Leadership and the development of quality culture in schools

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Introduction

The significance of leadership in the development of quality initiatives in organizations is well documented in the quality management literature. Many quality management models clearly state the need for top management to be the first to undertake quality management training, or that a quality committee or a quality champion should take the initiative in establishing quality processes. Fox (1991, p. 10), for example, identifies the need for a "TQM steering committee", which includes a "quality champion", a "quality sponsor" and a "TQM co-ordinator" as part of the management commitment, and suggests that there are four aspects to top management responsibility, which are to: develop a vision for the future; set specific quality objectives; establish the budget for quality; and provide leadership. There is emerging evidence to suggest that it is through the example and commitment to quality of senior management that the whole organization is able to adopt a quality ethos. Ellis (1993), for example, argues that such management commitment is demonstrated by:
• generating the quality policy through consultation;
• publicizing the quality policy;
• allocating money and time to the quality process;
• attending quality team meetings;
• talking with staff both informally and formally about quality;
• modelling the quality culture;
• valuing and respecting people;
• insisting on clear quality requirements and documented procedures.

This overall responsibility, outlined by Oakland (1989, p. 42), could include: encouraging and facilitating quality improvement; monitoring and evaluating the progress of quality improvement; promoting the partnerships in quality between customers and suppliers; planning, managing, auditing and reviewing quality systems; as well as planning and providing quality training and counseling or consultancy. It could also incorporate giving advice to management in relation to the:
• establishment of quality systems and process control;
• relevant statutory/legislative requirements with respect to quality;
• quality improvement programmes necessary;
• inclusion of quality elements in all job instructions and procedures.

This paper will consider the significance of leadership for the development of quality management in school education and discuss a theoretical framework which could assist leaders to develop the conceptual understanding necessary for the development of a quality philosophy appropriate to their organizations.

Leadership for quality management in school education

A number of research studies during the last decade have established a key function of educational leadership in the development of school culture generally (Deal and Peterson, 1994; Grace, 1995; Leithwood and Jantzi, 1991; Sashkin and Sashkin, 1990; Schein, 1985). There is emerging evidence that leadership is a significant factor in the development of quality organizations (Blanton, 1991; Robinson, 1996; Scholtes and Hacquebord, 1988; Senge, 1990; Tribus and Tsude, 1987). It is argued by Gore (1993, pp. 357-8) for example, that, from the plethora of quality management approaches available to organizations, leadership, vision and culture are essential in schools if significant and permanent change is going to be institutionalized. Aspin et al. (1994, p. 20) argue that:

The functions and tasks that have been identified as having to do with, and promoting quality in, education are, in a major way, the responsibility of those who are charged with the exercise of leadership and management of school and school systems.

The significance of leadership in the development of quality in school education is also recognized by Paine et al. (1992, p. 40) who, in discussing the concept of total quality education (TQE) as a model for schools, maintain that:
Leadership is considered to be a concept which describes actions which yield social change and improvement, and is associated with the development of community involvement and participation on decision making.

Working on systems and processes with the people who work in them requires more than management. It requires leadership. Schools using TQE to develop strategies to bring about lasting and continuous improvement must be led. Leadership is also essential to develop a mission and goals, and work constantly towards their improvement.

Similarly, Langford and Cleary (1995, p. 35) suggest that:

- In educational systems, the role of leadership is to sustain the vision of connectedness, so that students, teachers, administrators, parents and taxpayers – all those who receive the benefit of the system – understand their roles with respect to the larger systems of learning in which they operate.

Such leadership could include, for example, developing a vision for the future, generating quality processes, setting specific quality objectives and the allocation of resources. Siegel and Byrne (1994, p. 113) point out that:

In designing successful quality implementation strategies, education leaders confront two significant challenges that many companies do not. They must build for their people an understanding of individual jobs and professional expertise as the sum total of connected work processes with a customer at the end of each process. And they must alter the organizational culture to support people working together.

A model for leadership in quality management

A recent review by Leithwood et al. (1994) illustrated the complexity and depth of research relating to school leadership which has taken place during the last two decades. While this review considers a number of dimensions and frameworks for viewing leadership in schools, the significance of leaders having the ability to utilize expert knowledge to transform organizational culture is a key theme emerging for future school leadership.

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qualities alternatives which need to be considered, and decisions need to be made in relation to the content and structure of quality initiatives.

Such leadership is also necessary because the notion of quality, quality management and quality assurance are relatively new to schools and may require those in leadership positions to initiate strategies for a better understanding of quality issues at the organizational level. It may be that someone, or a group of organizational members, finds it necessary to develop specific expertise before quality processes can be attempted.

As there is no definite evidence that specific quality strategies can be unproblematically transferred from other industries to the educational context, leadership is required to develop a shared understanding of quality within the school or group of schools and to grow such initiatives from existing practices. The identification and further development of a quality system in a school, for example, would require a thorough knowledge of the existing organizational processes within the school, the skills to be able to identify the various possible components of such a system and the ability to manage it. This challenge for leadership is described by Siegel and Byrne (1994, p. 52) in the following way:

It is one thing for a leader to have the vision; it is quite another for that vision to guide the behavior of an entire organization. Leaders in successful quality settings have been able to conceptualize the theory in ways that translate into practice, steer the change process, and guide their people in determining not only how to perform their jobs, but even more importantly, what those jobs should be.

This conceptualization process for leaders needs to begin with an investigation of the nature of quality in organizations and then to consider the philosophical principles of existing quality management approaches.

The nature of quality

Central to the quality movement, which is influencing public and private sector organizations worldwide, is the concept of quality culture and the development of such culture within organizations (Acker-Hocevar, 1996; Gilbert, 1987; Kanter, 1987; Liberatore, 1993). The emphasis on culture in the corporate context reflects the holistic nature of organizational quality initiatives and incorporates the notion of transformation from existing commonly held assumptions, attitudes, behavior, values and beliefs towards the development of an alternative paradigm.

Such a quality culture is described by Saraph and Sebastian (1993, p. 73) in the following way:

Quality culture is the total of the collective or shared learning of the quality-related values as the organization develops its capacity to survive in its external environment and to manage its own internal affairs.

While the notion of a quality culture seems educationally desirable in that schools are concerned with cultural development and change for the improvement of learning, it is problematic because the concept has a specific meaning within the context of the quality movement. This meaning needs to be explored through the analysis of the concept of quality on which the notion of quality culture is based. In maintaining that quality is a "slippery concept", Pfeffer and Coote (1991, p. 31), however, highlight the difficulty in reaching a common understanding or universal definition of this term. Murgatroyd (1991, p. 14), for example, associates the concept of quality with standards and values by offering three definitions of quality:

1. Quality is defined in terms of some absolute standard and evaluations are based on the application of these standards to the situations experienced across a variety of organizations, irrespective of their strategy of differentiated services (established standards definition).
2. Quality is defined in terms of the objectives set for a specific programme or process in a specific location at a specific time (specific standards definition).
3. Quality is defined as "fitness for use" as attested by the end-users on the basis of their direct experience (fitness for use in a market-driven definition).

Similarly, Cuttance (1995) identifies two definitions of quality by making the distinction between quality as the intrinsic values associated with a service or product and quality as the meeting of customer requirements. In this sense there is a need to meet customer expectations in relation to the perceived value or worth attached to a product or service, while also ensuring the product or service has intrinsic merit as defined by widely held professional standards. Cuttance (1995, p. 4) notes that it is the notion of quality as "value" or "worth" in relation to customer expectations that describes the nature of quality as interpreted within the quality management context:

The term quality is thus used in a different way to that of its use in everyday language. In particular the "quality" of a product or service should be interpreted as its "value" or "worth" as measured by the extent to which it meets the needs of the customer.
Within this notion of quality it is assumed that most organizations produce a product or service which is intended to satisfy the needs of users or customers with quality; therefore, being the “totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bears on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs” (British Standards Institute, 1992). This relativist notion of quality is supported by Sallis (1993, p. 13), who perceives quality as: “a philosophy or methodology which assists institutions to manage change, and to set their own agendas for dealing with the plethora of new external pressures”. In this sense, quality is a concept implying “fitness for purpose”, measuring up to specification as well as meeting particular customer needs.

The relativist definition views quality not as an attribute of a product or service, but as something which is ascribed to it. Quality can be judged to exist when a good or service meets the specification that has been laid down for it. Quality is not the end in itself, but a means by which the end product is judged to be up to standard (Sallis, 1993, p. 23).

Quality, therefore, can be perceived in relation to accepted quality standards associated with a particular sphere of interest, “appropriateness to purpose”, through the ability consistently to meet or exceed perceived customer needs and an organizational capacity for continuous improvement of processes and systems.

...equity, excellence, democracy and justice provide the dimensions for a theory of quality for schools, which suggests that quality schools need to communicate civilization, meet the personal needs of students and ensure that students are responsive to the needs of society.

The total quality management paradigm

Defined in the broad sense, quality management has come to mean “that aspect of the overall management function that determines and implements the quality policy (intentions and directions) of the organization” (Van Vught and Westerheijden, 1992, p. 13). Quality management, as a quality improvement process, can be perceived within the context of planned organizational change. The notion of organizational change needs to be considered if quality management is the be understood. For example, organizational change can be in the form of the motion of the organization as a whole as it relates to motion in its environment – change that is macro-evolutionary, historical, and typically related to clusters or whole industries.

Alternatively, change could describe the motion of the parts of the organization in relation to each other as the organization grows, ages and progresses through its life cycle – change that is micro-evolutionary, developmental and typically related to size or...
shape, resulting in co-ordination issues. Furthermore, change could be the result of struggles for power and control among individuals or groups with a stake in the organization to make decisions or enjoy benefits as an expression of their interests – change that focuses on political dimensions and involving revolutionary activity.

In this sense change is complex and continuous, with each aspect of the movement of organizations having implications for the kind of quality improvement processes undertaken. Change is the result of circumstances beyond the control of the organization, as well as being the result of planning and rational decision making within the organization. Within this notion of organizational movement, the management of quality relates to planned cultural change to enable quality improvement processes to eventuate. Although difficult to define, the concept of culture can be perceived as being closely associated with the notion of shared attitudes, behaviours, values and assumptions. Within this context, Kroeber and Klukhohn (1952) maintain that:

Culture consists of patterns of ... behavior acquired and transmitted via symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core culture consists of traditional (historically derived and selected) ideas and especially attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning elements for future action.

Quality management, therefore, is based on change towards the development of quality values which might include a customer focus, teamwork, safety for all stakeholders, candour, total involvement, intimacy, integrity, unity, consensus and excellence (Hart and Shoolbred, 1993, p. 17). A quality culture would incorporate components such as “shared values, commitment to getting it right, open and explicit communication, time for teamwork, training in quality, total involvement, sensitivity to others’ needs” (Ellis, 1993, p. 3). Within this holistic framework for organizational change, quality management is a long-term change philosophy requiring a cultural transformation within an organization which could incorporate the development of a shared vision for the future of the organization, a professional development programme to equip stakeholders with the required skills to achieve goals, a focus on providing services which satisfy customer needs and a process of review and evaluation (Offner, 1993).

Unlike many organizations, however, schools are complex in nature and their concern with a multitude of educational purposes, including human development, community growth and learning outcomes, makes the management of quality problematic.

TQM in schools and school systems

Substantial interest in TQM in education has begun to emerge (Sallis, 1993), although this interest has been focused primarily on higher education institutions (Coate, 1990; Cope and Sherr, 1991; Cornesky, et al., 1991; Masters and Leiker, 1992; Needham et al., 1992; Reynolds, 1992; Saunders and Walker, 1991; Sutcliffe and Pollock, 1992; Tannock, 1991; Van Vught and Westerheijden, 1992; Winter, 1991), technical and further education (TAFE NSW, 1994, 1995) and training institutions (Ellis, 1993; Shaw and Roper, 1993). Other educational areas where interest in TQM has been shown include educational administration (Hough, 1993), vocational education (Laarnkard, 1992) and curriculum development (Macchia, 1992). This increasing interest in TQM in relation to education generally is based on the perception of educational institutions as being predominantly service organizations where the focus is on such factors as quality, delivery, safety, cost, organizational responsibility, infrastructure, external relationships, customer protection and compliance (Smith, 1993, p. 48).

The concept of TQM requires that schools are perceived as service organizations designed to fulfill the needs of their clients or customers. Within the educational context, services could include educational programmes, advice, care, information, opportunities to participate or specific skills training. In relation to schools, the emphasis for TQM could be on transforming teaching, curriculum, organizational and management processes within educational institutions in a way which serves student, parent and community interests. Murgatroyd (1991, p. 13) explains the nature of such a quality management process in the following way:

The key task of a service organization, like a school, is to build an effective chain of customers...To create a learning organization dedicated to this requires the school to think from the experience of the student backwards to educational design and structure. Rather than see structure as a normalization of control systems, structure should facilitate responsiveness to student needs in the students’ own terms.

The relatively recent introduction of the TQM philosophy to school education has been
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Educational Management

International Journal of

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perceived generally as a desirable undertaking for the school improvement process, even though some attempts to implement the process in schools have been unsuccessful (Beavis, 1995). In arguing the benefits of TQM to schools, Gore (1993, p. 335), for example, maintains that TQM is very applicable to education in that:

The central concept of TQM, continuous improvement, is fundamental to education. Where else would the idea of a culture oriented to continuous improvement be more appropriate than in institutions whose purpose is to support improvement and individual growth?

It is suggested by Gore (1993, p. 375) that, although schools need to develop their own approach, some aspects of TQM are very relevant, these being:

- the role of leadership;
- the articulation and development of a vision and the development of culture;
- management by fact;
- a focus on team building and processes that cross functional boundaries;
- management and enhancement of human resources;
- benchmarking;
- cycle time reduction;
- customer focus, satisfaction and measurement.

This belief that the TQM philosophy has a logical application to school organizations is supported by Murgatroyd (1993, p. 245), who maintains that quality improvement is culturally located in that “improving quality becomes an over-riding mission for the school. It is not afad, or a game or a new activity for a given academic year. It is an essential part of the development strategy for the school and is something that is everyone’s responsibility.” There is the belief that TQM principles can enhance learning at the individual and organizational levels, that schools need to become truly “learning organizations” and that schools can learn a great deal about quality management from other kinds of organizations.

A definition of TQM

TQM has emerged as the most well-known approach to the development of organizational culture for quality management, representing a philosophical framework for the management of quality in organizations which claims to be applicable to both private and public sector enterprises and institutions. Oakland (1989, p. 14) defines TQM in the following way:

Total Quality Management (TQM) is an approach to improving the effectiveness and flexibility of businesses as a whole. It is essentially a way of organizing and involving the whole organization; every department, every activity, every single person at every level.

Within this definition, TQM is conducive to the continuous improvement of quality within all kinds of organizations and, as a long-term change process, can contribute to organizational growth and renewal. From this perspective, TQM represents a quality management process which is concerned with people, systems and culture, incorporating processes such as leadership, systems thinking, and employee empowerment continuously to improve an organization’s capacity to meet current and future customer needs. In suggesting that the outcomes of TQM are improved quality, enhanced effectiveness and a change of institutional culture, Smith (1993, p. 57) maintains that TQM is a managed process that seeks organization-wide improvement through:

- planning for new products and services;
- innovation in existing services;
- continuous improvement in all existing service processes;
- daily control of service processes.

The TQM philosophy

In TQM, every element of the organization is involved in the enterprise of continuous improvement, with each individual sharing responsibility regardless of his or her position or status. It is maintained by Sallis (1993, pp. 26-7) that TQM is a philosophy of organizational culture change which, through employee participation and co-operation, focuses on the satisfaction of customer expectations:

TQM is about creating a quality culture where the aim of every member of staff is to delight their customers, and where the structure of their organization allows them to do so. In the total quality definition of quality the customer is sovereign...It is about providing the customers with what they want, when they want it and how they want it. It involves moving with customer expectations and fashions to design products and services which meet and exceed their expectations.

TQM is based on the notion of organizations as systems and sub-systems which function as a unified whole, with emphasis on the interface between the various elements of the organization as much as on the nature of the elements themselves. As a quality improvement philosophy based on systems thinking, TQM has a range of characteristics which distinguish it from other quality management processes such as those based on [57]
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inspection, quality indicators or achievement objectives. These key elements have been interpreted by TQM enthusiasts and practitioners in a number of ways, although each provides an insight into the TQM paradigm.

In defining TQM as a “cooperative form of doing business that relies on the talents and capabilities of both labor and management to continually improve quality and productivity using teams”, Jablonski (1991, p. 4) argues that TQM is based on six principles which include: developing a focus on customers, processes as well as results, prevention rather than inspection, mobilizing workforce expertise, fact-based management and providing feedback for improvement. Within this model, TQM requires participative management, continuous process improvement and the use of teams. Similarly, Lamprecht (1993, p. 24) emphasizes the function of process improvement as a central factor in TQM and defines total quality as having five components:

1. Employee participation.
2. Continuously improving all processes.
3. Monitoring your processes using appropriate statistical techniques.
4. Surveying your customers and benchmarking your competitors.
5. Innovation, in order to remain competitive.

In defining customer service, continuous improvement, systems thinking and leadership as fundamental elements, Bonstingl (1992, pp. 6-7) maintains that there are “four pillars” of total quality management:

1. The organization must focus, first and foremost, on its suppliers and customers.
2. Everyone in the organization must be dedicated to continuous improvement, personally and collectively.
3. The organization must be viewed as a system, and the work people do within the system must be seen as ongoing processes.
4. The success of total quality management is the responsibility of top management.

Fox (1991), in advocating the need for the further development of TQM in Australian organizations, suggests six sequential steps for the development of a TQM culture in organizations. The steps Fox (1991, p. 8) suggests are based on what is referred to as “the TQM trilogy”, which includes the concepts of quality, quality systems and quality measurement. The “six steps to TQM” are:

1. Demonstrate top management commitment.
2. Establish the current state of quality.
3. Determine the quality strategies.
4. Educate management in TQM.
5. Institute new quality awareness everywhere.
6. Institute continuous improvement.

Characteristics of TQM

It is apparent from the models discussed above that the philosophy of TQM is long-term, large-scale and all-embracing, incorporating all organizational members and activities into the quality improvement process, rather than being focused on limited aspects of the organization. This includes the internal interrelationships among the various components of the organization as well as its relationships with customers. TQM is about developing a new culture in the form of quality-based decision making permeating all aspects of the organization. This notion of quality is based on the well documented W. Edwards Deming’s 14 points which form the philosophical platform of the quality movement. These points are:

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

These, and other essential characteristics of TQM, are summarized below.

Customer-driven process

The methods and processes of the organization are designed and managed to meet both internal and external customer expectations. Suppliers and customers are viewed as partners in the quality initiative.

Emphasis on teamwork

Teamwork could be described as the primary element of the TQM approach to quality organizations and represents the organizational structure on which the quality improvement process is based. Participation is achieved primarily through the establishment of cross-functional and/ or cross-departmental, problem-solving teams in the form of quality improvement teams or quality circles.
Continuous improvement
The TQM process is based on the principle that widespread cultural change can be best achieved through the incremental process of gradual, small-scale, achievable projects incorporating the use of statistical tools and techniques (expressed in the Japanese notion of kaizen) rather than on radical structural reorganization. The performance of similar processes in different parts of the organization is compared through internal benchmarking.

Problem prevention
Quality is built in at the design and processing stage rather than being inspected out as defects in the end product. The organization rewards quality work and suggestions for improvement, usually through non-pecuniary means.

Participation in decision making
TQM is based on the notion of participation through a “total involvement” approach which requires continuous, first-hand involvement of top management as well as the participation of all organizational members in the development and implementation of quality management strategies.

Management by fact
Management decision making is based on qualitative and quantitative data from feedback about the performance of processes and products. Gut feelings and intuition are considered inadequate bases for decision making.

Individual responsibility
In order that TQM be successful as a process of quality improvement, each organizational member is required to take responsibility for the quality of their own performance. Organizational members are perceived as independent on one another within the customer/supplier relationship. Rather than depending in an external authority structure to enforce, coerce or induce desired behaviours, TQM is concerned with moving the focus of control from outside the individual to within.

Commitment to staff training
All organizational members require education and training in ways of working in a quality environment, practising error prevention rather than detection, as well as the use of problem-solving techniques and tools. Senior management requires education in relation to the philosophy of TQM and the implications for organizational change associated with a TQM culture. All organizational members require skills in relation to team membership and the use of techniques for problem solving.

Perceived barriers to TQM in schools
Although the TQM process seems compatible with the school improvement process, there is a range of issues which emerge in relation to TQM as a philosophy for quality improvement in schools, and these may form barriers to the intended change process, some of which are considered below.

Philosophical barriers
The TQM philosophy is not a panacea for the development of quality schools and cannot be seen as the only means through which a school or school system can achieve improved quality. Other instructional or organizational reforms, such as effective schools, essential schools, co-operative learning, accelerated learning and outcome-based education also need to be considered.

Application to improved student learning
The emphasis on organizational culture, which is fundamental to the TQM philosophy, is an approach to quality improvement which is new to schools as organizations. It could be that this emphasis lacks credibility within the teaching profession which is more concerned with the practicalities of the teaching/learning process. The linkage between TQM and improved learning outcomes may not be clear – if, in fact, it exists.

Difficulties with statistical analysis
TQM requires that information for problem solving and decision making be generated through the use of statistical techniques. This approach may be relevant to industrial or product-oriented enterprises where outcomes are directly observable and measurable. The introduction of such techniques in schools for decision making and policy development may be inappropriate or culturally removed from the accepted intuitive and professional judgements, as well as the political process, that pervade educational policy.

The customer/supplier relationship
As well as requiring students, parents, community members and other stakeholders to be considered as customers, TQM is based largely on an internal linear customer/supplier relationship which requires that each person within the organization be both customer to other organizational members, while at the same time supplying services to other personnel. This customer/supplier relationship may not be an appropriate concept to describe the long-term, close and emotional relationship that teachers develop with students, colleagues and parents within the context of their professional role. Moreover, even if appropriate, the customer/supplier relationship may be more complex in educational organizations where roles and
responsibilities are complex and multi-functional.

The right first time (RFT) philosophy
One aim of the TQM process is to establish an organizational culture which is error-free in that the quality system assures that mistakes are eliminated. While this may be a commendable objective in many industrial contexts, its possibility and value are debatable in educational organizations. Experimentation and the examination of alternative ideas and processes seem to be requirements of the learning process and, subsequently, a desirable aspect of the educational process.

The customer-defined quality concept
TQM requires that the notion of quality is customer-driven, in that the fulfilment of customer needs is the ultimate definition of quality. This perception of quality may be unrealistic in relation to the value-laden environment of schools, with quality being more a negotiated phenomenon drawing on student, parent, professional and department expectations and aspirations.

The industrial culture in education
TQM is predominantly an industrial or manufacturing organizational culture which assumes that the organizational structure is hierarchical in nature and that organizational personnel have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Schools are more flexible in their role definitions and the identification of a school's quality system may be much more difficult.

Perceived lack of a teaching/learning focus
Quality strategies for focusing on operations and administrative functions at the micro-level may be relevant to the support structure for the delivery of services, resources and programmes to schools. They may not be applicable to the improvement of schools' primary work, which is the theory and practice of teaching and learning, or to the evaluation of performance at the system level.

Introduction processes
The introduction of TQM requires that top management be committed to the philosophy of TQM and be prepared to undertake initial TQM education and training in order that they can take a central role in its implementation. The complex nature of schools and the demanding role of school executives could well prevent or restrict this initial phase to take place satisfactorily.

Stages of organizational development
TQM may be more appropriate to organizations at particular stages of their development. Schools do not necessarily pass through these stages, in that they are ongoing and permanent establishments.

Need for some inspection processes in schools
TQM requires the concept of built-in quality rather than the use of quality control or inspection processes. Within schools, the processes of assessment, appraisal and testing are recognized as legitimate and necessary processes to ascertain accountability and measure improvement, and their removal may cause community concern.

However, despite these perceived barriers, there are a number of advantages relating to the existence of TQM in school education, and these benefits have provided an incentive for some individual schools and school systems to initiate TQM approaches.

Perceived advantages of TQM in school education
TQM has a number of characteristics which make it philosophically compatible with the development of educational organizations, provided that TQM initiatives can be linked with the core educational purpose of schools. From the experience of some schools and school systems it is evident that the TQM philosophy can provide a conceptual framework for educational organizations to develop the culture relevant to their individual purposes. The TQM process could be compatible with school organizations for a number of reasons, which include the following:

- Theoretical compatibility. Schools are already undertaking processes which reflect the TQM philosophy. These include the use of curriculum development teams, the relatively high level of responsibility which teachers have for educational decision making in their classrooms and the use of school-based strategic planning processes. As a generic philosophy of quality improvement, TQM allows for the development of models for quality improvement which serve the specific needs of the organization.
- Educational compatibility. The TQM process values people and their achievements, therefore reflecting compatibility with the developmental purposes of the educational process.
- Equity principles. TQM requires education and training of all organizational personnel - a philosophy which is compatible with the purposes of schooling. Moreover, individuals are given the opportunity to contribute on an equal basis through team structures.
- Ethically comparable. TQM is based on responsibility, commitment and trust.
Models for TQM in schools

One focus for TQM initiatives in schools has been on the individual school as a system. Those who advocate TQM efforts in individual schools (Glasser, 1986; 1990; 1993; Gore, 1993; Greenwood and Gaunt, 1994; Murgatroyd, 1993; Paine et al., 1992) argue that TQM has implications for the improvement of student learning outcomes and maximizing the potential of the school to support student learning. This approach maintains that individual schools incorporate quality management processes into their existing culture in a way which supports identified organizational learning needs. Two models for school-based quality management are discussed below.

The quality marketing model

The quality marketing model (Murgatroyd, 1991, 1993) for the quality management process in schools is based on a competitive philosophy, which sees individual schools competing against one another in an open market for students and resources. Quality is sustained through each school establishing a particular niche in its educational philosophy and policies. TQM is equated with the notion of customer-driven quality, although the complementary processes of contract conformance and quality assurance (equated with quality control) are perceived as being necessary but of lesser importance to the quality process.

The quality learning model

The quality learning model (Glasser, 1990, 1993; Gossen and Anderson, 1995; Langford and Cleary, 1995) for the quality management process in schools concentrates on the relationship between the student and the teacher in the learning process. In this model, students are encouraged to accept responsibility for the quality of their work, with the teacher ensuring that the emotional, physical and psychological conditions for learning are in existence. Quality is equated with the continuous improvement of learning outcomes and the ability of students to take responsibility for this improvement.

TQM in school systems

A second focus for TQM initiatives in schools has been directed at the improvement of educational systems, that is, school districts composed of a cluster of individual schools making up the system. Those who advocate TQM at the district or school system level (AASA, 1992; Horine et al., 1994; Langford and Cleary, 1995; Rhodes, 1990; Siegel and Byrne, 1994; Weller and Hartley, 1994) argue that all organizations, regardless of their differences in purpose and structure, share a common quality language and similar quality concepts can apply to all organizations. A further argument is that school improvement initiatives can be undertaken more efficiently and effectively at a district level where all schools are part of the improvement process and that school systems need to be restructured in order to meet emerging global economic and societal futures. This approach has two key characteristics which have implications at the school level:

1. Long-term commitment to improvement.
2. Compatible with existing organizational characteristics which have implications at the school level:

   - Long-term commitment to improvement.
   - Compatible with existing organizational characteristics which have implications at the school level:
   - Long-term commitment to improvement.
   - Compatible with existing organizational characteristics which have implications at the school level:

which are values widely held as being ethically worthwhile.
1 Organizational networks. The fundamental assumption underlying district-based approaches is that the process of developing TQM in schools and non-school organizations can be undertaken within a similar conceptual and methodological framework. Quality, it is argued, can be enhanced in any organization through the sharing of inter-organizational information and practices, and the development of mutual support networks. Quality is dependent on a range of business and public sector organizations functioning as a unit for the mutual benefit of all involved. Individual schools have the advantage of sharing the knowledge and expertise of a range of TQM organizations, therefore becoming part of a larger TQM system.

2 Resource optimization. The district approach requires that a number of schools within a specified district function as part of a common quality improvement structure, which is non-competitive and collaborative in nature. It is argued by the American Association of School Administrators (1992) that TQM can be thought of as content-free, applicable to any instructional or structural reform, and that the limited resources available to educational systems can be utilized within a district to maximize advantages within each school.

Conclusion

Leadership needs to undertake a fundamental role in the development of organizational systems to generate and sustain cultural change in schools. The development of a quality culture in schools requires school leaders to develop a thorough understanding of, and commitment to, a quality philosophy as a means of school improvement, and expertise in quality management processes and techniques for the establishment of organizational quality systems.

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