### 1.7.4 Supplier

In quality theory, the word "supplier" includes anybody who provides a product or service - irrespective of whether the person is within or outside the school. An example would be the learner who, although often viewed as the customer of the education provided, can also be a supplier. When homework has to be submitted to the teacher, the learner is the supplier.

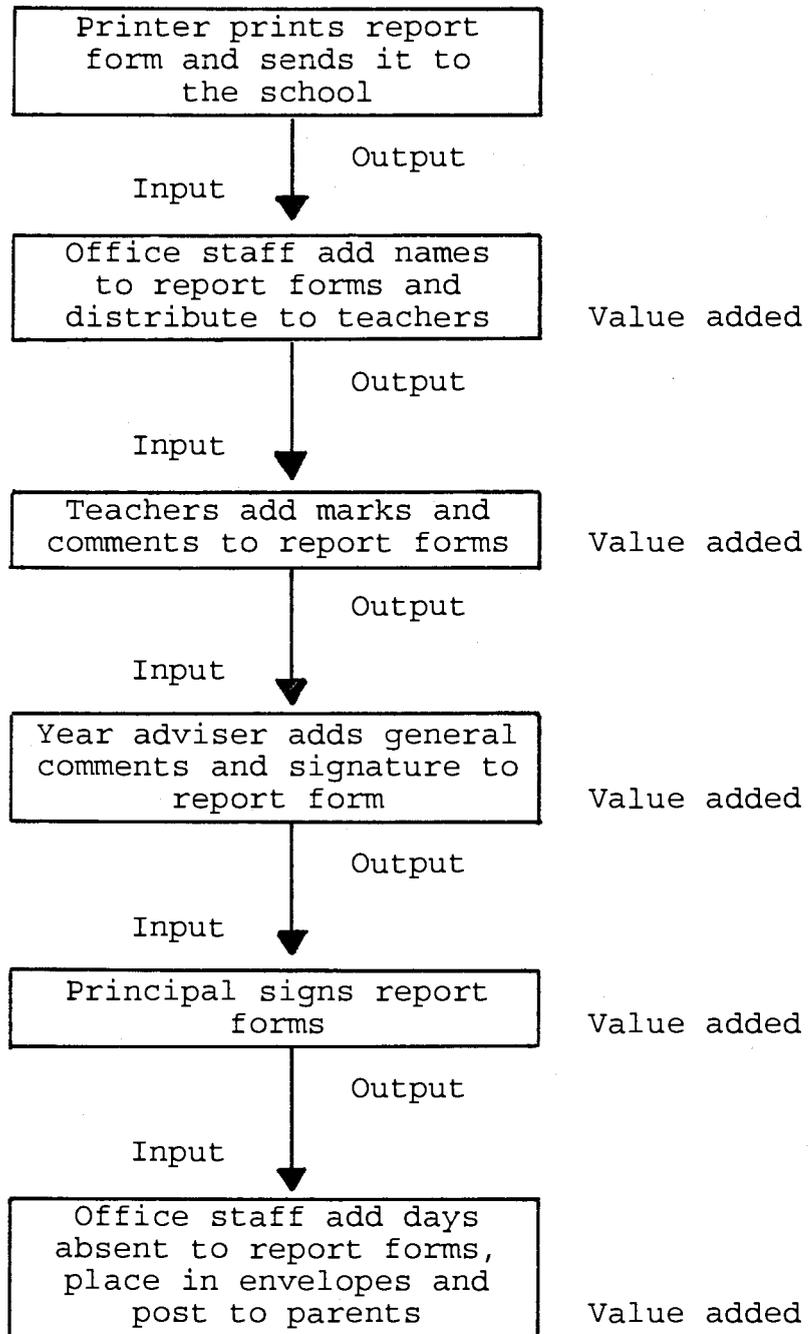
The concept "supplier" is defined as:

the person who provides the customer with the product or service.

#### 1.7.5 Process

Within the school, there are numerous work processes being done. The issue of a school report is an example. The figure below indicates that this particular process is a customer-supplier chain. At different times, the same person is both the "customer" and the "supplier".

Figure 1.3 Customer-supplier flow chart (Paine 1992:32).

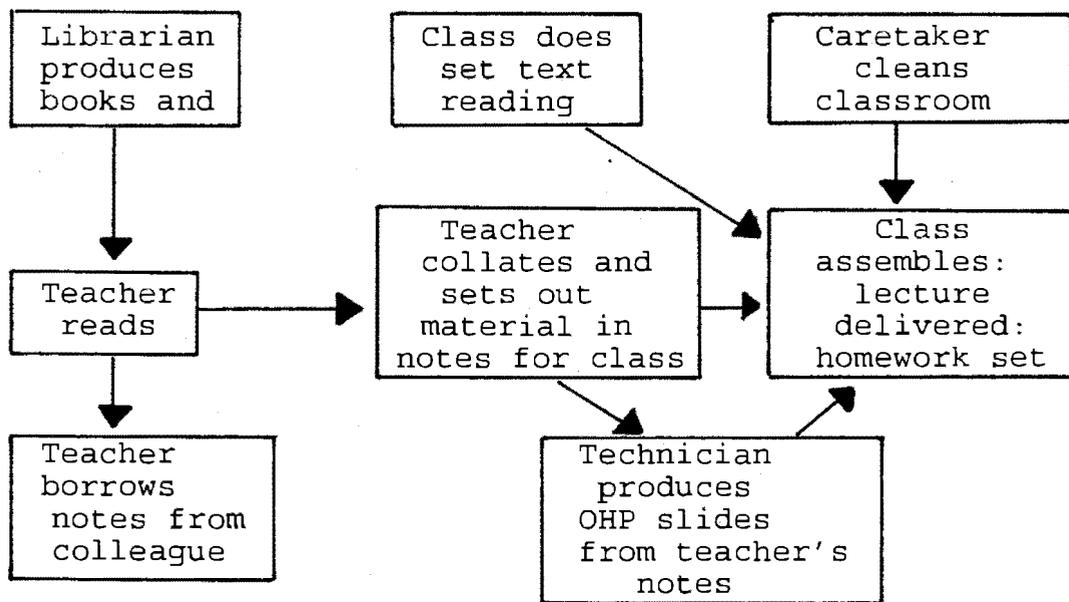


In Figure 1.3 the printer as the supplier sends the report form to the school. The office staff are initially the customers. Once they receive the forms, they become the suppliers. They are required to add the names of the learners on to the reports and forward them to the next customer, that is, the teacher. The process then continues.

Paine (1992:31-33) observes that the work of every person in a school is a process of inputs, added-value and outputs moving through the customer-supplier chain. Staff are customers when they receive inputs of materials, service or information from people within or outside the school. Staff become suppliers when they provide outputs of materials, services or information to others. "Value added" in Figure 1.3 refers to staff members who "do the right thing right" and thereby add value to the input that they have received.

It is important to note that processes are not necessarily linked in "chains" as in Figure 1.3. The "chain" may also be an independent network of processes (Greenwood 1994:46) as indicated in Figure 1.4 below:

Figure 1.4 **Network of processes involved in preparing a lesson** (Greenwood 1994:46).



Oakland (1989:9) defined a "process" as:

...the transformation of a set of inputs, which can include actions, methods and operations into desired outputs, in the form of products, information, services

or, generally, results. In each area or function of an organisation there will be many processes taking place.

He stated further that every process in every department or functional area can be analysed by examining the various inputs and outputs. Through such examination, strategies can be determined to improve quality (1989:9).

"Process" is defined as:

the way in which work is organised or sequenced in order to achieve desired outcomes.

#### 1.7.6 Continuous improvement

"Continuous improvement" has been described by Bowring-Carr (1994:14) as the driving force of the quality movement. This TQM concept is sometimes referred to by the Japanese word of *kaizen* which when translated means "step-by-step improvement" (Sallis 1993:36). In TQE theory, the organisation needs to be on a never-ending pursuit of achieving true quality and excellence in all it does.

Although the quality philosophy is "large-scale, inspirational and all-embracing", the change is brought about through small-scale, practical and incremental processes in which drastic intervention is eschewed (Sallis 1993:36). Changes for improvement must be made but they are to be effected without hurting people or reducing the organisation to a situation of chaos. Effective change is brought about when the people involved in the processes are neither frightened nor fearful. Rather, the people are confident and optimistic about the successful outcome of the envisaged improvements.

For the sake of this thesis "continuous improvement" is defined as:

the philosophy which maintains that the TQE organisation is in a continuous quest to improve the quality of products and services provided to all its internal and external customers.

#### 1.7.7 Teachers

Every person in the school has a contribution to create a quality institution. Teachers have a pivotal role because of their leadership position amongst learners and parents. Should they not "buy into" the quality philosophy, they have the influence to sabotage the process by their own actions or comments.

In this thesis, a "teacher" is defined as:

a professionally qualified or underqualified person who educates learners within the organisational structure of a school. 

#### 1.7.8 Team

Murgatroyd (1993:73) has made the observation that commercial organisations and many public sector organisations have changed their organisational design to revolve around self-managing work teams responsible for key processes in the organisation. In explaining this trend, Murgatroyd cites Moss-Kanter (1991) who maintains that one reason is a response to declining employee loyalty. The major reason is the realisation that those closest to a process have a greater understanding of the process and are therefore better able to improve process performance.

Teams have an important role to play in the implementation of continuous improvement in the TQE organisation. To effect quality improvement in organisations of the late 1990s, Aune (1992:1) cites three reasons for the need for teamwork activities:

- i) teams are needed because the complexity of products and

processes has increased in organisations.

- ii) in the face of this greater complexity, future strategy requires greater creativity. The days of depending on the individual genius are over; there is now a need for collective genius working within teams.
- iii) teamwork provides a mechanism to avoid a division of labour.

TQE theory aims to flatten the traditional hierarchy of labour. Steep pyramids of labour divisions from the lowest paid worker, through middle-management and then on to the executive member are discouraged. In the school where the researcher works, the Education Department has instituted four hierarchical levels of labour amongst the professional staff. These four levels are teachers, heads of department, deputies and the principal. The researcher submits that the pyramid can be flattened to two levels, namely, the teacher and the entire executive staff. Decisions affecting the whole staff can be made by everybody working together to formulate a unanimously acceptable action plan. Any subsequent work that has to be done is allocated on the basis of an individual's expertise or competency - not on the traditional hierarchical position held within the school.

Everyone, irrespective of position, understands the vision of the TQE institution and, in a spirit of cooperation, is committed to its realisation. Teamwork is crucial in bringing the vision to reality.

The researcher defines a "team" thus:

A team is a group of two or more people who pool their different skills to initiate or manage processes that will ensure continuous improvement in the TQE institution.

### 1.7.9 Quality toolkit

In their book, *Managing quality in schools - a training manual*, Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham (1994:16-17), refer to the concept of a "quality toolkit". They state that in order to manage quality, it is necessary to have a range of techniques, which in themselves, exemplify the principle of "fitness for purpose". Such a toolkit would be of assistance in activities such as analysis, problem-solving, decision-making and measurement.

To implement TQE theory, a large number of tools and techniques are available. Reynolds (1994:52) cites popular TQM tools, namely, fishbone charts and Pareto analysis for analysing problems; brainstorming to devise solutions; Gantt charts and flowcharts to plan and implement solutions, as well as tally charts and histograms to monitor progress. These and many other TQE tools and techniques help to measure and record quality. By using toolkit items, continuous improvement can be effected.

The "quality toolkit" is defined as:

all the tools and techniques available to the TQE institution to assist it in its endeavour to realise continuous improvement.

## 1.8 OUTLINE OF STUDY

The first chapter has identified the need for a study of TQM and TQE theory and practice, in order to ascertain whether they have contributions to make towards improving the current quality of South African education. General and specific aims were identified for the thesis. A number of concepts encountered in both TQM and TQE theory were discussed and defined by the researcher.

There will be a literature review of the major quality theorists in Chapter Two. Theorists in the business, manufacturing and

service sectors such as P Crosby, W E Deming, A V Feigenbaum, K Ishikawa, J M Juran and W Shewhart will be studied. There will also be a review of quality theorists in the field of education such as J J Bonstingl, W Glasser, C Morgan and S Murgatroyd.

Chapter Three will describe a number of the tools and techniques used in the quality toolkit. Illustrations will be provided of how certain schools worldwide have applied TQM and TQE tools and techniques to effect improvements.

Chapter Four will describe the methodology used in the research.

In Chapters Five, Six and Seven, there will be a discussion of how TQM and TQE principles were implemented at a public primary school in Gauteng by means of action research. There will be an analysis and interpretation of the action research data. Accounts will be given of both school achievements and setbacks in the endeavours to implement quality practice.

In Chapter Eight there will be a discussion of the research findings and their implications. Conclusions will be drawn on the relevancy of the quality theory and practice to South African schools. The researcher will make recommendations about what could be implemented by school communities, district management teams, colleges of education and other instances to improve the overall quality of education in South African schools.

## 1.9 SUMMARY

At the beginning of the chapter, the researcher noted increasing societal insistence on quality in services and products. This demand for quality is becoming more apparent in South African education at the approach of the twenty-first century. The colonial and apartheid eras in South Africa have resulted in disproportionate resource allocations to schools. There are enormous discrepancies in the quality of education found amongst schools. Ten of these discrepancies were highlighted.

South Africa must ensure that there is equity in the provision of resources for schools. There is also a need to ensure that education of true quality is provided in schools. The researcher maintains that schools can achieve quality by adapting certain principles found in the business, manufacturing and service sectors.

The researcher has recommended that a case study be done of a Gauteng school in which TQM principles have been adapted to the educational sector. The adaptations have resulted in a name change which is pertinent to the school situation, namely, Total Quality Education (TQE). Through action research, the success, or otherwise, of improving the quality of education at that school can be described. Such research findings will assist in ascertaining whether TQE principles have a contribution to make towards improving the educational management of South African schools.

## CHAPTER TWO

### QUALITY THEORISTS : A LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Much of the literature on the quality concept has as its base a manufacturing or industrial context. In the 1970s and 1980s quality theorists started giving attention to its application in service sectors such as banking, the hospitality industry and medical care (Crosby 1979; Norman 1984; Peters & Austin 1985 and Prigs 1974). Education is also a service industry. In the late 1980s and the 1990s, the relevancy of TQM theory in the field of education has been receiving critical analysis. A small number of educationists such as Bonstingl, Glasser, Murgatroyd and Morgan have designed quality models for education by adapting TQM theory.

This literature review of quality theorists will focus on the applicability of practice in the context of education. Certain theorists, for example, Ishikawa, Juran and Shewhart formulated their theories without reference to implementation in the educational sectors. What is extraneous to the educational setting will not be reviewed. It is important to note though, that certain quality principles which were viewed solely in areas such as manufacturing and industry, can be adapted to the schooling situation. These principles will receive attention in this chapter.

#### 2.2 QUALITY THEORISTS

The quality management movement received a significant impetus at the end of World War II. The Allied occupation forces were in Japan and one of their briefs was to help build up the devastated Japanese economy. W E Deming, a statistician from the United States of America, was sent to Japan in 1950 to offer guidelines to the Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers (JUSE). A year

later, a fellow American, J M Juran, was also invited to the country to give advice. These two quality "gurus" were rapturously received in Japan. Their recommendations were adapted to the Japanese business, industrial and manufacturing sectors. The Japanese economic miracle of the next thirty years had been set in motion. Quality disciples such as Ishikawa, Ohno and Taguchi came to the fore in Japan.

There was little interest in the United States of America in the quality movement during the first two decades after World War II. It was the most powerful industrial nation of the world. There was an international demand for its products. Quantity, not quality, was the most important consideration of United States businessmen. The United States received a major "wake up" call on the need for quality in its products in the mid-1970s. In 1975, the country recorded a balance of trade deficit of \$6 billion and the Japanese were making enormous inroads into the domestic market of the United States (Latzko 1995:14; Peters 1989:4-7). Philip Crosby made the Americans of the 1970s and later decades aware of the need for product and service quality (Crosby 1979; 1984; 1992).

The quality movement has been receiving limited attention in African and Western schools since the late 1980s. Among these countries showing an interest are the United States, Australia, Britain, Canada and recently, South Africa. This literature review will discuss the educational model of the British team of Murgatroyd and Morgan. Two American theorists on quality in education, Bonstingl and Glasser, will be discussed.

Quality theorists who, according to the researcher, have a relevancy to education, will be discussed.

### 2.2.1 William Edwards Deming

W Edwards Deming was born in 1900 in Iowa in the United States of America. He died in 1993 in Washington DC. Deming is regarded

as one of the "gurus" of the total quality theorists. His theory initially was not geared towards the education sector. Educationists have studied his theory and adapted it to the schooling situation. Deming's major contributions to the quality movement are the following:

- System of profound knowledge
- Fourteen management principles
- Seven sins of management

#### 2.2.1.1 *System of profound knowledge*

Deming commented on the importance of profound knowledge thus (Latzko & Saunder 1995:34):

Hard work and best efforts put forth without guidance or profound knowledge may well be at the root of our ruination. There is no substitute for profound knowledge.

There are four dimensions to Deming's concept of profound knowledge. Firstly, there is an appreciation for a system. Deming described a system as a series of functions or activities within an organisation that work together for the aim of the organisation (Latzko & Saunder 1995:35). Within a school, for example, there are different departments that work independently to help achieve the overall aim of the institution.

Secondly, profound knowledge implies an understanding of the theory of variation. In any organisation there will be variations from the norm. These variations can be the causes of quality failure. Deming distinguishes between "common" and "special" causes of failure. Sallis (1993:50) gives examples of common causes of poor quality in education such as poor curriculum design, lack of necessary resources and insufficient staff development. The point is made by Sallis that to remove the cause of the problem, management needs to reorganise, improve or respecify the systems and procedures (1993:50). Special causes

of failure often occur because procedures and rules are not followed or adhered to. The reason for this occurring could be that the individual teacher lacks the necessary skills, knowledge and attitude. If a problem is identified as a "special" cause, then it can be put right without the upheaval of a new policy or the need to redesign the system (Sallis 1993:51). He observes further (1993:51):

Too often faults and problems are put down to failures by individuals when, in fact, the difficulties result from deficiencies in policies and systems ... the vast majority of problems are the result of poor management or inadequate management systems.

The third dimension of profound knowledge is the theory of knowledge. For management to be successful, it should be able to predict, with some confidence, the future. To do this there is a need for a theory about specific future behaviour (Latzko 1995:41). It is necessary that management can predict on the basis of sound theory. Rinehart (1993:29) notes further of Deming's views:

Deming draws a concurrent conclusion that prediction in the primary function of management, that is, successful prediction of future outcomes is required for continued operation and is the responsibility of those in charge.

Deming regards psychology as the fourth dimension of profound knowledge. It is necessary to understand the behaviour of people and what makes them work optimally. Deming maintains that there is an over-emphasis on extrinsic motivation as against intrinsic motivation in the encouragement of staff to give of their best (Latzko 1995:43).

#### 2.2.1.2 *Deming's fourteen management principles*

Deming maintains that for business and industry to improve and

be successful, there is a need for a "bedrock philosophy of management" (Walton 1989:33). He articulated these management principles in his "Fourteen Points". It is important to remember that these principles were formulated by Deming to be used in business and industry. The principles have applicability in education. Educational management theorists such as Bonstingl (1992-1993), Sallis (1993) and West-Burnham (1992) have adapted Deming's management principles to the education sector.

These principles of management are (Bonstingl 1992:77-82; Deming 1986:24-88; Latzko & Saunder 1995:45-115; Paine 1992:10-13; Sallis 1993:48-49; Rinehart 1993:78-100; Walton 1989:55-86):

1 *Create constancy of purpose for improvement of product and service*

The school should have long-term goals based on vision and a commitment to continuous improvement. The needs of the customer (for example, learners, parents and teachers) should be sought and responded to.

Deming (1986:25-26) states that for innovations to be successful, it is necessary for top management to demonstrate "unshakeable commitment to quality and productivity". In the school situation, the principal and senior staff should show "explicit commitment to the quality philosophy".

2 *Adopt the new philosophy*

According to Bonstingl (1992:77), school leaders need to adopt and fully accept the new philosophy of continuous improvement. Sallis (1993:48) observes that organisations can no longer compete if they continue to live with the commonly accepted levels of delay, mistakes, defective materials and faulty products.

3 *Cease dependence on mass inspection to improve quality*

Inspection occurs after the work has been done. Rather, build quality into what is being done. Teachers should have the resources to evaluate their own work and to take appropriate action to ensure quality. Bonstingl (1992:78) maintains that reliance on tests as the major means of assessment of learner production is inherently wasteful and often neither reliable nor authentic.

4 *End the practice of awarding business on price-tag alone*

The relationship that a school has with suppliers should be cooperative in tone. It is a partnership committed to providing quality of service and product. The price-tag is not the most important consideration.

5 *Improve constantly and forever the system of production and service*

Everyone in the school should be continually striving to improve the quality of the teaching and the school as an entity.

6 *Institute training and retraining*

Staff development is necessary to ensure that teachers and all staff members understand both the theory and practice of quality education. The learners also need training in the quality programme.

7 *Institute leadership*

Paine (1992:12) observes that it is the task of the manager to lead - to help people do their jobs better. In the classroom, the teacher's role is one of leadership, not supervision.

8 *Drive out fear*

Fear is counter-productive in the school. Teachers wish to feel secure in knowing that their jobs are not under threat. A spirit of cooperation, teamwork and goodwill should permeate the school. Learners should not be fearful in their relationships with their teachers. Deming (1985:59) notes that most people in a job, especially people in management positions, do not understand what the job is or what is right or wrong. Many people are afraid to ask questions or take a position. The economic loss from fear is substantial.

Managers of schools should not be fearful of acknowledging their ignorance on certain issues. By openly turning to those staff members who do understand the issues, teamwork can be nurtured and, in certain instances, money can be deployed in a cost effective way.

9 *Break down barriers between staff areas*

All staff members are working towards the overall goals of the school. Bonstingl (1992(3):80) recommends that cross-departmental and multi-level teams should be created to break down role and status barriers to productivity.

10 *Eliminate slogans, exhortations and targets for the workforce*

The observation is made by Paine (1992:12) that implicit in slogans and exhortations, is the message that people could do better if they worked harder. Often the problems in a school are the result of faulty systems or processes, not of inadequacy of the teachers or the learners.

11 *Reduce numerical quotas*

Arguments and tests that focus on gradings do not fully reflect the quality of the learners' progress and performance

(Bonstingl 1992(3):81). Bonstingl further observes that when the grade becomes the bottom-line product, short-term gains replace learner investment in long-term learning.

12 *Remove barriers to pride and joy of workmanship*

If this Deming principle were to be implemented within the school, it would entail the abolition of appraisal systems and merit ratings. Sallis (1993:49) states that Deming has taken a strong position against appraisal systems which he believes put staff in competition with each other and act against teamwork.

13 *Institute a vigorous programme of education and retraining*

Within the context of the school, there should be a continuous programme of training to ensure that the staff is well informed about with the latest developments.

14 *Put everyone in the company to work to accomplish the transformation*

Although the initiative for the improvement of the quality of education comes from the senior management, all staff are part of the programme. All staff have a contribution to make towards the successful implementation of the quality initiative.

As the fourteen management principles outlined above can help an organisation to become a quality institution, factors can derail the process. Management in the United States, according to Deming (1989:87), suffers from deeply entrenched diseases that are potentially fatal unless corrected. Deming described them as the Seven Deadly Diseases.

### 2.2.1.3 *Seven sins of management*

Deming referred to the seven deadly sins of management in business and industrial settings. These management "sins" are also applicable in the area of educational management. These seven barriers to a quality management ethos, as applied to education, are (Sallis 1993:46-47 and Walton 1989:87-91):

#### 1 *Lack of constancy of purpose*

There is a lack of constancy of purpose by management to be committed to the "long haul". To achieve quality education, there is the acceptance that the process entails years of endeavour.

#### 2 *Short-term thinking*

A short-term thinking attitude by management exists which results in lack of vision for the school. Questions that are unasked or unanswered are, for example, what are the plans for the school in two, five, ten and twenty years time?

#### 3 *Evaluation of performance, merit rating or annual review*

Individual staff members are evaluated through procedures such as merit ratings and annual reviews. According to Deming, these procedures discourage risk taking, build fear, undermine teamwork and cause people to compete for the same reward (Walton 1989:36).

#### 4 *Staff mobility*

Continual job-hopping by staff has a negative impact on achieving long-term consistency of purpose for the school (Sallis 1993:47).

## 5 *Running an organisation on visible figures alone*

A school can rely too much on visible figures to ascertain whether or not it is a good school. An illustration would be the use of matriculation results to help market schools. Walton (1989:36) states that the most important figures are unknown and unknowable, for example, the multiplier effect of a happy customer.

## 6 *Excessive medical costs*

Deming (1986:91) refers to excessive medical costs as a deadly sin. In the context of a South African school, this issue might, at face value, not seem relevant. The South African public school does not pay teachers' medical bills. Yet the schools pay in other ways. An absent teacher might be replaced by a locum paid for by the school. When a teacher is absent, the quality of education being given to a learner could be impaired. Should an unwell teacher be at school, the teacher might not be able to teach at a professionally satisfactory level.

## 7 *Litigation*

The final deadly sin cited by Deming is the heavy cost of litigation found in American society. This matter is not an issue, at present, in South African schools of the 1990s.

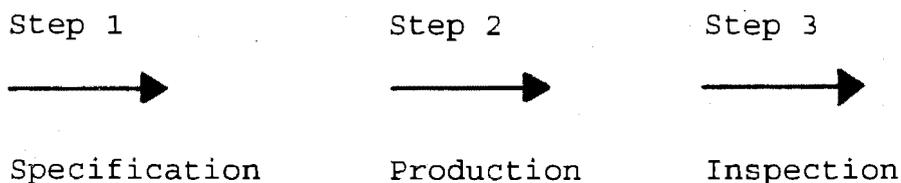
Litigation may happen soon in South African schools. The post-apartheid South African government has legislation on human rights which is enshrined in the new Constitution. Educational managers need to be aware of the legal obligation of schools towards learners. Teachers will have increased rights in labour relations legislation being formulated in the mid-1990s. Such rights open the doors for litigation against governance structures of schools and education departments.

In adapting the fourteen Deming principles and avoiding the seven deadly sins in the quality school, the principles should not and cannot be accepted uncritically. There are major restraints imposed on a school by the wider society. For example, staffing at schools is dependent on financial allocations to the province by the central government. Accordingly, there is real fear in many South African schools of the mid-1990s because of threats to job security. A Deming management sin is the use of appraisals and inspections. All South African provincial education departments presently subscribe to some form of inspection system. Promotions are often dependent on the results of merit ratings and appraisals. The present reality in the South African education system requires some form of teacher appraisal.

### 2.2.2 Walter Shewhart

A person who had a great impact on Deming was Walter Shewhart. In 1938 Shewhart was invited by Deming to lecture at the United States Department of Agriculture. In that year, Shewhart put forward the theory that there were three steps in the quality control process, namely, the specification of what is wanted, the production of things to satisfy the specification and finally the inspection of the finished product (Bradley 1993:14). Traditionally, the quality control process had been seen in the context of a pipeline model. The process was linear. Once one group had finished its part of the task, there was no interaction with the other groups.

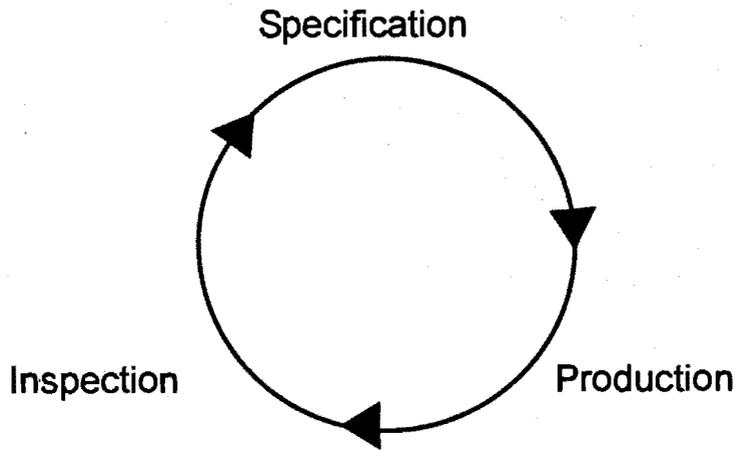
Figure 2.1 **The old view: pipeline model** (Bradley 1993:14).



Shewhart (Bradley 1993:18) proposed the cyclic model as a means of the control of quality. In this model the three steps are interlocking and interdependent. Bradley (1993:19) quotes

Shewhart's words on the model, "These three steps form a dynamic scientific process of acquiring knowledge".

Figure 2.2      **The new view: cyclic model** (Bradley 1993:18).



An adaption of Shewhart's theory and statistical methods was made by Deming. The PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Act) or PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act) cycle of Deming can be attributed to his friend and mentor, Shewhart (Williams 1994:29). An illustration of a PDSA cycle is given in Figure 3.12. In the cycle, the learner initially plans how to approach the work of a new unit. The learner then does the work. In the third stage, the learner and teacher together study the processes used to achieve the goals of the unit. In the Act stage, strategies are devised to improve further the processes for the next work unit.

The PDCA or PDSA cycle is congruent with quality practice in which all people in the organisation have a contribution to make to bring about improvement of product and service. Decision-making is not confined to those with the task of inspection.

### 2.2.3      **Joseph M Juran**

Juran and Deming have been described as duelling pioneers in the quality movement (Green 1994:16). Juran was born in Minnesota in 1904. Like Deming, he came under the influence of Shewhart.

According to Sallis (1993:52), Juran is best known for coining the phrase "fitness for use or purpose". A product or service can meet its specification but still not be fit for its purpose. The specification itself may be faulty or it does not achieve what the customer wants. Juran disagrees with the often used definition of quality, namely, "conformance to specifications". Oakland (1989:288) cites Juran as pointing out that a dangerous product could meet all the specifications and not be fit for use.

Juran formulated his 85/15 rule regarding quality problems (Sallis 1993:52,53). He maintained that 85% of such problems can be traced back to management decisions regarding processes. By putting the systems right, the quality will come right too. He arrives at the figure of 85% because management has control of 85% of the systems in an organisation. Deming attributes 94% of the quality problems in an organisation to management (Oakland 1989:288).

To bring about effective quality planning, Juran has developed an approach which he calls Strategic Quality Management (SQM). According to this approach, staff at different levels in the organisation make their own unique contributions to quality improvement. Sallis (1993:53) describes the three-level process. The first level involves senior management who take a strategic view of the organisation. In an educational institution, for example, the senior management and governors would formulate vision, priorities and policies. At the second level, middle-managers such as heads of departments would take an operational view of management. They would be responsible for quality assurance which involves coordinating information from course teams and checking on effectiveness. The results of such monitoring would be conveyed to both course teams and to senior management. The third level is quality control which is the responsibility of the teachers in the course teams. These teachers design the courses in such a way that the needs of their learners are met. Quality is effected by a project-by-project, team-solving approach to quality improvement.

Juran and Deming diverge on several key points regarding TQM (Martin 1993:16). Juran believes that managing for quality is similar to other managerial processes and does not require a total organisational resolution. His approach is quite flexible and he regards TQM statistical techniques and tools as aids and nothing more.

Juran has formulated his ten steps to quality improvement thus (Pike 1996:70; West-Burnham 1992:19):

- 1 Build awareness of the need and opportunity for improvement ✓
- 2 Set goals for improvement
- 3 Organise to reach the goals (establish a quality council, identify problems, select projects, appoint teams, designate facilitators)
- 4 Provide training
- 5 Carry out projects to solve problems
- 6 Report progress
- 7 Give recognition
- 8 Communicate results
- 9 Keep score
- 10 Maintain momentum by making annual improvement part of the regular system and processes of the company.

There are distinct parallels in Juran's steps to quality improvement with Deming's fourteen management principles. An example is staff training. Deming's sixth management principle is "Institute training and retraining" (Walton 1989:67). Deming maintains that workers are given little training or no training at all. Besides the initial training given, he asserts there should be further retraining when new processes or equipment are introduced. Juran's fourth step in the process of quality improvement is the provision of training. All members of staff should receive training on how to achieve quality. Moreover, Juran argues strongly that such training should begin with senior management (Pike 1994:69).

#### 2.2.4 Armand V Feigenbaum

Armand Feigenbaum published his classic work, *Total Quality Control*, in 1951. He spent several years at General Electric as their top quality expert where he "came to believe that quality management is more than a tool for managers to use; it is rather a way of managing" (Martin 1993:17). Feigenbaum made the quality movement aware of the "cost of quality" (Martin 1993:17). It is more economical to build quality into a product or service than to rectify errors later.

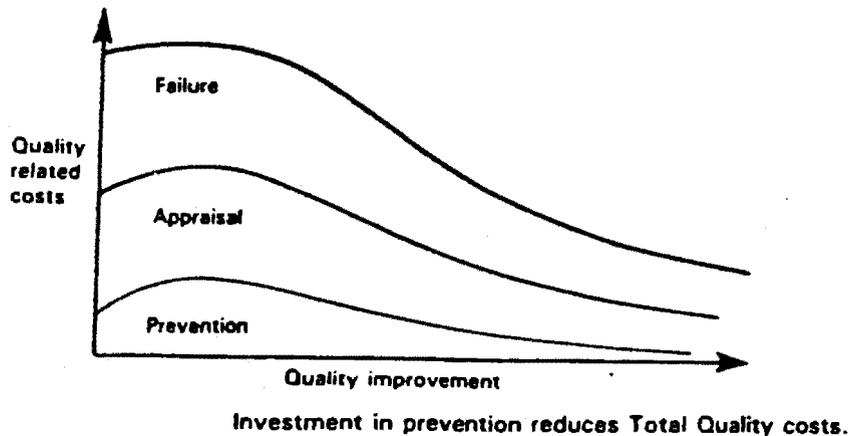
According to Feigenbaum, quality costs need to be categorised if they are to be managed (Dale 1994:18). Total quality cost is the sum of three categories: appraisal, prevention and failure costs. Greenwood and Gaunt (1994:81-87) give examples of quality costs in the context of schools. Appraisal costs are the expenses incurred to ensure that there is conformance with quality standards. Applied to the South African education system, inspection of schools by district managers would be an appraisal cost. Prevention costs would include training of staff and quality awareness programmes. Failure costs would be in areas such as waste, rework or rectification, reinspection and failure analysis. Examples of waste in a school are the indiscriminate use of stationery and the time wasted through poorly organised parents' evenings.

Sallis (1993:120) makes the observation that it is more difficult to quantify the costs of failure than those of prevention (1993:120). Failure costs are often lost opportunities and lost business. Included in these costs are learners' and parents' dissatisfaction, lost enrolment, learner failure, reworking and redoing things which should have been done correctly the first time, time wasting and frustration. Sallis defines failure costs as "all the things that take the pleasure out of managing and working in education" (1993:120).

An organisation that develops a preventative culture towards

costs will effect a better reduction in total quality costs, compared with the organisation that is continually reacting to failure of its products and service. Figure 2.3 below illustrates this point:

Figure 2.3 Investment in prevention reduces Total Quality costs (Hakes 1991:113).



#### 2.2.5 Kaoru Ishikawa

Kaoru Ishikawa was born in 1915 in Japan. He was at the forefront of the quality revolution from its inception in Japan during the late 1940s. Munro-Faure (1992:296) states that the main focus of his work was to make statistical techniques for improving quality available to the grassroot workers within Japan. He introduced the quality circle concept whereby people could, in a cooperative and participative manner, contribute towards the improvement of quality. Ishikawa also designed the cause-and-effect fishbone diagram which has been named after him. The Ishikawa diagram is a quality tool which will be described in Chapter Three.

Through Total Quality Control (TQC), Ishikawa maintained that channels of communication could be opened within a company, filling it with a breath of fresh air (Bowles 1991:206).

Ishikawa maintained that the philosophy of company-wide quality

assurance emphasises the customer and societal issues through the following objectives (Bowles 1991:206):

- Quality first - profit is not the first consideration.
- Customer orientation - product is not the first consideration. What does the customer want?
- Next process is your customer - an organisation should break down barriers between different departments and sections.
- Using facts and data - statistical methods are needed to identify areas for improvement.
- Respect for humanity - participatory management.

Areas of commonality with Deming and Juran's management principles are evident. For example, all three quality "gurus" emphasise the need for interactive participation and input by all parties involved in the various processes - a principle that is also essential in a school endeavouring to provide quality education.

#### 2.2.6 Philip Crosby

Crosby proposed the controversial concept of "zero defect" in quality management (Pike 1996:36). This involves putting in place systems to ensure that things get done correctly, the first time and every time. Deming and Juran have rejected this concept (Pike 1996:37). To strive for zero defect could prove to be so expensive that the cost is not worth the achievement. A counter viewpoint to Deming and Juran is put by Matsushita. He states that "it is better to aim at perfection and miss than to aim at imperfection and hit" (Pike 1996:37).

In the context of educational management, West-Burnham (1992:17) regards zero defect as "hopelessly unrealistic". Sallis (1993:55) regards zero defect in the services a desirable goal, but difficult to guarantee because there are so many opportunities for human error. He believes that zero defect has an importance in education because (1993:55):

...it would mean that all pupils and students would make a success of their education and fulfil their potential. The task of quality improvement in education would be building the systems and structures to ensure that this happened. Much stands in the way of zero defects, particularly norm-referenced examinations which make the goals of zero defects an impossibility and a widely held view that standards can only be maintained by a high degree of failure.

Another controversial concept of Crosby (1979) is that "quality is free". The concept is not to be taken literally. Sallis (1993:54) outlines Crosby's viewpoint that a systematic drive for quality will pay for itself. When people do not conform to set procedures, there are resultant wastages such as scrap, rework, refits, tests and inspections. Sallis (1993:54) draws parallels to education. Examinations have to be taken which require additional cost and effort. These examinations often have a low success rate.

To achieve quality in a school involves the optimal use of human, physical and financial resources. Greenwood and Gaunt (1994:82-87) describe three costs of quality which are failure, appraisal and prevention costs. Failure costs occur when there is non-compliance with acceptable standards of quality. Appraisal costs pertain to the "costs of checking it is right" (1994:85). Inspections, either external or in-house to the organisation, are examples of appraisal costs. To prevent failure from occurring, there are prevention costs. An illustration would be the school that expends money on security to avoid having its educational equipment stolen. It is submitted by Greenwood and Gaunt (1994:85) that it is cheaper to pay for quality through prevention and appraisal, than rectifying because of failed quality. Quality is not free; yet an awareness and response to the need for quality in an organisation helps bring down the cost of financial management of the institution.

Crosby's philosophy is underpinned by the "four absolutes of quality" which were formulated by him without reference to the education sector. Yet each absolute is pertinent to the quality school. These four absolutes are (Pike 1996:36):

1 *Everyone has the same understanding of quality*

Everyone needs to understand quality in the same terms, namely, "conformance to the agreed requirements of the customer", rather than as goodness or excellence. The customer may be either internal or external to the organisation.

2 *System to ensure quality (conformance)*

There needs to be a system to ensure quality (conformance). The system entails prevention, not inspection, checking or appraisal.

3 *Performance measurement is zero defect*

The standard of performance against which non-conformance must be measured is zero defect. While the level of non-conformance is higher than 0%, there is room for improvement.

4 *The price of non-conformance*

Quality is measured by the price of non-conformance. Crosby makes the assertion that service companies spend at least 40% of their operating costs on doing things wrong (Pike 1996:36).

2.2.6.1 *Steps of quality improvement*

Crosby devised a programme which management could follow to bring about a quality improvement in an organisation. The Crosby quality improvement programme is outlined below (Oakland

1989:282-283; Sallis 1993:55-57):

- 1 Management commitment is crucial to the programme's success.
- 2 Form quality improvement teams from every department.
- 3 Determine where current and potential quality problems lie through various types of measurement, for example, inspection reports and feedback from customers.
- 4 Quantify the cost of quality, for example, cost of things going wrong, having to do things again, inspection.
- 5 Build quality awareness and personal concern amongst all staff.
- 6 Take corrective action to deal with problems of quality. Crosby suggests that task teams be set up to deal with major problems first.
- 7 Establish a team to set up a zero defect programme.
- 8 Institute supervisor (or "middle-management" in the school context) training on its role in the improvement process.
- 9 Hold a Zero Defect Day which establishes the idea of zero defects and informs staff that there has been a change.
- 10 Individuals and teams should set goals.
- 11 Encourage staff to let management know of obstacles encountered in reaching their goals.
- 12 Recognise and appreciate those who participate.
- 13 Establish quality councils to decide how best to tackle problems.
- 14 Do it over again! Quality is continuous, never-ending improvement.

The Crosby management programme is practical and the approach is less philosophical than that of Deming (Sallis 1993:54). The executive management team of a school needing to implement quality education, would find Crosby's programme clear, easy to understand and with a distinct bias towards action. A cautionary observation from West-Burnham (1992:17) is that the programme has been criticised for being too doctrinaire and not always appropriate to different company cultures.

## 2.2.7 William Glasser

William Glasser qualified as a psychiatrist. Glasser maintained that the understanding of control theory is essential, if we are to make progress not only in schools but in all other areas of life (Glasser 1993:121-123).

Glasser (1992:25), by replacing boss-management with lead-management, gave guidelines as to how schools could move towards quality. Traditional schools are "boss-managed" where, for example, the boss tells, rather than shows, the workers (learners) what has to be done; the boss, or someone designated by the boss, inspects or grades the work and when workers resist the boss uses coercion (usually punishment) to get compliance (1992:25-26).

Central to lead-management philosophy is persuasion and problem-solving (Glasser 1992:31). He (1992:32) views the leader as a facilitator:

...in that he shows the workers that he has done everything possible to provide them with the best tools and workplace as well as a noncoercive, nonadversarial atmosphere in which to do the job.

In the context of education, Glasser (1993:22) maintains that to achieve quality schoolwork, a warm, supportive classroom environment is needed. In a quality school, no circumstances are permitted where one person attempts to coerce another person (1993:22).

Glasser (1992:179) maintains that the stimulus-response theory be discarded because it is based on extrinsic motivation. The stimulus-response theory fits into the boss-management concept. For example, a teacher informs the class of the consequences, whether in the form of rewards or punishments, of examination results. The class's behaviour is motivated extrinsically by the

teacher. Every learner in the class will react individually to what the teacher says. The teacher's comments are intended to be a motivation. Glasser (1992:42) contends that every living creature is highly motivated but "every living creature, including learners, is not necessarily motivated to do what you, I, or anyone else thinks they ought to do".

Rather, according to Glasser (1992:43), control theory should be applied in motivating a person. Control theory maintains that all human beings are born with five basic needs built into their genetic structure: survival, love, power, fun and freedom (Glasser 1992:43). The theory states that we try to control our own behaviour, so that what we choose to do meets our most important needs at that particular time (1992:43,44). Glasser further states that people try to control others as well as themselves, but in reality we control only ourselves (1992:44). Control theory encourages the lead-manager to identify the intrinsic needs of the individual. Motivation should be achieved through the lead-manager meeting that person's needs. Much work of true quality can be done if the work helps to realise one or more basic needs.

An important dimension to the quality school is to counsel noncoercively using reality therapy (Glasser 1992:269). There are two dimensions to reality therapy, namely, creating the counselling environment and learning to use the procedures that lead to behavioural change. A counselling environment, according to Glasser (1992:270), is a climate that is warm, comfortable and noncoercive. There is dialogue between the teacher and the learner. It should be an environment in which the learner is free to talk to the teacher without fear or criticism.

Once the counselling environment has been created, the second part of reality therapy may begin. This part gets the learner to evaluate what is being done and on the basis of this evaluation, the learner decides to change to a more effective way of behaving (Glasser 1992:271). According to Glasser, the reason why a person

misbehaves is because the individual has not evaluated what is being done. The aim of counselling is to confront the person gently but firmly about the behaviour. Once the counsellor has made his contribution, the learner will do the rest, namely, evaluate what is being done and realise that it is not acceptable behaviour. If a learner knows how to change behaviour, the learner will make the changes (Glasser 1992:271-273).

#### 2.2.8 John Jay Bonstingl

John Jay Bonstingl is the founder and director of the Centre for Schools of Quality. This quality consultant from the United States serves as an evaluator for the Education Pilot Programme of the American Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and as a judge for the US Department of Education's Blue Ribbon Schools Programme. His 1992 book, *Schools of quality: an introduction to total quality management in education*, examines the application of TQM theory and practice for those who strive to bring about continuous improvement in their schools. He has visited South Africa a few times to present workshops on the application of the quality concept in education. South Africa is formulating a new education system and philosophy in the 1990s. The quality concept as put forward by Bonstingl has a contribution to make towards the formulation of the new philosophy.

##### 2.2.8.1 *Four pillars of quality*

Bonstingl (1992, 1995) proposes four pillars of quality. These pillars are:

###### 1) *Customer-supplier focus*

Bonstingl (1995:Introduction) defines customers as all the people who use your work. Suppliers are all the people whose work you use. According to Bonstingl (1992:34), schools, like other fiscally based enterprises, are in business to satisfy their customers and to maximise opportunities to serve and delight

them. Everyone inside every school is both a customer and a supplier. It is important therefore that there are chains and networks of mutual support within and outside the school. To ensure that the school continually improves the standard of education provided, all role players (for example, learner, teacher, parent, education department) must know their duties and responsibilities.

2) *Constant dedication to continuous improvement (kaizen)*

Everyone in the organisation needs to be dedicated to continuous improvement, at both a personal and collective level, at work, at home and in the community (Bonstingl 1995:Introduction). The observation is made by Bonstingl (1992:37) that the traditional school has focused on learners' failures, inadequacies and limitations. Rather, the focus should be on encouraging learners to explore hidden talents and to build on previous successes and understandings.

Another characteristic of traditional schools according to Bonstingl (1992:37), is the view that learning is a collection of linear, consecutive segments of one-way communication. In the School of Quality, the learning process may be compared to a spiral. The spiral-shaped PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) Cycle or a continuous Experience Pattern as shown here

Perception → Conceptualisation → Thought → Action → Reaction

sees the teacher's role as much greater than that of writing on *tabulae rasae* or the filling of empty vessels. The learners are to "... use their prior knowledge and understanding as the foundation for construction of new learning and the constant refinement of developing intelligences (Bonstingl 1992:37)".

The concept of continuous improvement has its origins in Japanese quality theory. In Japan, this concept is called *kaizen*. The word is derived from two other words: "kai" which means "change" and

"zen" meaning "good" (for the better). In Japanese society *kaizen* philosophy is a commitment by its citizens to improve continually the conditions of the home, the workplace and the whole society. Improvement is to be ongoing and gradual. The philosophy is one of small-step improvement as part of a large overall target (Bowring-Carr 1994:144).

### 3) *A process-systems approach*

Bonstingl (1992:41) maintains that the organisation must be viewed as a system. The work that people do within the system needs to be seen as ongoing processes. When people in the system begin to realise their essential interrelatedness, they are better able to understand their roles in fulfilling the potentials of both the school and everyone connected with the school.

Within any system there are processes and products. A number of interdependent processes form a system, for example, an education system. Processes would, in the school context, usually be carried out by an individual or group of people. For example, a learner enrolling at the school would go through an admission process administered by the secretarial staff. Once the learner has been admitted, the formal education process begins. A class teacher, subject specialists and extramural teachers will help to educate the learner. Note that the education of the learner is the product, not the learner himself (Doherty 1994:87). At the beginning of the next year, new individuals contribute towards the process of educating the learner. In a quality school, Bonstingl (1992-3:41) observes that:

... everyone understands that improvement of student outcomes can only be achieved, over the long run, when learning processes are being continuously improved by those on the front lines, teacher-student teams, and when the entire system supporting those processes is being continuously improved by administrators who create the

context for optimal success within the school.

#### 4) *Consistent quality leadership*

The success of the quality transformation is the responsibility of those in top management positions (Bonstingl 1995:Introduction). The transformation will be achieved over a period of time when there is constant dedication to the quality philosophy.

According to Bonstingl (1995:Introduction), the quality philosophy is a way of being. It is a personal lifelong journey of the spirit, body and mind. The starting point of quality is inside our hearts and souls; then quality grows in the relationship with others; thereafter quality becomes the essence of our schools, workplaces and communities; then of our society and finally of the global village of which we are all a part.

At a 1995 workshop held in Midrand, Gauteng, Bonstingl reminded his audience that quality must begin at the top. Everyone is at the top of something, for example, the teacher in the classroom or the learner who is a project leader in a small group activity. The individuals in these positions need to think about what can be done to effect continuous improvement within themselves and also those over whom they have influence.

#### 2.2.9 Stephen Murgatroyd and Colin Morgan

In 1994, Murgatroyd and Morgan published their findings regarding quality education found in Britain, Canada and other countries.

##### 2.2.9.1 *Generic strategy model*

Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:24) maintain that a customer-conscious school needs to analyse which sector of the educational market it wishes to target for its educational services. Four generic strategies are articulated by the authors (1994:28-39)

which are:

1 *The broad basic service mix with open access:broad open*

This school offers a broad based programme of activities as regards, for example, the curriculum and the extramural programme. It would not be a specialist school in any area of the curriculum. Such a school has open access of enrolment, that is, there are no limitations regarding who is accepted into the school. There is no discrimination on the basis of ability, race or language skills (Murgatroyd 1994:29).

Most South African public schools fit into this category. All learners are welcome. All of these schools strive to provide the curriculum as formulated by the Department of Education. These schools provide a range of extramurals - cultural and sporting. The school used in this action research thesis would be such an institution.

2 *Enhanced basic service mix with open access:enhanced open*

The second generic strategy is similar to the previous type of school. The school also provides a broad-based curriculum and welcomes all learners. Where this school differs from the previous one is that the educational service is being enhanced through "added value" qualities derived from additional activities and resources (Murgatroyd 1994:34). An example cited by the authors is the school that has French in the curriculum. In addition to the language being taught at the school, the learners may be offered a two- or three- week visit to France or Quebec.

South African schools that would fit into this category would be King Edward VII School (KES) and Parktown High School for Girls. Both schools welcome all learners, KES offers "added value" through the additional physical and human resources put into its sporting programme. The school, for example, employs specialist

coaches for cricket. At Parktown High School for Girls, the school has achieved a reputation for excellence in the field of Art. The subject has a high profile because of its resources and specialist teachers.

3 *Basic service mix with differentiated access:basic niche*

In this form of school, the school offers a broad-based curriculum. Yet the school may wish to put special emphasis on a particular area. Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:36-37) cite an imaginary Georgetown High which has a sports niche. Every learner has a staff member or person outside the school who is a sports mentor and counsellor. As regards enrolment, there is a basic niche policy. Prospective learners would have to show an ability or competence in a particular area. Gender, ethnicity or religion could be used as niche determinants. At Georgetown High, for example, such learners would have to evince a degree of competency in sports.

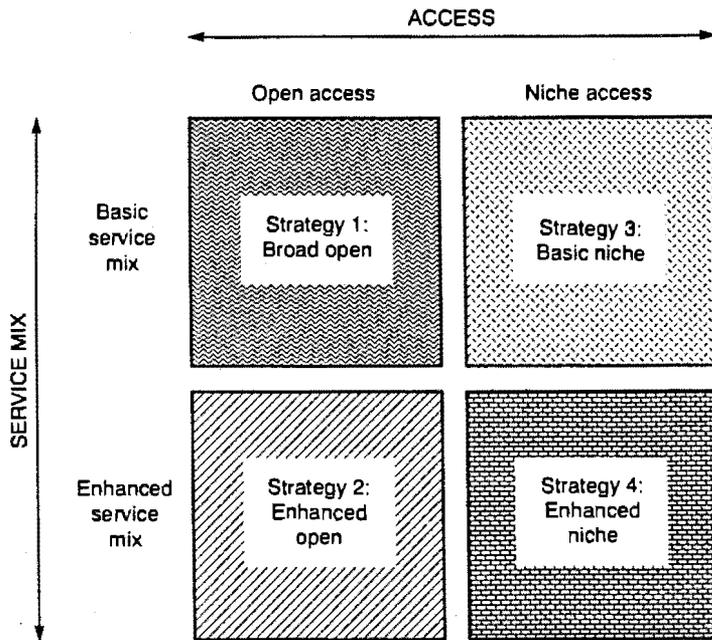
Examples of such schools in South Africa are the King David schools. These schools encourage enrolment from learners of the Jewish faith. Judaism is a core dimension of the daily curriculum.

4 *Enhanced basic service mix with differentiated mix:enhanced niche*

This type of school wishes to create a distinctive position in the education sector (Murgatroyd & Morgan 1994:37). The school aims to become a "leading edge" institution in which it is successful in a particular area. In the South African context, such a school would be the Drakensberg Boys' Choir School. The school selects learners on the basis of their singing ability. Certain staff members are appointed because of their excellence as music teachers. Disproportionate funding will be allocated to ensure that the music requirements (human resources and physical facilities) are met.

The four generic strategies are outlined in the diagram below:

Figure 2.4 **Generic strategies of schooling** (Murgatroyd & Morgan 1994:28).



Key

Basic service mix: broad-based programme of activities

Enhanced service mix: emphasis on particular aspect of programme

Open access: no limitations on learner intake

Niche access: learner intake dependent on variables, for example, gender and language.

2.2.9.2 TQM model for school leadership

Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:65-66) refer to implicit qualities of the effective TQM organisation. These so-called "soft" qualities can be thought of as the three Cs of TQM. They are:

Culture - the implicit rules, assumptions and values that hold the organisation together. In such

a culture, innovation is valued highly; status is secondary to performance and contribution; leadership is a function of action, not position; rewards are shared through the work of teams; development, learning and training are seen as critical paths to sustainability; empowerment to achieve challenging goals together with continued development and success provide a climate for self-motivation (Murgatroyd & Morgan 1994:65).

Commitment - a sense of pride and opportunity for development amongst everyone in the organisation. There is a sense of shared ownership of the goals of the school.

Communication - an organisational climate in which there is open, honest and full communication within and between teams.

According to Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:69-78), there are five critical components of TQM:

1 *Alignment and commitment to shared vision*

It is important that everyone in the school has a sense of identity and affinity for the mission statement. The aims and objectives of the school should be formulated and agreed between all the staff. The shared vision should permeate the organisation and "justify their actions to themselves and to each other. It is the statement by which all in the school wish to be judged" (Murgatroyd & Morgan 1994:71).

2 *Extended understanding of customer-driven process and strategy*

Three levels of process influence have been identified by Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:72), namely, those matters that the individual can affect by direct action, those processes over which the individual can have an influence by making suggestions and proposals and finally, those matters over which the individual has minimal influence. Through a spirit of dedication to process improvement, the organisation will reflect continuous improvement and meet the expectations of customer - both internal and external.

### 3 *Teams as focus of organisational change*

Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:73) note that most schools are hierarchically managed. They refer to the trend that had established itself by the early 1990s whereby many public sector organisations had changed their organisational design. In terms of the new trend, self-managing teams became responsible for key processes in the organisation. Those closest to a process in an organisation were better able to improve process performance (Murgatroyd 1994:73 quoting Moss-Kanter). Certain conditions have been put forward by Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:73-74) as being essential for effective teamwork:

- a commitment by top management to the principle of team work
- investment in training and development to help teams master the skills required for effective teamwork
- teams to be regarded as the basic units for dealing with all activities in the organisation
- specific mandates, deadlines and resources given to teams to help them perform their tasks responsibly and efficiently.

### 4 *Outrageous or challenging goals*

Outrageous or challenging goals are also called Hoshin goals. The word Hoshin in Japanese means "the shining light of good direction" (Murgatroyd & Morgan 1994:73-74). Such a goal is a target that the organisation feels it is incapable of achieving.

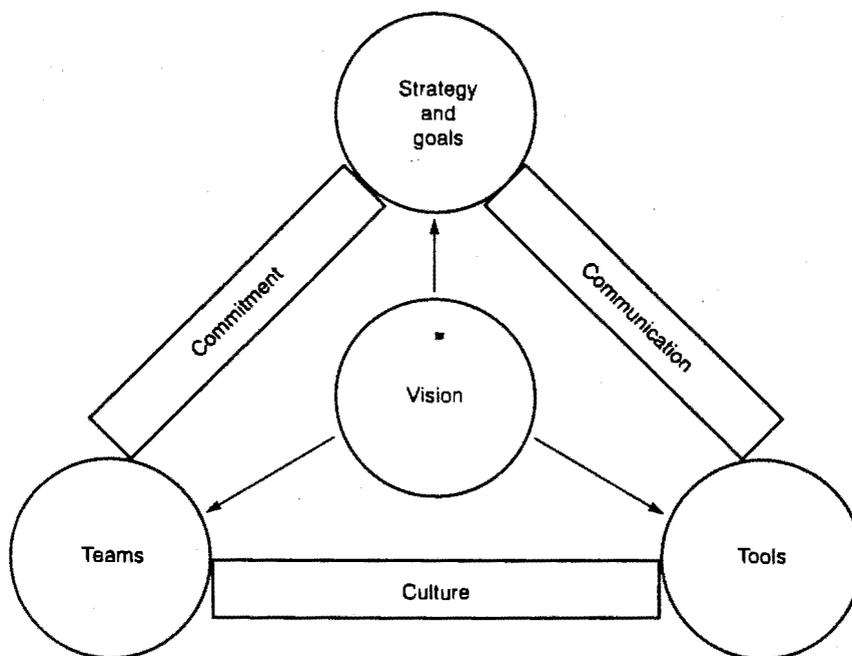
The daunting goal, however, if striven for by all in the organisation, can help bring about steep-slope improvement.

#### 5) Tools for systematic daily management

There should be systematic use of data to ensure that processes are achieving the intended goals. Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:77) state that by insisting on measurable gains and frequent use of indicators and "success" charts, people in the organisation will be able to make decisions based on facts rather than on anecdotes, guesses, instinct or rumour. Analytical and thinking skills will help in the process. There are also data analysis tools such as Pareto charts, histograms and fishbone or Ishikawa diagrams (Sallis 1993:102).

A model for TQM school leadership has been put in diagrammatic form by Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:67) in Figure 2.5. It should be noted that Component 2 (process and strategy), together with Component 4 (goals), have been grouped within one circle, namely, "strategy and goals" in the model.

Figure 2.5 TQM model for school leadership (Murgatroyd & Morgan 1994:67).



Different theorists have highlighted different critical characteristics of TQM leadership. Yet there are areas amongst these critical characteristics that agree with Murgatroyd and Morgan's leadership model as described in Figure 2.5. Sallis (1993:88-89) stresses the need for communicating the quality vision, a commitment to the quality improvement process and the need to build effective teams. Bonstingl (1996:94-100) highlights the necessity for strong and consistent total quality leadership in which leaders "talk their walk and walk their talk" (1996:94). Bonstingl sees the need to empower teams and build up relationships of trust. Goals should be set for both teachers and learners. He views all within the school adopting the quality philosophy so that it "becomes embedded into the deep structure and culture of the school" (1996:100).

### 2.3 SUMMARY

This chapter has indicated that much Total Quality Education theory and practice has its origins in Total Quality Management. It is important to remember, however, that TQM theorists such as Deming, Juran and Crosby have concentrated on quality in the manufacturing industry. All three claim that their theories are equally applicable to service industries (Sallis 1993:45).

The researcher submits that not everything that is used to ensure quality in the industrial sector is applicable to education. An example would be Crosby's concept of "zero defect". Zero defect cannot be achieved with every learner in a school. Deming refers in point eight of his Fourteen Management Principles to "driving out fear". In the happiest of schools, is there not, on occasion, a need for "healthy respect" to be instilled into possibly recalcitrant learners?

There is commonality amongst the theorists about what constitutes a quality organisation. Such elements are (Bowring-Carr 1994:3; Pike 1996:74; West-Burnham 1992:24):

- Quality is defined as responsiveness to customer needs. The customers may be internal or external to the organisation.
- Quality involves meeting stated needs, requirements and standards.
- There is a constant, never-ending striving for continuous improvement.
- Measurement (for example, statistical data) is critical to the quality process. The only way to improve is to know what is actually happening.
- An error-friendly problem-solving environment is created in which people are not scared to fail in their endeavours to improve quality.
- All staff are empowered and encouraged to be creative.
- There is a focus on prevention rather than detection, an aspiration to "get it right first time".
- Although senior management initiates the quality philosophy in the organisation, everyone contributes towards its realisation.
- All staff receive ongoing training in quality theory and practice.
- There are high levels of non-financial recognition of a valued workforce.

There are a number of differences amongst the theorists. When Deming spoke to Japanese industrialists in 1951, he aimed to help them get rid of the "Japanese is junk" stigma to their products. By contrast, Crosby's talks to United States businessmen in the 1970s and 1980s, were aimed at improving the quality of

management, particularly in United States corporations. Crosby promoted the concept of "zero defect" as a performance standard which was criticised by Deming as simply being a goal (Walton 1989:66). In meeting specifications, the organisation does not necessarily achieve constant improvements. All that is guaranteed is that the existing state of affairs remains. The theorists had different focuses. Dale (1994:20) states that in broad terms, Crosby focused on company-wide motivation, Deming on statistical process control, Feigenbaum on systems management, while Juran gave most of his theoretical attention to project management.

In this chapter, two theorists that have been discussed have an educational focus on quality; they are Bonstingl and Glasser. Their approaches to quality are different. Bonstingl has largely used TQM principles and adapted them to describe a philosophy of quality education. Glasser, with his background as a psychiatrist, has used his knowledge to formulate theory on how to create quality schools through cooperative, non-confrontational school environments.

For educationists attempting to bring about quality schools, Bonstingl and Glasser might therefore have a greater initial relevancy. They speak directly from the educational situation. The researcher submits that other theorists on quality deserve attention, even if their input is outside the education sector. There is, for example, extensive literature on the adaptation of Deming's philosophy in the field of education (Bonstingl 1995; Bowring-Carr 1994; English 1994; Greenwood 1994; Murgatroyd 1995; Sallis 1993). Such literature substantiates the significant relevance of Deming to educational management.

The theories of the quality theorists outlined in this chapter do have a contribution to make towards improving the quality of educational management in schools. It is important to remember, however, that TQM philosophy cannot be adopted in its entirety within the educational sector. The educational manager must sift through the theory and practice with a critical eye. What is

inimical to educational philosophy is to be discarded; what can be adapted to the realities of a particular school should be so used. That which can contribute to the continuous improvement of the quality of educational management should be accepted. Neither TQM nor TQE theory and practice have all the solutions to the challenges confronting South African education at the start of the twenty-first century. Yet the quality movement has a significant contribution to make, it is submitted by the researcher, to put true quality education into every school in this country.

## CHAPTER THREE

### TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES USED IN TOTAL QUALITY EDUCATION

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

How is quality measured in education? Latta and Downey (1994:2) make the observation that most professions have recognised means for measuring quality. Education, by contrast, does not have a set of unanimously accepted tools for this purpose (Latta & Downey 1994:2).

Latta and Downey (1994:2,3) further maintain that the education profession would benefit from having both precise measuring tools as well as the people with the necessary skills to use them properly. They regard quality tools as the means to extend individual effectiveness, help solve problems, gather information, analyse data and assist in making decisions about processes and systems (Latta & Downey 1994:3). A method for establishing the cost to a school of low quality would be another advantage. Greenwood and Gaunt (1994:87) assert that about 25% of a school budget is spent on "scrap, waste and rework".

Greenwood and Gaunt (1994:85) state that there is little empirical research on waste in school. They cite that the figure for the manufacturing industries in the United Kingdom is between 15 and 30 per cent of their sales revenue. Within the context of a school, examples of failure costs are:

- the learner who has to repeat a grade because the promotion requirements have not been met.
- retyping of work by secretaries because the work was not correct the first time.
- unsatisfactory teachers and resultant poor teaching because of inadequate staff selection procedures.

- excessive photocopying and roneoing costs because of out-dated/faulty duplicating equipment.
- declining enrolment and therefore fewer fee-paying parents because the school fails to provide learners with a quality education.

Tools and techniques can be used to improve work processes. A school that uses its human resources (learners and teachers) as well as material resources (for example, stationery and sports equipment) effectively, will reap financial savings.

According to Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham (1994:79), measurement is an essential attribute of a school striving towards quality education. Without precise, frequent and comprehensive measurements, the school will not know where it is going nor when, or even if, it has reached desired goals. They warn against two temptations when making measurements. Firstly, there can be the preoccupation with easily ascertainable statistics such as examination results and attendance figures. This preoccupation with visible figures often ignores what are unknown or unknowable figures.

Secondly, there is a predilection in organisations not to probe too deeply if everything seems to be working satisfactorily - a managerial outlook of "not rocking the boat". This viewpoint is rejected for these reasons (Bowring-Carr & West-Burnham 1994:79):

- The school needs to know that, at every point at which the child and the system come into contact, the outcome helps the child to learn more effectively.
- The school needs to know if its human and non-human resources are being used in the most efficient and effective way.
- The school needs to know if the money is being spent in the most efficient and effective way in the fulfilment of its mission statement.
- The school needs to know where it can still do better.

Measurement tools and techniques have a significant contribution to make in helping the school that is continuously trying to improve the quality of education it provides.

Many of the tools and techniques proposed for TQE have their origins in TQM theory and practice. It is important to realise that measurement tools and techniques cannot be used uncritically in the field of education. As Bradley (1993:85) points out, schools primarily involve people and not machines. Measurements will therefore by nature be less accurate than those encountered in heavy industry. Also, in quality education theory, the individuality of the person is to be respected. Tools and techniques should not be used to force mechanistic, uncritical conformance by people in the school. Rather, measurement is used to help all involved in the quality school to understand better the processes necessary to achieve participatively agreed-upon goals.

This chapter will discuss certain tools and techniques that can be used to assist in the implementation of TQE at a school. There will be a discussion of group processes in the quality drive. To bring about improvement in quality, there is a need for problem identification and analysis. Various measurement tools and techniques will be described. Once problems have been identified and analysed, the planning and implementation of TQE can begin. A number of planning and implementation strategies will then be highlighted in this chapter.

### 3.2 TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

For the sake of clarification, the TQE tools and techniques have been put into three divisions. The first division is group processes, while the second division deals with ways of identifying problems and analyses arising from the problems. The third division identifies strategies for the planning and implementation of TQE. It is important to note the interrelatedness of the TQE tools and techniques at any point in

the continuous improvement process at a school.

### 3.2.1 Group processes

Total Quality Education is characterised by management that is both participative and cooperative in style. This philosophy encourages group thinking on how to use the tools and techniques to improve education. Groups or teams can perform much better than a collection of individuals because of synergy in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts (Reynolds 1994:42). It is emphasised by Latta and Downey (1994:9) that group work is to be preferred when using the quality tools. They observe that two heads are always better than one, and three or more are better than two. Latta and Downey (1994:9) say that when individuals work in groups, the quality tools will help to

- involve the participation of those who "own" a problem in the problem-solving process
- create ownership in trying to find solution strategies
- disprove the saying that "sometimes liars figure and figures lie", because the figures and data are supplied by themselves
- show how educators may adapt a tool or process to make it work specifically in educational settings
- create a learning environment where each member of the group learns why, when, where and how to use quality tools
- ensure that the real value is *people* and not the TQE tools. The tools are merely being guided by the human intellect to increase human potential, productivity and effectiveness.

Group processes are also confirmed by Sallis (1993:92) who regards teams as the engines of the quality improvement. In a TQM institution, there will be a series of overlapping teams "working on small incremental projects each of which is designed to solve a problem, improve an existing process or design a new one" (Sallis 1993:92). Although teams are conceptually regarded as positive, Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham (1994:105) comment that many people's experiences are different. Teams are often

dominated by political activity, wasting of time and failing to achieve goals. In the quality school, teams will need to be effective by, for example, taking less time to produce high-quality decisions, making fewer mistakes, consistently improving their performance, meeting targets and deadlines, enhancing the performance of individuals, as well as distributing stress and pressure (Bowring-Carr & West-Burnham 1994:105,106). Staff must be trained on how to be effective and positive team members.

Group and team processes have different functions within a quality school. Four such groups that are relevant to a school are outlined below.

### 3.2.1.1 Quality council

*added 10/12/004*

Quality does not simply happen by accident in an organisation; it needs to be planned (Reynolds 1994:38). Within the school, there should be a small group of people who initiate the quality concept. A crucial member of the council is the principal of the school. TQE should be seen to have the visible support of the most senior staff members. For the same reason, other senior staff members need to be on the council. The members of the council will formulate a quality policy and design ways of introducing TQE to the whole staff. This would involve considerable staff development training. How is the quality concept to be conveyed to the learners and parents as well as the wider school community? This issue also needs to be addressed by the council. According to Reynolds (1994:40), the quality council should also examine the costs of quality of an early stage in the implementation process. Within the context of the school, Greenwood and Gaunt (1994:82-87) have identified three areas for analysis of the cost of quality. The areas are:

#### 1 Quality failure (both internal and external to the school)

Poor internal quality is found in instances such as poorly run meetings, inappropriate textbooks and excessive

photocopying. External failure could be evident in reduced number of applicants and poor publicity.

## 2 *Appraisal of quality*

The standard of quality can be assessed by teachers, for example, who mark and correct the learners' work (Greenwood & Gaunt 1994:85). Suppliers to the school need to have their products and services appraised. Staff should be appraised by the principal and by teaching colleagues. All of these appraisals take time and therefore, directly or indirectly, cost money.

## 3 *Prevention costs*

These costs are the costs of activities that prevent failure from occurring. Examples would be the training of staff in quality principles, quality awareness programmes and planning.

The council needs to do a cost-benefit analysis of implementing TQE in the school.

### 3.2.1.2 *Quality circles*

Professor Kaoru Ishikawa of Tokyo University introduced the concept of quality circles into TQM theory in 1962 (Green 1994:21). The idea behind quality circles (sometimes referred to as quality control circles) was to bring workers together for regular meetings. At these meetings, the workers were encouraged to discuss ways of improving the workplace and the quality of work. Workers were encouraged to identify potential problems to maintaining quality and to offer possible solutions (Williams 1994:6). According to Ishikawa, attendance at quality circles should be voluntary and the circle should not come under the command of a superior (Sallis 1993:98).

There are many situations in which the quality circle concept can be used within the school. All the teachers in a particular grade can establish a quality circle. At a sports level, many schools unconsciously use quality circles. Coaches of a sport, such as cricket, will regularly discuss the results of the matches played and how the cricketers' performances can be improved.

Tim Atkinson (quoted by Sallis 1993:98) commented on quality circle experiments carried out in further education colleges thus:

Quality circles are not a panacea but they can have dramatic results in terms of staff involvement, morale and identification with the aim of the organisation. There are no disadvantages to introducing a quality circle programme, only varied levels of success.

In British primary schools, quality circles have been used with great success (Mosley 1997:7). The concept has been described thus (1997:33):

Circle Time provides the ideal group listening system for enhancing children's self-esteem, promoting moral values, building a sense of team and developing social skills. It is a democratic system, involving all children and giving them equal rights and opportunities. It offers children a practical opportunity to discuss concerns, consider and debate moral issues, practise positive behaviour and work out solutions and action plans in an enjoyable and fun context which is highly motivational.

#### 3.2.1.3 *Quality improvement team*

The quality improvement team differs from the quality circle in that it has a limited life (Reynolds 1994:49). Once a particular topic or problem has been solved, the team is disbanded. Also, quality improvement teams do not necessarily come from the same

class, department or group, as is the case with quality circles. The composition of the team is determined by those people who have a meaningful contribution to make towards improving a process or solving a problem. There could be various levels of seniority in the team, although the team leader need not necessarily be the most senior member. Reynolds (1994:49) makes the observation though that the quality improvement team does need a sponsor who he defines as "a senior person or group of people in the organisation who have the authority to implement any changes suggested by the quality improvement team". As Reynolds further observes, the effort made by the quality improvement team will have been wasted if its ideas and suggestions are not put into practice. This is likely to happen if there has not been support from those people who have the authority to implement change, that is, senior management (1994:49).

Various stakeholders within a school can operate quality improvement teams concurrently. For example, a team in a school consisting of parents and teachers could be looking at ways to upgrade computer facilities. Another team consisting of the Children's Council and teachers could be formulating a policy to deal with bullying in the school.

Sallis (1993:92) refers to quality improvement teams as project teams. According to him, the brief of each team is usually limited, thereby making it easier to achieve success with small and manageable tasks. When a small project fails, the credibility of the process is not threatened. The notion is that a series of small successful projects can add up to a significant achievement (Sallis 1993:92).

#### 3.2.1.4 *Brainstorming team*

Brainstorming encourages creative, original thinking among its participants. West-Burnham (1992:56) states that the technique can be used several times in succession, such as for (1) problem

identification, (2) solution generation and (3) implementation strategy. In a brainstorming session, the ideal number of participants is five to ten members. All participants work together as equals and therefore every idea put forward needs to be considered. Sallis (1993:99-100) comments that brainstorming is enjoyable and productive. Yet there are limitations. While brainstorming excites the imagination and stimulates ideas, it does not provide objective assessment of a situation. It needs to be used with other tools such as the affinity and fishbone diagrams.

Four steps in the brainstorming approach have been described by West-Burnham (1992:56-57). Firstly, the problem or issue is written up on a blackboard or flipchart. Members are asked to put forward ideas. At this stage there is no criticism or judgement of ideas. All ideas are written down. Secondly, the facilitator checks with the originator of every idea that the written recording is correct. Every member of the team must understand the idea. In the third stage, all ideas are reviewed to avoid duplication, trivia, impracticality and inappropriateness. Remaining ideas are evaluated by certain criteria. In the fourth stage, those ideas which meet all the criteria may be considered as potential solutions for further discussion. Two forms of brainstorming techniques have been identified by Sallis (1993:100). These techniques may be either structured or unstructured. With unstructured brainstorming, everyone is allowed to express ideas as they think of them. Although the method stimulates creativity, it could mean that the more vocal people take control. Structured brainstorming encourages every member to give ideas in rotation until there are no more ideas forthcoming.

### 3.2.2 Problem identification and analysis

To effect improvement in the TQE school, it is important to understand fully those factors impeding the desired quality. It does happen that action can be implemented without fully

understanding the problem. Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:155) observe that decisions for action are rarely made on the basis of a full and systematic evaluation of the options and even more rarely that changes are made on the basis of sound data-based evaluation. The critical issue is to collect good information so that good decisions can be taken (1994:155). ]

The TQE toolkit has tools and techniques that help the school identify and analyse problems accurately. [These tools and techniques also help the school plan for improvement on the basis of sound knowledge of the problem or area to be improved. Certain problem identification and analysis tools are outlined below.]

### 3.2.2.1 *Affinity diagram*

Sallis (1993:100) has stated that this technique is used when there is a need to group a large number of ideas, opinions or issues and to categorise them. The overall aim is to identify those ideas which have more affinity than others.

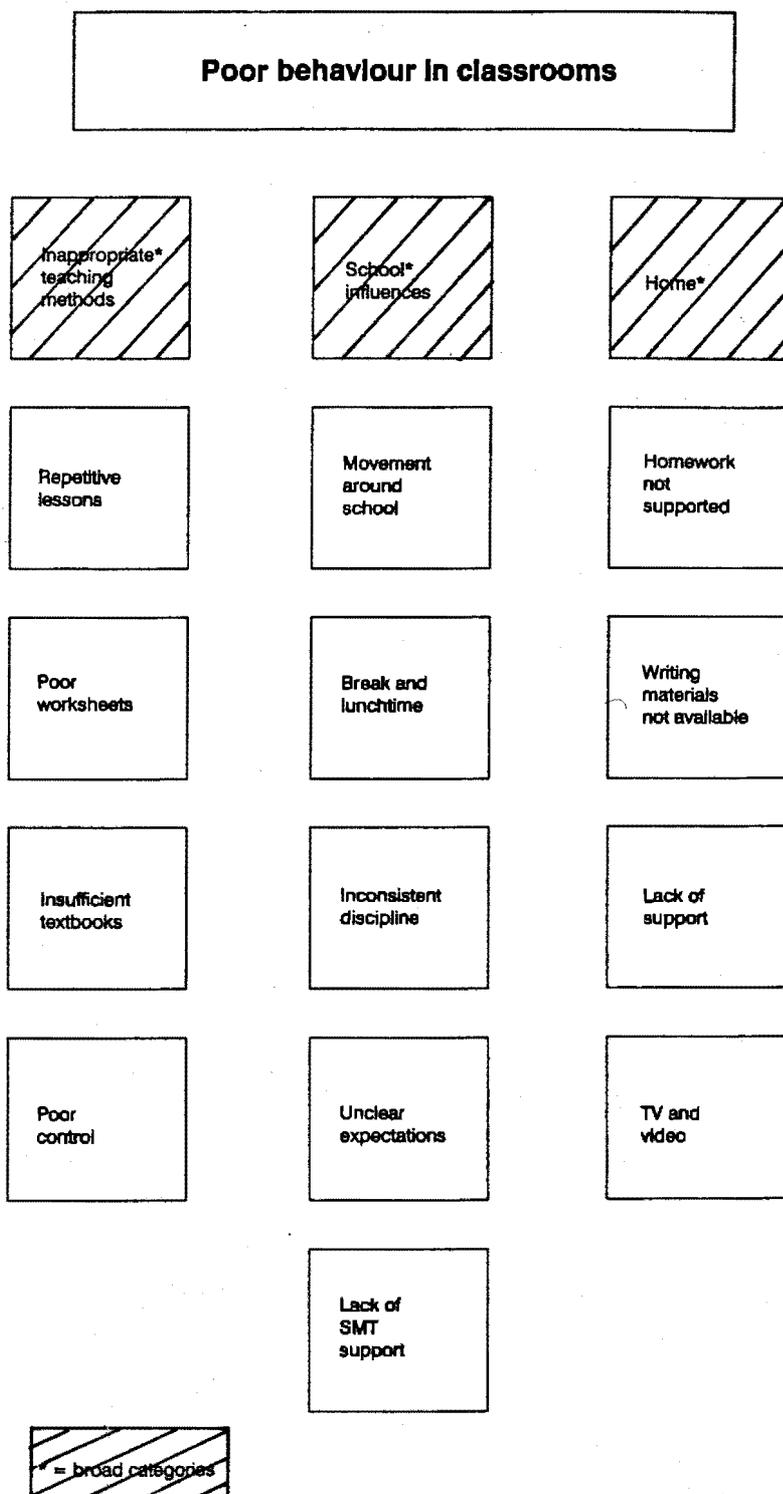
According to Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham (1994:81), the technique starts as a brainstorming idea done in total silence. Members write down their ideas on small pieces of paper. Afterwards, these ideas are put on random display. Members try to classify ideas into major groupings. An example of an affinity diagram is given in Figure 3.1.

A facilitator guides members in drawing up an affinity diagram. On the basis of all the ideas brainstormed by the members, broad categories are identified. In the diagram, three major groupings have been identified as the causes of poor behaviour in the classroom, namely:

- 1 Inappropriate teaching methods
- 2 School influences
- 3 Home

All the brainstormed ideas are then put under one of the three broad categories.

Figure 3.1 Affinity diagram to identify reasons for poor classroom behaviour (Bowring-Carr & West-Burnham 1994:81).



### 3.2.2.2 *Benchmarking*

Benchmarking is a form of comparative analysis (West-Burnham 1992:54). Capezio and Morehouse (1993:186-188) refer to four kinds of benchmarking. Three are of particular relevance to TQE. Firstly, there is internal benchmarking. This form should take place first to ascertain what resources already exist within the organisation to improve a particular process. Colleagues, for example, might already have dealt effectively with a problem confronting a fellow staff member. Competitive benchmarking is external to the organisation. The organisation looks at what its competitors are doing. Special attention is paid to the organisation perceived as being best in its class, as having the best practice.

Benchmarking may cut across particular industries. Two examples illustrate this type of benchmarking. A Johannesburg school needs to have neat sportsfields. The site manager of a school could benefit considerably by absorbing the advice given by his professional counterpart at a sports complex such as The Wanderers. A school needs an effective school-fee collection system. The processes used in a debt-collection agency can be adapted to the school situation.

Another form referred to by Capezio and Morehouse (1993:188) is activity-type benchmarking. This form is directed at process steps or discreet activities. The benchmarking process has been described by Greenwood and Gaunt (1994:55) thus:

#### Step 1 - Review

- Identify the process or product to be improved
- Identify those who do it better
- Gather hard data to form analysis

## Step 2 - Analysis

- What factors contribute to their success?
- Is their product/approach right for us?
- What are the implications of adopting their approach?

## Step 3 - Planning

- What can we achieve?
- How are we going to achieve these outcomes?

## Step 4 - Action

- Implement specific actions
- Monitor progress against norms
- Go back to the original and review
- Consider ways of extending improvement

Benchmarking helps the teacher to compare what others have done. An illustration would be the school that wishes to introduce an Interhouse Quiz competition. Through contact with schools that already have this activity, much can be learnt on how to organise the function properly from the outset. It avoids "reinventing the wheel". The teacher is being helped to work smarter rather than harder.

### 3.2.2.3 *Career-path mapping*

TQE is a process of continuous improvement of both the individual and the organisation. Both require goals that give direction to the journeys being followed. Sallis (1993:106) refers to career-path mapping. He says that such a technique is a simple means of identifying those milestones or potential barriers facing people during their time at either school or college. The institution can ascertain what quality characteristics and quality standards should be in place to help the teacher at each milestone.

Career-path mapping can be of great assistance to a teacher during an appraisal interview with the principal. Together, they can formulate strategies to ensure the never-ending professional improvement of the teacher. In appraisal interviews with staff members, the researcher discusses the short and long-term plans of the individual. The teacher might wish to start formal academic or professional studies in a particular area. Strategies are formulated on how the school can assist in achieving this goal. Furthermore, there are discussions on whether or not the teacher wishes to apply for promotion posts in the near future. Ways to achieve such goals are discussed.

#### 3.2.2.4 *Cause and effect/fishbone diagram*

The cause and effect diagram is also known as either the fishbone or Ishikawa diagram (Sallis 1993:101). The diagram gets its fishbone title because of its shape. The problem or desired improvement is put at the "head" of the fish. The major categories or factors responsible for the situation are put on the "big bones" of the fish. On the "little bones" contributing factors to major categories are recorded. Sometimes the diagram is referred to as the Ishikawa diagram in honour of Kaoru Ishikawa who first created this TQM tool.

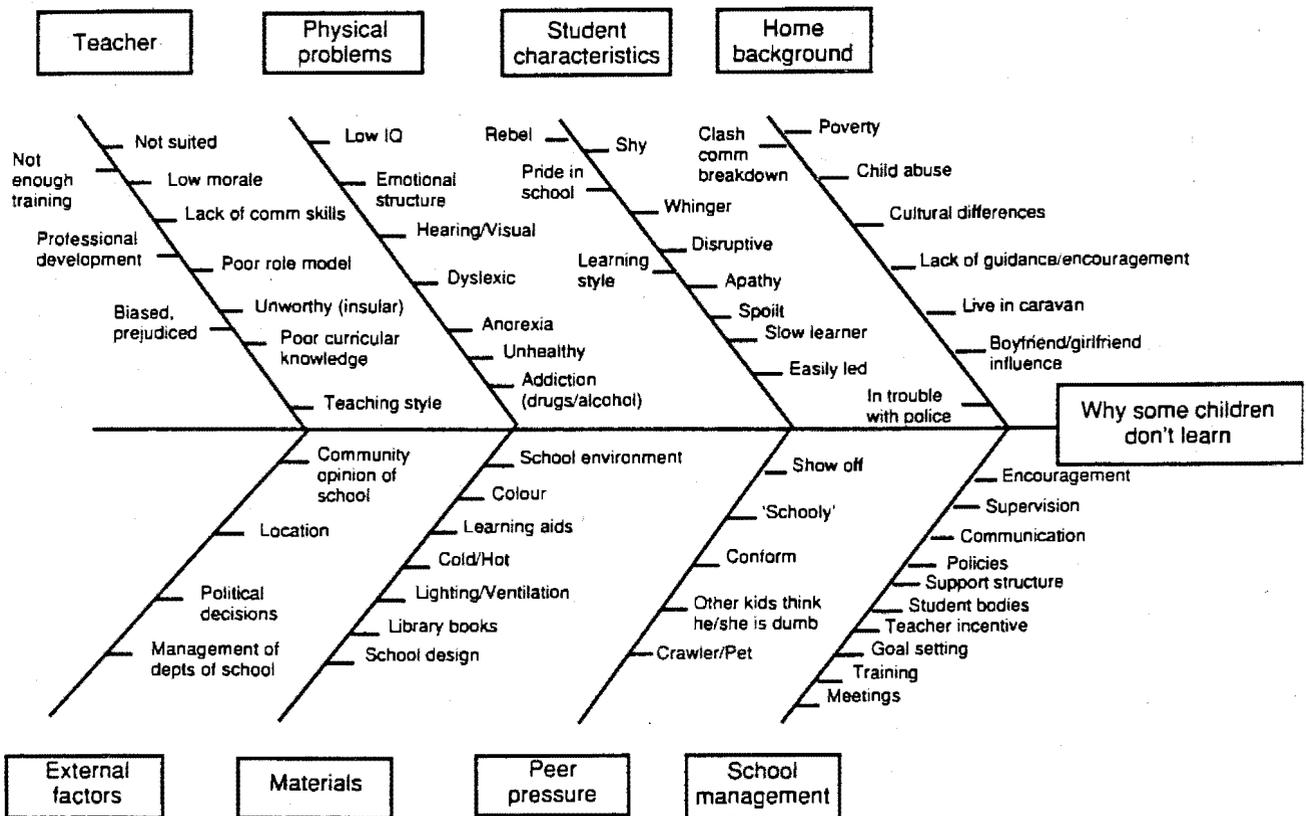
Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:169) maintain that cause and effect diagrams are most effective within a school for:

- i) trying to diagnose a particular problem with more than one cause.
- ii) attempting to change processes and there is a need to understand the processes better before moving to action.
- iii) trying to understand the links between one team and other teams.

The cause and effect diagram in Figure 3.2 identifies reasons why certain learners do not learn effectively.

In the diagram, a number of causes have been identified which result in a problem, namely, poor learning by certain learners. Among the causes are teachers, physical problems of the learner, peer pressure and the school management style. Each cause can be subdivided. So, for example, there could be many dimensions of the teacher that cause a learner to be a poor learner. The teacher could have insufficient training or show biased, prejudicial behaviour towards the learner.

Figure 3.2 Cause and effect diagram (Paine et al 1992:114).



### 3.2.2.5 Checklist analysis

A checklist is a simple method of data collection and is fundamental to other techniques, for example, the Pareto analysis (Bowring-Carr & West-Burnham 1994:84). Every time a particular event or incident occurs, it is recorded. At the end of a specified period of time, the different categories are tallied. These results will help the teacher move to action.

Below is a checklist compiled by a teacher who was attempting to identify the major behavioural problems encountered in a class.

Figure 3.3 Behavioural problems with Class 9E (Bowring-Carr & West-Burnham 1994:86).

Subject: Maths		Teacher AE
Number of periods: 5		
Please record each incident involving class 9E on the checklist for the period 10.1.94-14.1.94		
Category	Incidents	Total
Lateness	<del>1111</del> <del>1111</del> 11	12
Slow to settle	<del>1111</del> 111	8
Homework not completed	1111 11	6
Disruptive behaviour	111	3
Rudeness to teacher	11	2
Rudeness to other pupils	<del>1111</del> <del>1111</del> 1111	14
'Noisy'	<del>1111</del> <del>1111</del> <del>1111</del> 1	16

By analysing the above results, three major behavioural problems have been identified, namely, lateness, rudeness to other learners and the unacceptable noise level. With these significant findings to hand, the teacher is able to address the problems.

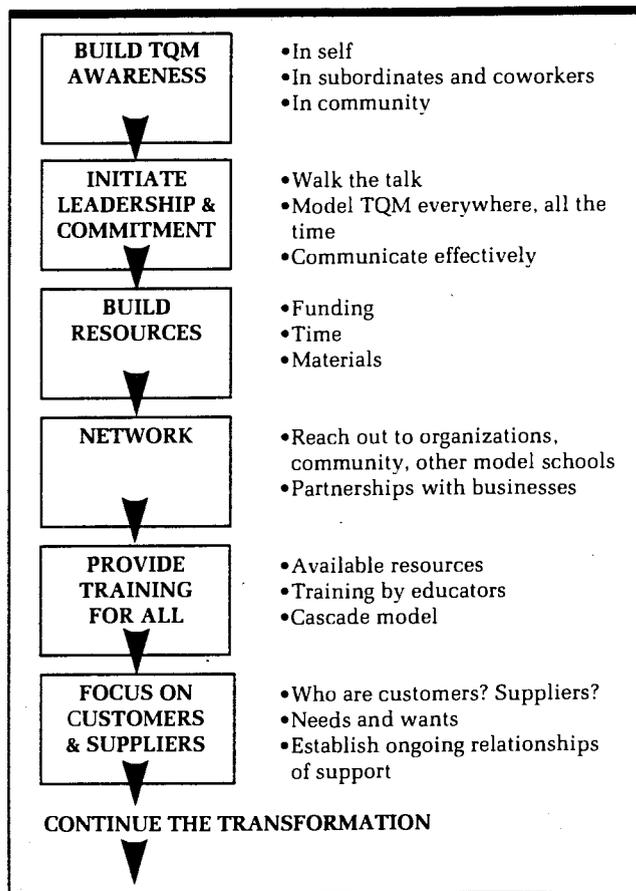
### 3.2.2.6 Flow chart

The flow chart is the diagram of the steps in a process in which

the steps are shown in natural sequence (Bonstingl 1992(c):51). Flow charts are useful ways of recording the steps followed in procedures used in an organisation. When a flow chart is drawn, it assists people in the organisation to see the steps to be followed with a certain procedure, for example, enrolment of a new learner at the school. By analysing the flow chart, weaknesses can be identified. A flow chart is a means of pinpointing areas where a process can be improved. It is also a means of analysing a new process before implementation so that potential pitfalls can be avoided.

In Figure 3.4, Bonstingl (1992(c):54) has designed a flow chart which shows the steps to be followed by a team of teachers and school leaders who wish to implement a Total Quality transformation in their school district.

Figure 3.4 Flow chart to implement school district Total Quality transformation (Bonstingl 1992(3):54).



In the design of the above flow chart, Bonstingl (1992(c):55) observed that because the flow chart was created by a team, there was a greater buy-in by everyone involved in the transformation process. The team members felt a part of the process from the beginning and the transformation began with a better chance for long-term success. The inference from Bonstingl's comments is that there are distinct long-term advantages to be derived from encouraging team input when designing a flow chart.

### 3.2.2.7 *Force-field analysis*

This technique helps to identify those forces that are driving the desired change, as well as those forces that are restraining the change. Bonstingl (1992(c):64) refers to "aids" (+) and "barriers" (-) to change. All the forces involved are identified and the technique thereby serves as a guide to action. It is important to remember that certain of the barriers or resisting forces may be outside the control of the organisation. It may not be worth the effort attempting to change such forces (Sallis 1993:102).

In the force-field analysis below, the teacher at the researcher's school was aiming to improve her relationship with a certain learner in the class.

Figure 3.5 **Force-Field analysis to improve Rorisang's behaviour**  
(Patrick 1995:2).

#### Driving Forces

1. Aim at clean school uniform.
2. Combat over-anxiousness.
3. Calm down hyperactivity.

#### Restraining Forces

1. Having to eat breakfast hurriedly, very early in the morning.
2. Strict, authoritarian discipline by father.
3. Diet high in refined sugar, preservatives and

4. Calm down giggling,  
outbursts of tears.

5. Building up trust in the  
teacher.

colourants.

4. Inability to cope in a  
new situation. Feeling  
of insecurity amongst  
her peers because of her  
size, race, slow tempo  
of work

5. Obviously strictly  
disciplined and  
punished with frequent  
hidings at home. Little  
trust in anyone with  
authority.

In the teacher's endeavours to help the learner, some of the restraining forces were beyond the control of the school, for example, strict, authoritarian discipline by father. The parent would be approached to adopt a more positive form of child management.

#### 3.2.2.8 Gantt chart

The observation is made by Reynolds (1994:57) that when people work together in a team, individuals within the team usually have different tasks. There are different starting and finishing times for the various tasks. It is frustrating for one team member to have to wait while another finishes a task before the first person can continue with the job.

One of the most useful methods for planning work by a group of people is the Gantt chart. In a Gantt chart the different people involved in getting a task done are listed. Their tasks and the due dates for completion are recorded. The final date for the overall task is also put on the chart. At a glance, everyone can see both the interdependence of every member and which member is responsible for the different tasks. In Figure 3.6 there is an example of a Gantt chart.

Figure 3.6 **Reporting to parents** (adapted from Bowring-Carr & West-Burnham 1994:90).

What?	Who?	When?
		Week beginning:
Report blanks circulated	Secretarial staff	1/6
Invitations to consultation evening	Headmaster	1/6
Reports completed	Teachers	8/6
Programme for consultation evening	Head of Grade/Std	15/6
Reports to principal for comment	Form tutors	15/6
Reports returned to teachers	Form tutors	22/6
Reports distributed		29/6
Consultation evening		30/6

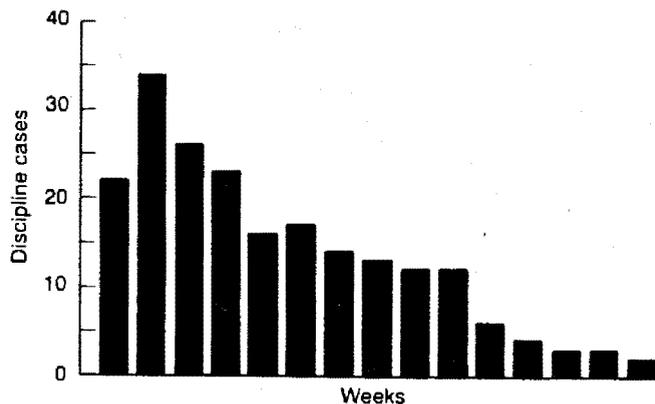
The Gantt chart can be used for organising projects such as a concert, sports day or production of a school magazine.

### 3.2.2.9 Histogram

Histograms have been defined by Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:177) as bar graphs that can be used to display the frequency of distribution of continuous data. The simplest histograms involve a simple variable (for example, discipline referrals). Histograms can be used to measure how a school is performing against a desired benchmark (for example, no learners being referred to principal because of indiscipline). In the diagram below, an imaginary school is striving for zero discipline problems.

Du Pont School recorded its endeavours to eliminate all incidences of indiscipline over a fifteen-week period. In the first week of the programme, twenty-two cases of indiscipline were recorded. Each week, the number of cases of indiscipline was recorded. Incidents of indiscipline peaked in the second week. Over time there was a gradual decrease. At the end of the programme in week fifteen, there were less than five incidents of indiscipline.

Figure 3.7. **Achieving zero discipline problems** (Murgatroyd & Morgan 1994:178).



#### 3.2.2.10 Market research

A core dimension of TQE philosophy is meeting (and exceeding) the expectations of customers or clients. It is not sufficient for the staff of the school to presume to know what its clients would like of the organisation. It has to ask them directly about their expectations. There are three major clients of a school, namely the learner, the parent and the teacher. Further clients of a primary school, for example, are the schools (or nursery schools) from which the learners come, the secondary and tertiary institutions to which the learners are going and instances such as the Department of Education.

Various types of market research are available. Questionnaires, formal and informal interviews with the clients are invaluable sources of research. Groups such as parent-teacher associations, governing bodies, children's and prefect councils, mothers' committees, staff meetings and *ad hoc* committees articulate the needs of clients.

Sources outside the immediate school should also be consulted. A primary school, for example, would consult nursery schools to ascertain the wants and needs of their former clients who are entering Grade One. High schools could be researched to indicate

the skills and standards expected from learners at the end of Grade Seven. The district management teams of the Education Department would also be a source of information on what is required of the school in the wider educational context.

Sallis (1993:112) makes the pertinent observation that market research cannot be carried out once and for all time, especially in the field of education. Unlike commercial activities, the core customers make a long-term commitment to the school but seldom return for re-enrolment. In such a market, the reputation of the institution is vital. Reputations take a long time to develop. Through market research, the school is given forewarning of changes in perception of the reputation of the school, as well as changing expectations of its clients.

A further point made by Sallis (1993:112) is that the market research must take into account the segmentation of the market. It is seldom that an organisation operates in a single segment of the market. An illustration would be a primary school. The parents of a Grade One learner would expect the school to have the professional expertise to make the transition from nursery to primary school as happy and stressless as possible. The methods adopted by the school to teach a learner to read could be an important factor for a discerning parent. At the Grade Seven level, parents would have different expectations. Is such a learner computer literate? Has the learner been inculcated with the work and study habits to ensure success in meeting the rigorous scholastic demands of the high school?

Traditionally, schools have had a captive audience (attendance being compulsory and determined largely by demographics) and their information-sharing has mainly been to convince the community that the educational programme is good and worthy of public support (Bradley 1993:74). There is a need to move such a perception to a new paradigm in which (Bradley 1993:74):

The school officials would have to rid themselves of

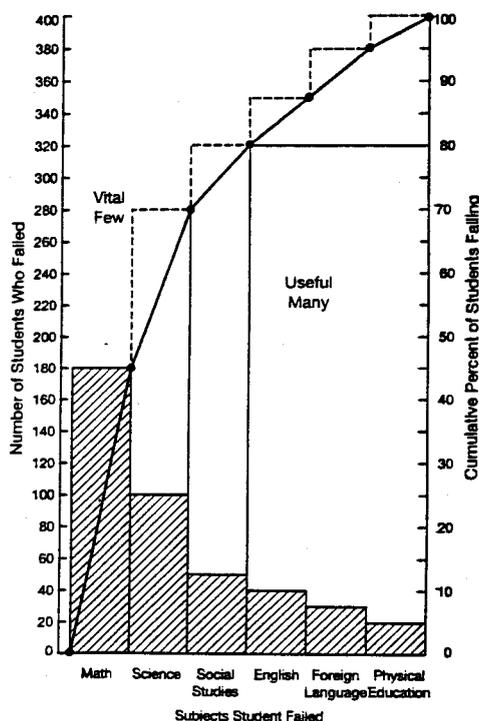
the practice of "selling" or "giving" and begin the practice of "gathering". That is, they would have to gather information about what customers want from schools in the way of production and services. Public relations would be replaced by consumer research.

### 3.2.2.11 Pareto analysis

The nineteenth century Italian economist, Vilfredo Pareto, came to a research conclusion that the majority of wealth was in the hands of a tiny proportion of the population (Sallis 1993:105). From his findings, he devised his Pareto Rule which states that 80% of the problems arise from 20% of the processes or procedures. The major problem areas (that is  $\pm 80\%$ ) should be tackled first in an attempt to improve the quality process. A Pareto chart helps a team or organisation to identify the major problems which can then be addressed.

Schargel (1994:45,46) describes a situation in which a United States high school attempted to identify the academic courses their senior students failed in a six-week marking period. The results are indicated in Figure 3.8:

Figure 3.8 Pareto chart: courses failed by students (Schargel 1994:46).



From the results obtained, it was clear that the majority of failures were in Maths (45%) and Science (24%). Attention was paid to these two subjects to ascertain how the teaching methodology could be improved.

### 3.2.2.12 *Recurring "How?" and Why?"*

By asking either the question "How?" or "Why?" five times, it is hoped to explore a problem or solution to the point at which it is expressed in its simplest, most basic terms (West-Burnham 1992:59). The observation is made by West-Burnham that the technique can be exasperating and needs skilful facilitating. Yet it is a powerful tool for overcoming superficial responses (West-Burnham 1992:59).

Bonstingl (1992(c):65) gives an illustration of asking the question "Why?" five times:

- 1      Why didn't you do your homework last night?  
        I didn't have time to do my homework last night.
  
- 2      Why didn't you have time to do your homework?  
        I had other things to do.
  
- 3      Why did you have other things to do?  
        I had to be with my little brother.
  
- 4      Why did you have to be with your little brother?  
        Because there was no-one else at home.
  
- 5      Why was there no-one else at home?  
        Because my parents went to a party and my little brother started throwing up right after they left. I had to take care of him until my parents got home after midnight and then I was too tired to do my homework. If it's okay with you, I'll hand it in tomorrow.

### 3.2.2.13 Sampling

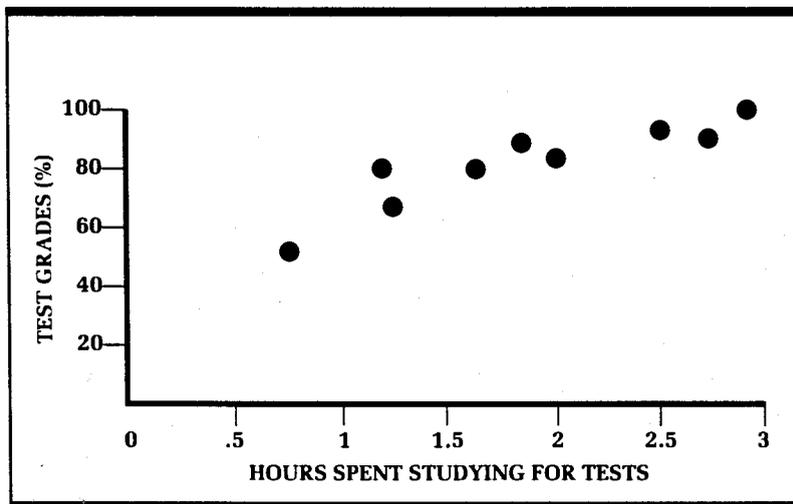
Sampling has been defined by Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:183) as "a statistical process for determining how many incidences of a process should be examined so as to obtain valid information for a systematic evaluation". The sample group, learners and/or their parents, can be of assistance in helping to identify areas of strength and weakness in the education service provided at the school. Sampling can be done by using questionnaires, interviews and focus groups.

### 3.2.2.14 Scatter diagram

The scatter diagram has been defined by Latta and Downey (1994:40) as a graph that plots one variable against another. They (1994:40) describe a scatter diagram as a test for cause-and-effect relationship. The strength of the relationship is ascertained by the degree to which the points/cluster approximate a straight line.

In the scatter diagram that follows, the student was taught how to use the scatter diagram to analyse the relationship between time spent studying for an examination and the actual percentages achieved (Bonstingl 1992(c):59).

Figure 3.9 Scatter diagram (Bonstingl 1992(c):59).



The student was able to see from the above scatter diagram that there is a positive correlation between time spent on study and examination results.

A cautionary note on interpreting scatter diagrams is given by Greenwood and Gaunt (1994:97). There might be a high correlation between two variables but it does not necessarily follow that the two variables are linked to each other. The example cited is that of an increase in the number of bank robberies as one variable as against the number of health shops in a town. A high correlation of variables is irrelevant.

#### 3.2.2.15 *SWOT analysis*

A quality school needs to have a long-term strategy. The mission statement, goals and objectives of the school help in the formulation of the strategy. A SWOT analysis is a basic tool for analysing the position of the school on the basis of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Sallis (1993:113) views the purposes of a SWOT analysis as a means to maximise *strengths*, minimise *weaknesses*, build on *opportunities* and reduce *threats*. Sallis (1993:114) gives an illustration of a SWOT analysis done at a British school. The analysis was done when the school learnt that it was likely to be merged with another institution. The findings are in Figure 3.10.

Figure 3.10 SWOT analysis (Sallis 1993:114)

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
A strong enrolment	Old buildings in poor decorative condition
Enthusiastic management team	High average age of staff
Excellent examination results	Inadequate budget
Strong music, art & drama departments	Lack of car parking
Strong parental support	Inadequate sports facilities
Good staff morale	
Supportive Governors	

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<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Merger with local institution with an excellent site but mediocre reputation	Loss of identity, strengths and reputation
Develop reputation in sport	Risk of losing experienced teachers who may take early retirement
The excitement of establishing a new institution	
The opportunity to enlarge staff expertise in order to increase the range of offerings	That the ethos of the other institution may become dominant
The merged institution may attract additional funding	Possible loss of some supportive Governors

Furthermore, Sallis (1993:113) views a SWOT analysis as having two elements. Firstly, there is an internal analysis which looks at how the institution performs. This internal audit focuses on strengths and weaknesses. In the environmental analysis, the focus is on how the school performs in relation to other schools and the environment or neighbourhood in which it is situated. The school has to defend itself against competing schools and furthermore it needs to make itself attractive to potential customers. The focus is on opportunities and threats to the

school.

### 3.2.3 Planning and implementation

Once the problems or challenges facing a school have been identified, it is possible to plan and implement change strategies. It must be remembered, though, that items from the TQE toolkit are interchangeable. Tools and techniques can be used in both or either the analysis or action stages of total quality education.

#### 3.2.3.1 Action plan

In their book, *Tools for achieving TQE*, Latta and Downey (1994:105) state that the decisions of groups often achieve no results. A reason is that there is no agreed-upon action plan. In addition, members of the group might not have agreed to accept responsibility for specific tasks. If an action plan is put off too long, the intended action either disappears or someone else does it with no immediate consequences. The group action-planning process is a "formal improvement plan to which everyone is committed and united in completing" (Latta & Downey 1994:105). Through action-planning, time-framed accountability is achieved (Schargel 1994:22).

A thirteen-point action plan has been devised by Latta and Downey (1994:105,106). Salient features of the thirteen points are:

- 1 Establish a representative group of six to eight people.
- 2 Review the analysed data and validate the improvement objective.
- 3 Conduct an analysis of resources and constraints.
- 4 Identify alternative solutions to the problem.
- 5 Select the quality alternative solution that has the best chance of meeting the improvement objective.
- 6 Agree on a format for the improvement plan.
- 7 Identify and select activities for implementing the

solution strategy.

- 8 List activities in the sequence they need to be completed, together with the following for each activity:
  - a) Person/s responsible
  - b) Cost
  - c) Resources needed
  - d) Start date
  - e) Completion date
  - f) Evaluation (target/expected product or devised outcome).
- 9 Individuals agree on issues such as responsibilities, time frame, resources needed.
- 10 Complete the improvement plan by placing the specifics on the planning sheet.
- 11 Everyone gets a copy of the plan developed and agreed on by the group.
- 12 Establish and agree on a schedule for meeting to discuss progress as well as assistance needed.
- 13 Individually and as a group, implement the improvement plan.

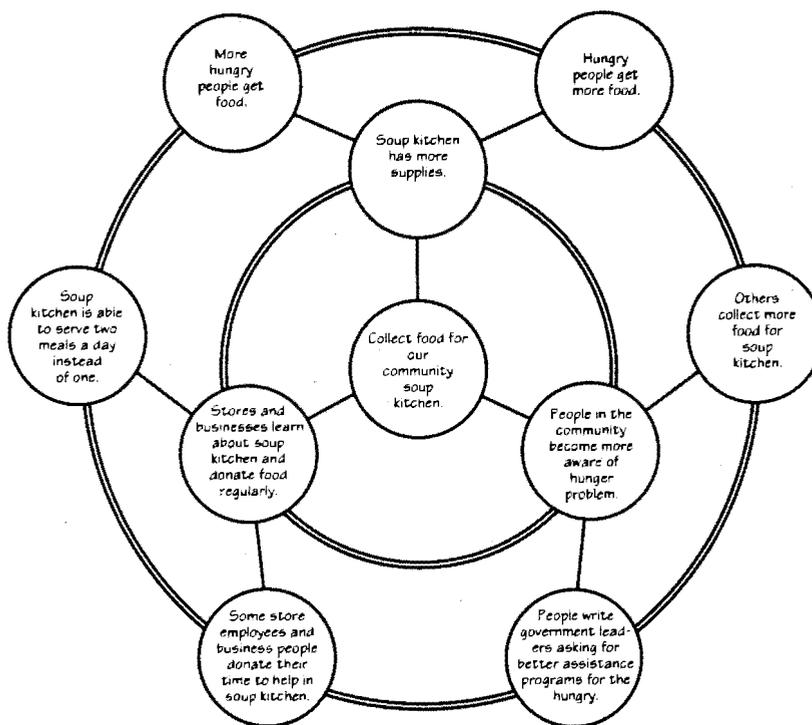
#### 3.2.3.2 *Decision wheel*

The decision wheel is also known as the Ripple Effect Diagram (Bonstingl 1992(c)67). The decision wheel is a tool for thinking through the effects of action taken. The decision or intended action to be studied is placed in the centre circle. The actual or probable consequences of the central action are written in the bubble of the first circle. In the bubble of the second circle, the actual or probable consequences of the actions of the first circle, are described. Thus, in a graphic way the consequences, both intended and unintended, are highlighted.

In Figure 3.11 students decided to collect canned food for a community soup kitchen. By using the decision wheel, the students were able to see the ripple effect of their good deed.

The decision to be taken or action to be studied was put in the centre bubble. In the four bubbles of the first circle surrounding the central action the actual or likely consequences of the central action were written. For example, stores and businesses learnt about the soup kitchen and donated food regularly. Actual and probable consequences of what happened in the first circle were written within the bubbles of the second circle. By way of illustration, the fact that stores became aware of the soup kitchen (first circle) meant that more food became available, resulting in the soup kitchen being able to provide two meals instead of one meal a day (second circle).

Figure 3.11 Decision wheel (Bonstingl 1992(c):67).



### 3.2.3.3 Hoshin planning

Hoshin is the Japanese term for the management concept of setting an "outrageous goal". It is a process of planning in which one

strives to reach the ideal state for an aspect of an organisation. For example, a school might wish to create a situation in which every learner is successful in cycle tests and examinations. There would be no scholastic failures in such a school. In describing the concept, Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham (1994:93) state:

In essence, Hoshin requires the abandonment of the normally cautious, pragmatic approach to thinking about the future. It depends on the suspension of the "that can't work" approach and daring to believe that profound and fundamental changes are possible.

Before looking at the Hoshin process, certain principles must be borne in mind. Seven Hoshin principles have been identified by Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:133-135). At the outset there should be participation by everyone in the development of the mission statement of the school. Secondly, there should be empowerment which encourages individual initiative and responsibility. A further principle is that root causes are tackled, not just symptoms. Hoshin goals go beyond the "fix-it" mentality into the "continuous improvement" mode of thinking. Fourthly, there is no link to performance appraisal. Hoshin planning encourages risk taking. At times, the risk will involve the experience of failure. A further principle is that quality and process improvement are prerequisites for maintaining improvements. The sixth principle is to "communicate, communicate and then communicate some more", with and between all in the organisation. Finally, there is a focus on process. Results follow processes which should be reviewed monthly.

Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:135-137) have outlined six steps in Hoshin planning for a school management team. The assumption is made that the school has clearly articulated its vision and strategy. The six steps are:

Step one: All teams in the organisation are asked to

imagine what it would be like and what they would do if the school had, amongst other things, more time to work with the students and could act quickly to implement and test new ideas.

Step two: Every team presents its responses to Step One above. There should be careful listening to ascertain the ideas of teams about action they would like to take; perceived barriers to utilising the opportunities existing in the organisation and the sense of commitment that teams seem to have, are noted.

Step three: Each team identifies one member to sit on a cross-function (or between-teams) planning group. This cross-function team will look at ideas from the various teams. The team should preferably be chaired by the principal and should determine outrageous goals to be pursued by the school.

Step four: The outrageous goals should be announced to everyone. Whilst outrageous, the goals must nevertheless be worth striving for.

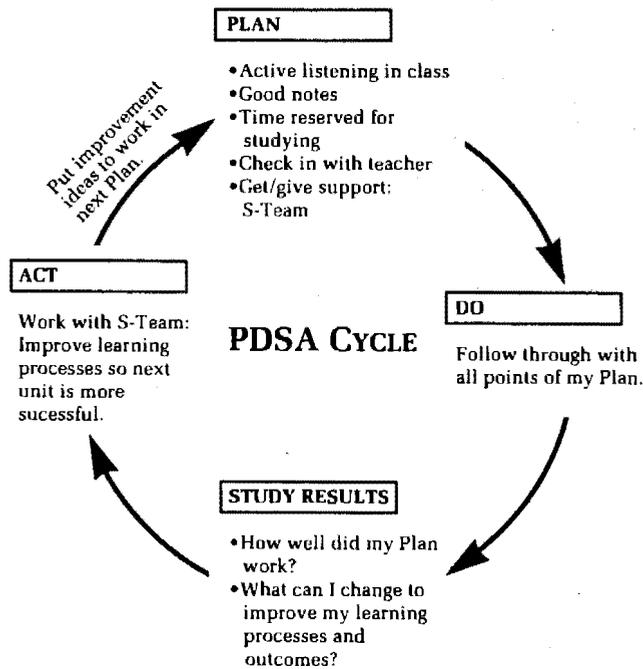
Step five: Every team should be empowered to achieve the Hoshin goals. Steyn (1995:97) asserts that, with the emphasis on restructuring and improving current school practice, it is indispensable that there be empowerment of teachers. Her definition of empowerment is "... the fundamental transfer of authority by allowing teachers to make decisions about assigned tasks, maintaining teachers' involvement in creating both a product as well as a satisfying environment and accepting teachers' involvement in daily problem-solving and decision making".

Step six: Progress should be monitored constantly. Feedback, whether it be good or bad, should be shared with all stakeholders. All should be able to see the degree to which the school was successful in achieving its Hoshin goals.

### 3.2.3.4 PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) Cycle

In 1939, W Shewhart conceived the PDCA (Plan-do-check-act) cycle. His friend and mentor, W E Deming, changed it to the PDSA (Plan-do-study-act) cycle. The cycle is a useful tool for carrying on a continuous improvement cycle (Bonstingl 1992(c):59). It is asserted by Bonstingl (1992(c):59-61) that the PDSA cycle is the way people learn. In Figure 3.12 the student is making a never-ending commitment to improving the quality of school work.

Figure 3.12 PDSA cycle (Bonstingl 1992 (3):60).



The PDSA is a versatile tool of the TQE toolkit. It has as its essence the notion of continuous improvement - a key dimension to the philosophy of TQE.

### 3.2.3.5 *Problem solving techniques*

In his book, *Managing quality in schools*, West-Burnham (1992:65) warns against using intuition in solving problems. The intuitive response starts from a recognition of the problem, tries to identify causes and then offers solutions. The results of such an approach could be:

- solving the symptoms but not the problems
- solving the problem but at high cost
- solving the problem but creating others
- not solving the problem or the symptoms but learning to live with both.

Such results are unacceptable in a school striving to offer Total Quality Education. West-Burnham (1992:65-67) posits five steps in the rational (as against intuitive) problem solving approach. They are:

1 Identification:

At this stage, the initial problem is identified. Techniques such as brainstorming or Pareto analysis are used to help in the identification.

2 Diagnosis:

Once the problem has been identified, there is a systematic analysis of the possible causes. Again, TQE techniques such as cause-and-effect analysis are used.

3 Generating solutions:

As many solutions as possible are identified.

4 Implementation:

The best solution or solutions are implemented. It is important to set target dates for the individuals working on the various aspects of the problem.

## 5 Monitoring and review:

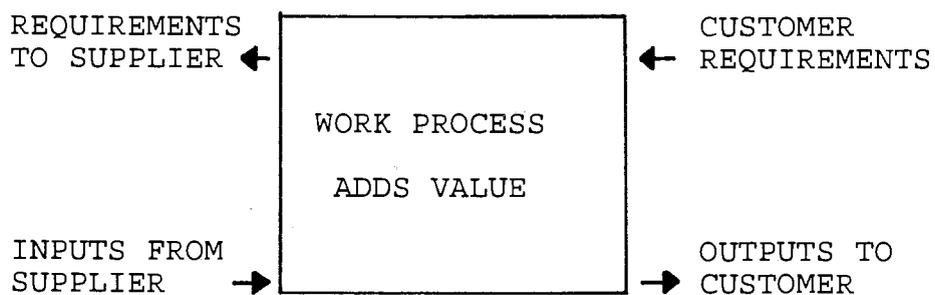
It is necessary to have monitoring to ensure that the solution being implemented is actually working. Longer time might be necessary. Such review helps to ensure that solution is institutionalised; this means that it becomes part of the way the school works. Secondly, it is necessary to ascertain whether or not the solution was cost effective and enhanced team skills.

### 3.2.3.6 Process analysis and review

Before a process can be improved, it needs to be understood (Bowring-Carr & West-Burnham 1994:94). The various factors that contribute to a process must be understood. Their relative significance should be defined.

West-Burnham (1992:44-45) makes the observation that in order for a process to work, all the aspects identified have to be complete. He put the work processes in a diagrammatic form as illustrated in Figure 3.13.

Figure 3.13 **Work processes** (West-Burnham 1992:44).



In the above figure, West-Burnham (1992:44,45) cites a situation in which a letter must be sent to parents about a forthcoming educational trip. The supplier is the teacher planning the trip. The customer is the parent who receives relevant information about the trip. The process is managed by the school secretary who needs enough time to complete the task, have access to both the word processor and photocopier. She then distributes the

letter to all the relevant parties. Although this example may be trivial, the implications of not managing the process properly are substantial:

- Time is wasted by the teacher and secretary in checking, clarifying or correcting.
- Rewording the letter would double the cost in terms of time, paper and copying.
- If the letter is sent out incomplete, then time would be wasted in answering queries.

The "bottom line" of work processes is to adhere strictly to them, while at the same time being conscious of the possibility of making the processes more effective and efficient (West-Burnham 1992:44,45).

#### 3.2.3.7 *De Bono thinking skills*

Edward De Bono is a world authority on how to teach people to think creatively and laterally (Murgatroyd & Morgan 1994:183). The term "lateral thinking" originates from him (De Bono 1992:186). Leading corporations such as Du Pont, IBM, Shell and KLM have used his theories to improve their managerial effectiveness (De Bono 1992:25). De Bono has devised his Cognitive Research Trust (CoRT) Thinking Lessons for teaching thinking skills in an organisation (De Bono 1992:25). Through the effective use of thinking skills, the TQE organisation can be guided towards making sound decisions in the long-term interests of the school. A few skills are indicated below.

The first thinking skill taught in the CoRT programme is the PMI (De Bono 1994:18-21). The abbreviations "PMI" stand for:

- P - Plus or good points
- M - Minus or bad points
- I - Interesting points

De Bono (1994:18) describes PMI as an "attention-directing tool". The first focus is on the Positive, then the Minus and finally the Interesting aspects of an idea or proposed solution to a problem. At the researcher's school, for example, the school community is doing a PMI on whether or not to build a swimming pool. There is a municipal pool one kilometre from the school site. The financial implications are being weighed against the convenience factor of a pool on the school site.

Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:184) refer to De Bono's book entitled *Six thinking hats* (1987). A team faced with an issue, problem or challenge can adopt different thinking modes (hats) in dealing with a problem. The team can wear (metaphorically or literally) different coloured hats. If the different modes are used systematically, they can assist in getting to the root of the problem. The hats (modes) are:

Figure 3.14 **Six thinking hats - different hats for different styles** (Murgatroyd & Morgan 1994:184).

<p><i>Six thinking hats - different hats for different styles</i> (<i>'Watch my Hat!'</i>)</p> <p>White hat: Facts Red hat: Feelings Black hat: Negative judgement Yellow hat: Constructive suggestions Green hat: Brainstorming Blue hat: Conductor of the thinking orchestra</p>
--

Learners can be taught to apply the six De Bono thinking hats. For example, at the researcher's school, a learner on the Children's Council suggested that there be a Kite Day. He proposed that everyone bring kites to school and have a kite-flying competition. Fellow councillors figuratively put on their white hats to consider the idea. They looked at the facts of the situation. Where would a suitable venue be? How much money could be generated through admission fees, selling of kite kits and related items? The learners then donned the De Bono red hat and

brought feelings to the fore. Would learners across all ages enjoy such a function or would it have limited appeal? What would be the responses of teachers if Kite Day interfered with the scheduled teaching day? The learners dealt with the issue by "wearing" the different hats. In the end, an enjoyable and financially successful day was organised by the learners.

Once the problem has been analysed, decisions need to be made on what action is to be taken. De Bono, in his book, *Six action shoes*, (1991) describes six possible actions that could be taken by a team or an individual.

In Figure 3.15 the different shoes to be worn (figuratively) in deciding which action should be taken, are described by De Bono.

Figure 3.15 **Six action shoes - different shoes for different actions** (Murgatroyd & Morgan 1994:185).

*Six action shoes - different shoes for different actions*  
(*'Read my feet!'*)

Navy formal shoes: Routine behaviours  
Grey sneakers: Collecting information and thinking  
Brown brogues: Pragmatism - doing what can be done  
Orange gumboots: Action to reduce danger  
Pink slippers: Sympathy, compassion and help  
Purple riding boots: Playing the status role

In supporting the use of the De Bono "thinking hats" and "action shoes", Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:185) comment:

... they are useful devices for encouraging and enabling teams to become more self-managing over time. Further, they are effective in getting to the heart of problems and deciding what actions can be taken.

The researcher submits that the De Bono thinking skills have a relevancy in TQE schools. He has personally taught certain of the skills to various classes. The learners are encouraged to think

creatively and laterally. As the learners find solutions to problems, they are improving processes within the school. When discussion generates new ideas, certain of those ideas are accepted. These ideas can help to create a climate of continuous, never-ending improvement which is one of the core dimensions of the TQE philosophy.

### 3.3 SUMMARY

This chapter identified the contents of the quality toolkit. For a school to implement Total Quality Education, certain tools and techniques are required. TQE emphasises teamwork - both within and across departments of the school. Therefore, group processes are important to the quality toolkit. Four group processes, namely, the quality council, the quality circle, the quality improvement team and brainstorming have been identified.

Before a school is able to implement TQE meaningfully and on a long-term basis, there is a need to identify present problems. There is also a need to analyse the present condition of the school. In the chapter, a number of tools and techniques that can be used for problem identification and analysis were described.

Once the problems have been identified and there has been an analysis of the school situation, the TQE organisation is ready to plan and implement continuous improvement. Planning and implementation techniques were identified and described in this chapter.

The chapter does not contain an exhaustive list of TQE tools and techniques. Yet the tools and techniques will be of assistance to the organisation striving for continuous improvement. Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:187) make two comments about using the quality toolkit. The more systematically teams use these tools, the greater is the likelihood that good, quality work will be done. Secondly, tools by themselves, do not solve problems. People solve problems. Bonstingl (1992(c):69) concurs with

Murgatroyd and Morgan when he states:

...it is good to remember that however useful these tools may be in the process of continuous improvement, they are not the transformative process itself. To place such importance on the tools is to potentially deny the importance of the people who are at the heart of every transformative process.

In many educational organisations, according to Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:187), not enough time has been spent on quality thinking and effective data analysis before the bullet has been bitten. As a result, the bullet explodes while still in the mouth! For an organisation to think and act systematically will take time, but the end results can be outstanding.

It is up to the people in the particular organisation to decide which items of the quality toolkit are to be used. Certain schools, for example, might find that a focus on group processes is the most effective way of bringing about improvement. Data collection could have a qualitative bias in that required information is obtained through observation, interviews and meetings. Other schools might focus on different tools and techniques such as scientific tools of scatter diagrams and Pareto analyses. A school that implements TQE principles, needs to decide which quality toolkit items are most suited to the abilities and interests of its people.

At the core of TQE, is transformation. One type of transformation is more visible and discernible. That transformation is of the school itself. New physical resources such as buildings, sport facilities and educational resources would be indicators of such transformation. The other transformation is not so evident but of far greater significance. Radical change of thinking has to come from the individuals and groups that are stakeholders in the school. They must transform their thinking to embrace the quality philosophy that is at the core of TQE. Tools and techniques can

assist a school in its transformation into a quality institution. Far more importantly though, transformed people who use the tools and techniques effectively, bring quality education into being.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH DESIGN: AN ACTION RESEARCH CASE STUDY

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

In attempting to answer research questions, two broad procedures are to be found in traditional educational research methodology (Borg & Gall 1989:321). The one tradition emphasises *quantitative* measurement and analysis, while the other emphasises *qualitative* measurement and analysis.

Borg and Gall (1989:323) state that quantitative research is rooted in the positivistic approach to scientific enquiry. They state furthermore that each part of a quantitative research design is important; if any part is deficient, the entire design is weakened (1989:323). Statistical analysis is of the utmost importance in quantitative research. In contrast, qualitative research methods are largely subjective in that they rely heavily upon the investigator's skills of observation and interpretation to provide valid information (1989:370).

The researcher of this thesis aimed to make the research relevant to the school community. The school community consisted of the learners, their parents, the teachers and those people who interacted with the school such as Department of Education officials. It was important that anyone who could contribute meaningfully to the major aim of the research, namely to improve the quality of education provided at the school, should be invited to make such contribution.

As has already been mentioned, there are two broad research methodology approaches: qualitative and quantitative. If one strategy allows for a more participative involvement by subjects of this particular thesis, that research approach was used more extensively.

According to Lancy (1993:23,24), there has been an increasing popularity in qualitative research in which it "has gone from being fringe, marginal, unscientific, to fashionable".

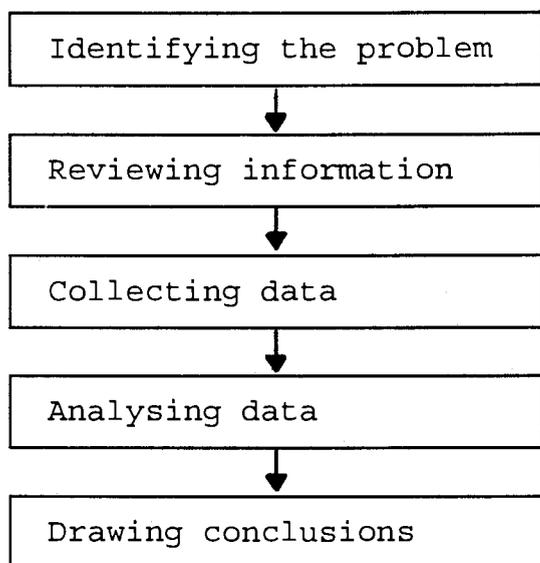
Lancy (1993:26,27) refers to the transparency of qualitative research in which qualitative researchers eschew variables and abstruse constructs that only a specialist can be expected to understand. Qualitative researchers engage in face-to-face contact with "informants" over a long period of time. In this way, trust is built up, as is the credibility of the eventual findings.

Quantitative research can demand considerable statistical analysis. Qualitative research can encourage much discussion and analysis of issues encountered by the researchers and the subjects of the project. A sense of "ownership" can develop, particularly when there are attempts to solve problems that have been encountered.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods of research were used in this study. For example, quantitative research methods are evident in the questionnaires given to parents and teachers. Quantitative research is more clinical and dispassionate than qualitative research. In this action research thesis, the researcher set out to determine the stakeholders' true feelings, experiences and expectations. Qualitative research is more appropriate to obtain such information. Accordingly, the researcher has used qualitative techniques more extensively than quantitative techniques in this thesis.

Wiersma (1995:4) has delineated the five steps that characterise the systematic nature of the research process thus:

Figure 4.1      **Research process** (Wiersma 1995:4)



Chapter One included an identification of the problem to be researched in this thesis. Information about quality theorists has been provided in the literature study contained in Chapter Two. In Chapter Three, there was a review of the tools and techniques available in implementing quality education. This chapter describes both the research design and methodology. Chapters Five to Seven will analyse and interpret the action research data. In Chapter Eight, the researcher will submit a summary, make recommendations and draw conclusions pertaining to this thesis.

#### 4.2 RESEARCHER'S SUBJECTIVITY

No matter how objective the researcher strives to be in action research, personal subjectivity seeps into the findings. Life experiences and value systems of the researcher influence the written report. What the researcher chooses to study and what is left out of the study, deliberately or unintentionally, affect the research findings. Four strategies were adopted by the researcher to help minimise his personal subjectivity and bias.

The first strategy was to encourage learners, parents and teachers to highlight those aspects of the school which they

regarded as important. The school was striving to be a quality school. The researcher continually asked the various stakeholders to identify aspects of the school that could be improved. The stakeholders had different priorities. For example, the learners laid considerable emphasis on extramural activities and resources, while the parents motivated for the establishment of a computer facility. Various stakeholders were contributing their wide-ranging priorities. The researcher had to order the priorities according to feasibility. Factors such as financial resources, sporting facilities and professional skills of staff determined what was feasible for implementation.

Triangulation was another strategy used by the researcher. This strategy has been described by Elliott (1991:82) as:

...a more general method for bringing different kinds of evidence into some relationship with each other so that they can be compared and contrasted.

The basic principle underlying the idea of triangulation is that of collecting observations/accounts of a situation (or some aspects of it) from a variety of angles or perspectives, and then comparing and contrasting them.

An illustration would be the issue of the amount of daily homework given to a learner. The researcher obtained different perceptions from the learner, the parent and the teacher. Similarities and dissimilarities of perceptions were noted by the researcher before a final analysis was made.

The third strategy was used by the researcher in an attempt to neutralise his position within the school community. He was the principal of the organisation. A principal may receive "filtered" information, that is, information that colleagues think the person would like to hear rather than the truth.

The researcher tried to resolve this issue during the course of the project. The traditional authority and power pyramid was flattened (which is in accordance with the quality philosophy). He was neither the ultimate power nor authority in the school for every situation. Rather, such responsibilities resided with the person who was most accountable for an issue - whether that was a learner, parent, teacher or the researcher. The chairing of meetings (and thereby possible control of matters discussed) was given to people other than the researcher. So, for example, in the Children's Council, the chair is a learner; the researcher is simply a council member. The school has an "open door" policy in which everyone is encouraged to speak directly to the principal. At many meetings, the researcher would often simply be a participant with neither special privileges (such as the right of veto) nor special status.

Criticism was accepted in good faith and was encouraged because it was viewed as a means of improving the school. The researcher accepts that despite his endeavours to encourage open and frank discussion, this was not always possible because of his position and role in the organisation.

A fourth strategy used by the researcher to diminish the impact of personal bias was to review his role as researcher. Stringer (1996:22) makes the observation that in community-based action research, the role of the researcher is not that of an expert who *does* research but that of a resource person. The researcher is a facilitator or consultant who acts as a catalyst to help all stakeholders understand problems that confront them and to support them as they work towards effective solutions. Throughout the project, the researcher endeavoured to view his role as that of a facilitator rather than as a principal piloting a research project.

#### 4.3 CASE STUDY OF ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT

For the purpose of this thesis, the definition given by Johnson

(1994:20) is used:

A case study is an enquiry which uses multiple sources of evidence. It investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.

The research methodology will entail a number of sources of evidence. Tools such as questionnaires, interviews and minutes of various meetings held at the school will be used. The phenomenon being researched is the management of a Gauteng primary school within the context of its normal day-to-day activities.

Johnson (1994:21) notes that "common sense perceived boundaries to case studies are not ring fences. As the study progresses, the boundaries appear increasingly permeable". The researcher found that as the case study progressed, new boundaries appeared and certain initial priorities receded into the background. For example, extramural sports coaches employed by the school have a significant contribution to make towards providing quality education. More coaches were employed at the school in succeeding years.

In contrast, the District Office of the Department of Education became less important. The District Education Coordinator (formerly known as Superintendent of Education) was informed by the researcher that he was attempting to implement quality practice at the school. There was informal discussion but no further follow-up. At the start of this research in 1994 and 1995, there was a switch-over from the Transvaal Education Department to the Gauteng Department of Education. Fundamental restructuring of schools and staff countrywide was occurring as they were all brought under a single Department of Education for the whole of South Africa.

There were a number of staff changes at the researcher's local District Office. The original District Education Co-ordinator to whom he spoke, took the voluntary severance package that was offered in the public service sector. He found it difficult to involve subsequent district education coordinators because of the demands made on them at a time of radical educational change.

The researcher maintains that the District Education Coordinator could have an important role to play in the implementation of TQE. The Coordinator could "spread" the TQE philosophy to the schools in the district. The TQE philosophy and processes should not stop at the researcher's own school. Rather, TQE principles could be disseminated to other schools in order to improve the quality of education provided to learners.

#### 4.3.1 Strengths of case study

There are strengths in using the case study approach. Johnson (1994:22) cites three such strengths. Firstly, a case study copes with complexity; secondly, the findings are intelligible and non-technical, and finally, the approach can provide interpretations of other similar cases.

Kogan (1994:106) cites further advantages of case studies. Extended case study work enables the dynamic of processes within the organisation rather than individual relationships to be monitored and appraised over time. Also, a case study provides a basis for analytical description of components and processes for model building (Kogan 1994:106).

The concept "Quality Education" is a complex one, but the case study methodology allows it to be analysed and adapted during the progress of the research. The research can be discussed in a non-technical, intelligible way - an important consideration when many learners, staff and parents would find another approach difficult to grasp. The findings of this particular case study could have relevancy to schools in similar situations.

#### 4.3.2 Weaknesses of case study

Weaknesses of the case study approach need to be identified. Johnson (1994:22,23) states that the major criticism of the methodology is its lack of scientific rigour. A case study relies too heavily on the degree of objectivity and accuracy of observation by the individual researcher.

A further weakness, according to Johnson (1994:23), is the possible uniqueness of the material. If the case study focuses on a unique institution or phenomenon, there might be esoteric interest but no "relatability". Non-uniqueness of the research is the aim. The case study should "relate" to the experiences of audiences in similar situations. Analysis of the research findings should add to already-known theory or be related to some existing body or bodies of knowledge (Johnson 1994:23). A case study must guard against being classified as meaningless theory with no practical application.

A third weakness identified by Johnson (1994:23) is that there could be an uneven access to all aspects of the phenomenon studied. Even though the researcher might wish to study the phenomenon in all its dimensions, he may be tempted to follow a particular pathway and leave out other relevant areas of enquiry. In doing a case study, the researcher needs to be aware of these possible criticisms of the research work.

To a degree, Johnson's (1994:22,23) criticisms of the case study relating to methodology are also applicable to action research study. Data obtained by the researcher have been qualitative in nature. Information has been obtained through personal observation, interviews and discussions. No matter how objective the researcher strives to be, personal values and life-views will influence the description of the situation.

In this thesis, quantitative data obtained from questionnaires and written records (for example, financial statements of the school)

have also been used. Such data help mitigate against the unconscious bias of the researcher.

A second potential weakness of the case study identified by Johnson (1994:23) is the possible uniqueness of the material. The researcher agrees with Johnson that the case study, I R Griffith Primary School, is a unique educational institution. Every school is a unique school. Yet the issues dealt with in the action research are generic to most schools worldwide. Examples of such issues are curriculum, learner management, organisational climate and staff development. This case study of a unique institution therefore relates to the experiences of many other educational institutions worldwide.

Johnson's (1994:23) third concern about the possible weakness of a case study is that the researcher might unintentionally not deal with all aspects of the phenomenon. The researcher is unlikely to see all aspects of a phenomenon and submits that this would be the situation in this particular thesis. One way to help counter this possible weakness in research, is to involve as many stakeholders as possible. A wide range of stakeholders did make input; this helped broaden the researcher's perception of what should be studied in the research.

#### 4.3.3 Action research

In formulating a definition of action research, Elliott (1991:69) has described it as "the study of a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it". In action research, the validity of theories and hypotheses does not depend so much on "scientific" tests of truth, but rather on their usefulness in helping people act more intelligently and skilfully. A theory is not validated independently and then put into practice. Rather, it is a practice which then validates a theory (Elliott 1991:69).

Kemmis and McTaggart (1988:5) have defined action research thus:

... a form of collective (their italics) self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices occur.

According to Kemmis and McTaggart (1988:5), the methodology can only be described as action research when it is collaborative. Even in a collaborative spirit, it is necessary to examine critically the action of individual group members.

#### 4.3.3.1 *Overview of theorists*

According to Cohen and Manion (1994:116) and McLean (1995:4), action research as a concept, had its origins in the post World War Two 1940s. Kurt Lewin from the United States was a pioneer of action research. He coined the concept "action research" (McLean 1995:4). He was keen to study human relationships and wished to encourage people to improve relationships by means of their own enquiries (McNiff 1988:19). Lewin devised a scheme which influenced other theorists such as Kemmis and Elliott.

According to Lewin, there are four phases to action research (Hopkins 1985:33). The phases are planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The model is to be viewed as a "spiral of cycles" in which, once the four phases have been done, the researcher enters into another spiral which is a repetition of the four phases (Elliott 1991:69).

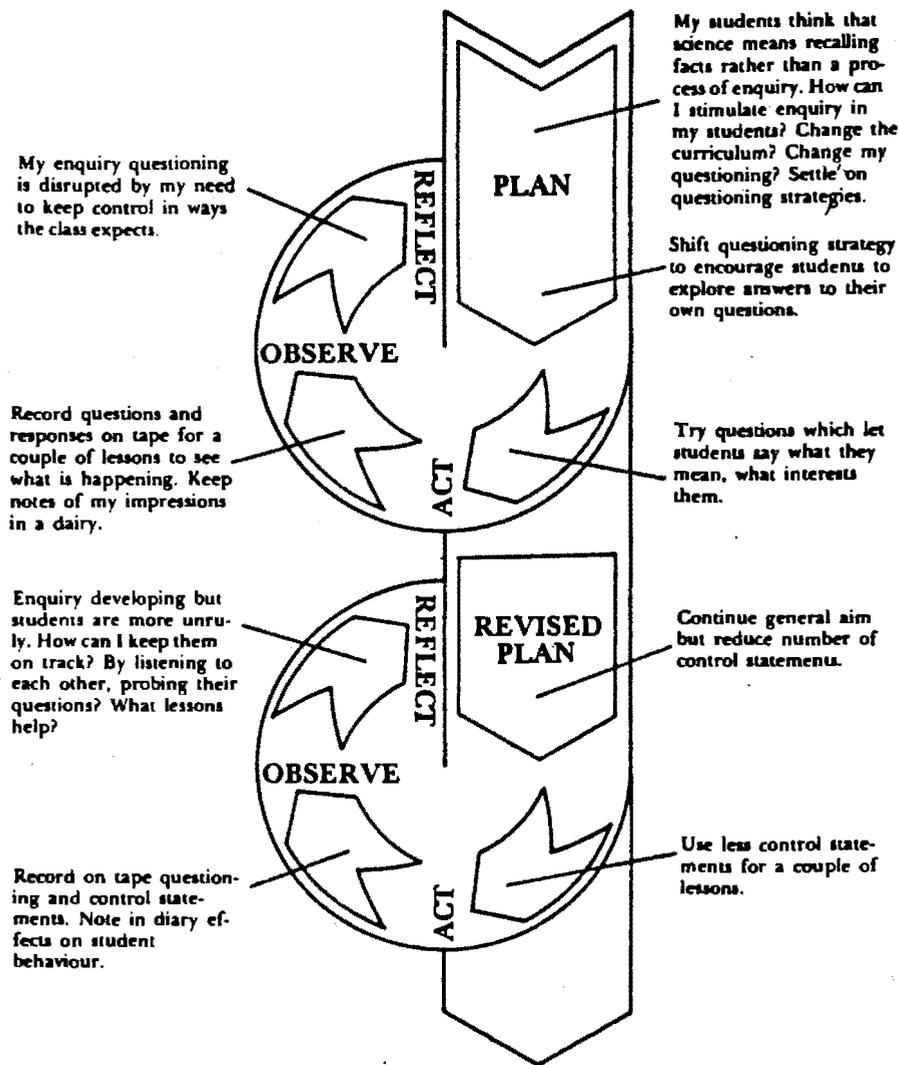
In Britain in the 1960s and 1970s, Lawrence Stenhouse gave the action research model great impetus in the field of education. His main thrust was the teacher as researcher (McNiff 1988:20). John Elliott and Jean McNiff were two other later British theorists in action research.

The researcher will briefly discuss the action research theories of Kemmis, McNiff and Stringer. Their theories form the basis of the action research used in this thesis.

Stephen Kemmis had worked with Lawrence Stenhouse. He was also influenced by Lewinian theory. Kemmis has refined Lewin's original concept of action research (McNiff 1988:26). Kemmis refined Lewin's action research cycle considerably and has applied the theory exclusively to education (McNiff 1988:26). He took Lewin's self-reflective spiral of planning, acting, observing, reflecting and re-planning as the basis for a problem-solving manoeuvre (McNiff 1988:26).

In his co-edited book, *The action research plan*, Kemmis (1988) gives an example of how a science teacher might use action research in a particular situation.

Figure 4.2 The individual aspect in action research (McNiff 1988:27).



A major criticism of Kemmis's system has been identified by McNiff (1988:25,26). There is the supposition of the model that life goes only on one tack at a time, that other problems or challenges do not occur while the research is in progress. The model forgets that related but dissimilar problems will occur and that "real people will have the flexibility and creativity to move easily to the new problem and then return to the original one" (McNiff 1988:26).

Stringer (1996) has simplified the action research cycles of previously mentioned theorists. He regards the cycle as

consisting of a continuous spiral of looking, thinking and acting. The Look-Think-Act (LTA) cycle of Stringer (1996:15) encourages consensual and participatory procedures that enable people to:

- a) investigate their problems and issues systematically
- b) formulate powerful and sophisticated accounts of their situation
- c) devise plans to deal with the problems at hand

Stringer's theory (1996:15) is community-based action research presented in terms that make it accessible to both professional practitioners and laypersons.

#### 4.3.3.2 *Characteristics of action research*

Four action research characteristics have been described by Cohen and Manion (1994:116,120,121). There is always a situational dimension to action research. The research concerns itself with diagnosing a problem in a specific context and attempting to solve it within that context. Secondly, action research is normally cooperative, in that researchers and practitioners work together in a situation. Action research is also characterised by participatory behaviour. Team members take part directly or indirectly in implementing the research. Fourthly, action research is self-evaluative. Adjustments are made as a result of continuous evaluation of the system.

#### 4.3.3.3 *Working principles in action research*

In describing the characteristics of action research in 4.3.3.2, the researcher has noted their cooperative and participatory dimensions. The researcher of this thesis worked alongside various stakeholders. The research findings were a school-community effort. Stringer (1996) in his book, *Action research: a handbook for practitioners*, refers to community-based action research. He describes such research as seeking (1996:25):

...to develop and maintain social and personal interaction that is non-exploitative and enhance the social and emotional lives of all people who participate.

Stringer (1996:25-37) described four working principles of community-based action research, namely: relationships, communication, participation and inclusion. The researcher has attempted to nurture these principles during the course of the action research.

The working principles of community-based action research are delineated thus by Stringer (1996:38):

Relationships in action research should

- promote feelings of equality for all people involved
- maintain harmony
- avoid conflicts, where possible
- resolve conflicts that arise, openly and dialogically
- accept people as they are, not as some people think they ought to be
- encourage personal, cooperative relationships, rather than impersonal, competitive, conflictual, or authoritarian relationships
- be sensitive to people's feelings.

In effective communication, one

- listens attentively to people
- accepts and acts upon what they say
- can be understood by everyone
- is truthful and sincere
- acts in socially and culturally appropriate ways
- regularly advises others about what is happening

Participation is most effective when it

- enables significant levels of active involvement
- enables people to perform significant tasks
- provides support for people as they learn to act for themselves

- encourages plans and activities that people are able to accomplish themselves
- deals personally with people rather than with their representatives or agents.

Inclusion in action research involves

- maximisation of the involvement of all relevant individuals
- inclusion of all groups affected
- inclusion of all relevant issues - social, economic, cultural, political - rather than a focus on narrow administrative or political agendas
- ensuring cooperation with other groups, agencies, and organisations
- ensuring that all relevant groups benefit from activities.

These ideals of the working principles were not always achieved by the researcher and other stakeholders. Yet it was pleasing to note that there was an increasing realisation and acceptance of these principles as the three-year research project progressed.

#### 4.3.3.4 *Participants of action research*

In deciding who undertakes action research, Cohen and Manion (in Johnson 1994:119) identify three possibilities. They are the single teacher operating individually, a group of teachers working cooperatively, or a team of teachers working alongside a team of researchers in a sustained relationship. This third grouping could also work alongside other interested parties such as advisors, university departments and sponsors.

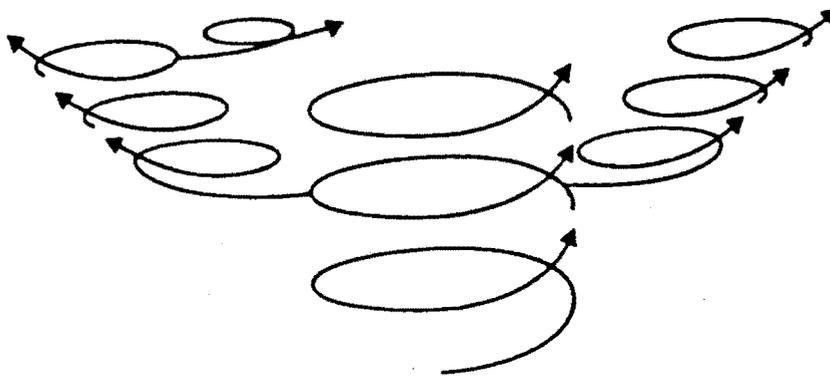
The researcher recommends that, in the context of a school, action research could also be done by the learners, parents and bodies such as the parent-teacher association and governing body. In fact, any person or group of people, striving to realise the aims of the action research is a participant. This viewpoint fits in comfortably with TQE, where everyone who has a contribution to make to the improvement of learning, is encouraged to make input (Bonstingl 1996:102).

#### 4.3.4 Action research model used in thesis

The action research model used in this case study is an adaptation of research theory formulated by Kemmis (1988:9-15), McNiff (1988:42-49) and Stringer (1996:15-19).

Kemmis's model (refer to 4.3.3.1) is a spiral of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The cycle is then repeated. McNiff (1988:43-45) developed the initial model of Kemmis. She criticised the model (refer to Figure 4.2) for being mainly a spiral of planning, acting, observing, reflecting, replanning that could only deal with one problem at a time (McNiff 1988:43). In concurring with McNiff's viewpoint, the researcher sees the spiral as having offshoots. The offshoots would allow the researcher to do further planning, acting, observing, reflecting and replanning without losing sight of the main research focus. The model, as put forward by McNiff, allows the researcher to explain practice and generate new theory when necessary. Her model allows not only the practice but also the theory to change and adapt.

Figure 4.3 McNiff's action research model (McNiff 1988:45).



In Figure 4.3 above, the central column is the main issue. Within the spiral there is planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The next level of the spiral is replanning and the same phases

are followed through. To the left and right of the central spiral are offshoot spirals.

The researcher has also included the community-based action research theory of Stringer (1996:15-18;59-141) in his own research model. Stringer views action research as an interacting spiral of "look, think, act" (1996:16-17). Participants of his action research model are reminded that, as they work through each of the major stages (1996:17),

...they will explore the details of their activities through a constant process of observation, reflection and action. At the completion of each set of activities, they will review (look again), reflect (re-analyse) and re-act (modify their actions). As experience will show, action research is not a neat, orderly activity that allows participants to proceed step by step to the end of the process. People will find themselves working backwards through the routines, repeating processes, revising procedures, rethinking interpretations, leapfrogging steps or stages and sometimes making radical changes in direction.

Figure 4.4 gives a brief outline of the different characteristics of each of Stringer's three major action research activities.

Figure 4.4 **Basic action research routine** (Stringer 1996:16).

<u>A Basic Action Research Routine</u>	
Look	▪ Gather relevant information (Gather data) ▪ Build a picture: Describe the situation (Define and describe)
Think	▪ Explore and analyse: What is happening here? (Hypothesize) ▪ Interpret and explain: How/why are things as they are? (Theorize)
Act	▪ Plan (Report) ▪ Implement ▪ Evaluate

At the "look" stage of the action research process, the stakeholders build the picture of the situation at hand. Stringer

(1996:61) states that each stakeholding group defines a descriptive account of its context separately, then works with other groups to draft a joint descriptive account. Information may be gathered through interviews, participant observation and the perusal of documents (1996:61:vi). The researcher may also convene meetings and committees to obtain greater insights into the actual situation (1996:67-70). *ended 2004/04/15*

The "think" stage of the research process involves interpreting and explaining what has been observed in the first phase. Stringer (1996:82) describes this phase of the investigation as the phase in which the researcher assists participants in engaging in discussion and dialogue. Mutually acceptable accounts are formulated to explain the issues and problems experienced. The researcher needs to set the agenda, review the descriptive accounts, develop, present and analyse interpretative accounts and then formulate follow-up activities (1996:82).

The final stage in each cycle is the "act" stage. At this point the problems are solved. There are processes that stakeholders can use to formulate practical solutions to perceived problems (Stringer 1996:97). In the planning stage, the research facilitator meets with the stakeholders to obtain consensus on the action to be taken. Priorities are sorted out and restated as goals, objectives and tasks to be achieved (1996:99). The tasks are then implemented. There should be regular meetings of the participants to review their progress and, where necessary, to modify the plan. Finally, there should be an evaluation. Stringer (1996:112) states that at this point, those tasks and activities that have led to a satisfactory resolution are delineated. Those that are unresolved become subject to negotiation concerning continued action.

The Kemmis and McTaggart action research cycle (refer Figure 4.2) clearly demarcates the self-reflective spiral of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The diagram also indicates a revised plan and a continuation of the self-reflective cycle. The

researcher has difficulties with Kemmis's diagram because as McNiff (1988:28) observes:

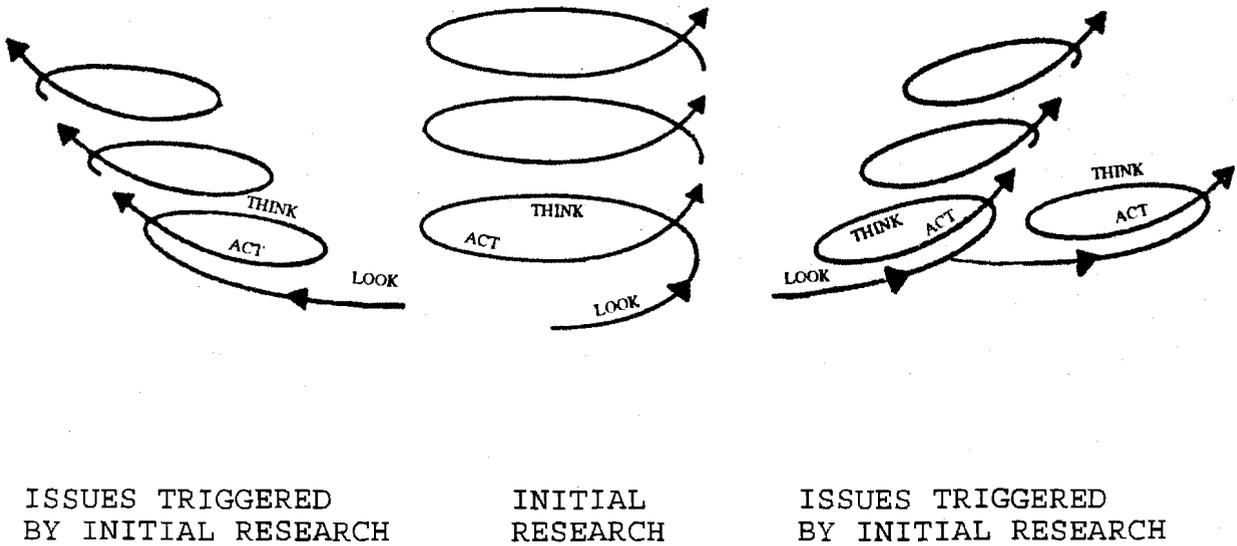
... a major weakness of Kemmis's system (and others) is in its supposition that life goes along only one tack at a time, forgetting that related but dissimilar problems will arise and oust the main focus, and that real people will have the flexibility and creativity to move easily to the new problem and then return to the original one.

McNiff (1988:45) posited an action research model (refer to Figure 4.3). The researcher is in agreement with the diagrammatic representation of the offshoots of planning, acting, observing, reflecting and further planning.

The researcher suggests a further adaptation to the McNiff model, on the basis of Stringer's 1996 book on action research. Stringer viewed action research as an interacting spiral of looking, thinking and acting (1996:17). The researcher views the three processes of the action-research cycle of Stringer to be an easier concept for the teacher to grasp during classroom-bound research. The researcher describes the model as "community-based". This is a reminder to the researcher that it is the entire community and not solely the researcher that is involved in the research. The research concerns of the researcher often do not coincide with other researchers as regards their degree of importance. That is why the model indicates "initial research" which most probably, but not necessarily, was initiated by the researcher. The phrase "issues triggered by initial research" indicates to all involved in the research the feasibility of subsequent research moving substantially away from the initial research concerns.

Diagrammatically, the action research model could be represented thus:

Figure 4.5 Hayward's community-based action research model



Stringer (1996:17) states that action research can be a complex process. The researcher admits that a case study of a school, with its large number of stakeholders and multitude of issues raised pertinent to the research, can be difficult to describe in a logical manner. If a process of action research is followed strictly, however, this will assist the researcher and all involved in the case study to keep focused on the direction of the project.

#### 4.3.5 School used in case study

The school, I R Griffith Primary, used in the case study is a public co-educational primary school in Randburg, Gauteng. Prior to February 1995, the school was under the control of the former Transvaal Education Department. Presently (1998), the school is administered by the Gauteng Department of Education. The eight hundred learners at the school are between the ages of six and thirteen. The language of instruction is English. Although the core of the school community could be described as middle-class

suburbia, about 20% of the learners are from economically deprived backgrounds. Approximately 80% of the learners are White and English is their home language. In addition, during the research period (1994-1996), a growing minority of learners have one of the ten other official South African languages as their home language. A small number of learners speak a wide variety of European languages other than English.

Each grade level (Grades One to Seven) has four classrooms. By the end of 1996 there were separate rooms for computer studies, design and technology, media studies, science and music. There is a school hall and tuckshop. As the original building was erected in 1966, most of the structures are in good condition. All the sporting facilities except the swimming pool, are on the school site. There is an athletics track, two cricket ovals, three netball and three tennis courts, three soccer fields and four cricket courts. Swimming lessons are held at the municipal pool situated 1.5 km from the school. There are extensive gardens and playgrounds.

There are thirty-two full-time and three part-time teachers on the staff. The sub-minimum qualification of any teacher is a three-year post-matric qualification. Five people make up the administrative unit of the school. The maintenance staff consists of a groundsman and eight general assistants.

The researcher's initial interest in the application of quality theory was "triggered" by its use in the South African business and industrial sector. Companies such as First National Bank, Toyota and Woolworths were emphasising the quality of both their products and services. When the researcher took up the principalship at the school in July 1993, he was aware of the need for the school to market itself. It was necessary for the school to maintain its client base and hopefully, to gain more learners. Within six kilometres of the school, there are four other public primary schools. There are also five private schools within the same radius. All these schools are competing for

learners. The researcher felt that by adopting the quality philosophy, the school could benefit in two significant ways. Firstly, the reputation of the school could be maintained and hopefully improved. Secondly, the school would attract learners despite a competitive climate.

The researcher did not get formal permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to do the action research. Instead, during an informal discussion with the District Education Co-ordinator (formerly Superintendent), the researcher discussed his intention to try to implement quality practices in the school. There was a positive response from the District Education Coordinator. The researcher obtained the support and goodwill of the school community through ongoing discussion of the quality philosophy. His position as principal facilitated the opportunities to raise issues, use questionnaires and initiate action research methodology within the school.

Training in quality principles was done at executive, whole-staff and staff development meetings with professional colleagues. Permission and enthusiastic support for the implementation of quality principles were received at Governing Body and Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings. In Chapters Five to Seven details will be provided about the agendas and dates of meetings held with various stakeholders.

#### 4.4 RESEARCH TECHNIQUES AND TOOLS

A number of research tools has been used to collect data relevant to the thesis. Schultz (1994:31) cautions that the methods for data collection cannot be prescribed nor can the research be preplanned as would be the situation in experimental research. Research tools become pertinent to particular problems or issues that manifest themselves during the development of the action research.

Qualitative and quantitative research tools used in this thesis

are described below.

#### 4.4.1 Observations

Johnson (1994:52) states that in social research, observation is generally used to record behaviour. It can also be used as a primary method of collecting data to describe a situation, or to get additional information that may qualify or help interpret other sources of data. A distinction is made by Johnson (1994:52) between structured and unstructured observation. In structured observation, according to Johnson (1994:53), the researcher sets out to observe only the presence, absence and intensity of certain clearly specified types of behaviour. By way of example, in a study of equal opportunities and staff management, the researcher might monitor the number of contributions which men and women respectively made at staff meetings. By contrast, the unstructured observation is still a systematic and planned activity but it casts its net wider than the "structured" variety of observation (1994:54). This research method is (Johnson 1994:54)

...generally used to record the behaviour of a collectivity or group, whether this be in a meeting or a series of less formal activities, even to record a "way of life". It is particularly suitable for the study of management meetings which regularly bring together the same group of people.

Johnson (1994:52) submits that although a researcher's observations should be systematically planned, there is always the likelihood of observations of great worth being made simply by chance.

The unstructured observation makes it easier for the researcher and the subject to interact naturally with one another. This form of research helps reduce the possibility of continued or deliberate behaviour that might occur when the subject knows that

he is being observed and possibly evaluated by the researcher.

To a limited degree, the researcher used structured observations. Class visits to teachers were made by him to appraise performance and discuss professional growth. The researcher wrote reports on teachers thus observed. The teacher appraisal form supplied by the Department of Education was used to record observations made by the researcher throughout the year.

The researcher also used unstructured observation as a research tool. Examples were the observations made at meetings such as those of the Governing Body, Parent-Teacher Association and various staff meetings. Extramural functions such as inter-school athletics meetings, inter-house galas and sports days were observed to study both efficiency and effectiveness. The researcher studied fund-raising events such as the annual Big Walk and the Fun 'n Frolics Night. When the researcher did MBWA (management by walking around), he became aware of the way of life of the school. He attended sporting and social functions and watched informal interactions amongst members of the school community. The researcher would often record an unstructured observation on notepad paper. The observation would be placed in the relevant file for possible discussion and action at a forthcoming meeting.

#### 4.4.2 Discussions, interviews and meetings

In defining an interview, Johnson (1994:43) notes that, although any interview is a social encounter between two people, not every social encounter is an interview. An interview is characterised by a particular focus and purpose which is initiated by the interviewer. It is the interviewer who wishes to get certain information from the person being interviewed. Discussion groups on a particular topic are valuable sources of data (McNiff 1988:79). Care should be taken that the discussion groups are not too large; optimal size is about seven members so that no one member feels inhibited (McNiff 1998:79).

Interviews were conducted by the researcher with representatives from various sectors of the school community such as executive staff members, the Governing Body, the PTA, the maintenance staff and secretarial staff. All staff members were asked, either individually or in group settings, how to improve the management and leadership of the school. Individual interviews were held with members of the Governing Body holding portfolios such as finance, human resources and site management on how to improve the school in other ways. Through discussions held with bodies such as the Children's Council, Governing Body, Parent-Teacher Association, staff Open Forums and workshops, strategies were devised to provide the learners with a quality education.

In interview situations with an individual, the researcher used open-ended questions in a semi-structured format. A few core questions were formulated prior to the interview. A "natural flow" in the discussion was encouraged by the interviewer who remained conscious of the essential reasons for the interview. After such interviews, the researcher would record salient points for further discussion and action.

In formal meetings such as those of the Children's Council and Governing Body, a secretary recorded the relevant points raised and decisions taken. Copies of these minutes were then made available to the relevant persons for future referral.

#### 4.4.3 Quality council

At the researcher's school, as in others schools, there is an executive staff committee. This committee consists of the departmental heads, deputy principal and the principal. This committee meets weekly. The researcher incorporated into the weekly agenda issues on quality theory and practice. For the quality philosophy to be meaningfully adopted within the school, it was imperative that management gave the philosophy its support. According to Bonstingl (1996:94), it is only management that can initiate the quality of culture. The executive committee

also acted as a quality council. The researcher initiated the quality philosophy to the committee. On an ongoing basis, the council looked at areas of quality failure and success to be found internally and externally to the school.

#### 4.4.4 Quality circle

The quality circle found in TQM-based businesses and industries was adapted to the school setting. Every class has circle time. The learners and the teacher sit in a circle. No one is "in charge" within the circle. Everyone has the right to voice opinions and concerns. The teacher as facilitator within the circle, encourages input from everyone in the circle.

The two main aims of circle time are: to give everyone in the classroom an opportunity to speak and to be heard and secondly, to devise cooperatively ways in which the class members (including the teacher) can improve the quality of education in the school. The quality circle normally meets weekly and each session lasts about thirty minutes. Although the teachers might initiate discussion, the learners are encouraged to raise areas of concern and interest.

#### 4.4.5 Quality improvement team

Each grade in the school has a team of teachers working as a unit. One member of the team is the team leader. Although the teams are not referred to specifically as "quality improvement teams", an important function of each team is to bring about quality improvements in the particular grade. The team normally meets weekly and reviews issues such as the teaching programme for the following week, methodology, discipline and homework. It has the autonomy to effect improvements to the quality of education in the grade. Each team issues a termly newsletter to the learners of that grade.

#### 4.4.6 Documents and records

Johnson (1994:58,59) states that a document or set of records differs from other research tools such as questionnaires and interviews because the essence of a document or record

...is that it already exists in a definitive form. Unlike a questionnaire or interview schedule, it cannot be individually designed to suit a particular research purpose but must be drawn on as a source of data in which it stands.

To a degree, the researcher agrees with this viewpoint of Johnson. There are times, however, when the researcher can use documents to further the goals of action research. An example would be the school magazine. The researcher requested the editorial team to promote the quality concept in reports and articles in the magazine. Another illustration is the weekly newsletter to the school community which is written by the researcher. There is often some reference to the quality concept in this newsletter. The researcher is deliberately using the document to make families aware of both theoretical and practical dimensions of quality education.

Documentation and records used in this action-research are:

- Minutes of these meetings:
  - Children's Council
  - Executive staff
  - Full professional staff
  - Maintenance staff
  - Open Forum
  - Secretarial staff
  - Finance Committee
  - Governing Body
  - Parent-Teacher Association
  - Staff development programme

Subject teachers

Junior primary teachers

- Appraisal interviews
- School magazine
- Prospectus
- Newsletter
- Logbook
- Samples of learners' work
- Report cards
- Letters from parents: complaints and compliments
- Newspaper clippings
- Promotion schedules

The documents and records will be referred to in Chapters Five to Seven, to indicate areas of achievement in the implementation of the quality philosophy. Likewise, these items will be used to illustrate where shortfalls have been encountered in endeavouring to implement quality improvements.

#### 4.4.7 SWOT analysis

A SWOT analysis of an organisation looks at its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. In March 1994, the staff did a SWOT analysis. Results of the analysis were used to help guide staff on how to improve the quality of education. There is a discussion of the SWOT analysis in Chapter Five.

#### 4.4.8 Benchmarking

Benchmarking was one of the TQM techniques and tools taught to staff. This technique was used by staff to improve educational practice. Before the school published its first magazine in 1994, extensive studies were made of publications of other educational institutions. Inter-school athletics meetings were used as opportunities to improve practice within the school. Participation in Eisteddfods afforded additional opportunities to learn how to improve the training given to learners for such competitions.

#### 4.4.9 Questionnaires

In a quality-driven organisation, it is important to know the expectations of the clients. Questionnaires are forms of market research.

In designing a questionnaire, it is important to ensure that the findings do not simply concur with the researcher's subjective interpretation of a situation. The real reasons for a particular situation or problem could be unknown to the researcher. Therefore, to have inventory-type questions where the respondent indicates the degree to which the individual agrees or disagrees with a statement, is acceptable and worthwhile only to a limited extent. It is important to include in the questionnaire questions that encourage the respondent to make comments. These comments can help the researcher get closer to the major issues pertaining to a research project. Such comments assist the researcher understand the real feelings and perceptions of people.

In May 1996, a questionnaire was given to approximately half the parents of the school. The questionnaire is included in the Appendix to this chapter. Findings of the questionnaire will be discussed in Chapter Seven.

A battery of eight questionnaires was given to the administrative and teaching staff in October 1996. Owing to the number of questionnaires, they are not included in the appendix to this thesis, but an analysis of the data is given in Chapter Seven. The aim of the survey was to measure the organisational climate and self-perception of staff members.

#### 4.4.10 Look-think-act (LTA) cycle

As stated in 3.2.3.4 the Plan-do-study-act (PDSA) cycle of Deming is a most useful tool for implementing a continuous improvement cycle. For the purpose of this research, the PDSA cycle has been adapted. The Look-think-act (LTA) cycle of Stringer as explained

in 4.3.3.1 is used. The participants in the research programme are in a continuous spiral of looking, thinking and acting on how to improve the quality of education at the school. In each of the four time frames during the period May 1993 to December 1996, the LTA cycle was used.

#### 4.4.11 Hoshin planning

Hoshin planning entails the setting of "outrageous goals". During 1995, teachers, either individually or as team members, tried to bring about Hoshin goals in their classrooms. These Hoshin goals are described in Chapter Six.

#### 4.4.12 Process analysis and review

In the staff development programme, members were trained in the use of process analysis and review. Many staff members applied this theory to improve practice in the school context. Administrative admission procedures, learner assessment and school magazine compilation processes were formulated. School management became more time and cost effective. A few examples will be outlined in Chapters Five and Six.

### 4.5 TIME FRAME OF EACH ACTION RESEARCH CYCLE

The quality philosophy subscribes to the principle of continuous never-ending improvement. It therefore follows that a school that is endeavouring to implement quality education, never reaches its goal. It is always on the journey towards quality education but never reaches the ultimate destination.

For research purposes though, the study needs to be put in a time frame. The action research done at the school for the case study has been divided into four time cycles each consisting of three activities. The activities are those of looking, thinking and acting. In each of the cycles, participants look and think about quality. They then act to implement the desired quality. Certain

suggestions made in one cycle are incorporated into the next cycle. The four cycles will be described in detail in Chapters Five and Six. The cycles are briefly described:

#### 4.5.1 Cycle 1: May 1993 - June 1994

At the end of April 1993, the researcher was informed that he would join the staff of I R Griffith Primary School in July of that year. The researcher felt that as the incoming principal of a school about which his knowledge was minimal, it was essential that he gain satisfactory answers to questions such as:

- What is the present (1993) situation of the school (for example, curriculum, staffing, financing)?
- What are the particular strengths of the institution (aspects of the school that stakeholders wish to see maintained or further nurtured)?
- What are the perceived weaknesses of the school?
- What innovations or improvements are recommended for the school?

During the period June to September 1993, the researcher held individual meetings with each head of department and the groundsman. He also had meetings with the secretarial staff, the finance committee, the Parent-Teacher Association and the Governing Body. The four questions set out in the paragraph above were asked at these meetings. Answers were either written in note form by the researcher or recorded in the minutes of the meetings.

The researcher also held separate meetings with the deputy principal, the former principal and the chairman of the Governing Body during the period May to August 1993. At these meetings the four questions were asked. Important issues raised were noted and incorporated into agendas of subsequent meetings such as those of the staff, Governing Body and PTA.

As a staff member of the school from July 1993 onwards, attempts were made by the researcher to ascertain the needs of the school from the broader community. The researcher established a Children's Council (a form of Student Representative Council) to gain input from the learners. As clients of the school, it was important to ascertain their needs and wants. This elected body consisted of a boy and girl from each class from Grade Four to Grade Seven. There were thirty-two learners on the Council. This Council met monthly and decisions taken were recorded in the minutes.

A staff Open Forum system was introduced. The researcher discussed with the staff the need for open, frank discussion on areas of professional concern. The Open Forum was held once a term. The agenda items would be determined by any staff member who wished to raise an issue. To encourage openness of discussion, only the decisions taken at the meeting were recorded in the minutes.

#### 4.5.2 Cycle 2: July 1994 - March 1995

During the period August to November 1994, the executive staff received formal training from the researcher on Total Quality Management (TQM). This training was incorporated into the weekly meeting. Sallis's (1993) book titled *Total quality management in education* formed the core of these discussions. At these meetings, the researcher attempted to raise an awareness of TQM practice and to ascertain the applicability, or otherwise, of TQM practice in the school. At an executive staff meeting in November 1994, it was unanimously agreed to start staff training on TQM at the beginning of the following year.

TQM was then introduced to the whole professional staff in January 1995. The executive committee was a quality council which drove the concept and was the impetus for the whole staff. Every term, on average, there was one staff development session on TQM which took the form of a lecture or workshop. Further details of

the contents and dates of the courses are contained in Chapter Five. During this period, the staff devised vision and mission statements for the school. The researcher attempted to incorporate a TQM concept or idea into every weekly whole-staff meeting. These were recorded in the weekly minutes.

Teacher appraisal interviews were introduced; these lasted from ninety minutes to two hours. The researcher strove to do an annual appraisal on each teacher. These structured interviews included two questions with a distinct TQM focus:

- Are there areas of the management and leadership of the school which you feel could be improved?
- What recommendations do you have to improve the quality of education being offered?

The responses to such questions were noted by the researcher on the appraisal form.

Staff members were encouraged to make the learners aware of the quality philosophy. Every class had a lesson initiated by the teacher in which the quality concept was discussed. The researcher and certain teachers used the weekly assemblies to impress the concept on the learners. Every week, a learner in each class was selected as a Quality Kid for displaying desirable traits (for example, "putting 110% effort into school work"). Teachers devised Quality Kid rules for their respective classes. On an irregular basis, Quality Kid Tuckshop vouchers were given to learners who had displayed noteworthy quality traits in the classroom and extramurally.

Each grade with its group of four teachers formed a team. The teams met weekly to formulate policy for their classes in areas such as discipline, implementation of curriculum, places to visit on educational tours and budgeting for their particular grade. The teachers were also encouraged to improve the quality of education they were providing to the learners.

In November 1994, I R Griffith Primary School became the first school in South Africa to become a member of SAQI (South African Quality Institute).

#### 4.5.3 Cycle 3: April 1995 - March 1996

It was during this period that the researcher started to experience misgivings about the uncritical adaptation of TQM principles to education. He felt that a distinctive educational identity to the quality concept was required. The researcher felt that the TQM concept had too close an affinity to the business and industrial sector. He thought that the quality principles envisaged for education were distinct from those for other sectors of society. In November 1995, the researcher attended a three-day workshop conducted by John Jay Bonstingl from the United States on the application of quality theories in schools. Bonstingl referred to Total Quality Education (TQE) and seldom to TQM. At a personal and whole-staff level, there was a shift from TQM to Total Quality Education (TQE).

During this period, termly maintenance staff meetings were introduced where the maintenance staff was introduced to the quality concept. They were encouraged to provide input on improving the maintenance of the buildings and grounds. A similar type of meeting was set up for the secretarial staff on a monthly basis. They met with the researcher and also gave recommendations on the betterment of the school.

As part of staff training, all professional staff learnt about the tools used in quality management practice. Every teacher or group of teachers devised an outrageous or Hoshin goal. The aim was to implement the goal in the classroom. Details of the Hoshin goal projects are provided in Chapter Six. The various Hoshin goals were discussed at the end of 1995.

#### 4.5.4 Cycle 4: April 1996 - December 1996

During this cycle, various types of research were used. Different types of questionnaires were issued to the parent community and to the staff. The parent questionnaire asked the clients to evaluate the services provided by the school. The questionnaires completed by the administrative and professional staff focused on organisational climate related issues such as levels of motivation, locus of control and interpersonal relationships. Quality circles were also used to research ways in which the quality of education could be further improved. By means of a development programme, the staff was introduced to action research methodology. The methodology was used to do Hoshin goal research projects.

A whole-school (that is every grade from Grade One to Grade Seven) questionnaire to parents was undertaken in May 1996. A copy of the questionnaire is in the Appendix. A total of 411 questionnaires was distributed. Every second learner on every class list was given a questionnaire to pass on to parents. Teachers monitored the return of the questionnaires by referring to class lists. A total of 402 completed forms was returned to the school. Parental response was 97,8%. When the questionnaire was distributed there were 820 learners in the school. Prior to the distribution of the questionnaire, drafts were submitted to the promoter of this thesis and other experts in statistics to ensure content and face validity. The Department of Computer Services at University of South Africa recorded the statistical data. Three lecturers from the Department of Statistics assisted the researcher in analysing the data. Certain questions required the respondents to give written responses. These responses were read and reread until preliminary categories emerged. From these, final categories were identified.

At the beginning of the questionnaire (refer to pages 1 to 13 of questionnaire in Appendix), biographical details regarding the respondent's gender and home language were requested. The

respondent was asked how many learners from the family presently attended the school. There was a category of questions ascertaining parental involvement in various school activities the previous year. Details of their involvement in committees in the present year were asked for. Parents were asked whether they attended the 1996 PTA meetings, and if not, to indicate the reasons for their non-attendance.

A category of questions (refer to pages 3 to 5 of questionnaire in Appendix) requested multiple-choice type responses to statements about the administrative efficiency, welcoming atmosphere, discipline, incidents of bullying and stealing, physical appearance of buildings and grounds of the school and others. A further category of multiple-choice type questions (refer to pages 6 and 7 of questionnaire in Appendix) asked parents to evaluate the quality of education given to their own learners in the particular grades. The questionnaire contained sections in which parents were encouraged to add comments to the set questions. They were also invited to respond to these two questions:

- Is there anything presently happening at I R Griffith Primary School that you would like to see either *changed* or *stopped*?
- What suggestions do you have to further improve the quality of education offered to the learners?

The data analysis of the questionnaire is discussed in Chapter Seven.

During this cycle, quality circles were established. The class or homeroom teacher arranged for the particular classes to meet on a weekly basis in a classroom or in the gardens. Sitting in a big circle together with the teacher, they discussed issues of common concern. Sometimes learners "unburdened" themselves about issues that were upsetting them. The meetings provided opportunities for ideas to be discussed on how to improve

situations in the class and the whole school.

Staff training was given by the researcher on action research. At a workshop, the theory of Kemmis and McTaggart was discussed and its practical relevancy to the school delineated. During the course of this cycle, all professional staff carried out some form of action research. Details of the action research projects which often had Hoshin goals, are described in Chapter Seven.

In October 1996 an organisational climate and self-perception questionnaire was completed by thirty staff members (I R Griffith Primary School 1996b). Both the questionnaires and the action research projects will prove to be excellent sources for continuous improvement projects in future years. In a quality organisation, there is a need to ensure an optimal quality working environment. In addition, staff must have the inner capacity to give of their best. The aim of the survey was to measure the perceptions of the staff in a formal and broad-based survey. It was also aimed at determining both strengths and weaknesses in the school climate that impact on the personal attitudes and performances of teachers as well as secretaries.

The survey consisted of the following eight questionnaires: organisational climate, supervisory support, team work, sense of coherence, locus of control, hardiness, self-efficacy and self-rating. The staff members answered the questionnaires by keying their responses into electronic key-pads linked to a lap-top computer. As mentioned previously, owing to the large number of questionnaires, they are not included in the Appendix of this thesis. Descriptions of the questionnaires, data analysis and interpretation of the results are in Chapter Seven. There were thirty-two teachers and four secretaries on the staff at the time that the organisational climate and self-perception questionnaire was done. With thirty out of thirty-six respondents, the response percentage was 86%.

#### 4.6 SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the research design used in this thesis. The thesis will attempt to describe an action-based case study in a Gauteng primary school which is attempting to implement quality principles. The research will be predominantly qualitative in nature.

In the context of a school, interruptions to daily routine can be distressing to everyone. Qualitative research allows the research to cause minimal disruption to the daily school routine.

The case study will include quantitative research, albeit to a lesser degree. Questionnaires will be issued to selected groups of learners, parents and staff. Documents such as promotion schedules, minutes of various meetings, SWOT analyses, and Hoshin projects will be among the quantitative research techniques and tools used in the thesis.

The researcher has a subjective involvement in the action research. Personal bias can permeate the research. In this research, the researcher is the principal of the school in the case study. He could be the victim of "filtered information". Four strategies were used by the researcher to neutralise biased information. The mechanisms used were to encourage input from as many stakeholders as possible, to use triangulation, to flatten the traditional authority and power pyramid of the school and finally, to see his own role as that of a research facilitator rather than as principal of an institution.

Community-based action research will be used in the case study. A characteristic of good action research is a spirit of collaboration and participation amongst all involved in the research. In this form of research, additional empowerment is given to those involved in achieving action research goals. Harmonious relationships, effective communication, encouragement of participation and a sense of inclusion for all stakeholders,

are working principles of action research.

The model used in this thesis is a synthesis of theory formulated by Kemmis (1986), McNiff (1986) and Stringer (1996). The model is a continuous spiral of looking, thinking and acting. In such a model, the researcher is allowed to change theory as new realities impact on the action research. Also, within one cycle, the researcher may venture into "offshoot cycles". These are issues that come to the researcher's attention while dealing with the major thrusts within the cycle. Action-research encourages action to bring about continual, never-ending improvement. In addition, action research, as envisaged by McNiff and this researcher, encourages the person doing the research to effect change to given theory.

Four action-research cycles in this case study have been identified and will be discussed in Chapters Five to Seven. The time frame cycles that have been identified are:

Cycle 1: May 1993 - June 1994

Cycle 2: July 1994 - March 1995

Cycle 3: April 1995 - March 1996

Cycle 4: April 1996 - December 1996

Research techniques and tools of a qualitative nature used will be observations, interviews, discussions as well as quality councils, circles and improvement teams. These forms of research allow the researcher to discover and evolve hypotheses around the research topic.

The next three chapters will involve a description of the received data as well as an interpretation of the findings.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### AN ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE ACTION RESEARCH DATA (PART ONE: CYCLES ONE AND TWO)

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Preceding chapters have attempted to define and describe total quality education (TQE). The literature review gave an indication of how quality theory has been applied in both the business and industrial sectors. Examples were provided of how the theory has been adapted for use in the education sector. Tools and techniques used in the non-education sector have been described by the researcher. Their applicability for use in effecting quality in schools has been described in Chapter Four.

Before venturing on the quality journey in an organisation, it is important to know the departure point. From such a position, it is easier to map the direction in which one wishes to travel. In this quest for a quality-driven organisation, the needs and wants of the organisation must be identified. In this thesis the clients are the parents, learners, staff (academic, maintenance, secretarial) and wider community of a co-educational public primary school in Randburg, Gauteng, South Africa.

The extent to which the school was quality-driven at the start of this research in July 1993 had to be determined. In the ensuing years, until December 1996, further analyses and interpretation were required to see how far the school had progressed on the quality journey.

There are four cycles in this research project. Each action research cycle consists of three continually recurring sets of activities - "Look→ Think→ Act" (Stringer 1996:17). These cycles are:

Cycle one:            May 1993 to June 1994

Cycle two: July 1994 to March 1995  
Cycle three: April 1995 to March 1996  
Cycle four: April 1996 to December 1996

It is important to remember that each of the three activities of the cycle "Look→ Think→ Act" can not be treated in strict rotation.

As Stringer (1996:17) states:

...action research is not a neat, orderly activity that allows participants to proceed step by step to the end of the process. People will find themselves working backwards through the routines, repeating processes, revising procedures, rethinking interpretations, leapfrogging steps or stages and sometimes making radical changes in direction.

It should be noted that it is difficult and at times, impossible to discuss an issue from a single dimension. For example, the need for a Computer Centre could be described within the dimension of physical resources. Yet the building of a Computer Centre has major implications in other areas of this action research thesis. There will be significant changes to the curriculum. The construction of the centre has financial management implications. Staff development will be required to ensure that teachers are computer-literate and professionally competent to teach the curriculum using computers. An improvement of the quality of education in one domain of the school impacts on other areas. For practical reasons, the researcher has been forced to record his findings within the frames of those dimensions that he considers the most important. There is an interconnectedness of issues across the entire school.

Cycles one and two will be discussed in this chapter, cycle three in Chapter Six and cycle four in Chapter Seven.

In the process of continuous improvement, the levels of priority of certain issues will change. Once challenges have been settled in one area, other issues assume priority. So, for example, the issue of physical resources of the school became less important once identified needs were gradually met.

## 5.2 CYCLE ONE (May 1993 to June 1994)

It was in May 1993 that the researcher had his first contact with the school. He had been informed that he would take up the principalship of the school with effect from July of that year. The first cycle ended in June 1994 when the researcher had been at the school for a year. This period of time gave the researcher the opportunity to make initial observations of a full school year. These details were recorded in note form by the researcher. He was then able to analyse his observations and to initiate action.

### 5.2.1 Look

In this first activity of the cycle, the researcher attempted to build a picture of the current state of the school. It was a time of forming first impressions. In the following paragraphs attention is focused on a number of key areas in the school.

#### 5.2.1.1 *Physical resources*

During the June 1993 school holidays, the researcher was taken on a tour of the school by the deputy principal. The school was twenty-seven years old. In general, the buildings were in a good state of repair. The gardens were neat as were the sportsfields. There were noticeable exceptions. Four dilapidated prefabricated buildings were used by the Grade Three classes and the maintenance staff quarters were unhygienic and overcrowded. Certain classrooms were less than acceptably neat as were the learners' toilets. The researcher noted that there was no Computer Centre, Tuckshop, Art Centre or offices for the

executive staff. Furthermore, the researcher observed that the Media Centre (library) was the size of two classrooms. This facility had to meet the needs of eight hundred learners and thirty-two professional staff.

In the minutes of the Governing Body meeting of 26 April 1993 (I R Griffith Primary 1996d), it was recorded that a section of the verandah roof of one of the prefabs had collapsed.

In May and June 1993, the researcher held one-on-one interviews with various stakeholders. Both heads of department (junior primary) and the chairman of the Governing Body identified an urgent need for a new Grade Three teaching block. The Governing Body chairman also identified the need for a Computer Centre and a Tuckshop.

In the staffroom, the researcher noted that the furniture and curtaining, although neat, were old. Informal comment from teachers was that it would be pleasant if the room could be "brightened up".

All eight maintenance staff members lived on the school property. The former Transvaal Education Department had provided accommodation for two employees. The additional employees had been given permission by the previous principal to live on the property. They doubled up in the allocated staff quarters. Four employees were accommodated in a garage which had no windows and a storeroom behind the school stage.

#### 5.2.1.2 Curriculum

The one-on-one interviews with executive staff members in the period June to August 1993 were opportunities for the researcher to be made aware of curricular needs. The deputy principal indicated the need for additional resources for the teaching of reading. The head of Educational Guidance maintained that this subject was not being given due recognition in the classroom by

her colleagues. Parents were unfairly loading her with their personal family crises. According to the head of the senior primary department, there was an urgent need for computer studies to be introduced into the curriculum. The junior primary department head felt that not enough was being done to ensure that learners from disadvantaged home backgrounds would succeed scholastically at the school.

By June 1993, the school had no policy on integrating learners of different races. There was no curriculum to ensure an awareness, acceptance and celebration of any cultures other than that of the majority, namely, a European-based Christianity. The Friday assembly was characterised by hymns and a homily that were Christian-based. The anthems sung were either *The Call* or *Die Stem* - anthems that were not representative of all the learners' backgrounds.

#### 5.2.1.3 *Learner management*

Shortly after his arrival at the school, the researcher found a Punishment Book in the drawer of his desk. The former principal administered corporal punishment to the boys. The book recorded the boys' names, their misdemeanours and the number of strokes administered. The researcher removed two canes from his office. School rules were outlined on a two-page list of "do's" and "don'ts" formulated by the teaching staff. The researcher's initial observation of the learners' behaviour was that it was characterised by courtesy, friendliness and sound discipline.

#### 5.2.1.4 *School uniform*

The majority of the learners were neatly attired in their school uniforms. A single, unstructured interview by a researcher can have significant consequences. On 21 September 1993, the researcher was talking to a ten-year old boy, who was a new learner at the school. Timothy mentioned that he liked his new school except for the uniform. His previous school, he asserted,

had a much better uniform. The researcher himself had been indifferent until then to the shades of beige and brown that made up the school uniform. He decided that the issue would be discussed further with both the school uniform committee (consisting of staff members and parents) as well as the Governing Body.

#### 5.2.1.5 *Financial management*

The researcher had perused the Governing Body meeting minutes for the period June 1992 to May 1993. The school had sufficient reserves to meet an emergency. Nevertheless, the researcher maintained at a Governing Body meeting of 23 August 1993 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d), that the level of school fee collection was unsatisfactory. As at that date, there had been a school fee payment from 64% of the parent community. There were minimal processes in place to ensure that parents received school fee accounts on a regular basis and there were insufficient deterrents in place (for example, regular legal follow-ups) for parents who refused to pay the fees.

#### 5.2.1.6 *Extramural activities*

The researcher noted that extramural activities took place on three days a week. Each afternoon session lasted one hour. Most of the activities were sport-based. There were few artistic and cultural activities. In the interview held by the researcher on 15 June 1993 with the PTA chairman, the chairman felt that extramural participation, particularly by those who could not make the "A" sporting teams, should be increased.

#### 5.2.1.7 *Marketing*

Any prospective parent of the school was given a single roneod information sheet. The sheet gave details about the starting and ending times of the school day, procedures to be followed when infectious diseases were contracted, the extramural programme and

the school uniform. As at 23 August 1993, the Governing Body minutes (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d) recorded that fifty-one applications had been received for the 1994 Grade One intake. The nearest neighbouring school had already received 137 applications by the same date.

The researcher noted that the area of the school was served by a local free-issue weekly newspaper, the *Randburg Sun*. Neighbouring schools had photographs of events published in the newspaper. In the period November 1992 to August 1993, only two photographs of events at the researcher's school had appeared in this newspaper.

#### 5.2.1.8 *Organisational climate*

In the week prior to the researcher's official arrival at the school on 27 July 1993, certain of the maintenance staff had gone on strike. A groundsman had been newly-appointed to the staff. This was the first time that the school had a supervisor for the maintenance staff. The researcher had discussions with the deputy principal (who was acting principal at the time of the strike), the groundsman and the striking workers. The deputy principal maintained that the strikers refused to accept the principle of a groundsman in a supervisory capacity. In addition they viewed the groundsman's manner as authoritarian and unyielding. The strikers did not perceive the need for them to report to a person other than the principal of the school. The groundsman asserted that the strikers were unwilling to work a full day, were uncooperative and rude.

In the interview held by the researcher with the former principal on 7 July 1993, he maintained that, overall, there were excellent relations between the parents and the teachers. He did allude, however, to interpersonal conflicts in the staffroom. In an interview on 13 May 1993 with the chairman of the Governing Body, the chairman informed the researcher that certain staff members had submitted a petition to him requesting that a particular

teacher who was already on the staff be appointed the new principal of the school. The Governing Body had turned down this request.

At a staff level, the researcher noted that although there were no designated seats for staff members, teachers were inclined to sit in the same chairs each day. There were two main groupings of seating arrangements. One grouping was that of junior primary teachers, while the second group was that of the senior primary staff. All members of the executive staff except the two heads of the junior department usually sat with the senior primary group at tea time. Every parking bay was numbered. Parking bay allocations were determined on the basis of seniority.

The relationships between the parent community and the teaching staff were, as far as the researcher could ascertain, both cordial and friendly. The professional staff seemed to initiate most of the ideas and vetoed unacceptable recommendations. For example, no Tuckshop was built, in spite of parental requests for a Tuckshop at PTA and Governing Body meetings.

Between teacher and learner there was a friendly relationship. A deferential tone was evident from most of the learners. The learners had no formal channels of communication regarding recommendations for school improvement or articulation of grievances. Prefects were selected exclusively by the executive staff. The Grade Seven learners made no contribution to the selection.

#### 5.2.1.9 *Staff development*

Whole-staff development was dealt with during the weekly Monday afternoon meetings. Subject heads held departmental meetings on a termly basis. Minutes of these meetings were issued to the staff members involved.

Developmental appraisals took two formats. The subject and

department heads would carry out appraisals of the written work done by the learners for the various teachers. Part of these appraisals included a written report of classroom neatness and ambience created by the teacher. The second type of developmental appraisal was a classroom visit and subsequent written report by the principal.

#### 5.2.2 Think

In this activity of the research cycle, the stakeholders attempt to interpret and explain what has been seen in the organisation. In this part of the process, stakeholders, according to Stringer (1996:80), construct *explanations* (his italics) in order to:

- a) extend their understanding of what is happening and how it is happening.
- b) develop joint constructions to interpret and explain the problems under investigation.

The teachers of Grade Three were frustrated about the seeming lack of action regarding the building of a Grade Three teaching block. The chairman of the Governing Body explained to the researcher why no construction work had begun. The Governing Body felt that it was a courtesy to the new principal to discuss the project with him. The construction site had not yet been finalised.

##### 5.2.2.1 *Physical resources*

Accommodation facilities for the maintenance staff were inadequate (refer to 5.2.1.1). In the 1980s there had been riots in areas such as Alexandra Township, where most of the maintenance staff had lived. They needed safe accommodation and took temporary residence at the school. Although the riots were over, the staff were reluctant to return to Alexandra. It was more convenient and cost-effective to live on the school property.

During the school holiday periods, there was a decline in the standard of cleanliness of certain classrooms. The researcher felt that this was mainly because there was no supervision of the work done during the holiday periods. Also, when cleaning material was depleted, it was difficult for the staff to obtain replacement stock at such times.

On 21 June 1993, the researcher held a meeting with the executive staff and members of the Governing Body about capital works projects. The meeting discussed the building needs of the school. A list of potential capital projects and their respective costs was recorded thus in the minutes of the Governing Body (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d):

Grade Three block	R260,000
Tuckshop	R 70,000
Media Centre	R260,000
Computers	R250,000
Administration offices	R120,000
Art Centre and work room	R30,000
Staffroom revamp	R30,000
Immigrant classroom	R50,000
Staff quarters	R150,000

The total cost of these projects was R1,230,000.

#### 5.2.2.2 Curriculum

During August 1993, the researcher reviewed the reading resources available at the school, together with the deputy principal and other language teachers. Two reading laboratories were at least ten years old and in poor condition. It was decided that two new laboratories be budgeted for the 1994 school year.

On 10 July 1993, the Educational Guidance teacher had a meeting with the researcher. She outlined difficulties with the subject because there was a lack of awareness on the part of the teachers of the significance of Educational Guidance. She maintained that the reason for this was that the subject was hardly ever

discussed at whole-staff level. Parents were inundating her with requests for advice on family problems. These families regarded the school as their only source of professional help. The guidance teacher was stressed within the school situation because of the heavy demands made on her time by learners needing counselling. These demands were in addition to her heavy teaching timetable.

The researcher, on the basis of discussion with staff members and the reading of various minutes, felt that no attention had been given to the concept of multiculturalism. At the staff meetings of 3 and 24 August 1993 (I R Griffith Primary School:19961), the issue was discussed. Agreement on the need for assemblies to reflect different cultures of the school community was agreed on. (The impact of the exclusive singing of *Die Stem* and *The Call* at assemblies was analysed.) Teachers reflected on how multiculturalism could be given due recognition in their respective classrooms. The feasibility of the formulation of a school prayer that would be acceptable to all religious denominations was discussed at staff meetings during August 1993.

#### 5.2.2.3 *Learner management*

At the first staff meeting held at the school by the researcher, he spoke about effective learner discipline. The minutes of 23 July 1993 record (I R Griffith Primary 19961):

The aim of effective discipline is to encourage *self-discipline* as opposed to *imposed discipline* with its concomitant threat of punishment. Teachers should try to "catch the pupils doing it right" rather than looking for situations where the child has made small infractions of school rules... There is to be no physical or verbal abuse of the child. The use of corporal punishment is to be avoided. The ears and hair of a child are to be left untouched - no matter how much they might on occasion deserve to be pulled!

The school had a tradition of corporal punishment. At the 23 July 1993 staff meeting (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l), certain teachers expressed their concern and dismay at the removal of this disciplinary procedure.

School rules had been drawn up exclusively by the staff. The researcher posed the question to the staff whether the learners themselves should not be involved in their compilation. The rules would then be their own and not rules imposed on them.

#### 5.2.2.4 *School uniform*

Discussion was initiated by the researcher with the school uniform committee and the Governing Body during the period August to November 1993 about the uniform. Certain staff members felt that a move from brown to blue, white and grey would be visually more pleasing, while other teachers felt that the change would be an unfortunate break with the traditions of the school. At the Governing Body meeting of 28 February 1994 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d), a representative of the uniform committee displayed examples of a proposed new uniform.

#### 5.2.2.5 *Financial management*

Non-payment of school fees was discussed at every Governing Body meeting during the cycle one period of May 1993 to June 1994. The treasurer differentiated between parents who "could not pay school fees" and those who "would not pay school fees".

A capital works budget was drawn up and recorded in the 21 June 1993 minutes of the Governing Body (refer to 5.2.2.1).

#### 5.2.2.6 *Extramural activities*

Prior to June 1993, there were limited opportunities for learners who were not selected for "A" sporting teams to participate in extra-mural activities. At executive staff meetings in the latter

part of 1993, explanations were sought for this situation. There was insufficient money allocated for the hiring of additional sports coaches and neighbouring schools did not have "B" and "C" teams against which the learners could compete. Furthermore, with an extramural programme that ended at 15:00, there was only one hour to provide activities for eight hundred learners at a school with limited sporting facilities.

#### 5.2.2.7 *Marketing*

The researcher discussed the issue of the 1994 Grade One enrolment with the executive staff at weekly meetings during the period September to November 1993. An outline was given of certain negative consequences if there was not a full intake. For example, there would be a loss of teaching posts and school fees, and fewer extramural activities. The feasibility of compiling a prospectus was considered.

The researcher maintained that it was important for the school to have a higher profile in the local newspaper. He requested permission from the Governing Body to employ a freelance photographer to take occasional photographs. This was agreed to at a Governing Body meeting held on 23 August 1993 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d). The researcher also visited the offices of the local newspaper in September 1993 and introduced himself to the school news reporter.

#### 5.2.2.8 *Organisational climate*

The issue of reserved allocated parking bays was discussed with the staff on 28 July 1993 (I R Griffith Primary 1996l). The researcher explained why he had discontinued this practice. He explained that such a system was prejudicial to junior staff members and, in his opinion, contrary to the spirit of teamwork. Smokers were invited by the researcher to sit in the staffroom at breaks. It was suggested by him that they be sensitive to the feelings of colleagues who disliked tobacco smoke.

Members of the executive staff, Governing Body and the groundsman discussed the maintenance staff strike with the researcher in July 1993. In August 1993, the groundsman and the maintenance staff met with the researcher. It was alleged by certain of the maintenance staff that the groundsman was too demanding as regards work tempo and was "ever-vigilant" as to what they were doing during working hours. Conversely, the groundsman claimed that the maintenance staff was not working hard enough and required ongoing supervision.

In the July 1993 school holidays, immediately prior to the researcher's arrival at the school, he decided that it would be important for him to have a one-on-one discussion with the staff member who had been proposed by colleagues for the vacant principalship. It was important for a harmonious professional relationship to be nurtured between that person and the researcher.

The researcher felt that the two unstated but discernible groupings in the staffroom, namely, junior and senior primary circles, should be scrutinised. These two sections of the professional staff could unknowingly be at variance with each other and not have a unity of purpose towards overall school goals.

At the executive staff meeting held on 26 July 1993 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996c) and the whole-staff meeting held on 28 July 1993 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l), the researcher discussed the principle of the establishment of a Children's Council. This Council, whose members would be elected by the learners themselves, would give learners from Grade Four upwards a voice in the management of the school.

#### 5.2.2.9 *Staff development*

In reviewing the staff development policy of the school, the researcher maintained that insufficient time was allocated to

this important issue. To incorporate it into weekly staff meetings did not allow for sufficient in-depth discussion of educational issues. He felt that there should be separate staff development meetings every term.

Aspects of quality theory and practice were first discussed with the executive professional staff. At the staff meeting of 28 July 1993 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l), the researcher spoke to the item "Service that's speedy and smileful". Staff were encouraged to provide "same day" service when parents made contact with them. Complaints were to be viewed as opportunities to improve the quality of educational practice. At the staff meeting of 11 January 1994 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l), the researcher spoke of "the school as a service organisation". The principle of "zero defect" in regard to every learner passing at the end of the scholastic year was discussed at a staff meeting held on 8 March 1994 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l).

Executive staff members also looked at quality issues on an ongoing basis. At the executive meeting of 21 September 1993 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996c), a Wits Business School article titled "Vital factors in pursuit of excellence" was tabled. Another example of such literature given to the executive staff was "Kaizen and the moving school", which was written by John Goss and appeared in the January 1994 issue of *Stimulus*. This article was discussed with the executive staff on 9 February 1994 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996c).

To help focus on the issues facing the school in its effort to be a quality-driven organisation, a SWOT analysis was done on 21 March 1994 as a staff development activity (I R Griffith Primary School 1996k). Cognisance was taken of pending changes to South African education such as less State funding, affirmative action and more learners per class. The minutes of this meeting highlighted these issues, amongst others, as they pertained to the school. Points raised were:

### Strengths

- 1 Well qualified staff
- 2 Varied expertise
- 3 High degree of motivation of staff
- 4 New management style
- 5 Dynamic Governing Body

### Weaknesses

- 1 Classroom size vs increased numbers of learners
- 2 Potential of mass resignations
- 3 Mark load: learners will have to mark their work - less thorough marking by teacher
- 4 Curriculum being watered down
- 5 Discipline problems due to cultural differences

### Opportunities

- 1 Advantages of team teaching - multicultural interaction and insight into past problems
- 2 All exposed to wider South Africa
- 3 Change from racially divisive curricula
- 4 Greater utilisation of human resources through quality education for all
- 5 Various teaching methodologies - challenging for teachers

### Threats

- 1 Personal space threatened in classroom
- 2 No control of admission policy
- 3 Racial hatred needs to be addressed
- 4 Language barriers
- 5 Attitudes of learners in classroom towards teachers will change

The SWOT analysis highlighted the degree of thinking that was required by the school community in achieving a quality school in the post-apartheid South Africa.

### 5.2.3 Act

#### 5.2.3.1 *Physical resources*

The demolition of the dilapidated prefabs was seen as a priority, as was the erection of a Grade Three block. The Governing Body sent a letter to the Education Department on 10 August 1993 asking for permission to demolish the prefabs. The prefabs were demolished in October 1993. A site was agreed for the new Grade Three classroom block. The building was constructed during the period August to October 1993. At the beginning of November 1993, the learners moved into the new building.

During September 1993 the issue of the overcrowded and unhygienic accommodation quarters was discussed with the maintenance staff. None of these staff members wished to vacate the premises. The researcher requested the Governing Body to accede to this request on humanitarian grounds. It was agreed, however, that if any of these staff members left, no new staff would occupy the vacated quarters. In October 1993, both the Governing Body and the maintenance staff accepted this proposal. The accommodation quarters were thoroughly cleaned in the same month.

During October 1993 maintenance staff members received training from the groundsman about the required standard of cleanliness in classrooms. New cleaning equipment was given to all these staff members during September and October 1993. Toilet hygiene was discussed by the teachers with the learners. At the end of break, the toilets were cleaned. The learners were encouraged to speak directly to either the groundsman or the researcher if the toilets were in an unhygienic state.

In the planning stage of the capital works projects, it was decided to prioritise the projects. The first construction would be the Grade Three block. After this the staffroom, principal's and secretaries' offices would be revamped. A committee of staff members worked on the revamping projects. At the Governing Body

meeting of 25 October 1993 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d), the plans for the next two capital work projects were tabled, namely, the Computer Centre and the Tuckshop. It was decided that accumulated funds and a special levy paid by the parents, would finance these projects. Construction work began in February 1994 and was finished by June of that year.

#### 5.2.3.2 Curriculum

At the end of 1993, new reading laboratories were ordered for English classes in Grades Five and Seven. The laboratories were received by the school in March 1994 and were immediately used by the respective classes.

The researcher acted on the comments of the Educational Guidance teacher. Her 1994 teaching load was decreased so that she could spend more time doing individual counselling sessions during normal teaching hours. She was also encouraged by the researcher to reduce her involvement with the personal problems of families of the school. Educational Guidance was given a high profile in the staffroom. At the staff meeting of 8 March 1994 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l), a programme was initiated to help learners become successful scholars. In an endeavour to reach "zero defect" as regards end-of-year examination results, learners identified as being scholastically "at risk" were to receive extra support from designated teachers. The staff realised that learners needing support were not the exclusive concern of the guidance teacher but rather of all teachers who interacted with these learners.

The multicultural dimension of the school was highlighted. The singing of *Nkosi Sikelel'i'Afrika* was sung at every assembly from September 1993 onwards. A sub-committee of staff members compiled a number of school prayers during August 1993. These prayers were discussed with the staff during September. In Term Four of 1993, the prayers were used at weekly assemblies. Teachers were requested to say the prayer daily with the learners together with

the Lord's Prayer.

Assemblies were non-denominational in tone in that overtly Christian homilies and hymns were avoided. Rosh Hashanah and Pesach Seder services were introduced for the Jewish learners. There were Carols on the Lawn and Easter Services for the Christian learners.

The farewell gift to the school from the 1993 Grade Sevens was a board with the word *Welcome* written in twenty-two of the languages used at the school. At a staff meeting of 15 February 1994 (I R Griffith Primary School 19961), a teacher suggested that learners from different cultures be given opportunities to give presentations at assemblies. As a result, a class per assembly put on a display of a particular culture.

Quality principles were introduced into the curriculum. Learners were encouraged to display quality character traits such as effort and enthusiasm. These traits were commended at assemblies. The weekly Merit Badges issued at the assembly of 22 October 1993 were awarded to learners who displayed these quality traits.

#### 5.2.3.3 *Learner management*

As has been mentioned in 5.2.2.3, certain staff members were dismayed at the abolition by the researcher of corporal punishment at the school. He stressed to the staff that there was no intention on his part to encourage indiscipline. He initiated a "white card" system. Any learner who was referred to him on three occasions for misdemeanours would have the parents called to the school for an interview. If it was deemed in the best interest of the learner and the school, the learner would be suspended for a designated number of days. This form of disciplinary action proved to be effective. During the period July to December 1993, only two families were called for such interviews. One of these families subsequently left the school.

Prefects workshopped a set of school rules which were presented to the Governing Body on 23 September 1993 (I R Griffith Primary 1996d). The weekly newsletter of 6 October 1993 set out these rules (I R Griffith Primary 1996f). The prefects explained the rules to the learners during visits to every classroom in October 1993. Every learner was given a copy of the rules and a copy was placed on the teacher's noticeboard in the classroom. Teachers were asked to formulate, together with the learners, rules that were positive in tone and applicable to their respective classes. This request was made at a staff meeting held on 8 February 1994 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l).

#### 5.2.3.4 *School uniform*

At the Governing Body meetings of 25 October and 22 November 1993 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d), proposals for a new uniform were tabled. The proposals were accepted. It was agreed that the uniform would be phased in from January 1996. Samples of the new uniform were shown to the Governing Body on 23 May 1994 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d).

#### 5.2.3.5 *Financial management*

At a meeting held with the parents on 9 November 1993, the proposed budget for the following year was discussed. Parents were given an opportunity to discuss 1994 expenditure items. Motivation was provided for the building of a Computer Centre and Tuckshop. The budget was passed unanimously and with applause. At the meeting, parents were given details of the outstanding school fees and the legal action that would be taken by the Governing Body against defaulting parents.

The researcher attempted to implement quality management principles in the formulation of the budget. For example, in a quality driven organisation, all stakeholders make input into the compilation of the budget. Traditionally, the school budget was drawn up exclusively by the executive staff, Governing Body and

the principal. At the staff meeting of 12 October 1993 (I R Griffith Primary School 19961), the researcher requested two teachers to draw up the junior primary (Grade One to Grade Three) budget. Another two teachers were to compile the senior primary (Grade Four to Grade Seven) budgets. These teachers were asked to liaise with their respective colleagues before submitting the budgets to the researcher.

#### 5.2.3.6 *Extramural activities*

In September 1993, a second deputy principal was appointed. Included in his job description, was the task of promoting cultural activities at the school. He was given the authority to arrange for theatrical groups to perform for the learners. As an art specialist, he introduced an Art Club as an extramural activity.

At the Children's Council meeting of 18 October 1993, a request was made for more "B" team coaches (I R Griffith Primary School 1996a). The 1994 budget allowed for more coaches to be hired.

In response to a Children's Council request for a girls' cricket team, a staff member started such a team in January 1994. It was decided to accede to the Children's Council request for academic and sporting scrolls, once a tracksuit had been introduced as part of the new uniform.

In an attempt to accommodate more learners in the extramural programme, it was decided to extend the activities by having extramurals every day of the week.

#### 5.2.3.7 *Marketing*

Ongoing discussion and planning by the executive staff on ways to encourage enrolment at the school took place during the period September to October 1993. The researcher, together with the executive staff, compiled a prospectus of the school. The

executive staff was given a first draft in September 1993. At the beginning of 1994, all new parents were given a copy of the prospectus. Additional copies were printed to give to prospective parents.

The executive committee decided to introduce a weekly "Welcome to our school" afternoon for learners entering the Grade One class the following year. This programme would allow prospective families to view the school facilities. From late September 1993 onwards, the programme was introduced and was favourably received by many families.

At the start of the school year in 1994, there were 105 Grade Ones - three short of the optimal enrolment figure.

#### 5.2.3.8 *Organisational climate*

Prior to taking up his appointment at the school in July 1993, the researcher had lunched with the internal candidate for the post. The issue was discussed openly and amicably. Professional friendship, loyalty and mutual regard were established at that meeting.

The two staffroom groupings were discussed at both executive and whole-staff meetings during September and October 1993. Staff were encouraged to view each other as colleagues within one staffroom rather than as colleagues within a mini-school of either the junior or senior department. By bringing these issues out into the open, the researcher maintains that there were conscientious efforts by most staff members to "cross" the "staffroom divide".

A Children's Council was established in August 1993. Learners from Grade Four upwards voted by secret ballot for a boy and girl councillor in each class. From their first meeting, the councillors initiated ideas for school improvement and aired concerns.

The researcher met with the maintenance staff and the groundsman in an effort to iron out the simmering interpersonal tensions. Grievance procedures were outlined by the researcher. At a meeting held on 7 September 1993, the researcher stressed the need for respect on both sides. The researcher was aware that the tension between the groundsman and certain elements of the maintenance staff had not been completely resolved. A "stand off" situation existed between the two parties.

Termly Open Forums were introduced as a communication channel at which professional staff were encouraged to make open and honest input on ways to improve the school. Topics for the Open Forum of 27 August 1993 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996g) included staff absenteeism, religion in the classroom and the redesigning of report cards. It was not only the Open Forum, however, which encouraged the philosophy of continuous improvement. Input was actively encouraged at weekly executive and whole-staff meetings, as well as at meetings with the Children's Council, PTA and Governing Body. Through this interchange of ideas and the opportunities provided for listening to one another, the researcher aimed to create a warm, cooperative organisational climate.

#### 5.2.3.9 *Staff development*

Staff were encouraged to improve continuously their educational practice. During January and February 1994, twenty staff members went to fourteen professional development courses at the Johannesburg College of Education. The researcher felt that a school striving to provide a quality education should be focused. To give the school focus on the three areas of academic, cultural and sporting activities, the researcher gave these portfolios to three staff members. In January 1994, the parent community was introduced to the Directors of Studies, of Cultural Activities and of Sports Programmes via the weekly newsletter and the Parent-Teacher Association AGM. These three directors were empowered to make decisions regarding policy and budgeting in

their areas of responsibility.

Evaluations were held by the staff members involved in a particular event. So, for example, there were evaluations of the Soccer and Netball Day as well as the Best Speaker Award competition which were held in June 1994. Evaluation notes were taken and filed in the respective administrative files. Future organisers of those events would be able to refer to the notes and make improvements not only to the functions but also to their own professional organisational skills.

### 5.3 CYCLE TWO (July 1994 - March 1995)

The second cycle was from July 1994 to March 1995. This cycle was a period during which initial actions taken in cycle one could be assessed and, where necessary, expanded on or adjusted.

#### 5.3.1 Look

##### 5.3.1.1 *Physical resources*

With the unsightly prefabs removed and the construction of the Grade Three teaching block, the school had a neater appearance. The learners and teachers in Grade Three were positive about the changes. Two problems, however, came to the fore. The classrooms were north-facing and were extremely hot during the summer months. Also, the new building was surrounded by unkempt ground.

At the Children's Council meeting of 20 March 1995 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996a), a councillor commented that the tennis court fences needed to be repaired.

Minimal changes had been effected to the overcrowded maintenance staff quarters. Three maintenance staff members left the employ of the school which left five cleaners in a complex designed for two residents. No other cleaner was prepared to vacate the premises and commute. Classrooms, grounds and toilets were

generally maintained in a neat and tidy condition.

By July 1994, the new Tuckshop was operational. Before this, the "Tuckshop" had consisted of two shopping trolleys which were wheeled around the corridors by a few mothers. The new Tuckshop brought additional issues to the fore. As the Tuckshop had heating and cooking facilities, lunches could be cooked on site. As a result, hundreds of learners wanted snack lunches on a daily basis. Far more helpers were required and arrangements had to be made to control the huge crowds. The grassed area outside the Tuckshop was wearing thin because of the crowds.

The Computer Centre was completed in July 1994. Sixteen computers were delivered in August.

Art lessons were given in the classrooms, on the corridors and lawns. Basic Techniques equipment was stored in the back of a teacher's classroom. No separate facility was available for these subjects.

Since the observations had been made by the researcher in cycle one about the Media Centre, there had been no improvements to this facility. The centre was still cramped and its facilities stretched to meet the media demands of learners and teachers.

#### 5.3.1.2 Curriculum

At the Children's Council meeting of 12 September 1994 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996a), a request was made for more computer lessons for the higher grades. The need for more computers was also evident. At that time, learners were obliged to work in pairs on the computers.

It was noted by the researcher that the report card did not include teacher comment in specific areas that staff perceived as important. The report card simply had a section designated "Remarks". Important areas identified were extramural

participation, neatness (personal and school work) as well as whether homework was being done properly. It was felt that these areas deserved specific comment for every learner.

At the start of the cycle, the Educational Guidance teacher resigned to take up an appointment at a Kwazulu-Natal school. Until the appointment of the new teacher, a locum teacher taught the subject. Individual teachers taught relevant Educational Guidance topics in their respective classes.

Before the start of the cycle and during the cycle, teachers had endeavoured to buy textbooks with a South African multicultural bias. Classroom wall displays reflected the cultural diversity of South Africa. The researcher felt that learners from different cultures were getting on well with each other both in and outside the classroom. Only one or two incidents of racism were brought to his attention each term.

A steadily increasing awareness of the quality philosophy permeated the school during this period. Class rules often mentioned the word "quality". The learners regarded it an honour to have their work displayed in the Quality Kid Showcase in the administration foyer.

#### 5.3.1.3 *Learner management*

All classrooms displayed the new school rules. Learners and teachers had compiled their own class rules which were to be seen in every classroom. The new School Prayer was also displayed in the classes.

#### 5.3.1.4 *School uniform*

The school had agreed during the cycle one period to introduce a new school uniform. Learners, parents and staff were encouraged to look at and benchmark uniforms worn at other schools. At the PTA meeting of 1 August 1994 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996h),

the School Uniform Committee discussed a range of styles with the parents. It was decided to put a few styles on display in the foyer. Parents were requested to vote for their preferred styles. These preferences were conveyed to the School Uniform Committee.

#### 5.3.1.5 *Financial management*

A school fee collection committee, consisting of members of the Governing Body, regularly contacted defaulting parents. One secretarial staff member was in charge of all bookkeeping matters as well as being secretary to the researcher. This was too much work for one member of staff.

#### 5.3.1.6 *Extramural activities*

The researcher noted that there was an extensive sporting programme with activities such as cricket, netball, soccer, swimming and tennis. Considerable attention was given to sporting achievements at the weekly assembly. However, there were few cultural activities and minimal mention of them at assembly. The researcher felt that many more learners could be involved in chess and music activities, for example. There were no drama or public speaking clubs.

#### 5.3.1.7 *Marketing*

The school was attempting to achieve a corporate identity through the use of specific colours. A staff member pointed out that the printing on school report cards was in brown. The school was changing its corporate colours to blue and white. Stationery in the form of envelopes, compliment slips, letterheads and notepads was ordered during the cycle. The paper was white and all printing was in a specifically identified blue shade.

In the first edition of the school prospectus, the aims of the school were published. The prospectus contained no vision and mission statements characteristic to TQM-based organisations.

The researcher noted that as a service organisation, the school had no mechanisms to make the community aware of the quality of the services that it provided. There was no concerted effort to make the school visible to people other than its direct stakeholders of learners, parents and teachers. Also, the researcher maintained that there was little awareness of the quality concept itself amongst the parent community.

#### 5.3.1.8 *Organisational climate*

Relationships between certain of the maintenance staff and the groundsman were not on an amicable level at the start of this action research cycle. Three of the eight maintenance staff members, however, worked harmoniously with the groundsman. The other five did their duties but this was done essentially to the "letter of the law" rather than in the "spirit of the law". Tension seemed to be just below the surface.

The school had an enrolment of some eight hundred learners. Many of the learners were unknown to the teachers. This made it difficult for learners to have a sense of belonging to the school.

#### 5.3.1.9 *Staff development*

At a whole-staff level, the 1995 theme was Total Quality Management and workshops were held on various aspects of quality theory. It was the researcher's observation that the executive staff understood and, in many instances, applied quality theory. In this cycle, the researcher attempted to make the whole staff even more aware of the quality philosophy.

### 5.3.2 *Think*

#### 5.3.2.1 *Physical resources*

The team leader of the Grade Three classes held a meeting with

her team on 20 September 1994 to discuss the excessive heat experienced in summer in their newly-erected classrooms. It was agreed that quotes be obtained for venetian blinds and that the work be completed by the end of the year. A meeting was held with the groundsman to discuss the unkempt surroundings to the classrooms. Consensus was reached on the format of a small garden and a paved area outside the classroom block.

A site inspection of the tennis courts led to agreement with the request by the Children's Councillors for new tennis court fences. As the money had not been allocated in the 1994 budget, it was agreed that the item would be included in the 1995 budget to be compiled during November 1994.

Learners in Grade Seven put forward ideas on how to improve the area adjacent to the Tuckshop. They suggested that they could create a piazza next to the Tuckshop as their 1994 Farewell Gift to the school. Learners, parents and teachers studied the concept together with the researcher.

At executive and whole-staff level, there was considerable discussion on how to meet the accommodation needs of Art and Basic Techniques. Countries such as the United Kingdom and Germany had been placing considerable emphasis on design technology since the 1980s. At the executive meeting of 25 July 1994 (I R Griffith Primary Schools 1996c), it was decided that two teachers would visit private schools in Gauteng to study their Design and Technology units.

#### 5.3.2.2 Curriculum

As a member of the Open Schools' Association in Cape Town, the school received regular literature from this organisation. At its inception, the Association had as its goal, the desegregation of hitherto racially segregated schools. Once schools were desegregated, the Association focused on helping schools to create successful multicultural environments. Literature received

from the Association was read and its applicability to the school was discussed. Examples of this literature were:

- Identity crisis among Black learners in White schools
- Multicultural education: the United States experience
- Heading towards reconciliation and reconstruction - its role in a multicultural school

It was important for the learners to be made aware of the cultural diversity within their own school and the wider society. Organisers of the school magazine, the Exhibition of Work and the annual Big Walk were requested to think of appropriate multicultural themes.

#### 5.3.2.3 *Learner management*

Certain teachers felt the need for the reintroduction of detention classes. A number of learners were not doing their homework or were contravening school rules. This matter was discussed at executive and whole-staff meetings during August and September 1994.

Because of the high number of learners at the school (namely, eight hundred), the school hall was overcrowded at the weekly assemblies. Often, the matters discussed were of concern to a particular section of the school only. The likelihood of incidents of indiscipline in such a large group was increased. An individual learner might feel "lost" in a group of this size. In spite of the large group at an assembly, however, it was an important occasion during which the school could identify as a single community. This issue was discussed at both executive and whole-staff meetings in the last school quarter of 1994.

#### 5.3.2.4 *School uniform*

The School Uniform Committee had established parental preferences as regards style for the proposed new uniform as a result of the voting by the parents. The Committee decided to ask the school

stockists to guide the school as to what items were practicable, cost-effective and readily available from manufacturers. Meetings were held with the stockists in late 1994 and early 1995. At one of these meetings it was agreed that the implementation date of the new uniform would be January 1996. It would be compulsory for the 1996 Grade One intake to wear the new uniform. For the rest of the school, this would be a voluntary option until the end of 1997.

#### 5.3.2.5 *Financial management*

It was clear that the new Tuckshop had created unexpected challenges. There were insufficient mothers available to assist effectively at the Tuckshop. The finance committee decided to employ a full-time Tuckshop lady. At the Children's Council meeting of 17 October 1994 (I R Griffith Primary 1996a), it was decided to establish a Tuckshop committee. This committee would assist the Tuckshop lady and the teaching staff by advising on issues such as Tuckshop prices and items to be stocked.

At the Children's Council meeting of 12 September 1994 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996a), a request was made for additional computer lessons for the higher grades. As more computers were required (there were sixteen at the time), the finance committee, Governing Body and the researcher met to formulate ways to meet this need.

The researcher thought that school fee collection was difficult because of the onerous load placed on the secretary responsible for fee collection. That same person had other administrative duties to perform. The researcher maintained that the appointment of a bursar would have at least two advantages for the school. Firstly, the overburdened secretary would receive support. Furthermore, a bursar would be able to spend more time following-up on those parents who were in arrears with their fees. The additional financial outlay of employing a bursar would be offset by the increased number of fee-paying parents.

#### 5.3.2.6 *Extramural activities*

Traditionally, the extramural programme had a bias toward sports activities. During August 1994 an Eisteddfod was inaugurated in the town. The Director of Cultural Activities asserted that it would be a good idea for the school to participate in that Eisteddfod. He also recommended that the school establish an annual Art Exhibition.

#### 5.3.2.7 *Marketing*

At an executive staff meeting on 5 August 1994 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996c), it was agreed that the school report card needed revision. The report card should reflect the new corporate identity of the school and include comments on issues such as extramural participation and neatness of work. Rather than changing a report card midway through the year, it was decided that sub-committees be formed to design separate junior primary and senior primary report cards for the following year. These sub-committees convened and submitted their recommendations to the whole staff during the next cycle of this action research project.

In January 1994, the school issued its first prospectus. Staff were invited to suggest improvements for the second edition. At a staff development meeting of 9 February 1995 (I R Griffith Primary 1996k), workshopping was done on designing a TQM-based school policy. This policy would be incorporated into the next edition of the prospectus.

During the cycle there had been discussion at executive staff meetings on how to ensure a full intake of learners every year. At the staff meeting of 22 July 1994 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l), a school marketing committee was established. The committee was to analyse the situation and to make recommendations. It was agreed that a school magazine would be published at the end of that year to make the school community

aware of the quality of education provided. Parents would be notified via the weekly newsletter to enrol their children promptly for the following year. Nursery school supervisors would be requested to inform parents of the need for timely enrolment.

The researcher wished to make the entire school community more aware of the quality philosophy. The weekly newsletter and annual school magazine could be used to spread the message.

The Governing Body agreed at a meeting of 1 November 1994 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d) to the principle of asking a parent to take on the portfolio of Public Relations Officer. This person would advise and initiate marketing strategies for the school. An amount of R10 000 was budgeted for this purpose.

#### 5.3.2.8 *Organisational climate*

Tensions between the maintenance staff and the groundsman continued during this cycle. Five of the eight maintenance staff members belonged to COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions). On 24 October 1994 a union representative visited the school. Both parties presented their grievances to the union representative. The representative explained to the maintenance staff that the school was entitled to employ the groundsman. He was not going to be dismissed as demanded by certain maintenance staff members. However, the groundsman was to treat them in a civil manner (if this was not already being done).

To help bring the home and the school closer together, the idea of "Class Moms" was considered in order to increase avenues of communication. A designated mother for each class would be able to liaise with a group of some thirty parents on issues of mutual concern. In the PTA newsletter issued on 22 March 1995 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996i), the names and telephone contact numbers of these mothers were given to the parent community.

### 5.3.2.9 Staff development

Although the school had a new Computer Centre in July 1994, many of the teaching staff were concerned about having to teach the subject. Therefore, basic computer literacy training was given to staff on consecutive Saturdays during August and September 1994. When the teachers started lessons with the learners, issues arose which required further discussion. There was no policy for the whole school regarding the computer literacy curriculum for each grade. There was in addition, apprehension about teaching computer literacy to learners who were often more knowledgeable on the subject than their teachers. The learners had an insatiable appetite for this new subject on the curriculum.

A staff development meeting held on 20 September 1994 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996k) studied the topic "Technology, Science and Design". It was felt that a Design and Technology Centre would assist in meeting the learners needs in an ever-increasing technocratic South African society. The staff agreed that the first priority would be the building of a Design and Technology Centre; once this had been constructed a Media Centre could be built.

Training was needed on implementing quality theory. In quality theory, concepts such as those of delighting the customer, zero defect, devolution of authority, giving of responsibility and continuous improvement were stressed. It was important for all stakeholders to be given opportunities to think about these and related issues. During the period 7 October to 2 December 1994, the executive staff discussed various chapters from Sallis's (1993) book entitled *Total quality management in education*. To assist the whole staff in understanding quality, a staff development programme was held on this subject on 9 February 1995 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996k). The researcher would often include articles pertaining to quality in the staff meeting minutes.

### 5.3.3 Act

#### 5.3.3.1 *Physical resources*

Action was taken to install venetian blinds in the hot-in-summer Grade Three classrooms. By November 1994, the blinds were in place. At the recommendation of a teacher in that team, fans were also installed in those classrooms. The maintenance staff established a garden in front of the new Grade Three block. All the learners in the teaching block were responsible for its cleanliness. In February 1995, the Children's Council request for the repair of the tennis court nets was carried out.

During this cycle, no action could be taken regarding the upgrading of the maintenance staff quarters. No maintenance members were prepared to vacate the overcrowded staff quarters. The researcher maintained that, in time, there would be a natural staff attrition.

By the end of 1994, the grounds outside the Tuckshop had been improved. The Grade Sevens had donated to the school a Tuckshop piazza and fountain.

A decision to build a Design and Technology Centre was taken at the annual Budget Meeting attended by parents on 16 November 1994. An amount of R175,000 was earmarked for this purpose.

#### 5.3.3.2 *Curriculum*

As a result of timetabling restraints, the school could not accede to the Children's Council request for additional computer lessons for the higher classes. The new Computer Centre highlighted the need for a specialist for this subject. Such a person would be able to coordinate the formulation of a policy for the whole school, design curricula for the different grades and do staff training. The Governing Body agreed that a computer specialist was needed on the staff. An advertisement was placed

in a local newspaper. The successful applicant took up the appointment in January 1995.

During the period July to December 1994, the Educational Guidance post was vacant. In response to the previous incumbent's observations that the subject had a low profile in the school, the researcher attempted at staff meetings to make the teachers aware of pertinent issues. For example, the staff meeting of 19 October 1994 highlighted Mental Health Month (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l). An article in the minutes outlined what could be done to ensure mentally healthy learners and adults. Howard Gardner's multiple-intelligence theory was discussed via an article titled "Creating Creativity" which was given to the staff on 13 January 1995 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996k).

On the appointment of an Educational Guidance teacher in January 1995, the incumbent was requested by the researcher to give the subject a high profile at professional staff level. In his first talk to the staff, the incumbent stressed the importance of all staff being involved not only in the effective teaching of the subject but also in giving guidance to learners in need of such counselling.

To make the learners aware of the multicultural dimension of South Africa, the first Exhibition of Work at the school had as its theme "Many families - a rainbow nation". Project work done by the learners reflected research on different countries and their respective cultures. The annual Big Walk for the school community had the theme of "Wide Wonderful World". Everyone was encouraged to dress in national costumes of different countries. The theme of the first school magazine was "A rainbow school" and the cultural diversity of the school was celebrated.

The wider community was made aware of the commitment of the school to multiculturalism. The 1994 school magazine (I R Griffith Primary School 1996j) underlined this commitment. In the magazine the researcher wrote:

I believe that every person has opportunities to make positive contributions to our new society. This applies especially to a school community. Our school, for example, is already a small "rainbow nation". Children of at least twenty different nationalities and home languages sit in our classrooms. The staff is committed to creating an invitational, welcoming atmosphere for the children. Furthermore, the children are made to feel that not only are their distinctive cultures accepted but that their particular backgrounds are causes for celebration.

As we respect and admire cultures other than our own, so do we grow as caring, true human beings.

Anti-racist education took place in History classes in Grades Six and Seven. The History teacher covered themes such as the events leading up to the April 1994 democratic elections, a comparison of education facilities provided for different racial groups prior to 1994 and the practical implications of apartheid legislation on the local community in which the learners lived.

The quality concept was promoted amongst the learners at the weekly assemblies. Learners who had displayed excellent quality traits such as perseverance, continuous improvement and outstanding work, were commended. The commendations were verbal but also took the form of merit badges and Tuckshop vouchers. The concept "quality" was discussed by certain teachers in their classes. Certain classes collected advertisements containing the word "quality" and made posters. A Quality Kid showcase was started in August 1994. The display cabinet exhibited work done by certain learners whose work evinced a quality effort.

#### 5.3.3.3 *Learner management*

To help ensure that homework was done properly and that school and class rules were obeyed, a weekly detention class was

introduced at the beginning of 1995. The researcher discussed with the staff on 13 January 1995 that the overall aim of the detention class was to effect "zero defect", in other words, that eventually no learners would attend such classes because they were all doing their homework properly and were obeying the rules (I R Griffith Primary School 19961).

With effect from January 1995, separate assemblies were held for the junior and senior sections of the school. The only time that the whole school met together was at the first and last assemblies of the term. This new arrangement made it easier for teachers to manage the learners. Furthermore, the assemblies were more age-related and therefore could be more interesting for the learners.

#### 5.3.3.4 *School uniform*

In the early months of 1995, a display of the envisaged new uniform was mounted in the administration foyer. Parents and learners were invited to vote on this uniform and forward comments to the Children's Council and the School Uniform Committee.

#### 5.3.3.5 *Financial management*

In September 1994, a Tuckshop lady was appointed to manage the newly-built Tuckshop. This person ensured that the Tuckshop was efficiently managed.

In response to the Children's Council request for more computers, the Governing Body had agreed to the purchase of an additional eight computers which were installed at the beginning of 1995.

To ensure a higher percentage of school fee payment, a bursar was appointed. This person took up the appointment in January 1995. Her appointment resulted in better follow-up of defaulters and a significant lessening of the workload of the secretary to whom

the many varied tasks of the bursar had been assigned in the past.

#### 5.3.3.6 *Extramural activities*

The cultural dimension of the extramural programme received a boost when learners of the school participated for the first time in an Eisteddfod in August 1994. Another first in the cultural history of the school was an Art Exhibition which was held in October 1994. Drama and drum majorettes were also introduced into the school. To help accommodate "B" and "C" sporting teams on the limited number of available fields, the extramural programme was extended by an hour.

#### 5.3.3.7 *Marketing*

To make the wider community aware of the quality of education provided at the school, a school magazine was published at the end of 1994. The editor of the local newspaper was visited by the researcher. It was agreed that the school would submit photographs for publication. A photographer was appointed and photographs were submitted on a regular basis. Periodically, photographs of school activities appeared in the local paper.

A Complaints and Compliments File was introduced in January 1995. Letters received from parents would be discussed with the relevant staff members. Appropriate action would be decided on. Such correspondence helped to identify those areas where the school was either pleasing the client or needed to improve its service. Compliments paid to staff members were tabled at staff meetings.

#### 5.3.3.8 *Organisational climate*

To help ease tensions between the groundsman and certain of the maintenance staff, termly meetings were held. The researcher chaired such meetings and the proceedings were minuted. There was

a definite cooling in tensions during subsequent cycles of this project. By the end of March 1995, the COSATU union representative felt that there was no need to visit the school. She has not visited the school since that time.

The quality-driven organisation encourages discussion on how to improve practice. It strives to create a climate where all are encouraged to make contributions. Open Forum meetings were continued each term with the professional staff. Examples of topics discussed were three items on the agenda for the 29 August 1994 meeting, namely: policy to determine which learners would benefit by repeating a grade, the feasibility of having separate junior and senior school assemblies, and administrative duties impacting on teaching time (I R Griffith Primary School 1996g). To help reduce the time demands on teachers, all staff were invited to participate in the calendar committee deliberations. This committee decided on the programme for the next year.

The quality concept was conveyed to parents through the monthly Governing Body and PTA meetings. These meetings were opportunities for the exchange of ideas on how to improve the quality of education at the school. Recommendations were recorded in the minutes.

#### 5.3.3.9 *Staff development*

At the staff development meeting of 9 February 1995 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996k), work was started on TQM-based vision and mission statements. At subsequent staff meetings, the statements were amended and fine-tuned. These were printed in the second edition of the school prospectus. All prospective parents were given a copy of the prospectus. At the beginning of the 1995 school year, there was a full enrolment of Grade Ones - a situation that had last occurred in the 1980s.

Action was taken during the cycle to make professional staff more aware of the quality philosophy. Attempts were made to apply

quality theory in both the leadership and management of the school.

At a staff meeting held on 9 February 1995, the theme for the year, Total Quality Management, was discussed with the staff. The concluding remarks of the researcher at this meeting were (I R Griffith Primary 19961):

Let's make 1995 a QUALITY year for IRG. Let's make it a year in which we strive to ensure:

- true quality education to every child
- true quality effort from every child
- true quality from everyone who serves the IRG child
- true quality performance from ourselves

In January 1995, a Quality Manual was given to all teaching staff. The manual contained policy statements on the cultural, scholastic and sporting dimensions of the school. These documents were the end results of the input of the entire staff.

Team leaders for the various grades were given increased authority and responsibility. Traditionally, team leaders led discussion on the work to be done by teachers with the learners. In January 1995, the researcher expanded this role. The team leaders took overall responsibility and authority to ensure sound learner management within the particular grade. The financial budget was determined by the team leader together with the team members. Where the team leaders, in consultation with the team members, identified a need to adjust the syllabus, they were given the necessary authority to do so. On a termly basis, the team leader was to edit a newsletter to parents. The researcher suggested that team leaders regard themselves as heads of "mini-schools". The "mini-school" for each grade should be able to create an identity which is distinct from that of any of the other six "mini-schools" found within the school.

#### 5.4 SUMMARY

The methodology used for this thesis was that of action-research. It was a case study of a primary school. In this action research, the school was studied by means of a series of four cycles over a period of time. Each cycle consisted of the three activities of looking, thinking and then acting.

This chapter analysed and interpreted two of the four action-research cycles. The school was attempting to apply quality theory in educational practice. The first cycle was from May 1993 to June 1994. The second cycle covered the period July 1994 to March 1995.

By using the three activities in each cycle, the researcher was able continually to adapt the action-research to ever-changing scenarios. In this way, problems that the researcher was initially unaware of could be responded to on an ongoing basis.

In the first cycle, the researcher perceived the school to be a sound educational institution with a fine reputation in the community. Through discussions with learners, parents and teachers, areas of possible growth were identified. Among the areas identified for growth or expansion were capital works projects, curriculum development and better utilisation of human resources. During this cycle, the staff and, to a lesser degree, the learners and parents, were made aware of the quality philosophy.

Stakeholders of the school were encouraged to propose ways in which the quality of education could be further improved. A wide range of proposals was put forward. By the end of the cycle, a Grade Three teaching block had been built. A Computer Centre and a Tuckshop were in the last stages of construction. Improvements had been effected to the staffroom and the executive staff offices. School and class rules had been formulated by learners and teachers together. Corporal punishment had been abolished.

Cultural activities were given greater prominence than hitherto in the extramural programme. The multicultural character of the school was acknowledged and celebrated. Staff were encouraged to be critical in a positive way of what was being done at the school. Open Forums were introduced to encourage such debate. Evaluations were held after functions to ascertain whether they could be improved in the future.

The second cycle was from July 1994 to March 1995. Issues raised in the first cycle were continued and expanded on. The Computer Centre and Tuckshop were brought into operation. A computer specialist was appointed and her skills added further enrichment to the curriculum offered to the learners. The prospectus that was initiated in the previous cycle was updated. The school issued its first magazine. All professional staff made input on the vision and mission statements which were included in the new prospectus. For the first time since the 1980s, there was a full Grade One enrolment in 1995. Tensions between the groundsman and the maintenance staff were discussed on an ongoing basis and a decrease in tension was evident by the end of the cycle.

To give the cultural dimension of the school a greater profile, an Art Exhibition was introduced into the calendar. Drama and drum majorettes were introduced into the extramural programme. Multiculturalism was stressed through the theme of the Exhibition of Work which was "Many families - a rainbow nation". Further training was given to staff on TQM. A Quality Manual was instituted. The staff theme for 1995 was to make it a quality year. Parents were made aware of the quality philosophy via the Governing Body, the PTA and the weekly newsletter. Learners were encouraged to adopt the quality principles in their own lives. At weekly assemblies, learners received commendations of various kinds for quality achievements.

In Chapters Six and Seven, the third and fourth cycles of this action research project will be analysed and interpreted. As the research proceeds, the issues raised in earlier cycles often

expand in complexity (for example, multiculturalism), while others virtually disappear. An illustration of the latter would be the publishing of a prospectus. It is important therefore to stress that, although this case study has a time frame from May 1993 to December 1996, the action research of this study, like quality theory, is in a process of continuous improvement.

## CHAPTER SIX

### AN ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE ACTION RESEARCH DATA (PART TWO: CYCLE THREE)

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter gave an analysis and interpretation of the first two cycles of this action research project. The cycles covered the period from May 1993 to March 1995.

This chapter will describe the action research done in cycle three of this case study. Cycle three covers the period from April 1995 to March 1996. The theory that underscored these two cycles was that of TQM. It was during this cycle that there was a shift in focus from TQM to Total Quality Education (TQE) theory by the researcher. The researcher started to have misgivings about the term TQM being used uncritically in the field of quality improvement of education. These concerns are discussed in 6.2.2.9 of this chapter.

#### 6.2 CYCLE THREE (April 1995 to March 1996)

##### 6.2.1 Look

##### 6.2.1.1 *Physical resources*

At the beginning of the third cycle in April 1995, the learners were still having arts, Basic Techniques and Craft lessons in conventional classrooms. These rooms did not have suitable work surface areas, nor were taps and sinks available for the washing of equipment.

The Media Centre was inadequate for its educational function. Because of its limited size, the equivalent of two classrooms, not all the learners could use its facilities. The learners in Grades One, Two and Three were obliged to have books on a "block

loan" basis. Teachers collected books for these classes from the Media Centre and set up mini-libraries in their classrooms. Insufficient space precluded the four hundred learners in Grades One, Two and Three from visiting the Media Centre on a regular basis.

At the Children's Council meeting on 18 September 1995 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996a), a request was made that an intercom be installed in the Computer Centre.

Accommodation for the maintenance staff was still overcrowded at the start of the cycle. A pile of old furniture and equipment was stored next to their quarters.

#### 6.2.1.2 Curriculum

The researcher noticed the tremendous enthusiasm of the learners for the newly-established Computer Centre. He also noticed, however, that staff response to the introduction of computers was divided. Certain staff were enthusiastic about and frequently used the facility in the teaching of the learners. Other staff members were apprehensive and did not use the facility, even when they had been allocated teaching time in the centre.

Readers and textbooks used in classes generally did not deal with issues such as multiculturalism and the need to break down gender stereotyping. By way of illustration, the class readers often depicted only White people. Men were depicted as the traditional stereotypes of doctors and businessmen, while the women stayed at home looking after the family.

Every classroom up to Grade Five had a display called the "South African corner". Many of the displays reflected the multicultural diversity of the society.

All the teachers of Zulu in the school were White. It was noticed by the researcher that most Black learners received an "A" symbol

for their end-of-term reports in the subject. The researcher asked himself whether the excellent results were because the subject was being taught as a third language as well as the teachers' lack of ease in talking Zulu.

The quality concept was permeating through certain classrooms. Teachers, of their own volition, were having Quality Kid winners in their classrooms. Two teachers who initiated this idea were commended at the staff meeting of 27 June 1995 (I R Griffith Primary School 19961). Newsletters issued by the various teams of the grades, often contained references to the quality philosophy.

An increasing number of learners from educationally deprived backgrounds were being enrolled. Such learners often had no pre-primary formal education. One or both parents were illiterate. The parents were unable to provide educationally stimulating resource materials at home because of their lack of funds.

#### 6.2.1.3 *Learner management*

The detention classes as recommended in cycle two had been introduced. Certain teachers still noted that the detention classes did not address the issue of unsatisfactory work or behaviour. The researcher observed that this problem is exacerbated in a school the size of this core project. In 1996 there was an enrolment of eight hundred learners. It is easy for an underperforming learner to blend undetected into the larger school milieu.

#### 6.2.1.4 *School uniform*

At the beginning of 1996, the new uniform was introduced. Either the old or the new uniform could be worn except for Grade One where the new uniform was compulsory. In Grades Six and Seven, the majority of the learners wore the old uniform. In the rest of the school, there was a surprisingly large immediate swing to

the new uniform. By the end of March 1996, approximately 80% of the learners, excluding the Grade Sevens, had switched to the new uniform.

A cause for concern was that a few learners were mixing the uniforms, namely, wearing part of the new and part of the old uniform at the same time.

#### 6.2.1.5 *Financial management*

In February 1995 a full-time bursar had been appointed at the school. She introduced a system whereby school fee statements were sent to parents monthly instead of termly which had been the previous policy. At the end of 1995, 98% of the budgeted school fees was collected - the highest percentage in the history of the school.

In the overall 1995 school fee budget, it was estimated that 10% of the parent community would not pay school fees. Owing to home circumstances such as single parents, retrenchments and indigent home backgrounds, many of these families could not afford to pay full fees. There were also other families where the parents were unwilling to pay school fees.

#### 6.2.1.6 *Extramural activities*

In the school log book it was recorded that the last time the learners had put on a theatrical production was in 1987 (I R Griffith Primary 1996e). The researcher observed that the school provided few opportunities for learners to participate in cultural activities and for them to be acknowledged for their achievements in this domain.

The extramural programme ran from 14:00 to 16:00 every day of the week. Learners in Grades One, Two and Three were becoming more involved in this programme, and certain activities such as chess, netball and soccer were eagerly supported.

#### 6.2.1.7 *Marketing*

At the PTA meeting of 27 November 1995, it was reported that the Grade One intake for the following year was full (I R Griffith Primary School 1996h). There was also a waiting list. This was the first time that this had happened in the history of the school.

The researcher felt that, although the school was well-regarded in the community, it had no distinct market niche. He felt that the quality philosophy might be used further to help the school formulate a distinct identity.

The weekly newsletter and annual school magazine made references to the quality concept. Photographs of various activities at the school were published in the *Randburg Sun* on 3 August 1995, 15 September 1995, 6 October 1995, 3 November 1995 and 10 November 1995.

In 1996, the school would be celebrating its thirtieth anniversary. The researcher felt that avenues for community awareness and publicity for the school should be considered.

#### 6.2.1.8 *Organisational climate*

At a staff meeting held on 30 May 1995, the researcher discussed the issue of staff absenteeism (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l). Although it was mid-winter at the time, the researcher maintained that the incidence of absenteeism was too high. Approximately 10% of the annual budget for locum teachers had been spent in a three-week period.

During the entire period of cycle three, there had been no visits from the trade union to the school, nor had the maintenance staff requested that union officials visit the school. The maintenance staff, groundsman and researcher met once a term. The researcher felt that there was a general sense of job satisfaction and work

commitment amongst the maintenance staff. The relationship between the groundsman and a faction of the maintenance staff which had previously been hostile, had grown more cordial.

#### 6.2.1.9 *Staff development*

Staff development, like the road to quality education, is a never-ending journey. The researcher wanted to ensure that staff grasped the quality philosophy fully and that TQE toolkits were both understood and used in the classroom. At the start of cycle three, the researcher was of the opinion that tools and techniques of TQE could be used more meaningfully in classrooms.

Certain staff members had initiated exciting ideas within the broad framework of the quality philosophy. The researcher believed that fellow teachers would benefit from discussing their findings.

#### 6.2.2 Think

##### 6.2.2.1 *Physical resources*

The school aimed to have a Design and Technology Centre completed by the end of 1995. Few South African public primary schools had such a facility at that time. Two Johannesburg private preparatory schools, namely, The Ridge and Pridwin School, had established such centres. During May 1995, two staff members who were designated to initiate the Design and Technology curriculum at I R Griffith Primary visited these schools. In the Governing Body meeting minutes of 29 May 1995 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d), it was recorded that these two teachers had also attended a course at Rand Afrikaans University on Design and Technology. Ideas gleaned from the visits to the two schools and the attendance of the university course on how to set up a Design and Technology Centre, were conveyed to the architect. He was able to incorporate certain of their recommendations in the building plans.

Although the school would have liked to build a new Media Centre, it was agreed by the executive staff and Governing Body that this could not be effected in the short-term. The Design and Technology Centre was viewed as of higher priority in a limited capital works budget.

#### 6.2.2.2 Curriculum

The researcher held a discussion with the computer teacher on the apprehension of certain teachers about using computers in the curriculum. In many classes, computers were not used for any lessons other than computer literacy. A teachers' course on computer literacy was started on 7 February 1996. The researcher and the computer teacher thought that the course could serve as a refresher course for apprehensive teachers. New staff members who were computer illiterate were invited to attend the course. The computer teacher decided to buy software across the various subjects of the curriculum. The intention was for the computer teacher to work in tandem with class teachers during certain lessons using the software.

To help address the issues of gender stereotyping and to further the concept of multiculturalism, the staff paid particular attention to readers, textbooks and other materials bought for the school. A representative from a bookseller visited the school and gave advice in this regard. It was pointed out, for example, that a reading programme published by a British bookseller had an explicit multicultural bias.

The researcher noted that many Black learners "anglicised" their names rather than use their proper names. He informed the Governing Body on 26 June 1995 (I R Griffith Primary 1996d) that this policy was to be discouraged amongst the learners. At an assembly, the learners were told to insist on being called by their proper names. A Governing Body meeting of 20 November 1995 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d) discussed the principle of twinning with a school from a different cultural background.

The principle of a support programme for learners from disadvantaged educational backgrounds was discussed by the Grade One team leader with the researcher during April 1995. The team leader stated that it was imperative that learners needing educational support were not made to feel either different or inadequate. The challenge was to initiate a support programme that could be integrated into the normal school day. She also maintained that the needs of learners who were gifted and therefore would benefit by an enriched programme, needed attention as well. These concerns were discussed at a staff meeting held on 9 May 1995 (I R Griffith Primary School 19961).

#### 6.2.2.3 *Learner management*

The deputy principal raised the issue of a daily report system for learners who produced unsatisfactory school work and/or who evinced unacceptable behaviour. The issue was discussed at a staff meeting held on 25 April 1995 (I R Griffith Primary School 19961). Staff members were in favour of such learners being assessed by the teachers on a daily basis. The staff decided to adopt the idea with immediate effect from June 1995.

#### 6.2.2.4 *School uniform*

The school did not have an official cap or hat. The researcher had been asked at Governing Body, PTA and school uniform committee meetings to consider the introduction of headgear. There was the concern of the harmful effect of the sunrays on the skin. At a Children's Council meeting of 22 May 1995 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996a), a member of the school uniform committee presented the councillors with a range of caps. There was discussion and subsequent voting by the councillors on the most appropriate and aesthetically pleasing cap for the learners.

#### 6.2.2.5 *Financial management*

At finance committee meetings during 1995, strategies were

devised to help reduce the percentage non-payment of school fees. A member of the committee was appointed as a debt collector to liaise directly with defaulting families. Thirty-two families were given the necessary documentation to apply for State bursaries and approximately fifty families were handed over to the school lawyer.

The finance committee discussed the principle of credit clearances for all prospective parents. With effect from January 1996, all such parents would have been checked with a credit bureau. To assist indigent families meet their school fee commitments, members of the finance committee discussed strategies that could be adopted to raise the necessary additional funds.

#### 6.2.2.6 *Extramural activities*

During the period April to August 1996, the learners and the teachers in the junior classes (Grades One to Three) were preparing for a school play. It had been decided by the teachers that every learner would be given an opportunity to appear on stage.

Plans were devised on how to accommodate the extra numbers of learners attending the wide range of extramural activities. The question was posed by the researcher whether it was possible to have Black coaches to assist in the extramural programme. The rationale was that if this were to happen, a statement of the commitment by the school to the principles of multicultural education would be made.

On 2 November 1994, the school held its first Sport and Cultural Awards Evening. The researcher noted that most of the prizewinners were learners who excelled in sporting activities. Few awards were made for cultural achievements. In addition, the awards were mostly for excellent achievement and gave scant recognition to learners for consistent effort and true

sportsmanship. The Director of Sport was requested to discuss this issue with coaches and teachers.

#### 6.2.2.7 *Marketing*

At a PTA meeting of 26 September 1995 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996h), ideas were put forward on how the school could celebrate its thirtieth birthday the following year. It was hoped to use the anniversary year to make the local community aware of the school and to offer former learners, parents and teachers an opportunity to visit the school. Efforts would be made to get media coverage of the various events.

There was discussion on making local nursery schools more aware of what the school had to offer to prospective Grade Ones. The junior department teachers recommended that the nursery school supervisors be invited to visit the school. The head of the Art Department suggested that local nursery schools be visited and invited to submit entries to the annual Art Exhibition.

#### 6.2.2.8 *Organisational climate*

There was staffroom discussion on the high incidence of staff absenteeism during May 1995. Through a whole-staff awareness of the situation, the incidences of absenteeism decreased significantly. The researcher nevertheless considered it necessary to monitor the level of staff absenteeism. Long-term, high absenteeism could be an indicator of low level of job commitment and work satisfaction amongst teachers.

In 1995 the Department of Education had suspended the merit award system for excellent teachers on post level one. At a Governing Body meeting of 26 June 1995 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d), the researcher had requested that a single lump sum be awarded to a designated number of excellent teachers. Concerns were expressed by certain governors about possible negative impact this might have on staff morale. Nevertheless, it was agreed to

implement a Quality Awards system until the Department of Education reintroduced appraisal-based merit awards. The awards could be given to either administrative or professional staff members. When the researcher discussed the Quality Awards proposal with the whole staff, certain members expressed their dismay. A few staff members conveyed their dissatisfaction to the chairman of the Governing Body.

A new member who held an executive human resources post at a major bank was appointed to the Governing Body. The Governing Body acceded to the researcher's request for the establishment of a human resources portfolio at the meeting of 29 May 1995 (I R Griffith Primary 1996d). One of this member's first tasks was to discuss with the researcher the issues surrounding the introduction of the Quality Teacher Awards.

#### 6.2.2.9 Staff development

It was during cycle three that the researcher had misgivings about the term TQM being used hitherto uncritically in the field of education.

J Lewis (1993:26-28), in the book titled *Implementing total quality in education*, describes differences between the educational and industrial sectors in approaches to achieving quality. Three of the differences are:

- 1 In the industrial, manufacturing and service organisations, the customer determines the needs. In education, both the customers (parents and learners) and providers (school administration and teachers), reach mutual agreement on needs, requirements and expectations.
- 2 In many organisations, advanced statistical techniques are applied to tackle complex problems. In school-related situations, this does not often happen.

3 Most school districts are under-funded for education, training and development, whereas this is not the case in the industrial sector.

To the third point above, the researcher submits that in a school, little money is traditionally budgeted for staff development programmes. In-house training is often limited to afternoon workshops run within the school or at a local teachers' centre. Compare this to residential courses spread over a number of days which are common practice in many quality-driven business and industrial organisations.

The concept TQM was also rejected in the field of education by English and Hill (1994:iii-xiv). They assert that Deming's ideas go far beyond simply restructuring a school. They embrace a complete transformation of the school, because traditionally competition is the watchword of nearly all facets of school life. Dr Deming stated that the greatest accomplishments of man have been achieved without competition (Walton 1992:89).

English and Hill (1994:xiv) regard TQM as too superficial for deep educational change and instead they

...prefer TQE (Total Quality Education). The management changes are the easiest to make. The educational changes are of a far different magnitude. But they are the ones that will ultimately make the most difference to the children.

The researcher subscribes to the above viewpoint. TQM applied within education could be viewed as a tag-on of management principles used in business, financial, industrial and other sectors. By using the term TQE, the quality philosophy has a distinct, unique education-focused identity.

The researcher's concerns relating to TQM and TQE needed to be shared with the staff. Further discussions were also necessary

on how to apply quality principles to daily educational practice.

6.2.3 Act

6.2.3.1 *Physical resources*

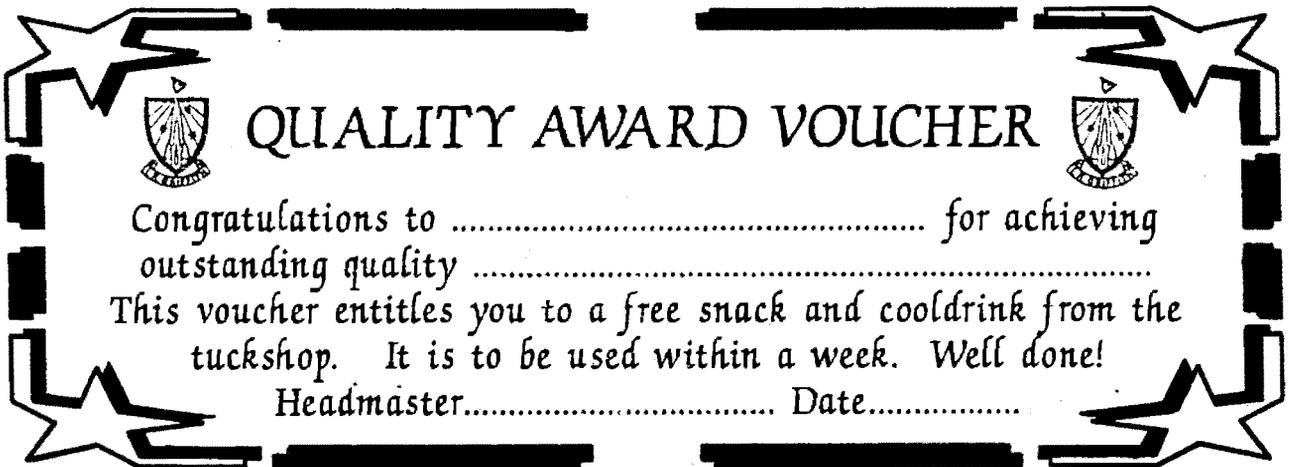
In the weekly newsletter of 31 May 1995 (I R Griffith Primary 1996f), a sketch was printed of the proposed Design and Technology Centre. On 17 October 1995, the centre was formally opened. Lessons were held in the centre with immediate effect.

6.2.3.2 *Curriculum*

Software to be used in a wide range of subjects of the curriculum was bought for the Computer Centre. For example, spelling was taught in certain grades using computer software. The PTA was informed that an additional six computers had been ordered for the centre. The goal was to have a computer for every learner in the class.

A Quality Award Voucher system was introduced in April 1995. A learner who was given such a voucher was entitled to a softdrink and a hotdog from the Tuckshop. The voucher would be given to learners who evinced quality principles during their school day. Examples were continuous never-ending improvement in school work or splendid achievement on the sportsfield.

Figure 6.1 Quality Award Voucher



In January 1996, the Quality Kid badge was introduced to the learners. The staff would choose a weekly citation and a learner from each class would be selected for the award. Examples of the citations selected at the staff meeting of 9 January 1996 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l) were:

- Neat school uniform
- Enthusiasm
- I love Zulu
- Extramural participation
- Teacher's choice (teacher chooses own theme within the quality philosophy)

A Science Exhibition was introduced at the school. This event was held on 24 October 1995. The exhibition had a three-fold purpose: to give the learners opportunities to think innovatively in the scientific domain; to stress the importance of Science in the curriculum and thirdly, to give learners who excel in this domain, an opportunity to be acknowledged and acclaimed. Besides being a successful evening, it was a triumph for those opposed to gender stereotyping in the field of science as Bronwyn Rayne's (Grade Six) report in the 1995 school magazine inferred (I R Griffith Primary School 1996j):

...it became a very tough decision for the judges in choosing the winning entries. In the end the judges were able to narrow it down to five winners. Claire Franklyn and Paul Sandler were commended... Candice Allen came third with an exhibit depicting a UFO and Dylan Keightley second with an exhibit depicting a radio station, park and robots. Very well done to Janet Pavey coming first with her conductivity tester.

In a quality-driven organisation, all stakeholders work together to reach common goals. Traditionally, when report cards are given to parents, the learners stay at home. Such evenings are often referred to as Parents' Evenings. The researcher felt that for

a learner to do well, it is important that there be absolutely clear communication and cooperation amongst all stakeholders - namely, the learner, the parent and the teacher. Therefore, as an experiment, all learners from Grade Four upwards were to accompany their parents to collect the Term One 1996 report. The event was called "Let's look at my work!" night and was held on 25 March 1996. The learners displayed their work to parents. Areas of possible improvement were identified. Strategies to effect improvement were determined and agreed at the meeting. Scholastic achievements of learners were also commended.

#### 6.2.3.3 *Learner management*

A Daily Report system was introduced from May 1995. Learners from Grade Four upwards who were producing work of an unsatisfactory standard and/or were behaving in an unacceptable manner, were put on this programme. The deputy principal devised a form which was continually adapted as the process was fine-tuned. Learners on this programme had to have the Daily Report sheet signed by every teacher during the course of the day for a whole week. If any teacher was dissatisfied with the learner, this was to be indicated on the form. Once a week the learner met with the researcher. At this meeting, a decision was taken on whether the learner should be placed on the programme for a further week. The researcher observed that most learners endeavoured to perform in an exemplary manner if they were given a Daily Report. They did not wish to have a second week on Daily Report.

#### 6.2.3.4 *School uniform*

Sports caps were introduced for the 1995 netball and cricket seasons. The caps were made optional for the netball players but compulsory for cricketers who were playing in matches. Cricket matches could last from two to four hours and prolonged exposure to the sun in an area such as Gauteng was considered dangerous.

Termly school uniform inspections were introduced in March 1996.

The inspections were opportunities to ensure that the learners were wearing either the old or the new uniform but not a mixture of the two. Secondly, there could be a check on a learner's overall neatness. Isolated incidents of stealing of uniforms had been reported to teachers and the researcher. All items of clothing and personal belongings had to be marked with the learner's name.

#### 6.2.3.5 *Financial management*

The credit clearance procedure with a credit bureau was implemented in January 1996 with pleasing results. It deterred certain non-payers at other schools from making application to the school. Parents knew that the credit bureau would be informed if they did not honour their fee commitments. It became policy from January 1996 for bursars to contact the previous school of prospective applicants to ascertain whether school fees had been paid on a regular basis.

Three strategies were in place to help indigent families. All the proceeds from a newspaper recycling project started at the school were put into a bursary fund. An amount of R3 000 was raised in this manner. The annual Golf Day held on 15 August 1995 raised a further R6 000. In the overall school budget, the treasurer had built in an estimate of about five percent of the parent community who would be unable to meet their school fee obligations. These families were requested to make a contribution when their financial situation improved.

Monthly finance committee meetings kept a sound control over money matters. At the end of 1995, there was a surplus on the budget.

#### 6.2.3.6 *Extramural activities*

Efforts had been made by the teaching staff to break down gender stereotyping. At assembly all learners were told that they were

welcome to participate in traditional boys' activities such as cricket and soccer. Subsequently, a small number of girls joined the various cricket and soccer teams.

The Director of Sports, in consultation with the staff, proposed new guidelines for the 1995 Cultural and Sports Awards Evening. There would be the usual prizes for those learners who excelled at various activities. An innovation would be the introduction of more prizes for learners who participated with enthusiasm and showed progress during the course of the year. Also, a premier award would be introduced for the top girl achiever in sport. In 1994, there was only one award and the inference was that the recipient had to be a boy.

A Black maintenance staff member joined the extramural coaching team. He coached two soccer teams in the 1995 winter months. One team won its league, while the other team came second in another league. This appointment, in the spirit of multiculturalism, helped to create positive attitudes within the school community.

In September 1995, the learners from Grade One to Grade Three put on a play titled *Up the beanstalk*. Every learner was on stage. For the majority of learners, it was their first participation in live theatre.

#### 6.2.3.7 *Marketing*

During 1996 the school celebrated its thirtieth anniversary. On 18 January there was a Thanksgiving Service attended by all sectors of the school community. The learners and staff had a small birthday party in Term One. These activities held during cycle three of this research study, helped to publicise the contributions of the school to the local Randburg community.

Arrangements were made for the supervisors of local nursery schools to visit the school. They did so in May 1995. The supervisors were shown around the school and enjoyed a teatime

chat with other supervisors as well as the staff of the school. They were given individual reports of the learners who had attended their respective nursery schools in the preceding year and were presently in Grade One. A positive rapport between the nursery schools and the school was established. The supervisors were invited to send samples of their learners' artwork to the Art Exhibition. Many nursery schools submitted entries and a number of parents of nursery school learners visited the Art Exhibition which was held on 17 October 1995.

#### 6.2.3.8 *Organisational climate*

In discussion with the Governing Body member holding the human resources portfolio, there was complete agreement on the principle of the Quality Awards. Five members of the administrative and professional staff were given the awards after deliberation by the executive staff. Some members of staff were still unhappy about the awards. One person voiced an objection to a member of the Governing Body and asserted that all staff members worked equally hard and therefore it was considered unfair to identify people who were "going the extra mile".

#### 6.2.3.9 *Staff development*

Quality theory and practice were highlighted further in staff development programmes during the cycle. In a quality organisation, there should be a spirit of cooperation and teamwork amongst all its members. At a staff development meeting held on 27 June 1995 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l), a Grade Three teacher demonstrated how she had carried out a cooperative groupwork project with her learners. She showed staff how exceptionally high standards of work had been achieved using this methodology.

The researcher discussed the TQM toolkit with the staff on 14 and 28 August 1995 (I R Griffith Primary 1996k). The staff was requested to apply the tools in a classroom-based activity. The

identified activity was to be an area needing improvement. Teachers were encouraged to have outrageous (Hoshin) goals. Certain teachers worked individually, while others worked in teams. Three examples of areas targeted for improvement were:

- 1 "Homework being done correctly and timeously by all children in the class" (Teacher of a Grade Five class)
- 2 "The reading fluency and enjoyment of the children in the grade" (Teacher of a Grade Three class)
- 3 "Improving my interpersonal relationship with a child in my class" (Teacher of a Grade Two class)

The researcher led a workshop entitled "TQE and Deming" with the staff on 23 May 1995 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996k). The applicability of Deming's theory within the school was highlighted.

At the staff meeting of 9 January 1996 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l), the researcher outlined the theme for the year. The theme was "We're going for never-ending quality improvement". The shift in terminology usage from TQM to TQE was discussed with the staff. In the weekly staff meeting minutes, the researcher often gave a quality tip. The researcher strove continually to bring the quality concept to the staff's attention.

With the building of the Design and Technology Centre, there was a growing interest by the staff in the subject. On 5 February 1996, the subject teacher discussed Design and Technology at a staff development meeting (I R Griffith Primary School 1996k). She also showed her colleagues work that had been done by the learners in her class.

### 6.3 SUMMARY

Chapter Six has looked at cycle three of the action research

programme. The cycle covers the period from April 1995 to March 1996.

During this cycle the Design and Technology Centre was opened. This forced a change in thinking across the whole school with regard to traditional subjects such as Arts and Crafts as well as Basic Techniques. Another area of the curriculum where there were changes was in the use of computers. In cycle two, the Computer Centre had been established. In the third cycle, there was an explosion of ideas on how to put the new facility to greater educational use.

The new school uniform was introduced during the cycle and there were inevitable minor hiccups. During this cycle there was considerable focus on school fee collection. As a result, school fees collected exceeded budget. Fundraising activities were put in place to assist those families that needed bursaries to meet school fee commitments.

It was during this cycle that the researcher had misgivings about the uncritical adoption of TQM principles in the field of education. There was a shift in terminology and management from TQM to Total Quality Education (TQE). The quality concept was being implemented more extensively by teachers in their classrooms. In the latter part of 1995, all staff members were involved in Hoshin goal projects.

Learners were becoming increasingly conscious of the need to apply quality principles in both their school work and extramural activities. Various occasions (for example, weekly assemblies, prizegivings, sports awards evenings) were used to highlight quality achievements of learners.

In the wider community, there was a growing recognition of the endeavours by the school to adhere to quality principles. Before the end of 1995, there was a waiting list of applications for the 1996 Grade One intake. This was the first time in the history of

the school that there had been a waiting list for Grade One.

During the cycle, the inadequate Media Centre resources had been highlighted and greater attention given to multicultural education. Gender stereotyping was occurring because of the textbooks used in the classrooms and because certain teachers were unaware of the issue. Such matters received attention during the cycle and required ongoing attention.

In Chapter Seven, there will be an analysis and interpretation of the action research data collected during cycle four. This last cycle covers the period from April 1996 to December 1996. It was during this cycle that a questionnaire was given to the parents. Chapter Seven will include the results of this survey. The parent survey highlighted the achievements of the school community through the cycles, in providing a quality education for the learners. More importantly though, in the spirit of the quality principle of Kaizen, the survey identified areas for further improvement in all facets of the school.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### AN ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE ACTION RESEARCH DATA (PART THREE: CYCLE FOUR)

#### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapters Five and Six, the period from May 1993 to March 1996 of this action research study, was discussed. The two preceding chapters analysed and interpreted the data obtained in the first three cycles. This chapter deals with the fourth and final cycle which covers the period April to December 1996.

It was during this cycle that a questionnaire was carried out with the parent community. The survey findings highlighted those areas where the school could improve further the quality of education offered. Such recommendations would be implemented in future action research cycles in 1997 and beyond.

All four cycles were characterised by a commitment to implement quality practice within the school. Therefore, the survey also served as an evaluation of the success or otherwise of stakeholders' endeavours to effect quality education. Certain sections asked the clients of the school to rate the school as a service organisation. Two examples read:

The school fees are good value for money  
and

I would recommend IRG to a prospective parent.

Administrative and professional staff completed a battery of organisational climate and self-perception questionnaires in this fourth cycle. The co-operation of staff members is crucial to the success of a programme such as organisational quality improvement.

The chapter highlights four dimensions of the action research.

Firstly, there was a description of the endeavours by the various stakeholders to implement the quality philosophy during this fourth cycle. Another dimension was to evaluate, particularly from the parents' perspectives, how quality theory and practice have impacted on the school. A third dimension was to evaluate the organisational climate amongst the administrative and professional staff. Finally, an analysis and interpretation of the data helped to discern the degree of relevancy of the quality philosophy in effecting school improvement.

## 7.2 CYCLE FOUR (April 1996 to December 1996)

### 7.2.1 Look

#### 7.2.1.1 *Physical resources*

The school still did not have a swimming pool and the learners were transported to the community pool about 1.5 km away for swimming lessons. There was insufficient parking place at the school for big functions, although there was a Council-owned vacant plot adjacent to the school. The Media Centre was too small to house adequate facilities for those learners wishing to retrieve information by means of CD ROMS and on the internet.

#### 7.2.1.2 *Curriculum*

The Design and Technology Centre had been inaugurated on 17 October 1995. The researcher, however, queried whether the learners regarded Design and Technology as an important subject in the curriculum. The subject was entirely new to the curriculum of most South African public primary schools.

The researcher thought that it was worthwhile to let the learners, particularly those in Grades Six and Seven, try their hands at entrepreneurship. The school provided no opportunities for learners to practise business entrepreneurial skills.

The quality concept was being applied in the classroom on a daily basis. Teachers would write remarks like "Quality work from a Quality Kid!" or "Five-star quality!" in the learners' exercise books. The weekly Quality Kid badge awards were continual reminders of the quality concept to the learners. However, the researcher noted that there was no day in the calendar on which there was a whole-school focus on quality.

#### 7.2.1.3 *Learner management*

At the beginning of cycle four, the researcher was unaware of any major areas of indiscipline. The three most common misdemeanours by learners seemed to be that of homework not being done in a satisfactory manner, isolated incidents of classroom and playground-based conflicts and untidy school uniforms.

#### 7.2.1.4 *School uniforms*

The new tracksuits had proved to be popular. The learners looked smart in their sky blue and royal blue tracksuits. All four stockists ran out of stock.

#### 7.2.1.5 *Financial management*

At the beginning of the cycle, families representing thirty-two learners had applied for State bursaries. An amount of R2 500 was given by the State towards their school fees. Considerable documentation was required by the State in order to receive this relatively small amount of money. The school fee in 1996 was R1 850 per learner per year. It was the researcher's perception that the number of families unable to meet school fee commitments would increase as a result of unemployment and low wages paid to certain employees, such as domestic workers. A number of parents were domestic workers. The researcher felt that the matter needed further discussion by the financial sub-committee of the Governing Body. More bursary money was required for indigent families of the school community.

#### 7.2.1.6 *Extramural activities*

Although the school participated in cross-country events against other schools, the school did not have its own internal competition. The researcher was also concerned about the lack of acknowledgement of the arts in the extramural programme. Apart from the presentations made at the Cultural and Sports Awards evenings, no formal recognition was accorded to learners achieving outstanding results in areas such as drama, music, public speaking and art work.

In 1995, the junior primary (Grade One to Three) department had produced a play. Informal requests had been made by learners in the senior classes to be provided with an opportunity to be on stage too.

#### 7.2.1.7 *Marketing*

The researcher was aware that earnest endeavours had been made through the years to ascertain the various customers' needs and expectations. At meetings of staff, Governing Body, PTA and Children's Council, such needs and expectations were often expressed. Individual staff members also communicated requests to the researcher. He was aware, however, that these forums did not represent all of the 590 families within the school. The assessments, recommendations and opinions of the parent community were unknown.

The school received erratic publicity in the local newspaper, the *Randburg Sun*, but in no other publication. The school had not received any publicity in any other medium such as radio or television.

#### 7.2.1.8 *Organisational climate*

In the history of the school, there had been no quantitative assessment of the organisational climate of the school -

particularly as perceived by the staff. Such assessments are costly in relation to the traditional allocation of monies to school staff development programmes.

The researcher noted how many teachers were becoming aware of the need to "delight" the customer and provide unexpected quality service. The following illustration of such service by a staff member to a parent of a Grade One learner is recorded in the staff minutes of 29 April 1996 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l):

A Grade One teacher noticed that a learner had not been collected from school in the afternoon. She made numerous telephone calls to contact the family but was unable to do so. (The parents had changed their physical address during the past few days and had not notified the school.) The teacher managed to trace the grandparents of the learner and made a 40 km trip to take the learner to them.

In any organisation, conflict is inevitable. Three main areas of potential conflict in a school are: amongst the learners, amongst colleagues and between learners and teachers. A fourth conflict area but less frequently noted, is that between parents and teachers. The researcher observed these forms of conflict within the school. No formal conflict resolution training skills had been provided by the school to any of these stakeholders.

#### 7.2.1.9 *Staff development*

During the course of the cycle, the school became aware of the Curriculum 2005 project with its "outcomes-based" curriculum philosophy. This new approach to teaching methodology in South African education was to be implemented in 1998. No staff member had either practical or theoretical knowledge of "outcomes-based" education.

The researcher discerned an overall staff commitment to

implementing the quality principle of continuous improvement. New methods and teaching aids had been bought. Teachers were revising their syllabi. Yet the researcher discerned a need to increase staff enthusiasm towards outrageous Hoshin-style new ideas. If this were not done a spirit of complacency and self-satisfaction might permeate the staffroom and later spread across the whole school.

## 7.2.2 Think

### 7.2.2.1 *Physical resources*

At a Children's Council meeting of 5 August 1996 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996a), a request was made for a swimming pool to be built at the school. The need for money (approximately R250 000) as well as the limited space available on the school site were discussed.

The researcher was aware of the insufficient parking for staff and visitors. Many cars were double-parked. Next to the school was an open piece of ground which belonged to the Town Council. The researcher felt that the Council should be approached to lease the property to the school.

Informal discussions with the media teacher during the cycle emphasised the need for a new Media Centre. The Media Centre was too small and did not have an internet facility. The researcher discussed these issues with the Governing Body on 18 June 1996 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d). It was decided to consider the construction of a new Media Centre as the major capital works project for 1997.

### 7.2.2.2 *Curriculum*

Visitors to the school often commented favourably on the state of the gardens, grounds and bird-life. The researcher was aware of some seventy species of trees on the site. Most learners were

oblivious to the fauna and flora surrounding them in their daily school lives. During June 1996 the researcher discussed with the biology and media teachers ways to make the learners more aware of the school environment. It was decided that a tree expert be asked to visit the school and identify all the trees. The media teacher suggested that charts of South African fauna and flora be displayed to make the learners aware of their surroundings. Environmental education lessons, with a particular focus on the school, could be given in the classrooms.

The learners could be made aware of their environment through the Extramural Club. This Club stated in the 1996 school magazine (I R Griffith Primary School 1996j:86) that:

The aim of the Environmental Club is to make the pupils aware of the environment that they live in and to learn how to make it a better place to live in. This is done through educational games, excursions, videos and projects. All you budding nature freaks, we hope to see you putting your ideas forward ...

To make the learners more aware of the importance of Design and Technology as a subject, it was decided at a staff meeting that projects done as part of this subject be incorporated into the annual Art Exhibition.

The Grades Six and Seven teachers took part in informal discussions with the researcher during April to June 1996 regarding business entrepreneurial skills training. It was decided that the learners in Grades Six and Seven would have such lessons in their Mathematics classes. The learners would be encouraged to open businesses in the latter part of 1996.

At a staff meeting of 28 October 1996, the idea of having a day on which the whole school focused on quality was discussed. It was agreed that the quality message could be conveyed in an assertive but fun way by having such a day.

### 7.2.2.3 *Learner management*

At a staff meeting of 13 May 1996 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l), there was a discussion on the "broken window theory" that had been applied to deal with crime in New York (Storey 1996:11). The premise of the theory was that by dealing firmly with minor transgressions (for example, a person scrawling graffiti on a subway wall), the bigger crimes (for example, drug trafficking), would be less likely to happen. The possibility of applying this theory to the school was analysed. There was consensus that firm action in the form of detention classes be taken against learners who transgressed school rules.

Conflict amongst learners is inevitable and even more so amongst a heterogeneous group. Although the issue was not a major one in the school, there were isolated incidents of this. It was therefore decided that Mr R Morris of the Community Dispute Resolution Trust (CDRT) should speak to the staff on *Conflict resolution in the classroom*. He ran an initial workshop session with the staff on 6 May 1996.

There was considerable debate on his proposal to introduce circle time in every classroom. During circle time, everyone, including the teacher, sits in a circle. Issues of concern are raised by members of the circle and discussed in an open, direct and non-confrontational manner.

### 7.2.2.4 *School uniform*

At an executive staff meeting of 28 May 1996 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996c), there was a discussion on the dress code of the school. Concern was expressed about the wearing of articles of both the old and the new uniform at the same time by a small number of learners. These learners would be spoken to by the teachers.

In telephonic discussions during June 1996 between the researcher

and the stockists regarding the lack of stock of the new tracksuit, the stockists conceded that they had completely underestimated the demand for the tracksuit. New stocks had been ordered. With the introduction of the tracksuit, scrolls could be sewn on to the jackets. The scrolls could be awarded to learners who displayed achievements of outstanding quality in areas such as leadership, cultural and sport activities.

#### 7.2.2.5 *Financial management*

After discussion by the financial sub-committee of the Governing Body, it was decided at a meeting held on 11 June 1996, not to apply for bursaries from the State for indigent families (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d). It was felt that time could be spent more profitably on generating ideas for school-based bursary projects.

#### 7.2.2.6 *Extramural activities*

In April 1996, the researcher was concerned about the lack of acknowledgement given to learners who excelled in the cultural programme. He decided that such learners would be eligible for scroll awards for cultural achievements.

The researcher approached three teachers and suggested that there should be a senior (Grade Four to Seven) play. They decided to adapt *The Jungle Book* for such a play. In April 1996, plans were set in motion for the production.

#### 7.2.2.7 *Marketing*

The researcher felt that, in order to identify the needs and expectations of parents of the school, a questionnaire should be drawn up. Parental responses would help the school understand its present market and enable it to reposition itself to meet changing market needs. The researcher asked for possible appropriate questions from his colleagues. He also studied

questionnaires compiled by educational management theorists (Greenwood & Gaunt 1994:168-169; Sallis 1993:138-150), and received advice from the promoter of this thesis regarding appropriate questions.

Marketing by means of radio was offered to the school. A local radio station named CANI, offered a fortnightly publicity slot to local schools.

To achieve public awareness of the school beyond the immediate community, the researcher thought that contact should be made with national newspapers. Involvement in quality conferences would help the school understand better the principles of management, and market itself more effectively.

#### 7.2.2.8 *Organisational climate*

The administering and analysis of an organisational climate survey at the school was discussed by the Governing Body on 29 July 1996 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d). A governor intimated that it might be possible to get such a survey done for the school at a discounted price.

The researcher had read of staff training helping to resolve organisational conflict. A member of the Community Dispute Resolution Trust spoke to the staff and outlined the training envisaged. Considerable discussion followed about the relevancy to the school of the eighteen-hour programme. The staff agreed in principle to such a programme.

To encourage further a climate of unity amongst the entire school community, the researcher discussed informally the concept of a school song with three teachers in April 1996. During April, May and June of 1996, these teachers composed various words and musical accompaniments which could be used for a school song.

#### 7.2.2.9 *Staff development*

Dr Ron Brandt, Associate Editor of the United States publication, *Educational Leadership*, visited the school on 11 November 1996. He spoke about "outcomes-based" education and the philosophy behind it. The staff was encouraged to think about ways in which they would adapt their teaching methodology to subscribe to the new curriculum to be implemented in 1998.

At the weekly staff meetings the quality philosophy and its applications were discussed. A few staff development meetings were held during the term. At the staff development meeting of 24 June 1996 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996k), the topic was "Using action research to achieve Hoshin goals". Staff were encouraged to think about using the action research model to effect educational improvement.

#### 7.2.3 Act

##### 7.2.3.1 *Physical resources*

As mentioned in 7.2.2.1, the Children's Council had requested a swimming pool. It was decided by the researcher that the proposed new Media Centre would meet a greater immediate need. Accordingly, on 10 September 1996 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d) the Governing Body allocated R200 000 towards the first phase of a new Media Centre. At the 1997 budget meeting held on 16 October 1996, the parent community unanimously supported this project. Construction of the new centre was to begin in mid-1997.

To address the parking needs of staff, the researcher contacted the Randburg Council regarding the hiring of the adjacent property. In a letter from the Council dated 10 May 1996, it was indicated that the request would be favourably considered. On 3 December 1996, the local councillor informed the researcher verbally that the Town Council had agreed at their previous meeting to lease the property to the school.

#### 7.2.3.2 Curriculum

At a Children's Council meeting of 22 May 1996, it was decided to adopt an animal at the Johannesburg Zoo. The councillors viewed this as a practical way of supporting environmental issues. Accordingly, a cheque was sent to the zoo to sponsor a hyena which was to be named Giggles. During September 1996, the Media Centre teacher put on permanent display posters dealing with the bird and flora life of South Africa. Environmental awareness was also encouraged by the collection of newspapers. A monthly interclass competition was held to collect newspapers for a recycling programme called the Ronnie Recycling campaign.

During September and October 1996, a tree expert visited the school and identified the majority of trees on the site. The biology teacher was to make arrangements for the trees to be labelled and for a tree discovery trail to be established.

To help focus on the school aim of academic excellence, academic scrolls were awarded for the first time on 20 July 1996 to Grade Seven learners who excelled in this domain. At the annual prizegiving held on 2 December 1996, academic scrolls were awarded to seven learners in Grade Six. These learners had obtained an aggregate of at least eighty percent in each of the four school terms of 1996.

Recognition was given to Design and Technology at the Art Exhibition held on 19 September 1996. Design and Technology projects were on display and awards were presented to a number of learners for their entries.

World Quality Day was celebrated at the school on 14 November 1996. The learners designed posters which were exhibited outside the Media Centre. All learners were given a quality sticker provided by SAQI. Learners made up their own quality slogans such as:

Quality Kids give 110%

A quality sportsman has a neat kit  
Quality Kids reach for the stars  
Keep the customer satisfied ... do your homework

During September 1996, all Grade Six learners worked individually or in groups on business entrepreneurial projects. Matthew Marinus of Grade Six wrote as follows in the 1996 school magazine about the project (I R Griffith Primary School 1996j:95):

The children chose which products to make and set about completing a market research on product and costing. From here, we (sic) learnt how to provide mark-up prices, how to keep record of our sales, how to advertise correctly and how to use the computer in our businesses.

#### 7.2.3.3 *Learner management*

During Term Three of 1996, the average number of learners attending Friday detention classes increased from eight to twenty. This was as a result of the application of the "broken window theory" referred to in 7.2.2.3. The learners became acutely aware of the "zero tolerance" by staff of the infraction of school rules. At the last detention class of the year on 22 November 1996, two factors were discerned. Most learners, without being explicitly instructed to do so, were obeying school rules and secondly, the number of learners attending detention classes had declined. Seven learners attended the last detention class of 1996.

The staff meeting minutes of 26 August 1996 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l) recorded that circle time would be introduced to the learners. All classes would try to hold these sessions once a week with either the class/homeroom or the guidance teacher. Informal comments from parents, learners and teachers were that the circle times were excellent means of defusing potentially confrontational issues and conflicts amongst the learners.

#### 7.2.3.4 *School uniform*

To make the learners aware of the importance of wearing the correct uniform, termly inspections were introduced. An inspection was held on 5 August 1996. To keep the tone positive, prizes were awarded to the two classes who were closest to 100% in the wearing of correct and neat uniforms.

The researcher was informed by learners, parents, and teachers of alleged theft of school uniforms. The researcher noticed various items left lying in the corridors and on the sportsfields. From the beginning of Term Three 1996, it became mandatory for all items of school uniform and personal property to be marked with the learner's name. By the end of 1996, few parents phoned the researcher to complain of thefts. Lost items found around the school could be returned to their owners.

#### 7.2.3.5 *Financial management*

To compensate for the loss of revenue from State bursaries for indigent families, on 11 June 1996 the Governing Body looked for other sources of revenue (I R Griffith Primary School 1996d). It was decided that all monies received from the newspaper collection campaign be disbursed to these families. By the end of 1996, nearly R6 000 had been collected in this manner. The Golf Day which was held on 12 August 1996, raised a further R8 500 for this bursary fund.

At the Governing Body meeting of 12 November 1996, the treasurer anticipated a 100% payment of budgeted 1996 school fees (I R Griffith Primary School:1996d). When the books were closed on 31 December 1996, his forecast was proved correct. This was the first time in the history of the school that there had been a 100% payment of school fees according to the budget. It needs to be noted though, that the school budgeted for an overall non-payment of fees of ten percent.

#### 7.2.3.6 Extramural activities

Cultural achievements received greater recognition with the introduction of scroll awards. The first Art Award scrolls for outstanding achievements in areas such as art, drama, music and public speaking were presented at a function on 8 November 1996.

The first internal (interhouse) cross-country events were held on 5 and 6 June 1996. This new event in the interhouse competition calendar brought a new group of sporting champions to the learners' attention.

To meet the drama needs of senior learners, a play was produced. On 2, 3, 5 and 6 September, an adapted version of *The Jungle Book* played to capacity houses on every night.

#### 7.2.3.7 Marketing

##### a Media publicity

To help market the school in the local community, the school accepted the offer of a fortnightly slot on Radio CANI. Every alternate Wednesday afternoon during term time, a boy and a girl from the school were interviewed by the radio announcer. School news was discussed. At the end of 1996, Radio CANI awarded the School News Reporter of the Year to an IRG girl reporter.

Attempts were made by the researcher to publicise the school in local and national publications. During cycle four, photograph articles about the school appeared in the *Randburg Sun* on the following dates: 26 April, 17 and 24 May, 31 May, 5 July, 2 August, 26 September, 25 October, 29 November and 6 December, 1996. An article about a promising soccer player at the school appeared in the *Educational* supplement of *The Sowetan* on 8 August 1996 (Motsei 1996:4). An article about the school appeared in the *Looking North* supplement of *The Star* on 4 September 1996. In the *Financial Mail* of August 1996, a supplement was published on

private schools in South Africa. A few public schools were mentioned in the article, including the school in this case study. M Holmes (1996:62), the supplement editor commented thus:

At primary level, State-aided I R Griffith in Randburg has 800 pupils and a reputation for doing the ordinary things extraordinarily well.

Marketing of the school in a country-wide context was furthered at the second International Quality Conference held in South Africa. On 15 November 1996, the researcher delivered a paper titled "Can South African schools be quality-driven?" (Hayward 1996).

A "Tea for Thirty" function to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the school was held on 21 September 1996. Former learners, parents and teachers who attended were able to see the progress of the school through the years. The function created goodwill amongst those who were present.

*b Parent survey*

Market research in the form of a questionnaire was carried out during cycle 4. A copy of the questionnaire is in Appendix A. The questionnaire was given to parents in May 1996. Data analysis and interpretation of the parent questionnaire is given below.

The questionnaire attempted to ascertain the following matters pertaining to the quality of education encountered at the school:

- the degree to which parents are involved in various school activities
- strategies which the school could adopt to improve attendance at the Annual General Meeting of the Parent-Teacher Association
- the perceptions that parents have of the courtesy, effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative and

- professional staff as well as those of the principal
- the evaluation by the parents of the responsiveness of the school to issues such as multiculturalism, religious diversity, bullying and stealing
  - the degree to which parents were satisfied with the quality of education being offered at each grade level
  - identification of strengths in the overall education offered at the school
  - identification of areas of weakness in the overall quality of education being offered
  - recommendations by parents regarding what they would like to see changed or discontinued at the school
  - recommendations on how to improve further the quality of education offered to the learners.

(i) *Methods*

1 *Subjects*

The subjects of the questionnaire were the parents of the school. A total of 402 completed forms were returned to the school which reflected a parental response of 95.7% from 420 questionnaires distributed. This response rate is deemed acceptable to validate the research data.

2 *Questionnaire*

Before designing the questionnaire, the researcher did a literature review of market research strategies and questionnaires done in United States and British schools that were striving to implement the quality philosophy (Greenwood 1994:36-38; Sallis 1993:112, 138-146; Schargel 1994:101-108). The researcher conducted trial runs with staffroom colleagues to ascertain whether there were aspects of the questionnaire that needed improvement. The supervisor of this research project edited drafts of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire had thirteen sections. They were:

- Sections 1, 2 and 3 asked for the respondents' gender, home language and the number of their children were currently at the school.
- Sections 4, 5 and 6 ascertained parental involvement in school activities in the preceding year.
- Section 7 asked respondents who did not attend the last AGM of the Parent-Teacher Association to indicate the reason/s for their non-attendance.
- Section 8 requested respondents to indicate the degree to which they personally agreed or disagreed with certain statements about the management and leadership of the school. They were also asked to evaluate the state of the buildings, gardens and grounds. Respondents were invited to indicate whether the school provided "value for money" and the degree to which they would recommend the school to prospective parents.
- Section 9 invited respondents to comment on any of their responses to section 8.
- Section 10 asked respondents to indicate the grade of the learner who gave them the questionnaire. From their perception of that particular grade or standard, the respondents were asked questions. Twelve statements were given and respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with them. The statements dealt with issues such as the teacher's approachability, amount of daily homework and the extramural programme.
- Section 11 invited comments to the responses made in section 10.
- Section 12 requested respondents to indicate anything at the school that they would like to see either changed or discontinued.
- Section 13 invited respondents to give recommendations on how to improve further the quality of education offered to the learners.

Using the class lists, every second learner in every class was given a large envelope. Inside the large envelope was another envelope and a questionnaire. The teachers recorded on the class lists which learners had been issued with envelopes. Completed questionnaires were to be inserted in the envelopes, sealed and returned to the class teacher. The teacher recorded the names of all learners who returned their sealed envelopes. The envelopes were then forwarded to the researcher.

*(ii) Data analysis*

The questionnaire was given to Computer Services at UNISA who recorded the statistical data on a computer. Three lecturers in the Department of Statistics assisted the researcher in analysing the data.

Sections 9, 11, 12 and 13 of the questionnaire invited respondents to make comments. Sallis (1993:138-146) delineated the following areas for an audit team doing a "quality education checklist" in a British secondary or tertiary institution:

- i) Access - for example: welcoming reception, short telephone response time, clear signing on the site.
- ii) Services for customers, for example: accessible student welfare and counselling, well-stocked library and resource centre, adequate sports facilities.
- iii) Leadership - for example: Head has vision and shares it, Head gives quality top priority, staff and students understand the ethos.
- iv) Physical environment and resources - for example: buildings and classrooms are clean and attractive, learning environments well planned and organised.
- v) Effective learning - for example: variety of learning modes available, teaching and learning strategies regularly reviewed, learning is student-centred, content

of programmes relevant and up-to-date, student feedback regularly obtained, feedback from other customer groups regularly obtained.

- vi) Students - for example: clean and well-maintained toilets, good rapport between students and staff, students have a sense of pride in their work, students' views regularly solicited.
- vii) Staff - for example: committed and knowledgeable, student-centred, take responsibility for their own quality, have a sense of enjoyment and pride in their work, ready to respond to individual needs, teamwork, institution committed to developing its staff, is proactive and clearly states individual needs, good workrooms.
- viii) External relations - for example: coherent marketing strategy, student and employer questionnaires used, excellent links with relevant communities.
- ix) Organisation - for example: institution has broad aims and objectives, simple and lean structure, change in part of the culture, good communications seen as major priority.
- x) Standards - for example: excellent exam results and student successes, effective budgetary control, caring atmosphere, student welfare a priority, customer service in evidence, welcoming environment, commitment to learners of all abilities.

The researcher invited respondents to make comments on any aspect of the school. Every educational institution is unique and likewise the issues that are deemed important to its clients. Every issue in the list below can nevertheless be categorised within Sallis's quality audit checklist (1993:138-146) cited above. As he recorded the comments, the researcher identified the following broad areas of discussion by the respondents:

- i) Administration
- ii) After-school care facility

- iii) Buildings, gardens and grounds
- iv) Bullying
- v) Learner-parent-teacher communication and relationship
- vi) Computer education
- vii) Curriculum
- viii) Discipline
- ix) Extramurals
- x) Fees
- xi) Homework
- xii) Isolated comments
- xiii) Newsletter
- xiv) Positive comments from respondents
- xv) Quality Kid concept
- xvi) Stealing
- xvii) Streaming of learners
- xviii) Teaching methodology
- xix) Teacher-learner ratio
- xx) Uniform

Two of the areas mentioned above are briefly explained. By "isolated comments" is meant those issues that are mentioned by only a single or few respondents. The issues raised are not part of the general concern of the parent community. An illustration would be the request for the selling of soup at the Tuckshop during winter months. The other area that is clarified is "Positive comments from respondents". A questionnaire aims to identify what needs to be changed, implemented, improved or stopped. Yet in quality theory, a questionnaire should also aim to identify present good practice. Such identification can serve to remind everyone in the organisation to continue providing such services. When these positive comments are passed on to the relevant people, they can also serve as positive motivators.

#### *1 Biographical information*

The relevant biographical details obtained from the research questionnaire were:

Table 7.1 **Gender of respondents**

	Frequency	Percentage
Male	114	28.4
Female	283	70.4
Frequency missing	5	1.2
Total	402	100

The significant majority of the respondents were women (70,4%). Traditionally, the mother is more involved in the day-to-day matters pertaining to a learner's schooling. The high percentage of women, compared with the men, who answered the questionnaire could be an indicator of this different level of parental involvement in their children's education.

Table 7.2 **Home language**

	Frequency	Percentage
African	30	7.5
Afrikaans/English	20	5.0
English	328	81.6
European	5	1.2
Other	11	2.7
Frequency missing	8	2.0
TOTAL	402	100

The vast majority (81,6%) use English as their home language. The English parents would be the dominant cultural influence within the school. Their perceptions of what constitutes quality education would determine many policy decisions taken by the staff and parent leaders. Although only 7.5% of the respondents were African, it is important to remember that in 1992, four years prior to the questionnaire, there were no African families at the school. There will be an ever-increasing need to be responsive to the cultural expectations of Africans in each succeeding year. In time, the majority culture of the school will, it is submitted by the researcher, be African.

Table 7.3 Number of children at the school

	Frequency	Percentage
One child	219	54.5
Two children	153	38.1
Three children	26	6.4
Frequency missing	4	1.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 7.3 indicates that the majority of families at the school (92.6%) have either one or two children at the school. Only 6.4% of families have three children at the school. No family has more than three children at the school.

2 Parental involvement in activities

Table 7.4 Parental involvement in school activities during the year prior to questionnaire

	Yes (Percentage)		No (Percentage)		Frequency missing
Catering - providing refreshments	138	(51.9)	128	(48.1)	136
Catering - assisting at events, functions	77	(33.2)	155	(66.8)	170
Coaching of sport/Assisting at sports functions	41	(19.1)	174	(80.9)	187
Delta Park Big Walk	106	(41.9)	147	(58.1)	149
Fun and Frolics Night	92	(37.9)	151	(62.1)	159
Helping Hands Day	60	(26.4)	167	(73.6)	175
Media Centre	6	(2.9)	201	(97.1)	195
Outgrown Uniform Shop	23	(10.6)	193	(89.4)	186
Tuckshop	27	(12.8)	184	(87.2)	191
"Up the beanstalk" production	46	(20.8)	175	(79.2)	181

The three main areas of parental support are in providing refreshments (51.9%), assisting in the annual Big Walk (41.9%) and in working at the Parent-Teacher Association Fun and Frolics night (37.9%). For all other activities parental involvement is considerably less. These figures do not take into account the missing frequencies. The researcher submits that many of the respondents who did not answer the questions, do not participate

in the listed activities. This is based on his personal observations of parental involvement at these functions.

The data highlight the overall low percentage involvement by parents in certain functions. A major factor is that often both parents have full-time jobs. Mothers, for example, are no longer able to assist in the Media Centre or the Tuckshop. Yet, where parents can assist, for example, in providing refreshments, the involvement is 51.9%. The second and third highest percentage of parental involvement, namely the Big Walk and the Fun and Frolics Night, are events that take place on a Saturday morning and Friday evening, respectively. To increase parental involvement, activities should be held over weekends. The results would indicate that parents should be made more aware of the different services they can offer to the school, how much they would be valued and the present low percentage of parental involvement. In a quality-driven organisation, all are involved in effecting an improvement in quality. The data would indicate that parents have a greater contribution to make to improve the school.

Table 7.5 Parental involvement on committees

	Yes (Percentage)	No (Percentage)	Frequency Missing
Bursary fund	1 (0.3)	369 (99.7)	32
Governing Body	3 (0.8)	366 (99.2)	33
Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)	13 (3.4)	364 (96.6)	25

Once the questionnaire had been completed, the researcher felt that these questions served little purpose in furthering the action research. Only three parents are requested to be on the bursary committee, eight are elected on to the Governing Body, while a maximum of twenty may be voted on to the PTA. Although few in number, these parents would often have a greater insight into the workings of the school. Their evaluations could, it is submitted, be more insightful than that of parents with minimal contact with the school.

Table 7.6 **Attendance at grade/standard meeting and AGM of Parent-Teacher Association**

	Yes (Percentage)	No (Percentage)	Frequency missing
Grade/standard meeting	341 (85.9)	56 (14.1)	5
PTA Annual General Meeting	122 (35.1)	226 (64.9)	54

Both these meetings are open to all parents. In a school striving to provide a quality education, it is important that there be open communication between the home and the school. The grade/standard meetings serve this purpose. The 85.9% attendance is a positive indicator of that degree of communication. The non-attendance of 14.1% stresses the need for further improvement. The questionnaire was done in 1996. At that time, there were two grades, namely one and two in the Gauteng school system. All other classes were designated as Standards from One to Ten. Only in 1997 were classes designated from Grades One to Twelve. At the time of the questionnaire (1996), the Department of Education started replacing the term "pupil" with "learner".

Only 35.1% of the parent community attended the Annual General Meeting of the PTA. The next table indicates the reasons given for non-attendance.

Table 7.7 Reasons for non-attendance at AGM of Parent-Teacher Association

	Frequency	Percentage
Fear of travelling at night	32	8.0
Long distance to travel	7	1.7
My home is unprotected	3	0.7
No-one to babysit children	63	15.7
Not interested	12	3.0
Sufficiently well-informed via newsletters, parent evenings and the like	60	14.9
Unsuitable day of the week	32	8.0
Other ... (specify)	52	12.9
Frequency missing	141	35.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

There were 52 respondents who indicated "Other". Only a handful specified why they did not attend the meetings. A few commented that English was not their home language and that they would therefore find proceedings difficult to follow; two respondents had night time jobs, while another three found that evening meetings made it difficult to cope with an early morning job. One respondent was handicapped and four had no means of evening transport. The results indicated the need for a child-care facility at such meetings (15.7%). A positive dimension to the results was that 14.9% of respondents felt that communication within the school was sound and that attendance was therefore superfluous. The fear of travelling at night (8%) and the fact that the home is unprotected (0.7%) are indicators of factors that impinge on aims of the school and over which it has no control. The Randburg suburb in which the school is situated had a high incidence of crime and minimal police patrolling in 1996.

In the questionnaire, parents were presented with a series of statements and were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with these.

Table 7.8 Prompt answering of telephone calls to school

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	205	51.0
Agree	156	38.8
Disagree	4	1.0
Strongly disagree	3	0.7
Not applicable	34	8.5
TOTAL	402	100

A high percentage of 89.8% state that the telephone is answered promptly. Such a result is a sound base line for an organisation striving to reach zero defect in this regard. "Not applicable" responses would include those parents who do not make telephone calls to the school and/or those parents who did not answer the question.

Table 7.9 Satisfactory dealing by secretaries of telephonic enquiries to school

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	192	47.8
Agree	164	40.8
Disagree	3	0.7
Strongly disagree	1	0.2
Not applicable	42	10.5
TOTAL	402	100

The data would indicate that a high percentage of parents (88.6%) are satisfied with the way in which the secretarial staff deal with telephonic enquiries. Only four parents (0.9%) disagree with this perception.

Table 7.10      **Telephonic enquiries to the headmaster dealt with in an effective manner**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	108	26.9
Agree	73	18.2
Disagree	4	1.0
Strongly disagree	3	0.7
Not applicable	214	53.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

The high "Not applicable" score of 53.2% would indicate that a considerable proportion of the parent body does not make telephonic enquiries to him. Of the 188 that do make telephonic enquiries to him, 181 maintain that the queries are dealt with in an effective manner. Seven respondents feel otherwise.

Table 7.11      **Visitors made to feel welcome at the school**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	220	54.7
Agree	165	41.0
Disagree	9	2.2
Strongly disagree	1	0.3
Not applicable	7	1.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

Respondents were asked to respond to the statement "When visiting the school, I have been made to feel welcome". The school has an invitational tone according to parents. Most of the respondents (95.7%) found the staff welcoming when they visited the school.

Table 7.12            **Helpfulness of secretarial staff**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	222	55.2
Agree	154	38.3
Disagree	5	1.3
Strongly disagree	4	1.0
Not applicable	17	4.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

A significant majority of 93.5% of parents found the secretarial staff helpful towards them. The results of Tables 7.8, 7.9, 7.11 and 7.12 indicate that the secretaries are treating the customers, namely the learners and parents, in a manner that is friendly, efficient and effective.

Table 7.13            **Approachability of headmaster**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	163	40.6
Agree	88	21.9
Disagree	3	0.7
Strongly disagree	3	0.7
Not applicable	145	36.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

Of the respondents, there were 36.1% who indicated that the statement was not applicable to them. These respondents were likely to have had no or minimal contact with the principal. When pertinent issues occur with these respondents, they would liaise directly with the relevant teacher or secretary. Alternatively, they have had no need to contact the school on any issue. There were 257 respondents who have contacted him and 251 of them found him approachable. A small number (3) disagreed and a further 3 strongly disagreed that he was approachable.

Table 7.14 **Weekly newsletter interesting to read**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	189	47.0
Agree	198	49.3
Disagree	7	1.7
Strongly disagree	0	0
Not applicable	8	2.0
TOTAL	402	100

These statistics were in response to the statement "I find the contents of the Wednesday newsletter interesting to read". A large majority of 96.3% agreed with the statement, either to a degree or very strongly. Only 1.7% disagreed.

The next statement to which respondents were asked to give their personal responses was "Enough information about activities at the school is contained in the weekly newsletter". The results are tabulated below:

Table 7.15 **Enough information about school activities contained in newsletter**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	159	39.6
Agree	215	53.5
Disagree	19	4.7
Strongly disagree	3	0.7
Not applicable	6	1.5
TOTAL	402	100

It is interesting to note that although 93.1% of respondents stated that enough information about school activities was contained in the newsletter, only 39.6% strongly agreed with the statement. Also a further 5.4% both disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 7.16 **Sound discipline maintained at the school**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	115	28.6
Agree	230	57.2
Disagree	35	8.7
Strongly disagree	8	2.0
Not applicable	14	3.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

A not-insignificant number of 43 respondents (10.7%) disagreed with the statement that sound discipline is maintained at the school. The majority of respondents (85.8%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Parental perception of a good school is determined in part by their perceived sense of discipline in the school. Overall discipline must be improved.

Table 7.17 **Learners are neatly dressed**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	99	24.6
Agree	237	59.0
Disagree	50	12.4
Strongly disagree	11	2.7
Not applicable	5	1.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

Only 24.6% of respondents strongly agree with the statement "The pupils of IRG dress neatly". A significant 59% agree that the learners are neatly attired. There is a 15.1% who disagree in varying degrees that the learners are neatly dressed. Neat appearance is linked to self-discipline and ultimately group discipline and therefore more care must be taken to make sure that the learners are neatly dressed in their school uniform.

Table 7.18 **Courtesy of the pupils in public**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	91	22.6
Agree	219	54.5
Disagree	49	12.2
Strongly disagree	2	0.5
Not applicable	41	10.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

The non-applicable group of 10.2% could be attributed to the fact that certain parents do not see the learners in their uniform outside the school grounds. According to 77.1% of respondents, the learners are perceived as being courteous in public. A further 12.7% do not agree.

Respondents were asked to respond to the statement "Incidents of bullying have been dealt with in an effective way". The parental responses are indicated below:

Table 7.19 **Bullying incidents dealt with effectively**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	45	11.2
Agree	123	30.6
Disagree	56	13.9
Strongly disagree	9	2.3
Not applicable	169	42.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

That 42% of parents found the statement not applicable to their family is heartening. The researcher infers from this that bullying is not seen or experienced by their children at the school. Yet there is 16.1% of respondents who feel that bullying encountered at the school is not handled in an effective way. Every school, whether it wishes to admit it or not, has incidents of bullying. In a quality school, the aim should be "zero defect" in the number of such incidents.

Table 7.20 **Stealing incidents dealt with effectively**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	33	8.2
Agree	100	24.9
Disagree	47	11.7
Strongly disagree	23	5.7
Not applicable	199	49.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

There was 49.5% of respondents who found the statement "Incidents of stealing have been dealt with in an effective way," did not apply to their families. Yet the remaining 55.5% did have opinions on how it was addressed within the school. There were 33.1% who viewed the school as being effective in its endeavours to stop stealing. There were 17.4% of parents who disagreed in varying degrees as to the effectiveness of the school in this area. Further strategies must be adopted to convince parents that effective methods are in place to deal with incidents of stealing.

At the school, the staff attempts to show respect and appreciation for the various cultures of the learners. Therefore the statement was posed "The school shows due respect to our family's cultural beliefs". The responses are tabulated thus:

Table 7.21 **Respect accorded to different cultural beliefs**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	125	31.1
Agree	188	46.8
Disagree	3	0.7
Strongly disagree	2	0.5
Not applicable	84	20.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

A total of 20.9% of families regarded the issue as not applicable to them. As for the remaining 79%, only 1% felt that insufficient respect was accorded to different cultures.

Allied to the previous statement, is the following: "The school shows due respect to our family's religious beliefs". Respondents gave these replies:

Table 7.22 **Respect accorded to family's beliefs**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	132	32.9
Agree	189	47.0
Disagree	5	1.2
Strongly disagree	2	0.5
Not applicable	74	18.4
TOTAL	402	100

In analysing the responses, only 1.7% either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. There was 79.9% of respondents who felt that due respect was given to the various religions. It must be borne in mind that in 1996 the school was a relatively homogenous group. With each passing year, the cultural diversity with its evolving heterogeneity will become more evident. More religions will be visible in the school. It is necessary for the school to be sensitive to the needs of these minorities.

Table 7.23 **Sense of welcome for parents to participate in school activities**

The responses to the statement of "Parents are made to feel welcome to participate in school activities", are:

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	205	51
Agree	177	44
Disagree	8	2
Strongly disagree	0	0
Not applicable	12	3
TOTAL	402	100

In a quality school, the organisational climate should be

invitational. Parents should be made to feel welcome to participate in its varied activities.

The results would indicate that the overwhelming majority, namely 95%, strongly agree or agree with the statement. Only 2% of the sample disagreed that parents are made to feel welcome to become involved in school activities.

Table 7.24 Parental input of ideas for school improvement welcomed by staff

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	101	25.1
Agree	194	48.3
Disagree	8	2.0
Strongly disagree	1	0.2
Not applicable	98	24.4
TOTAL	402	100

The statement was phrased thus "Parents' ideas for the improvement of the school are welcomed by staff". There were 98 respondents (namely 24.4%) who did not answer the question. This significant percentage of "not applicable" to the question would suggest that there are a number of parents who have made no recommendations to staff on how to improve the school. Alternatively, parents might feel that it is not in their domain to advise the school on how it could be further improved. The quality school encourages all stakeholders to contribute ideas for school improvement.

Of the 304 respondents who did answer the question, an overwhelming 295 either strongly agreed (25.1%) or agreed (48.3%) that ideas from parents were welcomed by staff. Only nine respondents felt that their ideas would not be welcomed by staff.

Table 7.25 **School has neat gardens**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	241	60.0
Agree	155	38.6
Disagree	5	1.2
Strongly disagree	1	0.2
Not applicable	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

The statement was "The gardens are neat". The overwhelming majority of the respondents (98.6%), maintained that the gardens were in such a condition. The working environment in a quality-driven organisation should be pleasant. The responses would indicate that the maintenance staff were doing this aspect of their work well.

Table 7.26 **School buildings in a state of good repair**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	179	44.5
Agree	209	52.0
Disagree	8	2.0
Strongly disagree	1	0.3
Not applicable	5	1.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

A total of 96.5% either "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that "The school buildings are in a state of good repair". Only nine respondents (2.2%) felt otherwise. The challenge to the maintenance staff would be to keep up the commendable standard of site management and to strive for "zero defect" in respect of the nine dissatisfied parents.

Table 7.27 School fees as "value for money"

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	170	42.3
Agree	197	49.0
Disagree	18	4.5
Strongly disagree	6	1.5
Not applicable	11	2.7
TOTAL	402	100

In the business and industrial sectors where quality principles are being applied, there should be "value for money". What a customer pays for products and services should be worth the money spent. Governments want the education industry to provide value for money (Murgatroyd & Morgan 1994:17). To the statement "The school fees are good value for money", 42.3% of respondents strongly supported this viewpoint. A further 49% agreed with the statement and 6% of the parents either disagreed (4.5%) or strongly disagreed (1.5%) with the statement. The overall results would indicate that the school is meeting the majority of parents' expectations of the school fees as being good value for money.

Table 7.28 Personal recommendation of school to prospective parent

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	248	61.7
Agree	123	30.6
Disagree	8	2.0
Strongly disagree	0	0
Not applicable	23	5.7
TOTAL	402	100

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement "I would recommend IRG to a prospective parent". A significant 92.3% of respondents would recommend the school, while only 2% would not do so. No respondents responded to the statement with a strong

disagreement. The statistics indicate a positive regard towards the school by the parent community.

#### 5 *Comments on management*

In section nine of the questionnaire, respondents were invited to comment on any of the statements given in section eight. (The tabulated responses to these statements in section eight are found from Table 7.8 to Table 7.28.)

Pages 4, 5, 7 and 11 of the questionnaire invited respondents to make comments. Where respondents did make comments, the researcher photostatted the pages. A total of 455 pages of comments were photostatted. On occasion, direct quotes from remarks made on the comment pages will be recorded in this thesis.

In section nine, there were fourteen comments about the administration and executive management of the school. A respondent with a child in Grade Two stated that telephone calls are expensive and therefore parents should not have to return calls. Most positive comments were made about the secretarial staff, although one respondent maintained that the bursar could be more friendly on the telephone. It was recommended that statements be issued at the beginning of each term. The principal was both criticised:

I get the impression that the Head is not always open to what we have to say ... and doesn't seem to (outwardly) show much interest

and praised:

Mr Hayward is a very approachable man and very fair to both children and parents. We have the greatest respect for him ... and we can see the children feel the same way.

The weekly newsletter is written by the researcher. Two respondents maintained that too much emphasis was given to cricket and soccer. Three respondents complained of the lack of swimming coverage. The researcher heeded the observations and thereafter endeavoured to include more swimming news in the weekly newsletter.

There were thirty-three comments about discipline at the school. Five respondents maintained that there was too much swearing by learners. Detention classes are held for learners from Grade Four upwards. Seven parents made observations about these classes. One respondent commented that detentions are given too "liberally", while another asked how a child who attended such classes could get home safely considering the dangers in an urban Gauteng street. Other respondents requested that detention be more meaningful by involving the children in community services such as picking up papers or cleaning corridors.

At an executive meeting held on 10 September 1996 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996c), it was decided that the learners would be informed at the following assembly of the unacceptability of swearing. The executive felt that detentions were not given too "liberally", as the researcher personally signed all detention slips once they had been issued by teachers. There was only one instance where the researcher was of the opinion that a teacher had given detentions indiscriminately. The researcher discussed the issue with that teacher. From a practical point of view, the executive staff maintained that it was easier to control detention class learners in one room, than having them scattered throughout the school doing community services.

At the time of the questionnaire (May 1996), the school was in the first year of a two-year change to a new uniform. Learners were given the option of wearing either the old or the new uniform. Twenty-six parents commented on the neatness of the uniform. Five parents complained about the untidiness of individual learners wearing articles of the old and the new

uniform at the same time. Seven respondents expressed concern that the skirts did not fit sensibly on the hips of the younger girls in particular. The length of skirts varied. Four parents approved of the new uniform, while other respondents felt that the learners should have an overall neater appearance. A critic of school uniforms wrote:

Uniforms belong to an old colonial past. In the new South Africa, IRG could have taken a lead by either abolishing them or at least making them more affordable. Instead, we have gone in the opposite direction. My fear is that this may have been an attempt to create an elitist situation.

Seventeen respondents made observations about bullying. Two Grade One parents felt that bullying was not dealt with effectively. Another Grade One parent observed:

... due to some children's size and aggressive nature, they are labelled as bullies and therefore teachers and prefects do not try to find out the entire story when a situation occurs.

There were four Grade Two parental responses to bullying. A parent of one victim enquired whether there was a racial undertone, while one respondent stated the following dilemma:

If a child tells the teacher, they are told not to tell tales. If they smack back, they are punished.

One respondent recommended that parents of victims should be notified accordingly.

In Grade Three there were five parental comments on bullying. A greater vigilance at break times to prevent bullying incidents was requested. Prefects should have a higher profile in settling bullying or dispute incidents. In Grade Four there were two

comments on bullying and one in Grade Five. Two observations about bullying were made in Grade Six with one respondent noting:

... perhaps the children could be counselled to try and ascertain if there are underlying reasons or problems for this behaviour.

No parents of Grade Seven learners made comments about bullying.

At the weekly prefect meetings held in August 1996 by the head of Educational Guidance, the prefects were given further guidelines on dealing with playground bullying. Staff were encouraged at a staff meeting on 21 September 1996 (I R Griffith Primary School 19961) to use the circle time with their classes to discuss bullying. Teachers were asked to find out why certain learners "needed" to bully and what the victims could do to avoid recurrences.

There were thirty-one respondents who commented on stealing incidents at the school. Anger was evident in a number of responses about clothes, money, sports kits, stationery and in one instance, lunch, stolen. One parent recommended that

... a special programme be introduced to educate errant parents to exhibit more ethical behaviour,

while another parent would have liked to see

... more of a responsibility taken by children to return items of school clothing ... but also increased role of parents to instil honesty and integrity in their children.

The researcher felt that he could not implement special programmes to teach the ethics of not stealing to "errant parents". At regular intervals, the researcher reminded the learners at assembly of the consequences of stealing: detentions,

full reimbursement to victim, parents called in to school and possible suspension of learners.

Twenty-two parents commented on the buildings, gardens and grounds. Five respondents requested that a swimming pool be built. Six parents of Grade One and Two learners complained of smelly, untidy toilets. The researcher liaised directly with the groundsman and appropriate action was taken immediately. Two parents complained that the area next to the newspaper collection bins was untidy. A respondent of a Grade Four child felt that school chairs, desks and cupboards were in dire need of replacement and repair. A parent raised the question whether it was not too easy for strangers to gain access to the school in the afternoon. The remainder of comments about the buildings requested cleaner, more comfortable toilets for the senior girls.

On the school site is a private after-care facility. The facility operates from hometime until 17:30. Eight parents made comments regarding this facility. The recommendations and compliment were passed on to the manager of the centre.

Ten respondents commented on school fees. One parent recommended fee discounts for the second and third child. There was an acceptance of the fees of one respondent, although the point was made that divorced/single parents are finding it difficult to pay them. Two respondents commented on hidden costs in areas such as day tours and money needed for Design and Technology projects. Two respondents argued for increased school fees. A respondent stated:

I feel school fees could be raised slightly so that teachers could earn a better salary, thereby giving them better initiative to stay and teach at IRG.

In supporting increased school fees, a respondent made a further suggestion:

...if government schools are going to be forced to have more children per class, I would support IRG becoming a private school to retain its high standards.

6 *Grade levels of respondents' children*

Section ten requested parents to indicate the grade of the learner who brought the questionnaire home from school. The results were:

Table 7.29 **Grade of learner given the questionnaire**

	Frequency	Percentage
Grade One	58	14.4
Grade Two	61	15.2
Grade Three (formerly Standard One)	61	15.2
Grade Four (formerly Standard Two)	60	14.9
Grade Five (formerly Standard Three)	52	12.9
Grade Six (formerly Standard Four)	55	13.7
Grade Seven (formerly Standard Five)	55	13.7
TOTAL	402	100

The computer printout gave two sets of results for each of the questions described in Table 7.30 to Table 7.41. One set of results was for all the respondents in the school to the questionnaire statement. The second set of results was only for the respondents in a particular grade. The results recorded in Table 7.30 to Table 7.41 of this thesis were for the first set, namely, all the respondents throughout the school.

7 Statistical evaluation of education provided

Table 7.30 Helpfulness of child's class/homeroom teacher when parent makes contact

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	212	52.7
Agree	151	37.8
Disagree	9	2.3
Strongly disagree	2	0.5
Not applicable	27	6.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

A significant 90.5% of respondents found the teachers helpful when a parent contacted them. The results indicate that a high percentage (93,3%) of parents made contact with the school. Only 27 parents (6.7%) viewed the question as not applicable, which would suggest that they had no teacher contact. In a quality school, there are three continually interacting partners to ensure sound education - the learner, the parent and the teacher.

Table 7.31 Caring attitude of teacher towards parent's child

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	197	49.0
Agree	185	46.0
Disagree	11	2.7
Strongly disagree	2	0.5
Not applicable	7	1.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

The staff of a quality school should evince a sense of care towards its primary clients, the learners. There were 49% of parents who strongly agreed with the statement "The teachers have a caring attitude towards my child". A further 46% agreed with the statement. Only 3.3% disagreed, of which two parents felt strongly that the staff did not evince a caring attitude towards their children.

Table 7.32      **Sufficient opportunities provided for parent to discuss child's progress with teacher**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	179	44.5
Agree	191	47.5
Disagree	18	4.5
Strongly disagree	3	0.8
Not applicable	11	2.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

The statement in the questionnaire was "sufficient opportunities have been provided for me to discuss my child's progress with the class or homeroom teacher". There were 44.5% of respondents who strongly agreed with the statement and a further 47.5% who agreed. Another 5.3% of respondents disagreed and felt that additional opportunities should be provided.

Table 7.33      **Termly grade/standard newsletter has been informative**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	157	39.1
Agree	229	57.0
Disagree	5	1.2
Strongly disagree	1	0.2
Not applicable	10	2.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

In a quality organisation, it is essential to have effective communication. The termly grade newsletter is an opportunity for the teachers of a particular grade to communicate with the relevant parents on issues pertinent to that group. The significant majority (96.1%) of parents find the newsletter informative. The researcher does not know why ten respondents gave "not applicable" as their replies because every family receives a termly grade newsletter. Possible explanations are that certain respondents did not understand the question or simply forgot to give a reply or that their children did not give

them the newsletter.

Table 7.34 **Fairness of cycle tests to evaluate scholastic progress of the child**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	119	29.6
Agree	176	43.8
Disagree	10	2.5
Strongly disagree	2	0.5
Not applicable	95	23.6
TOTAL	402	100

Respondents were required to indicate the degree of agreement or disagreement with the statement "The weekly cycle test is a fair way to evaluate the scholastic progress of my child". There were 95 (23.6%) respondents who recorded "Not applicable". This can be explained by the fact that weekly cycle tests are only used from Grade Four upwards. The results indicate that 29.6% strongly agree that the weekly cycle tests are a fair means of assessment. A further 43.8% agree with the statement. The results would suggest that a considerable percentage of parents are not strongly convinced of the effectiveness of cycle tests to evaluate fairly their children's scholastic progress.

Table 7.35 **Enjoyment by child of educational tour**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	162	40.3
Agree	68	16.9
Disagree	5	1.3
Strongly disagree	0	0
Not applicable	167	41.5
TOTAL	402	100

There were 41.5% of respondents who replied "not applicable" to the statement "My child enjoyed going on the educational tour in March". These respondents were probably those with children in Grades One, Two and Three who do not go on tour. A small number

of learners from Grades Four to Seven do not go on tour because of health, financial and religious reasons. Of the 235 learners who went on tour, 230 of them, according to their parents, enjoyed the experience. Only five learners (1,3%) did not enjoy the experience.

Table 7.36 **Educational tour price is good value for money**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	109	27.1
Agree	111	27.6
Disagree	10	2.5
Strongly disagree	3	0.8
Not applicable	169	42.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

There were 133 respondents who evaluated the tour price. Only thirteen either disagreed or strongly disagreed that it was good value for money. By referring to the responses per grade, eight of the dissatisfied respondents were from Grade Seven. After the learners in Grade Seven had returned from the tour, the researcher was informed that, although they had enjoyed the tour, catering at one venue was unsatisfactory. A different tour has been arranged for the Grade Sevens of 1997.

Table 7.37 **Fair amount of prescribed daily homework**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	123	30.6
Agree	232	57.7
Disagree	29	7.2
Strongly disagree	6	1.5
Not applicable	12	3.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

The statement in the questionnaire was "The amount of daily homework given to my child has been fair". There were 88.3% of respondents who either agreed (57.7%) or strongly agreed (30.6%) with the statement. Of the 35 (8.7%) who had varying degrees of

disagreement, nine were from Grade Seven. During the month of August 1996, the four teachers of Grade Seven discussed how the homework load, particularly as regards project work set, could be more evenly distributed so that it did not exceed reasonable expectations from twelve and thirteen-year old learners.

Table 7.38 **Extramural programme meets child's needs**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	133	33.0
Agree	213	53.0
Disagree	20	5.0
Strongly disagree	2	0.5
Not applicable	34	8.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

There were 34 respondents who regarded the statement as inapplicable to them. Possible reasons are that their children do not participate in the extramural programme because of issues such as religious beliefs which preclude participation (for example, Jehovah's Witnesses) or transport problems. A significant 88.1% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "The extramural (for example, Computer Club, Cricket) programme meets my child's needs". Only 5.5% of respondents indicated varying degrees of disagreement with the statement.

Table 7.39 **Scholastic expectations made on child are fair**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	134	33.3
Agree	239	59.5
Disagree	16	4.0
Strongly disagree	1	0.2
Not applicable	12	3.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>100</b>

A significant 92.8% of respondents replied positively to the statement "The scholastic expectations made on my child are fair". Only 4.2% (17 respondents) felt that the scholastic

demands were unreasonable.

Table 7.40 Parental satisfaction with overall academic standard offered to child

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	158	39.3
Agree	218	54.2
Disagree	18	4.5
Strongly disagree	2	0.5
Not applicable	6	1.5
TOTAL	402	100

The statement from the questionnaire is "I am satisfied with the overall academic standard offered to my child". There were 39.3% of respondents who strongly agreed with the statement and a further 54.2% who agreed. There were 4.5% who disagreed and a 0.5% who strongly disagreed. The results would indicate that the teaching staff is, in the main, meeting the expectations of parents regarding the education of their children.

Table 7.41 Child enjoys attending the school

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	233	58
Agree	161	40
Disagree	3	0.8
Strongly disagree	0	0
Not applicable	5	1.2
TOTAL	402	100

A significant 98% (394 respondents) replied positively to the statement "I think that my child enjoys attending IRG". This response is heartening to all the staff. In an organisation striving for "zero defect" it would have been interesting to meet with the three respondents who disagreed with the statement. (This was not possible because of the anonymous response to the questionnaire.) Endeavours could then have been made to ensure that these children do indeed enjoy their school days.

Section eleven invited respondents to add comments to their responses to the statements in section 10. Thirty-five respondents commented on issues relating to the home-school relationship and the parents' perceptions of the degree of caring by the teachers towards their children. Ten of the respondents were from Grade One parents who requested that more opportunities be provided to discuss their children's progress with the teachers. One parent felt overwhelmed by the deluge of information given to new members of the school community. A parent of a Grade Three child maintained that a teacher was insensitive. Two parents complained of a slightly cynical, non-caring attitude of a Grade Five teacher. In Grade Seven three parents requested that teachers treat the learners with more respect.

The parents commented on the weekly cycle tests done from Grade Four upwards. A respondent with a child in Grade Four acknowledges the validity of these tests, but with these reservations:

Cycle tests are a good thing except in many instances when young children suffer because of a great anxiety and nervousness. My son revises at home and gets 90% but in a class he is lucky to get 50%. It is very demoralising and it gets worse as we go along. Confidence reduces with each test.

A Grade Five child's parent criticised the perceived narrowness of what cycle tests were attempting to assess:

I find testing is generally only to assess the child's ability to remember - memory capability. Even though he knows his work and studies hard, the mark he receives often does not justify or reflect his understanding of the subject.

There were five comments on the educational tours held in March 1996 for learners from Grade Four upwards. One parent felt that the tour fees were onerous on top of school fees. Two parents of Grade Seven learners made comments. One praised the tour to Shakaland but complained of the long travelling time by bus. A closer venue was recommended. The second parent complained of the quality of food given to the learners at one of the Shakaland venues. Two respondents of Grade Four learners were excessive in their praise of a Magaliesburg educational centre visited by their children.

Twenty-five parents throughout the school commented on the homework given to their children. In Grade Two there were three respondents. Two parents felt that too much homework was given, while a third requested that daily reading be given to the child. In Grade Three, three respondents complained of too little homework, while a third complained of too much homework being set. All four respondents in Grade Four felt that too much homework was being given by the teachers. One respondent suggested that a "Study Hall" be introduced. The school day could then end later or existing periods such as Bible and Physical Education could be used as homework sessions. Five of the six respondents in Grade Five complained of too much homework, while the sixth parent suggested that a supervised homework period would be invaluable for a working mother. In Grades Six and Seven, the dominant theme was too much homework. Teachers were requested to ensure that all homework was recorded in the homework diary.

There were sixty respondents who commented on the extramural programme. Among the nine Grade One comments were: insufficient transport between venues for sport matches; stop the compulsory cross-country participation in the grades; correct sun protection lotion and hats should be made compulsory for outdoor activities and activities should be more clearly communicated to parents. There were fifteen comments from respondents who have children in Grade Two. The overall tone of their comments was positive,

but requests were made to reduce the coach/teacher:learner ratio in popular activities such as cricket and tennis. Eight parents of Grade Three learners made comments. Because of the wide range of extramural activities, there were timetable clashes for certain learners. These parents suggested that the school hire professional coaches and that gymnastics and piano lessons be added to the extramural programme.

There were thirteen comments from Grade Four and Five parents. Evaluations ranged from "not of a very high standard" to "excellent". A recommendation was made that private music and dance instructors be employed. Further suggestions were that hockey be introduced and that Clubs such as a Science as well as Design and Technology be established.

In Grade Six, there were thirteen respondents who commented on extramural activities. One respondent expressed a perception felt by other parents in Grade Six:

Very little time is spent with sport for the children that don't make the teams. As a result, the same children make the teams year after year. The others lose interest.

A comment from a parent of a Grade Seven child served as a timely reminder of the stated policy of the school regarding extramural participation:

... perhaps there is a need for less emphasis on winning and more on participation.

Comment on the overall academic standard of the school delved into most areas of the curriculum. Nine parents commented on the computer education programme. One parent required more information about the computer studies curriculum. Most respondents appealed for more than one lesson a week as was the situation at the time of the survey. A parent suggested that

pupils be given a monthly progress report on computer studies.

Seven comments were received from parents of Grade One learners. There was an appeal for a remedial teacher to be appointed on to the staff.

Two respondents write favourably of class visits to the zoo and the Japanese School. Their children also enjoyed the visits of the National School of the Arts orchestra as well as a dance group. More talks and visits to encourage awareness of different religions and cultures, were recommended.

In Grade Two, there was a respondent who asked for more outings and another who suggested that visitors address the learners. One parent asked for a remedial class, while a second parent requested that private remedial teachers give lessons during school hours. A further recommendation from a Grade Two parent was that learners utilise information technology, if available, to carry out homework, projects and assignments.

There were five comments in Grade Three about the academic standard. A respondent observed:

... the standard of education can be better, at a higher level. It seems as if it is quite easy. Children need to learn more to be stimulated more to catch up with the world.

A request was made by one respondent for a Cultural Day for learners to understand one another's backgrounds, while another respondent asked for extra lessons in the afternoon for subjects such as Maths.

The appeal for remedial lessons was repeated in the comments of respondents about their children in Grade Four. Requests were made for assistance in Afrikaans, Maths, Spelling and Science. Two respondents recommended that learning, studying and test

skills be taught to the learners. There was an appeal for more project work and a broader approach to subjects such as Geography and History.

In the Grade Five responses, one of the five respondents asked that either an Aid or Remedial class be established at the school. Two respondents maintained that the curriculum was lacking in practicality. A parent referred to the need for

... more practical "life skills" subjects and training, for example, how (respondent's emphasis) to plan, study, how to apply what you learn to everyday life, real money, banking, raising problems, first aid, communication skills, vocational guidance - a more balanced approach to schooling and education.

In Grade Six most of the eight respondents who made comments focused on lifeskills education and the need for their children to be helped to cope in a stressful world. A parent posed these questions:

With the increase of stress and emotionally-disturbed related problems in children's lives, is sufficient time being given to the children to express their needs and concerns and to develop to their full potential in a secure, accepting, understanding and loving environment? How well do the children relate to their teachers and trust them with deeper needs? With the Standard Four (sic) structure and movement between lessons, emphasis on accumulation of knowledge, do the teachers have the time to build up the trusting relationship so many children need today?

Three parents asked for the curriculum to include lessons that made their children more aware of the cultural diversity within the school and South African society.

There were thirteen comments from parents of learners in Grade Seven regarding the academic standards and curriculum of the school. A respondent maintained that inadequate skills are being taught in Basic Techniques. The boys were not being prepared for woodwork at high school nor the girls for home economics. An appeal was made by a respondent for the learners to have

... more visits to places that can generate an interest and understanding of why a subject should be learnt to demonstrate that knowledge can be both practical and useful, namely, banks, laboratories, factories, building sites, architects, hospitals, advertising agencies, etc.

One respondent recommended more lifeskills training and there was a request by another respondent for the introduction of study periods, so that teachers can provide immediate assistance to learners experiencing homework difficulties. It was felt by one parent that the academic standards and expectations of the school had decreased considerably, while one respondent felt that the standard expected of the learners was not high enough. A compliment to the academic standard, and recommendation for further curriculum improvement were made by a respondent thus:

In terms of the South African curriculum, IRG has managed to wed the knowledge-based content with more of a child-centred approach ... I believe that a more problem-solving, creative and investigational approach to Maths and Science in particular, could revolutionise the cognitive approach within South African education.

A further request from a parent of a Grade Seven child was that it should not be necessary for the learners to go outside the school for remedial reinforcement. Rather, the school should provide for these learners by having bridging classes.

9 *Recommended changes or stoppages to programme*

In Section 12 of the questionnaire, respondents were invited to answer this question:

Is there anything presently happening at IRG that you would like to see either *changed* or *stopped*?

At the time of this research, there was a flat school fee structure. The school fee was the same for every learner - irrespective of the number of siblings in the school. A parent of a Grade Two child recommended that the first child pay the fees in full, while the second and third child should be given a discount. Alternatively, the first two learners pay in full and the third gets a bursary.

A parent objected to the Tuckshop Quality Kid voucher system. It was felt that no single player should be given an award whilst playing a team sport.

Capital work projects should be stopped, according to the remarks of a parent of a Grade Six learner:

I hope parents will not be required to fund any further building projects. I feel that the Computer Centre and Design and Technology Centre are good but they are now sufficient. No more building!

A parent recommended that administrative tasks given to teachers be cut down, so that more time could be devoted to preparing quality lessons and exercises.

Two parents were critical of the Quality Kid badge concept. A parent of a Grade One child asked:

"I would like to know why my child's name never appears on that list."

A parent of a Grade Five child commented thus:

I do not like the title "Quality Kid". All the pupils are special and if you're going to run a scheme like this, then all the children should get an award. I don't like the quality badge system and instead, the pupils should be given house points or something along those lines.

A respondent recommended that there should be separate classes within a particular grade to cater for the different academic abilities of the learners. The parent suggested that "A" grade learners should have their own classes apart from those learners who struggle academically. Three other respondents also recommended the introduction of streaming. Motivation for streaming from a parent of a Grade Four child was given thus:

I do not feel that my child is being challenged to his full potential. I strongly believe that there should be streaming to provide an ideal learning environment for all pupils. The pupils who are not coping with the pace should be provided with more attention in a special class. Pupils with greater ability should receive additional work. It is impossible for one teacher to cope with three or four groups of different standards in one class.

A respondent of a Grade Three child felt that there were too many young teachers in relation to experienced teachers on the staff. The respondent felt that it would be more beneficial if there were older staff members.

There was an appeal from a Grade Five learner's parent that the teacher mark the homework and class work, thereby ensuring that the child learns the correct work for tests. In a related area, a respondent requested that the learner's books be marked well in advance of any cycle test. The learners need the corrected

work well in advance to ensure good revision.

An evaluation of teaching methodology was contained in these comments from a parent of a Grade Seven learner:

... the same roneod notes are being handed out year after year. This must affect the teacher's enthusiasm whilst teaching the section ... I've also heard the pupils complain about reading from the textbook and calling it teaching.

Another parent of a Grade Seven child asked that mid-year examinations be discontinued, since the weekly cycle tests were perceived to be sufficient.

Project work done by the learners was commented on thus by a parent of a child in Grade Seven:

... pupils should not be allowed to do projects at home. I have seen projects where the child has received a high mark and I know (respondent's emphasis) that it was not done by the child. Don't evaluate projects on their artistic content.

#### *10 Recommendations to improve quality of education*

The final section of the questionnaire, section 13, invited parents to provide suggestions on how to improve further the quality of education offered to the learners.

Nine respondents commented on the teacher:learner ratio. Five respondents asked for smaller classes. The other respondents maintained that the present teacher:learner ratio should be maintained. This heartfelt plea came from a parent of a Grade Four child:

Please, please don't let the classes get any bigger if

it is at all within your control. If necessary, raise the school fees to pay for extra lessons. I don't believe that teachers can cope with pupils other than "middle of the road" if they are trying to teach huge classes.

A respondent recommended that parents be used as classroom helpers. These parents could, for example, listen to the learners read and be of assistance in cookery lessons. Another respondent proposed that seminars be held to teach parents methods that the teachers use for certain subjects. The parents could also be taught the study methods used at IRG. The parents could then assist the learners to find the study methods that best suit the learners.

An unintended consequence of this question was that many respondents made complimentary comments about the school. There were eighty-six such comments. A sample of these comments follows:

#### Grade One

- ... we are 100% happy and satisfied
- ... the teachers are to be complimented on their high standards and obvious love for the children
- ... my daughter has been introduced wonderfully into primary school

#### Grade Two

- ... thank you for the Quality education
- ... all staff at IRG need to be patted on the back - we have a lovely school!

#### Grade Three

- ... I don't believe that my child could be getting a

better education than he is getting at the moment  
... thank you for a great school. Please keep it up  
for my great children!

#### Grade Four

... I am very proud of IRG. I always call my friends,  
my family to come when we have meetings so that they  
can see the school and manner of approach. I love the  
school

... I would recommend IRG to prospective parents  
because the school adjusts to changes occurring in our  
country

#### Grade Five

... my kids love coming to school!  
... much, much more value for money!

#### Grade Six

... listening to some mothers with children at other  
schools, my children are at the right one!

... I find IRG school and staff set a standard high in  
integrity and care. I appreciate how my daughter has  
been educated and encouraged to grow. A questionnaire  
such as this exemplifies a spirit open to feedback and  
transformation

#### Grade Seven

... Quality staff at a quality school  
... IRG is a wonderful school. There is always a  
happy, concerned atmosphere and the children always  
come first.

The results of the questionnaire were discussed by the researcher

at numerous weekly executive and whole-staff meetings during the period July to November 1996. Team leaders of the various grades were given the questionnaires and the computer printouts. The findings were discussed at the weekly grade meetings. Strategies were devised to deal with concerns expressed by parents. Findings of the questionnaire were discussed with parents during the period July to November 1996 in the weekly newsletter and report-backs at various PTA and Governing Body meetings. Because of the wide range of issues raised in the questionnaire, the findings are receiving ongoing evaluation and responses in 1977 - a period outside this action research time frame.

#### 7.2.3.8 *Organisational climate*

During August and September 1996, the Community Dispute Resolution Trust (CDRT) conducted mediation skills training with the teaching staff. The cost of the programme was co-sponsored by a United States educational agency. Staff training dealing with two main types of conflicts was given, namely, group and interpersonal. Training was given on how every teacher could be an effective mediator in conflict situations found within any school. On 17 August, an expert from the United Kingdom conducted a staff workshop on the use of circle time to resolve conflict in the classroom. Grades One and Two implemented circle time with the learners in the ensuing weeks. There were noteworthy positive responses to the circle time concept from learners and teachers from Grade Four upwards.

In October 1996, an organisational climate and self-perception survey was conducted amongst thirty-one administrative and teaching staff members. The survey was conducted by the human resources division of a South African mining house. The aim of the survey was (I R Griffith Primary School 1996b:1)

... to measure the perception of the staff in a formal and broad-based survey and to determine both strengths and weaknesses in the school climate that are

impacting on the personal attitudes of the teachers and their performances.

Salient results are indicated below (I R Griffith Primary School 1996b:1). It is to be noted that scores below the 50th percentile indicate problems, while those above the 50th percentile indicate positive results.

- Job tension: In overall terms, the staff is experiencing high job tension (37th percentile).
- Decision-making process: Staff are not satisfied with the decision-making process (40th percentile) and in particular with their involvement in the decisions that are taken.
- Communication: Teachers from Grade Four upwards feel that they are kept in the picture of what is going on in the work situation (60th percentile) but this is not the case with the junior primary staff (6th percentile). It would appear that the junior primary staff are not being kept adequately informed by the necessary sources of the broader work issues.
- Management/supervisory support: There is a poor perception of supervisory support which impacts on all aspects of the self-perception measurements used in the survey. The two areas of support that have the most impact on the negative feeling of self-perception are instrumental (38th percentile) and emotional (33rd percentile).
- Conflict handling: Overall, conflict handling was put on the 47th percentile. The statement "Disagreements are avoided or suppressed" was put on the 4th percentile in the junior primary (Grade One to Three) section and on the 23rd percentile in the senior primary (Grade Four to Seven) section. The survey identified conflict resolution as weak and requiring attention.

- Role clarity: In the junior primary department it was perceived as a problem (31st percentile) but as good in senior primary (58th percentile)
- Teamwork within teams: A positive aspect of the survey was the extent to which the teachers work well together within their teams.
- Standards: The standards are high and teachers are continually encouraged to strive for higher standards (70th percentile).
- Leadership: Leadership is viewed in different ways by the staff members. The senior primary department is very positive (74th percentile) whereas the junior primary is less positive (45th percentile).
- Responsibility: Staff feel that they are given the responsibility to carry out their work. This is a positive dimension characteristic of the organisational climate. However, the report (I R Griffith Primary School 1996b:2) added the rider:

... the fact that responsibility correlates significantly with job tension may indicate that levels of responsibility without the corresponding levels of supervisory support lead to high levels of tension.

The report of the survey (I R Griffith Primary School 1996b:7), revealed that the main issues that called for appropriate interventions agreed between the school and outside consultants were:

- i) What can be done by the school to improve communication, decision making, conflict handling and supervisory support, in order to enhance further the personal growth and

attitudes of the teachers?

- ii) What can each individual teacher do (based on the results of confidential feedback to each member of staff of the personal profile) to improve self-efficacy and locus of control?

#### 7.2.3.9 *Staff development*

One of the core concepts of quality theory is Hoshin (outrageous) goals. During cycle three on 26 February 1996 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996l), staff were encouraged to find Hoshin goals. At the staff development meeting of 24 June 1996 (I R Griffith Primary School 1996j), there was discussion on the use of action research to achieve Hoshin goals. Teachers were requested either individually or in small groups to formulate Hoshin goals and endeavour to implement them through action research by 12 November 1996. TQM tools and techniques were used together with educational diagnostic tests. At a staff meeting held on 24 November, teachers gave report-backs on their research work (I R Griffith Primary School 1996k).

By focusing on goals, teachers strove to reach higher levels of teaching methodology. The quality of education being given to the learners was improved.

Three examples of Hoshin goals are provided. In Grade One classes, the Hoshin goal was that all Grade One learners would have a reading age equal to or exceeding their chronological age. The music teacher set this Hoshin goal:

The biggest, most ambitious and definitely most challenging goal I set myself for 1996 as the music teacher of IRG was to ensure that by the end of this year, every single pupil in IRG would love music. Not only would they love the class, methods and contents of the lessons but would also develop a deeper awareness, understanding and passion for music on its

own that would last a lifetime.

In Grade Seven, all the subject teachers had a common goal: every Grade Seven child would meet the promotion requirements to move on to high school.

The researcher submits that the Hoshin goals described in the preceding paragraph were achieved by the end of the 1996 school year. For the learners in Grade One, supplementary remedial and enrichment readers were bought. By the end of the year, the reading age level goal for every learner had been achieved. Music proved to be particularly enjoyed and popular throughout the school. The music teacher was a musical co-director of the school play "The Jungle Book". The play was one of the many successful strategies adopted by the music teacher to instil a positive regard towards the subject. All 107 learners in the 1996 Grade Seven group met the promotion requirements. Every learner passed Mathematics - a subject which traditionally has a number of failures. No learner needed to have marks for any subject adjusted, nor was it necessary to give any learner a condoned pass.

On an ongoing basis at the weekly staff meeting, the researcher raised quality service issues with the staff. Articles from books and newspapers were referred to. By way of illustration, the staff meeting of 12 August 1996 (I R Griffith Primary School 19961) discussed strategies on how to resolve amicably conflict with a difficult parent. Reference was made to Leland and Bailey's six-step process in their book, *Customer service for dummies*.

### 7.3 SUMMARY

Cycle four which lasted from April 1996 to December 1996 was the last cycle of this action research project. Issues that were of concern at the start of the first cycle in May 1993 had been addressed. Examples were the need for a Computer Centre,

Tuckshop, new Grade Three teaching block and a Design and Technology Centre. During cycle four new issues had come to the fore.

During cycle four, the decision had been taken that a new Media Centre would be built in 1997. By the end of the cycle, an amount of R250 000 had been set aside to initiate this capital works project. The curriculum was given greater attention during the cycle to subject areas such as design and Technology, Entrepreneurial Skills and Environmental Education. With the changing demographic mix of the school and the increasing societal stresses in South Africa in the 1990s, the need for effective conflict resolution management was important. Programmes were initiated during 1996 for both learners and teachers to deal with conflictual situations in acceptable ways.

By the end of the cycle, the new school uniform had been in use for a year. There had been minor hiccups with the stockists but by December 1996, approximately 80% of the learners had made the switch-over. Significant overhauling of the school fee collection procedure had resulted in satisfactory financial revenue collection by the end of 1996. Most of the recommendations made in earlier cycles to improve the extramural programme had already been implemented by the fourth cycle. A senior school play, the first since 1987, was produced in September 1996.

In May 1996, a market survey questionnaire was undertaken with four hundred parents. The survey helped the Governing Body, Parent-Teacher Association, staff and researcher identify strengths and weaknesses of the school. Overall, the results of the survey were positive. Nevertheless, many worthwhile recommendations were made on how to improve further the quality of education. An organisational climate questionnaire was administered by an outside agency on the administrative and professional staff. Areas were identified where the organisational climate could be improved. Examples were communication, decision-making processes and conflict resolution

techniques. The survey also honed in on those dimensions of the organisational climate which were impacting positively on the school. Excellent working within teams and a commitment to high professionals standards were two such examples.

In action research, the cycles of look, think and act are never-ending. Although the case study ended in 1996, the continuous improvement philosophy was pursued further. A few examples illustrate this point. The new Media Centre will be equipped with both an audio and internet library. The Centre was built in the latter months of 1997. In 1997, all Grade Sevens were involved in an entrepreneurial fair extending over a number of weeks. Besides the money raised by the learners for themselves, the school benefitted financially. The curriculum focused further on environmental issues. The school theme for 1997 was "Giving Quality Kids a Quality Environment".

In the staff development programme, many teachers went on outcomes-based education courses during 1997. A teacher trainer from the United Kingdom spent three weeks training the staff during August 1997. She ran programmes and workshops on issues such as:

- Gender and race
- Improving the quality of classroom-based circle time
- Mediation skills for learners
- Multiculturalism

In Chapter Eight, the researcher will recommend that the application of quality theory can have beneficial results to the administration, leadership and management of schools. A recommendation will also be made that quality theory and practice has much applicability to the "outcomes-based" educational philosophy. This approach to education will be implemented in South African schools during the period 1998 to 2005.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 8.1 INTRODUCTION

In the first chapter of this study, the researcher discussed the application of quality theory in business, commerce and industry throughout the world. The researcher posed the question whether quality theory and practice could be adapted for use in the education system. It was posited by the researcher that quality management principles could be applied to effect an improvement in the vast majority of South African schools after the demise of colonial and apartheid-driven education systems.

In Chapter Two there was a literature study of quality theorists. Quality theory literature emanated originally from theorists who were not directly involved in education. The literature study analysed the input of theorists such as Crosby, Deming, Feigenbaum, Ishikawa, Juran and Shewhart. From the late 1980s, educationists such as Bonstingl, Glasser, Morgan, Murgatroyd and Sallis began writing about the adaptation of quality theory into the field of education. The chapter discussed the application of quality principles into the field of education.

Chapter Three discussed the tools and techniques used to measure quality. In business, commerce and industry it is possible for those organisations subscribing to quality philosophy to have their levels of quality achievement measured. Tools such as benchmarking, histograms, market research and Pareto analyses are appropriate measuring instruments. The chapter outlined ways in which tools and techniques used in management in fields other than education could be adapted for the education sector. Chapter Three also described processes which could be used to effect organisational quality improvement.

In Chapter Four, the design of the research and research methods

were described. Action research was used in the case study of a Gauteng primary school endeavouring to apply quality theory to its educational management practice. Research tools, both qualitative and quantitative, used in the study, were discussed. An analysis was made of the ways in which the researcher's subjectivity could impact on the objectivity of the findings.

The action research data was described and interpreted in Chapters Five, Six and Seven. At the beginning of the research, the term used by the researcher was TQM. The researcher used the term TQM for two reasons: quality practitioners in the business, industrial and service sectors used TQM theory and practice in their various activities; secondly, the researcher noted that earlier quality practitioners in the field of education such as Bonstingl, Murgatroyd and Morgan also used the term TQM (sections 2.2.8 and 2.2.9 of this thesis). The research consisted of four cycles with each cycle comprising processes of looking, thinking and acting. The period of the case study was from May 1993 to December 1996.

Chapter Five dealt with the first two action research cycles. The first cycle covered the period from May 1993 to June 1994. This cycle identified certain aspects that determined the quality of education provided by the school. Examples were the physical resources, curriculum, extramural activities, organisational climate and financial management of the institution. Stakeholders thought and acted on these aspects to help improve the quality of education. This process was expanded during cycle two which lasted from July 1994 to March 1995 and has been described in section 5.3.

It was during the third action research cycle, which is described in Chapter Six, that the researcher had misgivings about using the term TQM in the field of education. Chapter Six outlines those misgivings and the researcher's rationale for using the term TQE (Total Quality Education). Cycle three (section 6.2) covered the period from April 1995 to March 1996.

Chapter Seven described the fourth and final action research cycle of this case study. The analysis and interpretation of the data covered the period from April to December 1996.

In this final chapter of the thesis, the researcher will summarise and draw conclusions from the action research study. Recommendations will also be made as to how various stakeholders can make contributions to improve the quality of education in South African schools.

## 8.2 SUMMARY

### 8.2.1 Objectives of the study

The researcher submits that there were five broad objectives in this study. Firstly, the study attempted to ascertain whether TQM principles used outside the field of education had a relevancy in improving the education sector (sections 1.3 and 2.3). If such a relevancy was discerned, the researcher wanted to identify those tools and techniques encountered in TQM that could be adapted for use in educational institutions (section 3.2). The third objective was to use those adapted tools and techniques in an action research case study at a Gauteng primary school (sections 5.2, 5.3, 6.2 and 7.2).

Fourthly, given the unique situation of South African education because of its colonial and apartheid past, the study attempted to identify challenges to implementing quality principles in the education system (section 1.1). The fifth objective was to identify those aspects of South African society at the onset of the twenty-first century that would predispose the various stakeholders in education to strive for quality at all levels of the education system (sections 1.1, 8.2.1.3 and 8.5).

#### 8.2.1.1 *Hypotheses*

As is characteristic of qualitative research, this study yields

the following hypotheses:

The first hypothesis is that TQM theory as encountered in business, commerce and industry does have significant applicability to the education sector. As the research progressed, however, the researcher moved from endorsing TQM principles to TQE principles in the field of education. TQM has an undoubted relevancy. Yet TQE has an even greater and unique contribution to make in creating quality schools.

The second hypothesis is that tools and techniques used in the TQM philosophy to effect quality improvement can be successfully adapted to the education sector. In the action research study of the primary school in this thesis, TQM tools and techniques were used. They helped the school measure levels of quality in the school. The tools and techniques also effected improvements in the quality of education offered by the institution.

#### 8.2.1.2 *Research findings*

The research findings do support the first hypothesis of the applicability of TQM as found in the business, commercial and industrial sectors to the education sector. In the manufacturing sector, for example, there are prescribed processes necessary for making a product. In the school system there are processes through which a learner must progress in order to receive an education. Both the business and education sectors need to satisfy their customers. Dissatisfied customers take their business to competitors. Both in the business and the educational worlds, there is competition to attract customers. By being made aware of issues such as "value for money" and a philosophy of "continuous improvement" that should be evident in the organisation, potential customers are likely to give such institutions their patronage. An illustration of the potential for competitiveness amongst schools is that in Gauteng in 1996, there were 2 104 public schools and 776 private schools (Central Statistics 1996:page unnumbered).

Yet theorists such as English and Hill (1994), Lewis (1993) and Sallis (1993) cautioned against an uncritical acceptance of TQM in the field of education. The end product, for example, of a manufacturing process, when compared with that of an educational process is significantly different. The manufactured product can be accurately measured and quantified as to whether it is suitable or not for its designated purpose. By contrast, the learner at the end of the educational process, cannot be accurately measured. Furthermore, in TQM theory it is easier to determine what the characteristics of the end product should be. In the field of education, it is impossible for all educators to agree on the characteristics of an "educated" learner. During the action research, the researcher found it increasingly difficult to describe quality within the TQM philosophy - a philosophy that was focused on addressing issues found in sectors outside the field of education.

Sallis (1993:8) assesses the interpretations of quality as found in the different sectors thus:

... an understanding of quality derived from business experience is applicable to education but ... it requires a degree of adaptation to fit both the general educational setting and the particular circumstances of each school, college or university. Each institution needs to decide its own destiny but an understanding of how the best organisations in other fields of endeavour do things will not go amiss.

To give the concept of quality a distinct identity in education, the researcher placed the theory under the description of Total Quality Education (TQE) (section 1.7.2).

The second hypothesis states that tools and techniques used in TQM to measure and improve quality can be applied effectively in schools. During the course of this action research study, a number of such tools were used at the school. Group processes

such as teams and quality circles were established. These groups identified areas for improvement and dealt with them appropriately (for example sections 5.2.2.1 to 5.2.2.8). Problems were identified and analysed by techniques such as benchmarking, checklist analysis, flow charts, histograms and SWOT analyses (section 5.2.2.9). All staff members were trained on how to use the techniques. Market research was done by means of a survey questionnaire distributed to the parent body (section 7.2.3.7). The planning and implementation of quality improvement was effected through techniques such as the Hoshin process (section 3.2.3.3) as well as the PDSA (Plan-do-study-act) cycle (section 3.2.3.4). Every teacher was a participant, either as an individual or member of a group, in a Hoshin project (section 6.2.3.9). These projects effected significant improvement to the quality of education at the school. The improvements have been described in Chapters Five to Seven of this thesis.

#### 8.2.1.3 *Implications of the research findings*

Within the quality practice encountered in the business and manufacturing sectors, there is the continual drive to ensure "value for money", to be receptive to the needs of customers and continually to improve prices, products and service. These factors are relevant in the education sector too. During 1997, all public schools elected governing bodies. These bodies represent the parent communities. To ensure their future corporate health and survival, schools will need to adopt the total quality approach (Sallis 1993:136). The caveat made by Longworth and Davies (1996:45) that quality strategies used in industry would not work in schools, if they are the same strategies, must be acknowledged. What is important to remember though is that the underlying ideas are always adaptable to new situations and therefore also to a school.

The quality of education provided in South African schools is quantitatively poor. One illustration would be that of overall poor matriculation results (See Figure 1.1). Hofmeyr (1997:page

unnumbered) stated that in an international Maths and Science Study for thirteen-year olds, South Africa took bottom position for both subjects. Poor education in the classroom impacts negatively on the South African economy. The 1997 World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report rated South Africa in 44th position out of 53 participating countries in the survey (Klein 1997:2). South Africa must improve the quality of education given in its schools in order to become a significant player on the world economic stage.

In the late 1970s through to the early 1990s, there was a culture of defiance and reluctance to learn amongst significant numbers of urban Black schools. This attitude was further exacerbated after the 1976 Soweto riots protesting against Bantu Education. A culture of learning needs to be instilled in South African schools. Bonstingl (1996:45) writes thus about schools in the United States of America, but the words are pertinent in the South African context:

...management must drive fear out of the organisation. The old fear-based Taylor system of compliance, control and command has no place in the modern workplace, business or school, where people must think creatively, work in self-directed teams and build partnership cultures of mutual support... Leadership is helping, coaching and supporting, not threatening, ranking or punishing.

Learners and teachers in South African schools need to be treated in a new way. In the quality philosophy, the learners as customers have a contribution to make as to what is taught and how it is taught. The teacher is a facilitator in the process of ensuring the quality education for interactive learners, not an all-knowing pedagogue providing knowledge to passive learners. Sallis (1993:136) observes that to harness the commitment and goodwill of staff to assume quality, they need motivation, expertise and enthusiasm. Staff do not need appraisal and

inspection. Such perspectives on human resource management require a radical paradigm shift from the accepted practices in many contemporary South African schools of the 1990s.

The research findings indicate a critical shortage of physical and human resources in South African schools. Quality practices help optimise the effective use of resources. In a quality organisation, all in the organisation are committed to designing processes that work efficiently, effectively and that have "zero defect". The observation is made by Sallis (1993:87) that in non-TQM organisations, managers spend 30% of their time in dealing with systems failure, complaints and with "fire fighting". In contrast, TQM saves that amount of time so that managers have more time to lead, plan ahead, develop new ideas and work closely with customers.

Within a quality education system there is a significant reduction in wasting the scholastic potential of learners. Much scholastic wastage was evident in the 1997 matriculation results where, for example, Gauteng had an overall pass rate of 51,5% with only 17,2% achieving exemption (Cresswell 1998:1). The Northern Province obtained a 31,8% pass rate (Cresswell 1998:1).

A study by Harvard University and the University of Pretoria found that in 1994, 80% of Africans and 40% of Whites could neither read nor compute at a Grade Seven level which is considered the basic level of literacy (Sidiropoulos 1996:96). Such figures indicate extensive wastage of educational potential. Glasser (1992:3) in his book, *The Quality School*, asserts that by using Deming's quality principles in schools

...the present elitist system in which just a few students are involved in high quality work will be replaced by a system in which almost all students have this experience.

The research findings indicated how TQM tools and techniques that

were adapted for use in a Guateng primary school effected improvement in the quality of education (sections 5.2.3 and 5.3.3, 6.2.3 and 7.2.3). These tools and techniques could prove beneficial to other South African schools wishing to improve educational practice. This implies, however, that it would be necessary to teach educational personnel at all levels about quality theory and practice.

In the Bill of Rights of the 1996 Constitution it is stated that, as regards education there is "... the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices" (The Constitutional Assembly 1996:14). The 1996 Schools Act aims not only to create and manage a new national school system. Potgieter et al (1997:6) write in *Understanding the SA Schools Act*:

A further basic aim of the Schools Act is that the quality of education must be improved. For example, there must be better facilities, better trained teachers, better methods of teaching and better school conditions. Learners must also be better motivated and disciplined to take their education seriously and to use the opportunities that are now open to them.

Quality theory and practice have considerable relevance in South African educational management practice at the end of the twentieth century. Given the far-reaching political and societal changes during the 1990s, the quality philosophy has the potential to be received positively by educationalists throughout South Africa. Quality theory and practice provide the means to effect the educational ideals articulated in both the 1996 Constitution and the 1996 Schools Act.

### 8.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS IN EDUCATION

In quality theory, all stakeholders are active participants. Every stakeholder has an important contribution to make towards the continuous improvement of education. Recommendations for the

various stakeholders are outlined below. The recommendations were based on a number of sources (Abbott 1998:1-115; Bonstingl 1996:31-45 & 69-87; Bradley 1993:170-190; Fields 1994:1-106; Glasser 1992:25-71; Greenwood 1994:191-233; Langford 1995:131-167; Murgatroyd 1994:141-196; Sallis 1993:48-49, 91-136; Walton 1989:55-86).

### 8.3.1 Learners

The researcher recommends that learners could do the following to bring about quality education for themselves and others:

- Strive for continuous improvement.

The concept of "continuous improvement" is described in section 1.7.6. Steyn (1996:128) states that there should be a "constant dedication" to this concept. Deming has the concept as his first principle in his fourteen-point management theory (Walton 1989:55). In this thesis, the action research cycles describe the endeavours to effect continuous improvement. In section 5.2.3.3 there is a description of what was done by the learners themselves to bring about acceptable behaviour throughout the school. The Quality Kid badge concept described in section 6.2.3.2 is a strategy to effect continuous improvement in all areas of the school curriculum.

Whether in the classroom, on the sportsfield or in extramural activities, the learner should realise that there is always room to reach greater heights of achievement.

- Inculcate the principle that education is a journey and not a destination.

Bonstingl (1996:55) observes that Total Quality is a journey and not a destination. He views the journey as a

slow and steady process.

The learning process is to be experienced throughout a person's life and should not stop at the end of school days. The White Paper on Education (Government Gazette 1995:21), in describing the values and principles of education and training, states:

The over-arching goal of policy must be to enable all individuals to value, have access to and succeed in *lifelong education and training of good quality* (their italics).

It is imperative that a learner enjoys and has fun during the many daily learning experiences that will be encountered.

- Learn and apply quality tools and techniques.

Tools and techniques of quality theory can be understood and used in the primary school. Group processes can be used such as quality circles and improvement teams. (Refer to sections 3.2.1.2 and 3.2.1.3.) A range of other tools and techniques is described in sections 3.2.2 and 3.2.3. In their book *Tools and techniques to inspire classroom learning*, Cleary and Duncan (1997:1) state that pupils who cannot yet read or write can use flowcharts. Photographs or drawings can be used, for example, to show pupils the process for having their lunch at lunch-time.

- Work together.

A core dimension of quality practice is that everyone learns to work harmoniously in groups, quality circles and teams (section 3.2.1). Learners must become good listeners. Conflict is inevitable in group situations. Skills need to be learnt and applied to deal constructively with conflict.

During this action research thesis, circle time was used by the learners and teachers to deal with issues such as bullying (sections 7.2.2.3 and 7.2.3.3).

- Be patient and persevere.

The quality journey will not be a smooth ride without disappointments. There will be setbacks. Strength of character displaying patience and perseverance will be required of everyone. Deming told people that in persevering with their endeavours to improve quality, it needs to be remembered that "this isn't instant pudding!" (McClanahan & Wicks 1993:13).

### 8.3.2 Teachers

Recommendations for teachers to follow in bringing about quality education in schools are:

- Give supportive mentoring to learners to ensure their success.

Longworth and Davies (1996:17) observed that in many countries, education has tended to be an academic obstacle course, in which students find it difficult to meet university entrance requirements. Teachers with high percentages of failing students were deemed to be educationalists with high standards. In contrast, quality schools want students to pass and achieve good results. The aim is to achieve "zero defect" as regards academic results.

Hoshin goals can be used to help achieve an ideal state or "zero defect" in an aspect of the school (section 3.2.2.3). In the staff development programme (section 6.2.3.9), staff were encouraged to strive for such goals. A direct result was that in 1996, every learner in Grade Seven passed

Mathematics, a subject which traditionally has failures (section 7.2.3.9).

- Demonstrate constant dedication to continuous improvement.

The teacher committed to the quality philosophy demonstrates dedication to the continuous improvement of self and others at home, at school and in the community (Bonstingl 1996:90). It is not only the product (education of the learner) that needs to be continually improved, but also the process by which that objective is achieved (Greenwood & Gaunt 1994:155-6). Learners and teachers must continuously engage in a process of seeking out opportunities for improving the process of learning, the quality of the learning experience and the delivery thereof (Greenwood & Gaunt 1994:156).

- Create fear-free classrooms.

"Drive out fear" was point eight in Deming's fourteen-point plan for the effective company (Walton 1989:71-72). In a school fear is counterproductive and destructive, resulting in lowered performance by everyone (Steyn 1996:126).

In a quality organisation, there is no place for fear of management (section 2.2.1.2). Learners should not be afraid of teachers (section 2.2.7).

Fear is often instilled into learners through the use or threat of corporal punishment. When the researcher took up the appointment at the school in 1994, he was aware that corporal punishment had been used as a form of discipline (section 5.2.1.3). At his first staff meeting on 23 July 1993, the staff was informed that this disciplinary procedure would be discontinued with immediate effect (I R Griffith Primary 19961).

- Make classroom learning relevant to the learner's life-world.

In a quality school, both the learners and teachers work together to achieve meaningful, worthwhile results. There is a need to create a culture of "yearning for learning". When learners see the curriculum as relevant to their present and future life-worlds, conflict situations with teachers can be greatly reduced.

Dryden and Vos (1997:97) maintain that *how we learn* is more important than *what we learn* (their italics). They cite Daggert (Dryden & Vos 1997:97) who observes "The world our kids are going to live in is changing four times faster than our schools". Rose and Nicholl (1997:257) state that education should be relevant to the challenges facing them when they leave school.

- Be supportive of the changes needed to create quality schools.

Teachers must support school leaders as they implement the necessary changes to transform schools into Schools of Quality (Bonstingl 1996:94). Deming states that everyone in the company has to work together to bring about the transformation (Bradley 1993:189, Sallis 1993:49). Change brings about inevitable pleasures and pains (Bonstingl 1996:94). Teachers have a pivotal role to play in the success or otherwise of any plans to effect quality improvement within a school.

When stakeholders are actively involved in formulating changes to improve quality, there is a sense of commitment. In the research project, Open Forum sessions were held regularly with staff (section 5.3.3.8). These sessions made recommendations for improving educational practice.

- Develop effective quality circles and teams.

A cornerstone of implementing quality practice in schools is the existence of quality circles and teams (sections 3.2.1.2, 3.2.1.3, 4.4.4 and 4.4.5). These groups can be formed around a particular grade, subject, sport activity, or department of the school. Alternatively, the group can be formed to address specific issues and concepts. Quality circles and teams need to work harmoniously within themselves and with other groupings in the school. Theorists such as Abbott (1998:15-36), Fields (194:97-106), Langford (1995:96-108) and Sallis (1993:91-98) describe the use of quality circles and teams in schools.

- Learn and apply quality practice.

Point six of Deming's fourteen points to implement a programme of total quality management is "Institute training and retraining" (Bradley 1993:175-177). Teachers need to be enthusiastic participants in staff development sessions on quality practice. Teachers should also do self-study in this domain.

The executive staff were the first to receive training by the researcher in quality theory and practice (section 5.2.2.9). Afterwards, there was a focus on training the whole staff (section 5.3.2.9). Learning should be lifelong and therefore staff training on the quality philosophy was done in each of the four action research cycles.

Deming (Walton 1989:67) regarded the institution of training and retraining as important for any employee.

- Be a lifelong learner.

A teacher's education does not end at the conferment of a diploma or degree. As such, the teacher should be

professionally relevant in the school system which is part of the never-ending societal change. Teachers need to be lifelong learners because, although they are (Longworth & Davies 1996:86)

... but one change agent in the continual development of human potential ... they are a crucial one. In this sense, a nation's long-term economic and social health depends ultimately on the quality of the initial training and continuing updating of in-service teachers.

### 8.3.3 Parents

Recommendations on how parents can contribute to the development of the quality philosophy in schools are:

- Be quality parents.

Such parents demonstrate constant dedication to continuous improvement of self and others at home, at work and in the community (Bonstingl 1996:91). The parents provide for their children's physical and emotional needs and they themselves are "real-life role models who live to learn and who build active relationships of unconditional love and mutual respect for everyone in the family" (Bonstingl 1996:91).

- Participate in enthusiastic, hard-working parent or parent-teacher associations.

In explaining the significance of the South African Schools Act, Potgieter *et al* (1997:9) observe that parents, learners, educators and others cannot expect the State to give everything and do everything for the school. For a school to have anything beyond the bare essentials of

classrooms, furniture and teachers, there will also be need for hard work from the school community. Well-resourced schools throughout the world have traditionally achieved these "extras" through the endeavours of parents in fund-raising bodies such as parent-teacher associations.

- Use governing body structures to create effective partnerships with schools.

The governing body is a democratically elected body of parents which, in a spirit of partnership, governs the school together with the principal and staff of the school. Effective partnerships are generally characterised by (Potgieter 1997:9):

- Mutual trust and respect
- Shared decision-making
- Shared goals and values
- Open communication
- Good teamwork
- Respect for the roles of different partners

Governing bodies can be powerful synergies to effect quality improvements in schools.

In the research study, the Governing Body implemented many quality improvements to the school (for example, 5.3.3.1, 5.3.3.4, 6.2.3.5 and 7.2.3.5). This can be confirmed by referring to the minutes of the committee meetings during cycles one to four of this action research (I R Griffith Primary 1996d and 1996h).

- Be supportive of the transformation process to a Quality School.

Quality theory is significantly different from traditional management practice. It implies that the role of top

management is a facilitative rather than a directive one. In a quality school, everyone has a right to advise on how to improve the organisation. Parents might be wary of such significant change to the traditional perceptions of school management. Parents need to support the school in its endeavours and to be understanding when there are the inevitable hiccups during times of change.

- Be critical friends of the school.

As customers of the school, parents have unique perspectives of the institution. They can discuss the impact on their children of what is happening at the school. Parental advice and suggestions keep the school ever-vigilant regarding ways of improving the quality of its education. Their positive comments can also vindicate what is already perceived to be good educational practice.

#### 8.3.4 Senior management teams

Suggestions on what the senior management team (heads of department, deputy and principal) can do to bring a quality school into being are:

- Treat teachers as professionals.

In a quality school, the administration makes continual efforts to treat all teachers as professionals by refraining from telling them what to do in their classrooms (Glasser 1992:182). The assumption is made that teachers will teach the appropriate curriculum for a particular grade and that they will determine how much time is spent on various aspects of the curriculum (Glasser 1992:182). The senior management team has a facilitative, supportive role and not that of an instructor. When invited or deemed necessary, this role changes to that of a mentor and positive critical friend.

- Drive out fear.

The quality school encourages everyone to speak openly, honestly and without fear of reprisal (section 2.2.9.2).

- Empower.

Deming (Walton 1989:73) stated that barriers between staff areas should be broken down. When people are forced to administer policies that they had no hand in drafting and with which they disagree, they may give unsatisfactory service to the customer (Walton 1989:73).

Sallis (1993:89) quotes Stanley Spanbauer on empowerment:

...in a quality-based approach, school leadership relies on the empowerment of teachers and others involved in the teaching/learning process. Teachers share in decision-making and assume greater responsibilities. They are given more power to act and greater autonomy in almost everything that they do.

Senior management teams in South African schools might find a reluctance by certain teachers to be empowered. Teachers are often not used to empowerment in hierarchically-structured schools. With empowerment comes accountability and responsibility.

Empowerment was given to teachers in this action research thesis through Quality Improvement teams (section 4.4.5). Every grade was a team with its own team leader. The team could make decisions in areas such as methodology, discipline and how to improve the quality of education in the grade.

- Build teamwork.

Teams are most effective mechanisms for planning and bringing about quality improvements. Teams must be empowered to make decisions and to implement change.

- Create the correct organisational climate.

According to Reynolds (1994:88), TQM cannot be implemented unless the organisational climate is right. He asserts that there is a need for a reasonable degree of trust in the management personnel of the organisation (Reynolds 1994:88). Senior management needs to create an organisational climate that will encourage staff to innovate and strive for continuous improvement - without fearing that colleagues will make negative comments if mistakes are made.

With quantitative organisational climate assessment of a school, the senior management team is more accurately able to implement the necessary improvements. An organisational climate survey was done at the school on 29 July 1996 (I R Griffith Primary 1996d). Areas for improvement were identified (section 7.2.3.8) and improvements effected in cycle four and beyond.

- Flatten the organisational structure hierarchy.

The current educational paradigm is characterised by an hierarchical order, superordinate/subordinate function, control, command, up-to-down communication and division of labour (Bradley 1993:198). Senior management needs to change the organisational structure to that of flattened hierarchies, as well as share functions and responsibilities. Communications should be two-way both horizontally and vertically. There should be mutual responsibility to ensure that tasks get done. In Figure

1.2, there is a description of the organisational structure in a TQM organisation.

- Listen to all customers.

Every stakeholder of the school, learner, parent, teacher, community member and departmental official, has the right to contribute to the quality improvement process. Listen to all stakeholders.

At the school used in this thesis, committees such as the Governing Body, PTA and staff were already established before the researcher's arrival in July 1993. Stakeholders were listened to at these committees. Further listening channels were established through, for example, the Children's Council (section 5.2.2.8) and professional staff Open Forums (section 5.2.3.9). The result of the parent survey questionnaire (section 7.2.3.7 (ii)) was an opportunity for the senior management to listen to the parent customer expectations.

- Encourage a lifelong learning philosophy amongst stakeholders.

The school must continually improve the quality of education provided. Senior management needs to encourage stakeholders to be lifelong learners so that the school can benefit from the shared new knowledge.

- Institute quality theory and practice training.

Staff development programmes should be conducted to ensure that there is an understanding of the quality philosophy. Through discussion and planning, all stakeholders will be able to make meaningful contributions to its implementation throughout the school. Greenwood and Gaunt (1994:191-233) have designed a TQM training programme for schools and

collages.

- "Walk the talk" of quality practice.

Deming taught that "Quality cannot be delegated" and that only management can initiate organisational cultures of quality (Bonstingl 1996:94). It is crucial for school leaders to "talk their walk and walk their talk" in everything they do, if total quality is to permeate the school (Bonstingl 1996:94).

- Persevere with the quality philosophy.

The implementation of quality practice in a school does not bring about immediate success. Sallis (1993:137) cautions that not all problems are solved and furthermore new difficulties and challenges will rise to the surface. To bring about total quality, the process is slow and the benefits are long-term (Sallis 1993:137).

In May 1996, a parent survey was done at the school used in this research study. The data results (section 7.2.3.7) acknowledged where the school had been successful in its endeavours to implement the quality philosophy. Likewise, the data highlighted areas for further improvement, such as the need for more lifeskills training, remedial programmes and multicultural education.

#### 8.3.5 Teacher unions

Teacher unions can help schools bring about improvements in the quality of education by implementing these recommendations:

- Support the endeavours of educationalists to enjoy good conditions of service.

Traditionally the role of teachers' associations and unions

is to look after the interests of their members. Conditions of service are a top priority. Thompson (1995:III) conceded that teacher unions should not retreat from their role of working for better conditions, rewards and employment practice.

- Encourage quality teaching in schools.

There is a need for unions to (Thompson 1995:III):

...become responsive to the quality of teaching. What good teaching is and how we measure it, how we achieve it and how we retain it, should be important union topics of discussion and debate.

It is the paradigm shift that comes from focusing on quality, which requires collaborative employer-employee relations, that most changes the role of a teachers' union. ...The union must speak not only for teachers but for teaching itself.

The teaching profession is enhanced and can demand better conditions of service when it is providing learners with education of excellent quality. Unions should encourage the establishment of quality schools throughout South Africa.

#### 8.3.6 District management teams

Although there is one national Department of Education in South Africa, each province has its own education department. Every provincial department of education is divided into district management teams. The Gauteng province, for example, has seventeen districts. Recommendations for district management teams are:

- Appoint a district manager to initiate the quality process.

For quality theory to be successfully implemented in an organisation, it is necessary that there be backing from the leader (Pike 1996:55, Sashkin & Kiser 1993:159). The district managers are the educational leaders of local school communities. Their committed involvement is needed to drive the process.

- Establish quality teams in each district.

In 1994 in Caldwell County, North Carolina, United States, a quality planning team was established (McNeel 1997:3). Leaders from schools, education boards, business and industry worked together to implement quality principles in schools. The cooperative, collaborative approach has been successful, according to Tom McNeel, the superintendent of Caldwell County Schools (McNeel 1997:3):

Our school system has involved and empowered its personnel and community partners to become active leaders in the quality process. The results are far better and more widely accepted than if the superintendent or board had dictated the change.

South African schools can be transformed if there is a commitment and drive by district educational management teams to bring into being quality schools.

#### 8.3.7 Colleges and faculties of education

Recommendations for colleges and faculties of education to assist the process of introducing quality schools into South African schools are:

- Establish departments of Quality Educational Management.

There is much research and study that has been done in fields such as TQM, quality assurance and control in business, commerce and industry. From the late 1980s onwards, there have been a number of schools world-wide that have adapted TQM principles to the education sector. Academics in educational management have a significant contribution to make in imparting traditional quality theory and practice to educational settings.

- Manage and lead these institutions according to the quality principles.

Colleges and faculties of education can be role models for future teachers and educational managers. If these institutions are administered according to quality principles, they can help students identify with sound educational management practice.

Longworth and Davies (1996:107) observe that universities should be learning organisations. According to them, many universities do not put the focus on the learner, do not employ modern educational technologies and do not empower their staff and students. They feel that universities should be "...seeking to insert quality into everything that they do - in research, teaching and administration" (Longworth & Davies 1996:107).

- Educate students in quality theory and practice.

Colleges and universities could conduct courses on the quality philosophy and its practical application in educational institutions.

#### 8.3.8 Department of Education

It is recommended that the Department of Education could contribute to the establishment of South African quality schools

by doing the following:

- Show commitment to implementing quality practice.

"Adopt the new philosophy" was the second point of Deming's management theory (Walton 1989:58-59). The quality philosophy needs to be adopted by all in the organisation before quality is truly effected.

As has already been stated, for quality theory to be implemented successfully in an organisation, the leadership has to "buy into" the process (section 8.3.6). The Minister of Education, Professor S M E Bengu, evinces commitment when he states that the country needs a principled national accord on education and training which will provide a secure platform for change and development, for widening access and raising quality (Government Gazette 1995:5). Senior educational managers at national and provincial level must evince such commitment.

- Train personnel in quality theory and practice.

Personnel, at all levels and in all areas of the Department, need formal training in the quality philosophy and its practical implementation.

In 1998, the Education Bill to be tabled in the British Parliament, will make it mandatory for aspiring head teachers to have passed the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) examination (Whitehead 1997:9).

In South Africa, principals of schools often have no formal training in educational management. It has never been a prerequisite for appointment. The researcher contends that a prerequisite management qualification for aspiring South African principals, could do much to inculcate the quality

philosophy into schools. Such a qualification should be encouraged from candidates, it is submitted by the researcher, for all promotion posts (that is, head of department upwards). This would help ensure that all the staff in formal leadership posts in a school are aware of the quality philosophy.

- Design quality into the system and processes.

Bonstingl (1996:92) states that when policies are being created, it is most important to start with those educators who are needed to implement the policies. As front line workers, they are in the best position to determine whether or not a policy is workable and of good quality.

- Examine quality educational practice in other countries.

Benchmarking is a technique of quality practice which should be used to improve South African education. Green (1997:16) observes that countries which do relatively well in school education such as France, Germany, Japan, South Korea and Sweden, have certain things in common. For example, as nations they emphasise educational achievement and have a "learning culture". South Africa needs to identify these characteristics of quality education systems and apply them.

#### 8.3.9 Business, commerce and industry

Recommendations for business, commerce and industry to assist the process of improving the quality of South African schools are:

- Guide schools on how to make students more employable

Schools need to prepare learners for the world of work. In the world global competitiveness stakes, South Africa ranked 44th out of 53 countries in the survey (Klein

1997:2). In first and second places were Singapore and Hong Kong, respectively, who were both characterised by an educated labour force (Klein 1997:2). In the same survey, the United Kingdom took seventh position. Sir Iain Vallance (1997:19), Chairman of British Telekom, observes

The educational standards achieved in the classroom and the workplace will be critical to the UK's competitiveness in world markets, so the relationship between education and business should be inseparable.

- Show schools how quality is implemented in other sectors.

Companies such as First National Bank, Mercedes-Benz, Standard Bank, Toyota and Woolworths implement quality principles in their business operations. Learners and staff can benefit by seeing the application of the quality philosophy in these types of organisations. What is observed can be applied in the school context. Management outside the education sector can share with teaching staff issues such as conflict resolution, financial management, human resources and recruitment.

- Give financial sponsorship.

The Department of Education is unable to provide all the necessary finances to ensure well-resourced schools. Business in the area can provide financial aid. In turn, these companies benefit from additional goodwill, advertising of their products and most importantly, an improvement the educational quality of the former learner seeking employment.

- Promote quality recognition programmes.

Throughout the United States of America, there are numerous State Quality Awards (Dusharme 1997:2-32). These awards are sponsored by instances such as state legislatures, quality councils, business, industrial and commercial associations. The awards promote an awareness of the importance of quality in all areas of American life.

In 1998 the Congress of the United States will be asked to endorse the establishment of a Baldrige Education Award system with these criteria in the pilot programme (Rhodes 1997:1-2):

- 1 Leadership
- 2 Information and analysis
- 3 Strategic and operational planning
- 4 Human resource development and management
- 5 Educational and business process management
- 6 School performance results
- 7 Student focus and student/stakeholder satisfaction

South African education could benefit by a public recognition of schools that are endeavouring to give quality education to its learners.

#### 8.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

To date, there has been limited research on the application of quality theory to the management of South African schools. In this thesis, the researcher has attempted to describe the action-research process of implementing quality practices in a primary school. Related recommended fields of study for future research are:

- An action-research case study on the implementation of quality practice in either a South African secondary school or college/faculty of education.

- A longitudinal case study of a school identified as a previously disadvantaged institution which adopts quality educational management practices.
- Designing curricula on quality theory and practice for undergraduate education students.
- Designing curricula (Grade One to Twelve) to educate learners on the quality philosophy and practice.
- An action-research case study of how a district management team initiated and facilitated the development of the quality philosophy in the district schools.
- Designing assessment models for determining the quality of education provided in different types of South African schools.
- An international study of the types of partnerships that business, commerce and industry have made with the education sector to bring about quality schools.

## 8.5 CONCLUSION

This thesis attempted to grasp the concepts of TQM as found in business, commerce and industry. The concepts, as applicable to education, were discussed and defined in section 1.7. Theorists of quality principles were discussed in the literature review in Chapter Two. From the 1980s, a number of schools in countries such as the United States, Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom have adapted TQM practice to educational management. The researcher tried to adapt the quality philosophy as found both in and outside the educational sector in overseas countries, to the field of South African education.

The history of South African education poses significant challenges to contemporary educational management leaders to

implement quality practices. As a result of discriminatory practices in the allocation of financial, human and physical resources in the past, the majority of the schools are extremely disadvantaged. In section 1.1 figures were provided of the racially skewed teacher:learner ratio. In 1993, for example, the ratio in Black schools was one teacher for forty-four learners, while in White schools it was one teacher for eighteen learners. In Figure 1.1 the enormously high failure rates in the 1996 and 1997 matriculation results were outlined.

Post-colonial and apartheid education in South Africa at the start of the twenty-first century is receptive, it is submitted by the researcher, to a transformation of its standards. At ministerial level, the Minister of Education has stated his commitment to the improvement of quality (Department of Education 1997b:1). Provincial level commitment is evident in a joint message by Mary Metcalfe, MEC, and James Maseko, Head of Department for Education in Gauteng, to school governing body members (Gauteng Department of Education 1997:page unnumbered):

As a group you are very special because this is the first time that as South Africans together, as part of a single system, you will be joining hands as a community of school governors to take forward a determination to achieve quality education for all in all of our schools.

On 1 January 1997 the South African Schools Act became law. The Act (Department of Education 1997a:1)

... consigns to history the sub-standard and unequal schooling of our apartheid past and creates a single school system in which people can work together to improve education quality and ensure that all children have an equal opportunity to learn.

Before the formation of a single Department of Education in 1997,

there were nineteen departments. These departments administered education on behalf of different racial groups with the different provinces. All the departments were answerable to Parliament which, with its overwhelming predominance of White members, reflected a Eurocentric perspective on educational issues. The new democratic Parliament, with its representatives from all cultural groups, reflects a different reality. The hierarchical, Weberian structure found in traditional South African public and private institutions is being challenged. Concepts particular to Africa such as *Ubuntu* are being proffered as alternative forms of leadership and management in this country. White (1997:8) quotes these words from Lovemore Mbigi's book *Ubuntu*:

The [African] spirit of collective work, of solidarity and dignity, could be the basis of building a culture of empowerment and teamwork in the workplace.

Mbigi writes of *Ubuntu* and describes two core concepts - empowerment and teamwork (White 1997:8). Unintentionally, he is also describing two core concepts of quality theory.

The spirit of partnership between the home and the school to bring about the betterment of education is being encouraged through instances such as governing bodies. Prior to the introduction of the South African Schools Act, most schools did not have governing bodies. These bodies traditionally existed only in former exclusively White public and independent schools. During 1997 all public schools held governing body elections.

The 1996 Constitution of South African gives every citizen the inalienable right to basic education and to further education which the State "must make progressively available and accessible" (Constitutional Assembly 1996:14). The State also needs to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices (Constitutional Assembly 1996:14). The Bill of Rights will help citizens assert their rights to have a quality education system.

The researcher submits that it is easy for very young learner stakeholders to understand the core concepts of quality philosophy as formulated in Deming's fourteen points (Walton 1989:55-86). For example, in section 6.2.3.2 there is a description of the Quality Kid badges and Quality Kid Tuckshop vouchers introduced at the school used in this research. Learners from Grade One upwards understood the quality principles undergirding these awards.

The core simplicity of the quality philosophy allows for its wide understanding by all stakeholders in education. It also allows for its immediate implementation, irrespective of the limited physical and human resources to be found in any South African educational institution.

Challenges await educational managers attempting to implement the quality philosophy. A paradigm shift in management thinking is necessary. Greenwood and Gaunt (1994:157) believe that the biggest obstacle to the application of the quality management theory is the difference between Japanese and Western culture. TQM was very successful in Japan, with its Confucian culture of a strong preference for group consensus and team-based approaches to any kind of problem-solving, whether in politics, work or home (Greenwood & Gaunt 1994:157). By contrast, in the West there is the notion of competition, self help and market forces. Together with the frontier spirit of the United States, the West has produced a highly individualistic and confrontational culture in politics, work and home (Greenwood & Gaunt 1994:157).

White (1997:8) tangentially discusses the point raised by Greenwood and Gaunt in the preceding paragraph. He refers to empowerment in South African organisations and observes that the environment may be paradoxically less but at the same time more ready for it. White (1997:8) observes that the country is emerging from a totalitarian, unjust and disempowered society in which

People will be slow to adopt empowered practices, they will be distrustful and old habits will surface.

Yet White (1997:8) sees potential for paradigm shifts in management:

The Western world is struggling to come to terms with consultation, openness and collective decision-making. In South Africa the new Labour Relations Act has legislated empowerment into our organisations - but only if management sees the act as an opportunity and not a problem, can it accept the challenge to learn and grow.

The quality philosophy embraces the challenge to learn and grow. Given the history of education in South Africa, the proponents of quality will realise that persistence and perseverance will be necessary to spread its philosophy.

In 1994, South Africa experienced a political transformation when it became a democratic State. Another transformation is a dire necessity in the country ... an educational one. The implementation of quality practice, it is submitted by the researcher, is the means to ensure education of true quality for the learners of South Africa.

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12 September 1994	Computer classes
17 October 1994	Tuckshop complaints
20 March 1995	Tennis courts
18 September 1995	Intercom for Computer Centre
22 May 1996	"Adopt-a-pet" programme
22 May 1996	New school caps
5 August 1996	Request for a swimming pool

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21 September 1993	"In pursuit of excellence"
9 February 1994	Kaizen
25 July 1994	Design and Technology
5 August 1994	School report card
28 May 1996	Dress code of learners
10 September 1996	Behaviour in the school

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26 April 1993	Maintenance report
21 June 1993	Capital works projects
23 August 1993	Headmaster's report
23 August 1993	Marketing
23 August 1993	School fee payments
23 September 1993	School rules
25 October 1993	Capital works projects
25 October 1993	New school uniform
22 November 1993	New school uniform
28 February 1994	New school uniform
28 May 1994	New school uniform
1 November 1994	Marketing
29 May 1995	Human resources portfolio
	Teachers attend Design and Technology course
26 June 1995	Staff Quality Awards
26 June 1995	No anglicisation of learners' first names
20 November 1995	Twinning project
11 June 1996	Bursary policy for indigent families
18 June 1996	Capital works projects
29 July 1996	Staff organisational climate questionnaire
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31 May 1995 Design and Technology Centre

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29 August 1994 Redesigning report cards

29 August 1994 Religion in the classroom

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29 August 1994 Separate Assemblies: Junior and Senior schools

29 August 1994 Staff absenteeism

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20 September 1994 Design and Technology workshop

13 January 1995	Gardner's multiple intelligence theory
9 February 1995	TQM: Vision, mission and goals
23 May 1995	TQE and Deming
27 June 1995	Cooperative classroom teaching
14 and 28 August 1995	TQM toolkit
5 February 1996	Design and Technology workshop
24 June 1996	Using action research to achieve Hoshin goals
24 November 1996	Report back on Hoshin goals project

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28 July 1993	Children's Council
28 July 1993	Disciplinary procedures
28 July 1993	"Service that's speedy..."
28 July 1993	Staff parking bays
3 August 1994	Multiculturalism
24 August 1994	Multiculturalism
12 October 1993	1994 Budget
11 January 1994	School as a service organisation
8 February 1994	Designing class rules
15 February 1994	Multiculturalism at assemblies
8 March 1994	Academic support programme
22 July 1994	Establishing a marketing committee
19 October 1994	Mental Health month
13 January 1995	Theme for 1995: TQM
	"Zero defect" and detention classes
25 April 1995	Daily Report system
9 May 1995	Enrichment and support programme
30 May 1995	Staff absenteeism
27 June 1995	Quality Kid winners in the classroom
9 January 1996	Quality Kid badge citation
	"We're going for never-ending quality improvement"
26 February 1996	Identifying Hoshin goals
29 April 1996	A teacher delights a parent
13 May 1996	"Broken window theory" and school discipline

12 August 1996            Conflict resolution techniques  
26 August 1996            Introduction of circle time  
  9 September 1996        A school song for IRG  
21 September 1996        Incidents of bullying  
28 October 1996          World Quality Day

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Ramphele, M 1997. Conscientious and diligent but could do much better. *Sunday Times*, 9 November, :25.

Randburg Sun 1995-1996. Various photographs and short articles.

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|------------------|--|
| 3 August 1995    | Newspaper collection for bursary fund    |
| 8 September 1995 | At the Design and Technology Centre site |
| 6 October 1995   | Every sports day has its unsung heroes   |
| 3 November 1995  | Junior Department concert                |
| 10 November 1995 | Classy cricketers make the area team     |
| 17 November 1995 | Top marks at Randburg Eisteddfod         |
| 8 February 1996  | First Day in Grade One                   |
| 29 March 1996    | This is your teacher shouting!           |

Randburg Sun 1996. Various photographs and short articles published:

26 April 1996	Valentine's Day sales buy flagpole
17 May 1996	Easter eggs from Jessica and Amanda
24 May 1996	Pupils and pets go for a BIG walk
31 May 1996	A Passover (Pesach) Celebration
5 July 1996	"Let's look at my work" night
2 August 1996	National School of the Arts visits IRG
26 September 1996	Go fly a kite ... Kite Day
25 October 1996	A trip down Memory Lane
29 November 1996	IRG visits the Japanese School
6 December 1996	First Interhouse Cross Country winners

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# IR GRIFFITH PRIMARY SCHOOL

EQUITY DRIVE  
BLAIRGOWRIE  
RANDBURG 2194  
PO BOX 210  
PINEGOWRIE  
2123

Headmaster: R Hayward BA, BEd, MEd, TTC  
Telephone: 787-5933  
Fax: 787-4918

29 May 1996

Dear Parent

The school is committed to providing the children with an education of true quality. As a school community, we would like to continually improve on the quality of education provided.

I would be most grateful if you were to complete the attached questionnaire. Your comments, evaluations and suggestions will help us to further improve IR Griffith Primary (IRG). Once you have completed the questionnaire, please insert it in the accompanying envelope. Kindly seal the envelope and return it to school via your child. It would be appreciated if the questionnaire is given to your child's class/homeroom teacher by Friday, 31 May.

Confidentiality is assured. Your valued input will help all of us (ie. children, parents and teachers) to realise the goal of an education of true quality at IRG. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely

R Hayward  
Headmaster

IR GRIFFITH PRIMARY SCHOOL

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

OFFICE USE		

(1 - 3)

KINDLY COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY PUTTING A "X" IN THE APPLICABLE BOX:

1. Gender of Parent

Male

1

Female

2

(4)

2. What is your home language?

African (eg. Xhosa, Zulu)

1

Afrikaans

2

Afrikaans and English

3

English

4

European (eg. Italian, Portuguese)

5

Other (please specify) .....

6

(5)

3. How many children do you have at IRG?

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(6)

4. If your family was at IRG last year, indicate whether you have given your services to the school in any of the following activities during 1995: (YES = 1; NO = 2)

	YES	NO	
Catering - providing refreshments	1	2	(7)
Catering - assisting at events, functions	1	2	(8)
Coaching of sport / Assisting at sports functions	1	2	(9)
Delta Park Big Walk	1	2	(10)
Fun and Frolics Night	1	2	(11)
Helping Hands Day	1	2	(12)
Media Centre	1	2	(13)
Outgrown Uniform Shop	1	2	(14)
Tuckshop	1	2	(15)
"Up the beanstalk" production	1	2	(16)

5. Are you presently on any of the following committees? (YES=1;NO=2)

	YES	NO	
Bursary Fund	1	2	(17)
Governing Body	1	2	(18)
Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)	1	2	(19)

6. Did you attend the meetings indicated below in Term One, 1996? (YES=1;NO=2)

	YES	NO	
Grade or Standard meeting	1	2	(20)
PTA - Annual General Meeting	1	2	(21)

7. If you did not attend the PTA - Annual General Meeting, what was the most important reason for your non-attendance?

Fear of travelling at night

Long distance to travel

My home is unprotected

No one to babysit children

Not interested

Sufficiently well informed via newsletters, parents' evenings and the like

Unsuitable day of the week

Other (please specify) .....

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8

(22)

8. Kindly put an "X" in the block that best describes your personal response to the following statements. The key to the responses is:

1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Disagree	4 Strongly disagree	5 Not applicable
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My telephone calls to the school have been answered promptly.

1	2	3	4	5	(23)
---	---	---	---	---	------

Telephonic enquiries have been dealt with by the secretaries to my satisfaction.

1	2	3	4	5	(24)
---	---	---	---	---	------

The Headmaster has dealt with my telephonic enquiries in an effective manner.

1	2	3	4	5	(25)
---	---	---	---	---	------

When visiting the school, I have been made to feel welcome.

1	2	3	4	5	(26)
---	---	---	---	---	------

Secretarial staff have been helpful towards me.

1	2	3	4	5	(27)
---	---	---	---	---	------

The Headmaster has been approachable when I have contacted him.

1	2	3	4	5	(28)
---	---	---	---	---	------

I find the contents of the Wednesday newsletter interesting to read.

1	2	3	4	5	(29)
---	---	---	---	---	------

Enough information about activities at the school is contained in the weekly newsletter.

1	2	3	4	5	(30)
---	---	---	---	---	------

Discipline at the school is sound.

1	2	3	4	5	(31)
---	---	---	---	---	------

The children of IRG dress neatly.

1	2	3	4	5	(32)
---	---	---	---	---	------

The IRG children are courteous in public.

1	2	3	4	5	(33)
---	---	---	---	---	------

Incidents of bullying have been dealt with in an effective way.

1	2	3	4	5	(34)
---	---	---	---	---	------

Incidents of stealing have been dealt with in an effective way.

1	2	3	4	5	(35)
---	---	---	---	---	------

The school shows due respect to our family's cultural beliefs.

1	2	3	4	5	(36)
---	---	---	---	---	------

The school shows due respect to our family's religious beliefs.

1	2	3	4	5	(37)
---	---	---	---	---	------

Parents are made to feel welcome to participate in school activities.

1	2	3	4	5	(38)
---	---	---	---	---	------

Parents' ideas for the improvement of the school are welcomed by staff.

1	2	3	4	5	(39)
---	---	---	---	---	------

The gardens are neat.

1	2	3	4	5	(40)
---	---	---	---	---	------

The school buildings are in a state of good repair.

1	2	3	4	5	(41)
---	---	---	---	---	------

The school fees are good value for money.

1	2	3	4	5	(42)
---	---	---	---	---	------

I would recommend IRG to a prospective parent.

1	2	3	4	5	(43)
---	---	---	---	---	------

9. Should you wish to add comment to any of your responses to the questions in 8 above, please do so here:

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10. Kindly answer the following questions on the basis of the Grade or Standard of the child who was issued with this questionnaire. (For example, you might have children in Grade One, Standard One and Standard Two. The child in Standard Two was issued with this questionnaire. Accordingly, you would answer these questions on the basis of your impressions and experiences of the Standard Two educational situation).

My child who was given this questionnaire is in (put an "X" in the applicable box):

	Grade 1	1
	2	2
Standard	1	3
	2	4
	3	5
	4	6
	5	7

Please put an "X" in the block that best describes your personal response to the following statements. The key to the responses is:

1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Disagree	4 Strongly disagree	5 Not applicable
---------------------	------------	---------------	------------------------	---------------------

My child's class/homeroom teacher has been helpful when I have made contact.

1	2	3	4	5	(45)
---	---	---	---	---	------

The teachers have a caring attitude towards my child.

1	2	3	4	5	(46)
---	---	---	---	---	------

Sufficient opportunities have been provided for me to discuss my child's progress with the class or homeroom teacher.

1	2	3	4	5	(47)
---	---	---	---	---	------

The termly Grade or Standard newsletter has been informative.

1	2	3	4	5	(48)
---	---	---	---	---	------

The weekly cycle test is a fair way to evaluate the scholastic progress of my child.

1	2	3	4	5	(49)
---	---	---	---	---	------

My child enjoyed going on the educational tour in March.

1	2	3	4	5	(50)
---	---	---	---	---	------

The tour price was good value for money.

1	2	3	4	5	(51)
---	---	---	---	---	------

The amount of daily homework given to my child has been fair.

1	2	3	4	5	(52)
---	---	---	---	---	------

The extramural (eg. Computer club, cricket) programme meets my child's needs.

1	2	3	4	5	(53)
---	---	---	---	---	------

The scholastic expectations made on my child are fair.

1	2	3	4	5	(54)
---	---	---	---	---	------

I am satisfied with the overall academic standard of education offered to my child.

1	2	3	4	3	(55)
---	---	---	---	---	------

I think that my child enjoys attending IRG.

1	2	3	4	5	(56)
---	---	---	---	---	------

11. Should you wish to add comments to any of your responses to the questions in 10 above, please do so below:

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12. Is there anything presently happening at IRG that you would like to see either changed or stopped? If so, please indicate below:

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