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Exploring the Implementation of Total Quality
Management in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

The study explores the implementation of Total Quality Management in Saudi Arabia. Particularly, it investigates the factors affecting the implementation of TQM in the educational sector, ‘the Ministry of Education’, to fill a gap of knowledge in the previous literature. These factors are related to the organisational culture in the country. The thesis studies these factors and their relevance in affecting the implementation of TQM. This study aims to explore the nature of the relationship between Total Quality Management and Organisational culture. The first objective of this thesis is to explore the challenges that facing the education quality management in Saudi Arabia. The second objective is to identify the actions that being taken by the Ministry of Education to introduce TQM to the educational system. Finally, the third objective is to determine the factors affecting the implementation of Total Quality Management in the educational system in Saudi Arabia.

Collecting data was via semi-structured interviews as the methodology is qualitative to provide an in-depth understanding of phenomena. Forty employees in the ministry were interviewed who had worked for the ministry for more than five years, so they understood the quality of educational system in the country. The main themes in the findings were identified by analysing them thematically using Miles and Huberman’s (1994) inductive approach.

Regarding the first objective of this research, the findings illustrate the weakness of quality in the educational system in Saudi Arabia, which the interviewees ascribe to some issues such as weak pre-service training, lack of professionalism, misuse of performance evaluation, inconsistent standards of rewards and punishments. In addition, findings show that there are other issues with the quality of education related to school resources and the availability of materials, curriculum, and the centralisation in the system of the Ministry of Education. In regard to the second objective of this research, the findings show that the Ministry of Education has taken some important steps to raise the level of quality by establishing the Total Quality Management Department which has top-level support from the minister. Moreover, there are new programmes and trends made by the ministry such as new curricula, decentralisation, and teachers’ efforts to provide careers guidance. Regarding the third objective of this study, the findings illustrate that there are some obstacles facing the implementation of Total Quality

Management in the educational system in Saudi Arabia. Training employees of the ministry and spreading the culture of TQM is facing issues such as insufficient training courses, unqualified trainers, access issues and lack of benefit from those training programmes. Cultural resistance from some parents and principals plays an important role hindering implementation of change. The findings of this study also show that the participation of the staff is not enough, whether they are teachers, principals or members of educational departments.

This study contributes knowledge at both practical and academic levels. At practical level, it offers has pointed recommendations for the ministry's top management to increase the awareness of TQM importance in regard to improving the quality of educational system and to reach the maximum benefits to the employees and students. On the academic level, as this study gives insights regarding TQM implementation and an understanding of the nature of the TQM application process and the challenges that face its implementation. It contributes to knowledge of TQM by providing empirical evidence that may assist practitioners in the Arab context to improve TQM.

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I dedicate this work to

My parents

My Brothers and Sisters

My sons

And to all those who prayed for me

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1. Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction

The concern of this study is the implementation of total quality management (TQM) in the public sector, particularly the factors affecting its applicability. The study was conducted in the public sector in Saudi Arabia in the Ministry of Education. The modern theory of TQM has outlined the significance of quality management, which can improve education in almost all countries around the world to the satisfaction of various shareholders, including society as a whole, parents, students and industry (Agarwal et al., 2011).

This chapter describes the rationale behind the research, beginning with the background of the study, followed by the research aims, research questions, research significance, research context and the structure of this study.

1.1. Background to the Study

The management of organisations has evolved from a concept of detecting problems to preventing problems, and in current times has become generally known as total quality management (TQM), which is a concept of continuous improvement. Moreover, TQM attempts to combine all departments and functions of an organisation, such as customer service, production and design, to serve the needs of customers by continually improving efficiency through the involvement of all employees, and is defined as a management philosophy.

After years of focusing on quantitative expansion of public sectors, including education, the Saudi government has recently turned its attention to quality improvement. In an attempt to improve quality, it has turned to theories and models from developed countries, notably Total Quality Management.

There has been considerable research into the management of organisations, and particularly attempting to define how quality may be improved by developing a quality culture within an organisation (Crosby, 1997; Deming, 1988; Juran, 1992). Nevertheless, organisations need to create a culture of support for their employees before they can implement TQM successfully. According to Westbrook (1993 cited in Smith et al., 2002), the adoption of TQM by an organisation will fail unless managers have a clear focus on their target outcomes, as well as an understanding of what needs to be achieved to reach the end of this journey. As a result, the successful implementation of TQM is dependent on examining its relationship with

organisational culture, as much as its requirement to enhance the procedures and processes of management and the culture of the organisation.

Studies into organisational culture began during the 1980s, but researchers were unable to agree a common definition, whether it can be changed or be managed or how it could be assessed or examined, until more recent times. Conflict has been demonstrated among researchers regarding whether the definition of organisational culture should be related to its values or practices. Furthermore, little agreement was reached as to the form of measurement of organisational culture, such as by measuring current practices or measuring according to the organisation's values (Hofstede, 1998; Van den Berg and Wilderom, 2004). Some findings describe organisational values as being stable (O'Reilly et al., 1991) and others suggest that they are difficult to change (Hofstede, 2001). In contrast, Deal and Kennedy (1982) argue that organisational values have the capacity to be managed and changed. However, there is little common agreement with regard to values when attempting to define and assess organisational culture (Hofstede, 1998; Van den Berg and Wilderom, 2004; Van Muijen et al., 1999). According to Hofstede (2003), there are wider differences among the practices of employees than among their values. In an earlier study, he explained that people acquire values from their families in their early years, but that the practices of organisations are acquired through socialisation at places of work (Hofstede, 2001). However, in contrast to these findings, Van Muijen et al. (1999) argue that individuals' values and practices are influenced by an organisation. Therefore, if conclusions from findings demonstrate that employees' values cannot be changed as they are stable, these cannot be adopted as a management strategy for assessment or culture change. Conversely, if findings conclude that it is possible to change values, then this concept is valuable in the management of organisations and in assessing culture change capacity within organisations.

Hofstede (1998) explains this disparity of views among other researchers on this aspect as being due to the levels of the information sources they adopted, which he suggests differed considerably. Many studies have gathered data about company values from managers but failed to gather data from all company employees regarding organisational culture. These findings were challenged by Van Muijen et al. (1999), who carried out research at an individual employee level in three separate studies and concluded that organisational culture can be managed and used to assess the culture of an organisation.

1.2. Research Aims

This study explores the nature of the relationship between TQM and national and organisational culture, and attempts to present a clear understanding of this concept by addressing the impact of national and organisational culture on implementing quality programmes. Furthermore, this study highlights the cultural factors affecting the implementation of TQM. Different quality programmes were examined to understand the importance of TQM in the education sector by studying the employees' point of view. In order to undertake this research effectively, the researcher explored and adopted a TQM model appropriate for the education sector and subsequently conducted interviews.

1.3. Research Questions

In order to accomplish the purpose of this thesis, the following research questions need to be addressed:

- 1- What are the current challenges to education quality management in Saudi Arabia?
- 2- What actions are being taken to introduce total quality management in the public education system in Saudi Arabia?
- 3- How do national and organisational culture affect the implementation of Total Quality Management in the public education system Saudi Arabia?

1.4. Significance of the Study

The significance of this research comes from the fact that there are few researchers who have discussed total quality management in the Middle East, particularly its implementation in the education sector. While organisational and national culture have been linked to TQM in most of the literature, the nature of the relationship nature between them is not clear. This study is intended to fill this gap by developing a research design to explore the implementation of TQM in Saudi Arabia. This will help to clarify the nature of the relationship between organisational culture and TQM.

The majority of management theories have been borrowed and adopted from Western theories and implemented in Arab countries (Assad, 2002; Giangreco et al., 2010). Since Saudi Arabia is one of the developing countries, organisations suffer from administrative problems (Assad, 2002). This research will provide in-depth insights into the implementation of TQM and its principles in the context of Saudi Arabia and if there are any factors that may affect its

implementation in the Saudi context. The current scenario highlights the significance of principles of TQM in the Saudi education system. Nevertheless, previous literature has illustrated that educational organisations have been lagging behind other institutions in regard to TQM (Sulaiman et al., 2013). Many scholars suggest that several institutions have a vague idea of the progress that they have made or how far they still have to go to reach a high level of quality (Evans, 2007; Evans and Lindsay, 2008; Lascelles and Dale, 1993).

This research should be beneficial to the Ministry of Education and the Total Quality Management Department (TQMD), as it may draw a clearer picture for them regarding the factors that can affect the implementation of TQM in the education sector and, therefore, allow them to improve the TQM programmes to embed it.

According to Sulaiman et al. (2013, p. 77),

Because culture emerges as a response to internal and external problems, members of an organisation must learn to adopt; changing a culture from the traditional to a TQ culture requires learning. People must come to a new understanding of what quality means. For a TQM organisation, this learning is ongoing as the organisation continuously seeks to improve customer value.

Sulaiman et al. (2013) also declare that the literature focusing on the TQM implementation philosophy and values in developing countries is limited, particularly in the education context. This study therefore contributes to overcoming this deficiency.

1.5. Research Context

1.5.1. Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia

The first Islamic verse ever says

“Recite (or read) in the name of your Lord who created; Created man from a clinging substance; Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous; Who taught by the pen; Taught man that which he knew not” (Quran, verse 96, 1-5).

To avoid the influence of variations in industry culture and national culture on the results of the study, the study will be applied in one sector and one country. The Saudi Ministry of Education was established in 1952 in the reign of King Saud bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, with a budget of 4,400,000 Saudi Riyals, while the budget in 2010 was 26% of the whole budget for the country, which was 94,656,037 Saudi Riyals. There are three stages of education in Saudi

Arabia: primary education starts from the age of six and lasts for six years, then students move to a higher stage called intermediate for another three years; after that they move to the highest stage, which is secondary education, and stay at this level for three more years before they leave general education at the age of eighteen. Schools are segregated by sex; nonetheless, both boys and girls have the same curriculum and take the same examinations annually (Ministry of Education website, a). According to the statistics of the Ministry of Education, there are 5,187,498 students in all stages of general education with a total of 501,111 teachers, including both males and females (Ministry of Education website, b).

At the time when the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) was founded in 1932, few opportunities for education existed. However, the situation has changed radically over the years. Since the establishment of the Ministry of Education, the country has dedicated huge resources to an ongoing programme covering all levels: primary, elementary and secondary education. The rapid development in KSA has caused an enlargement of economic and social activities at all levels and this is a result of the kingdom's huge oil resources. It has also caused an increasing demand in the country for sophisticated technology. Before higher education in Saudi Arabia, there are four educational stages. First of all, the pre-school stage, which is a small part of educational activity which is at present limited mostly to cities. Then, the elementary stage, which caters for the educational needs of children from the age of six to twelve. After that, there is the intermediate stage, which caters for children from the age of twelve to fifteen. Finally, the secondary stage, which is the last three years of education before higher education, that caters for students from the age of fifteen to eighteen. In the first year of the secondary stage, pupils share a common curriculum, while in the other two years they select one of two curricula: literary-based or scientific-based (al-Farsy, 1990).

The number of students and schools has increased since 1970. The table below indicates what was accomplished regarding the number of schools and students in the period 1970-2001.

Education Development 1970-2001
--

Year	Number of schools	Number of students
1970	3,283	547,000
1975	5,634	984,000
1980	11,070	1,462,000
1985	15,079	2,149,000
1990	16,609	2,934,000
1995	21,284	3,934,000
2000	22,770	4,774,000
2001	23,517	5,015,650

Source <http://www.kingfahadbinabdulaziz.com/main/c001.htm>

Al-Sinble et al. (2004) state that as a result of the expeditious increase in education in Saudi Arabia, the Ministry of Education was incapable of building adequate new schools to cover the needs of the community. Consequently, the ministry leased a number of houses for use as schools. This was not, however, conducive to the process of teaching-learning (al-Sinble et al., 2004), because these buildings, not being designed for educational purposes, lack essential facilities.

According to al-Sinble et al. (2004), the Ministry of Education does not provide regular maintenance, even for purpose-built schools. In addition, some schools lack basic facilities such as science and computer laboratories. Thus, it may be some time before the technician team gets to a school because of this irregularity in maintenance. As a result, teachers and the staff of the school in general fix whatever they can, which adds to the burden on teachers. Furthermore, the ministry does not reimburse these extra costs that the teachers pay because of the rigid system (al-Sinble et al., 2004).

1.5.2. Total Quality Management Department in the Ministry of Education

The Total Quality Management Department (TQMD) was established in 2009 and is organisationally linked to the minister directly. The TQMD includes three departments: the Educational Quality Department, the Electronic Quality Department, and the Comprehensive Appraisal Department. TQMD provides its services to the education system, aiming at the continuous improvement of educational services and programmes and evaluating their qualitative level according to certain standards. In addition, TQMD aims to raise the level of performance in general and contributes to developing employees at all levels in the ministry and the field in order to face the developments in the requirements of services and operations,

through continuous improvement and changing the employees, services and operation (TQMD, 2011). The position of the TQMD within the ministry is shown in figure 1.1, overleaf.

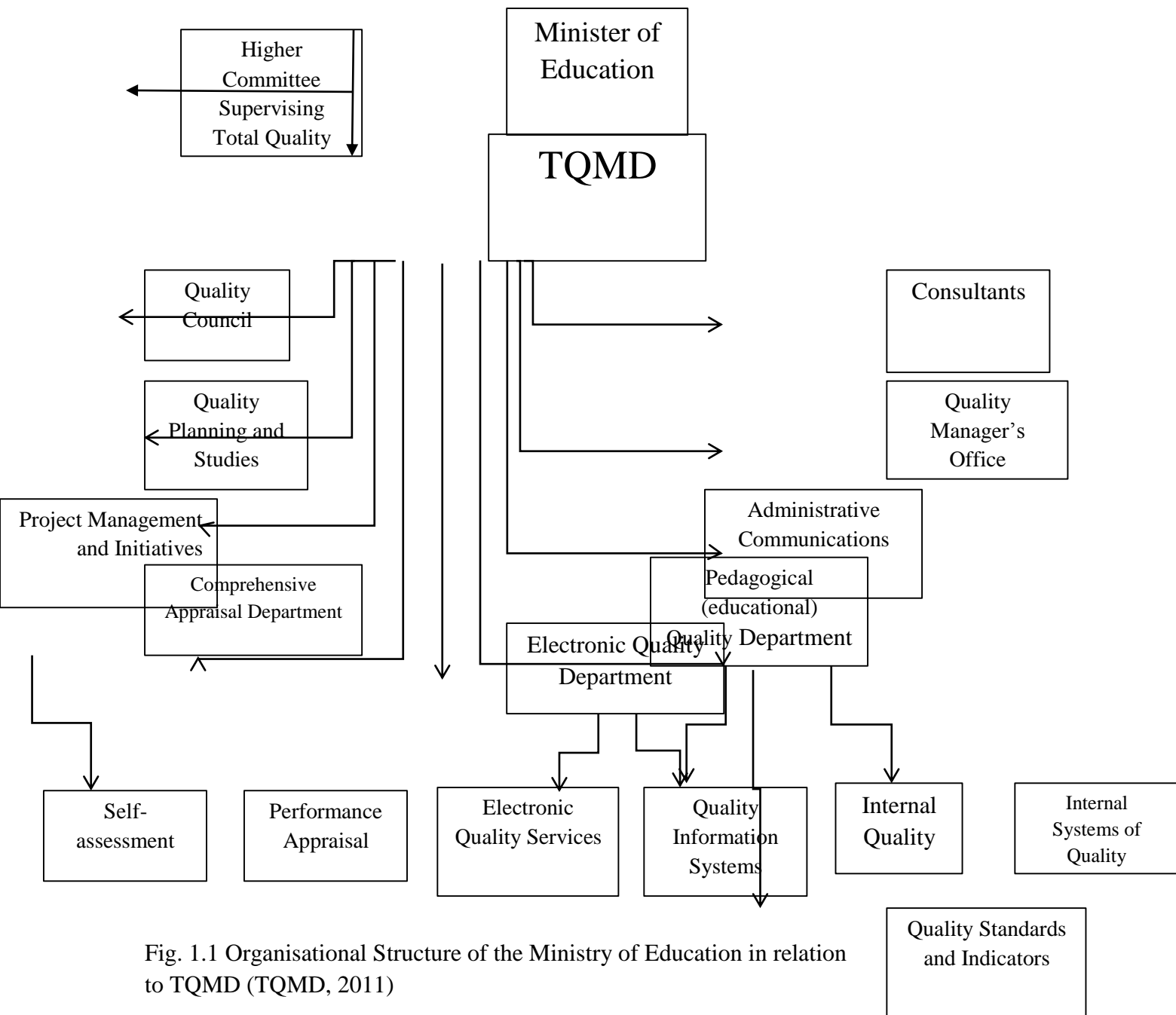


Fig. 1.1 Organisational Structure of the Ministry of Education in relation to TQMD (TQMD, 2011)

The objectives of the TQMD are as follows:

- 1- Setting the Ministry's programmes and projects in educational quality.
- 2- Applying TQM tools in those projects and programmes.
- 3- Developing the educational quality standards of all the elements of the education system.
- 4- Training and qualifying national cadres with competencies in educational quality.

- 5- Setting scientific and practical plans and policies for comprehensive appraisal.
- 6- Developing tools and indicators for comprehensive appraisal.
- 7- Applying the procedures of comprehensive appraisal.
- 8- Selecting and training the supervisors of comprehensive appraisal and evaluating their performance.
- 9- Conducting studies regarding comprehensive appraisal.
- 10- Determining the training needs and the managerial requirements of TQMD.
- 11- Making regular reports about the achievements and activities of the department, reporting the obstacles facing performance, and making suggestions regarding how to overcome these obstacles.

According to the procedure handbook of the TQMD (2011), the main aim of the department is to spread the culture of quality and improve the general performance of the ministry, the education departments and schools, and identify to what extent the ministry is achieving its aims. The first operation of TQMD is spreading TQM, which means explaining to the employees of the Ministry of Education the meaning, principles and tools of TQM. Furthermore, it is the General Manager's responsibility to issue a specific procedure and determine the person who will prepare a plan to spread the culture of quality in the ministry and the field. The ministry has issued an administrative decision to form a team to accomplish this mission and specified the time frame for completion. The ministry has trained this team to make sure that it will deliver the message according to precise steps and a clear vision (TQMD, 2011).

Moreover, the ministry has set requirements for spreading quality awareness in the ministry's departments using the following methods:

- 1- Establishing relationships with visual and aural media, and making a working plan to spread a culture of quality in education.
- 2- Providing lectures, workshops and training programmes for the education leaders in the ministry and the education field.
- 3- Issuing educative brochures and flyers regarding TQM.
- 4- Issuing regular magazines to identify TQM, such as *Culture of Quality, Quality Tools, and Projects of Improvement*.
- 5- Launching an electronic portal and website and distributing CDs to spread awareness of TQM.

- 6- Making field visits to departments in the ministry and the field to supervise and participate in the plans of spreading the TQM culture (TQMD handbook, 2011).

The TQMD holds workshops and arranges conferences to introduce and define TQM to the staff as an innovation in the culture of education. The ministry arranged the first International Conference of TQM in Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) education, “Best International Practices for TQM in Education”, under the patronage of King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz in the period 8-11 January 2011, with participants from modern countries with advanced education systems. The second one will be held in 2013 (Ministry of Education, 2011).

Aims of implementing TQM

The Ministry of Education is aiming at improving the productivity, as well as customer satisfaction and providing the maximum services to customers through continuous improvement of processes within the ministry. It is also aiming at employees’ satisfaction and setting the appropriate environment to them.

There are more aims for TQM in the ministry such as:

- 1- Providing a good working environment that enhances creativity and increasing the productivity’s levels and performance. Moreover, encouragement to making suggestions and developmental visions to improve and develop working processes.
- 2- Increasing the job satisfaction’s levels among employees.
- 3- Abbreviating time and routine in doing work.
- 4- Develop and simplify the work procedures.
- 5- Evaluating employees easily according to clear standards.
- 6- Raising the level of cooperation between departments.
- 7- Training employees to work as a team.
- 8- Eliminating useless missions.
- 9- Increasing the level of self-confidence and working abilities among employees and beneficial.
- 10- Participation of all employees in the processes of improving and developing TQM programmes and make discussions to identify the indicators of success and failure.

1.6. Structure of the Thesis

This research is structured in six chapters, which are:

Chapter One: Introduction, where the background of the study, research aims, research questions, significance of the study, and research context are reviewed.

Chapter Two: Literature Review, this chapter reviews the concept of TQM including its history, principles and standards. It discusses the five gurus of TQM and their work and the Quality Awards and their standards. After that, this chapter gives an overview of TQM in the educational context. National and organisational cultures are discussed in this chapter and their link to TQM considered. Some Human Resources (HR) practices are also reviewed, including Performance Appraisal, Training, and Centralisation and Decentralisation.

Chapter Three: discusses the methodology of this research including research paradigms, the research approach, a justification for the choice of research philosophy, and research strategy. Then it discusses the data collection method, sampling, data analysis, quality of this research and research ethics.

Chapter Four: this chapter analyses the findings of this study. It is divided into four main categories. The first reviews the challenges to education quality in Saudi Arabia. Then, the role of the TQMD and relevant recent trends in the educational system are reviewed. Finally, the chapter presents the cultural factors affecting TQM implementation in the educational system.

Chapter Five: presents a discussion of the findings of this study according to the research questions. The first research question is about the current challenges to education quality in Saudi Arabia while the second question is regarding the actions being taken to introduce Total Quality Management. Finally, the third question is about the cultural factors affecting Total Quality Management implementation. The findings of this study are interpreted in the light of relevant theory and previous research findings.

Chapter Six: is the conclusion of the research. It starts with a brief summary of the main findings of the study. Then, it points out the contribution of the research, policy implications, limitations of the study, and recommendations for further studies.

2. Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1. Total Quality Management

2.1.1. Concept of TQM

“Quality in a product or service is not what the supplier puts in. It is what the customer gets out and is willing to pay for” (Peter Drucker).

As TQM is widely applied, it has several different definitions and interpretations. Viewed from different angles, there is disagreement over the components of TQM. It means many things to different people (Hackman and Wageman, 1995). What led some quality researchers and practitioners to consider TQM as a phrase with no meaning is the disagreement about the TQM definition among them. For example, Deming (1994) states that TQM is a "buzzword" and he has not used the term TQM because it is meaningless. Crosby (1992) argues the same:

"They forget, or perhaps didn't know, that I have never recommended they fool around with TQM in the first place. They are just a set of initials

without definition or formulation that have been used by organisations in order to avoid the hard work of really managing quality"

(Crosby, 1992, xi). In 1994, Reeves and Bednar concluded that there had been a failure to find a universal definition of quality. Green (1994, cited in Sahney et al., 2004) highlights that it is 'an elusive' concept, hard to articulate.

There can be no meaningful communication or common understanding on the topic if there is no clear definition (Dale and Plunket, 1991 cited in Boaden, 1997). Garvin (1988) argued that TQM cannot be completely understood by only one definition. As a result of different peoples' inputs the concept has been developed and has been defined and interpreted by different views. Thus, these definitions and views need to be reviewed.

The purpose of this section is not to develop a new definition of TQM; it aims to build a common understanding of the TQM's main different views existing in the literature. This will present a context for a debate on total quality management in the education context. The study will review some examples of different definitions of TQM that delineate the main different TQM views.

Generally, the TQM concept is defined as a form of management philosophy that influences people's behaviour and thought within an organisation (Byrne, 1992; Luthans, 1995). It has also been described as a management approach or method (e.g. Flynn et al., 1994; Ho and Fung, 1994), as a management system (Hellsten and Klefsjo, 2000; Svensson and Klefsjo, 2000; De Jager and Nieuwenhuis, 2005) and as a culture (e.g. Kujala and Lillrank, 2004; Irani et al., 2004).

Total quality management has been described as a management integrative philosophy for continuously improving product quality and processes to achieve customer satisfaction (Vuppalapati et al., 1995). "TQM is a revolutionary philosophy that requires radical and pervasive change within the firm" (Grant et al., 1994, 34). "TQM is an organisation-wide philosophy of management which emphasizes the need to meet customer needs precisely and to get things right first time" (Bright and Cooper, 1993, 22)

TQM is an approach to improve the flexibility, effectiveness and competitiveness of a whole organisation. It is also a way of understanding, organising and planning each activity, and relies on each individual at each level (Oakland, 1995). TQM is an integrated approach to sustain and achieve high quality output, focusing on the continuous improvement and

maintenance of processes and preventing defect in all functions of the organisations at all levels, to exceed or meet the expectations of customers (Flynn et al., 1994). In 2000, Zhang suggested that TQM is a method of quality management which consists of several quality methods, for instance, information communication, suggestion activities and quality culture.

Westbrook (1993) defined TQM in more detail as

"an interrelationship between the organisation's cultures, its relations with its customers, both internal and external, the use of organisational teams and cross-functional teams, an emphasis on problem solving using teams, recognising of the need for continuous improvement, the use of measurement to evaluate system and practices to indicate the effectiveness of improvement efforts" (1993,1).

Dale (2003) believes that TQM is both a set of guiding principles and philosophy for managing a firm, and that successful implementation of TQM needs creation of an organisational culture that is encouraging to ongoing development. He describes TQM as "the mutual co-operation of everyone in an organisation and associated business processes to produce value for money products and services which meet and hopefully exceed the needs and expectations of customers" (2003, 26).

Williams (1994) states that total quality management is made up of techniques, training and tools but TQM impact is limited without TQM culture. In addition, TQM is described as culture or the wanted organisational culture (Irani et al., 2004). Logothetis believes that it is "a culture that requires a total commitment to customer satisfaction through continuous improvement in all aspects of business" (1992, 1).

Hellesten and Klefsjo (2000) suggest that TQM should be seen as a system of management that contains three components: the first one is core values which are the bases for the culture, for example, continuous improvement and focusing on customers; the second is techniques, which are a number of actions performed in a specific way to achieve values, such as circles of quality; the third component is tools which have a statistical base to support decisions, Pareto diagrams and control charts, for example.

TQM simply is "a person-focused management system with the main target of continually increasing customer satisfaction at the lowest possible cost" (Scharitzer and Korunka, 2000).

TQM is not only a technique, specific tool or a form of programme that can be relatively and simply straightforwardly applied. At the same time, it is not just a theoretical philosophy;

it contains both tools and philosophy (Sousa-Poza et al., 2001). TQM includes both soft aspects such as values and attitudes and hard aspects such as techniques and tools (Bright and Cooper, 1993). Tacit features or soft aspects such as management commitment and employee empowerment have more impact on the implementation of TQM than programmes of quality such as training (Powell, 1995). TQM requires organisational culture, a shift in people's thinking and in the way people behave (Bright and Cooper, 1993; Waldman, 1995).

As for the existence of different opinions regarding TQM, several different explanations are given. Grandzol and Gershon (1997) attribute the dearth of agreement about total quality management to several perceptions regarding quality itself. Hellsten and Klefsjo (2000) attribute it to three main reasons which are partly related to each other: the first one is that the TQM gurus do not like the concept; secondly, there is a similarity in names for the same idea; finally, there is a large number of hazy descriptions and few definitions of total quality management.

In addition, the growth of TQM is connected to this concern: TQM has a scientific base rooted in the statistical control of the process of manufacturing, when the purpose was to reach and maintain a steady desired quality level. With its expansion to the organisation's management level, it requires to be studied and viewed as a cultural phenomenon to manage complicated social system (Kujala and Lillrank, 2004). Consequently, the interpretation and gradual development of the TQM concept from something almost like philosophy to something more similar to culture might be a reason why different definitions exist (Hellsten and Klefsjo, 2000).

As indicated by the above reviews of the gurus' thoughts and TQM definitions, there is no ideal way of quality implementation, and different conventional methods exist in the literature (Dale, 2003). Quality authors frequently propose groups of TQM principles for firms seeking to take on TQM (Murgatroyd, 1993).

Beside the efforts to develop a universally accepted TQM definition, efforts to identify TQM factors or principles that actually add more to successful implementation of TQM are the focus of much research on TQM (Grandzol and Gershon, 1997).

2.1.2. History of TQM

Powell states that the beginning of total quality management was in 1949, when the Union of Japanese Engineers and Scientists formed a team of engineers, scholars, and government

officials who were dedicated to enhancing the Japanese post-war life quality, and improving their productivity. Afterwards, firms in America started to take TQM seriously around 1980. Grant et al. (1994) declared that TQM started in the US, then the Japanese developed it, and then in the 1980s, it was developed more since it spread throughout Europe and North America. According to Martinez-Lorente et al. (1998), it is hard to ascertain the exact date of the beginning of the term TQM, although it is clear that the philosophy and the term TQM came to the surface in the mid-1980s, and in 1993, the use of the term TQM reached a peak.

Statistics is the theoretical base of TQM. It has a scientific base in the statistical control of manufacturing processes, where the purpose is to manage the process of production to achieve the wanted level of quality. It was increasingly implemented in the late 1980s across all systems of organisations, having a big effect on all functions of the organisation at all levels of management (Grant et al., 1994; Kujala and Lillrank, 2004).

Many writers divide the development of quality management into four distinct periods, which are: quality inspection, control, assurance, and total quality management. Dale (2003), described each stage as follows.

A quality inspection system is based on the idea that the only method to ensure quality is by one time inspection for specific requirements. The inspection is implemented on incoming materials and goods at suitable points in the process and prior to finished goods being passed into the warehouse before despatch. This system gives emphasis to reactive remedial action with no preventive content. Clearly, inspection at specific stages of the process of the production before the product goes to the consumer cannot prevent output faults and is frequently seen as a late procedure or step. This leads to the next period, which is quality control.

Quality control is an inspection-based system, except with more developed systems and methods, for instance, performance specifications and detailed product, self-inspection by accepted operators, information usage, using basic statistics and procedures control and a paperwork control system. Nevertheless, the main cause of a problem cannot be eliminated by finding and fixing the mistake. Consequently, organisations moved to preventing problems and planning, which leads to the third stage of quality management, quality assurance.

The emphasis in this stage is on the process, whereas in the earlier system it was on the product. Quality assurance is a system where the focus is on the service design and product,

and where the efforts of organisations are directed to preventing problems and planning at source, which makes it a prevention-based system. Motivation improvement, people involvement, improving control of the process, product design, people training and advance quality planning are emphasised. Quality is integrated into the design and planning stages to avoid faults occurring; even when faults arise they can be recognized early in the process. Nonetheless, changing to prevention from detection requires changes in the style of management and the way of thinking in all departments, everyone's commitment and cross-functional teamwork for continuous improvement; in other words, it needs quality in management. Reaching this leads to the next stage of the quality evolution, which is total quality management.

Total quality management implements quality management to all organisational features including suppliers and customers. TQM needs application of the principles of quality management in all units and departments at all levels, with an emphasis on integration into practices of business and balance between people, technical and managerial issues. Cultural change is what distinguishes TQM from the processes of quality assurance and quality control (Bright and Cooper, 1993). TQM was developed in the sector of manufacturing, and then afterwards, with more understanding of the concept of quality, it was implemented by several sectors such as education and healthcare (Dahlgaard-Park, 1999).

Even though TQM came into view in the mid-1980s, many of its elements, such as teamwork and involvement, were applied and developed since the early 1950s (Martinez-Lorente et al., 1998). TQM contains a collection of different management approaches which have been shown to work in particular contexts (Kujala and Lillrank, 2004).

"TQM is far wider in its application than assuring product or service quality, it is a way of managing business processes to ensure complete customer satisfaction at every stage, internally and externally" (Oakland, 1995, ix).

TQM was not evolved in academe as a result of academic analysis of organisational theory and existing management (Grandzol and Gershon 1997). The discipline evolved based on the works of Kaoru Ishikawa, W. Edwards Deming, and J. M. Juran (Kujala and Lillrank, 2004). "Virtually everything that has been written about TQM explicitly draws on the work of W. Edwards Deming, Joseph Juran, and Kaoru Ishikawa, the primary authorities of the TQM movement" (Hackman and Wageman, 1995, 310). The appearance of quality standards and

quality awards has increased the dispersion of quality management and its practical development (Kujala and Lillrank, 2004).

2.1.3. Ideas of TQM Gurus

Ishikawa, Feigenbaum, Crosby, Juran and Deming are frequently seen as the most significant quality pioneers and their studies are the basis for the movement of quality management (Kruger, 2001; Martinez-Lorente et al., 1998). The next sections will introduce the main concepts and ideas of each pioneer with an emphasis on Deming's approach as his work is referenced more often in the literature of quality education (Kwan, 1996). Also his philosophy is seen as the most relevant to the education context (Weller, 2000; Glasser, 1990; Brandt, 1992).

Deming's Work

The theoretical basis of the management method of Deming concentrates on the innovation of an organisational system that encourages cooperation and simplifying the application of practices of process management, which in turn leads to steady development of services, products, processes and to fulfilment of employees, both of which are important to satisfying the customer and critical to the survival of the organisation (Anderson et al., 1994).

Deming defines quality with different examples rather than explaining it in a single phrase as most authors do. Quality has several aspects or scales. He emphasises that the most essential part of the production line is customers, and quality can best be described by them. Customers' expectations and needs play a big role in changing the meaning of quality. Deming thinks that zero defects is not enough; an organisation must show steady development in its products. Managers must understand the significance of applying statistical methods to processes, statistical thinking, and customer research (Deming, 2000b).

Development of work process will lead to decreasing costs because of less waste in materials and manpower, fewer delays, less mistakes and less rework, which assists the organisation to seize the market with lower-priced products and improved quality. Quality improvement is greatly dependent on the ability to manage and control processes and systems, and depends on the management's role in accomplishing this (Deming, 2000b). To develop the quality of a firm, Deming promoted his approach to quality, summarised as fourteen points or transformation principles for developing management practice. Deming (2000a) states that these points can be implemented in any firm, whatever its sector or size. These points will be explained as follows:

- 1- Create a consistent purpose for improvement of services and products. In order to create a quality firm, management must concentrate mainly on long-term problems and pay enough attention to problems that may appear in the future. Consistency of purpose needs distribution of the resources of the organisation to long-term planning, investment in education and research, and creativity.
- 2- Take on the new philosophy. A firm cannot endure with generally accepted levels of defects, ineffective and inadequate supervision, bad training, a climate of fear, uninformed employees, inconsistent materials, and mistakes. Concisely, quality ought to become the firm's way of life.
- 3- To achieve quality; dependence on inspection must cease. Inspection does not guarantee or improve quality. One cannot add quality into a product while it is in process; it comes from improvement of the production process.
- 4- The practice of awarding business on the basis of price tag alone must be ended. The buying decision should be on the basis of lowest cost in total rather than on the lowest price. Total cost is increased as a consequence of poor results caused by the poor quality of incoming materials. To minimise the total cost and increase the quality of services and received materials, the organisation must encourage a long-term business relation of trust and loyalty with a single supplier or a few suppliers, and be dedicated to continuous improvement.
- 5- Improve steadily and permanently the service and the production system. Improvement of quality is an endless process that contains every activity. It should be included in the stage of design and from improved understanding of the needs of the customers and of their methods of using the product. To improve productivity and quality, and therefore continually decrease costs, an organisation must develop the workers' knowledge, machinery, the raw materials and the process of production. The improvement must consider all other functions, such as sales, distribution methods and transportation.
- 6- Initiate training. Managers and all workers at an organisation need training. Supervisors have to study the entire organisation such as understanding the raw material from the final product, through the process of production, to the methods of use of the customers.
- 7- Oust fear. One of the requirements of effective work is removing fear within a firm. Creating a fear-free atmosphere within an organisation is the management's responsibility, so employees can feel secure to make suggestions, express their ideas, point out problems, and request further explanations or ask questions.

- 8- Institute and adopt leadership. Leading and helping employees to do a better job is the main aim of supervision. Improving the system allows the employees to more efficient in their job.
- 9- Remove targets, exhortations and slogans for the workforce. Targets, exhortations and slogans do not enhance quality as they never assist the employee to do a good job. Organisation management should provide employees with descriptions and means to achieve aims.
- 10- Remove barriers between employees' areas. The only way to achieve customer satisfaction and significant quality improvement is working as a team within the organisation. People in production, sales, design and research have to work as a team, in order to solve quality problems, anticipate production problems, and design styles.
- 11- Eliminate barriers that take pride in workmanship from workers. Basically, the employee must be keen to do good job; to him/her, his/her job means quality. Nevertheless, there are some obstacles facing the employees in doing that, for instance, inadequate machinery, bad raw materials and bad supervision. Employees become upset when they cannot do their jobs the way they would prefer. Management of an organisation need to listen to the concerns of the employees and remove the obstacles that employees may face.
- 12- Remove statistical targets for management and numerical shares for the personnel. Statistical targets for an organisation's managers will focus their attention on output quantity rather than improving the process. In the same way, numerical shares intend to increase quantity rather than the quality of the work; they provide employees with motives to meet the level required of production regardless of quality.
- 13- Encourage self-improvement and education for everyone. It is not sufficient for a firm to have righteous people; they must be trained frequently, and constantly gain new skills to develop their contributions to their firms in the future. Training allows the performance quality of the employees to be improved.
- 14- Do something to achieve the transformation. It is everyone's job; applying the last thirteen points demands structure and an appropriate organisational atmosphere.

The popular management style must go through transformation to implement the previous fourteen points. Consequently, Deming evolved what he preferred to call four interactive elements of profound knowledge: knowledge of psychology, theory of knowledge, knowledge about variation and appreciation of a system.

In general, profound knowledge is a theory for transformation, which starts with individuals' transformation. According to Deming (2000b), an individual will implement the principles of profound knowledge in all his/her relations with other people once he/she understands its system. Next, a short description of each of those principles will be presented:

- Knowledge of psychology/ people naturally have a desire to gain knowledge and to be creative. What brings joy to the workplace are not intrinsic motivators. Supervisors should understand human behaviour and psychology to manage employees to optimise the system.
- Theory of knowledge/ system management demands knowledge of the interrelationships amongst all the employees who work in the system and all of the parts of the system. Increasing our knowledge regarding a process or a product is the way to improve it. For increasing knowledge, there are some practical steps which form a cycle which are 'Plan, Do, Study, Act'. What helps to anticipate the future is knowledge that depends on theory as information is not knowledge unless it depends on theory.
- Knowledge of variation/ improvement in productivity and system optimisation demands a realisation of the variability between employees that work in processes and variability in processes themselves. The source of variation is a crucial factor affecting solving problems, whether it came from a special cause or from a common cause. A system is a net of functions in a firm that works for the organisation's objective.
- Appreciation that an organisation is a system/ transforming the suppliers' inputs to outputs by using processes. A system cannot manage or understand itself. Managers should make predictions about work and understand the system as, without understanding of the entire system, it cannot be directed or managed.

(Deming, 2000b)

It can be identified from the above review that Deming's approach emphasised the top management's responsibilities in the improvement of quality throughout continuously improving systems and work processes. The system inspires most of quality; managers should understand the system and enhance it altogether. Top management have to understand the behaviour of people, provide workers with clear criteria for what is considered suitable work, and give the description and means to accomplish it. "The president of the company is the one that is responsible for quality" (Deming, 2000b, 16).

Deming (2000b) focused on the significance of continual training, improvement of employee skills, understanding the type and the source of variation, initiating teamwork identify and to solve quality problems, generating a long-term partnership with a single supplier or few suppliers, identification and measurements and customer requirements'. In addition, he focused more on the employment of statistical methods in the improvement, management and the design of processes, which aims to reduce expected variation. Simultaneously, the cultural aspect plays an important role in his philosophy. He emphasises the importance of creating the appropriate atmosphere in the workplace, where employees feel proud of their work and secure.

Juran's Work

Following Deming's steps, Juran claims that the system of the organisation is the basis of its problems in quality. He highlights that the involvement of top management is a crucial signal for every subordinate for motivating quality (Kruger, 2001). Juran's definition of quality is "fitness for use". He emphasises a balance between freedom from deficiencies of products, which costs less in general, and features of product which generally cost more (Juran, 1992). Juran states that quality management can be implemented by applying Juran's 'trilogy' which contains three connected processes of management: quality improvement, quality control, quality planning (1992).

Quality improvement is a process to develop performance. This process begins with recognising the need for development, then innovating the infrastructure and assembling the quality teams, ensuring they know their responsibility and provide the resources needed for the development to take the project as a whole to a successful conclusion.

Quality control concerns maintaining the process's performance through appraisal of performance, comparing the performance with the goals of quality and realising the difference between quality goals and current performance.

Quality planning consists of the action of defining the goals of quality, improving process and product to meet these goals, setting up controls of process, and transporting the resulting strategies to the operating forces.

Juran (1988) focuses on receiving the best profit on the investment, and the financial aspects. Management's main responsibility is to reduce the cost in total to the minimum, and to decide when the efforts of quality improvement have to be stopped as the process's cost exceeds the benefits. External and appraisal failure, internal and prevention failure are the four main categories of quality costs that Juran identified, which can be employed to appraise the organisation's costs related to quality.

Inspection or appraisal costs are the costs of identifying internal failures. These costs include testing of the incoming, final and in-process products and the expense of the inspection.

External failure costs are a result of when a flawed product reaches the customer. These costs include allowance, returned material, complaint adjustment and warranty charges.

If there are no faults in the process before the product's transfer to the customer; internal failure costs, which include failure analysis, rework and scrap disappear.

Preventive costs of quality include costs of servicing and maintaining instruments, new product training and review, expenses of quality planning; it helps in keeping appraisal and failure cost to the minimum.

Juran's theory stresses project and team work, which can enhance quality improvement. Juran also stresses the significance of top management empowerment and commitment, rewards, recognition, participation and the significance of recognising the needs of the consumer. Unlike Deming, Juran illustrates that rather than being a negative factor; fear can be a positive factor when focused in a positive way (Juran, 1988).

The credit goes to Juran for bringing the principles of Pareto into management. He advised management to concentrate on the few fundamental sources of problems which cause around 80% of the difficulties (Goetsch and Davis, 2006). He believes that the improvement of processes should be ordered according to their significance to the firm, then according to their priority to the firm – the development efforts begin with top priority. Juran believes that efforts of process quality improvement must not be continuous; these efforts must be stopped when they reach a sufficient quality level according to cost benefit analysis (Juran, 1992).

He is also widely credited for adding a new dimension to quality management, which is the human dimension. According to Williams (1994), Juran thinks that the human mind's power is more effective than all the quality tools together in identifying and correcting problems. He

emphasises the role played by cultural norms of behaviour and values in quality application. Juran revealed that “cultural patterns” such as practices, habits, and beliefs are the key force in human behaviour (Juran, 1992).

Crosby’s Work

The approach of Crosby is based on five facts of quality management: the first one is that quality is described not as goodness but as “conformance to requirement”; the second fact is that there is no such thing as a quality problem; the third fact is that zero defect is the only performance measurement; while the fourth is that doing the job right at the first time is always cheaper; finally, the fifth fact is that cost of quality is the performance indicator (Crosby, 1982). To achieve zero defects is the ultimate goal of Crosby’s approach.

Crosby (1995) claims that the first step of eliminating defects is that senior managers have to adopt the ‘zero defect’ attitude as their personal standard. He states that quality standards are nothing but a reflection of the expectations of the top management. Employees will share the belief of the defects are expected and normal if the top management think the same. He also stresses the significance of organisational culture to quality improvement by stating that quality improvement demands changes within organisational culture, which demands time relatively. There are fourteen steps suggested by Crosby to achieve zero defects which are:

- 1- Measurement: quality measurements are needed for all crucial activity throughout the firm; they allow the firm to appraise the current level of quality and proceed toward the appropriate level of improvement.
- 2- Quality development team: this is formed by reps from each department within the firm. The main goal of this team is to direct processes by organising the efforts and enhance other members of the firm.
- 3- Commitment of management: it requires the management’s faith in quality. They also must be persuaded of the quality’s need and communicate this to entire firm clearly.

- 4- Corrective action: the main causes of the problems must be eliminated after determining them based on data. The main aim of this step is to determine and remove problems.
- 5- Quality awareness: the significance of the quality has to be spread among employees in the firm. Awareness should be adopted and integrated with the organisational culture. The awareness of employees can be established by communicating through posters, films and booklets and also can be established by training senior managers.
- 6- The quality's cost: this cost is split into two main areas, the price of conformance and the price of non-conformance. These areas can be useful in tracing the opportunities for corrective actions and tracing where the firm is improving.
- 7- Planning of zero defects: launch an ad hoc team for the programme of zero defects to discover the concept of zero defects and how they can apply it in their work.
- 8- Zero defects day: the firm should set up a memorable even as zero defects day so every member of the firm will remember it; the purpose is to start attitudes to zero defects as a standard of performance for their firm.
- 9- Employee education: supervisors at all levels have to be trained and educated before the programme is started. They must be able to communicate the programme and explain it to their employees.
- 10- Recognition: workers who perform outstandingly or meet their goals must be recognised by a nonfinancial award.
- 11- Error-cause removal: employees are confident to state any type of problem they have which standing as an obstacle between them and doing error-free work.
- 12- Goal setting: the ultimate aim for every member of a firm is zero defects. Yet, every manager is expected to have from 30 to 90 day development goals for this unit.
- 13- Quality councils: the team chairpersons and quality professionals should meet frequently to put on the table examples of their achievements and discuss how to act and what to do to improve the quality programme.
- 14- Do it all over again: the previous steps have to be repeated again constantly as quality improvement is an outstanding process. (Crosby, 1982).

To assist in operating the 14 steps mentioned above, Crosby gives some tools, for instance, quality vaccine and maturity grid of quality management. The first tool, quality vaccine, uses a medical analogy to introduce the idea of vaccinating a firm against non-conformance to needs. The quality vaccine tool consists of five main ingredients outlined as follows:

- Policies: must not be vague and need to be clear

- Operation: support and educate suppliers, examine and modify procedures continuously when there are opportunity; training must be a routine activity.
- Communication: frequent supply of information regarding quality improvement's progress assisting to recognise error, missed and waste opportunities.
- Systems: some systems must take place such as services measurement of organisation, measurements endeavours to ensure conformance, education and financial measurement.
- Integrity: every member of the firm is committed to the consumer getting what he/she has been promised. (Flood, 1993)

The maturity grid of quality management gives a method for management to assess the progress of their firm in the quality journey. There are five stages included in the grid: certainty, wisdom, enlightenment, awakening and uncertainty. These stages can be evaluated through six categories of measurement: summation of organisation quality posture, quality improvement actions, quality cost as a percentage of sales, problem handling, quality organisation status, and management attitude and understanding.

Feigenbaum's Work

Armand V. Feigenbaum (1991) is another essential figure in quality movement which is the concept's originator of Total Quality Control (TQC), emphasising 'total'. Feigenbaum (1991) states that quality can be determined only by the consumer and measured against his/her requirements. He described quality as "the total composite product and service characteristics of marketing, engineering, manufacture and maintenance through which the product and service in use will meet the expectation of the customer" (Feigenbaum, 1991, 7). He also described total quality control as

"an effective system for integrating the quality development, quality maintenance, and quality improvement efforts of the various groups in an organisation so as to enable production and service at the most economical levels which allow full customer satisfaction"

(Feigenbaum, 1991, 6). His philosophy can be summarised into four main steps which are:

- 1- Setting quality standards, which include product reliability, safety, performance and cost standards.
- 2- Evaluating the manufactured products' conformance to standards.
- 3- Act when the current standards do not solve the problems or their causes.
- 4- Planning to make improvements (1991, 10)

Feigenbaum (1991) asserts that quality should be understood as a style of management and emphasises the need to direct from a systematic total perception. He also asserts the significance of involving all departments in improving quality and effective human relations. Rather than correcting defects after they happen, he stresses the importance of preventing them in the first place.

According to Feigenbaum (1991), there are three main contributions of quality which are: development of classification system of quality cost; development of TQC concept; and quality ethics' promotion. To make total quality successful; he also identified some fundamental components for this success, which are: using statistical technology, using economical quality costs, appraisal, the information system, supplier quality management, employee participation and commitment of top management.

Feigenbaum (1991, 828) determined ten significant benchmarks regarding the success of total quality:

- It is applied with a total system linked to suppliers and consumers
- It is the least capital-intensive, most cost-effective route to productivity
- It demands a continuous improvement
- It is an ethic
- Innovation and quality are commonly dependent
- It is a managing method
- It needs zealotry of both team and individual
- Cost and quality are not a difference, they are a sum
- Quality is what the consumers say it is
- It is an organisation-wide process

Ishikawa's Work

Quality is the "development, design, production and service of a product that is most economical, most useful, and always satisfactory to the consumer" (Ishikawa, 1985, 44). His description of Quality Control (QC) was "to develop, design, produce and service a quality which is most economical, most useful, and always satisfactory to the consumer" (Ishikawa, 1985, 44). To meet this goal, a firm requires everyone's participation from the top management 'CEO' down to line employees, including all departments. Participation of employees is the key of the successful QC implementation. Quality circles can be the vehicle to accomplish participation of employees. These circles are small group with small number of volunteer

employees from the same unit of division having frequent meetings to talk about how they can perform their tasks efficiently and effectively.

Ishikawa's suggestions go further than product quality, to quality of people, quality of division, quality of process, quality of service and quality of work. He emphasises that people provide quality, and the human factor should come to the surface. Ishikawa highlights that "an organisation whose members are not happy and cannot be happy does not deserve to exist" (Ishikawa, 1985, 27).

Employees are the ones who really produce; QC cannot progress unless employees and their managers are good at their work and what they do. Consequently, he asserts the significance of training and education; quality control education for employees is essential, and it has to be followed with application in the context. He also reveals that quality begins and ends with education. Total quality control demands running continuous education for every member of the firm, at all levels. Ishikawa also focuses on the significance of training for the employees of the organisation on technical tools such as Pareto charts, histograms, control graphs and charts, and fishbone diagrams. The success of the organisation depends on seeing quality improvement as an endless quest. It requires an endless total commitment from every member. What can ensure that organisation's members will never stop learning is a commitment to continual improvement.

According to Ishikawa (1985), inspection is crucial yet it has to be done by the employees themselves. They should be educated to be capable of producing 100% defect-free products. To reach the wanted quality, it is important to understand what consumers need and to provide services or products that meet their wants and needs. Ishikawa (1985) also pointed out the significance of culture since activities of quality control cannot be applied in a cultural and social vacuum.

Ishikawa's approach revealed six elementary principles to quality which are:

- 1- "Quality first—not short-term profit first
- 2- Consumer orientation—not producer orientation. Think from the standpoint of the other party.
- 3- The next process is your customer—breaking down the barrier of sectionalism.
- 4- Using facts and data to make presentation—utilization of statistical methods.

- 5- Respect for humanity as a management philosophy—full participatory management.
- 6- Cross-function management.” (Ishikawa, 1985, 104)

Even though all the main approaches of quality gurus are verified methods, none of them offers the solutions to all the obstacles that an organisation faces in implementing total quality management (Dale, 2003). Every one of these approaches has its weaknesses and strengths (Flood, 1983; Beckford, 1998). Consequently, the quality gurus’ intellectual contributions should not be seen as alternatives to each other; they should be considered as complementary, and the emphasis should not be on differences but similarities. The quality gurus shared some common points that will be presented in the next section.

2.1.4. Quality Gurus Common Points

After reviewing the gurus’ contributions regarding quality, it is clear that they share some basic principles, although they describe quality itself differently as well as their approaches of quality.

Differences among quality gurus are not important; what is, are the similarities as they can enables a basic group of concepts of total quality management to be assembled (Oberle, 1990). Taking the differences in expression among them into consideration, the common points that shared by the quality gurus can be presented as follows:

- 1- Poor quality’s main sources are system and management.
- 2- Focus on the consumer.
- 3- Involvement and commitment of top management are fundamental for improving quality.
- 4- The contributions of individual workers to quality development and the role of human resources are important.
- 5- The responsibilities of the management are: firm-wide evaluation activities, the operation framework, policy, and determining strategies. It is also responsible for providing the correct support to human and technical processes.
- 6- Management is in charge of creating the suitable work culture, and enhancing the commitment of the employees to quality improvement throughout empowerment, everyone’s involvement and leadership.
- 7- The focus is on avoidance of product defects rather than inspection after defects happen. Prevention is the way to quality improvement.
- 8- Workers’ motivation and recognition for improving quality are essential.

- 9- Quality is a systematic organisation-wide activity from provider to consumer. All divisions and departments, such as after sale services, installation, accounting, shipping, inspection, manufacturing, purchasing, engineering, planning and design, and marketing, must be involved in quality development efforts
- 10- Training and education are crucial.

The common points above include most of the principles of quality mentioned before in the literature of total quality management, and from the joint contributions of the gurus one can conclude the basic elements of the concept of TQM.

2.1.5. Quality Awards

There are many important regional and national awards for quality: in the United States there is the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, in Europe there is the European Quality Awards, and the most broadly known award is the Deming Prize, in Japan (Kujala and Lillrank, 2004).

Several authors see the main quality awards and the ISO 9000 family as the most widespread methods of approaching the discipline of TQM (Kujala and Lillrank, 2004). They provide a practical and inclusive guideline for the implementation of TQM (Vokurka et al., 2000; Kujala and Lillrank, 2004) and they also give through their scoring criteria an objective progress assessment (Ghobadian and Woo, 1996). The articles written by academics have less influence on practical implementation of TQM than the models of quality awards and their criteria (Hellsten and Klefsjo, 2000).

According to Dale and Bunney (1999), the quality awards contribute to give better understanding of the concept of total quality management. They address quality management's main domains and reflect current thinking and changes and development in total quality management (Dean and Bowen, 1994; Vokurka et al., 2000).

The Deming Prize

The Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers (UJSE) established the Deming Prize in December 1950 to support quality control in Japan. The award is named after Dr. William Edwards Deming who contributed considerably to encouraging concepts of quality in Japanese industry.

The Deming Prize describes total quality management as “a set of systematic activities carried out by the entire organisation to effectively and efficiently achieve company objectives so as to provide products and services with a level of quality that satisfies customers, at the appropriate time and price” (UJSE, 2007b, 3).

The prize was established with five different categories which are: the Quality Control Awards for Factories (QCAF); the Deming Application Prize for Divisions (DAPD); the Deming Application Prize for Small Companies (DAPSC); the Deming Application Prize (DP); the Deming Prize for Individuals (DPI). Some categories were combined to make a sum of three categories. They are presented each year with no limit to the number of potential addressees. Below, these three categories will be discussed, focusing on the most significant one which is the Deming Application Prize, which is available for overseas candidate, both, organisations or divisions of organisations (UJSE, 2007).

- The Deming Prize for Individuals: which is awarded every year to individuals who have made extraordinary contributions in the total quality management’s dissemination, or to individuals who made extraordinary contributions to the TQM studies or some statistical systems used for total quality management
- The Quality Control Award for Operations Business Units: which is awarded every year to operations business units of a firm that have accomplished distinguishing improvement in their performance through the quality management’s application in chasing total quality management in a given year
- The Deming Application Prize: which is awarded every year to an organisation that has accomplished distinguishing improvement in its performance throughout TQM application. The award of this category is open to all kinds of industries. This category also enables a division of an organisation that is managing its business autonomously, to apply for the award separately from the organisation itself.

There are three main points emphasised by the Deming Application Prize which are:

- Consumer-business objectives, and organisation's management philosophy, Organisation strategies that are appropriate to business environment, considering the conditions, business structure and type of business.
- Total quality management has been applied properly to accomplish business strategies and objectives as stated above.
- That excellent results have been attained for business objectives; how the organisation applied total quality management and how it got the results.

An organisation applies by submitting a description of the practices of TQM and the document examination is carried out depending on that. If the applicant organisation passes the examination, another examination will be conducted, known as the on-site examination. The three elements that are included in the evaluation criteria are: roles of top management, unique activities, and basic categories. The basic categories have evaluation items and weight of points for overseas applicants which is based on the Deming Application Prize's guide (UJSE, 2007b):

- 1- Operational qualities and product's improvement and maintenance. Organisation makes continuous development on quality and other features as satisfaction rate of the customer (20 pts).
- 2- Work process innovation and/or new product development (20 pts).
- 3- Policies of the management and their employment regarding managing quality (20 pts).
- 4- Development of human resources (15 pts).
- 5- Gathering quality information and analysing them, utilisation of information technology and using statistical methods (15 pts).
- 6- Launching systems for managing quantity, quality, costs, delivery, environment, safety, etc. (10 pts).

There are four different evaluation angles to review each evaluation time and rated according to different levels listed below: effectiveness in achieving the organisation's objectives, consistency throughout the firm, continuous from mid-term and long-term points of view, and through application at the division involved.

The category of unique activities refers to the core activities related to quality in the organisation for its development which it emphasises on. The applicant organisation must have as a minimum one unique activity. The unique activities are evaluated on performance rather than evaluating on the basis of if they comply with the existing criteria. In addition, there are

no criteria set for every evaluation item. The unique activities are appraised from three different angles: innovativeness, reproducibility, and effectiveness. In fact, effectiveness is conducted as structured activity and contributes to the further development and performance improvement of the organisation. With reproducibility, the evaluation focus is not on technologies developed, services and new products, but it is on the management process that facilitated their improvement. Such a process should be created as a system; thus, analogous outcomes can be foreseen when it is implemented to situations that are similar to the current one. It should be innovative and can be foreseen to pay out for management improvement in a given field.

“As executives play such important roles in promoting TQM, “the executive session” intends to investigate (evaluate) their understanding, enthusiasm, establishing and developing policies and reviewing activities through questions and answers in an informal manner. The following points are included:

- 1- Understanding of and enthusiasm toward TQM
- 2- Insights into top management leadership, visions, strategic policies and environmental changes.
- 3- Organisational strength (maintenance and strengthening core technology, speed and vitality)
- 4- Employee development
- 5- Organisation’s social responsibilities” (The Application Guide for The Deming Prize, 2012, 25).

The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA)

The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) started back in 1988, managed by the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST), which is an outcome of the cooperative efforts of United States’ government businesses and leaders (The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, 2012).

According to the 2013-2014 Baldrige criteria booklet, the criteria are the basis for giving feedback to applicants, making awards and applying organisational self-evaluation. “The Baldrige Criteria play three roles in strengthening U.S. competitiveness:

- 1- They help to improve organisational performance practices, capabilities, and results.
- 2- They facilitate communication and sharing of best practices.

- 3- They serve as a working tool for understanding and managing organisational performance, for guiding your strategic plan, and for providing opportunities to learn”.
(Baldrige Criteria, 2013-2014)

According to Prajogo (2005), the Baldrige criteria are considered as universal in helping firms achieve results of quality business performance. Stephens et al. (2005) stated that irrespective of the type of business of operation, the Baldrige criteria’s guidelines and application can improve quality. The criteria can be considered as outlines for quality service in all business operations’ areas (Williams, 2004). According to Bell and Elkins (2004), just the Baldrige criteria’s presence in management system can change, inspire, and motivate organisational culture to develop quality performance.

According to Chuan and Soon (2000), the Baldrige criteria have been changed through time as a consequence of criticisms from users and from the gurus of quality management such as Joseph Juran, Armand Fiegenbaum and Philip Crosby. The focus of the criteria in recent years is balanced amongst all aspects of organisational performance, for instance innovation, employee morale, safety, growth, market share and profitability; while in the past the focus was on satisfied consumers, services and defect-free products (Brown, 2007).

There are seven different categories included in the framework of The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (2011-2012) to frame the criteria of the award.

“1- Leadership 120 points

- Senior Leadership 70 points
 - Governance and Social Responsibilities 50 points
- 2- Strategic Planning 85 points
- Strategy Development 40 points
 - Strategy Implementation 45 points
- 3- Customer Focus 85
- Voice of the Customer 45 points
 - Customer Engagement 40 points
- 4- Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management 90 points
- Measurements, Analysis, and Improvement of Organisational Performance 45 points
 - Management of Information, Knowledge, and Information Technology 45 points
- 5- Workforce Focus 85 points

- Workforce Environment 40 points
- Workforce Engagement 45 points
- 6- Operations Focus 85 points
 - Work Systems 45 points
 - Work Processes 40 points
- 7- Results 450 points
 - Product and Process Outcomes 120 points
 - Customer-Focused Outcomes 90 points
 - Workforce-Focused Outcomes 80 points
 - Leadership and Governance Outcomes 80 points
 - Financial and Market Outcomes 80 points

TOTAL POINTS 1,000” (Criteria for Performance Excellence booklet, 2011-2012, 3)

The award is based on the category scores, requiring 450 points out of 1000 points.

The category of leadership evaluates how the senior leaders’ personal actions within an organisation guide and support the firm. Moreover, it evaluates whether the firm fulfils its societal, ethical, and legal responsibilities and enhances its key communities. The second category, which is strategic planning, investigates how the firm determines and develops action plans and strategic objectives. In addition, it studies how the chosen action plans and strategic objectives are applied and modified if circumstances demand, and how improvement is measured. Customer focus is the third category, which studies how the firm makes the customer engaged in long-term marketplace success. The strategy of engagement includes how the firm uses the consumers’ information in identifying and improving opportunities for innovation, builds consumer relationships, and pays attention to the customer’s voice. The category of measurement, analysis and knowledge management investigates how the firm selects, collects, analyses, manages and develops its knowledge assets, information and data and how the organisation manages its IT (information technology). Furthermore, the category assesses how the firm uses the findings to develop its own performance. The fifth category is the Workforce focus, which assesses the organisation’s ability to evaluate capacity needs and workforce capability and build a workforce environment that lead to higher performance. In addition, it studies how the firm engages in, manages, and develops its workforce to employ its full ability in alignment with the overall action plans, strategy and mission of the organisation. The next category is operation focus, which evaluates how the firm improves, manages, and designs its

work processes and work systems to achieve sustainability and organisational success and to deliver customer value, the category also evaluates the firm's preparedness for emergencies. The last category is Results, which appraises the improvement and performance of the organisation in all main areas—financial and market outcomes, leadership and governance outcomes, workforce-focused outcomes, customer-focused outcomes, and product and process outcomes.

“The Criteria are built on the following set of interrelated core values and concepts:

- Visionary leadership
- Customer-driven excellence
- Organisational and personal learning
- Valuing workforce members and partners
- Agility
- Managing for innovation
- Management by fact
- Societal responsibility
- Focus on results and creating value
- Systems perspective

These values and concepts, “...., are embedded beliefs and behaviours found in high-performing organisations. They are the foundation for integrating key performance and operational requirements within a results-oriented framework that creates a basis for action and feedback” (Criteria for Performance Excellence booklet, 2011-2012, 49).

Clearly, this award covers nearly all the principles of total quality reviewed earlier.

European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM)

According to Conti (2007), The European Quality Award (EQA) was born in 1991, went public in 1991 and was awarded in 1992 for the first time. The EQA aims to recognise and encourage effective TQM development by European organisations. Nabitiz et al. (2001) state that in a few years several organisations used the self-assessment tool and introduced the EFQM criteria of business excellence. Nowadays, it is an organisational framework that is widely used in Europe and has turned out to be the foundation for a series of regional and national quality awards (EFQM, 2007).

There are many uses of the EFQM Excellence Model, for example: as a structure for the management system of an organisation, as a foundation of a way of thinking and a common vocabulary, as a blueprint to identify improvement areas, as a method to benchmark with other firms and as a self-assessment tool.

Hakes (1999) defined the EFQM Excellence Model as a non-prescriptive framework that recognises that there are various approaches to accomplishing sustainable organisational excellence. In addition, it suggests a demonstrated framework relying on principles that seem suitable to a wide range of firms. The original concepts that lie behind the EFQM Model are conventional as changing through time as firms improve and develop. The following points are a review for the current indicative concepts:

- 1- “Adding Value for Customers: Excellent organisations consistently add value for customers by understanding, anticipating and fulfilling needs, expectations and opportunities.
- 2- Creating a Sustainable Future: Excellent organisations have a positive impact on the world around them by enhancing their performance whilst simultaneously advancing the economic, environmental and social conditions within the communities they touch.
- 3- Developing Organisational Capability: Excellent organisations enhance their capabilities by effectively managing change within and beyond the organisational boundaries.
- 4- Harnessing Creativity and Innovation: Excellent organisations generate increased value and levels of performance through continual improvement and systematic innovation by harnessing the creativity of their stakeholder.
- 5- Leading with Vision, Inspiration and Integrity: Excellent organisations have leaders who shape the future and make it happen, acting as role models for its values and ethics.
- 6- Managing with Agility: Excellent organisations are widely recognised for their ability to identify and respond effectively to opportunities and threats.
- 7- Succeeding through the Talent of People: Excellent organisations value their people and create a culture of empowerment for the achievement of both organisational and personal goals.
- 8- Sustaining Outstanding Results: Excellent organisations achieve sustained outstanding results that meet both the short and the long term needs of all their stakeholders, within the context of their operating environment.” (EFQM, 2013; British Quality Foundation, 2013)

There are nine criteria which can be considered the base of this model, which are divided into two parts: enablers and results. The enablers are leadership, strategy, people, partnership and resources, and processes, products and services, while results criteria are people results, customer results, society results and key results. Enablers cause the results which improve enablers by using the feedback from them. The nine criteria will be reviewed below:

1- Leadership

- Leaders develop the ethics, values, vision and mission and act as exemplars.
- Leaders define, review, drive and monitor the improvement of the performance and management system of the organisation.
- Leaders engage with representatives of society, partners and customers.
- Leaders support a culture of excellence with the members of the organisation.
- Leaders make sure that the firm is flexible and manages change in an effective method.

2- Strategy

- Strategy relies on understanding the expectations and needs of both the external environment and stakeholders.
- Strategy relies on understanding internal capabilities and performance.
- Supporting policies and strategy are updated, reviewed and developed to make sure of ecological, societal and economical sustainability.
- Supporting policies and strategy are developed and communicated through objectives, processes and plans.

3- People

- People's plans enhance the strategy of the organisation.
- People's capabilities and knowledge are developed.
- People are empowered, involved and aligned.
- People communicate in effective methods throughout the firm.
- People are cared for, recognised, and rewarded.

4- Partnerships and Resources

- Suppliers and partners are directed for sustainable profit.
- Finances are directed to protected sustained achievement
- Natural resources, materials, equipments and buildings are directed in a sustainable way.
- Technology is directed to enhance the strategy's delivery.

- Knowledge and information are directed to build the organisational capability and to enhance effective decision making.
- 5- Processes, Products and Services
 - Processes are managed and designed to optimise stakeholder value.
 - Services and Products are improved to create minimum value for consumers.
 - Services and Products are effectively marketed and promoted.
 - Services and Products are managed, delivered and produced.
 - Customer relations are enhanced and managed.
 - 6- Customer Results
 - 7- People Results
 - 8- Society Results
 - 9- Key Results

The Points in Common among Quality Awards

The models of the awards consider a wide range of management processes, practices and activities that influence the final products quality. Those models share the same fundamental purpose, and give a framework that is useful for an organisation to evaluate and apply their implementation practices of total quality management. Furthermore, as these quality awards are modified and refined periodically they reflect trends and developments in the quality practices and concept. The quality awards' format changed because of the impact of the different approaches and philosophies towards total quality management caused by several organisational and social systems within different countries (Chaun and Soon, 2000). However, the similarities among different studies employed to compare the main awards of quality are shown to be more than the differences (such as Bohoris, 1995; Vokurka et al., 2000; Cauchick, 2001; Chaun and Soon, 2000). The three awards mentioned above have more similarities in their criteria than differences, although they emphasise different aspects and have different categories. They also have the same values and principles (Chaun and Soon, 2000; Vokurka et al., 2000).

While the awards have similar criteria; the definitions involved, points' distribution, and approaches vary from award to another (Vokurka et al., 2000). There is no such thing as a normative guideline or perfect approach (Kujala and Lillrank, 2004). It appears that the components of total quality management tend to change from one sector to another and from one country to another. Different principles might need to be emphasised in different countries and industries or different departments. These similarities can be helpful to find common basic

components of total quality management. Yet again, focusing on the differences is not as useful as focusing on the similarities because the principles that are agreed can be useful in giving a better understanding of the current developments in the components of TQM and the TQM itself. The following aspects have been highlighted by the three awards:

- The significance of leadership
- Consumer focus
- Continuous improvement
- The significance of HR management
- Employees' participation
- The significance of training and education
- Process management
- Policy and strategy
- Information and data
- Provider quality management

ISO 9000

ISO 9000 standards are seen by some quality scholars as useful norms for quality management implementation (Goetsch and Davis, 2006; Sallis, 2002). According to Kartha (2004), ISO standards' certification has been represented as an exceptional starting point; and by Magd and Curry (2003) as groundwork for TQM implementation.

ISO 9000 is a standards' family for quality management systems which is published by the International Organisation for Standardisation and managed by certification and accreditation bodies. Sallis (2002) states that the origin of ISO standards was in the United Kingdom in the very late seventies and published in the late eighties after being revised by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Ministry of Defence according to their responsibilities as procurement agencies. It was founded in the manufacturing sector but it has been expanded across different kinds of organisations. According to the 2009 ISO 9000 publication 'Selection and use of ISO 9000 family of standards' there are three standards which are:

- ISO 9000:2009 Quality Management Systems, which provides the vocabulary and fundamentals used within the entire family of standards of ISO 9000.
- ISO 9001:2009 Quality Management Systems, which is meant for use by any firm that provides any type of service. ISO 9001:2009 provides confidence in the ability of the organisation to introduce products that meet the customer's expectations and needs.

- ISO 9004:2009 Quality Management Systems, which provides guidance on a set of objectives of QM system especially in managing for organisation's long-term success.

The final version of ISO 9000 standards includes eight principles of quality management, which align the standards with TQM more closely. They are: mutually beneficial supplier relationship, realistic approach to decision making, continual improvement, system approach to management, process approach, people's involvement, leadership, and customer focus (Goetsch and Davis, 2006)

Yung (1997) states that the ISO 9000 series has been noticed as a step within quality management implementation. Goetsch and Davis (2006) described it as a subset of and compatible with total quality management. ISO 9000 has an impact on organisation quality management, as demonstrated by a research Rao et al. (1997). Their findings highlight that organisations registered to ISO 9000 have better quality management results and practices than those that are not registered. In addition, organisations that are certified with ISO 9000 offer better quality services and moving towards total quality management than those that are not.

Research findings by Sun (1999) indicate that implementation of ISO 9000 alone did not add much to the organisations' quality improvement. This can be linked to an organisation's motivation in looking for ISO 9000 certification. Seaver (2003) suggests that organisations are not going to achieve important quality improvement unless the main motive is to develop its quality systems instead of gaining the certificate itself.

There is a positive relation between organisation results and ISO 9000 which is that more profitable organisations are more likely to gain the ISO 9000 certification (Heras et al., 2002). Conversely, other research does not offer significant evidence to confirm that the norms of ISO 9000 influence organisation performance (Martinez and Martinez, 2004; Tsekouras et al., 2003). The different effect of the norms of ISO 9000 can be linked to the motivation of the organisation to achieve it; meaning that if the organisation gained the certification due to external pressure, not because they believe that it can assist to improve the quality, they may get worse results than by not applying those standards (Martinez and Martinez, 2004).

2.1.6. Principles of TQM

The different views and disagreement amongst quality researchers about how to define and describe TQM extended to a lack of unanimity about its components. Finding the principles underlying total quality management is seen as a prerequisite to apply and improve TQM. In

addition, it is viewed as an essential starting point to study experimentally the relation between organisational culture and TQM (Zeitz et al., 1997; Detert et al., 2001).

According to Goetsch and Davis (2006), total quality management contains eleven critical elements: unity of purpose, employee empowerment and involvement, training and education, system's continuous improvement, teamwork, long-term commitment, using a scientific approach, obsession with good quality, external and internal customer focus and strategic planning. Dean and Bowen (1994) mentioned that TQM has three basic values which are: teamwork, continuous improvement and focus on the customer.

On the basis of analysing the propositions of Deming, Ishikawa and Juran, Hackman and Wageman (1995) identified four basic assumptions determining TQM. The first assumption links to quality: producing poor quality is more costly than high quality products, and quality is important to the long-term survival of organisations. The second assumption is about people: employees surely care about their work's quality if they are provided with the training and the tools they need. Consequently, barriers and fears that they may face must be removed by management. The third is about organisation: an organisation is a system of extremely interdependent elements with numerous cross-functional problems, so representatives from all appropriate functions must be included. The fourth assumption is related to the role of senior management: senior management is responsible for quality, and must be committed to the process.

Hackman and Wageman (1995) recognized four main principles for the implementation of total quality management: analyse the basic cause of uncontrolled variance in outcome and process, focus on processes, continuous improvement and promotion of learning, and problem-solving based on data. Sitkin et al. (1994) acknowledged three primary components of TQM, which are a holistic view of the organisation, continuous improvement, and customer satisfaction.

Ahire et al. (1996) evolved ten TQM constructs: employee empowerment, employee involvement, information usage, internal quality, SPC usage, benchmarking, design quality management, supplier quality management, customer focus and top management commitment.

Dale and Bunney (1999) identified eight TQM key elements, which are teamwork, involvement, education and training, quality management techniques and tools, planning, leadership and management commitment, feedback and measurement.

Huarng and Chen (2002) conducted an empirical study in Taiwan, which concluded in a mix of nine hard and soft tools. Hard tools include benchmarking, statistical methods and training, while soft methods include empowerment and management commitment.

The empirical study of Seraph et al. (1989) produced eight critical factors for successful quality implementation: employee relations, quality data reporting, process management, supplier quality management, training product design, the quality department role, and quality policy and the role of divisional top management.

Twelve fundamental elements of TQM implementation are presented by Dahlgaard-Park (1999): scientific approach; holistic approach/total approach; partnership with society, customers and suppliers; building a TQM culture; education, training and learning; empowerment, motivation, teamwork, and focus on employees; actions based on facts; focus on processes; total involvement, responsibility and commitment; focus on customers; continuous improvement; and strong management commitment.

Eng and Yusof (2003) presented eight essential factors for applying TQM including culture, work environment, education and training, employee participation, supplier quality management, improvement of tools and techniques, customer satisfaction and feedback, continuous improvement system, and management leadership.

While TQM has certain important principles for its implementation, TQM components tend to be different from one country to another (Sun, 1999; Huarng and Chen, 2002). Even within the same organisation and within the same industry, different departments may emphasise different values (Van Donk and Geer, 1993). Nevertheless, the common principles of TQM cited in the literature are commitment, management and orientation of everyone in the organisation to fact-based decisions, focus on process, and continuous improvement (Hellsten and Klefsjo, 2000).

2.2. TQM in the Educational Context

2.2.1. Introduction

While Total Quality Management was developed in the manufacturing sector, it has spread to the education sector in several countries. Many authors consider applying TQM in the education system as appropriate to develop education output (e.g. Jenkins, 1997; Arcaro, 1995a; Arcaro, 1995b; Sallis, 2002; Crawford et al., 1993; Leslie, 1994; West-Burnham, 1997), and at the same time improve the country's economy in general. If schools cannot produce

skilled personnel, it will be difficult for industry to recruit workers able to produce good products (Schargel, 1996). Peak (1995) stated that if there is no good education, there will be no quality anywhere in society. TQM offers a suitable response to the requirements of this era through a holistic approach, a unified view which amalgamates relationships, process and structures (West-Burnham, 1997).

Most research conducted on Total Quality Management in the educational context focused on higher educational systems; few studies have been conducted into the implementation of TQM in the general system of education, such as secondary and elementary schools. Cunningham (2007) suggested that several systems of education implementing TQM at present are doing so with little guidance, because there is no previous specific model to which researchers can refer. TQM's appropriateness to education is an issue of much debate. Schools are different from the manufacturing sector, where TQM was developed in the first place, as well as more complicated. It has been argued that TQM is not as suited to the educational system as to industrial organisations (Cunningham, 2007) and that applying the quality model of manufacturing in education can be inappropriate (Scrabec, 2000). To meet specific needs of schools, the model has to be adjusted (Cunningham, 2007). Consequently, to match the requirements of education might require a particular group of quality principles.

In addition, there are two different levels of work in schools, based on the characteristics of performers and the nature of the relationship between them. The first one can be found between administrators and teachers, while the second level is in classrooms, which means between teachers and their immature students. These levels of work may need different sets of principles of quality.

This section will review the literature in respect of TQM within the educational context, concentrating on the general system of education (secondary and elementary levels). Given that most argument in relation to TQM is connected to the nature of educational settings, Section 2.2.2 studies the definition of TQM in the educational context. Then, Section 2.2.3 studies the components of TQM in education. After that, Section 2.2.4 studies the differences between manufacturing and educational sectors. In Section 2.2.5, consideration is given to the issues of customers in the educational process. Then, Section 2.2.6 studies the role of the student in TQM education. Section 2.2.7 introduces the position of this study regarding the existing argumentations about the implementation of TQM in education and defining TQM in the educational context. Finally, the last part sums up the section.

2.2.2. TQM's definition in the educational context

Researchers and authors have defined Total Quality Management in education differently on the basis of their different views on quality. TQM in education has been described as fineness in education; educational value addition; correspondence of the output of education to requirements, specifications and planned goals, excellence of the outcome of education and experience for use; avoiding failure in the process of education; and exceeding or at least meeting the expectations of the customers of education (Sahney et al., 2004).

Nevertheless, most of the definitions adopt the idea of the business model and consider the student the main customer that should be satisfied. Babbar (1995) argues that definitions of TQM applied to business can be implemented in the teaching context (Babbar, 1995). He discusses that the teacher can be considered as a manager in the educational context, and teachers and students can be considered as employees and customers. On this basis, he suggests two definitions of TQM in a class setting. He suggests that Total Quality Management is a philosophy and a set of practices and guiding principles the teacher applies to teaching, that constitute the basis for continuous improvement and learning on the part of the teacher and the students. He also states that it is the application of instructional methods to improve the quality of education provided to the students and the level to which students' needs and their teachers' are met, in the present time and in the future (Babbar, 1995). The second definition is that TQM is a process that involves the teacher adopting a quality approach to teaching (such as trying to improve the quality of instruction and the meaningful learning of the students by every possible method) in order that the students' and teachers' needs are best served. Moreover, he suggests that it is the endless pursuit of continuous development in the quality education provided to the student (Babbar, 1995).

Dahlgaard et al. (1995) describe Total Quality Management in the educational context as an educational culture characterised by increased customer satisfaction through continuous development in which all students and employees actively collaborate. Sahney et al., 2002 argue that

“Total quality management in education is multi-faceted – it believes in the foundation of an educational institution on a systems approach, implying a management system, a technical system and a social system – all based on principles of quality, to be implemented throughout. It aims at satisfying the needs of the various stakeholders, through the design of a system based on certain principles and practices. It includes within its ambit the quality of inputs in the form of students, faculty, support staff and infrastructure; the quality of processes in the form of the learning and

teaching activity; and the quality of outputs in the form of the enlightened students that move out of the system” (Sahney et al., 2002, quoted in Sahney et al., 2004, 149-150).

Yet, it seems that defining Total Quality Management in education is not an easy task. A proper definition has to take into consideration the complexity and nature of the system of education and its dissimilarities from business.

2.2.3. Components of TQM in an educational context

The literature review of TQM in education highlights that most of the models of education are based on the philosophy of Deming (e.g. Weller, 1996; Jenkins, 1997; Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1993; Crawford and Shulter, 1999; Crawford et al., 1993; Glasser, 1990; English and Hill, 1994). The idea of creating a proper environment for continuous learning where teachers and their students are intrinsically motivated, interact positively and work with each other in a fear-free and cooperative atmosphere dominates the literature of TQM in education.

Crawford and Shulter (1999) contrast the applicability of the models of Deming and Crosby to education. They conclude that the models of Deming and Crosby may lead to a state wherein students pass examinations the first time, based on the ‘do it right first time’ principle. However, students may become complacent, passive, inflexible, distracted from the subject matter by the focus on the techniques of the tests, and deficient in imagination and creativity. On the other hand, the model of Deming can lead to a situation in which students are actively involved in exercises of application of knowledge, co-operation and team work, problem-solving exercises, research projects, and equal relationships with teachers, and as a result become creative and critical thinkers, well-equipped to face the challenge of rapidly changing life.

Deming’s fourteen points have been summarised by Winter (1991) into three classes of objectives that education management has to accomplish, which are:

- Environment of organisation – these principles establish norms and values that govern the behaviour of each person in the organisation.
- Mission and philosophy – this class contains principles that emphasise focusing on the needs of the customer in a continual search for quality.
- Process – rather than the recognition of imperfection at the end of the process, this class emphasise the need for prevention of imperfection throughout the process.

However, TQM cannot be implemented in any school (Murgatroyd, 1993). Rather than a detailed blueprint for the implementation of TQM in educational settings, most of the authors in the area suggest components or principles of TQM. Different people have presented different TQM components.

West-Burnham (1997) suggests a model of TQM that might be implemented in schools, including four main components which are:

- Principles: the initial purpose, values and vision of the school expressed in its mission statement and articulated through its management.
- People: the school has to be designed smoothly around people, with the minimum number of management layers, emphasising human relationships and development, learning and a team-based approach.
- Prevention: this philosophy has to be implemented in all activities of the school
- Processes: all the processes of the school must be viewed in terms of the extent to which they meet the needs of the customer.

Arcaro (1995a) argues that there are five quality pillars that can be implemented in every department and school, from building maintenance to classroom activities, to accomplish a quality culture, which are:

- Customer focus: to increase a quality focus, everyone in the system of the school has to know that there are clients for every educational output. Everybody is both a supplier and a customer in a total quality school. The school board, staff, administrators, teachers, students and the parents are the internal customers in the education system, while higher education, employees and society are the external customers. Satisfying the customer is the aim of TQM. This purpose can be accomplished by a continuous effort to meet both external and internal customers' expectations and needs.
- Measurements: professionals of education need to know how to measure quality. They can demonstrate and measure education's added value when they learn to collect and analyse data. Quality management professionals in school have to have a system to measure and document the added value of their initiative of quality.
- Continual improvement: "the basic concept of quality is that everything can be improved" (Arcaro, 1995a, 9), thus there no such thing as a perfect process.

- Total commitment and involvement: everyone should be committed and involved in the transformation of quality. It starts with the adoption of a new approach to education and getting rid of the old way of working and thinking.

Frazier (1997) describes TQM as a philosophy which has nine important values that offer guidance to improving and restructuring organisations: long-term planning, teamwork, human resource development, and participatory management, management by fact, continuous improvement, customer focus and system thinking. He indicates that improving quality requires the optimisation of the whole system by grasping the interdependence amongst all of its components. Problems in the performance of the students are mainly ascribable not necessarily to the student but to the system. It is necessary to look at the entire system and find the origin of the problem to resolve it. “Successful transformation requires that the entire system shares in a common vision, and then develops some very specific strategies to coordinate alignment up and down the organisation” (Frazier, 1997, 57)

William Glasser’s (1990) book, *The Quality School*, is one of the most important works in the literature of TQM in education. The main idea of the book is based mostly on what the writer calls choice theory. ‘Choice theory’ suggests that individuals choose to do things that they consider to be the most need-satisfying options available at the time. Individuals try to live in the ways by which they think their needs will be best satisfied. They also try to control the behaviours of others, but they cannot coerce them. This constant striving is choice theory. All people are born with five important needs which are built into their genetic structure, which are freedom, enjoyment and fun, friendship and love, power and belonging, and survival. They choose the behaviour that they believe will satisfy their main needs (Glasser, 1990).

2.2.4. The educational VS manufacturing sector

It is more difficult to define quality in the educational context than in other sectors. The educational sector’s nature is more complicated and different from the industrial sector and service sector. Consequently, it is worth discussing the application of business terms and the concept of quality in education. Transposing terminology has more effect than the words themselves. It revises and shapes responses to social reality, and has a big impact on how all interpersonal relationships in the educational sector are conceived (Schwartzman, 1995). Nevertheless, what makes some see the quality concept when implemented to education as unclear is the different nature of the setting of education from manufacturing (Cheng and Tarn, 1997; Pounder, 1999).

Kwan (1996) states that there are four aspects that makes the difference between education and manufacturing sectors, namely, inputs, outputs, processes and objectives. He also described every aspect as follows:

Kwan explains: educational settings' inputs are subject to high variability, unlike those of factories. Although some entrance requirements can be imposed on applicants, schools cannot control the quality of their inputs, the students, so it will be difficult to control the outputs' quality. There are other factors, for instance, interpersonal skills, the students' learning strategies and their attitudes towards learning, which are not readily measurable. Students are persons whose performance usually differs under different conditions. As a result, it is difficult to control and measure the incoming students' quality.

The second aspect is the outputs. In quality manufacturing companies, outputs are those that can satisfy the requirements of the customers. In education, on the other hand, there are different customers: society in general, potential employers, the school management, the parents, the students and their teachers. There are intangibles in relation to the students, namely, student skills, student wisdom, student character, the development of student knowledge and the educational product (Bonsting, 1992).

The third aspect is process. Processes of education are not like assembly lines in manufacturing. Learning and teaching are interactive processes between students and their teachers. Thus, the steps in the process cannot be predetermined in a step-by-step format like those for manufacturing assembly lines.

Moreover, both parties are persons whose behaviours are determined by individual styles of interpersonal skills, emotional fluctuations, and objectives and motives. In addition, the behaviour of one party often reacts to the actions of the other. Consequently, a step-by-step format cannot be implemented in the process of teaching in the classroom. The education process is influenced by different aspects and different parties. It deals with human beings and its success depends on the students' willingness to collaborate in the process (Bonsting, 2001; Schwartzman, 1995). Kwan adds that the curriculum of the school is not the only feature that influences the students' behaviour, academic achievement, and personality. Other factors that play a significant role are societal impact and family. Therefore, he argues that student performance does not only thing reflects the teaching process.

The last aspect is the objectives. Profit is usually used as an indicator of effectiveness for manufacturing companies. The aims of the system of education are not so simple: the objectives of each school have to be to offer opportunity for each student to develop in four areas: knowledge, which enables the students to understand; know-how, which allows them to do; character, which allows the students to cooperate; and wisdom, which allows them to set priorities, to persist, and become trusted and respected members of society. Thus, education's mission is quite long-term and no single indicator can be a symbol of the effectiveness of accomplishing these objectives (Kwan, 1996)

The differences mentioned above between the manufacturing and educational sectors are major differences, and they require to be taken into consideration when studying or adopting total quality management in educational settings. Those differences lead to many arguments amongst authors in the area, especially regarding the customer of education.

2.2.5. The role of the student in TQM education

The student's role in the educational process can be seen in different ways. Students can be considered as stakeholders like others, whose interests, occasionally, must come after the needs of others (Schwartzman, 1995). According to Scrabec (2000), however, the student should not be seen as a customer but as a recipient. Hoffman and Kretovics (2004) suggest that students can be seen as fractional employees in the school, while other authors see students as workers, and quality as a result of the quality level of their work (Glasser, 1990; Helms and Key, 1994); students are seen as immature material but main customers too.

2.2.6. The study's stance

Whether students are categorised as workers, products or customers determines their significant roles and affects the way TQM is implemented in education. They are not just workers, products or customers, though students have some of these characteristics; they are more than that. They have specific attributes in a particular sector, and need a particular model to meet their needs. If Total Quality Management is to be successful in the educational sector, the uniqueness of the students has to be addressed.

Students have to be seen as students; nowadays, they are the school's daughters and sons. They are made aware of social needs and equipped with citizenship to take their position as the most significant element of tomorrow's society. When we say that the student has to be seen as 'the school's daughter or son' we mean it; all stakeholders must consider and treat students like family, where everybody does their best to use their skills and knowledge to get the best

for their country and society and for themselves. Consequently, this study prefers the terms “stakeholders” and “students” instead of using the term “customer”.

2.3. Organisational and National Culture

2.3.1. Definition of Organisational Culture

Many researchers have presented different definitions of organisational culture. While there is an agreement among researchers that organisational culture is something that members of an organisation share, there is strong disagreement about what they share (Martin, 2002). There are many definitions of organisational culture (Brown, 1998); “Culture means different things to different people” (O’Reilly and Chatman, 1996, 159). Generally, there are two aspects included in most of the definitions of organisational culture, which are: invisible or cognitive components, such as values, beliefs and assumptions, and visible components such artefacts and behaviours. Some researchers focus mostly on the invisible aspect (such as Ott, 1989; Kilmann et al., 1985) while other researchers believe that culture exists mostly at the practice level and see the organisational practices’ pattern as the major element of organisational culture (Hofstede, 1998).

Values are included in most definitions of organisational culture existing in the literature, and are seen by many researchers as a central element of organisational culture. Values are considered as the elements that distinguish organisations from each other (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2004), which may be why they are the component most used in organisational culture definitions (Chao and Moon, 2005). Organisational culture is a group of shared basic assumptions, which is a deeper definition by Schein (2004).

The following are instances of definitions which are currently in use amongst researchers of organisational culture, which contain values as a key component of the definition of organisational culture.

Organisational culture is “the pattern of shared beliefs and values that give members of an institution meaning, and provide them with the rules for behaviour in their organisation” (Davis, 1984, 1). According to O’Reilly and Chatman (1996), organisational culture is “a system of shared values defining what is important, and norms defining appropriate attitudes and behaviours, that guide members’ attitudes and behaviours” (page 166). Bright and Cooper (1993) defined organisational culture as the general pattern of values, beliefs and behaviour that in common among members. It is “the collection of relatively uniform and enduring values,

beliefs, customs, traditions and practices that are shared by an organisation's members, learned by new recruits, and transmitted from one generation of employees to the next" (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2004, 643).

Most of the organisational culture definitions in the literature include both manifestation and cognitive components. Nevertheless, they focus mainly on invisible components and values, particularly, as a central element of definitions of organisational culture. Conversely, there are some other researchers who believe that organisational culture exists mainly at the practice level and who see the pattern of organisational norms or practices as the central element of organisational culture.

Organisational culture is "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one organisation from another" (Hofstede, 2001, 9). Based on the findings of his research, Hofstede believes that the values of the main leaders and the founders surely shape organisational culture, except the ways in which these cultural values influence the members of organisation would be restricted to shared practices. The values of leaders and founders would become the practices of other organisation members.

In addition, based on their experience, Van den Berg and Wilderom (2004) described organisational culture as "shared perceptions of organisational work practices within organisational units that may differ from other organisational units" (p. 2). They state that the central element of organisational culture is organisational practices.

The common definition of organisational culture, "how things are done around here", is an additional simple example that sees culture's existence in organisations at the level of practices. From this perspective, culture has been described as "what is typical of organisation, the habits, the prevailing attitudes, and the grown-up pattern of accepted and unexpected behaviour" (Drennan, 1992, cited in Brown, 1998, 8).

Culture varies from one firm to another. Generally, firms follow unwritten regulations whose existence is intended for the organisation's good. Evans and Dean (2003) suggest that the social environment and culture of the organisation are socially constructed or enacted by the members of the organisation themselves. Members of a firm that follow the same practices, beliefs and values altogether in performance of their functions in the organisation's hierarchy develop some form of culture. Organisational culture may be affected by 'heroes' such as Bill Gates or may be partly influenced by external factors like organisational boundaries, religion,

government regulations and policies, or internal factors like organisational structure. Culture can be determined by the way people share stories and talk, by how they spend their time and by the way people respect their superiors. In addition, it can be identified by how the policies of the organisation are generally practised.

There are some aspects of culture that Bodley (1996) has summarised as follows:

- Symbolic: culture is based on randomly given meanings that are shared by a firm.
- Structural: culture contains interrelated and patterned behaviours, symbols or ideas.
- Mental: culture is composed of learned habits or ideas for social control.
- Functional: culture is how people solve problems that they might face regarding living together and adjusting to the environment.
- Normative: culture is rules, values or ideals for living.
- Behavioural: culture is a way of living; it is learned and shared human behaviour.
- Historical: culture is a social tradition, or legacy, that is passed on from one generation to another.

While there is no particular and commonly agreed definition of organisational culture, actually there is a general agreement that culture represents beliefs or values, and the norms of usual behaviour in an organisation. Therefore, organisational behaviour generally and organisational success particularly have a strong relationship with culture. Most organisational culture's empirical studies focus on the two components mentioned earlier. The two components and other major components will be explained in the next part of this chapter.

2.3.2. Components of Organisational Culture

A group of organisational culture components have been determined by many researchers. Generally, most organisational culture researchers, such as Trompenaars (1995), Bright and Cooper (1993), and Schein (2004), think that organisational culture has a series of layers or levels.

Trompenaars and Hampden-Tuner (2004) state that viewing organisational culture in terms of different layers is useful to understand it. Determining different levels or layers is useful to understand to what extent culture could be influenced and managed (Bright and Cooper, 1993). There is some confusion surrounding the definition of culture and this confusion is a consequence of failure to distinguish the layers at which it shows itself (Schein, 2004).

Different categorisations of the organisational culture's layers have been presented by several researchers. Hofstede (1990) categorises culture's manifestations into four classes which are: values, rituals, heroes and symbols. The last three are classified under the term practices, as they are visible to the viewer. While they are visible, the cultural meaning of these practices lies in the way they are viewed by insiders. Deal and Kennedy (1982) agree with this; they indicate four significant elements of organisational culture, namely: a cultural network, rituals and ceremonies, heroes, and values.

Three levels of organisational culture have been defined by Schein (2004). Artefacts is the most superficial level, which takes the form of symbols, heroes, rituals and ceremonies, jokes, myths and stories. The second level includes attitudes, values and beliefs. The third level is the deepest one which is basic assumptions, such as care about the environment, human relationships, human activities, human nature and reality.

2.3.3. Norms and Behaviour

Some researchers, such as Trompenaars (1995) see norms in the same layer as values, while Kotter and Heskett (1992) see norms as a portion of the artefacts layer. According to Kilmann et al. (1985), norms are just under the artefacts layer, whereas they have been seen as a separate level by other authors such as Rousseau (1990). Brown (1998) suggests that norms have been described as the rules of behaviour which prescribe what are considered to be inappropriate and appropriate responses from the members of the organisation in certain circumstances. Norms can be considered as activities that an organisational culture's members maintain, without thinking (Fairfield-Sonn, 2001). According to Ashkanasy et al. (2000), there are two aspects of norms, which are shared realisation about what individuals are supposed to do and what individuals typically do. Practices can be categorised as norms when individuals do them because others do them as well (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2004). Ashkanasy et al. (2000) states that norms can be so powerful that they are at no time called into question.

Norms are viewed as significant for organisations since they control much of the day-to-day behaviour of the employees and work as providers of structure and coherence to the cultural life of the organisation (Brown, 1998). 'Do not disagree with your boss' is an example of a norm. Normally they are unwritten rules; however, they are passed on from one generation of workers to another via rites, stories and so forth (Kilmann et al., 1985). They are easy to change (Kotter and Heskett, 1992).

2.3.4. Values and Beliefs

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2004) state that values are firmly held cognitive (mental) views and beliefs regarding reality, concerning what individuals believe to be untrue or true (p. 157). A value has been described as “an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally and socially preferable to alternative modes of conduct or end-states” (Rokeach, 1969, cited in Ashkanasy et al., 2000, 38). This description contains the end or acts and the results or the means (Ashkanasy et al., 2000). Values can be considered as the base behind the determinable norms, for instance, collaboration as a value behind data sharing as a behaviour norm in a firm.

Some try to differentiate between values that govern the work behaviour of employees within an organisation and values in a general sense. Ashkanasy et al. (2000) defined values in the context of work as “the end states people desire and feel they ought to be able to realise through working” (p. 39). In most of the literature, values are viewed as essential to organisational culture. They are first expressed by managers and leaders, mainly through behaviours and attitudes. Eventually, almost all workers adopt the attitude and emulate the behaviour of leaders and managers (Williams, 1994).

One of the problems that education in Saudi Arabia is facing is the weak relationship between school and families. The staff of the school realise the significance of the relationship with parents, yet, it appears that the cooperation between them at a low level. Schools are partly responsible; however parents believe that it is the school’s responsibility to do the work without the parents’ interference. School administrations frequently complain about the poor response of the parents when asked formally to visit the school regarding a problem with the students (Al-Sinble et al., 2004).

Al-Sinble et al. (2004) suggest that changes always face resistance. They argued that the community sense challenges when it comes to changes as people feel threatened. In this regard, parents feel that their values and those of their ancestors are going to disappear because of the changes in curricula. In addition, they perceive that any changes are threatening their heritage, as they see it, and it fear will change the entire culture. On the other hand, Al-Sinble et al. (2004) declare that sometimes teachers who are long-established in the educational system are resisting the change by themselves and sometimes they do not deliver the new lessons to students.

2.3.5. National and Organisational Culture

There is an assumption that has been presented in most of the management literature, that each nation has its describable, distinctive and influenced culture (McSweeney, 2002). In addition, Nelson and Gopalan (2003) argue that many intuitively assume a relationship between national culture and organisational culture.

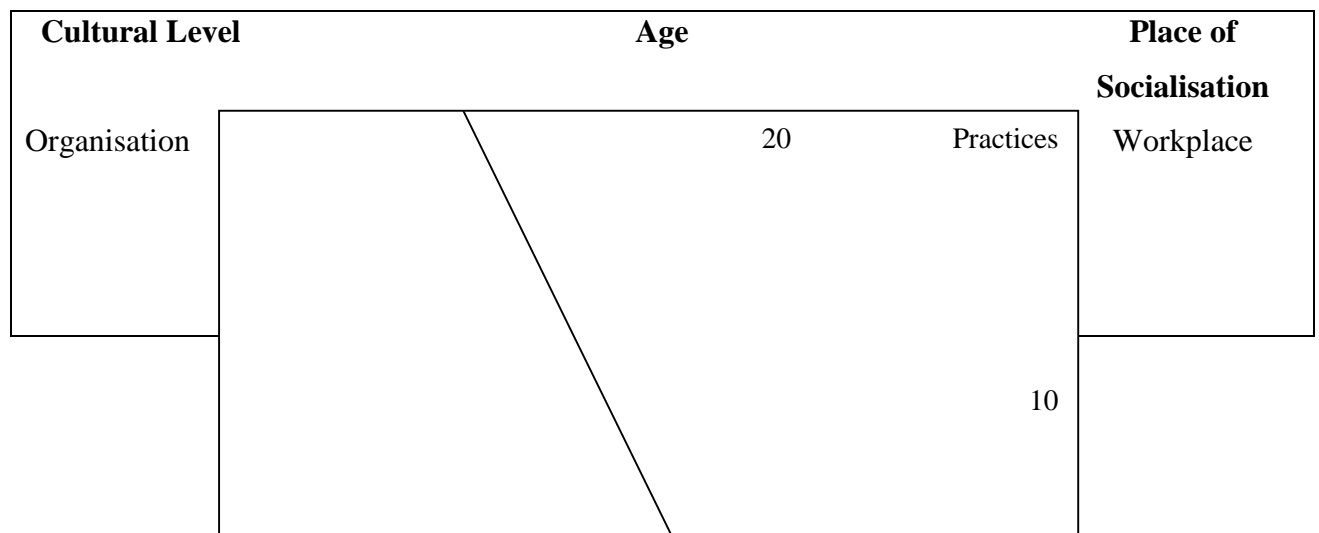
Cultural preferences of employees and leaders have an impact on an organisational culture's shape. It is expected that people will borrow from ideals or models that they are familiar with when they set up an organisation (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2004).

There are five dimensions that have been identified by Hofstede (2001) that differentiate several national cultures: short-term versus long-term orientation, masculinity versus femininity, individualism versus collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and power distance.

Although some view organisational culture as a partly the outcome or a result of national culture, some others argue that it is more stable and powerful than organisational culture (Buchanan and Huczynki, 2004)

National and organisational cultures are two kinds of culture (Hofstede, 2001). According to Hofstede (2001), organisational culture mainly stems from consistency in practices; while national culture stems from consistency in values. The findings of research by the information technology company IBM indicate that there are substantial differences in values amongst national cultures. Cultural differences are less clear in values than those in practices at the organisational level. Based on the same findings, understanding of the daily practices ought to be considered as the core of organisational culture (Hofstede, 2001).

The differences between national and organisational culture can be demonstrated in figure 1 (Hofstede, 2001). The place of learning for practices and values is shown in the figure on the right hand side while the left hand side shows the balance of practices versus values at organisational, occupational and national levels.



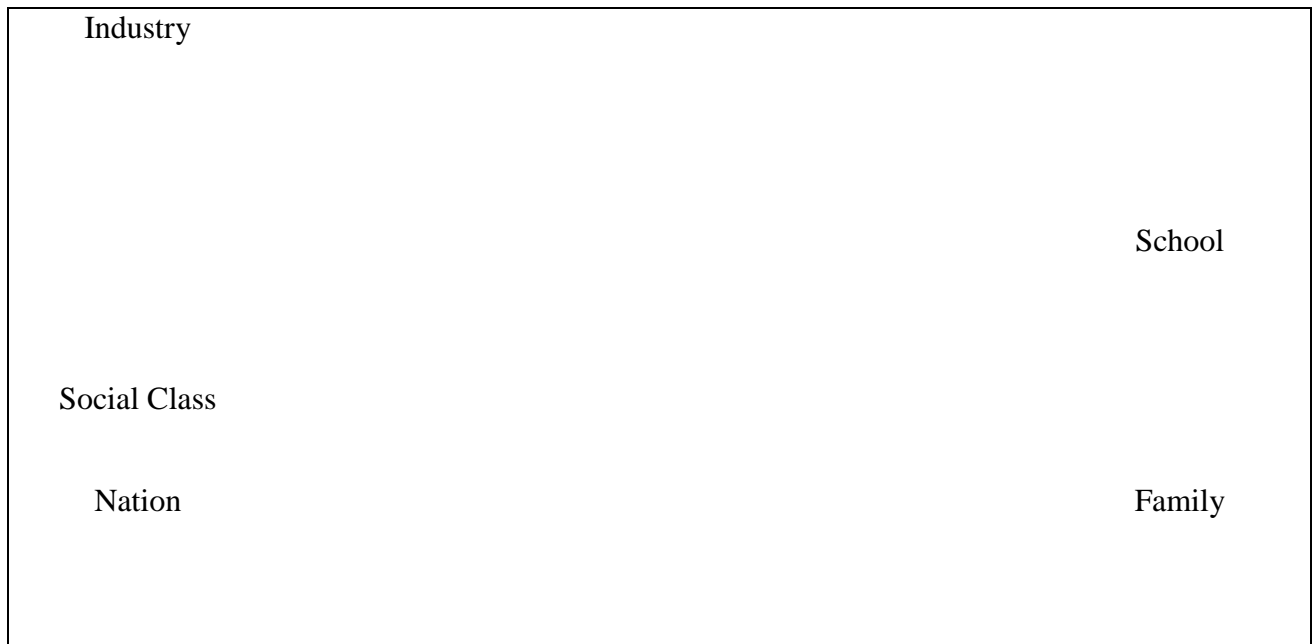


Figure 2.1: the Balance of Practices versus Values at Organisational, Occupational and National Levels. (Hofstede, 2001).

2.3.6. Saudi culture

Hofstede defined culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the member of one human group from another” (1980, 25). He states that culture is an integral part of achieving success in business (Hofstede, 2014).

Rivera-Vazquze et al (2009) suggest that cultural considerations might have a negative impact between investors and employees as a source of clashes of synergy but might have a positive influence as well, through facilitating communication between them. Therefore, this section explains aspects the Saudi culture to allow the reader to understand prevailing values and norms that might influence organisational practices such as Total Quality Management. French (2010) states that many researchers have studied culture through a number of dimensions that mirror the influence of the institution and the values of the individual. According to French (2010), many of these dimensions were developed and introduced by the work of Hofstede. In terms of Saudi Arabia, the majority of the studies conducted there have been based on the four dimensions originally developed by Hofstede (1984). He suggested that countries are distinguished from each other by their values in regard to Individualism versus Collectivism, Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Masculinity and Femininity (Hofstede, 2014). According to Hofstede (2014), cultures can be compared based on scores on each of the dimensions, from 0 (low) to 100 (high). Although Hofstede’s work gives important clarity and

understanding of national cultures, some scholars have criticised it (Inglehart and Barker, 2000; McSweeney, 2002; Hamilton and Webster, 2012; Taras et al., 2012) for the following reasons:

- 1- It assumes that the values in a particular country are homogenous.
- 2- It presumes that culture needs a long period of time for change, while some studies (for instance, those by Inglehart and Barker, 2000; Taras et al., 2012) show that the time needed for a shift in culture is less than that expected by Hofstede.
- 3- There is some concern about the reliability and validity of Hofstede’s research, because values may have changed with time.
- 4- Generalisation is limited because of the fact that the study was applied in some countries in one organisation.
- 5- The study is too old.

Nonetheless, even with these criticisms, the study of Hofstede is extensively applied in management research (Kankanhali et al., 2004). His cross-culture study covers more than 70 countries. Yet, there is a shortage of studies exploring Saudi business culture conducted in the English language. Budhwar and Debrah (2001) suggested that the management practices in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have been influenced by Islamic values. According to Bjerke and Al-Meer (1993), the mentality and behaviour of the Saudis are a combination between Arab tradition and Islamic teachings. However, management practices, such as TQM, were developed in the Western context. Therefore, the following table has been adapted from Hofstede (2014) to introduce a brief comparison between Saudi Arabia as an Eastern context and the US as a Western context.

Cultural Dimension	US	Saudi Arabia
Power Distance	40	95
Individualism	91	25
Uncertainty Avoidance	46	80
Masculinity	62	60

Adapted from Hofstede (2014). <http://geert-hofstede.com/saudi-arabia.html>

Hofstede (2014) stated that the Power Distance (PD) dimension is concerned with the fact that all individuals are not equal in a certain society. It addresses “the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that

power is distributed unequally” (Hofstede, 2014). According to the above table, the US scored 40 in relation to the PD dimension, which is one of the lowest scores on this dimension’s scale, compared with other countries. In relation to the environment of organisations, this means there is a small gap between subordinates and their manager, which is said to have a positive impact on the communication between them, leading to improved organisational performance and sharing of knowledge (Rivera-Vazquez et al., 2009). Dickson et al. (2003) claimed that the leadership style in low PD cultures supports innovation, flexibility and general skills. According to Pellegrini and Scandure (2006), the individuals in a low-power-distance culture are more likely to be involved in making decisions and to believe that they should have a voice. Moreover, countries with such a culture are likely to promote employees’ empowerment, which enhances the workers’ productivity (Baruch and Hall, 2004). In addition, Hofstede (1991) suggested that employees in low-power-distance culture look for a leader/manager who will give them more responsibility and consult them. Hofstede’s study did not include separate data for Saudi Arabia, but gave scores for a set of seven Arab countries including Saudi Arabia. These show a high score (95 out of 100) on the PD scale, compared with the US. Hofstede (2014) claimed that people in a high power distance culture “accept a hierarchical order in which everybody has a place and which needs no further justification”. Moreover, the hierarchy in organisations in a high PD culture reflects innate inequalities, centralisation is accepted, the ideal superior is a philanthropic tyrant, and employees are expected to do what their managers tell them. Although, Hofstede’s scores, as noticed above, did not clearly single out Saudi Arabia, subsequent scholars have supported his ascription of high power distance and its consequences. According to Al-Gahtani et al. (2007), there is no equality in organisations, and workers in Saudi culture expect their leaders/managers to act autocratically and paternalistically. Moreover, Arab traditions do not support the idea of empowerment or of employees’ participation at all organisation levels. Such values have a negative impact on HRM practice (Baker and Abou-Ismael, 1993). According to Mardani (2012), “quality management would prove more successful in national cultures with higher levels of masculinity, power distance, uncertainty avoidance and collectivism” (2012, 292).

Collectivism/Individualism

According to Hofstede (2014), individualism is “a preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of themselves and their immediate families only”. He described collectivism as: “a preference for a tightly-knit framework in society in which individuals can expect their relatives or members of a particular in-group to

look after them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. A society's position on this dimension is reflected in whether people's self-image is defined in terms of 'I' or 'we'" (Hofstede, 2014).

This means that people in an individualistic culture tend to emphasise their personal needs, concerns and interests over those of a group or an institution, whereas in collectivist cultures people are integrated into a strong group and look after each other. Hofstede's scale illustrates that the Arab group scored 25 on individualism (low) which indicates that organisational culture may have a tendency to focus on relationships in a small group and long-term commitment to the group members, factions and families, with everyone looking after other group's members (Hofstede, 2001). The US scored 91 out of 100 on Hofstede's measurement scale, in which means that it is highly individualistic.

Differences between collectivist and individualistic cultures are concrete differences in employee beliefs, values, attitude, and behaviour regarding their organisation and job. For example, according to Hofstede (2001), an employee in a individualistic culture is more keen on freedom, initiative and challenge in her/his work, whereas in collectivist cultures is the opposite. Moreover, the differentiation between the workers in individualistic societies is based on the productivity of the individual (Hofstede, 2001). Interpersonal relationships trump business in a country with a collectivist culture (Idris, 2007). According to Idris (2007), in a collective culture, business is often influenced by the notion that the worker's primary obligation is to family or his/her friends. For example, recruitment and promotion practices in organisations may be influenced by the desire to indulge family or friends rather than to strive to find the person with the best qualifications.

Uncertainty Avoidance

Hofstede (2014) suggested that this dimension is concerned with how different cultures in different societies deal with ambiguity and uncertainty. This dimension illustrates the extent to which the managers/leaders within an organisation feel comfortable or uncomfortable with unstructured situations, as well as how they try to minimise these situations by applying strict roles, policies and regulations to put everything in order, control over them and solve them to avoid any unexpected results (Hofstede, 2014). The US scored 46 out of 100 while Saudi Arabia scored 80 on the Uncertainty Avoidance (UA) dimension, which means that the Saudi preference is for avoiding uncertainty, whereas uncertainty is more tolerated in the USA. In terms of uncertainty avoidance, the differences between countries are mainly linked with certain distinctions in job-related and work behaviours. Brislin (1993) argued that organisations

in countries with low-uncertainty avoidance cultures have a relaxed attitude towards ambiguity and have fewer rules for workers. Moreover, Rivera-Vazquez et al. (2009) suggest that tolerance and acceptance diversity in low UA cultures such as the US tend to be much higher than in high UA countries such as Saudi Arabia. According to Brislin (1993), in the United Kingdom, as an example of a low UA culture, there is lower acceptance of regulations and less compliance with authority and power, compared to a high UA country such as Saudi Arabia. In addition, Hofstede (1991) argued that very often in high UA cultures the individual has a low-level of ambition for development, workers tend to stay with the same employer for the long term, there is high stress in the workplace, and the selection of managers is often based on seniority. On the contrary, in low UA cultures such as the US, there are criteria for seniority other than age, for instance, qualifications, employees are less hesitant in moving to another organisation, the individual has a high level of ambition for development, stress is at a low level, and for making the decision on selection of managers/leaders. Nonetheless, individuals in countries with high-uncertainty-avoidance culture value their traditions and it is hard to accept changes (Hofstede, 2014).

Masculinity and Femininity

Hofstede described masculinity as “the extent to which the dominant values in society are ‘masculine’ – that is, assertive, the acquisition of money and things” (1980, 46). In other words, a society with a high score of masculinity is driven by competitiveness, success, (defined as winning), and tough competition. Conversely, a feminine society has a preference for feminine values such as friendliness, physical condition, caring for the weak, cooperation, security of position and quality of life (Hofstede, 2001). The US scored 60 out of 100 on the scale for this dimension, while Saudi Arabia scored 60, which means the dominant values are masculine in both societies. Based on these results, Hofstede (1994) suggests that these countries have discrimination in gender roles and men play the dominant role in these societies. In a masculine country, if women play a man’s role, they become more assertive and competitive. According to Hofstede (2014), in a masculine country, such as Saudi Arabia, managers/leaders are often expected to be decisive and assertive, the focus is on equity, people live for the sake of work and conflict, rivalry and performance are solved by fighting out these factors. Workers in a highly masculine country are more interested in advancement, recognition and challenge compared with those in a less masculine country (Hofstede, 1991). On the contrary, in a feminine country, people consider that it is very important to keep a balance between life and work. An example is Sweden which scores 5 on this dimension. Regarding organisational life,

managers/leaders usually involve their subordinates in decision making, support them, and conflicts are solved by cooperation and negotiation (Hofstede, 2014)

Long-term versus Short term Orientation

This symbolises the extent to which community's perspective is pragmatic and future oriented. According to Peretz and Fried (2012, 449), "organisations in high FO societies are likely to engage in future-oriented behaviours such as planning, development, and goal setting". In addition, it is the opposite situation in low FO cultures.

2.3.7. Management in Saudi Arabia

Criticism of management in Saudi Arabia

Alqonabet (1998) suggests that several studies conducted regarding management in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have found that there are major insufficiencies in administrative practices which have significantly hampered the effort of improvement in Saudi Arabia. In Saudi Arabia, economic programmes have increased organisational size, function and authority. Several new organisations have also been founded to apply the development programmes and goals of the state. As Saudi Arabia is one of the developing countries, these organisations are having some administrative obstacles, like in other developing countries, at both structural and behavioural levels (Assad, 2002; Mellahi, 2007). These structural and behavioural obstacles have been found in both academic and other organisations. For example, Assad (2002) mentioned significant problems in the academic context, such as that a huge lack in employees' participation in decision making, inadequate communication, and rapid turnover. According to Assad (2002), other problems; include the important role played by personal relationships in promotion and employment, inadequate communication, a lack of clarity over work responsibility, and a misfit between employees' qualifications and work assignments. In addition, there are other problems such as centralisation of authority and overlapping responsibilities (Assad, 2002). According to Rawaf (1990), there are common problems facing female administrators that have an impact on their performance, such as lack of preparation and selection of women, particularly in jobs entailing supervisory responsibilities. Generally, workers are employed, often on personal family considerations, not on the individual's skills or education.

Assad (2002) has conducted other studies in higher education institutions. One of those studies investigated training opportunities and to what extent recruitment criteria are suited to them and it examined the incentive system. The findings of the study show that the majority of

workers surveyed were not experts in the administrative field and had no previous experience in the same career. Furthermore, almost half of the employees had only secretarial or high school clerical training. It was clear that the critical factor for employing was personal relationships. Regarding employees' perception of the inducement system, the findings of the study revealed a prevailing view that it was not only hard work that brought promotion or rewards; personal relationships played an important role and were more significant than working hard (Assad, 2002). Moreover, it is very common in the Arab countries for reward, recruitment and decision of selection to be based on personal connections known as '*wasta*' (Hutchings and Weir, 2006; Branine and Pollard, 2010). Additionally, "friendship and kinship take precedence over qualification as managers feel obliged to support their relatives and family and friends" (Branine, 2002, 141). Metcalfe (2007) also states that '*wasta*' or interpersonal relationship is commonly used in the Arab countries to achieve personal aims. According to Al-Saeeri (1993 cited in Assad, 2002), despite several efforts to restructure Saudi bureaucracy, administration still suffers from the structural and behavioural problems mentioned before. Several scholars highlight that Saudi bureaucracy still restrains the growth of the Saudi economy (Al-Sultan, 1990; Wilson and Graham, 1994; Looney, 2004).

According to Jreisat (1990) and Al-Adwan (1993), there are some tangible achievements in developing countries after serious efforts and investments by the administrative system to promote restructuring. Jreisat (1990) claims that the direction of the reform effort is often central and top down, although, managers often resist change as they are occupied with fulfilling their duty to political managers/leaders instead of following through with the organisation's programmes. In terms of accepting changes in the organisational environment, organisations find themselves struggling, and bureaucracy is seen as inflexible (Abrahamsson, 1977). According to Ali (1995), modern management practices are completely new in the Arab environment.

The impact of culture on management in Saudi Arabia

As the culture of Saudi Arabia is a collectivist one that values group work, the model of pay-based-on-performance which identifies individuals is difficult to apply. Furthermore, many studies suggest that the high-context and collectivist culture in Saudi Arabia is very weak in the out-group (such as, people from another religion or guest employees); while it is extremely strong in the in-group such as extended tribe or family (Ali, 1993; Mellahi and Wood, 2001). According to Mellahi and Wood (2001), in an out-group, attachment to a person is very limited and the emphasis is on the accomplishment of the task in hand, o rather than on

social belonging and relationship. The reason behind this is that interaction between people belonging to different out-groups is very low. On the contrary, people in an in-group cohere into a group and have strong relations.

Saudi Arabia's score on the power distance dimension is higher than other Arab countries. Bhuain and Kim suggest that "in general a Saudi manager would expect employees to do whatever they are told, and an employee's being left on his or her own may be viewed as an indication of the management's dissatisfaction towards the employee" (2001, 29). It would be conceived as a strong sign of rejection and marginalisation and that managers did not trust the individual's ability. Generally, managers make all decisions, which has a negatively impact on the change process (Yavas, 1997). Tribal values are crucial in Saudi Arabia and support the idea of absolute wrong and right; any other approach that does not conform or match to this idea is seen danger to the stability of the organisation and authority and is highly unacceptable (Ali, 1993).

The impact of religion on HRM in Saudi Arabia

In many organizations in Arab countries, the management of the relation between decision making and employees is, at least in theory, shaped throughout a process of consultation which is rooted in the Islamic traditions and comes from the Holy Quran. Yet, the situation is quite different in reality. In a survey conducted in some Arab countries by Muna (1980), using interviews, consultation was highly emphasised. In addition, Muna (1980) indicated that there were strong expectations among managers, partners and even friends and relatives to be consulted on organisational or daily issues. Moreover, the majority of managers saw consultation as a useful technique for 'human relations'. They used it to avert any possible disagreement between employees and their managers, to please, to pacify, or maybe to convince any individual who might disagree about a particular idea; it was a "face saving" mechanism. Additionally, consultation seemed to be a significant method for gathering information. However, in all situations, only selected individuals are consulted and who is selected depends on circumstance.

According to Wilson (2006), justice is a virtue that every individual anywhere deserves to develop, irrespective of their gender or whether they are leaders or employees. Moreover, Islamic teachings emphasise the significance of justice in any organisation or society. Branine and Pollard (2010) stated that in Islam, personal weal or any other consideration should not have an impact on justice. Additionally, justice should protect the freedom and equality of

everyone. The Holy Quran indicates that people are free in their benefits. Moreover, people are equal irrespective of their status, race, knowledge, profession, gender and wealth; what makes the difference between them are their actions and deeds. Branine and Pollard claim that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) made it clear that people are equal when he said “An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over a black, nor has a black any superiority over a white except by piety and good action” (2010, 719). This means that the only standard is piety and no one except God knows the level of piety of an individual. In an organisational context, the teachings of Islam support a manager to treat his/her subordinates fairly and equally despite any other considerations (Branine and Pollard, 2010).

Studies of the Saudi Arabian culture have found that it is quite homogenous and that the main cause is that the impact of Islamic teachings on the Saudi community. Teachings of Islam have a strong impact on all aspects of life, even for business decisions. According to Walker et al. (2003), Saudi people are fatalistic and strongly believe in God, believing that God’s hands have the ultimate control over the environment. Yet, the most crucial issue is not regarding the belief in the ultimate control or in God but misguided interpretations of the teachings of Islam. Islam teaches that God has the ultimate control but also teaches and persuades people to put forth effort to get a better life. Misguided interpretations in Saudi Arabia have an important impact on the settings and reaching objectives, and the business environment. Accountability in Saudi Arabia in managing appears to be weak; it is not acceptable to blame fate for mistakes in management (Bhuiyan et al., 2001).

Quranic principles and Prophetic prescriptions emphasise respect and obedience for leaders. According to Beekun and Badawi (1999), in Islam, leaders must be obeyed at all times. Obedience is crucial and mutiny is unacceptable, except in very specific circumstances. Beekun and Badawi (1999) highlighted that the majority of Muslim researchers sustain what is called ‘dynamic followership’. This means that even though Islam emphasises that followers should accede to the orders of the leaders, it does not advocate blind subservience. In other words, while typical Muslim workers respect their leader/manager and should do so, responsibility in most of the cases lies with the manager/leader to persuade followers that her/his orders are worth applying and obeying, rather than imposing the leader’s will on workers by strict administrative orders (Mellahi, 2003). This view is embedded in the religion through the practice of *shaura* or consultation, where managers/leaders ask their subordinates’ opinions before making decisions.

An additional key characteristic Saudi management is social and cultural informality and etiquette. A variety of issues and business deals concerning employment are dealt with in simple settings. *Diwaniyah* for example, which often take place after working hours and outside the formal meeting environment in the evening, where all the parties discuss their concerns more freely (Mellahi, 2003). Given the fact that Saudi people tend to avoid getting to the topic or business in hand directly (this is considered rude behaviour and a sign of impatience) and like to loop around, starting with greetings and social talk before beginning to talk on business, relaxed and long informal settings lend themselves to such decision making processes.

2.3.8. Studies of Organisational Culture

In general, studies of organisational culture have been conducted at several levels of organisation, like employees versus managers, evaluating different cultural elements or dimensions, or by using different methodological approaches, such as quantitative or qualitative.

These differences are connected to researchers' different cultural perspectives. There are three different perspectives of cultural studies that have been identified by Martin (2002) which are: fragmentation, differentiation and integration. Martin argues that many researchers adopt the first one of these perspectives. These three viewpoints can be explained as follows:

The fragmentation perspective views relations between cultural manifestations as neither clearly inconsistent nor clearly consistent and views vagueness, not clearness, as the culture's core.

The differentiation perspective concentrates on cultural manifestations that have inconsistent clarifications. For instance, organisation departments may behave very differently from what they publicly espouse of any group of values. This perspective finds consensus to exist just in subcultures. Therefore, vagueness exists in the gap between subcultures but within a subculture there is clarity.

By contrast, the integration perspective concentrates on cultural manifestations that have consistent clarifications, and sees culture as a clear consensus with no vagueness. From this opinion, people see culture the same way, despite the angle from which they see it.

However, for comprehensive study of organisational culture, researchers need to adopt views from all three perspectives (Martin, 2002; Fitzgerald, 2002).

Organisational culture has been assessed and studied in different ways. Cameron and Quinn (1999) identified three strategies to evaluate culture at the organisational analysis level:

- Quantitative approaches, when the researcher uses structured interview or questionnaires to evaluate a particular dimension of culture.
- Language or metaphorical approach, where the researcher uses patterns of language in conversations, stories, reports and documents to find out patterns of culture in the same way that investigators use word prints, voice prints or fingerprints to find out the identity of someone.
- A holistic approach, in which the researcher becomes immersed in the culture and gets involved in in-depth participant observation.

There are three methods available to evaluate organisational culture in real terms: surveys, intensive interviews and participant observation (Swaffin-Smith et al., 2002). However, the disagreement amongst researchers of organisational culture regarding what it is leads to debate regarding the most suitable way of studying organisational culture.

2.4. Performance Appraisal as an aid to Quality Management

Standard performance appraisal has become an extensive tool of human resource management. Surveys reported in the period from 1970 to 1990 indicated that 74-96 per cent of the United States organisations and a similar percentage of British organisations had in place a standard performance appraisal system. The most likely organisations to conduct formal appraisals are large and complex organisations.

According to Grote, performance appraisal is “a formal management system that provides for the evaluation of the quality of an individual’s performance in an organisation” (2002, 1). It is also “the process of measuring and evaluating employees’ performance” (Bloisi, 2007), whereas Armstrong defined it as “the formal assessment and rating of individuals by their managers at, usually, an annual review meeting” (2006, 500). According to Human Resource Management theory, performance appraisal is a process of gathering, registering, and analysing data to extract information regarding the employee, with specific focus on developing and managing business methods, helping managers to develop the performance of employees, and qualifying employees to apply self-evaluation (Ahmed and Dablan, 2007).

Jacobs et al. (1980) state that performance appraisal is a systematic attempt to recognise the less efficient employees from the more efficient employees and to differentiate the

weaknesses and strengths each one has across several job factors. In brief, performance appraisal can be considered as a measurement of how well someone performs tasks that are relevant to his/her job (Parril, 1999). The ratee's direct supervisor normally does these measurements, which can serve several organisational purposes such as, personnel planning, supervision, training, promotion, feedback, development, disciplinary, and employee selection.

2.4.1. The Purpose of Performance Appraisal

The purpose of conducting performance appraisal has been discussed in the literature by many contributors. For instance, Fedor (1991) states that feedback and employee development is the purpose of a performance appraisal system. Other scholars add more purposes for the performance appraisal system, such as achieving cultural change, controlling and motivating employees, determining promotion, allocating financial rewards, succession planning, providing career counselling, identifying training and development needs, and defining and clarifying performance (Bowles and Coates, 1993 and IRS; 1994,1999, cited by Redman, 2006). According to Pilbeam and Corbridge (2006), the performance appraisal's outputs can form the structure of a plan of organisational success and individual development; whereas Spinks et al. (1999) claim that the performance appraisal's purpose is to help workers to set goals, to give rewards, and to relieve uncertainty amongst employees.

Bratton and Gold (2007) declare that whilst the most usual justification and rationalisation for performance appraisal is improving individual performance, there are several other affirmed purposes for performance appraisal, such as setting targets and goals, planning corrective actions, discipline, counselling, managing careers, improving communication, developing opportunity and identifying training, determining rewards, reducing ambiguity and clarifying expectations regarding performance, and improving morale and motivation.

Performance appraisal might be seen as a cure in organisations, even though such hopes are more often than not misguided (Taylor, 1998). Bratton and Gold declare that "appraisal is arguably the most contentious and least popular among those who are involved. Managers do not seem to like doing it, employees see no point in it, and HR managers, as guardians of an organisation's appraisal policy and procedures, have to stand by and watch their work fall into disrepute" (2007, 285).

The purpose of performance appraisal, the way it is employed and researched in practice within organisations can be a wide area. According to Randell (1994), performance appraisal is systematic evaluation of the performance of individuals linked to specific criteria and/or

workplace behaviour. Performance appraisal frequently takes the form of an interview, commonly annual, and it is also supported by standardised paperwork/forms. The main objective of performance appraisal is to provide ratees with feedback regarding their performance given by their manager/supervisor. There are three main questions for the feedback's quality:

“1- What and how are observations on performance made?

2- Why and how are they discussed?

3- What determines the level of performance in the job?” (Prowse and Prowse, 2009, 70)

It has been highlighted that this procedure cannot be effectively done unless the person providing feedback, e.g. the line manager, has the skill of interpersonal interviewing to give that feedback to the employees being evaluated. This has been identified as the “Bradford Approach”, which strongly demands development of appraisal skills (Randell, 1994). The Bradford Approach highlights the linkage between developing, involving, valuing and rewarding people at work.

Many scholars categorised the purposes of performance appraisal into four categories which are: research, system maintenance, developmental and administrative (Jawhar and Williams, 1997; Harris, et al, 1995, Greguras, et al, and Goff, 2003). Performance appraisal systems with administrative purposes are implemented to gather information about performance that will be used to make decisions regarding pay promotions, or other rewards or/and gruels. A performance appraisal system with developmental purposes is implemented to give performance information that can be given as feedback to the workers which will be hopefully assist them to improve their performance soon. System maintenance appraisals are applied to provide information regarding organisational training needs and personnel planning. Finally, research purposes appraisals are normally not implemented for organisational purposes at all, but to contribute to or to validate an instrument in experimental research.

2.4.2. Performance Appraisal Methods

Rating Scales

Characteristic of each employee are rated on scale from poor to excellent. Employee characteristics such as communication and initiative skills and cooperation are usually included, although the characteristics included depends on the description of the job and organisational objectives. An advantage of using this method is that it is standardised and

structured, which allows easy comparison between ratings (Archer North, 2006). An element of equality and fairness is introduced in this method because all workers are rated by using the same scale and with the same options. In addition, what makes this method popular is that it is simple to use and easy to understand. However, there is a disadvantage of this method, which is that it might be too structured for some job roles. Some of these characteristics may have more significance to a specific job than another, yet, there is no way to differentiate or prioritise between the different worker characteristics. Some workers may have lower scores on rating in some traits or characteristics basically because the work does not need them to use these often. Furthermore, scoring low ratings on those characteristics does not necessarily mean that the worker is underperforming. Hence, ratings are context sensitive (Archer North, 2006).

Including all relevant characteristics and traits in the method is another significant consideration. It may happen that a worker's performance is good but the related characteristics that caused the employee to do well are not included in the performance appraisal. Consequently, this will not provide an accurate indication of performance (Archer North, 2006). Also, this method suffers from faults caused as a result of perception: various managers may observe the work performed and the meaning of the characteristic differently. This method has another disadvantage, which is that managers who are busy often may tend to give median or average ratings (Archer North, 2006). This happens within some organisations where the performance appraisal does not have strong support from the organisation's management (Archer North, 2006).

Essay Method

In this method, the manager prepares a written statement or 'essay' regarding the employees, in which the future course of actions, weaknesses and strengths, with areas to be corrected, are specified. This method has some advantages, such as that it is not as structured as the rating scales, which allow managers to include any characteristic and comment on any weakness they wish. Thus, this method is flexible and open (Archer North, 2006; Stone, 2005). However, there are some disadvantages, the main one being the process is time consuming and demanding (Archer North, 2006; Stone, 2005). In addition, the process depends to a certain extent on the writing skills of the manager or the person who is doing the appraisal (Archer North, 2006; Stone, 2005). The other disadvantage is that it is difficult to make a comparison between ratings of different employees because it is subjective (Archer North, 2006).

Management by Objectives or Results Method

This method evaluates the employees in relation to the extent to which objectives have been achieved (Archer North, 2006; Stone, 2005). Initially, there is an agreement between the appraiser and the appraisee regarding the objectives. Once agreed, identifying the skills required and monitoring their own development and progress are the responsibilities of the employee (Archer North, 2006; Stone, 2005). An advantage of this method is that the method focuses on outcomes and results rather than concentrating on traits. This approach's guiding principle is that while characteristics can be inferred results can be observed directly (Archer North, 2006; Stone, 2005). Nonetheless, a disadvantage of this method is that the appraisers need to be skilled to recognise what is accomplishable and what is not (Archer North, 2006; Stone, 2005).

360 Degree Feedback

The main foundation of this method is that a brighter picture will be acquired if the feedback from several sources other than the appraiser is gathered. In this method unnamed feedback is gathered from managers, employees, peers and in some cases even suppliers and customers (Archer North, 2006; Stone, 2005). It is important to recognise how the feedback gathered will be employed and whether it will be employed to make administrative decisions. The performance appraisal is implemented via rating scales and comments. It is recommended to use no less than six anonymous evaluators (Smith and Mazin, 2004). Offering honest opinions and different perspectives is the advantage of this method. The method becomes a good way of getting a picture of the whole organisation, if it is going through a changing period, especially for jobs which involve a big amount of relationships (Smith and Mazin, 2004). If there is a lack of trust between subordinators within the organisation, or if the organisation is hierarchical, this method might not work (Smith and Mazin, 2004; Stone, 2005). This method can be ineffective where the same people are used as appraisers time after time, and when the method is used for the long term.

2.4.3. Criticising Performance Appraisal

There is a direct correlation between appraisals and critiques, meaning, when performance appraisal has increased in operation and scope across occupations and sectors; critique continues. Use of performance appraisals is presented as an "orthodox" technique by management framework that seeks to cure weaknesses and PA is suggested as a system for developing performance (Bach, 2005). The "orthodox" approach indicates that there are contradictory purposes of PA (Strebler et al., 2001). PA can motivate employees by illustrating

the organisation's objectives and setting lucid objectives for future with provision for development and training necessitate setting performance objectives. These contradict with distribution of payments based on past performance and assessing past performance as well (Bach, 2005). Employees are unwilling to reveal any concerns and limitations with their current performance because this could affect their opportunities or promotion or merit-related rewards (Newton and Findley, 1996). This contradicts with the view of PA as a developmental process because the evaluators are challenged with contradictory roles as judges and monitors of performance. This was argued by Randell (1994) when he claimed that only a few appraisers receive training programmes to perform their duties. McGregor (1957) suggests that managers are unwilling to make negative judgement regarding performance of individuals because it could be de-motivating, which leads to employee accusations of lack of managerial support and contributes to poor performance of an individual. One of the consequences of conflict is the so-called "central tendency", where managers appraise all evaluations in the middle evaluating point. The "halo effect" distorts political judgement further by over-rating specific criteria in performance rather than being significant across the range of standards, and if some qualifications are lower they might prejudice the evaluation across the positive review, which is known as the "horns effect" (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service, 1996).

Central tendency and leniency errors are examples of distributional errors. According to Jacobs et al. (1980), leniency is a propensity to evaluate higher than appraisees deserve. Barry (2003) states that the resulting mean evaluation score is high and rating scores are focused at the distribution's high end. Other things remaining equal, the worse the discerned consequences of negative evaluation, the greater the motive for the evaluation to be lenient (Dalton, 1996). According to Hamman et al. (1999), raters with too lenient evaluations are called easy raters. These raters are mainly found amongst individuals who have been raters for a very long time, or amongst groups of raters who are not bothered to put forth the effort to understand the standards of performance. Central tendency suggests giving no extreme evaluations in either negative or positive direction (Jacobs et al., 1980). Another error is called similar-to-me error, which is the propensity to rate the appraisee more positively if the appraisee is supposed to be similar to the rater (Jacobs et al., 1980). According to Rudner (1992), stereotyping is where impressions regarding the whole group change the impression regarding a member of this group. If past experience or viewpoint affect how behaviour is explained one speaks of differences' perception (Rudner, 1992).

Although one can deduce that eliminating error involves a certain level of accuracy (Parrill, 1999), there are other factors that have the potential to deflate or enhance rating accuracy, such as delays between monitoring and giving feedback and opportunity to observe. There is a strong relation between interrater-reliability and the rate and the opportunity to observe (Rothstein, 1990). In addition, it appears that this relation is strongest in the first year. According to this result, firms should not use the evaluation of one supervisor regularly to appraise the performance of employees with less than one year in the position or which are monitored for less than a year by their current appraisers. Generally, what lead to more accurate evaluations are promoted opportunities to monitor and record behaviour. Yet, normally delays between performance ratings and observation are inevitable, due to the restricted time and resources that firms are willing to expend in performance appraisal (Sanchez and De La Torre, 1996). This may have extreme consequences. For example, delays may affect the behavioural memories' availability and, as a result, weaken their relation with evaluations formed under such high memory demand (Sanchez and De La Torre, 1996). In contrast, behaviour recognition has been affected by temporal delay more than evaluating accuracy (Martell and Leavitt, 2002). Appraisees keep their first evaluative impression but over time forget specific behaviours.

According to Smith (2001), bias is an under- or overidentification of ratees relative to performance for member of groups towards which the appraiser may have a preference or his/her own group. He claims that these systematic biases are a result of either individual motivation or, cognitive processing limitations, or both. Unfavourable ratings of out-groups and favourable ratings of in-groups occur, even if not necessarily together (Ridge, 2000). This finding is supported by Cook (1995) when he found members of in-groups accomplish their positions by some other path, other than better work. The research of Cook (1995) presented other instances of bias: performance appraisal illustrates considerable bias against older individuals. Moreover, "own race" bias is a small example, yet, it is consistent.

There are other factors that risk the ratings' accuracy besides bias and errors. Cook (1995) conducted in-depth interviews and he claims that, for instance, three quarters of appraisers freely confessed that they liked to magnify performance evaluations and tended not to lower performance evaluations. Yet, 83% of the interviewed appraisers declared that being in a bad or a good mood changed their performance evaluations. According to Banker et al. (2001), private agendas or political considerations almost always influence evaluations too. Examples are to avoid confrontations or to protect individuals who are underperforming owing to personal problems or to maximise merit increases. Moreover, it became clear that employees

who helped managers to make them feel satisfied, or helped them to believe in themselves as good managers and be proud of it, received better performance evaluations. According to Reinke (2003), such favouritism weakens subordinates' perceptions of procedural justice and, consequently, their acceptance of the PA system and outcomes.

Branine and Pollard (2010) stated that, in the Arab society, authority and power determine individuals' role and have powerful implications for the relations between subordinates and leaders. It is all about who you are, no matter how much you know. Furthermore, they suggest that the source of status and power can be from the name of the degree held, relationship with the manager of the firm, the organisation's position, relationship of an individual with the state apparatus, the tribe and the family (Branine and Pollard, 2010).

Ball et al. (1993) suggest, "Distributive justice refers to the fairness of an outcome distribution (Deutsch, 1985), and is closely associated with equity theory (Adams, 1965) and fair distribution of rewards. However, people are also concerned with the fair distribution of punishment outcomes" (Ball et al., 1993, 43). Ball et al., (1994, 306) that "Under distributive justice formulations, disciplined employees can be expected to compare their punishments to the punishments of others who have committed similar infractions..... Thus, equity refers to the perceived appropriateness of a punishment in comparison to what others have received. Equity was measured with two items, one of which was "My supervisor disciplined me harder than others who have performed similarly.'" (Ball et al., 1994, 306)

According to Harris (2012, 2), "... social norms still play a crucial role in maintaining social orders". The reason behind this is that a great part of human interaction still occurs in informal social environments, for instance, residential neighbourhoods, workplace and family, which are not controlled by clear contracts (Fehr and Gaechter, 2000). Social norms are normally imposed by the willingness of individual to impose an informal punishment on those who deflect from the standards of behaviour, even at the own cost of the punisher (Fehr and Fischbacher, 2004; Hoff et al., 2007).

2.5. Training

To improve the effectiveness of performance appraisal, almost all scholars agree that appraiser ought to be trained to monitor, collect, process and join information related to behaviour. There are three suggested goals that should be aimed by training which are: firstly, it should clarify how the appraisers should define any normative information that they are given. Secondly, it must make sure that appraisers understand the sequence of operations that

they should perform. Finally, it should make the appraisers familiar with the measures and the standards that they will be dealing with (Rudner, 1992). Extensive training is essential to avoid errors since errors can become habitual and entrenched (Tziner and Kopelman, 2002). Thus, the training ought to provide trainees with a wide range of opportunity to practise the particular skills, provide them with feedback regarding the performance appraisal they just practised, and comprehensive knowledge of the behaviour to should be observed. Harris (1988) indicates the need for training: continual training is essential in some areas such as observing performance on a regular basis and goal-setting, and interactional and personal skills. She suggests that a firm could provide training programmes like this on a frequent basis in such a way that it becomes an integral part of the position of the supervisor and therefore becomes an element of the culture of the organisation.

Kondrasuk et al. (2002) claim that training conditions for every individual involved must be fulfilled. Accordingly, this requires that training is regularly updated and involves aspects of appraisal such as approaches of conflict resolution, active listening skills, personal bias, and giving and receiving feedback. Reinke (2003) adds another aspect, which is broad understanding of the system which is essential to build trust and therefore enhance acceptance of the process of performance appraisal. Harris (1988) emphasises the importance of training by indicating that if it is applied in this way, employees will be more aware regarding performance appraisal's intentions and less disappointed and less confused regarding measures. Moreover, this means that they will be able to offer useful feedback and critique regarding the process of performance appraisal.

2.5.1. Training in Saudi Arabia

According to the latest statistics from the Ministry of Education, the number of teachers is 501,111 (Ministry of Education, 2012). There are eighteen teachers' colleges that owed degrees in Education that and those colleges are supervised by the ministry (Sedgwick, 2001). There are 42 training centres for the ministry around the country that are responsible for training teachers. These training centres offer a variety of training courses and methods which are provided by their own supervisors. In-house training and workshops in schools undertaken by visiting teachers with experience is another method (Sidiya, 2009).

Fatima Sidiya (2009) wrote an interesting article about training teachers in Saudi Arabia and how it had improved corresponding to the new campaign; however, she claimed it is not very successful in meeting its aim. Five interviewees were involved in her study, a head of a

private school, a chief executive officer of a private training centre, two ministry trainers, head of a training centre of the ministry in Jeddah; in order to explore the ‘intense debate’ regarding the current training programme’s effectiveness (Sidiya, 2009). The head of the training centre of the ministry in Jeddah stated that over the fifteen years that she had spent in the centre, training had been offered for teachers, supervisors and principals, but never for trainers (Sidiya, 2009). The majority of the participants that Sidiya interviewed declared that the supervisors of the ministry who perform the training ‘lack the necessary skills of training’ while another participant claimed that they are ‘not qualified enough to be trainers’. Shoura Council officials such as Ahmad Al-Mufarih claimed that the current training programmes are ‘ineffective, undirected and unorganised’ (Arab News, 2009). Metcalfe (2006) suggests that training and development opportunities are not based on the abilities of the individuals, because they are based on family networks and individual relations.

2.5.2. Training Trainers

According to Cheung and Cheng (1997), training teachers will teach them self-learning skills for self-improvement in addition to making them better teachers. If this implication is applied to training trainers, it will be equally effective; it will make the trainers better and will give them the right tools for more development and improvement (Srinivasan, 1990). Acemoglu and Pischke (1997) highlighted that training the trainers will affect the trainers’ job satisfaction and motivation, which will provide a competitive advantage for the ministry in the employment market, which is challenged by several private training centres.

According to Armstrong (2003), training trainers could cause staff involvement and empowerment, which in turn may raise productivity and effectiveness and contributes to gaining a competitive advantage for the organisation in the market.

2.6. Centralisation

2.6.1. School Culture and Centralised Education Structure

Any organisation’s culture is the result of many operations, processes and elements that influence it and give it its distinctive character (Coleman and Earley, 2005). There are internal and external factors that play a main role in influencing the culture of each organisation. The internal factors such as the decision-making process and leadership style, while the external factors such as the national culture and the society itself. Structure, reward, control, evaluation and selection systems, job description, and communication system are aspects that consistent with administrative processes that influence the culture of the organisations. In addition,

emphasising the principal's role and changing the structure and learning/teaching processes are crucial when it comes to school efficiency (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 2004). Many scholars claim that the educational structure and system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is extremely controlled by the governing body, which monitors attainment of desired goals, supervises educational processes, and directs many organisations (Alghamidi and Abdul-Jawad, 2005; Albilehshy, 1991; Alhgeel, 2002). The justification of this highly centralised and controlled system in the Saudi Arabia conform with a suggestion stating that centralised systems of education improve the process of teaching/learning. For instance, strongly controlled curriculums can solve problems that poorly qualified teachers are facing. Similarly, uniformity and fixed politics can deliver quality to curriculums since central control is prosperous in spreading innovation and change (Coleman and Earley, 2005). Nevertheless, Likert (1979) has another proposal when he names rigid systems of education "exploitive authoritative" wherein the classical bureaucratic characteristics are clear. Low performance goals of managers, close over-shoulder supervision, motivation based on subordinates status and fear, absence of cooperative team work, centralised decision-making, one way downward communication, and limited supportive leadership are included in the characteristics of such rigid systems.

A survey conducted by Fahmy and Mahmoud (1993), in all the Gulf countries, found that principals in Saudi Arabia have limited chances to be a part of decision-making on the level of the ministry or even inside the school. Moreover, the researchers found that practices of Saudi principals are targeted and focused on executive managerial operations and routine rather than supervision and direction of operations. They also stated that centralisation greatly influences the job and school related work of principals. Therefore, one can find a sense of the relation that exists between higher authorities and principals by looking closely at the limited activities of principals. It becomes obvious that principals are not leaders anymore; in many cases they are only executives of the intended goals of authorities.

Likewise, Wiseman (2003) declares that in several educational contexts, managerial actions of principals are trapped between the conditions and needs of the national environment and those of the school environment. According to Alghamidi and Abdul-Jawad, (2005), this dilemma is not far from Saudi principals, because principals of both private and public schools must follow the same centralised policies while acting in response to their individual schools aspirations and needs.

2.6.2. Principals' Authority, Role and Centralisation

Centralised policies of education constrain principals of schools, narrow their leadership activities and hinder their job. Consequently, these restrictions strongly influence the leadership style of principals and their range of activities will be limited. The outcome of such rigid control might not be satisfying because of the important role that must be played by the principals of schools (Southworth, 2000). Lunenburg and Ornstein defined authority as “the right to make decisions and direct the work of others” (2004, 46). In addition, responsibility and authority must be linked (Wiseman, 2003). Similarly, Grace (1995) claims that the educational leadership' nature and form not only influence the staff and students' academic lives, but also have implications for transformation of the wider society. Thus, having some authority can ease the application of these influences.

Many scholars agree that there is a positive causal relation between the outcomes of schools and the school principals' activities (Bjork, 2000; Gaddy et al., 2001; West, 2001). Likewise, the outcomes of a study conducted by Wiseman (2003) demonstrate the differences in managerial activities and decisions of principals regarding administrative practices and curriculum. He explains that these differences are because of the nature and form of the national and local influences on the leadership style of the principals.

In spite of the reform movement in several countries, dominance over several educational decisions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is still supposed to be at the ministry level, while school principals seem to have control in various other kinds of decisions (Alhageel, 2002). Alhageel (1996) states that although some efforts of decentralisation by the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia have been noted, principals of schools are still constrained by rigid regulations and a lengthy routine. For instance, it is the ministry determines the process of terminating and hiring contracts. Principals of schools are in charge of informing the ministry about the qualification and number of all the teachers working at their schools, and they cannot fire or hire any of the schools' staff without obtaining the approval from the ministry (Alabbasi, 2002).

Fahmy and Mahmoud (1993) explain in their study that the job description of the Saudi principals is precisely defined and they are supervised closely by the Department of General Management and the Ministry of Education. Therefore, there is no freedom in their jobs that can allow them to go further than the managerial work to something more challenging and more innovative. The important role that the principals play supports the need for taking their

points of view into consideration when issuing policies and rules regarding schools' work, for these policies to be effective and closer to achieving the desired goals. This needs higher authorities to release the heads of the schools from rigid legislations, and to change the roles of principals by shifting the way that the officials of the ministry think regarding the educational administration.

In contrast, Albilehshy (1991) states that the key agents in centralised educational systems are superintendents, whose efforts focus on facilitating and guiding the jobs of principals and teachers. Thus, they should have qualities of open-mindedness, persuasiveness, respect of others' feelings, integrity, firmness, honesty, and fairness. They also ought to recognise others' efforts and be capable of listening to them with being solvers of the problems that people face. In addition, they must see the principals of the schools as leaders and thereby principals deserve recognition for their efforts and respect.

Nonetheless, principals should make the superintendents' job easy by working with them cooperatively and taking their recommendations into consideration (Alabbasi, 2002). There are some points which describe the relationships' nature between superintendents and school principals. Firstly, the superintendents and principals should discuss issues related to the duties of the principal and both of them should evaluate the teachers and exchange knowledge. Secondly, informing the superintendents about the teachers' innovations and achievement in the school is officially stated to be a part of the principal's job. Yet, Fahmy and Mahmoud (1993) do not agree with this and state that the relationship between the superintendents and principals requires more cooperation and that superintendents employ little time in activities related to developing and modifying the processes of education.

In total, valuable results need some delegation of responsibility and authority to principals of the schools. Improbable, in the majority of the situations, the managerial activities of principals are influenced and determined by political and social factors. This is the situation in Saudi Arabia, where the school principals are closely supervised and monitored by the Department of General Management and the Ministry of Education. Consequently, school principals require some freedom to react to their schools' needs without crossing the formalities. Therefore, cooperation from superintendents and decision makers should be an obligation for enhancing the efforts of the schools principals.

2.6.3. Centralisation and Decentralisation

According to Albakor (2005), the bigger an educational establishment gets and the more chains of command and policies it has, the more resistance to change and less caring it is going to be to the requirements of the teaching/learning processes. Wiseman (2003) declares that in such centralised establishments, rather than internal concerns; their heads are driven by external pressures as a result of working under these pressures. There are several dysfunctions in such bureaucracies, such as rigidity of downward hierarchy, the high separation of labour resulting in diminished performance, and inefficiency. Consequently, frustration will be generated because of the rigid and control structure over people, promotion that is awarded according to prejudice and preferences rather than performance, and deficiency in decision-making participation (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 2004).

Decentralisation in education settings emphasises the delegation of authority between subordinates and supervisors, shifting the decision-making power from a location in the centre to one that not so central, which is in this case principals and schools (Coleman and Earley, 2005). In Saudi Arabia the issues related to centralised policies are clear in the relation between the DGM and schools. The source of these issues started when the ministry started to move in the direction of decentralisation by allowing more authority to the principals of schools and the DGM's managers, applying shared decision-making. These efforts to activate decentralisation were not productive because of the DGM's actions. The DGM managers did not respond to the decentralisation vision; in contrast, they kept and held these authorities to themselves without passing them on to school administrations (Abdul-jawad and Alghamidi, 2005).

In addition to the previous issue, there are more current problematic phenomena that rose in the education system of Saudi Arabia as an output of its rigid controlled approach. An example of these problems is the schools principals' low performance level. There are several reasons that led to this problem; the inability to make decisions regarding retention and recruitment of the teachers, the power shortage that allows school principals to balance authority and responsibilities, and the low levels of trust held by superintendents toward principals of schools. Moreover, it is not only the school principals who are suffering from this bureaucratic scheme; students and teachers feel helpless and incapable of facing the system. They are unable to make change because of the formalities and hierarchy they need to defeat (Albakor, 2005).

Implementing more flexible methods of management is one way to reduce the disadvantages of centralised systems; for example the approach of School Based Management (SBM) which allows school systems to transfer responsibilities and to reduce huge bureaucracies to schools (Gamage, 2003; Hayes et al., 2002). Furthermore, Total Quality Management is one more approach that relies on the idea that people want to give their best and it is the management's responsibility to allow them to do so by continuously improving the system wherein they work (Lunenburg and Orstein, 2004).

According to Papagiannis (1998), empowering one side via decentralisation means reinforcement of the role of supervision of the other side. Implementing this approach to settings of education means that empowering principals of schools by implementing a decentralised policy needs reinforcement of the processes of supervision and mentoring by higher authorities. Supervision like this can guarantee accountability that can be seen as a contradict element of freedom at the instructional level (Coleman and Earley, 2005). Another way to guarantee both freedom and accountability of practice is the existing trends to centralise in regard to establishing priorities, goal setting, and works frame for responsibility and decentralise responsibility and authority for key functions at the school level (Eyal and Nir, 2003).

In the case of decentralisation, principals of schools should direct their schools according to the immediate needs and school community frameworks while considering the expectations and goals of national education (Astiz et al., 2002; Wiseman, 2003). Furthermore, decisions made with the participation of the parents and the community are more likely to be effectual and lead to greater improvement than other decisions made by bureaucratic governments at a distance, which supports the previous view (Coleman and Earley, 2005).

2.6.4. Curriculum Change and Centralisation

Albakor (2005) reveals that the youth's education process is incomplete unless it is correspondent and connected or the problems, needs, and nature of the society. Moreover, Durkhiem (1956) emphasise that youth should be educated in ways that assist them to explore what is appropriate to their manners, citizenship, and age. He argued for less emphasis on the ancestors' culture and more on the preparation of the youth to be the workforce of the future. He called for a change in textbooks and the common curriculum. Furthermore, the connection between life and school learning is an energiser for students as it is going to help them see education as a method of gaining employing opportunity in the future and life skills (Gamage,

2003; Maruatona, 2002). Any change of curriculum needs to be monitored for quality control, which necessitates direct interference by higher authorities that need schools to adopt a national curriculum or its standards. Several countries adopt this approach including Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom. For instance, private and public schools in Saudi Arabia do not earn their licences until they get approval from the Ministry of Education on the curriculum and it is verified that the textbooks are the ones distributed and issued by the ministry. In addition, schools are banned from making any additions, deletions, and modifications to the curriculum issued by the ministry (Alabbasi, 2002). This rigid control reduces the principals' role as instructional leaders and restricts their opportunity and ability to contextualise curriculum in their schools, so it slows the process of curriculum variation or improvement. This opposes recommendations within the literature regarding the need for principals of schools to be leaders in the area of instruction and curriculum (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 2004; Wiseman, 2003). In the same line with this issue, scholars studied the principals' role as instructional leaders, who demonstrate strong leadership in the areas of instructions and curriculum. Joseph Murphy (1990), who is one of those scholars, developed six instructional roles of principals and curriculum. He described principals of schools as those who monitor students' progress, promote content coverage, coordinate curriculum, protect and allocate instructional time, evaluate and supervise instructions, and promote quality instruction (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 2004).

In the Arab and the third world countries, officials of the ministry do not give principals of schools the freedom to execute their roles as instructional leaders. In contrast, ministries inspect what is being taught in classrooms closely, distribute textbooks, and issue curricula (Albakor, 2005).

According to Fahmy and Mahmoud (1993), principals of schools in Saudi Arabia would like to have more authority and freedom to address issues regarding curriculum. "Saudi principals ask for more authority and more free space to change certain points in curricula that they see 'not needed'" (Fahmy and Mahmoud, 1993, 73). Furthermore, they state that these principals showed preferences for roles as instructional leaders or curriculum, and when those principals were requested to explain themselves, they revealed that they saw themselves as instructional leaders who dedicated most of their resources and professional development time to school improvement, instruction, and curriculum.

2.6.5. Extracurricular Activities and Centralisation

The western literature states that participation of the students in productive leisure activities eases development and positive growth on several levels. Scholars argue that participation in extracurricular activities decreases risk-taking and health-compromising behaviours (Morrissey et al., 2006). Such activities should enhance the problem solving and decision-making ability, build leadership attitudes and promote social values. Particularly, religious activities maintain such values as caring, the significance of giving to others, and the importance of every individual (Daley and Leahy, 2003).

Scholars in the United States of America found that activities that take place after school reduce drug use and the chance of pregnancy (DeMoulin, 2002). Moreover, research discovered that students who join in these activities have better interpersonal skills and have better working habits, spend extra time learning, spend less time watching TV, and have increased their Grade Point Average GPA (Cassel et al., 2000; Dworkin et al., 2003). Likewise, getting involved in sports is connected to an increase in self-confidence, positive body image, and self-esteem, and decreasing the incidence of smoking initiation, pregnancy, and depression (Eccles and Harris, 2005).

According to Wilson (2002), meaningful participation of students in activities relies on generating conditions that encourage their involvement. These conditions are involving students in all discussions regarding their experiences of learning, trust and opening conversation between students and other members, clear communications regarding future plans and integrating top-down and bottom-up planning approaches. In addition, he states that students of secondary schools share this position as they want to be involved in activities that transforms activities of the classroom into activities that are more realistic and practical. They seek the power to affect decisions related to their education progress generally and to the type of extracurricular activities they like to practise particularly.

The situation in Saudi Arabia is different, as extracurricular activities are limited in variety and scope. Furthermore, it is the Ministry of Education that controls and determines the activities offered in schools. The ministry allows several categories of extracurricular activities, such as Scouting, school radio, arts, health, math, science, humanities, Islamic teaching, and Arabic language (Alsorayri and Alaref, 1992). However, many of these activities fail to fulfil the developmental needs and the desires of many school students. They are an extension and a manifestation of the academic curricula. According to Alsorayri and Alaref, (1992), schools

cannot apply any extracurricular activities outside from these umbrellas as the regulations of the ministry ban them. Furthermore, they suggest that if the activity includes a field trip; principals have to ask for the educational departments' permission.

3. Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter will explain the methodology adopted in this research. First of all, it will identify the philosophy of the research, including the paradigm and its assumptions. Then, it will indicate the research approach. After that, the researcher will justify the use of the philosophy adopted. Next, the research design will be explained, as well as the method used in collecting the data sampling and the data collection procedure.. Then, the data analysis method will be discussed. Finally, the chapter will address some of the ethical issues that the researcher took into consideration.

3.2. Research Philosophy

3.2.1. Paradigms

A research paradigm is defined as “set of beliefs” Guba and Lincoln (1994), which “represents a worldview that defines...the nature of reality” (Guba and Lincoln 1994, 107). Collis and Hussey (2009) said, "A research paradigm is a philosophical framework that guides how scientific research should be conducted" (Collis and Hussey, 2009, 55). The definition of philosophy is "the use of reason and argument in seeking truth and knowledge, especially of ultimate reality or of general causes and principles" (Oxford Compact Dictionary and Thesaurus, 1997, 557). Ideas regarding the nature of reality and of knowledge have altered over time and, consequently, new research paradigms came out in response to the apparent deficiencies of earlier paradigms. This is obvious in the definition of Kuhn: "Paradigms are universally recognized scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners" (Kuhn, 1962, viii). Punch (2006) indicated that paradigms are used to explore appropriate methods or approaches to explore the world, as well as formalising the research process, by offering guidelines for researchers about the research

direction. This allows researchers to use suitable methods to collect their data within a paradigm setting or framework.

For many centuries there was only one paradigm, since the 'scientific achievements' referred to by Kuhn (1962) were assumed to be derived from one source. At present we refer to that as the natural sciences, to differentiate them from the social sciences. The appearance of social science caused the expansion of the second paradigm (Collis and Hussey, 2009). These paradigms are commonly referred to as positivism and interpretivism, respectively.

Positivism

Positivists believe in the independence of the reality, as Collis and Hussey (2009) stated "Positivism is a paradigm that originated in the natural sciences. It rests on the assumption that social reality is singular and objective, and is not affected by the act of investigating it. The research involves a deductive process with a view to providing explanatory theories to understand social phenomena" (Collis and Hussey, 2009, 56). "Positivism provided the framework for the way research was conducted in the natural science and the scientific methods are still widely used in social science today" (Collis and Hussey, 2009, 56). Positivism is supported by the idea that reality is independent of us and the aim of research is the detection of theories, based on experimental research (experiment and observation). Knowledge is concluded from "positive information" for the reason that "every rationally justifiable assertion can be scientifically verified or is capable of logical or mathematical proof" (Walliman, 2001, 15). Nowadays, researchers doing business research under a paradigm rooted in positivism still focus on theories to describe or/and predict social phenomena. They still implement logical analysis in order that rigour, objectivity and precision support their approach, rather than intuitive interpretation and subjectivity. Since positivists claim that reality is independent of us, they presume that the act of examining social reality has no effect on that reality (Creswell, 1998).

Interpretivism

Criticism of the positivist paradigm led to development of the Interpretivist approach. Researchers criticised positivism as they indicated that this approach measures phenomena, but Interpretivists concentrate on exploring the phenomena in the social setting. This allows researchers who adopt an interpretive approach to gain more understanding of the research phenomenon (Cresswell, 2007; Bryman and Bell 2007; Collis and Hussey 2009). Collis and Hussey (2009) stated, "Interpretivism is a paradigm that emerged in response to criticisms of positivism. It rests on the assumption that social reality is in our minds, and is subjective and

multiple. Therefore, social reality is affected by the act of investigating it. The research involves an inductive process with a view to providing interpretive understanding of social phenomena within a particular context” (Collis and Hussey, 2009, 57)

Interpretivism is supported by the idea that social reality is not objective but highly subjective, since it is formed by our perceptions. The researcher interacts with those who are under consideration because it is not possible to split what exists in the researcher's mind from what is in the social world (Smith, 1983; Creswell, 1998). Thus, social reality is affected by the process of investigating it. While measuring social phenomena is the main focus of positivism, discovering the complexities of social phenomena with a view to acquisition of interpretive understanding is the focus of interpretivism. "Therefore, rather than adopt the quantitative methods used by positivists, interpretivists adopt a range of methods that 'seek to describe, translate and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world' (Van Maanen, 1983, p. 9) " (Collis and Hussey, 2009, 57). These momentous differences lead to a very broad inference that interpretive research is any kind of research where the results are not concluded from the numerical analysis of quantitative data (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). “The challenge for the researcher using an interpretive paradigm is to apply method (s) that will retain the integrity of the data” (Collis and Hussey, 2009, 143)

3.2.2. Justification for adopted philosophy

The phenomenological-interpretivist paradigm is adopted in this research, as a guiding principle. The reason behind adopting this approach and paradigm is that this study's nature is humanistic and subjective. It is interested in understanding and studying the impact of implementing TQM on national and organisational culture, concentrating on interpretations, judgement and human behaviour and how these factors are pieced together in TQM implementation. In interpretivist-inductive research, a researcher tries to make sense of the situation with no imposition of pre-existing assumptions on the phenomenon at hand (Patton, 1990). An inductive approach denotes observation of experiential reality that leads to developing theory, which means that general conclusions are drawn from specific instances (Snape and Spencer, 2003; Collis and Hussey, 2003).

Assumptions of Paradigms

Ontological Assumption

Paradigms are distinguished by their underlying assumptions in relation to five dimensions, as follows. This is concerned with the nature of reality:

- Positivists believe that social reality is external and objective to the researcher. So, there is only one reality.
- Interpretivists believe that social reality is subjective, since it is socially constructed. Hence, every person has her or his own sense of reality and there are, as such, multiple realities.

Epistemological Assumption

It is concerned with what we believe to be valid knowledge. This includes an inspection of the relation between the researcher and what is researched:

- "Positivists believe that only phenomena that are observable and measurable can be validity regarded as knowledge. They try to maintain an independent and objective stance" (Collis and Hussey, 2009, 59).
- Alternatively, interpretivists try to reduce the distance between the researcher and what is researched. They might be involved in different types of participative enquiry. The polarity that appears here between both approaches has been taken from Smith (1983, 10-11) who states, "In quantitative research facts act to constrain our beliefs; while in interpretive research beliefs determine what should count as facts."

Axiological Assumption

It is concerned with the role of values in the research:

- Positivists believe that the research process is value-free. Thus, positivists believe that they are independent and separated from what they research and inquire about phenomena as objects under investigation. "Positivists are interested in the interrelationship of the objects they are studying and believe that these objects were present before they took an interest in them. Furthermore, positivists believe that the objects they are studying are unaffected by their research activities and will still be present after the study has been completed" (Collis and Hussey, 2009, 59).
- Alternatively, interpretivists believe that researchers have values, even if they have not been made clear. These values help to define what are accepted as facts and the

interpretations derived from them. Most interpretivists believe that the researcher is implicated with what is being researched.

Rhetorical Assumption

It is concerned with the research language. This is mainly important when the researcher writes his/her research proposal and his/her thesis or final dissertation. These documents should be supplementary to the researcher's paradigm, but they also have to be written in a way that is acceptable to the researcher's examiner or supervisors.

- In a positivist study, it is common to write using the passive voice, which is a formal style. For instance, in place of writing, "As part of my research, I observed a group of employees..." in the researcher's thesis or dissertation he/she will write, "As part of the research, observations were made of a group of employees..." (Collis and Hussey, 2009, 60). This is because the researcher should try to express the impression that his/her research was objective, that strict procedures were undertaken and that any personal values and opinions the researcher holds were not allowed to bias the results. The researcher will employ the future tense in his/her proposal. For instance, "Observations of a group of employees will be made" (Collis and Hussey, 2009, 60).
- In an interpretive study, the position is less clear. In many disciplines, researchers prefer a style that will reflect the immediacy of the research and the involvement of the researcher. Consequently, the researcher would write in 'I' the first person employing the future tense in the proposal and the present tense in the his/her thesis or dissertation. Nevertheless, Collis and Hussey (2009) suggest that the researcher review the literature in his/her discipline and note what is acceptable to his /her supervisor.

Methodological Assumption

It is concerned with the research process:

- Collis and Hussey (2009) suggest that if the researcher is positivist, he/she is probably concerned with making sure that any concepts he/she uses can be operationalised; that is to say, explained in such a way they can be evaluated. Perhaps the researcher is investigating a subject that includes the concept of intelligence, and the researcher wants to find a way to evaluating a particular definition of intelligence. The researcher is likely to use a big sample and reduce the phenomena he/she is investigating to their simplest parts. The researcher will concentrate on what he/she regards are formulated

hypotheses and objective facts. His/her analysis will seek association between causality and/or variables (one variable affecting the other) (Collis and Hussey, 2009).

- If the researcher is an interpretivist, he/she will be inspecting a small sample, probably over a period of time. The researcher will employ several research methods to find deep understanding of the phenomenon and in his/her analysis he/she will be seeking to understand what is going on in a situation and searching for patterns that might be repeated in another similar situation (Collis and Hussey, 2009).

3.3. Research Approach

There are two main approaches in social research for developing knowledge and conducting research; the inductive and deductive approaches. These approaches address the relationship between research and theory through variant logics, because each one contributes in a different way to knowledge and has its way of dealing with data and its own characteristics. The inductive approach is when the data is collected and theory developed as an outcome of the data analysis, whereas the deductive approach is when researcher develops a hypothesis based on theory and designs the strategy of the research to collect data and test the hypothesis (Saunders, et al., 2009). There are many differences between the inductive and deductive research approaches, as follows:

Table 3.1: Major differences between deductive and inductive approaches to research" (Saunders, et al., 2009, 127)

"Deduction emphasises	Induction emphasises
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scientific principles ▪ Moving from theory to data ▪ The need to explain casual relationships between variables ▪ The collection of quantitative data ▪ The application of controls to ensure validity of data ▪ The operationalisation of concepts to ensure clarity of definition ▪ A highly structured approach ▪ Researcher independence of what is being researched ▪ The necessity to select sample of sufficient size in order to generalise conclusions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gaining an understanding of the meanings humans attach to events ▪ A close understanding of the research context ▪ The collection of qualitative data ▪ A more flexible structure to permit changes of research emphasis as the research progresses ▪ A realisation that the researcher is part of the research process ▪ Less concern with the need to generalise
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Although the deductive and inductive approaches are separate, recently, scholars suggest that those approaches are not separated from each other completely since each one could have some of the other's elements; this view might be seen in the iterative weaving process between research and theory (Bryman, 2012). Therefore, in this section the author discusses both of these approaches, underlines the meaning of each one and how they vary in essence. The author also justifies using the inductive approach to accomplish his research aims.

3.3.1. Deductive Approach

This approach is the most commonly used logic in research and natural science. In accordance with this approach, researchers usually try to test a particular type of knowledge such as framework, theories and models. They start with assuming hypotheses and testing them empirically. They gather and analyse data consistent with the assumed hypotheses. This logic is based upon the idea that theories have to be tested to be valid. Consequently, this approach entails an exact process such as so: a) devising hypotheses based on a particular theory, b) designating measurements for determining the variables of the research, c) testing hypotheses

by gathering quantitative data and analysing them statistically, d) rejecting, modifying or confirming the theory (Saunders et al., 2009). The start of this logic is from a general basis, to find data that support deductions based on those basis. Furthermore, those deductions are predictable and generalisable. This approach enables researchers to concentrate on testing a particular framework, model or theory of the studied phenomenon. Moreover, objectivist researchers implement this approach to study one reality across contexts, cultures, and individuals. Consequently, a deductive design provides a tight angle to concentrate on certain claims rather than seeking alternative explanations and understanding (Ketokivi and Mantere, 2010).

The deductive approach is used effectively in several situations because of its features as a tool of applied science for testing theories, such as: a) to clarify casual relations amongst variables and illustrate how they are related; b) to gather quantitative data via surveys, experiments and questionnaires; c) It is associated with research paradigms such as positivism; d) It is mostly associated with objectivist research, where an external actuality argued to exist; e) When the study concerns measuring a group of variables; f) When researchers intend to generalise results, as they apply statistical tools in analysing data and choose large samples (Saunders et al., 2009; Cunliffe, 2011; Heit and Rotello, 2010).

3.3.2. Inductive Approach

This approach involves producing generalised conclusions from observation is unlike the deductive approach (Bryman, 2012). It ends up with theories based on prior observations, views and insights. According to the idea that the deductive approach does not allow development of alternative explanations of the studied phenomenon, the inductive approach is about understanding the similarities and differences of opinions relative to what happens in a specific place. Thus, it concentrates on improving alternative explanations of a specific phenomenon in a certain context (Hiet and Rotello, 2010). This theory seeks to develop alternative explanations and better understanding, unlike the deductive approach.

3.3.3. Justification for implementing inductive approach

Before justifying the reason for adopting the qualitative method, it is necessary to define the methodology, according to Sarandakos (1998, p. 32), who described methodology as “a model which entails theoretical principles as well as a framework that provides guidelines about how research is done in the context of a particular paradigm”. Basically, there are three types of research methodology, namely, quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodology

(Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007). As shown in Chapter One, the main objective is to explore the implementation of total quality management in the Saudi Arabian context. Particularly, it investigates the factors affecting the implementation of TQM in the educational sector. Since the author assumes that these issues are best understood through people's perceptions, judgements and views based on their knowledge and experience, he adopted the interpretivist paradigm (Miles and Huberman, 1994). In addition, Creswell (2009) emphasised that interpretivism is the appropriate paradigm for researchers who seek to understand a specific phenomenon through the experience of human participants. In addition, Morrison (2002, p. 19) highlighted that a qualitative research approach has "an overarching view that all human life is experienced and constructed from a subjective perspective". The current study is concerned with human nature differences and issues (such as quality) which are highly subjective, since people are different, with different beliefs, needs and interests. Strauss and Corbin (2008, p. 12) also highlighted that "qualitative research allows researchers to get at the inner experience of participants, to determine how meanings are formed through and in culture, and to discover rather than test variables". For this reason, the author decided a qualitative methodology would allow him to explore the situation in the Ministry of Education in a meaningful and in-depth manner.

By reviewing Table 3.1, it is clear that a deductive approach is not appropriate for achieving the aims of this research because it opposes the author's study in various ways, especially his intentions to explore the factors affecting total quality management implementation and capture the participants' perceptions regarding the importance of TQM without applying any definition or imposing any theories on them. Therefore, the author will show how the inductive approach responds better to the aims of this research. According to Table 3.1, the inductive approach is appropriate to this research as it would help with enabling the author to answer the research questions and achieve the research aims of exploring the factors affecting total quality management implementation from the employees' point of view. The inductive approach is helpful in exploring the understanding of the participants of TQM and its significance and how they understand it in their national, social and cultural contexts, because of the lack of previous research regarding TQM implementation in Saudi Arabia within the educational sector. The lack of previous studies will limit the use of deductive hypotheses, which generally appear from well-developed literature regarding the subject of the research. Another advantage of an inductive approach is its flexibility, since inferences depend on the relationships and capability

of the researcher. This means that implementing inductive logic could create different inferences from various researchers studying the same topic (Klauer and Phye, 2008).

However, the inductive approach is criticised for being imperfect and the big challenge it faces is how to create understandable and credible knowledge. There is a problem of the inability to generalise results, because any set of data could give multiple and different interpretations. Nevertheless, this obstacle can be overcome by employing a contextualisation strategy, which provides a solid rationalisation for using an inductive approach throughout a context-specific process.

3.4. Quantitative vs. Qualitative Approaches

Scott and Usher (1999) identified the two approaches ‘qualitative’ and ‘quantitative’, as symbolizing the traditional divide in arguments about research methods. Morrison (2002) claims that ‘positivism’ and ‘interpretivism’ are the philosophical traditions that determine those approaches, while Bryman (2001) uses the terms ‘induction and deduction’. This separation reflects the view adopted by the researcher or the underlying paradigm. The terms ‘qualitative’ and ‘quantitative’ are not just tags for different research methods but imply a different concept or viewpoint of the enquiry’s nature, as Bryman identifies: “Increasingly the terms quantitative research and qualitative research came to signify much more than ways of gathering data; they came to denote divergent assumptions about the nature and purpose of research in the social sciences” (1988, 3)

Generally, quantitative research allows researchers to familiarize themselves with the concept or problem to be studied, and perhaps create hypotheses to be studied and tested. It is also concerned with interpreting and gaining data, which can be, as Verma and Mallick suggest, “presented in the form of discrete units that can be compared with other units by using statistical techniques” (1999, 26). Therefore, if the aim is to collect information that can be quantified, a quantitative research approach is applied. Morrison (2002) indicates that quantitative research is a linear, rational process. There are many key elements of quantitative research. The relationship between observation and measurement, and concept formation is central. “Quantitative research is often conceptualized ... as having a structure in which theories determine the problem ... data collected by social survey or experiment ... they are then analysed so the causal connection specified by the hypothesis can be verified or rejected” (Bryman, 1988, 18). According to, Scanlon’s definition, quantitative research is “highly structured and produces data which are amenable to statistical analysis” (2000, 7). He also

states that “until the 1960s quantitative methods dominated social research ... focusing on the need for objective, quantifiable information” (2000, 7).

Morrison states that the approach of qualitative research has “an overarching view that all human life is experienced and constructed from a subjective perspective” (2002, 19). As Morrison suggests, the starting point of qualitative research is “to conduct educational research with people” (2002, 18). From the point of view of a qualitative researcher, human interaction can be seen only by social research. Verma and Mallick supported this view: “The main feature of qualitative research methods is that meaningful explanations of social activities require a substantial appreciation of the perspectives ... of the actors involved” (1999, 27). Therefore, a qualitative research approach involves collecting evidence that reflects the judgments, feelings or experiences of participants in the study. Based upon the Interpretivist philosophical tradition, a qualitative approach takes the individuals being observed as central. ‘Meaningful explanation’ needs full description and understanding through an inside investigation and a process of empathy. Miles and Huberman claim that qualitative research is “conducted through an intense and/or prolonged contact with a ... life situation” (1994, 6). Cresswell’s definition of qualitative research is “an enquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of enquiry, that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting” (1998, 15). Strauss and Corbin defined qualitative research as “any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification” (1998, 17). Qualitative research “assumes that reality is socially constructed and that variables are complex, interwoven, and difficult to measure (and that) researcher seeks the insider’s point of view and is personally involved in the process” (Campbell, 1997, 122). In general, these kinds of studies end with grounded theory or hypotheses. While quantitative researchers seek generalization of findings, prediction, and causal determination, qualitative researchers seek extrapolation to similar situations, understanding, and illumination (Hopeful, 1997).

Every research method has its own strengths and weaknesses. Accordingly, the advantages and limitations of these methods, qualitative and quantitative research methods, need to be recognized. It is known that qualitative research method usually reaches a higher level of detail and greater depth than quantitative research because of its exploratory, investigatory and inductive nature. Qualitative research methods allow the researcher to approach sensitive subjects in an open way through applying personal skills to help reducing the difficulties of the

subject matter rather than being constrained by present answers. These methods create an open atmosphere between all the parties and help to produce new theories or new techniques for solving problems. Kruger indicates, "It certainly seems reasonable to suggest that one may have a better understanding of a community member's situation by reading a descriptive passage than just looking at demographic statistics" (2003, 18). On the other hand, some interviewees can feel uncomfortable with some subjects in the presence of the interviewer and give answers under coercion; additional influences like ethnicity and gender of the researcher can affect some interviewees' answers. In addition, qualitative results can be more difficult to collect and then make systematic comparisons. It can also be more difficult to repeat research because of the lack of standardised procedures or structured design (Cohen et al., 2000).

3.5. Research Design

The chosen design is a case study. Collis and Hussey (2009) state that a case study can be defined as a methodology that is used to discover a single phenomenon (the case) in a normal setting by using a collection of methods to find in-depth knowledge. The significance of the context is crucial. Eisenhardt refers to the focus on "understanding the dynamics present within a single setting" (1989, 534), while Bonoma highlights that the research must be "constructed to be sensitive to the context in which management behaviour takes place" (1985, 204). The case can be a person, process, event, group of workers, particular business or other phenomenon. Detailed information is collected regarding the selected case, frequently over a very extended period of time. One or more cases can be selected. The chosen case study is the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia.

Collis and Hussey (2009) suggest that if the researcher was adopting a more positivist approach, he/she might develop particular research questions and a theoretical framework, while in the interpretivist paradigm the characteristics of a case study strategy will be as in Yin's classification (2003):

- The research aims to study certain phenomena in a specific context, not only to explore them.
- The research begins with a group of notions and questions about the limits within which the study will be taking place.
- The research employs several methods for data collection, which might be quantitative and qualitative.

3.6. Data Collection Method

A qualitative method of data collection was implemented through interview to answer the research questions. The term 'interview' is widely used in everyday life. It has many different purposes, such as medical selection. Also it can be found in different contexts like work, media and education. An interview usually is a conversation between two people. It can be online, face to face, or on the telephone. The aim of the interview in any research is "to obtain information and understanding of issues relevant to the general aims and specific questions of a research project" (Gillham, 2004, 2). Some interviewers, when setting up the interview with the interviewees, may refer to it as a 'chat', a 'conversation', or a 'discussion' about interesting topics. On the one hand, this can be seen as useful as generally 'interview' as a term can have negative implications, such as police questioning and job applications (Wragg, 2002). On the other hand, the danger is that the participant could see it as low status and low key. Generally, although the interview is 'a special occasion' it affects how ready people are ready to and to respond at an interview and it is surprising the vividness, richness and quality of the material which appears (Gillham, 2004). Collis and Hussey (2009) highlight that interview is a process for collecting data wherein selected interviewees are asked to indicate what they feel, think or do. The interview is a very powerful and useful tool, providing a plentiful source of information (Wragg, 2002). Qualitative research includes different methods of data collection such as case study, focus groups, interviewing, ethnography, documents and texts. According to Rubin and Rubin (2005), interviewing is the most commonly used method. It entails collecting empirical data through requesting people to talk regarding a certain experience or phenomenon they are facing in their lives. It is not just a method of gathering data; it is a method of creating knowledge as participants are considered as interactional and both sides are involved in the process of production of knowledge (Holstein and Gubrium, 2003; ; Groenewald, 2004). The interview involves collecting data directly through lingual interaction between people; also it is inter-subjective, allowing the researcher who is interviewing to note interesting responses and probe beneath the surface (Cohen et al., 2003). Gathering data by observation was considered but felt to be impracticable because capturing concepts like sustainability and strategy by direct observation would be arduous, and require a long time. Having decided to use interview, the appropriate structure had to be considered. Under the positivist paradigm, interview questions are planned in advance, which makes it structured (like in a questionnaire). In contrast, under the interpretive paradigm, the interviewee's answers can lead to other questions, so the interviews are unstructured (Collis and Hussey, 2009). Semi-structured interviews give the interviewee wide scope and make him or her feel free to respond to the

questions of the researcher (the interviewer) (Frankfort-Nachimas and Nachimas, 1996). For this reason, semi-structured interviews were used in this study.

A semi-structured interview lasting an hour and half was used because it appeared most appropriate for this type of investigative study. Of the different types of interview (Kvale, 1996; Cohen and Manion, 1994; Powney and Watts, 1984), a semi-structured interview was adopted in this study because the interview guide provides some order and structure, yet it gives flexibility to the interviewer to probe and develop responses. Semi-structured interview is the most used method even if unstructured and structured interviews are used in social research too. The reason for this is that they give deep data while keeping on the topic at the same time. Questions can vary from one interview to another, depending on the context, and the questions' order can differ among participants too (Saunders et al., 2009).

Because of semi-structured interviews' flexibility, they can be adopted in several theoretical and epistemological assumptions. They are consistent with interpretist, subjectivist, and phenomenological interpretive positions (Cunliffe, 2011). In respect to phenomenological interpretive research, interviews aim to define the meaning of notions that people share; they emphasise the interviewees' knowledge and experience (Marshall and Rossman, 2011).

In the light of the above, the author adopted semi-structured interviewing for the following reasons:

- 1- Semi-structured interviews promote the relation between participants and the researcher, which was essential for the interviewees who participated in this study (Alder and Alder, 2003)
- 2- Semi-structured interviews provide freedom and flexible balance to the participants to speak out and data generally represent high quality (Gillhan, 2003)
- 3- Because semi-structured interviews target the meanings and understanding of daily life, they assist in deeply exploring various perspectives, meanings and interpretations (Cunliffe, 2011)
- 4- Semi-structured interviews are appropriate for investigative research and the adopted position of the author (Saunders et al., 2009).

3.7. Sampling

The selection of the participants was based on purposeful sampling. Participants were selected on the base of the judgement of the researcher (Cohen et al., 2007) regarding who would have full knowledge about these specific issues. Participants were chosen on the base of their expertise (Sekaran and Bougie, 2009). Only employees who had more than five years experience were invited to participate, since they were expected to have comprehensive understanding of the impact of implementing TQM on the culture of the organisation.

Qualitative research methodologists have reached a general agreement regarding sampling for qualitative research, which is that choosing for case studies ought to be undertaken not on the basis of opposed sampling but purposive one. "...many qualitative researchers employ purposive, and not random sampling methods. They seek out group, settings and individuals where the processes being studied are most likely to occur" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, 370). Consequently, many scholars highlighted that non-probability sampling is used in qualitative research for choosing the population for the research (Eisenhardt, 1989; Perry, 1998; Ritchie et al., 2003). Eisenhardt (1989) supports purposive sampling by arguing that "random selection of cases is neither necessary, nor even preferable" (1989, 537).

Purposive sampling includes selecting people who are most available to participate in the research, and who can give information that serves the study's research questions the best. The power and logic of purposive sampling depends on selecting cases that are rich with information for an in-depth and extensive study (Patton, 2002; Stake, 2000). In addition, purposive sampling is known as judgmental sampling (Saunders et al., 2007; Sarantakos, 1997). Purposive sampling is non-probability sampling, wherein samples are chosen on the basis of the judgment of the researcher that they are able to engage in gathering in-depth data and concentrate on the key theme (Saunders et al., 2007). The selected sample are supposed to be capable of understanding the research's central theme and revealing required information, in detail, in the exploration of certain behaviours and experiences (Ritchie et al., 2003).

The sample of this research was 40 participants, including teachers, principals, members of the educational department, and members of the Ministry of Education, as shown in Table 3.2

Table 3.2: the Study's Participants

No.	Age	Qualifications	Years of experien	Years of	Name of current Position
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			ce in the current position	experie nce	
I1	58	Bachelor of History	12	30	Management of curriculum development
I2	55	PhD in the quality of the environment of electronic learning and PhD in Education	4	31	Head of Total Quality of Management
I3	46	Bachelor of Mathematics	7	22	School Principal
I4	32	Diploma of Management	9	9	Employee in Project Department
I5	35	Bachelor of Science	11	11	Teacher of Physics
I6	30	Bachelor of Geography	6	6	Teacher of Geography
I7	36	Bachelor of Science	5	12	Vice-Principal
I8	30	Diploma of Management	3	8	Employee in Finance Department
I9	39	Bachelor of Arabic Literature	7	16	School Principal
I10	49	Bachelor of Islamic Studies	16	22	School Principal
I11	39	Master of Management	3	14	Middle Manager in TQMD
I12	45	Master of Education	7	18	Management of curriculum development
I13	31	Bachelor of English Literature	8	8	English Teacher
I14	40	Bachelor of Mathematics	15	15	Mathematics Teacher
I15	37	Bachelor of Arabic Literature	13	13	Arabic Teacher
I16	38	Bachelor of Education	3	15	Employee of TQMD
I17	41	Bachelor of Islamic Studies	11	17	School Principal
I18	33	Bachelor of Art	9	9	Teacher of Art
I19	42	Master of English Literature	6	14	School Principal
I20	35	Bachelor of Islamic Studies	10	10	Teacher of Islamic Studies
I21	30	Bachelor of English Literature	8	8	English Teacher
I22	29	Bachelor of Computer Science	7	7	The Ministry of Education, Technical Support
I23	31	Master of Management	3	8	TQMD
I24	27	Bachelor of Education	21	27	The Ministry of Education, Planning Department
I25	35	Bachelor of Science	11	11	Teacher of Science
I26	32	Bachelor of Mathematics	8	8	Mathematics Teacher
I27	33	Bachelor of Education	9	9	School Teacher
I28	39	Bachelor of Education	2	14	The Ministry of Education, Schools' Supervision
I29	56	Bachelor of Education	9	31	The Ministry of Education, Comprehensive Evaluation
I30	45	Bachelor of Geography	13	13	Teacher of Geography
I31	29	Diploma of Management	7	7	School Administration
I32	35	Bachelor of Management	12	12	The Ministry of Education, Planning Department
I33	46	Bachelor of History	13	13	History Teacher
I34	54	Bachelor of Science	32	32	Teacher of Science
I35	30	Bachelor of Chemistry	7	7	Teacher of Chemistry
I36	44	Master of Education	8	19	Superintendent
I37	34	Bachelor of Physical Education	11	11	Teacher of Physical Education
I38	31	Bachelor of Geography	9	9	Teacher of Geography
I39	42	Bachelor of Education	3	17	School Principal

I40	51	Master of Education	7	23	Superintendent
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3.8. The Interview

3.8.1. Interview Protocol

In order to understand the factors affecting the implementation of TQM in Saudi Arabia, and because of the nature of the study, the author carried out semi-structured interviews to gather data; this appeared more appropriate for the research and gave the author more flexibility. According to Yin (1989), an interview protocol is a group of guidelines or rules that assists the researcher to manage the process of interviewing. Yin (1989) recommended that a researcher adopting a case study should implement an interview protocol as a piece of procedural equipment to be followed during interviews. Moreover, the interview protocol is very important in the effort of the researcher to design the developing themes (Smith et al., 2002). In addition, it has the advantage of increasing the smoothness of the discussion, which will allow the researcher eventually to solicit the required data from the interviewees. The preparation of the interview protocol started after the upgrade process in July 2011 and finished before the journey to gather data in September 2011. The protocol started with a brief about the research and described the main objectives of the study. Moreover, it described the rare data would be used to guarantee to the interviewees that the given data would be used only for the research purposes and would be anonymous. Generally, the protocol involved some general questions regarding the interviewee's experience, education, position and age, to make the atmosphere of the interview less formal. The interview questions were derived and designed from the literature, with some taken from previous studies in the same area of research, and contained two levels of questions: the main and probing questions. The main open-ended questions had the purpose of gaining a general understanding of the interviewee's thoughts, whereas the probing questions were used to give the author more information on a particular issue related to the research. The current research followed Yin's (1989) interview protocol. The protocol can be seen in Appendix 1.

Regarding the interview technique, Opdenakker (2006) suggested that face-to-face interviews give the researcher additional information to that elicited from the participants, since face-to-face interviews have a crucial advantage of social indications such as voice and body language. According to this recommendation, the author travelled to Saudi Arabia and applied face-to-face semi-structured interviews to gain further understanding of the interviewees'

significance of the pilot study to raise the experience of the researcher about the most effective way of using the interview questions and increase the confidence of the interviewer. Gillham (2000) insists on the significance of refining instruments of research and emphasises the necessity for 'schedule development' to avoid interviewers being plagued during interview sessions by procedural distractions. He also argued that the major purpose of conducting a pilot study is to give the author an important opportunity to apply some changes and improvement to increase the quality of the interview procedure before applying the actual interview. Other scholars concur that researchers mostly use pilot interviews or a pilot case study to shape interview questions and gather background information on the setting to be researched (Sampson, 2004). Saunders et al. (2009) suggested that it a good idea for the author to use family or friends for a pilot study to give the author at least some idea of the interview questions' face validity.

Based on the suggestions of Saunders et al. (2009), the author involved three respondents in the pilot study. They were the researcher's colleagues in the University of Hull Business School, who were doing their PhD, and working in the same field of education. The researcher selected the participants for pilot study based on their experience as members of the Ministry of Education because they were doing PhD courses in Business Management. All the participants had been teachers at some stage in their lives. One of them is in the Curriculum Changing Committee and two participants had left their jobs in the Ministry of Education. The interviews were conducted in several locations. One was in a café, another one was in a room in the library and the last one was in the participant's home, as he had no free time during the daytime. At the beginning, the author talked to them on general subjects to make them comfortable before the interview started so they would not feel that it was formal. When the researcher felt that they were feeling comfortable, he asked for their permission to record the interviews on his mobile phone. They all agreed. During the interviews the author wrote notes on interviews reactions to some of the questions. For example if they did not understand their meanings and asked the researcher, 'What do you mean?' this indicated that the question needed to be rephrased or examples given to explain the question. The interview sessions took around an hour. All the interviews went well and added to the researcher's confidence. At the end of the interviews, the researcher asked for some feedback points regarding both the interview overall and the questions. Within days, the interviewees gave the researcher their feedback notes. The main knowledge gained was that it was not certain that all the participants would understand all the questions of the interview and sometimes they faced some ambiguity

over basic aspects. These notes showed, for example that the researcher needed to modify some of the questions from ‘what’ to ‘how’ questions, For example, the second question in the interview, which was originally ‘What is Total Quality Management?’ was changed to ‘How do you describe Total Quality Management from your understanding?’ Generally, the pilot study was very useful guidance for the author for making some minor changes in the interview questions before conducting the actual interviews.

3.8.3. Procedure of data collection

Because the participants were unfamiliar with interviews, a lot of effort had to be exerted before the interview, during and after, due to the importance of the way of approaching interviewees. With resistance to research and lack of trust in the academic researcher’s intention, interviewing within the context had to be directed (Adler and Adler, 2003).

Once the interviewees agreed to be a part of this study, the author contacted them by either going to their offices or via phone to introduce himself as well as the topic and aims of the research. In addition, the author explained in detail what the interview would be about and what would be said, to make the participants familiar and comfortable. Alder and Alder (2003) argued that the location of the interview is important. Accordingly, the author attempted to conduct the interviews at participants’ offices, whether they worked at schools, educational departments or the ministry. However, some of the interviewees were unwilling to be interviewed at their offices because of the nature of their work, as they had meetings with the staff of the ministry and the teachers who participated in this study had classes to teach during the working hours of the day. Where interviewees could not see the researcher at their offices, they were invited to choose a more convenient location, such as their houses, cafes or restaurants as a working lunch. The author tried to make an appointment with the head of the Total Quality Management department, but the manager repeatedly postponed the appointment because of meetings with the staff of his department and with some members of the ministry. After two weeks, the author had the chance to conduct the interview, but after forty minutes he had to stop the interview after the manager received a call from the minister for an immediate meeting and gave the researcher another appointment to finish the interview the next day. Some potential participants made excuses so they would not have to do the interview, claiming that the time was not convenient and the researcher had to cancel and find alternative interviewees.

At the beginning of the interview, the author started by thanking interviewees for their participation and expressing gratitude for their contribution to his study, which gave them

confidence and made them feel comfortable. Furthermore, the researcher assured interviewees that no classified or personal information was required and that no third party would look at the data. Some of the interviewees was worried that their superiors would see the data they were about to reveal, while others did not like the idea of giving personal details and they stated at the beginning of the interview that they would not give any information in this regard, even when the researcher did not ask for it. A few of the interviewees had some reservations regarding some information until the author guaranteed that no confidential information was required. The questions of the interview concerned individual thoughts, beliefs, descriptions and experiences on Total Quality Management implementation, not the personal case of the interviewees. In addition, to raise the interviewees' trust in the researcher, he allowed them to ask questions. To give interviewees additional scope to express themselves, the questions were open-ended. The duration of the interviews was between one hour to an hour and 45 minutes. The reason for this is that some of the interviewees elaborated their answers, which expanded the interview duration. Some conducted their interviews over two days, due to the time limits for meetings and other work, 30 minute in each session.

The author noticed several behaviours during the interviews from the participants. For instance, some of the interviewees refused to answer some questions and others answered briefly as their trust level was low. The researcher had to ask the same questions again after they felt comfortable and they started to trust him. Others answered with additional details. Moreover, power relations between the researcher and participant varied. In some of the interviews, the researcher had no influence over the interviewees because they had more knowledge of what was going on at their workplaces and had more experience. On the other hand, in the case of interviewees who had less experience, the author's impact was noticeable, because they accepted whatever he suggested to them and they were less interested to be interviewed in the first place. Therefore, after every interview, the author made a few comments regarding the interview; how the interviewee acted, how the researcher felt about it, and his general ideas regarding the interview. Furthermore, some of the interviewees were suspicious about the notes that the researcher made and asked what he was writing and they checked every time he took notes. Therefore, the researcher had to put the notebook on the table so the interviewees could see what he was writing to increase their trust in him and see that there was nothing against them in this regard.

3.9. Data Analysis

This study used the thematic system of data analysis. Braun and Clark (2006) state that thematic analysis is a method for reporting, analysing, and identifying patterns (themes) in the data. According to Bryman and Bell (2007), the frequency of the appearance of certain phrases, words, or incidents is indicated as a theme. Ironically, although the term thematic analysis is commonly used, however, there is no clear agreement about what thematic analysis is and how authors go about doing it (Tuckett, 2005; Boyatzis, 1998; Attride-Stirling, 2001).

3.9.1. Interview Translation

All of the interviews were in Arabic as the interviewees felt more comfortable in expressing themselves. Some of the participants, however, chose to mix both Arabic and English in their statements, although the majority of conversations were in Arabic. For this reason, transcripts were translated into English. The researcher translated the transcripts himself and he used the original transcripts and the recordings for more verification. Checking transcripts of the interviews and the translation process gave the researcher the opportunity to grasp significant themes related to the study. Accordingly, the author recognised that the actual process of analysing data actually started in the checking and preparation of the transcripts.

3.9.2. Procedure of Data Analysis

This part of the study will represent the procedures of analysing the gathered data. In addition, it explains the steps of the reduction process of the huge volume of the gathered data from the interview meetings. On the base of thematic analysis, the author started to read and reread the interviews' transcripts, eliciting and coding themes, structuring categories and subcategories, to assist in bringing out the participants' insights relative to the research concepts and to answer the research questions. The author uses the term 'theme' to symbolise the participants' values, beliefs, opinions, examples and ideas. Units related to themes are called subcategories, while the units of meaning that give a direct answer to every research question are called categories. Next, the thematic analysis will be defined and it will be explained how it was used in this research.

Thematic analysis is an effective tool for analysing qualitative data inductively, even if scholars agreed that there is no particular right method of analysis (Gibbs, 2007). The essence of this tool is sustaining arguments through underlining evidences via gathered data (Attride-Stirling, 2001). Therefore, related basic themes are sorted into meaningful groups. These groups are reinterpreted and sorted in higher level groups. In the end, all of these higher levelled groups, collected together to reach one conclusion, which is the insights of the participants in

this study. Furthermore, the process of underlining themes is the heart of all techniques of qualitative data analysis. Consequently, thematic analysis is implemented in qualitative research design, for instance, narrative analysis, content analysis, discourse analysis and grounded theory. Eliciting themes from raw data is the first and most common stage of these qualitative designs, interview transcripts for example (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This tool could be used across several ontological and epistemological paradigms because of its flexibility. As a result, it is crucial to address the research assumptions regarding the way that data has been analysed. The definition of thematic analysis is an exploration of themes that appear significant to the description of the subject under research. It begins with themes' identification and finishes with an inclusive explicable group of categories and themes, which seem sensible for answering the research questions. Essentially, it is identification of patterns in the collected data (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Thus, these patterns are used for creating meanings from all themes with direct connection to the data. Boyatzis described thematic analysis as “a pattern in the information that at minimum describes and organises the possible observation and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon” (1998, 4).

This technique is flexible, because it is used to generate and underline alternative conclusions and explanations for a specific phenomenon. Furthermore, it can use several types of qualitative data in an orderly way that facilitates interpreting observations and enhances understanding regarding a specific phenomenon. Inductively, this technique allows researchers to minimise the size of the descriptions of experienced phenomena, and conclude inferences. One of the advantages of implementing thematic analysis is that it offers a clear way of drawing explanations and conclusions in respect to the researched concept. Because it permits researchers to provide significant insights to guide practice and theories, this technique allows for a full understanding of the phenomenon. Thematic analysis is considered as a tool for making communication to a wider audience easier, because it gives audiences a clear relation between conclusions and data, and allows for different views and opinions of interviewees to appear. Consequently, it gives audiences of various backgrounds more access to the qualitative findings, since it allows for a several points of view to underline the scene (Boyatzis, 1998; Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Even if thematic analysis lacks specified and clear procedures (Bryman, 2012), in the literature of phenomenology, there are some underlined processes of implementing thematic analysis in an inductive way within qualitative research, which are:

- 1- Accustoming oneself to data; transcribing, reading and rereading data.
- 2- Producing primary codes, which need an explicit label/code. The label or the code could refer to a specific indicator, category, or theme. Themes could be implicitly or explicitly found in the transcriptions of the interview when interviewees talk regarding their experiences of the study's phenomenon. Therefore, themes are usually elicited inductively from the informants' statements. Drawing connections between final inferences regarding the phenomenon and the raw data is one of the main roles of coding (Boyatzis, 1998).
- 3- Seeking themes; this could be done by highlighting sentences and statements that give an explicit view of how the interviewees experienced the phenomenon.
- 4- Reviewing themes; this can be done by naming and defining them, including displaying them in several classifications as subthemes or categories, with each subtheme or theme assisted by quotations from the experience's transcription of the phenomenon. These quotations should represent the interviewees' language as it is.
- 5- Improving clusters/categories of meanings with related themes, because the relation between those themes must be as understandable as possible.
- 6- Making the report, which includes writing descriptions/conclusions based on clusters/categories and themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Recognising the definition, process and role of the thematic analysis, the researcher adopted this technique because of its effectiveness for investigating the insights into Total Quality Management implementation and to underline the characteristics of interviewees' interpretations of it. Thematic analysis enabled the researcher to explore several stories, experiences, and views, to get to the heart of them. This technique assisted in inductively defining common understanding throughout data without being committed to a specific theoretical framework.

Microsoft Word Processor was used in data analysis, to make categories and subcategories, organise interviews and type them. There are different programs available for analysing qualitative data, for example CAQDAS, Atlas and NVivo (Lewins et al., 2005); however methodologists caution that these programs can make qualitative research more like quantitative research, reduce the thinking role of the researcher and separate researchers from their studies (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006). The author used Microsoft Word as it would not separate him from the research data, it was widely accessible, he had good skills using it, and it gave him flexibility in making summaries, diagrams and tables.

3.9.3. Data Reduction

This section discusses the procedure of analysing data including the stages of reducing the huge amount of data gathered from the interviews. On the basis of thematic analysis, the author started with reading the interviews and eliciting the themes and categories and coding them, structuring subcategories and categories, to assist in answering the questions of the study and reveal the interviewees' insights in respect to the concept of the research. The researcher uses the term 'theme' to symbolise the interviewees' values, beliefs, opinions, examples and ideas. Units that are related to themes called subcategories, while the units of meanings that give a direct answer to every research question are called categories. Consequently, the author started by writing notes in the margin while reading every interview individually. Then, he started underlining themes and inputting them in Microsoft Word files. Once the author had elicited all themes of every interview, he started to classify them under related subcategories. He achieved that by answering questions as guidelines, for instance; what themes are alike and can be gathered as a group under one subcategory? What are the most meaningful examples, sentences and statements that the author could represent as evidences? What are the relations between those themes, and how each subcategory be described?

At the beginning, the author started coding when he gathered the first five interviews by listening to the recordings and picking up some themes. One of the problems that faced the author when analysing the data was when to stop, there was a huge amount of data regarding various related topics. Consequently, the research questions were the guideline for the researcher to find out when to stop; he stopped as soon as he felt that the data analysis answered them. In addition, the researcher took into consideration the limits of the research purpose and word limitation.

3.9.4. Managing Data

Managing data means preparing raw data for the procedures of analysis which starts with transcribing interviews. Transcribing interviews is writing down the conversation of each participant, which was done in Arabic. The author numbered every interview with a code for the participant. In line with literature, the author followed specific procedures to guarantee a high quality of the transcriptions (for instance see Holstein and Gubrium, 2003; and Rubin and Rubin, 2005), including; 1) Ensuring high quality of sound and good recording which means a clear voice and no noises. Consequently, the recording device was placed right in front of the interviewees. 2) The transcribing was done by the researcher himself. 3) Every transcript was separated into several parts: underlined talk, opinions or behaviours, others' description,

examples, explanation, opinion. 4) To guarantee full transcription the author read every transcript and listened to recordings to ensure that he had not missed anything. 5) The researcher also handed over some of the transcriptions to a trustworthy third party, requesting them to make sure that the recordings matched these transcriptions and excluding participants' personal information from both recorded and written interviews. Various written and electronic copies of the interviews were saved. The author printed one written copy of every interview, in addition to making a few copies in several locations.

3.9.5. Data Display

Data will be reviewed in one chapter which will include the category and subcategory answering the research questions and every subcategory contains several themes. Every subcategory and category is described and supported by evidences from the interviews. On the basis of providing adequate data accounts, every subcategory is described, tagged with a certain title, and themes' evidence was elicited from the interviews. Punch (2005) stated that the main aim of using data display is to organise and present the data into summary diagrammatic or visual displays to allow the researcher to assess, interpret, and evaluate and to start drawing primary conclusions. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), to justify the final conclusion of the extended text, graphs, matrices and findings are often used which help the researcher with themes and patterns for more analysis and to reach further conclusions. In addition, Saunders et al. (2009) declared that data display allows researchers to compare the data and try to identify patterns, trends, relationships and key themes that might assist them in further interpretation.

Figure 3.2

Category 1: Challenges to Education Quality in Saudi Arabia

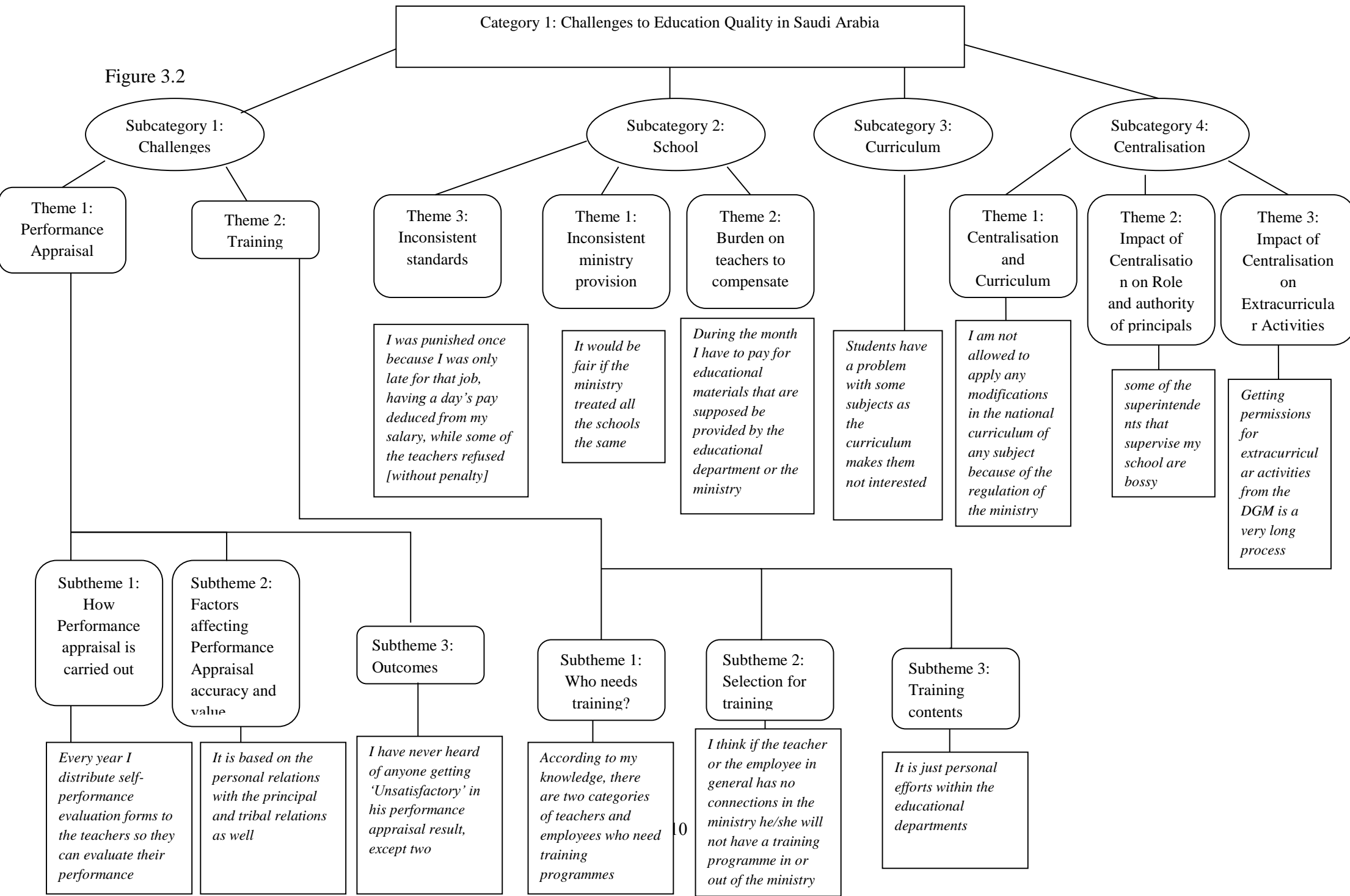


Figure 3.3 Research Question 2: What actions are being taken to introduce total quality management in the public education system in Saudi Arabia?

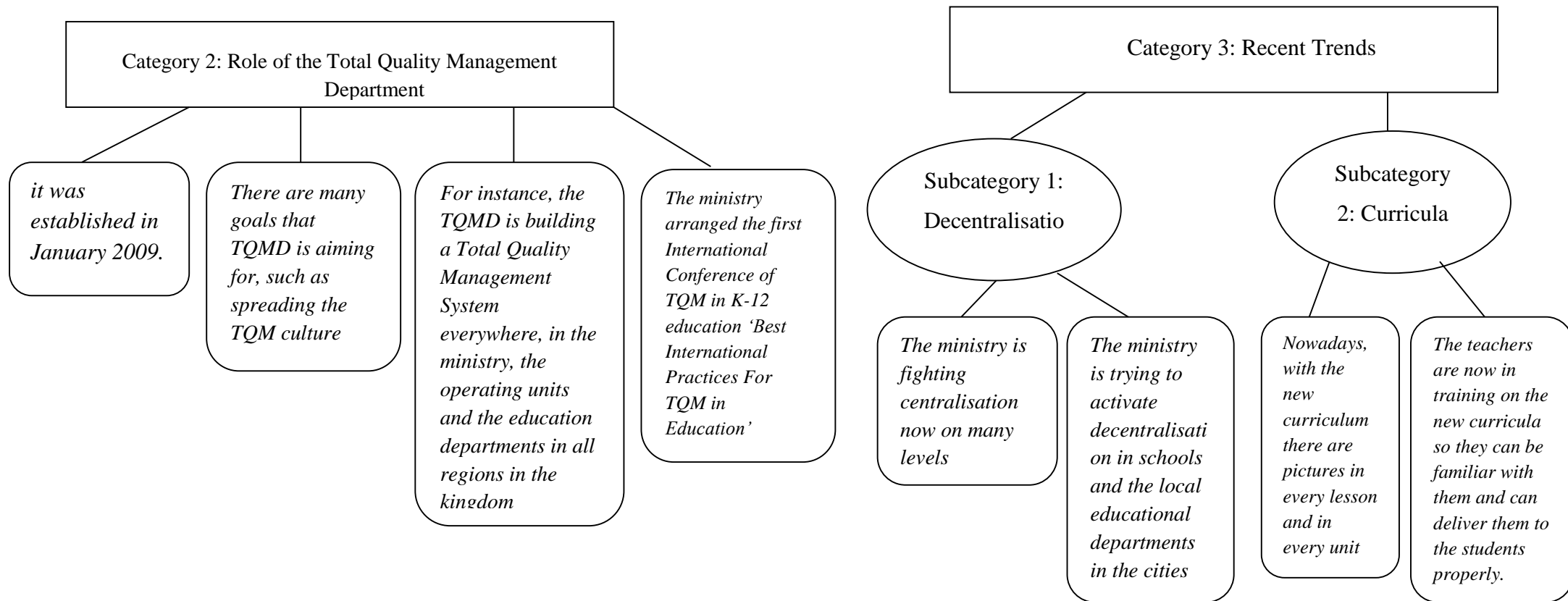


Figure 3.4 Research Question 3: How do national and organisational culture affect the implementation of Total Quality Management in the public education system Saudi Arabia?

Category 4: Cultural factors affecting Total Quality Management implementation

Subcategory 1:
Training

we need lectures regarding TQM or workshops to learn more about it.

Choosing the trainees is tricky as there are no standards in choosing who gets those programmes and who does not. It is all about the principals, not paying attention to who needs or deserves a training programme or not.

They believe that the school has to do everything in raising their children. They think that the teacher should teach students the curriculum, manners and what should they believe

Subcategory 2: Lack of integrated vision

The community is not playing a positive role with the school in raising the students

And sometimes, the school is not open to the community so the parents can get involved and share their ideas with the school

Subcategory 3:
Resistance to change

From my point of view, some of the school principals are fighting these changes due to their age.

the society rejects any changes and developments, especially changes and developments that come from Western countries

the students want to be like their ancestors in every possible way

the majority of the teachers and principals cannot participate

Subcategory 4:
Inadequate participation of staff

Teachers should be involved in designing and choosing the learning prototype

The suggestions of the students, teachers, and the parents do not reach the educational department or the ministry

3.10. Quality of This Research

Before starting to explain how the author used authenticity and trustworthiness in this study, giving some details of the consistency and reliability of qualitative data would be an addition to this research's credibility. First of all, qualitative data's reliability is known to be concerned with finding related places for related themes. It is about knowing where and when to fit a code. To reach this standard, qualitative scholars usually use different and several interested participants in coding such as researcher-related audience or other researchers (Boyatzis, 1998). Moreover, in order to increase the data's reliability, researchers usually seek repeated expressions and statements, in addition to highlighting expressive examples, differences and similarities of the themes. They also request data and clear connection between themes and research questions (Bryman, 2012). Consequently, there are five points that could improve the data's reliability in qualitative research, highlighted by Thomas (2006) which are:

- 1- Read and revise by others to guarantee the clearness and appropriateness of coding.
- 2- Clear connections between themes and categories and raw data via using the same tags from the participants' language.
- 3- Highlight differences and similarities.
- 4- Data verifications.
- 5- Analysis of data is guided by research questions/aims.

Secondly, consistency means gathering themes that have the same meaning. It also means consistency of judgement and developing clear codes, in addition to sticking to the data when developing codes and themes, for instance, using similar words or the same vocabulary as mentioned in the transcription of the interview. Stating the researcher's own emotions, attitudes and values would help with giving explicit data analysis (Boyatzis, 1998). In this meaning, consistency means the clearness of using codes. Thomas (2006) suggested that consistency could be reached through:

- 1- Independent parallel coding; which means proceeding coding by other independent individuals and comparing the researcher's codes to theirs. The author applied this with interested researchers, three PhD students to check the codes' clarity and ensure that they reflected the ideas stated by the interviewees clearly. They were asked to assign codes to several statements taken from the primary data. Most of them were similar to those developed by the author and others were discussed.

- 2- Check on the categories' clearness; this process evaluates how representative and clear is a set of themes. It is not regarding the theme itself; it is about making the meaning of a set of themes understandable and clear all together. Thus, at this point of this study each set of themes was given sources, a table of themes, definition, a tag 'code', and every one of these themes was illustrated in the thematic network in English. Then, the author asked three other researchers to read each set of themes and explain the meaning of each one of them. In addition, the author asked them to give reasons why those themes were set in those categories. The process took the form of an informal discussion.
- 3- Member check; which means testing whether the conclusions of the research mean what they were supposed to mean by interviewees, therefore it assists with raising the credibility of inferences. This process is allows additional participation from the interviewees to contribute to the drawing and shaping of the inferences. The author asked some participants to read the final inferences shaped by the author himself and to comment on the entire picture of the Total Quality Management implementation. It was crucial for the author to evaluate whether the participants felt that those inferences represented their experiences, feelings and opinions regarding the implementation of Total Quality Management. The majority of the inferences met with the approval of the participants.

In respect to this study, authenticity and trustworthiness were taken into consideration by applying a variety of procedures.

- 1- Consistent research methodology and research process. This indicates that the philosophical assumptions are compatible with all research components (Sandberg, 2005). For instance, thematic inductive analysis is compatible with semi-structured interviews and the qualitative phenomenological design is compatible with an interpretivist subjective research design. Accordingly, all of these concepts work for the research purposes and questions.
- 2- A brief description was provided for the participants by the author. It described the interview questions to deliver more 'data credibility', because this would increase their awareness of the topics and the points that would be discussed in the interviews.
- 3- The author discussed the views of the interviewees and he challenged them by asking for conclusions, stories and examples. Furthermore, the researcher checked their

opinions by repeating them and describing their view in their presence, to verify and support his understanding of their interpretations of Total Quality Management.

- 4- To provide 'data triangulation', data were gathered from both non-managerial and managerial interviewees.
- 5- To provide 'dependability' to this research, all the interviews were transcribed and recorded and the details of the interviews were documented such as date, time and the place where they were conducted.
- 6- To get higher credibility and better understanding, the author contacted interviewees to clarify unconvincing meanings or clarify issues, in case of there was something unclear.
- 7- The author gave some interview transcripts to some interviewees to check if they represented their points of view. Although the researcher tried to promote additional participation of interviewees to play a role in reading their interview transcripts, most of them stated that they trusted him and there was no need to do so, while others stated that they had no time. Some of the interviewees to whom the author gave interview transcripts did not return them. The researcher was reluctant to try to compel the participants to read those transcripts, when he sensed that they did not wish to do so.
- 8- The author reviewed the literature to establish 'communicative validity' and underline what is similar and what is different.
- 9- The author thinks that the results of this research respond to all the issues related to authenticity. The views of the top management of the Ministry of Education are the key determinants of this study's authenticity, as they symbolise the beneficiary of such research. It relies on whether they would be capable of using this research to increase the quality of the ministry and its operating units, schools and employees in the educational sector, to accomplish 'catalytic authenticity'.
- 10- The author investigated the points of view of teachers, principals, members of educational departments and members of the ministry including the head of Total Quality Management Department to guarantee 'fairness'.
- 11- The researcher described the managerial and employment settings of participants to facilitate decisions on whether such perceptions are transferable to other contexts.

3.10.1. Trustworthiness

Interpretivist researchers suggested a different method of evaluating their research's quality based on the belief that "validity is the warrant of trustworthiness" (Scheurich, 1997, 81). Trustworthiness refers to evaluating the truth of specific results, the possibility of being

duplicated in various contexts and the likelihood of being duplicated amongst the same participants. In addition, it reflects to what extent that the results present a true account of the experience of the participants, not the researcher (Marshall and Rossman, 2011). Trustworthiness also refers to how well the findings and processes of the research have been checked (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006). It can be accomplished through concentrating on data triangulation, member checks, transcribing interviews, recording them, and personal perceptions of interpreting certain phenomena (Greonewald, 2004).

Trustworthiness contains four elements: 1) Credibility; this refers to the research is done based on good practice. This could be accomplished through four steps: a) checking to confirm whether the researcher has captured participants' meanings of the phenomena under investigation, b) triangulation; gathering data from multiple resources, c) long-standing engagement, this refers to staying for a long time in the setting, d) comparison, which means comparing between perspectives and comparing views, meanings and perspectives of the participants (Marshall and Rossman, 2011). 2) Transferability; which means the ability of transferring the results to different contexts or at different times within the same context. Transferability could be accomplished through solid description of the context of the phenomena and participants. 3) Dependability, which is an "auditing" approach, peer reviewing, for instance. The author used this approach only in the data analysis and by consulting his supervisor; also by presenting his work at conferences, as he received priceless feedback. He also consulted scholars and colleagues. In an attempt to increase this research's dependability, the author saved records of the process of this research. 4) Confirmability; which means reducing the intervention of the researcher values, as researchers must not allow their personal beliefs to take over creation of knowledge. The themes and evidences used must be traceable (Bryman and Bell, 2007).

3.10.2. Authenticity of the Research

Authenticity is about the research's impact. Authenticity shows how qualitative study helps participants to improve their understanding, actions and work practices in regard to the studied phenomena. It includes; A) Fairness, which means exploring changeable views about certain phenomena. B) Ontological authenticity, which means helping participants to promote their understanding and awareness of the social environment. C) Educative authenticity, which means developing the awareness of various perspectives concerning the phenomena. D) Catalytic authenticity, which means acting as a motivator for interviewees to start improving the situation of the examined phenomena. Catalytic authenticity is about making an actual

impact on the actual participants' situation (Cho and Trent, 2006). This standard is seen as extremely hard in conventional study in social science; it concerns emancipating and empowering research subjects (Scheurich, 1997). E) Tactical authenticity, which means the empowerment and overall impact of the research, in that it provided interviewees additional steps to a better status quo (Bryman and Bell, 2007).

Regarding generalisability, qualitative researchers highlighted that the intent in qualitative research is not to underline generalisability, but to emphasise the 'particularisation' of phenomena and cases (Creswell, 2007). Philosophical assumptions are the base for the standards for evaluating qualitative research supporting the research in a certain paradigm. In this respect, research accounts include personal experiences, which affect interpretations and observation. These accounts do not give a full picture as they take place at one time. Therefore, qualitative research results are not generalisable or duplicable; rather, they give contextualised understanding of the case (Cunliffe, 2011). Thus, the value of qualitative research is in how it raises our understanding of a specific concept or phenomenon (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006).

Scheurich (1997) criticised the way of judging research quality by declaring that trustworthiness and validity are just various faces of the same belief. This belief indicates the traditional method of putting limits to what is not valid/trustworthy and unacceptable and what is valid/trustworthy and acceptable. He highlighted that validity is a significant issue in traditional social science convention, because it originated from the presumption that research is objective truth, value-free. In addition, the concern regarding validity is just positivist thinking, introduced in different mask. For that reason, he suggested, rather than imposing specific criteria on the research participants, for more of their involvement in evaluating research quality.

3.11. Ethical Issues

Ethical concerns will arise as the researcher plans her/his research, tries to gain access to individuals and organisations, do the data collection, analyse and report it. In the research context, ethics refers to the consonance of the researcher's behaviour towards the people who become the researcher' work subject, or may be affected by it (Saunders, et al., 2009). Blumberg et al. describe ethics as the "moral principles, norms or standards of behaviour that

guide moral choices about our behaviour and our relationships with others" (2005, 92). "Research ethics therefore relates to questions about how we formulate and clarify our research topic, design our research and gain access, collect data, process and store our data, analyse data and write up our research findings in a moral and responsible way" (Saunders, et al., 2009, 178). This means that the researcher should to make sure that the way she/he designs her/his research is both methodologically sound and ethically defensible to all people who are involved. In this regard, the author kept all the information of the interviewees protected, such as names, positions, and contact information. In order to preserve participants' anonymity, the author will use the letter 'I' for interviewee and all interviewees will be given numbers (I1, I2, and I3).

3.12. Conclusion

The chapter has explained the research philosophy, including the interpretivist and positivist paradigms as well as five assumptions underlying them. After that, it indicated the approach of this research and the reason why the researcher adopted the interpretivist philosophy. The approach that the researcher followed when choosing the sample was explained. Next, the method of collecting data for the research was identified, as was the method by which the researcher analysed the collected data. Finally, the ethical issues that faced the researcher in collecting data and writing up the results were explained.

4. Chapter Four: Data Analysis

This chapter presents the findings based on the semi-structured interviews. It is divided into four categories. Each category includes subcategories and themes. This chapter presents the challenges to education quality in Saudi Arabia in the first category. Secondly, it presents the actions being taken to introduce total quality management in Saudi Arabia, which is divided into two categories: the role of the Total Quality Management Department (TQMD), and recent trends made by the Ministry of Education. The last category shows the cultural factors affecting the implementation of total quality management. These categories are derived from the

research questions, whereby the first category answers the first research question, the second and third categories answer the second research question, and the fourth category answers the third research question.

Research Question 1. What are the current challenges to education quality in Saudi Arabia?

4.1. Category 1: Challenges to Education Quality in Saudi Arabia

This category will discuss the challenges to quality in education in Saudi Arabia. These are the issues that the Total Quality Management initiative needs to address. Those problems include challenges facing teacher, school resources, curriculum and centralisation. Hence, the section includes four subcategories; Challenges facing teacher, which includes three different themes; School resources which also includes three themes; the Curriculum, which constitutes a theme in itself and finally, Centralisation, which includes three themes.

Subcategory 1: Challenges facing Teacher

Through the interviews, participants raised some issues related to challenges facing teachers in the Ministry of Education. Participants suggest that performance appraisal system in the ministry is a main concern to them and they can consider it as a major challenge, this will be discussed in the first theme. In addition, the participants mentioned another important issue which will be discussed in the second theme ‘Training’. During the interviews sessions, the interviewees suggested that there is another challenge facing them which is the inconsistent standards applied regarding teachers’ responsibilities.

Theme 1: Performance Appraisal

This theme will discuss issues regarding the performance appraisal (PA) system applied in the ministry, how it is done and the factors affecting its accuracy and value, such as lack of understanding of its purpose, laxity of education superintendents, misuse by principals to compensate for their lack of authority, and intervention of personal relations. This theme will include three subthemes to address these issues.

Subtheme 1: How Performance appraisal is carried out

This subtheme will focus on the importance of feedback and its effect on the policy of the ministry, the employees' performance, and clarifying the weaknesses in the employees' skills. Additionally, feedback will help to determine whether the employees need training programmes and motivation or not. It will also consider whether feedback is perceived as accurate or not and the staff's vision of the self-evaluation process and performance appraisal as seen by the principals and the managers of education departments.

There are forms for self-performance evaluation distributed to teachers annually to appraise themselves, the principals, their satisfaction with the educational environment and to evaluate the services of the ministry. The majority of the participants agreed that when those forms are anonymous; they feel free to evaluate accurately. Participant I6 stated:

Every year I distribute self-performance evaluation forms to the teachers so they can evaluate their performance and evaluate the principal's performance and evaluate their satisfaction with the educational environment and the ministry's services and all that is within a non-judgmental environment, which means that they do not have to write their names on the forms. I have noticed that if they do not have to write their names, the output is different from when they have to write them down. Some of them are accurate in the forms but others are not. (I6, 2011)

Participant I15 had the same opinion, as he stated that he had come to know the importance of evaluation forms over a few years:

I have been a teacher for thirteen years and I have moved between five different schools and I have filled those performance evaluation forms annually. At the beginning of my career, I was not accurate with those forms because I thought that they were just routine 'paper work'. I did not believe in them because I did not have to write my name. I did not realise that it was an opportunity to write and say whatever I want. After a few years I knew their importance and since then I am very accurate in filling them and I even started to tell my colleagues my story, to learn from it (I15, 2011)

Subtheme 2: Factors affecting Performance Appraisal accuracy and value

Interviewee I6 suggested that there is another type of evaluation form on which the principal evaluates the teachers in his school based on discipline and social interaction in the classroom. However, he claimed that tribal relations affecting the standard of this evaluation, as principals evaluate teachers based on tribal and personal relations, not based on the teachers' discipline and social interaction in the classroom:

The principal's evaluation is supposed to be based on the classroom discipline and the classroom social interaction but it is not. It is based on the personal relations with the principal and tribal relations as well. This means that if the teacher is from the same tribe as the principal he will have the perfect grade, that is 100%, and if he knows the principal on a personal level he will have the same grade. (I6, 2011)

Similarly, participant I15 revealed that there is a strong impact of culture and tribal relations in evaluating teachers' performance. He highlighted that he had received a perfect rating grade because the principal was his relative and if had not given him such a grade it would be considered as shameful:

There is another performance evaluation form filled by the principal of the school. In all those thirteen years and those five schools I worked with five principals and I got excellent in all of my evaluation ratings except on one of them I got 'very good', and once I got 100% as a total score in my rating result because the principal was my relative. He was from the same tribe that I belong to, and it would be considered as shameful if he did not give me an excellent rating. (I15, 2011)

He claimed, moreover, that principals give teachers high ratings in their performance appraisal for a variety of other reasons.

The principal gives high grades to teachers for several reasons---. Since moving from one school to another requires a high grade in the annual performance appraisal, the principal helps some of the teachers with that so they can move to another city or another village. On the other hand, if the principal has a problem with a teacher, let us say 'they do not get along', he will also give him a high rating so the teacher will have the advantage of moving from the school. (I15, 2011)

Participant I19, a principal, confirmed this claim and stated that he had no control over moving teachers from his school and it was up to the ministry to take such decisions. His only option was to facilitate such movements by awarding high scores in the performance appraisal. Hence, irrespective whether a teacher was performing well poorly, or had problems of any kind in his performance or personal problems with the principal, the latter had to give him a good score in his evaluation rating:

The culture requires me to comply with the demands of the teachers and sympathise with them regarding moving to another city or village. This decision is for the ministry to take and the only thing that I can do is to give them a high score in the annual performance appraisal and give recommendations to the ministry so they can make the decision. If the teacher is not good at teaching and negligent, there is no penalty that I can apply; as a result I just give him a perfect score so he can move to another school. (I19, 2011)

Moreover, he emphasised the effect of tribal relations on the principal's decisions in evaluating the teachers' performance in the school. The participant claimed that he could not give a teacher a bad rating in his performance appraisal when the teacher was from the same tribe, since it would be considered shameful:

It is considered shameful if the teacher is from the same tribe as I am, and I gave him a bad score. (I19, 2011)

Additionally, he suggested that the person who comes from the educational department to evaluate the teachers in the school is not proficient in the evaluation process. He declared that the appraiser ascribes one teacher's fault to a few other teachers without seeing them:

Every year an observer comes to the school to evaluate the principal, administrative staff and the teachers. The problem is that when he finds a fault in a teacher he would attribute the same fault to three or four other teachers because he would not be bothered to attend the other teachers' classes; he will just fill their form with the same fault and the same evaluation. (I19, 2011)

Moreover, he recounted his own experience with one of the evaluators from the educational department who came to the school once a year, to illustrate this laxity:

A long time ago, when I was a teacher, a member of the educational department came to the school and since I was a beginner I was trying to impress the principal so he would give me a good rating at the end of the year. The external evaluator should have attended one or two of my classes and then he could judge me, but I was surprised that he left without attending any class and I thought that it was a long process and he might need more time and he would come the next day. I asked one of my colleagues if the evaluator had attended his class; he answered me saying that he had not and he had finished with the school. My colleague told me that he never attended all the teachers' class, he attended a few of them and he evaluated the others on this basis. When the results came I had 'very good' as my score [although] I was working more than all of my colleagues. Over time I found out that he had attended one of the lazy teachers' classes and he applied the same score to three other teachers, and I was one of them. (I19, 2011)

Subtheme 3: Outcomes

The majority of the employees claimed that the performance appraisal form is not effective in motivating teachers or improving quality because it is not accurate, because of the strong culture in the country. For example, Participant I29 highlighted that he had never heard of any teacher getting 'Unsatisfactory' in his performance result rating. He suggested that 91% of the teachers got 'excellent' in their ratings and comparing this rating with the number of teachers in the country, it appears that it is a huge number, makes this rating unconvincing, so performance appraisal becomes meaningless:

In the past thirty one years; I have never heard of anyone getting 'Unsatisfactory' in his performance appraisal result, except two. It does not make sense that all teachers in Saudi Arabia are excellent teachers. In the past few years, 91% of the teachers got 'excellent' in their results, which is a big number if we consider that the total number of teachers, is almost half a million. (I29, 2011)

Because performance appraisal is imperfectly linked with outcomes, it was said that some members of staff do not exert effort to get a high rating in the evaluation results. I10 stated:

I have been a principal for sixteen years and moved to five different schools covering all stages. Some of the teachers do not care about the annual evaluation form because nothing will happen to them if they get a low rating in their results. They already have the schools next to their houses so they do not need to move to another school. The other reason is that they will have their annual promotion whether they got 'weak, good, very good or excellent' in their results, so the promotion is fixed. And the results do not affect their salaries. (I10, 2011)

Moreover, he claimed that if a teacher is not looking for a higher position in the school, the education department or the ministry, he does not exert any effort and just does his job, nothing more:

If the teacher is not planning to hold an administrative position in the school or move to an education department or even the ministry, he would not be bothered to put any effort in his teaching methods or techniques. In addition, some of the teachers do not stay at school all the working hours; when they do not have any classes they go out to finish some personal business and sometimes they cannot get back on time and other teachers have to cover for them (I10, 2011)

In contrast, some of the staff of the ministry had been more ambitious and conscientious, and had reached high levels in the ministry because of their evaluation results. One such was I28, who explained:

I would like to say that I am holding a good position in the ministry after I moved between several schools in different cities, some of which were far from my home town, because I was planning to reach the ministry. I pushed my efforts to the top and worked on every section of the evaluation form to achieve this ambition by promotions from a teacher to an administrative position in the school then to a principal, then I moved to an education department for the northern area and finally here at the ministry supervising schools. (I28, 2011)

However, he claimed that not every teacher who works hard gets good positions or even bonuses; they just remain in the same position for some reasons. For example, the participant

stated that strong culture plays an important role in promotions. He suggested that if a teacher has some connections in the ministry, he could get promoted even if does not put in the effort and work hard to deserve this promotion:

Some of my colleagues worked very hard but they remained the same; same position, same school, same educational department. This is because of the impact of the strong culture. Some of the teachers or the employees in general start to gain promotions that they do not even deserve and move from one position to another, higher one, because they have strong connections in the ministry, because assigning employees to positions is not the educational departments' responsibilities. And the teachers who work very hard to achieve that do not get any promotion except the annual raise in the payment cheque, even when their annual evaluations are almost perfect and some of them get full marks. (I28, 2011)

I28 commented that teachers with connections in the ministry could have scholarships and travel abroad to study, even without starting working as teachers in schools:

Those employees who have strong connections in the ministry were sponsored by the Ministry of Education to finish their higher education. Some of them finished their master degrees in universities in Saudi Arabia and the others finished them abroad. There was a guy I know who was a teacher, and he got a scholarship within four years from the day started working and he finished his master degree abroad and then he finished his PhD as well. After that, when he came back, his connection was preparing a position in the ministry for him. He has done all that because he has a connection in the ministry, while there are other teachers and employees who are more qualified and more creative and intelligent than him who stayed the same, in the same position. (I28, 2011)

Theme 2: Training

This theme will discuss the training programmes provided by the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia, with the aim of improving teachers' skills and raising their quality. This theme has three subthemes. The first one will discuss who was considered to need training programmes and according to what standards. The second one concerns the methods of

selection for these programmes. Finally, the third theme is regarding the contents of those training programmes or courses.

Participant I13 affirmed that there are not enough training programmes for the employees, whether they work at the ministry, in educational departments or in schools. He claimed that the pre-service training is weak as he had to finish modules to graduate and those modules did not qualify him to teach:

I have been a teacher for eight years now and I have never been sent to a training programme. I have studied at university for four years and after graduation I studied for one year to get an education diploma. The diploma was supposed to qualify me to teach but actually I was studying modules to graduate and I could work afterwards, so it did not qualify me for anything and I had to ask teachers with experience to find out what I should do and how to deal with the students. There should be training programmes to explain to fresh graduates, to prepare them for the classroom. (I13, 2011)

Moreover, participant I5 blamed pre-service training under the Ministry of Higher Education for a lack of teacher professionalism:

There is a weakness in the preparation programmes from the Ministry of Higher Education. The outputs of the Ministry of Higher Education do not have even the minimum limits of sufficiency that would enable it to meet the needs of public education. Now, the ministry is about to activate an office between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education to give the latter the required competencies for future teachers and anyone without these competencies will not be able to enter the teaching career. Hopefully, in a few years from now, professionalism will be spread in the public education's teachers. (I5, 2011)

He also drew attention to the relation between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education, arguing that there is a process of an exchange of interests between these two ministries:

The relationship between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education should be stronger as it is almost a circle. Meaning, a part of the outputs of the Ministry of Higher Education will be members of the

Ministry of the Education as teachers, principals and members of the educational departments. Also, the outputs of the Ministry of Education as outputs of the schools will be the inputs of the Ministry of Higher Education as undergraduate students. The latter needs well educated and well prepared students to keep up with the accelerated wheel of education in all majors, whether it is science or art. Both of the ministries should work together to increase the educational level in Saudi Arabia. (I5, 2011)

Subtheme 1: Who needs training?

According to interviewee I36, there are two categories of employees and teachers who need training courses. He claimed that the first category is the creative employee or teacher whom he considered the future of education. The second category is the poorly-performing employee or teacher who needs to improve his/her skills.

According to my knowledge, there are two categories of teachers and employees who need training programmes which are: 1) the creative teacher or employee, who is the future of education and who is open minded to learn about new things, 2) the weak levelled teacher or employee who needs to improve himself and needs to get better in what he does. (I36, 2011)

Through the interviews, the majority of the interviewees claimed that there is no action taken by the management regarding sending the employees to training programmes to improve their skills and remedy any weaknesses discovered by the results of the performance appraisal.

Participant I31 stated that:

If I get a bad rating in the annual performance appraisal; that means that I have some weaknesses in my skills and performance that need to be improved. This can only be improved by letting me know what and where they are, which they do, and by sending me to training programme for these weaknesses. My manager is expecting me to do better next year by my own effort and he will not take any action in this regard. (I31, 2011)

Subtheme 2: Selection for training

Selection for training was said to depend on two factors; nomination by the school principal and decisions at ministry level. Both were criticised for being based on subjective criteria rather than objective analysis of needs.

Participant I36 revealed the principals' nomination methods for the teachers to participate in training programmes and suggested that tribal and personal relations play a significant role:

Some of the principals choose who gets this training programme randomly and some of them choose according to personal reasons such as if the teacher is a relative or if he is a close friend to him outside the school and some of them choose the teacher just because he is his neighbour. (I36, 2011)

With regard to decisions ministry level, I13 claimed that the top management in the ministry keep the other members in the dark while they select who will receive training programmes and they do not announce them beforehand:

I think if the teacher or the employee in general has no connections in the ministry he/she will not have a training programme in or out of the ministry, as there are some training programmes in the ministry and there are training programmes abroad. The ministry top management keeps the other members in the dark and they do not announce these programmes before they launch it. They tell the closest members and middle managers and choose who goes to these programmes then they invite the public to apply and when the public apply for them they say that they had enough and the programmes are full now and they have to wait for another year. (I13, 2011)

Participant I33 highlighted the absence of training need analysis to develop education in the country. He claimed that the strong culture has an impact on choosing who takes the training programmes, such as the personal connections that the teachers have:

There are no tools to sort and indicate the needs of the education, because there is no vision in the first place, to specify the training programmes and workshops needed for the teachers. There is no specific method to nominate the teachers who should participate in these programmes and again the teachers who take these programmes do so because they have personal connections. There is no real evaluation of the teacher's performance and

diagnosis of what he/she needs from an expert supervisor of these programmes. (I33, 2011)

He went on to point out the adverse consequences of such biased means of selection, in that training was not targeted where it was needed. He claimed that some of the staff of his school participated in the same training programme more than once, while others had never received in-service training:

...Besides, no one knows from the staff of the school who would participate in these programmes until the list of the names comes from the ministry directly or from the educational department, without informing the teachers beforehand. Some teachers have already participated in a similar programme in the past and because they have personal connections, they arrange to participate again, while some of the teachers have never participated in these programmes in their careers. (I33, 2011)

Subtheme 3: Training contents

During the interviews, some of the participants claimed that there is a lack of professionalism in teaching and suggested some reasons for this lack of professionalism. I33 revealed that:

Training programmes are not founded on a vision from the Human Resources Department or linked to educational theory. It is just personal efforts within the educational departments. Three billion Riyals has been allocated in King's Abdullah Project to develop teachers professionally at the beginning of this year (I33, 2011)

Interviewee I33 expressed the opinion that the training programmes need to be updated and the ministry should launch new programmes that correspond with the new system that the ministry is trying to apply to improve educational quality.

Moreover, there are some old training programmes that are for old systems for teachers, principals and members of educational departments that are not useful anymore and those systems have not been usable for years now and the ministry is still launching these programmes. (I33, 2011)

Theme 3: Inconsistent standards

During the interviews, some of the interviewees raised the important issue of unclear and inconsistent standards regarding teachers' responsibilities; Participant I17 claimed that he did not know what his rights are as a member of the staff of the Ministry of Education:

There is a problem that the teachers are facing, which is that when we are employed we do not know what consequences we will face if we do something wrong or we do something against the regulations. On the other hand, if we have been excellent in our work and been creative and we did everything properly and beyond that, [we don't know] what we should get. There was no one to tell me what my rights are as a teacher or what I should not do. (I17, 2011)

Elaborating on the theme of the lack of a clear penalty for certain mistakes that teachers make, he explained clearly that there is no clarity in the regulation and the penalties in the educational system and he told a story regarding two teachers who acted in the same way but were subject to two different decisions:

I have been a principal for eleven years now and I moved to three schools in those years. If I have a problem with one of the teachers, I write a report and wait for the representative of the educational department and give it to him and then the penalty will be identified. However, some of the problems or the mistakes that the teachers make do not have any clear penalty. The teacher should prepare the next lessons in the class in hard copy at the beginning of the week, for all five days. Once, there was a teacher who was refusing to prepare and when the representative came and saw the report he took strong action regarding that, which was giving him a warning letter, which could affect his ability to move to another school or another city and his promotion. In another school, a teacher did the same thing and the representative did

nothing about it because he thought that since the teacher was creative and attended all the lessons on time, it was fine to refuse. (I17, 2011)

Participant I1 stated that it is a well-known fact that there are no clear standards for rewarding or applying penalties to teachers or the employees of the educational departments. He gave as an example the issue of undertaking supervisory duties during break times. Although there was an understanding that teachers were expected to do this, such duties were not enforced consistently:

I remember when I was a teacher, and I cannot remember what year, that some teachers refused to watch the students during the break. Teachers are supposed to watch the students during the break, which is twenty minutes, and the principal sometimes punished the teachers who refused and sometimes he did not. I witnessed a case like this. The principal's view was that some teachers had better things to do during the break and they did not have to watch if they did not want to, while the others would be punished if they did not. (I1, 2011)

He added:

I was punished once because I was only late for that job, having a day's pay deduced from my salary, while some of the teachers refused [without penalty]. Anyhow, if one of the teachers refused, another teacher had to cover for him, even if he just did [break duty] the day before. Moreover, there are no benefits for the teachers if they do it properly and they volunteer to undertake that job and cover for the others, they do not even receive any gratitude or appreciation. (I1, 2011)

He also revealed that the same problem arose with supervision at the end of the school day. He admitted that this duty was difficult for some teachers because of their parental responsibilities, but again, the problem was a lack of consistency, leading to a perception of unfairness.

There is another shift for the teachers to watch the students, from the first grade to the fourth, at the end of the working hours of the school. Daily, two

or more teachers need to stay and watch the students of this age until their parents come and pick them up, as it is the school's responsibility. Some of the teachers refuse to take this shift as some of them have to pick up their children from day care or their daughters from their school since the male students are separated from the females. Some of the teachers who refused were not even married, but because they were relatives of the principal they did not take that shift and the principal did not apply any penalty to his relatives. In fact, he applies penalties to the other teachers who might have a genuine emergency one day. (I1, 2011)

Subcategory 2: School resources

During the interviews, participants suggest that there are other challenges facing quality of education. They believe that not all schools are equipped and treated equally. This subcategory concerns the insufficient resources faced by some schools, and the strain this places on teachers.

Theme 1: Inconsistent ministry provision

Participant I25 suggested that the ministry does not treat all schools in the same way; it does not equip all the schools equally. He claimed that some schools are equipped with smart boards, advanced computers, well-equipped laboratories and all the required educational materials while other schools do not have even the basic materials and teachers have to buy these materials:

The situation remains the same for the other teachers, like the mathematics teacher for instance; he has to buy the educational materials such as the rulers, the triangles and all the other geometric shapes. There are other schools called model schools which have great funding from the ministry. They have smart boards, advanced computers, well-equipped laboratories and all the educational materials, while most of the schools all around the country have none of these advantages. It would be fair if the ministry treated all the schools the same, because all of them are the ministry's responsibility

and by doing that [i.e. treating them differently] they are not treating the students in different schools the same as well. (I25, 2011)

Theme 2: Burden on teachers to compensate

In the face of shortage of materials supplied by the ministry, teachers felt obliged to purchase materials from their own pockets. For example, Participant I25 claimed that lab equipment is supplied by the ministry but other educational aids are not, so their supply depends on teachers' personal efforts.

In my experience as a science teacher in the last eight years, I had to make educational posters to support the curriculum with pictures in addition to the pictures in students' books. I did it with no funds from the school. The ministry expects us to make posters and shapes and they do not provide them and if the teachers do not [make them], they will have problems with the representative of the education department. (I25, 2011)

Participant I35 complained that his salary at the end of the month was insufficient, and one of the reasons was that he had to pay for several things in the school which were not his responsibility:

I have been a member in the educational field for seven years now and I have a problem with my salary. During the month I have to pay for educational materials that are supposed be provided by the educational department or the ministry, but it takes time [for them] to come to the school and sometimes the school never receives them and by taking time I mean months. As a result, teachers have to provide these materials (I35, 2011)

In addition, interviewee I35 highlighted that because the ministry did not provide a computer lab in his school; he had to buy a computer and a projector, as the ministry did not treat all schools in the same way in providing materials and facilities:

I had to buy a laptop so I can use it in the class. As there are more than twenty students in each class, they could not see the screen of the laptop because it is on the front desk near the board. I had to buy a projector and a white screen so all the students could see the educational materials shown. (I35, 2011)

Through the interviews, interviewees revealed that sometimes they even had to pay for school maintenance. According to participant I35, the process of ordering technicians from the maintenance department could take a long time, so the teachers had to pay for maintenance, as the students were not to blame for the technical failure in the school and as they had to stay in hot weather, their comfort and health had to be protected.

Sometimes teachers pay even for the maintenance work in the school. Three years ago the main climate control in the main hall, which is at the same time the praying area, was broken, and it is very hot in the summer in Riyadh; the temperature is between 45-55 C at midday. The principal ordered the technicians from the maintenance department at the educational department to come and fix it. This process took a week and they did not come, claiming that there was too much work and the school needed to be scheduled. We had to pay for a new climate control unit because the school could not wait much longer as some of the students have medical conditions and they cannot stand all that heat (I35, 2011)

I35 gave two reasons why teachers contribute to school resources in this way. One was a sense of responsibility to the students, and teachers did not want students to suffer for a situation that was not of their making. As he explained:

...the students have nothing to do with this, they come to the school to learn and educate themselves. (I35, 2011)

The other reason was that the ministry expected the teachers to do their jobs to a certain standard, but gave nothing in return. He claimed that teachers had to buy resources, because if teachers did not perform as expected, their evaluation and, hence, that of the school as a whole would suffer.

The educational department asks the teachers to use more modern educational materials and more technical materials in the class, but neither the educational department nor the ministry provides any of that and if we do not use them, the rank of the entire school will be dramatically decreased. (I35, 2011)

Subcategory 3: Curriculum

Some of the participants during the interviews raised issues related to the curricula, regarding designing, planning, choosing the learning prototype, and choosing the simultaneous evaluating form with teaching. Every year this Ministry of Education studies how it can develop education in the country and improve the outcomes of K-12 education. Nevertheless, some of the teachers declared that the students are having problems with the excessively theoretical approach to subjects such as History, English Literature and Geography and others. I30 commented:

Students have a problem with some subjects as the curriculum makes them not interested in studying them and this leads them to study them just to pass, nothing more. History for instance; the students do not know why they are studying it in the first place. Giving them a lot of details makes them bored, which leads to their ignoring the subject and missing the point of studying History, which is focusing on the examples of role models' lives and the great characters who left their mark on history. Students should live History by showing them pictures or taking them to the real places where great battles happened and some archaeological places and showing them video clips about other nations' ancient cultures to see the changes through time, to make the subject interesting to them, rather than giving them much information with details that are easy to forget. (I30, 2011)

He added that some subjects' curricula are considered boring by the students because they do not notice anything interesting in them. He made suggestions to make these subjects more interesting to the students, such as doing some practical work and taking students on field trips, even for theoretical subjects:

The majority of students think that Geography is also a boring subject because it is noticeable that the contents of the subject focus more on the variables of the countries, such as the population. What would make the subject more interesting and bring its importance to life is to show the students pictures of landmarks in those countries and the goods that they produce and export to other countries and clips of the peoples' lives too. There are different methods to grab the students' attention, such as satellite pictures and maps to add realism and modern value to the students. Students do not care about the weather conditions and the direction of the wind and

the temperature degrees in different countries, which makes the subject boring. (I30, 2011)

For the practical subjects, the problem was quite the opposite – a lack of curricula, reflecting a failure to take these subjects seriously. For example, Participant I37 declared that there is no curriculum for physical education and he complained about the lack of classrooms, even if he wanted to make his own curriculum:

I have been a teacher for eleven years now, and I am a physical education teacher in my school. There is no curriculum for physical education, the only thing I do is give the students a ball and let them play on the school field. I want to teach the students real physical education but there is no curriculum and even if I make my own curriculum, there is no classroom to teach them. They need to know what are the benefits of sports and exercise and what they do to the human body, and then they can choose which one of these sports they prefer. This is why most of the students are not interested in sports and physical exercise and if it is not given to them as a written curriculum, they will not be interested. (I37, 2011)

He also stated that art education teachers are suffering from the same problem, which is that there is no curriculum for the subject and all the themes that are given to the students have been chosen randomly, unless the class coincides with a special occasion:

The same thing for art education, there is no curriculum for this subject. The teacher asks the students to bring some materials such as a sketchbook, crayons and coloured markers and more. Then every class he takes them to the art studio to take the class there. The teacher does not teach the students any art, he only asks them to draw anything, according to the theme of the week and he will choose the theme according to any occasion such as Ramadan, Eid or the traffic week or even choosing randomly. (I37, 2011)

Some of the teachers highlighted an issue about English language, regarding the teaching methods and the students' reception of the information within the curriculum. I21 claimed that English skills are not taught in the right order, and he made some suggestions in this regard:

From my point of view, learning vocabulary is the foundation of learning any language in the world. Unfortunately, it is different in the English

curriculum because the focus is on teaching the grammar and it is considered the base of learning English. In addition, when students see that they do not understand the English grammar due to their lack of vocabulary, they will not be interested in learning it and they will try to learn what will make them pass to the next stage, which is a big problem because they will face a more advanced level and it will be harder to learn. Students have no chance to practise English and cannot pronounce it because they do not hear English. Hearing is the basis in learning a new language. Teaching English should be supported by listening to tapes or CDs in the form of conversations or stories so students can have a chance to learn how to pronounce and learn how to use the grammar that they have already learned. (I21, 2011)

The majority of the interviewees believed that education should be connected to real life so the students can understand why they are studying these subjects and these materials. I7 argued that students need to be shown the importance of what they study in real life and that they should be taken to field trips as a part of the curriculum so they can see and sense the application of what they study in school:

Most of the students do not know, or do not see the point of, why they are studying. How can anyone demand students to love learning if they do not see that there is a benefit in daily life and they do not know its effect in real life and do not know in which direction this education is taking them?. To identify and to show students the importance of the education and what they are learning, they should be taken out to manufacturing and producing sites to make the idea of learning simple to them. For instance, to show them the importance of engineering in building big towers and reveal that if there is any small error in any mathematical equation it could affect the foundations of the building, which will cause the whole tower to collapse. The same thing for Geography, by showing them the importance of studying maps and revealing their effect on the military locations. If students do not see the importance of education in their real life, why would they be interested 'from their perspectives'? (I7, 2011)

He added that in addition to revitalising the curriculum, more attention should be paid to students' motivation and psychological needs, so that the students can gain more self-esteem and feel that they have achieved something:

There are some ideas that the teachers were discussing the other day about giving the students something to motivate them to give their best. Some suggested that the school should design a website that connects the school with the students' homes and show their creations through the web pages to the public, which will make the students feel that they have gained something from their education and those web pages will be identified as the school's production and show the students' efforts. Some teachers suggested that the school makes an aesthetic model to give to the city council or an idea to solve a problem in the town or information boards for the town made by the hands of the students and under the supervision of the teachers, to enhance the spirit of voluntary service. (I7, 2011)

Subcategory 4: Centralisation

Saudi Arabia is a big country, including many cities and every city has from one to six education departments. Every education department supervises the schools in the city or the town, including all stages of education for boys and girls. However, curricula and administrative matters are prescribed centrally. In the interviews, attention was drawn to the issue of excessive centralisation, which means that every education department has to refer all decisions to the ministry. Participant I9 commented:

I have been a teacher since 1995 and now I have been a principal for seven years. I am facing a problem, which is that I have no authority to take any action but monitoring attendance and the annual evaluation. If there is anything regarding the teachers or the students, no matter how small it is, I need to report it to the education department of the city and they will pass it to the ministry and then they will let me know the action. Even sick leave, or if a teacher needs a few days leave for any urgent reason, I just pass it to the education department. The authority is held in one hand, which is the ministry. (I9, 2011)

Moreover, he stated that centralisation affects the educational systems on many levels from the ministry to the operational units, such as schools and book warehouses. He gave an example of how bureaucratic procedures affected him personally:

A few years ago there was a shortage of students' books at the beginning of the educational year in one of the subjects. I had to go to the manager of the educational department to get his signature for the warehouse so I could take the books and cover this shortage. I had to go in the working hours of the educational department, which are the same as the school's. When I was at the educational department, there was an observational committee visiting the school. As a principal, my absence was noted and they wrote a report in this regard and I received a reproof letter for my absence, even though I was at the educational department. (I9, 2011)

I18 confirmed the high level of centralisation, which he claimed ruined his work. He described how he had to leave his town and his school to apply for a promotion, because of the long bureaucratic process imposed by the centralisation:

My experience as a teacher is nine years now. My school is in a small town and sometimes if I need to apply for sick leave or apply for a promotion or anything else, I have to go to Riyadh, which is more than 600 kilometres [away], so I can apply for it, if the principal is on holiday. In addition, sometimes I have been unable to attend my classes so I can go there for two days and the principal will mark me absent. I go to Riyadh because if I do not, the application will take a long time to get a reply due to the delay in moving the application from the school to the education department and from there to the ministry and vice versa. Therefore, I have to sacrifice one of two things; my evaluation rating because of the absence, or my applications for a promotion or moving to another city or even my sick leave. (I18, 2011)

He described how a similar situation was repeated the following year:

I did not get the promotion because I was marked absent for the first day of the week, which is counted as three days and it happened again in the next year when I was trying to apply for the same promotion that I deserved from the year before. Nowadays, I think the ministry is trying to activate

decentralisation as I can apply for sick leaves and holidays to the principal and apply for the annual bonus as well. (I18, 2011)

Theme 1: Centralisation and Curriculum

The curriculum has been affected by centralisation in the operation units, schools, as principals do not have scope to make decisions regarding modification in the curriculum, such as adding to or deleting from the curriculum. Changes in the national curriculum are prohibited by the ministry and if there are any changes that the principal wants to apply; he/she has to check with the superintendent, who is a member of the educational department supervising the school, to see whether he/she will be allowed to do so.

Participant I3 stated that:

As a principal, I am not allowed to apply any modifications in the national curriculum of any subject because of the regulation of the ministry, even if these modifications are small changes like additions or deletions. If I need to make some changes; I need to check with the superintendent and obtain his permission to do so. Sometimes I feel like I need to teach the students some additional information other than that provided in their textbooks, but it is prohibited. In addition, sometimes I allow my teachers to make some omission in secret. The reason behind this is that if the Department of General Management finds out through their superintendent, this means that the curricula have not been taught completely to the students of the school. In this case, the Department of General Management will have to give the principal a warning or they could prevent him/her from conducting any examinations at the end of the year and they will conduct these exams to make sure that the students have studied every part of those books. (I3, 2011)

However, he claimed that this is not the case for all schools; this regulation is only applicable to public schools. Private schools can teach their own curricula:

Private schools can choose the curricula that they want to teach but under some conditions, such as examination of the new curriculum by the Department of General Management (DGM), and the school can implement this curriculum only if there is nothing allocated by the ministry. Moreover, not all the private schools can do this, only the international schools, the

curricula for international schools can be taught after they get permission from the ministry. (I3, 2011)

He added that teachers of some subject were free to delete from or add to their curricula, in cases where no ministerial allocation existed.

Some teachers can add to or delete from any part of the curricula of the subjects they teach. The reason behind all this freedom is that these curricula are not 'allocated' by the ministry and there is no close supervision from the DGM and from its superintendent. These subjects' curricula are approved, not 'allocated' by the ministry. These subjects are Computer literacy, Physical Education and English Language. (I3, 2011)

In addition to curriculum content, some teachers raised issues regarding the centrally prescribed teaching methods and resources. Some stated that they had to use external resources in teaching their students, since they were not satisfied with the curriculum package provided by the ministry. I14 claimed:

I and some of my colleagues sometimes use external resources other than the current curricula which are assigned by the ministry because we are not satisfied with them. However, we are not allowed to do so, but we do so to reach to our objectives of the lessons we give. In addition, when we use these external resources other than the textbooks assigned by the ministry, we have to document those resources and get the approval of the superintendent and the DGM relatively. Personally, I use external resources because I think that the curriculum of my subject includes unnecessary or nonsense materials and sometimes the curriculum does not emphasise the important topics that the students should be learning about. (I14, 2011)

According to the participant, most teachers want to teach their students topics that are not in the ministry's curricula and they can use additional materials in their lessons after obtaining the superintendent's approval, but they cannot modify any part of the national curriculum by deleting.

I cannot delete any part/s from the national curriculum, no matter how small this part is. Moreover, I cannot use any external materials as learning resources unless I ask the principal to consult the superintendent assigned to

my school by the DGM and only if he approved it I can use those materials, no matter how creative this step will be. I want to teach my students things that are not in the curriculum that are very useful to them. (I14, 2011)

Theme 2: Impact of Centralisation on Role and authority of principals

This theme will review information about the role and authority of principals. Teachers and principals answered questions regarding the way they deal with the centralised Saudi education system. In addition, they discussed the responsibilities and role of principals of schools expressed their view that the Department of General Management and superintendents hinder principals' decisions in school matters.

Some of the interviewees stated that principals face conflicts in their dealings with the authorities and that one cause of this can be differences in superintendents from the DGM in terms of flexibility, co-operation and support for principals. Participant I7 claimed that:

For example, some of the superintendents that supervise my school are bossy and they look for small details and some of them visit the school once and sometimes twice a year while others visit the school more than ten times. Furthermore, some of the superintendents never visit the school and they do their work by sending reports for the school via fax. Actually, the situation is haphazard and chaotic because some of the superintendents come without any arrangements for appointments except when they have personal relationships with principals. And sometimes when they have been asked why they have come without any appointments they simply and rudely say that it is not the principal's business even to ask when the next visit will take place. This type of behaviour from the superintendent's side does not give the principal any chance to prepare his/her agenda and what he/she wants to discuss in the meeting. (I7, 2011)

However, not all superintendents behave in this way; it depends on their characters. In addition, it is pure luck which type of superintendent will be allocated to the school. According to the participant, the way that superintendents treat principals and schools is based on personal relations.

Regarding his authority in implementing ideas, he stated that if he was convinced about an idea he would apply it even if he had to do it behind the ministry's and the DGM's back. Yet, if they

found out by whatever means, there would be disciplinary actions such as investigations, warning letters, and salary deduction. He suggested that:

I do not care about these punishments as I care about achieving the goals that I believe that are important. I am not doing anything harmful or wrong after all. (I7, 2011)

Furthermore, when the participant was asked about how supportive the DGM is, he claimed:

There is no encouragement, reinforcement or support; the superintendent comes to attend a class or two, states the responsibilities of the principal and dictates new policies and rules. The majority of the superintendents assess principals on school records and paperwork, not based on character, achievements or their performance as managers or leaders. A few years ago, I spent all the working hours in the morning supervising teachers and sharing experience and knowledge with them and I had to stay late at school or come back in the evening to do all the paperwork that I had to finish. However, superintendents had doubts and suspicions regarding my stay and they interrogated me for my 'unacceptable behaviour'. (I7, 2011)

He stated that most of the superintendents of the DGM are not supportive:

I have dealt with many superintendents in my career and most of them are not supportive and they are not keen about the performance of the school. In fact, sometimes they interrupt in my job and stand in my way. For instance, one superintendent stopped me from implementing an idea because he did not want to have extra work such as evaluation duties and extra supervision. (I7, 2011)

Participant I19 suggests that some of the superintendents interfere in some things that are outside their remit and sometimes they ask about small things and ignore the important work in the school.

I receive some announcements from the ministry and from the DGM regarding the superintendents' responsibilities and what they should supervise. Yet, on more than one occasion, some of the superintendents asked to see things that are not included in their authorities and I had to allow them

to, because I did not want them to write negative reports to the DGM about the school. And some of the superintendents focus on small things such as the classrooms' cleanliness, organisation of the lesson plans of the teachers, and neatness of the notebooks of the students. (I19, 2011)

In addition, he noted that most of the teachers had the same negative impression about the superintendents and did not like their presence in the class because they already knew that they would write negative reports about them. He claimed that most of the teachers felt confused, anxious, and afraid in the presence of the superintendents in the classroom. However, if supervisions were more supportive, teachers would appreciate having the superintendents' supervision, advice, and help in decision making regarding academic issues.

Theme 3: Impact of Centralisation on Extracurricular Activities

This theme will review the information regarding the methods that the principals follow when choosing and implementing extracurricular activities and the constraints that they face.

Through the interviews, the participants stated that they were not free to take decisions when it comes to extracurricular activities. They agreed that the DGM does not give them freedom to conduct some extracurricular activities, especially when these activities are religious. Attempts to organise such activities led to be their being questioned by the superintendents assigned to their schools by the DGM, about those religious lectures and why they were holding them, especially if they did so without getting prior approval from the DGM.

Participant I10 stated that he had held a religious lecture one semester and he was questioned about it when the superintendent came to visit the school:

One of the teachers came to me once with an idea of a religious lecture to be given to the students of the school and I approved his request as there was no harm in that. In the next visit of the superintendent of the DGM, he questioned me about that lecture and why I had done it in the school without getting his approval or even consulting him about it. And I explained that requesting approval for any extracurricular activity consumes time and it could take up to four months as the officials of the DGM have to study the proposal and they have to send one of their superintendents to supervise the activity before the full acceptance of the request. (I10, 2011)

In addition, he stated that he had more ideas regarding some extracurricular activities that he wanted to initiate, but was not supported in such aspirations by the education authorities, who took a restrictive view of what should be provided by the school.

Getting permissions for extracurricular activities from the DGM is a very long process and it could take months for each activity's request. I have many ideas for extracurricular activities such as public speaking training, vocational training, activities clubs, and an open day. But the DGM and their superintendents forbid me from conducting these activities as they believe that these activities are a waste of the school time and it is too valuable to be wasted. (I10, 2011)

Participant I25 explained that he had been involved in such activities and that he and his colleagues were in a conflicted situation regarding initiating extracurricular activities as the principal encouraged their creativity, while the superintendent did not approve their ideas. Moreover, he believed that there are two reasons why teachers cannot introduce any extracurricular activities and that they do not enjoy any freedom to do so:

As a teacher, I get involved in the extracurricular activities' implementation. Yet, my involvement is voluntary and my opinions are taken into consideration at the school level. However, the teachers need to get the approval from the principal and the superintendent when he visits the school. Most of the teachers agree with me when I say that we are in a conflicted situation because the principal appreciates the innovation and creativity but the superintendent does not approve everything we come up with regarding extracurricular activities and we have to do the activities under the umbrella of the activities approved by the DGM. There are two reasons that the teachers cannot implement any activities and they do not have any freedom to do so. Firstly, following the rules whereby no extracurricular activities are permitted to occur without the approval of the superintendent. The second is to guarantee uniformity and order in the school and to avoid any chaos that could be generated when teachers do whatever they please without any prior approval and planning from the principal and the superintendent. Nevertheless, teachers can implement and develop activities without consulting the superintendent, since he rarely visits the school (I25, 2011)

As this section has shown, centralisation and bureaucratic procedures have wide-ranging effect on school-level efforts to improve education quality. Indeed, the problems reported in relation to teacher quality, school resources and the curriculum can all be linked in various ways to this fundamental problem.

Having identified the issues currently facing education quality in Saudi Arabia, turn next to the work of the body tasked by the Ministry of Education with implementing its new TQM initiative.

4- Research Question 2. What actions are being taken to introduce total quality management in the public education system in Saudi Arabia?

This section answers the second research question which is divided into two categories; Role of the Total Quality Management Department and recent trends made by the Ministry of Education.

4.2. Category 2: Role of the Total Quality Management Department

This category will discuss the role of the TQMD in education in Saudi Arabia. It will emphasise TQM's perceived importance and the significance of spreading the culture of TQM within the ministry. In addition, this category will discuss the activities undertaken by the ministry to ensure correct implementation and explain how the ministry is building a TQM system.

In order to develop education in Saudi Arabia, the ministry had to adopt a new approach to improve the standards of education and hence the education outputs. The ministry adopted TQM as an approach to achieve a better standard of education by setting the basics such as establishing a Total Quality Management Department and recruiting employees with experience in that field. As a new department, the TQM department needed to set goals and the methods by which these goals were to be achieved. The researcher met some of the employees in the department to find out the role of the department and its employees. Participant I11, who is one of the middle managers, stated that:

The Total Quality Management Department (TQMD) is young if we take into consideration that it was established in January 2009. There are many goals that TQMD is aiming for, such as spreading the TQM culture in the Ministry of Education including the staff of other departments, the principals and teachers, to give them an idea about TQM and make them familiar with it.

Since the TQMD needs to make changes in the educational system and to make decisions to improve it, the staff need to know the purpose of these decisions so they will apply them properly. (I11, 2011)

He declared that members of the ministry, including employees, managers, teachers, principals and managers of the educational departments, should share the knowledge of total quality management in order to improve the education system in Saudi Arabia:

Members of the Ministry of Education need to identify and understand TQM so they can raise the education in Saudi Arabia and deliver the message and the mission of education. On the other hand, they need to understand the consequences of not applying TQM properly by not understanding it in the right way. Employees, managers, teachers and principals, they need to share the aims and the principles so they implement TQM as it should be. (I11, 2011)

During the interviews, the employees revealed that the TQMD is trying to build a Total Quality Management System within the educational establishments such as the Ministry of Education, the Education Departments and schools. Participant I23 stated:

Since I have been moved to a position as a middle manager in TQMD, the system has changed. For instance, the TQMD is building a Total Quality Management System everywhere, in the ministry, the operating units and the education departments in all regions in the kingdom. TQMD is also trying to spread a new idea of making an integrated model between knowledge management and TQM so the workers, including the staff of the ministry and the teachers in schools, will be encouraged to share their knowledge and express their opinions in a free environment. (I23, 2011)

An indication of the importance attached to the TQM initiative is the high-level support accorded to it. Participant I11 explained that the department receives strong support from the king and the minister and it is largely funded by the ministry. He explained:

TQMD is largely funded by the ministry and by the minister himself and the manager of the department has complete access to the minister at any time. It is even supported by the king. (I11, 2011)

The TQMD holds workshops and arranges conferences to define TQM and introduce it to staff as new activities to embed TQM in the culture of education. The ministry arranged the first international conference of TQM in 2011 and it is planning a second one to be held in 2013:

The ministry arranged the first International Conference of TQM in K-12 education 'Best International Practices For TQM in Education' under the patronage of King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz and it was in the period 8-11 January 2011 with participants from modern countries who are advanced in education. (I11, 2011)

According to Participant I16, there is a department called the Comprehensive Evaluating Department, which was independent in the past. However, it has now been made a part of the TQMD to provide it with feedback, based on evaluation of the 'operating units', schools and teachers. He stated:

I used to work for the Comprehensive Evaluating Department in the last twelve years. Since the department became a part of TQMD three years ago, the standards have been changed to the maximum, the process of evaluating is different and the way we deal with the feedback has changed. The department now applies 'Evaluating of Institutional Performance' by using the 'Automated Balanced Score Card System' which is linked to a database of work standards and that provides feedback that allows the department to know where the strengths and the weaknesses are in the educational system. (I16, 2011)

In addition, he affirmed that one of the goals that TQMD is aiming for is customer satisfaction. With this in mind, a new call centre has been established to take calls from parents and listen to their claims or ideas about learning styles or anything else which will be taken into consideration to improve education in the country. He added that all of these goals serve the main goal, which is improving the general performance of all the departments in the ministry and the schools and identifying the extent of the ministry's achievements.

4.3. Category 3: Recent Trends

This category will highlight the efforts made by the ministry regarding improving the system of education in Saudi Arabia. These recent developments were introduced by the

ministry to resolve some of the problems identified in the system of education, such as activating decentralisation within the ministry, adding new features to the curricula and initiating some extracurricular activities.

Subcategory 1: Decentralisation

Nowadays, the ministry is trying to introduce some decentralisation at the level of reaching the operational units, schools, by giving authority to the schools. However this is a limited authority, subject to evaluating the school on several levels including the principals, the administrative staff of the school, teachers and students' annual attainment; only the more successful schools will have this autonomy. I32 stated:

The ministry is fighting centralisation now on many levels. It is evaluating the schools and taking into consideration some factors, such as facilities, if the school's staff is keeping the facilities clean and they keep the [need for] maintenance at a low level. The other factor is the evaluation of teachers' results by the principal. Evaluating the principal if he/she can deal with the problems that he/she may face and more. The result of all of the evaluation is that the school will be self-evaluated and will not be under the supervision of the ministry in this matter because they reached a high level, since supervision means continuous examination and failure prevention (I32, 2011)

Moreover, he revealed that the situation has changed in schools and educational departments as they now have certain authority that they can exercise. As an example, he highlighted that principals now have the authority to make administrative decision and even to suspend students, while they could not do so in the past:

The ministry is trying to activate decentralisation in schools and the local educational departments in the cities. The principal now can accept or refuse any holiday request or sick leave and he/she can deal with the problems that he/she might face with the teachers, parents and students. In the past I, as a principal, could not even suspend any of the students as a punishment, or any of the teachers. However, now it is one of my authorities and the annual evaluation for the staff of the school is included in my authorities too (I32, 2011)

Through the interviews with the staff of the ministry; the researcher was able to identify some of the developments regarding decentralisation. I24 stated that:

The ministry is planning to activate decentralisation as much as possible so the education departments will have some authorities to act without referring to the ministry in everything. Now it is partly activated on some levels such as the education departments in big regions in the country and some schools, by giving the managers in those departments and principals in those schools authority in matters such as teachers' holidays, the performance appraisal process and developing the facilities. (I24, 2011)

Subcategory 2: Curricula

Other quality initiatives included revision of curricula. Some school staff claimed that the new curricula have added some good features and made the teachers work harder and be more creative. I3 stated:

It is my job as a principal to attend some of the classes of my teachers and I have noticed that the new curricula have made the majority of the teachers work harder. I have noticed that the new curricula motivated the teachers to do their own research and motivated them to develop themselves and use new techniques in delivering the information in the curricula, not to mention the use of new technology, like using the internet, video clips on youtube, using the smart board and using bright colours to get the students' attention. (I3, 2011)

Moreover, he stated that teachers now are practising a new activity, which is arranging some field trips supervised by the school and the education department. These trips take place at weekends so they do not interfere with regular classes:

Some of the teachers have now started to arrange some field trips for the students under the supervision of the school and the educational department. The reason behind this new activity is that the new curriculum has more pictures in it than before and the students need to see some of these pictures for themselves. These field trips take place at the weekends so they do not affect the students' academic achievements. (I3, 2011)

Participant I38 commented that the new curriculum made his job easier regarding explaining subject-matter to the students with pictures, since the new curriculum text-book has more pictures in it than before:

I have been a teacher for nine years now and I moved between three different schools in three different major cities. In the past, when we had the old curriculum there were more words than pictures within the pages of the students' book. This affected the progress of the students because they had to study on only in words in some of the lessons and they had to imagine the shapes by themselves. Nowadays, with the new curriculum there are pictures in every lesson and in every unit in all books. This has made my job easier as a teacher as I do not have to make them imagine the pictures or even print something out from the internet. In addition, this encourages me to arrange some field trips to some places where I can explain practically and show the students some fossils and different types of rocks to feel and touch the geological life by themselves (I38, 2011)

He added that his school had initiated an additional activity, which was starting scientific clubs for the students and then arranging competitions for the students supervised by the teachers of the scientific subjects, who were more qualified to supervise them:

To make the students more interested in the school and what it provides the educational department arranges some activities such as scientific competitions in different types of subjects. To do that, the school needed to create scientific clubs and art clubs so [students] can develop their talents so they can compete one day on the educational level. I supervised one competition that was arranged between the students as individuals on the school's level so we can team up the first five winners and make a team that will represent the school in the future. Furthermore, there are other activities which are extracurricular activities where the students play and get out of the studying mood so they can come back to the school at the beginning of the week refreshed. (I38, 2011)

Nevertheless, curriculum reform was not without problems. Participant I7 raised issue regarding the training on the new curricula; he commented that the teachers are having difficulty

in teaching them to the students because of the time gap between launching the new curricula and training the teachers on them:

Most of the teachers are facing a problem with the new curriculum since these curricula are new to them. The ministry is supposed to introduce the new curricula to the teachers before launching them in the educational department which informs the schools of these curricula. The ministry launched the new curricula in the schools without giving the teachers training programmes in this regard and they had to study them on their own while they were teaching them to the students. They cannot deliver the information within these new curricula to the students properly as the teachers themselves have only just studied it and they could miss some information which could affect the students' attainment (I7, 2011)

He also made suggestions to the ministry regarding the timing of training programmes, and when the ministry should inform the teachers about the new curricula:

The training programmes should take place in the summer break, which is three months, in the educational departments, because they do not close like the schools. In addition, the ministry should introduce the new curricula at the end of the educational year so the teachers can prepare themselves to enter the training programmes in the summer break. These programmes should take a long time from the ministry and a lot of effort because of the big number of the teachers around the country (I7, 2011)

Teachers also expressed their ideas on how to generate better outputs of the education system in the country. A common view was that to accomplish this mission, the ministry needs to study the labour market. I5 believed that the education outputs should meet the needs of the labour market and he made suggestions to meet this expectation, such as starting to provide workshops for the students regarding the needs of the labour market, whether the students are going to enter the universities or not:

Students should be aware of the labour market and its needs. After they leave K-12 stages, not all of them will be accepted in universities. Thus, they should be prepared for other options by giving them workshops about several things such as electronics, electricity, or first aid and then they will

understand the basic ideas about them and when they see the complicated systems in these areas they will understand them. And for the others who will have an opportunity to get into college, they will know which major they should apply to according to the labour market's needs. The education system in Saudi Arabia should focus on what students are interested in and then concentrate on these subjects by giving them more and advanced information to enhance their knowledge in this area and build their self-esteem (I5, 2011)

He added that some of the students already know what they want to be and which field they will be entering. However, as yet, the educational system in the country does not provide summer courses to help them in choosing careers and future courses of study.

Some of my students have their own plans for their future and they are working on achieving their goals, which is a good thing. They go to public libraries requesting more information in their fields by reading more and in the summer they work in companies in that work in the same field. All of this is great and I support them in every possible way but all of this as well is by their personal efforts. The educational system does not help by offering work opportunities such as summer courses or by giving workshops in some subjects so all the students will gain more educational benefits. (I5, 2011)

However, I14 highlighted, based on 15 years teaching experience, that it is not easy to control the quality of education outputs, as the input is not controlled:

I have learned in all these years that it is really hard to control the output's quality because the input's quality is hard to be controlled. The reason behind this is that the inputs are students, human beings, with different levels of skills and different levels of abilities. Some of them are incredibly clever and others are less clever. But my colleagues and I are trying to put more effort into teaching techniques so we can increase the quality level for the students. (I14, 2011)

He added that since the educational system does not provide summer programmes, teachers give lessons to the students as personal efforts, because students ask them about the majors at the universities and which one should they choose:

Some of the students come to me or the other teachers asking them for help in regard to the major that they should study. In addition, as a personal effort from me and my colleagues, we started to teach the students about the labour market and the options that students have when they graduate from the school. These classes take place at the beginning of the educational year so they can decide early and focus on some subjects more than usual. Then, after they learn and before choosing which subject they will take in the future, they read more about it and come to me and the other teachers to ask about books in this regard. (I14, 2011)

Participant I39 revealed the need to recognise and foster the teachers of all students, including those of less academically-minded students:

I worked as a teacher for eight years then I moved to one of the educational department as a member then I came back to schools as a principal three years ago. I have met some of the students who are not interested in studying most of the curricula because they are more interested in vocational education and anything made by hand, whether it is scientific or art. They have talent but they do not like to study and these talents need to be burnished to come to the surface. Because these are natural talents but they need to be guided in the right way and made useful. While some of the other students are interested in one subject such as mathematics and they are brilliant at it but they are not at the other subjects. In addition, they have to study other subjects to make a progress and move to the next stage but [schools] are killing [students'] talents by not focusing on them (I39, 2011)

He also suggested that such students need particular attention and the ministry or the educational department should provide special classes and workshops for them so they can develop their skills and talents:

From my point of view, I think the students with these special abilities in some subjects do not need a new curriculum, they need to be focused on by the educational department and the school to make them get better in what they are good at, whether it is scientific or in vocational work. The students with scientific talents need special classes and advanced lectures in their subjects and more educational materials to qualify them for the future that they will

be facing and if the universities knew about these classes they would send talent explorers to the schools to recruit them and give them scholarships. While the students with other talents such as vocational talents need workshops to improve them and develop their talents so the vocational institutions will recruit them in the near future. (I39, 2011)

A positive sign was that the ministry has formed an advisory council for the teachers from every education department, to get them involved in decision making, which may offer an opportunity for such views to be debated and inform future action.

In regard to improving teachers' quality, the ministry has taken some big steps, as noted by I24. He suggested that the ministry is sending excellent teachers to elementary schools because this stage is considered the foundation of education. In addition, he claimed that the ministry has set up an annual award for excellence, which is intended to give teachers motivation to compete and give of their best:

The ministry is sending excellent teachers to the elementary schools as they are the base for the students in education, based on their creativity in teaching techniques and their evaluation results. In addition, to motivate the teachers to give their best and push them to the limits, the ministry has set up an annual excellence award that the teachers will compete to be awarded. (I24, 2011)

He also added that the ministry is pushing the recruiting standards of teachers higher than before, in coordination with the National Centre for Assessment in Higher Education. The ministry also is raising the teachers' qualifications before and after recruitment.

Furthermore, I12 stated that:

The quality of teacher preparation has been raised through coordination with the Saudi Universities regarding their curricula and the admission standards in the colleges that qualify their students to be teachers and by forming a standing committee with the Ministry of Higher Education. (I12, 2011)

I12, as a member of a curriculum development committee, stated that new curricula for Mathematics and Science have been applied in all stages of education and the teachers are taking training programmes on these new curricula:

The teachers are now in training on the new curricula so they can be familiar with them and can deliver them to the students properly. Since the new curricula were applied at the beginning of the year; the ministry did not have time to set up the training programmes at the right time because the teachers were on the summer break, but they are taking the programmes gradually. (I12, 2011)

According to the Facilities Department in the ministry, the ministry received 2100 new school building approved projects over the last two years, an average of four buildings a day. I4 highlighted that:

The ministry has refurbished and brought up to standard over four thousand school buildings in the past three years. In addition, it is in a stage of designing new model schools with new technologies such as computer laboratories with high definition projectors and smart boards. (I4, 2011)

As stated by some of the staff, the ministry is entering a new stage in transforming its working methods, whereby the majority of its transactions will be done electronically. It will be establishing a number of public companies to help the ministry to achieve this, as well as developments in other fields such as schools transport and catering.

I22, who works in the technical support at the ministry, stated that:

Information Technology plays an important role in the ministry, which has been recently activated. Nowadays, the majority of transactions are done electronically. The ministry has launched two important systems, which are Noor and Faris. Noor is a system which is providing more than 2700 services to more than ten million users all around the country online, which allows students and their parents to check the performance and the services at the schools. Moreover, it allows the parents to register their children in elementary and secondary schools with no need to go in person to the school. The teachers and the management of the schools are using the system to enter the students' grades in the students' files. Faris is applied in the ministry, which is for human, financial and administrative resources. (I22, 2011)

Whilst interviewees acknowledged that changes were being made to address concerns about education quality, their comments also highlighted ongoing problems that could undermine the new initiative. These are addressed in the next section.

Research Question 3. How do national and organisational culture affect the implementation of Total Quality Management in the public education system Saudi Arabia?

4.4. Category 4: Cultural factors affecting Total Quality Management implementation

This category will explain the obstacles facing the implementation of Total Quality Management in the education system in Saudi Arabia. They include issues such as training, lack of integrated vision, resistance to change and inadequate participation of staff whether they are teachers, members of the educational departments or principals.

Subcategory 1: Training

Participant I11 stated that spreading the TQM culture is an ‘on-going process’ because of the large area of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He mentioned that no matter how many conferences and workshops were arranged, it would not be enough because of the large population of the staff, including teachers in all cities and villages.

I think that it will take a long time to spread the culture of TQM in Saudi Arabia and the ministry needs to arrange more conferences and more workshops. These conferences and workshops can be considered as activities for the members of the ministry. By the members of the ministry I mean not just the ministry employees that work at the quarters head in Riyadh; I mean all of the employees at all levels in all the cities around the kingdom. Considering that there are hundreds of thousands of employees in total distributed all around the country; this process will consume time and it could be years. (I11, 2011)

Participant I8 agreed on the previous point and he emphasised that all the members of the Ministry of Education need lectures and workshops to introduce them to TQM. He claimed that he had been introduced to TQM by friends who did not work for the ministry and that he needed to be introduced to TQM by the ministry by attending lectures in this regard:

I have been working for the ministry for eight years and three years in the current position and I have heard about Total Quality Management from my friends who are not members of the ministry and they told me about it briefly. From my point of view employees of the ministry need to know more about TQM and its principles and more importantly its aims and objectives. To achieve that, we need lectures regarding TQM or workshops to learn more about it. (I8, 2011)

Through the interviews, some issues were raised regarding training programmes. Some of the employees claimed that there are no training programmes that define TQM, introduce its principles and aims and the way to apply it in schools. Participant I31 highlighted that:

There are no training programmes on TQM and how to apply it in our work in the school. (I31, 2011)

Even when training was provided, the interviewee claimed that employees of the ministry also face difficulties of access to those programmes. He stated that not all the employees have access to the training programmes arranged by the ministry, as they live in cities and villages far from the capital city and only the employees who live in the capital have access

I was invited to this seminar because I live in the capital; if I was living in a village far from the capital, I would never have known about it. (I31, 2011)

In addition, he declared that another issue was the lack of expertise of trainers, as they were not qualified to train other employees, since they had only one week of training programmes regarding TQM before they started to train others:

There was a seminar and it was just to explain TQM for one week and the one who was directing the seminar had [only] one week of training as well, so he was not an expert in TQM. How can a beginner in TQM give seminars to explain it and he does not know what it is in the first place? So it was useless. (I31, 2011)

Participant I36 supported this claim when he reported that he had received training about total quality management but it was for a short time and then he was asked to train other employees, although he was not qualified enough to do so. Furthermore, he claimed that he gained a certificate only for attending a training programme and it did not certify competence:

I was invited to a training programme about total quality management in the Intercontinental Hotel arranged by the Ministry of Education for five days. I learnt a little bit about TQM as a useful tool in management and as I am a member of an educational department, I needed this training programme because the ministry is aiming to apply TQM in the educational sector. I gained a certificate after the programme proving that I attended. After that, I was asked to train other members of the ministry and members of my educational department, since I had received a training programme in this regard. This demand of the ministry to train others was surprisingly shocking, because I am not qualified and I do not have enough knowledge to do so. I apologised and I told the person who asked me my reasons and he said that he needed me to teach the other members what I had learnt already from that programme, which was not enough for the other members to learn what TQM is and its aims and principles so they can apply it or even help to apply it (I36, 2011)

He also stated that these seminars would not help in the TQM implementation process as the idea is not delivered completely to the employees and they do not understand what their roles are in this process:

The educational department arranged some courses, actually they were seminars, regarding total quality management and I was in charge of giving these courses to the members of the educational department. I had to prepare some slides about TQM and its definitions, principles and its aims and the ministry's aim and what it is intended to apply, all by myself. In addition, since I was the one who prepared the seminars' curriculum, there, the employees did not receive any certificates and they had no bonus at the end of the year. Moreover, at the end of every training course, the members of the educational department do not know what their part of applying TQM is, because I have never taught them that, as I do not know what my part is in this implementation. In other words, there are no benefits of these courses as long as there are no qualified trainers to give those programmes to the employees or to the teachers in the operational units. (I36, 2011)

He reported that the employees that he trained were in turn asked to train principals and teachers, although they were not qualified to, especially as they had been trained by an unqualified trainer (himself):

The problem is that those members of the educational department that I have trained are supposed to train principals and teachers in the schools related to this educational department. If they do not know what they are supposed to do to apply TQM in the educational sector; how are they going to train those teachers and principals who are the base of teaching and who are the ones who contact with the students directly? Besides, if I am not qualified enough to train the members of the educational department, how can they be qualified enough to train others? (I36, 2011)

Moreover, he suggested that another issue undermining training interviews is that the selection process for training programmes, as there are no standards for that. He claimed that the decision is based on the principals' nominations and there is no proper training need assessment:

There are other training programmes that I can deliver to other members of the educational department and to teachers and principals because they have curriculums, but the problem is in choosing who take these programmes. Choosing the trainees is tricky as there are no standards in choosing who gets those programmes and who does not. It is all about the principals, not paying attention to who needs or deserves a training programme or not. Some of the teachers need these programmes to improve their work at their schools and some of them need those programmes to improve their teaching skills, as they are new teachers. (I36, 2011)

Subcategory 2: Lack of integrated vision

Through the interviews, the teachers revealed other obstacles facing them in the school regarding providing a better education and a better educational environment for the students, such as weak community partnership. Participant I27 indicated that parents are not playing a positive role in raising their children along with the school. He stated that their idea of the role of the school is to teach their children everything including manners:

As a teacher; I moved to four cities in the past nine years and I have taught two different stages, intermediate and high school. I noticed the same thing

in all of the four cities, which is the idea of the role of the school from the community's point of view. They believe that the school has to do everything in raising their children. They think that the teacher should teach students the curriculum, manners and what should they believe. They think that their role ends at driving them to school. The community is not playing a positive role with the school in raising the students. (I27, 2011)

Sometimes there is a lack of cooperation from the parents as in terms of visiting the school to discuss students' progress when the school's staff ask them to, and the interviewee claimed that the students are the victims of this behaviour

...And sometimes the school management call the parents asking them to come to the school so they can discuss the student's situation, whether the case is about the student's educational level or if there is any behavioural problem and the parents refuse to come. Some of the parents make excuses and they promise to come but they never do, and sometimes they just tell the school's management that it is the school's problem and they do not come and the victim in this process (I27, 2011)

Conversely, he suggested that the school sometimes is not open to the society and does not share the parents' ideas regarding the students' education:

...And sometimes, the school is not open to the community so the parents can get involved and share their ideas with the school. The only thing that the parents share is their child's medical condition if they have problems (I27, 2011)

He also highlighted that sometimes the teachers are not cooperative with the parents regarding the attainment of their children when they come to ask about it:

Sometimes the teachers do not cooperate with the parents when they come to ask about their children's attainment at the school and they (the teachers) do not share anything with the parents regarding the students. (I27, 2011)

Some of the interviewees, when they were asked about the current curricula, stated that the curricula are weak. Others declared that the curricula need some modifications so they can touch the students' lives and then they will become closer to their understanding accordingly.

Some interviewees stated that the curricula are not too bad, but this does not apply to all stages/levels. For example, participant I14 stated that there has been a lack of teachers' participation in setting the new curricula and he felt that the ministry should take their opinions into consideration:

From my point of view, the ministry should take the teachers' and principals' opinions into consideration when the ministry is making changes in the curriculum. I have been making recommendations regarding these changes to the principal and he conveyed them to the superintendents, but they have been ignoring them for a few years now (I14, 2011)

Through the interviews another type of obstacle appeared that faces the implementation of Total Quality Management in the Ministry of Education, which is the changes that need to be made to improve the level of quality in Saudi education. Some of the TQMD employees highlighted that there are three things that should be in harmony to achieve a high level of quality. I2 stated:

The solution of all the problems in the ministry regarding quality in education is in the complementarity of three things which are OD, ID and FD. The first one is Organisational Development, which means if the staff of a unit is trying to develop the teaching style, there are some other factors that will prevent this development. For example, if the teachers in a school were trying to apply 'cooperative learning' to improve the standard of the students and the school in relation to this wants to adopt new teaching strategies, there is a circulated note dictating 'the exams should be done in the traditional way' which is paper and pencil. So if the work is developed but the policies are not, there is a problem. (I2, 2011)

I2 declared that if the faculty showed resistance to change and do not follow the new policy that the ministry is adopting, the ministry's work in developing the instructional design and organisational development will be for nothing:

Instructional Design concerns developing the teaching materials, learning environment and developing a method of solving problems in the system. If ID does not complement OD there will be a gap in the system that cannot be filled. The last one is Faculty Development. If the ministry succeeded in the

previous two factors but the faculty resist the changes and fight to follow old-fashioned methods, the effort of the ministry would be for nothing and the performance would never improve. Hence, this indicates that the process of changes, developments, and solutions is not carried out according to an integrative vision, it is just bits and pieces, which means that the ministry is working by the reactions to every action it takes. (I2, 2011)

One of the difficulties faced in implementing an integrated vision was resistance to change, as the next subcategory highlights.

Subcategory 3: Resistance to change

For every action there is an opposite reaction. This applies to the situation in education in the Saudi Arabia. The changes that the ministry is trying to make in education are facing resistance from different levels in the society.

According to I40, there is some resistance to change coming from some school principals, with regard to teaching methods and techniques because of their age and thinking that old-fashioned methods are the best:

I have worked for the ministry for sixteen years now as a teacher at the beginning and I have been working as a manager of an educational department for seven years now. The ministry is trying to apply some changes and move to the next level and start an educational revolution in the country. It has equipped some schools in several major cities such as Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam with the latest technologies in the educational field. It has set these schools up with smart boards, latest computers, and new High Definition projectors. It is also trying to phase out the examinations for the primary stages and introduce the evaluation of the students and their educational progress. From my point of view, some of the school principals are fighting these changes due to their age. Most of the principals are old and they like to do everything in the school with the old fashioned methods, thinking that it is always the best (I40, 2011)

He added that the ministry is facing a challenge in applying changes within the operating units when the principals resisting these changes and holding the progress of the ministry back:

Those principals sometimes force the teachers at their schools to follow the old fashioned tests and according to these examinations' results they write in the evaluation forms, so if there any observer comes from the educational department, he will only see these forms and not the examination papers. It is a major challenge for the ministry and for the educational departments to apply these changes and move forward while there are people who are resisting and holding the progress back. (I40, 2011)

Moreover, the ministry and schools face opposition to change efforts from parents, as illustrated in reactions to curriculum reform. The society in Saudi Arabia is resisting these changes because of the strong culture. I33 argued that the change in the current curriculum that the ministry is planning to apply is facing resistance from the society because of the strong culture, as people believe that the values of the previous generation should be transmitted without change and see no room for argument.

Culture has a strong effect on developing the curriculum, which is resisting any new ideas since it is very conservative. In addition, the society rejects any changes and developments, especially changes and developments that come from Western countries. The reason behind that is that people believe that any new changes and development to the system of the curriculum will affect the message that it delivers relatively. People see the current curriculum as a tool for delivering the values of the previous generations and [they think] that heritage should be kept and delivered as it is. These beliefs conflict with the orientation of building and designing the curriculum, which should be an educational environment where the student's character can be built and interact with its variables and provide all the resources so the student is a human in the first place and can develop thinking skills in the future. (I33, 2011)

Moreover, participant I20 stated that some parents want their children to become exactly the same as they are and learn the same lessons that they learnt:

While the parents still have the old ideas regarding schools, teachers, and the learning methods; they want their children to learn in the same way that they did, which is considered old since it is from another generation and another

period of time. They had the basics in everything since Saudi Arabia was still young and they did not have the proper learning resources. (I20, 2011)

The participant highlighted the obstacle in the path of change, coming from parents' confusion in that they want better education, yet with the same curricula they know:

We are facing a problem from the parents of the students, which is that they demand a better educational level for their children and at the same time want the curricula to be the same but change the teaching methods and this cannot be achieved if the curricula remain the same. The reason I am saying this is that whatever change we make in the teaching methods and facilities, if the curriculum is the same, the learning level will never be developed. 'There is no boring subject, there are only boring teachers' does not apply here. (I20, 2011)

Participant I9 agreed in this regard and stated that sometimes the parents raise their children with some ideas that can be considered as principles about schools, teaching and the education system in general:

Some of the students have ideas about the teachers and education that they gained from their parents. Their parents grew these ideas in their brains and since they love their parents, the students want to be like their ancestors in every possible way. One of these ideas that the whatever the teacher says is right and, no matter what, the student has no right to argue and he/she has to believe their teachers. While there is another idea that you have the absolute power to argue with the teacher on everything the students do not like. This impact on education is from the strong culture and from society's information about the education system (I9, 2011)

Subcategory 4: Inadequate participation of staff

This section will discuss the role of teachers, principals and students' parents in some issues in education in Saudi Arabia. Such issues include designing the curriculum, learning prototypes and any type of participation regarding the teaching policies in the ministry, the education departments and the operational units, schools.

The majority of the teachers and principals in schools claimed to be facing problems with the curriculum, because as they declared there is centralisation in preparation of the curricula for all subjects. I26 explained:

I have faced a problem with the curriculum for the last eight years. Many teachers among colleagues have the same problem, which is that when the ministry changes the curricula they do that without giving us advance notice. We need to study the new curriculum so we can deliver the contents of these books in hand. (I26, 2011)

Moreover, criticised the ministry for eliciting not taking the teachers' points of view on the new curricular, since the teachers are the ones who can see if the curriculum is suitable for the students' age and stage or not:

Moreover, the majority of the teachers and principals cannot participate, as a matter of fact all of them cannot participate in preparing the new curriculum as they see it, although they are the people who are facing the students and see the faults in the curricula and if they are suitable for the students' stage and age or not. Therefore, there is centralisation in making and preparing the curriculum because no one can share their opinions in this regard (I26, 2011)

After the interviewee finished his points about the curriculum from his perspective, he made some suggestions that he believed would improve the situation. He believed that teachers' should be involved in designing the learning prototypes.

Teachers should be involved in designing and choosing the learning prototype, which is a prototype for the changes in the curriculum in the future, for many reasons. One of the reasons is that the teachers are the people who can see the response from the students to the materials in curriculum. The other reason is that there is an annual evaluation of the teachers and whether they can deliver the new materials. Moreover, they are the ones who can tell if the students can gain benefits from the new or the edited ideas in the curriculum. (I26, 2011)

However, he believed that none of the suggestions made by parents, students, or teachers reach the ministry or the educational department, because principals do not forward them and the reason behind that was disillusion with lack of response from the ministry:

The suggestions of the students, teachers, and the parents do not reach the educational department or the ministry. The reason behind this is that the principals have informed the educational department in the annual meeting for the principals of the schools in the area and to the Ministry of Education too, but eventually they lost hope. Because the ministry and the educational department are just ignoring these suggestions as if they never existed. After the principals saw that the educational department and the ministry are not responding to these suggestions, they started to act the same and ignore these suggestions from the parents, students and teachers (I26, 2011)

According to I34, a more student-centred approach is needed, as in the modern era, students have resources available to them other than teachers, and can be more active learners. He noted that students used only to receive information from the teachers and that was their only role in education, but, nowadays it is different, as they have other resources of information and learning:

Students play a big role now in the modern education. In the past, they could not share any information with their teachers because they did not have any, but now it is different. They are encouraged to work together as teams and they are motivated to go to other learning resources in libraries and use the internet to learn more. All of this is because of the new curriculum and the new policies of education. (I34, 2011)

He added a comparison between the old way of teaching and the new generation of students and how they differ from thirty years ago. Furthermore, he claimed that students are now not content to be passive recipients of information and expect to participate actively. They will object and discuss any point that they are not convinced by:

The students nowadays object to the information delivered by the teacher because they have other learning resources. Some of them discovered small mistakes in the books given to them by the ministry that the teachers sometimes do not pay attention to. It is a different era of education that the

ministry and the educational department should keep up with. The teachers thirty years ago used to be nonnegotiable and their information was undoubtable because of the strong culture, but now it is different. If the students are not convinced by the information given by the teacher; they discuss it and they justify their point of view, which is something that no one could do in thirty years ago. (I34, 2011)

Similarly, I20 claimed that change is coming from the society itself, not from the parents but from the students. He stated that students' thinking has changed and it is different from few years ago because of the external learning resources they have:

I have been a teacher for thirteen years now, and I can see that the students' way of thinking is different and changing. This change is attributed to the learning resources outside the school. Since the internet has entered the country a few years ago and now smart mobiles and computer tablets with applications, the students have started to change the way they think and they want the change in their schools, such as learning methods, teaching methods and curriculums. (I20, 2011)

4.5. Summary:

This chapter presented the findings of this study. It analysed the data gathered into four main categories. The first category was about the problems with the education quality management in Saudi Arabia. This category is divided into four main subcategories. There are problems with the HR practices in the educational system in the Ministry of Education which are affecting the education quality relatively. One of the major issues facing the performance appraisal system is its accuracy, which is affected by the culture of the rater and its relation to the ratee. The findings of this study illustrate that personal and tribal relationships affect the rating scores given by the appraiser. It has been shown that if the ratee has a relationship with the rater on a personal level, he/she will get a high score and sometimes a full mark. Then, the issues with the training system were reviewed including the selection of the trainees and the contents of the training programmes. In addition, the criteria and process applied in the ministry to select candidates for training programme are vague. Again, personal and tribal relationships affect this process. According to the participants, the contents of training programmes provided by the ministry are not valuable enough. Others suggested that some of the trainers are not qualified to train employees, whether the programmes are for teaching skills or for TQM. They

declared that trainers are not trained adequately so they can spread the culture of TQM, which is one of the aims of Total Quality Management Department. There was another problem facing the awarding and punishment system, which is that the standards are inconsistent. The findings of this study show that there are no clear standards of awarding or punishment in the education system in the ministry. After that, the findings illustrate the problems with the education quality which is related to the school resources. According to the findings, there is inconsistent provision from the ministry and there are burdens on teachers. The interviewees claim that the Ministry does not treat all schools in the same way. The last two subcategories were about the problem with the curriculum and the centralisation in the system. Participants suggested that some of the subjects' curricula are not effective while others do not even have curricula. The findings of this research show that centralisation affects the quality of education system in Saudi Arabia on several levels. It appeared that the level of participation is low when it comes to designing and preparing new curricula, as it is designed without the teachers' opinions while they are the ones who are touching the classrooms' life. Some principals claim that they do not have any authority in their schools and they have to report to the educational departments with their problems and not to try to solve them by themselves. The findings of this study illustrate that centralisation is limiting the authorities of conducting any extracurricular activities in schools if they are not under the ministry's umbrella.

The second category was about the role of Total Quality Management Department in the Ministry, and in improving the quality of the education system. The main aim of the TQMD is to spread the culture of TQM in the ministry at all levels so it can be implemented properly. The TQMD holds workshops and arranges conferences in order to define and introduces TQM to staff as new activities to embed it in the culture of education. In addition, the ministry arranged the first international conference of TQM in 2011. After that, the third category reported the recent achievements made by the Ministry of Education, including reducing the centralisation in the system on several levels, and the developments applied to the curricula. The findings show that there are new features added to the known curricula. The last category was about the obstacles facing the implementation of TQM in the educational system in Saudi Arabia. According to the participants, some of those obstacles resulted from the problems in the HR practices mentioned earlier, such as centralisation and training, and some of those obstacles are results of the strong culture and its resistance to change and the weak parent-school relationship.

However, some of the findings were unique and could not be linked to the literature of TQM nor HR practices. For example, the participants revealed that if the principals had personal problems with some of the teachers, they [principals] would give the teachers high scores in their performance appraisal rating, since moving to another school requires a high rating.

5. Chapter Five: Discussion and Interpretation

5.1. Introduction

This chapter will discuss the study's findings in comparison to the related literature. In so doing, it will answer the research questions mentioned in the beginning of the study. Every question will be answered separately with reference to the relevant categories of the data. The first research question will be answered by discussing the first category, challenges to education quality. Then, the second and the third categories (role of the TQMD and recent trends) will be linked to the literature in order to answer the second research question. Finally, the third research question will be answered by discussing the fourth category in the data analysis, obstacles to TQM implementation.

5.2. Research Question 1. What are the current challenges to education quality in Saudi Arabia?

This question was addressed via the first category of the reported findings. This category contains four main subcategories. First of all, it will discuss the issues regarding the performance appraisal system in the ministry, training programmes and inconsistent standards, as three issues affecting the quality of teachers. Then, the second subcategory addresses issues regarding the school resources and the burden on teachers. After that, the third subcategory will highlight the issues related to the curriculum and the new curricula. Finally, the last subcategory will discuss the problems caused by centralisation in the Ministry of Education.

Subcategory 1: Challenges Facing Teacher

Theme 1: Performance Appraisal

This theme will view the problems facing the performance appraisal system in the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia. These problems affect the accuracy of the results of the evaluation process of the staff of the ministry, whether they are teachers, principals, members of educational departments or staff of the ministry's headquarters.

The majority of the interviewees claimed that the performance appraisal system conducted by the ministry lacks accuracy. In particular, the majority of the participating teachers claimed that the evaluation conducted by their principals is based on tribal relations and personal relationships rather than being based on the classroom social interaction and discipline of the teachers. In addition, they revealed that a teacher will get a full mark in his rating if he enjoys good relations with the principal. Participant I6 stated that

The principal's evaluation is supposed to be based on the classroom discipline and the classroom social interaction but it is not. It is based on the personal relations with the principal and tribal relations as well. This means that if the teacher is from the same tribe as the principal he will have the perfect grade, that is 100%, and if he knows the principal on a personal level he will have the same grade. (I6, 2011)

In the same vein, I15 emphasised the impact of the strong culture on the performance appraisal results. He added that tribal relationship gave him a 100% in his rating in the annual evaluation because the principal was his relative and if did not give him that it would be considered as shameful:

There is another performance evaluation form filled by the principal of the school. In all those thirteen years and those five schools I worked with five principals and I got excellent in all of my evaluation ratings except on one of them I got 'very good', and once I got 100% as a total score in my rating result because the principal was my relative. He was from the same tribe that I belong to, and it would be considered as shameful if he did not give me an excellent rating (I15, 2011)

In this situation, some of the interviewees declared that a teacher who works hard will not necessarily get a good position or bonus; again, they stated that cultural factors play an important role in promotions and selection for training programmes. They suggested that if a teacher has some connections in the ministry, he could get promoted even if he is not working hard to deserve this promotion. Interviewees stated that some of their colleagues worked very hard but they remained in the same position because of the impact of the strong culture. Conversely, other employees gained promotions that they did not deserve and they moved to higher position, due to strong connections in the ministry. This was perceived as unfair when some other teachers work very hard to but do not get any promotion, but only the annual

increment, even when their annual evaluations are almost perfect and some of them get full marks.

These findings of the study correspond with what Branine and Pollard (2010) stated, that in the Arab society, authority and power determine individuals' role and have powerful implications for the relations between subordinates and leaders. It is all about who you are, no matter how much you know. Furthermore, they suggest that the source of status and power can be from the name of the degree held, relationship with the manager of the firm, the organisation's position, relationship of an individual with the state apparatus, the tribe and the family (Branine and Pollard, 2010).

Through the interviews, it was highlighted that principals give teachers high ratings in their performance appraisal for a variety of reasons. The majority of the interviewees agreed that since moving from one school to another requires a high rating in the annual performance evaluation, some principals help teachers by giving them a high rating to facilitate their transfer application. Conversely, in some cases, if principals have personal problems with some teachers they will give those teachers high grades in their performance appraisal to allow those teachers to move from their schools to others, since principals have no authority to apply penalties on those teachers.

The findings of this research show that there is another problem that the staff of the schools are facing, which is that when the appraiser assigned by the Department of General Management or the educational department comes to the school he does not evaluate them properly. They claimed that the rater does not see several teachers, but grades them by assuming that all have the same faults as whoever he observed. According to participant I19:

Every year an observer comes to the school to evaluate the principal, administrative staff and the teachers. The problem is that when he find a fault in a teacher he would attribute the same fault to three or four other teachers because he would not be bothered to attend the other teachers' classes; he will just fill their form with the same fault and the same evaluation. (I19, 2011)

Moreover, he recounted his own experience with one of the evaluators from the educational department who came to the school once a year, to illustrate this laxity:

A long time ago, when I was a teacher, a member of the educational department came to the school and since I was a beginner I was trying to impress the principal so he would give me a good rating at the end of the year. The external evaluator should have attended one or two of my classes and then he could judge me, but I was surprised that he left without attending any class and I thought that it was a long process and he might need more time and he would come the next day. I asked one of my colleagues if the evaluator had attended his class; he answered me saying that he had not and he had finished with the school. My colleague told me that he never attended all the teachers' class, he attended a few of them and he evaluated the others on this basis. When the results came I had 'very good' as my score [although] I was working more than all of my colleagues. Over time I found out that he had attended one of the lazy teachers' classes and he applied the same score to three other teachers, and I was one of them. (I19, 2011)

These findings correspond with Rudner (1992) regarding stereotyping. The author suggests that stereotyping is where impressions regarding the whole group change the impression regarding a member of this group. Moreover, these findings agree with the findings of Cook's (1995) study, in which 83% of the interviewed appraisers declared that being in a bad or a good mood changed their performance evaluations.

Through the interviews, the majority of the participants declared that one of the reasons that they believe that the performance appraisal is not accurate is that most of the employees, whether they are teachers, principals, members of educational departments or staff of the ministry, have high ratings in their evaluation results. Participant I29 pointed out that he had never heard of any teacher getting 'Unsatisfactory' in his performance result rating. He suggested that 91% of the teachers got 'excellent' in their ratings and realistically, it is unlikely that all teachers in the country deserve such a rating. If grades are awarded arbitrarily or for spurious reasons, appraisal becomes meaningless:

In the past thirty one years; I have never heard of anyone getting 'Unsatisfactory' in his performance appraisal result, except two. It does not make sense that all teachers in Saudi Arabia are excellent teachers. In the past few years, 91% of the teachers got 'excellent' in their results, which is a

big number if we consider that the total number of teachers, is almost half a million. (I29, 2011)

This finding may be explained by Randell's (1994) claim that only a few appraisers receive training programmes in how to perform their duties. Moreover, McGregor (1957) suggests that managers are unwilling to make negative judgement regarding performance of individuals because it could be de-motivating, leading to employee accusations of lack of managerial support and contributing to poor performance.

Theme 2: Training

This theme will view issues related to training programmes regarding teaching skills. It will illustrate the problems facing employees in participating in training programmes. In addition, it will discuss the factors determining of who participates and who does not. Moreover, this theme will demonstrate the impact of the strong culture of Saudi Arabia on the selection process.

The findings of this research show that the majority of the employees of the Ministry of Education were not satisfied with the training programmes provided by the ministry. They stated that the management did not take sufficient action regarding sending the employees to training programmes to improve their skills and overcome their weaknesses discovered by the results of the performance appraisal. Participant I31 reported that when he received a low rating in his performance appraisal results, he did not receive any training to improve his skills in areas of weaknesses, and he felt unsupported in this respect.

If I get a bad rating in the annual performance appraisal; that means that I have some weaknesses in my skills and performance that need to be improved. This can only be improved by letting me know what and where they are, which they do, and by sending me to training programme for these weaknesses. My manager is expecting me to do better next year by my own effort and he will not take any action in this regard. (I31, 2011)

This finding shows the teacher's desire for feedback and help to improve his performance, consistent with Fedor's (1991) claim that feedback and employee development is the purpose of a PA system. Other scholars add more purposes for the performance appraisal system, such as achieving cultural change, controlling and motivating employees, determining promotion, allocating financial rewards, succession planning, providing career counselling, identifying

training and development needs, and defining and clarifying performance (Bowles and Coates, 1993 and IRS; 1994,1999, cited by Redman, 2006). However, the comments made by interviewees suggested PA was not used to achieve any of those purposes.

Participant I36 revealed principals' nomination methods for the teachers to participate in training programmes and suggested that tribal and personal relations play a significant role:

Some of the principals choose who gets this training programme randomly and some of them choose according to personal reasons such as if the teacher is a relative or if he is a close friend to him outside the school and some of them choose the teacher just because he is his neighbour. (I36, 2011)

Another problem raised by I13 was lack of transparency in the selection process at ministry level, resulting in training being offered to the favoured few, while others have no such opportunity.

I think if the teacher or the employee in general has no connections in the ministry he/she will not have a training programme in or out of the ministry, as there are some training programmes in the ministry and there are training programmes abroad. The ministry top management keeps the other members in the dark and they do not announce these programmes before they launch it. They tell the closest members and middle managers and choose who goes to these programmes then they invite the public to apply and when the public apply for them they say that they had enough and the programmes are full now and they have to wait for another year (I13, 2011)

These results show that the provision of training programmes in the ministry is not based on the needs and abilities of the individuals, whether they are principals, teachers, or members of educational departments. This corresponds with what Metcalfe (2006) suggests, that training and development opportunities are not based on the abilities of the individuals, because they are based on family networks and individual relations.

Theme 3: Inconsistent standards

This theme will illustrate another challenge facing the education quality in Saudi Arabia which is inconsistent standards. This theme will highlight deficiencies in the system for rewarding and disciplining employees for good or poor performance.

Through the interviews, the majority of the interviewees agreed that there is inconsistency regarding the punishments policies in the Saudi educational system. They stated that if a member of the staff was guilty of misconduct or refused to carry out one of his/her responsibilities; he/she did not know what punishment he/she would receive. The reason behind this, according to them, is that the same infringements are treated differently from one case to another. This was illustrated by Participant I17 who recounted instances of inconsistent responses to teachers' failure to produce lesson plans:

I have been a principal for eleven years now and I moved to three schools in those years. If I have a problem with one of the teachers, I write a report and wait for the representative of the educational department and give it to him and then the penalty will be identified. However, some of the problems or the mistakes that the teachers make do not have any clear penalty. The teacher should prepare the next lessons in the class in hard copy at the beginning of the week, for all five days. Once, there was a teacher who was refusing to prepare and when the representative came and saw the report he took strong action regarding that, which was giving him a warning letter, which could affect his ability to move to another school or another city and his promotion. In another school, a teacher did the same thing and the representative did nothing about it because he thought that since the teacher was creative and attended all the lessons on time, it was fine to refuse. (I17, 2011)

As Ball et al. (1993) suggest "Distributive justice refers to the fairness of an outcome distribution (Deutsch, 1985), and is closely associated with equity theory (Adams, 1965) and fair distribution of rewards. However, people are also concerned with the fair distribution of punishment outcomes" (Ball et al., 1993, 43). In the case of the teachers and principals interviewed, distributive justice was clearly perceived to be lacking in the Saudi education system, because of the lack of consistent criteria for distributing rewards and punishments.

Participant I1 stated that it is a well-known fact that there are no clear standards for rewarding or applying penalties to teachers or the employees of the educational departments. He declared that:

I remember when I was a teacher, and I cannot remember what year, that some teachers refuse to watch the students during the break. Teachers are supposed to watch the students during the break, which is twenty minutes, and the principal sometimes punished the teachers who refused and sometimes he did not. I witnessed a case like this. The principal's view was that some teachers had better things to do during the break and they did not have to watch if they did not want to, while the others would be punished if they did not.” (I1, 2011)

He added:

I was punished once because I was only late for that job, having a day's pay deduced from my salary, while some of the teachers refused. Anyhow, if one of the teachers refused, the other teachers had to cover for him, even if he just did the day before. Moreover, there are no benefits for the teachers if they do it properly and they volunteer to undertake that job and cover for the others, they do not even receive any gratitude or appreciation. (I1, 2011)

This illustrates the point made by Ball et al. (1994, 306) that “Under distributive justice formulations, disciplined employees can be expected to compare their punishments to the punishments of others who have committed similar infractions..... Thus, equity refers to the perceived appropriateness of a punishment in comparison to what others have received. Equity was measured with two items, one of which was “My supervisor disciplined me harder than others who have performed similarly.”” (Ball et al., 1994, 306). Participant I1's experience confirms that Saudi teachers made such comparisons, and were dissatisfied with the results.

The same interviewee suggested that personal relationships also affect the punishment decisions of the principals and the way they deal with subordinates. He cited as evidence the inconsistent treatment of teachers who did not perform after-school supervision duty.

There is another shift for the teachers to watch the students, from the first grade to the fourth, at the end of the working hours of the school. Daily, two or more teachers need to stay and watch the students of this age until their parents come and pick them up, as it is the school's responsibility. Some of the teachers refuse to take this shift as some of them have to pick up their children from day care or their daughters from their school since the male

students are separated from the females. Some of the teachers who refused were not even married, but because they were relatives of the principal they did not take that shift and the principal did not apply any penalty to his relatives. In fact, he applies penalties to the other teachers who might have a genuine emergency one day (I1, 2011)

According to Harris (2012, 2), "... social norms still play a crucial role in maintaining social order". The reason behind this is that a great part of human interaction still occurs in informal social environments, for instance, residential neighbourhoods, workplace and family, which are not controlled by clear contracts (Fehr and Gaechter, 2000). Social norms are normally imposed by the willingness of individual to impose an informal punishment on those who deflect from the standards of behaviour, even at the own cost of the punisher (Fehr and Fischbacher, 2004; Hoff et al., 2007).

Subcategory 2: School resources

This subcategory represents the results of the research regarding school resources including buildings, teaching materials and facilities. The majority of the participants agreed that the ministry does not treat all schools in the same way; it does not equip all the schools equally. They claimed that some schools are equipped with smart boards, advanced computers, well-equipped laboratories and a variety of educational materials while other schools do not have the basic materials and teachers remedy the deficiency at their own expense. Participant I25 claimed:

. There are other schools called model schools which have great funding from the ministry. They have smart boards, advanced computers, well-equipped laboratories and all the educational materials, while most of the schools all around the country have none of these advantages. It would be fair if the ministry treated all the schools the same, because all of them are the ministry's responsibility and by doing that [i.e. treating them differently] they are not treating the students in different schools the same as well (I25, 2011)

Similarly, other interviewees recounted how, as the ministry did not provide some teaching materials for schools, they had to buy them. For example, interviewee I35 claimed that he had to buy a computer and a projector because his school was not equipped with a computer laboratory.

I had to buy a laptop so I can use it in the class. As there are more than twenty students in each class, they could not see the screen of the laptop because it is on the front desk near the board. I had to buy a projector and a white screen so all the students could see the educational material shown (I35, 2011)

These findings are in line with the report of Al-Sinble et al. (2004), that as a result of the expeditious increase in education in Saudi Arabia, the ministry was incapable of building adequate new schools to cover the need of the community. Consequently, the ministry leased a number of houses for use as schools. This is not conducive to the process of teaching-learning (Al-Sinble et al, 2004), because these buildings, not being designed for educational purposes, lack essential facilities.

Because of such deficiencies, together with bureaucratic impediments to action, teachers even paid for maintenance in their schools. According to participant I35, the process of ordering technicians from the maintenance department took so long that in his school the teachers paid to have the air-conditioning mended, so that students would not suffer in the hot weather:

Sometimes teachers pay even for the maintenance work in the school. Three years ago the main climate control in the main hall, which is at the same time the praying area, was broken, and it is very hot in the summer in Riyadh; the temperature is between 45-55 C at midday. The principal ordered the technicians from the maintenance department at the educational department to come and fix it. This process took a week and they did not come, claiming that there was too much work and the school needed to be scheduled. We had to pay for a new climate control unit because the school could not wait much longer as some of the students have medical conditions and they cannot stand all that heat (I35, 2011)

According to Al-Sinble et al. (2004), the ministry does not provide regular maintenance, even for purpose—built schools. In addition, some schools lack basic facilities such as science and computer laboratories. Because of this irregularity in maintenance, it may be some time before the technician team gets to the school. As a result, teachers and the staff of the school in general fix whatever they can, which adds to the burden on teachers. Furthermore, the ministry does not reimburse these extra costs that the teachers pay, because of the rigid system (Al-Sinble et al., 2004).

Subcategory 3: Curriculum

The curriculum has been affected by centralisation in the operation units, schools, as principals lack autonomy to make modifications in the curriculum, such as adding or deleting content. Changes in the national curriculum are prohibited by the ministry and if a principal wishes to make changes; he/she has to check with a superintendent, from the educational department supervising the school, obtain permission to do so. This left no scope for principals' creativity or professional knowledge of their students' needs

Participant I3 stated that:

As a principal, I am not allowed to apply any modifications in the national curriculum of any subject because of the regulation of the ministry, even if these modifications are small changes like additions or deletions. If I need to make some changes; I need to check with the superintendent and obtain his permission to do so. Sometimes I feel like I need to teach the students some additional information other than that provided in their textbooks, but it is prohibited. In addition, sometimes I allow my teachers to make some omission in secret. The reason behind this is that if the Department of General Management finds out through their superintendent, this means that the curricula have not been taught completely to the students of the school. In this case, the Department of General Management will have to give the principal a warning or they could prevent him/her from conducting any examinations at the end of the year and they will conduct these exams to make sure that the students have studied every part of those books. (I3, 2011)

Therefore, according to the interviewees, sometimes teachers inserted extra materials to the curriculums without first obtaining the approval of the authorities. However, deletion from the national curricula was more difficult than additions, although even this was sometimes furtively done. The official position, however, is as Alabbasi (2003) stated, that principals of schools are banned from applying any addition, deletion or modification to the curricula issued by the ministry.

According to the participants, most teachers wanted to teach their students topics that are not in the ministry's curricula and they could use additional materials in their lessons in the classrooms

after detaining the superintendent's approval, but they could not omit any part of the prescribed national curriculum. Participant I14 claimed:

I cannot delete any part/s from the national curriculum, no matter how small this part is. Moreover, I cannot use any external materials as learning resources unless I ask the principal to consult the superintendent assigned to my school by the DGM and if he approved it I can use those materials, no matter how creative this step will be. I want to teach my students things that are not in the curriculum that are very useful to them. (I14, 2011)

Teachers' feelings meet about this recall the argument of Durkheim (1956) that textbooks and curricula should be tailored to the needs of the students.

Subcategory 4: Centralisation

The results of this research state that there are differences in the ways that principals handle the centralised education system under which that they work. Some of the principals appeared to be more frustrated than others regarding the restraints imposed on them. Differences were also attributable to variation in the level of supervision and support given to schools by the superintendents. As participant I7 claimed:

For example, some of the superintendents that supervise my school are bossy and they look for small details and some of them visit the school once and sometimes twice a year while others visit the school more than ten times. Furthermore, some of the superintendents never visit the school and they do their work by sending reports for the school via fax. Actually, the situation is haphazard and chaotic because some of the superintendents come without any arrangements for appointments except when they have personal relationships with principals. And sometimes when they have been asked why they have come without any appointments they simply and rudely say that it is not the principal's business even to ask when the next visit will take place. This type of behaviour from the superintendent's side does not give the principal any chance to prepare his/her agenda and what he/she wants to discuss in the meeting (I7, 2011)

These results illustrate the argument of Wiseman (2003) that managerial activities concerning decision-making differ because of differences in the nature of local influences.

As Alhageel (2002) states, decision-making in education in Saudi Arabia is made in the ministry and the principals of schools have little control. Fahmy and Mahmoud (1993) also declare that the Ministry of Education and Department of General Management (DGM) define the jobs of Saudi principals. The arguments of these studies are supported by the results of this study, in which both teachers and principals agreed that usually their duties are designed by the ministry and dictate by the superintendents.

In this situation the majority of the principals, denied professional discretion, directed their schools either by manipulating the educational system and taking actions behind the Department of General Management's back or by challenging the authorities when they thought conforming to official prescriptions could have a negative effect and on students' education. As an interviewee stated

I do not care about these punishments as I care about achieving the goals that I believe that they are important. I am not doing anything harmful or wrong after all (I7, 2011)

Some years ago, Alhageel (1996) asserted that despite some efforts to introduce a degree of decentralisation in Saudi Arabia; principals continued to face substantial restrictions. Moreover, Southworth (2000) declares that such rigid control could not be pleasing, and both those points were borne out in this study.

A particular source of contention was the relations between superintendents and principals, since superintendents, whose role is to guarantee the performance of the regulations of the ministry, are the connecting link between DGM and schools. Investigating this relation through the opinions of the teachers and principals revealed conflicting results. Findings illustrate that even when teachers and principals suffered difficulty because of the superintendents, principals and teachers still appreciated their existence and they also considered them important, but thought the superintendents could do more to develop the academic life in these schools, for example by being more flexible in supporting efforts made by teachers and principals. Instead, a principal whose behaviour did not conform to department norms faced criticism, even though he was acting for the good of the school

There is no encouragement, reinforcement or support; the superintendent comes to attend a class or two, states the responsibilities of the principal and dictates new policies and rules. The majority of the superintendents assess

principals on school records and work paper, not based on character, achievements or their performance as managers or leaders. A few years ago, I spent all the working hours in the morning supervising teachers and sharing experience and knowledge with them and I had to stay late at school or come back in the evening to do all the paperwork that I had to finish. However, superintendents had doubts and suspicions regarding my stay and they have interrogated me for my 'unacceptable behaviour'. (I7, 2011)

Fahmy and Mahmoud's (1993) study shows similar results. They found that the relation between schools and superintendents requires cooperation and that superintendents do not give enough attention to developing the academic life in the schools.

In addition, teachers highlighted that they would rather having their school principals observe their classes than the superintendents, because the teachers have more open relationship with their principals than the superintendents. These results reveal the need expressed by principals and teachers to have positive relations with their superintendents and their need for superintendents to be more supportive and more knowledgeable of what was important in the education process.

I receive some announcements from the ministry and from the DGM regarding the superintendents' responsibilities and what they should supervise. Yet, on more than one occasion, some of the superintendents asked to see things that are not included in their authorities and I had to allow them to, because I did not want them to write negative reports to the DGM about the school. And some of the superintendents focus on small things such as the classrooms' cleanliness, organisation of the lesson plans of the teachers, and neatness of the notebooks of the students. (I7, 2011)

Similarly, Albilehshy (1991) suggests that the superintendents play an important role in this relation so they should be supporting the others' efforts, respectful to others, problem solvers, open minded and fair in order to perform to the highest standards

The results show that the majority of the interviewed principals had limited freedom to implement and start extracurricular activities; they tolerated the limited extracurricular themes assigned by the ministry when they wanted to provide an extracurricular activity, but this

condition did not satisfy them and consequently they sometimes rebelled. As participant I10 stated,

Getting permissions for extracurricular activities from the DGM is a very long process and it could take months for each activity's request. I have many ideas for extracurricular activities such as public speaking training, vocational training, activities clubs, and an open day. But the DGM and their superintendents forbid me from conducting these activities as they believe that these activities are a waste of the school time and it is too valuable to be wasted. (I10, 2011)

This research supports the findings of Alsoraysri and Alaref (1992), who similarly reported that schools that wish to implement an extracurricular activity must make sure that the activity's nature fits within the themes assigned by the ministry. Nevertheless, the activities assigned by the ministry failed to meet with the needs of the principals and the students, since no consideration was given to those in ministry plans.

In addition, most of the teachers who participated in this study felt that they and the principals should be able to exercise freedom to be creative in preparing extracurricular activities and that the students would like to take part too. Participant I25 suggested

As a teacher, I get involved in the extracurricular activities' implementation. Yet, my involvement is voluntary and my opinions are taken into consideration at the school level. However, the teachers need to get the approval from the principal and the superintendent when he visits the school. Most of the teachers agree with me when I say that we are in a conflicted situation because the principal appreciates the innovation and creativity but the superintendent does not approve everything we come up with regarding extracurricular activities and we have to do the activities under the umbrella of the activities approved by the DGM. There are two reasons that the teachers cannot implement any activities and they do not have any freedom to do so. Firstly, following the rules whereby no extracurricular activities are permitted to occur without the approval of the superintendent. The second is to guarantee uniformity and order in the school and to avoid any chaos that could be generated when teachers do whatever they please without any prior approval and planning from the principal and the superintendent.

Nevertheless, teachers can implement and improve activities without consulting the superintendent, since he rarely visits the school (I25, 2011)

These points of view correspond with Wilson's (2002) opinion that meaningful participation from students in extracurricular activities requires top-down and bottom-up planning. Hence, students' suggestions and opinions should be taken into consideration, for their involvement to be valuable.

5.3. Research Question 2. What actions are being taken to introduce total quality management in the public education system in Saudi Arabia?

This question is addressed via two categories in the results: category 2 on the role of the TQMD, and category 3 on recent trends.

5.3.1. Category 2: Role of the Total Quality Management Department

This category discusses the role of the TQM in education in Saudi Arabia. It emphasises its importance in spreading the culture of TQM within the ministry. In addition, this category highlights the activities undertaken by the ministry to make sure of the correct implementation and explains how the ministry is building a TQM system.

With the purpose of developing education in Saudi Arabia, the Ministry of Education in had to adopt a new approach to develop the educational standards and the education outputs. The ministry adopted TQM as an approach to achieve a better standard of education by setting the basics such as establishing a Total Quality Management Department and recruiting employees with experience in that field. As a new department, the TQM department needed to set goals and the methods by which these goals were to be achieved. The researcher met some of the employees in the department to find out the role of the department and its employees. Through the interviews, a number of participants suggested that Total Quality Management Department (TQMD) is considered young since it was established in January 2009. In addition, they stated that the TQMD is aiming at many goals such as spreading the culture of TQM in the ministry including the staff of other departments, the teachers and principals in order to give them an idea regarding TQM and make them familiar with it as much as possible. Since the TQMD needs to apply some changes in the educational system, the employees need to understand the purpose of these decisions so they will not face any problems in applying them.

According to the procedure handbook of the TQMD (2010), the main aim of the department is to spread the culture of quality and improve the general performance of the ministry, the educational departments and schools and identify to what extent the ministry is achieving the aims of the ministry. The first operation of TQMD is spreading the TQM, which is aiming to describe the procedure to explain the employees of the Ministry of Education the meaning, principals and tools of TQM. Furthermore, it is the general manager's responsibility to issue a specific procedure and determine the person who will prepare a plan to spread the culture of quality in the ministry and the field. The ministry issued an administrative decision to form a team to accomplish this mission and specified the time frame for completion. The ministry trained this team to make sure that this team will deliver the message according to clear steps and clear vision (TQMD handbook, 2010)

Moreover, the ministry set the requirements of spreading the quality awareness in the ministry's departments:

- 1- Setting a relationship with the media, whether was it seen or heard and make a working plan to spread culture quality in education.
- 2- Providing lectures, workshops, and training programmes for the educational leaders in the ministry and the educational field.
- 3- Issuing educative brochures and flyers regarding TQM.
- 4- Issuing regular magazines to identify TQM, such as "Culture of Quality", "Quality Tools", and "Projects of Improvement".
- 5- Launching an electronic portal and a website and distributing CDs to spread awareness of TQM.
- 6- Making field visits to departments in the ministry and the field to supervise and participate in the plans of spreading the TQM culture (TQMD handbook, 2010)

The TQMD holds workshops and arranges conferences to introduce and define TQM to the staff as an innovation in the culture of education. The ministry arranged the first international conference of TQM in 2011 and the second one will be held in 2013 (Ministry Booklet, 2011)

The ministry arranged the first International Conference of TQM in K-12 education 'Best International Practices for TQM in Education' under the patronage of King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz in the period 8-11 January 2011, with participants from modern countries which advanced education systems.

5.3.2. Category 3: Recent Trends

The findings of this research highlight a belief among teachers that the output of the educational system should be improved and developed to meet the needs of the labour market, as interviewee I5 explained:

Students should be aware of the labour market and its needs. After they leave K-12 stages, not all of them will be accepted in universities. Thus, they should be prepared for other options by giving them workshops about several things such as electronics, electricity, or first aid and then they will understand the basic ideas about them and when they see the complicated systems in these areas they will understand them. And for the others who will have an opportunity to get into college, they will know which major they should apply to according to the labour market's needs. The education system in Saudi Arabia should focus on what students are interested in and then concentrate on these subjects by giving them more and advanced information to enhance their knowledge in this area and build their self-esteem (I5, 2011)

This coincides with many scholars' point of view, as many authors consider applying TQM in the education system as appropriate to develop education output (e.g. Jenkins, 1997; Arcaro, 1995a; Arcaro, 1995b; Sallis, 2002; Crawford et al., 1993; Leslie, 1994; West-Burnham, 1997), and at the same time improve the country's economy in general. If schools cannot produce skilled personnel, it will be difficult for industry to recruit workers able to produce good products (Schargel, 1996). Peak (1995) stated that if there is no good education, there will be no quality anywhere in society. TQM has been said to offer a suitable response to the requirements of this era through a holistic approach, a unified view which amalgamates relationships, process and structures (West-Burnham, 1997).

In the interviews, however the majority of the participants claimed that the educational system is not meeting the students' expectations or satisfying teachers. Participant I14 However, I14 highlighted, based on 15 years teaching experience, that it is not easy to control the quality of education outputs, as the input is not controlled:

I have learned in all these years that it is really hard to control the output's quality because the input's quality is hard to be controlled. The reason behind this is that the inputs are students, human beings, with different levels of skills and different levels of abilities. Some of them are incredibly clever and others

are less clever. But my colleagues and I are trying to put more effort into teaching techniques so we can increase the quality level for the students. (I14, 2011)

Participant I5 added that some of the students already know what they want to be and which field they will be entering, but that more needs to be done within the educational system in the country, for example through summer courses to help students in choosing careers and making plans for further education:

Some of my students have their own plans for their future and they are working on achieving their goals, which is a good thing. They go to public libraries requesting more information in their fields by reading more and in the summer they work in companies in that work in the same field. All of this is great and I support them in every possible way but all of this as well is by their personal efforts. The educational system does not help by offering work opportunities such as summer courses or by giving workshops in some subjects so all the students will gain more educational benefits. (I5, 2011)

This is consistent with what Babbar (1995) stated when he defined Total Quality Management in the educational context. He suggests that the educational system should serve the students' needs and meets with their expectations. In addition, it is consistent with Arcaro (1995a) who argues that everyone in the system of the school has to know that there are clients for every educational output. Everybody is both a supplier and a customer in a total quality school. The school board, staff, administrators, teachers, students and the parents are the internal customers in the education system, while higher education, employees and society are the external customers. Satisfying the customer is the aim of TQM. This purpose can be accomplished by a continuous effort to meet both external and internal customers' expectations and needs.

5.4. Research Question 3. How do national and organisational culture affect the implementation of Total Quality Management in the public education system Saudi Arabia?

This question is addressed by category 4 in the data. The findings of the research show that the majority of the interviewees do not know what Total Quality Management is in the first place. The reason behind this is that there are few training programmes arranged by the ministry and the limited efforts in this direction are not assigned to trainers with high level of knowledge in the field. This impedes efforts to define TQM and spread TQM awareness among the

employees of the ministry including teachers, school principals and members of the educational departments and members of Departments of General Management. Some of the employees claimed that there are no training programmes that define TQM, introduce its principles and aims and the way to apply it in schools. Participant I31 highlighted that:

There are no training programmes on TQM and how to apply it in our work in the school. (I31, 2011)

Questions were also raised about the competence of trainers, since they had only one week of training programmes regarding TQM before they started to train others:

There was a seminar and it was just to explain TQM for one week and the one who was directing the seminar had [only] one week of training as well, so he was not an expert in TQM. How can a beginner in TQM give seminars to explain it and he does not know what it is in the first place? So it was useless. (I31, 2011)

Moreover, many employees in the education system will face difficulty in gaining access to those programmes. Since training tends to be held in the capital, those who live in cities and villages far from the capital city will be unaware of them, or unable to attend.

I was invited to this seminar because I live in the capital; if I was living in a village far from the capital, I would never have known about it. (I31, 2011)

The findings of this study highlight the significance of what Crosby (1995) states regarding achieving zero defects which is the ultimate goal of quality in his theory. He states that quality awareness is crucial and it has to be spread among employees in the firm. Awareness should be adopted and integrated with the organisational culture. The awareness of employees can be established by communicating through posters, films and booklets and also by training senior managers.

The majority of the participants argued that the training programmes provided by the ministry and the DGMs is not useful to make the employees aware of the TQM and its importance because those training programmes are too short to provide sufficient information regarding TQM and because the trainers themselves are not adequately informed about TQM. Interviewee I 36 reported that he had received brief training about total quality management and then was asked to train other employees, although he was not qualified to do so.

I have been invited to a training programme about total quality management in the Intercontinental Hotel arranged by the Ministry of Education for five days. I have learnt a little bit about TQM as a useful tool in management and as I am a member of an educational department, I needed this training programme because the ministry is aiming to apply TQM in the educational sector. I gained a certificate after the programme proving that I attended. After that, I was been asked to train other members of the ministry and members of my educational department, since I had received a training programme in this regard. This demand of the ministry to train others was surprisingly shocking, because I am not qualified and I do not have enough knowledge to do so. I apologised and I told the person who asked me my reasons and he said that he needed me to teach the other members what I had learnt already from that programme, which was not enough for the other members to learn what TQM is and its aims and principles so they can apply it or even help to apply it. (I36, 2011)

He also stated that these seminars would not help in the TQM implementation process as the idea is not delivered in sufficient depth to the employees and they do not understand what their roles are in this process:

The educational department arranged some courses, actually they were seminars, regarding total quality management and I was in charge of giving these courses to the members of the educational department. I had to prepare some slides about TQM and its definitions, principles and its aims and the ministry's aim and what it is intended to apply, all by myself. In addition, since I was the one who prepared the seminars' curriculum, there, the employees did not receive any certificates and they had no bonus at the end of the year. Moreover, at the end of every training course, the members of the educational department do not know what their part of applying TQM is, because I have never taught them that as I do not know what my part is in this implementation. In other words, there are no benefits of these courses as long as there are no qualified trainers to give those programmes to the employees or to the teachers in the operational units. (I36, 2011)

In addition, he highlighted that further inadequacies of the training model whereby the employees that he trained were asked to train principals and teachers. Thus, ignorance, rather than knowledge, was being cascaded down the system:

The problem is that those members of the educational department that I have trained are supposed to train principals and teachers in the schools related to this educational department. If they do not know what they are supposed to do to apply TQM in the educational sector; how are they going to train those teachers and principals who are the base of teaching and who are the ones who contact with the students directly? Besides, if I am not qualified enough to train the members of the educational department, how can they be qualified enough to train others? (I36, 2011)

Moreover, he expressed concern about the selection process for those training programmes, as there are no clear criteria. He claimed that it depends on principals' subjective judgment and there is no proper training need assessment:

There are other training programmes that I can deliver to other members of the educational department and to teachers and principals because they have curriculums, but the problem is in choosing who take these programmes. Choosing the trainees is tricky as there are no standards in choosing who gets those programmes and who does not. It is all about the principals, not paying attention to who needs or deserves a training programme or not. Some of the teachers need these programmes to improve their work at their schools and some of them need those programmes to improve their teaching skills as they are new teachers. (I36, 2011)

What is happening is the Saudi education system contravenes Crosby's (1995) thinking on the training of employees that to reach to zero defects in an organisation. He stated that supervisors at all levels have to be trained and educated before the programme is started, since they must be able to communicate the programme and explain it to their employees. This appears not to be the case in the Saudi TQM initiative.

Subcategory 2: Lack of integrated vision

The findings of this study support Fahmy and Mahmoud's (1993) finding that principals of schools want to have more authority to make changes and choices regarding the curriculum and

they also want to play their roles as instructional leaders at their schools. In addition, the majority of the interviewees agreed that their school principals are aware of instructional and curriculum issues and as a result, they supported the suggestion of giving the principals the power to choose the curricula that should be taught in their schools.

From my point of view, the ministry should take the teachers' and principals' opinions into consideration when the ministry is making changes in the curriculum. I have been making recommendations regarding these changes to the principal and he conveyed them to the superintendents, but they have been ignoring them for a few years now (I14, 2011)

However, the actuality of the current situation is not different from what was claimed by Albakor (2005) when she stated that ministries in the Arab World do not allow the school principals to play their role but in contrast they issue the textbooks and the curriculums and they inspect closely what is being taught and not in schools.

Through the interviews, the teachers revealed other obstacles facing them in the school regarding providing a better education and a better educational environment for the students, such as weak community partnership. Participant I27 indicated that the parents are not playing a positive role in raising their children along with the school. He stated that their idea of the role of the school is teach their children everything including manners:

As a teacher; I moved to four cities in the past nine years and I have taught two different stages, intermediate and high school. I noticed the same thing in all of the four cities, which is the idea of the role of the school from the community's point of view. They believe that the school has to do everything in raising their children. They think that the teacher should teach students the curriculum, manners and what should they believe. They think that their role ends at driving them to school. The community is not playing a positive role with the school in raising the students. (I27, 2011)

Conversely, he suggested that schools are sometimes not open to the society and does not share the parents' ideas regarding the students' education:

...And sometimes, the school is not open to the community so the parents can get involved and share their ideas with the school. The only thing that the

parents share is their child's medical condition if they have problems (I27, 2011)

In contrast, sometimes there is a lack of cooperation from the parents as they do not come when the school's staff ask them to, and the students are the victims of this behaviour

...And sometimes the school management call the parents asking them to come to the school so they can discuss the student's situation, whether the case is about the student's educational level or if there is any behavioural problem and the parents refuse to come. Some of the parents make excuses and they promise to come but they never do, and sometimes they just tell the school's management that it is the school's problem and they do not come and the victim in this process (I27, 2011)

One of the problems that the education in Saudi Arabia is facing is the weak relationship between school and families. The staff of the school realise the significance of the relationship with parents, yet, it appears that the cooperation between them at a low level. Schools are partly responsible; however parents believe that it is the school's responsibility to do the work without the parents' interference. School administrations frequently complain about the poor response of the parents when asked formally to visit the school regarding a problem with the students (Al-Sinble et al., 2004).

The study's findings illustrate that some of the teachers and principals employed by the ministry resist the changes that the ministry is trying to implement and they still prefer the old fashioned way of teaching. This is despite the fact that the ministry is trying to put new blood into all departments and schools. Participant I40 stated that

I have worked for the ministry for sixteen years now as a teacher at the beginning and I have been working as a manager of an educational department for seven years now. The ministry is trying to apply some changes and move to the next level and start an educational revolution in the country. It has equipped some schools in several major cities such as Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam with the latest technologies in the educational field. It has set these schools up with smart boards, latest computers, and new High Definition projectors. It is also trying to phase out the examinations for the primary stages and introduce the evaluation of the students and their

educational progress. From my point of view, some of the school principals are fighting these changes due to their age. Most of the principals are old and they like to do everything in the school with the old fashion methods, thinking that it is always the best (I40, 2011)

And he added that the ministry is facing a challenge in applying changes within the operating units when the principals resisting these changes and holding the progress of the ministry back:

Those principals sometimes force the teachers at their schools to follow the old fashioned tests and according to these examinations' results they write in the evaluation forms, so if there any observer comes from the educational department, he will only see these forms and not the examination papers. It is a major challenge for the ministry and for the educational departments to apply these changes and move forward while there are people who are resisting and holding the progress back. (I40, 2011)

These findings illustrate Juran's (1992) comments on the role played by cultural norms of behaviours and values in quality application. Juran revealed that "cultural patterns" such as practices, habits, and beliefs are the key force in human behaviour (Juran, 1992). Likewise, Crosby (1995) also stresses the significance of organisational culture to quality improvement, stating that quality improvement demands changes within organisational culture, which takes time. Moreover, Smith et al. (2002) state that TQM adoption in a firm can be viewed as a cultural change journey.

Subcategory 3: Resistance to change

This subcategory discusses the resistance to change in society as an impact of the strong culture. The changes that the ministry is trying to make in education are facing resistance from different levels in the society; for example there are those who reject curriculum reform because they consider that the thinking of previous generations should be preserved without change.

Participant I33 illustrated:

Culture has a strong effect on developing the curriculum, which is resisting any new ideas since it is very conservative. In addition, the society rejects any changes and developments, especially changes and developments that come from Western countries. The reason behind that is that people

believe that any new changes and development to the system of the curriculum will affect the message that it delivers relatively. People see the current curriculum as a tool for delivering the values of the previous generations and [they think] that heritage should be kept and delivered as it is. These beliefs conflict with the orientation of building and designing the curriculum, which should be an educational environment where the student's character can be built and interact with its variables and provide all the resources so the student is a human in the first place and can develop thinking skills in the future. (I33, 2011)

Al-Sinble et al. (2004) suggest that changes always face resistance. They argued that the community sense challenges when it comes to changes as people feel threatened. In this regard, parents feel that their values and those of their ancestors are going to disappear because of the changes in curricula.

Subcategory 4: Inadequate participation of staff

The findings of this research show that the majority of the interviewed teachers and principals had no opportunity to participate in any of the decision-making processes, whether it is regarding the designing curricula or the prototypes of the new curricula or any kind of participation in the teaching policies in the ministry. According to I26, teachers are informed about the new curriculum, only when it is launched, without any notice in advance and that none of the teachers or principals can participate in preparing the new curriculum.

I have faced a problem with the curriculum for the last eight years. Many teachers among colleagues have the same problem, which is that when the ministry changes the curricula they do that without giving us advance notice. We need to study the new curriculum so we can deliver the contents of these books in hand. (I26, 2011)

Moreover, he criticised the centralisation in setting the new curricula and the ministry's failure to take teachers' points of view into consideration. He stated that the teachers are the ones who can see if the curriculum is suitable for the students' age and stage or not:

Moreover, the majority of the teachers and principals cannot participate, as a matter of fact all of them cannot participate in preparing the new curriculum as they see it, although they are the people who are facing the

students and see the faults in the curricula and if they are suitable for the students' stage and age or not. Therefore, there is centralisation in making and preparing the curriculum because no one can share their opinions in this regard (I26, 2011)

After expressing these views, the interviewee made some suggestions that he believed would improve the situation. He believed that teachers' should be involved in designing the learning prototypes:

Teachers should be involved in designing and choosing the learning prototype, which is a prototype for the changes in the curriculum in the future, for many reasons. One of the reasons is that the teachers are the people who can see the response from the students to the materials in curriculum. The other reason is that there is an annual evaluation of the teachers and whether they can deliver the new materials. Moreover, they are the ones who can tell if the students can gain benefits from the new or the edited ideas in the curriculum. (I26, 2011)

Juran (1988) emphasises the role of participation of the employees and teamwork can enhance the quality improvement. Moreover, he is credited widely for adding a new dimension to quality management, which is the human dimension. According to Williams (1994), Juran thinks that the human mind's power is more effective than the quality tools all together in identifying and correcting problems. Likewise, Ishikawa (1985) declares that a firm requires everyone's participation from the top management down to line employees, including all departments. In this case, the employees are the principals and the teachers who work in the operational units 'schools'.

I34 extended this principle to students, noting that whereas students used only to receive the information from the teachers and that was their only role in education, but, nowadays it is different, as they have other resources of information and learning:

Students play a big role now in the modern education. In the past, they could not share any information with their teachers because they did not have any, but now it is different. They are encouraged to work together as teams and they are motivated to go to other learning resources in libraries and use the

internet to learn more. All of this is because of the new curriculum and the new policies of education. (I34, 2011)

He added a comparison between the old way of teaching and that favoured by new the generation whose wider learning experiences and expanded expectations need to be addressed by the education system:

The students nowadays object to the information delivered by the teacher because they have other learning resources. Some of them discovered small mistakes in the books given to them by the ministry that the teachers sometimes do not pay attention to. It is a different era of education that the ministry and the educational department should keep up with. The teachers thirty years ago used to be nonnegotiable and their information was undoubtable because of the strong culture, but now it is different. If the students are not convinced by the information given by the teacher; they discuss it and they justify their point of view, which is something that no one could do in thirty years ago. (I34, 2011)

The findings of this study reflect a prevailing view among participants that every member of the educational process should be involved in the ministry's policies and that students, teachers and principals should be a part of the process of decision-making. This corresponds with the opinion of Agrwal et al., (2011), who argue that products' successful completion needs the participation of the students as workers, co-managing the process of learning.

5.5. Summary:

This chapter discussed the findings of this study according to the research questions, to show how they are addressed by the findings collected. It linked the findings of this study to the literature review in TQM, Performance Appraisal, Training, and Centralisation. The first research question was regarding the current challenges to education quality in Saudi Arabia. This question was answered by the first category including four subcategories. The second research question was about the actions are being taken to introduce Total Quality Management by the Ministry of Education. It was answered by the second and the third categories by identifying the role of Total Quality Management Department and the recent achievements made by the department and the ministry in general. The last research question was answered by determining the factors affecting the implementation of TQM in the educational system, particularly cultural factors.

6. Chapter Six: Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

There is a shortage in several fields of research in the Middle East in general and in Saudi Arabia particularly, especially in relation to total quality management (TQM). The major aim of this study was to explore the implementation of total quality management in the public sector. The research was conducted in the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia, which is responsible for education at three stages, primary, elementary and secondary stages. The ambition is to achieve contributions to theory by rejecting, supporting or expanding previous literature and also to develop practice. Generally, the ministry is facing some issues regarding management practices and applications. However, this study has focused on TQM and its implementation.

This chapter of the study presents the conclusion. It summarises the main findings of the study based on the research questions. The challenges to education quality in Saudi Arabia will be discussed, as well as the actions being taken to introduce TQM and the factors affecting its implementation. Then, the contributions to theory, practice and methodology are argued. After that, the limitations of this study are reviewed. Finally, recommendations for further study are introduced.

6.2. Summary of the Main Findings of the Research

The aim of this study was to explore the implementation of total quality management in the public sector. The findings of this study were reviewed in Chapter 4, while in Chapter 5 they were linked to previous literature. This section will be organised in accordance with the research questions.

The first research question concerned the current challenges to education quality in Saudi Arabia. The first subcategory reviewed the issues facing teachers' quality, including the performance appraisal (PA) system. The majority of the participants agreed that there is insufficient accuracy in the performance appraisal system conducted by the Ministry of Education. According to the interviewees, the evaluation conducted by their principals is based on tribal relations and personal relationships, rather than being founded on classroom social interaction and the discipline of the teachers. They emphasised the impact of a strong culture on the results of the system. Some of them revealed that these relationships provided them with a full mark. In addition, the interviewees claimed that if a teacher has some connections in the ministry, he/she could get promoted even if he/she is not working hard to deserve this promotion, while other teachers have worked very hard but remain in the same position because of the impact of such a strong culture. This was seen as unfair when some other teachers work very hard but do not receive any promotion but only the annual increment, even when their annual evaluations are almost perfect and some of them receive full ratings in their results.

According to Branine and Pollard (2010), in the Arab culture, authority and power determine individuals' roles and have powerful implications for the relations between subordinates and leaders. No matter how much an individual knows, it is about who he or she is. Moreover, they state that the source of status and power can be from the name of the degree held, the relationship with the manager of the firm, the position of the organisation, the relationship of an individual with the state apparatus, and the tribe and the family (Branine and Pollard, 2010). According to the interviewees, principals empathise with teachers who would like to move to other cities and give them high grades in their evaluation forms, while other principals give teachers high scores when they have personal problems with them so that the teachers can be transferred, since high scores are considered as a requirement for transfer. Rudner (1992) states that stereotyping occurs where impressions regarding the whole group change the impressions regarding a member of this group, while Cook (1995) suggests that the mood of the appraiser changes the evaluations. The majority of the participants agreed that most of the teachers receive "excellent" in their performance appraisal results, which indicates that the system is not

accurate. Randell (1994) has claimed that only a few appraisers receive training programmes in how to perform their duties. Furthermore, McGregor (1957) suggests that managers are unwilling to make negative judgements about individuals' performance because it could be demotivating, leading to employee accusations of lack of managerial support and contributing to poor performance.

The second issue facing teachers' quality is training. The findings of this study illustrate that the majority of the ministry's employees were not satisfied with the training programmes provided and the management did not take sufficient action regarding sending employees on training programmes so they could improve their skills. The majority of the interviewees claimed that they wanted to be given feedback regarding their results. Feedback and employee development are the purpose of a PA system (Fedor, 1991). Yet again, mediation is playing an important role in the method of selection in sending employees on training programmes. Metcalfe (2006) states that training and development opportunities tend not to be based on the abilities of individuals because they are rooted instead in family networks and individual relations. Thirdly, the findings of this study show that there is another challenge facing education quality in Saudi Arabia, which is inconsistent standards. The majority of the interviewees agreed that there is inconsistency regarding the punishment policies in the Saudi education system. They declared that punishments differ from one case to another. According to Ball et al. (1993), "Distributive justice refers to the fairness of an outcome distribution (Deutsch, 1985), and is closely associated with equity theory (Adams, 1965) and fair distribution of rewards. However, people are also concerned with the fair distribution of punishment outcomes" (Ball et al., 1993, p. 43). In the case of the teachers and principals interviewed, distributive justice was clearly perceived to be lacking in the Saudi education system because of the lack of consistent criteria for distributing rewards and punishments. The findings of this study show that personal relations affect the way that principals deal with teachers in relation to punishments. According to Harris (2012, p. 2), "social norms still play a crucial role in maintaining social orders". The reason behind this is that a great part of human interaction still occurs in informal social environments, for instance, residential neighbourhoods, workplaces and the family, which are not controlled by clear contracts (Fehr and Gaechter, 2000). Social norms are usually imposed by the willingness of individuals to impose an informal punishment on those who deflect from the standards of behaviour, even at the personal cost of the punisher (Fehr and Fischbacher, 2004; Hoff et al., 2007).

The second subcategory presented the findings of this study regarding resources, including buildings, teaching materials and facilities. The findings illustrate that the Ministry of Education does not treat all schools in the same way; it does not equip all the schools equally. These findings are in line with the report by al-Sinble et al. (2004) that, as a result of the expeditious increase in education in Saudi Arabia, the ministry was incapable of building adequate new schools to cover the needs of the community. One of the findings of this study is that the curriculum has been affected by centralisation in schools because of the principals' lack of autonomy in making modifications to the curriculum, such as adding or deleting content. According to the interviewees, teachers sometimes insert extra materials into the curricula without first obtaining the approval of the authorities. One of the problems with education quality is centralisation, which is widespread on many levels. The results of this research show that decision making in Saudi education is made in the ministry itself and the school principals have little control. The majority of the principals, denied professional discretion, direct their schools either by manipulating the education system and taking actions behind the Department of General Management's back, or by challenging the authorities when they thought conforming to official prescriptions could have a negative effect on students' education. Most of the interviewees believed that they and the principals should have freedom to be creative in preparing extracurricular activities and that the students would like to take part too.

The second research question was regarding the actions being taken by the Ministry of Education to introduce TQM and the role of TQM in education. The findings of this study show that the Ministry of Education is undertaking activities to apply TQM to the education sector in Saudi Arabia. According to the participants, the ministry has recruited employees with experience in the field of quality in order to achieve better standards of education. In January 2009, the ministry established the Total Quality Management Department (TQMD) (TQMD handbook, 2010). Spreading the quality culture and improving the general performance of the ministry, the educational departments and schools, and identifying to what extent the ministry is achieving its targets are the main aims of the TQMD. In addition, the ministry formed a team to spread the culture of quality and has trained the members of the team so they can deliver this message of precise steps and a clear vision. The TQMD holds workshops and arranges conferences to introduce and define TQM to the staff as an innovation in the culture of education. The ministry arranged the first international conference of TQM in 2011 and the second one will be held in 2013 (Ministry Booklet, 2011). The Ministry of Education is taking steps towards decentralization, curriculum reform and participation. Through the interviews,

some of the interviewees believed that the output of the education system should be improved to meet the needs of the labour market. This corresponds with several researchers' opinions, as many researchers consider implementing TQM in the education system as appropriate to developing education output (e.g. Arcaro, 1995a; Arcaro, 1995b; Crawford et al., 1993; Jenkins, 1997; Leslie, 1994; Sallis, 2002; West-Burnham, 1997) and at the same time improving the country's economy in general. Peak (1995) has suggested that there will be no quality anywhere in society if there is no good education. The majority of the participants claimed that the educational system is not meeting the students' expectations or satisfying teachers. According to Babbar (1995), the education system should serve the students' needs and meet their expectations.

The third research question concerned the factors affecting the implementation of TQM. The findings of this study illustrate that the majority of the participants did not know what TQM was because of the limited number of training programmes arranged by the Ministry of Education. This impedes efforts to define TQM and spread TQM awareness among the employees of the ministry, including teachers, school principals and members of the education departments and of the Department of General Management. Furthermore, some of the interviewees claimed that the trainers lacked competency regarding TQM knowledge, as they receive only a one-week training course before they start to train others. As a result, trainees would not realise the importance of applying TQM and how to apply it. According to the participants, not all employees have access to these training programmes, as they do not live in the capital city and so do not hear about them and are not invited to them. The majority of the interviewees suggested that teachers and principals' points of view should be taken into consideration by the ministry regarding changing the curriculum. They believed that their participation and their recommendations in this regard are important. Albakor (2005) states that ministries in the Arab World do not allow school principals to play their role, although they issue the textbooks and the curricula and inspect closely what is and is not being taught in schools. According to the participants, the community partnership is weak, which is affecting providing a better educational environment for the students. The study's findings illustrate that some of the teachers and principals employed by the ministry resist the changes that the ministry is trying to implement and still prefer the old-fashioned way of teaching. These findings illustrate Juran's (1992) comments on the role played by cultural norms of behaviour and values in quality application. Juran has revealed that "cultural patterns" such as practices, habits and beliefs are the key force in human behaviour (Juran, 1992). Likewise, Crosby (1995)

also stresses the significance of organisational culture for quality improvement, stating that quality improvement demands changes within organisational culture, which takes time. Moreover, Smith et al. (2002) state that TQM adoption in a firm can be viewed as a cultural change journey.

The third category discussed the resistance to change in society as an impact of the strong culture. The findings of this research show that the Ministry of Education is trying to apply changes to the education system and that these are facing resistance from society on different levels; for example, there are those who reject curriculum reform because they consider that the thinking of previous generations should be preserved without change.

Finally, the fourth subcategory presented another factor affecting the implementation of TQM, which is inadequate participation of the employees of the ministry. The findings of this research show that the majority of the teachers and principals interviewed had no opportunity to participate in any of the decision-making processes, whether regarding designing the curricula or their prototypes, or any kind of participation in the teaching policies in the ministry. The participants criticised centralisation in setting the new curricula and the ministry's failure to take teachers' points of view into consideration.

6.3. Contribution of this Study

Previous scholars have highlighted that the Middle East and the Arab World suffer a lack of research related to management practices and TQM in particular. Consequently, this research contributes to filling the gap in knowledge of TQM and its implementation in the education sector in Saudi Arabia. More particularly, until now, empirical studies of TQM implementation in the education sector and the challenges that it faces have been inadequate. Most of the research conducted in the Arab World and the Middle East has reviewed TQM theoretically without practical evidence from the field. In addition, the majority of the studies on TQM and its applicability have been conducted in the Western world and there is a lack of these studies in the Middle East context, Saudi Arabia in particular. Therefore, this study could be seen as a base for further research in the Saudi context. As this study gives insights regarding TQM implementation and an understanding of the nature of the TQM application process and the challenges that face its implementation, it contributes to knowledge of TQM by providing empirical evidence that may assist practitioners in the Arab context to improve TQM.

Cultural issues appear to affect the implementation of TQM. In this regard, a new contribution is made in exploring the impact of Saudi culture on the implementation of TQM.

The values and norms of employees affect feedback accuracy, which affects the implementation of TQM relatively. On the other hand, the value to society, including parents and students, lies in accepting the changes that the ministry is trying to apply. In addition, this study contributes to the knowledge by studying the other factors affecting the implementation of TQM, such as centralisation, on several levels, and resistance to curriculum changes and training programmes, which is an HRM practice.

Moreover, this research has been conducted in Saudi Arabia using semi-structured interviews as a method of data collection to explore the implementation of total quality management in the public sector. This method has provided the advantage of asking “Why” and “How” questions to answer questions that have not been fulfilled before. Usually, researchers have used surveys to gather data in Saudi Arabia because of certain difficulties, for instance, time pressure and employees not being used to this type of method.

The main aim of establishing the Total Quality Management Department (TQMD) was to apply TQM successfully within the education system in Saudi Arabia and seek continuous improvement. However, the findings of this study illustrate that the ministry is failing to achieve its aims. Consequently, the ministry should pay more attention to spreading the quality culture among its employees and seek more accuracy in the feedback given by the performance appraisal system. According to the findings of this research, the top management in the ministry and especially in the TQMD should trace the errors that are causing the failure in the system. In relation to spreading the quality culture, the employees, whether they are teachers, principals or members of educational departments, should be aware of TQM and its principles and how to apply them correctly. The ministry ought to arrange more conferences, seminars and workshops to enhance employees’ awareness of TQM. The study’s findings emphasise the weakness of the feedback provided by the performance appraisal system in the ministry and its educational departments. Therefore, the ministry has to pay more attention to these results because any modifications in the system will be based on them. In addition, more authority should be distributed to the educational departments and principals to reduce the centralisation within the system. The findings of this research show that the issues in the performance appraisal system in the ministry come from the strong culture effect and unqualified raters. In relation to training programmes, whether regarding teachers’ skills or TQM, these appeared to have some weaknesses. There are training programmes, but the selection methods are not practical and the unqualified trainers are a further issue.

It is shown in the findings of this research that there are issues regarding school resources, facilities and regular maintenance. It seems that the Ministry of Education does not treat all its schools equally. The ministry gives some schools more priority than others, aiming towards more model schools as they are already equipped with the latest technologies, while other schools are not. There are also shortcomings in the relationship between parents and schools due to the strong culture. Schools should enhance this relationship and arrange more meetings with parents, so they can seek they can pay more attention to the students. The findings of the research show that the culture of Saudi Arabia is extremely strong and affects the implementation of TQM on many levels, such as its aims and visions, the school-parent relationship, training programmes and performance appraisal results. The findings suggest that the implementation of a TQM process will consume time and effort in order to be completely effective due to the strong culture in Saudi Arabia.

6.4. Policy Implications

- 1- Changing the recruitment patterns and recruiting based on candidates' abilities and skills rather than their families' connections.

The Ministry of Education is raising the standards of recruitment and selection higher than before; however, they are not high enough from the participants' point of view. They suggest that new recruits need to be trained even after they have been hired to persuade them to give their best. One reason for this is that instead of being based on the applicants' qualifications and skills, selection is often based on their connections and relations with the employees, managers and/or principals. For Total Quality Management to be fully implemented, the Ministry of Education needs to make changes in the old system and start to recruit the best people, whether they are teachers, members of educational departments, or administrative staff of the ministry.

- 2- As the performance appraisal system is considered the feedback for the Total Quality Management Department, the ministry should make the process of performance appraisal more effective by training the appraisers from the ministry or develop an automated system.

The majority of the participants stated that the performance appraisal system lacks accuracy for a variety of reasons. Furthermore, they claimed that tribal relations and personal relationships affect the evaluation process, since it is conducted by principals who are not trained to be appraisers. Since the performance appraisal rating can be considered as an

important standard for promotions, annual transfer to other cities or schools, and the annual bonus, it has to be fairly conducted. In order to achieve that goal; the Ministry of Education should hold training programmes for appraisers and emphasise that teachers based on must be evaluated based on social interaction classroom and discipline. Another possibility would be for the ministry to launch an automated evaluation system containing an electronic portal system so the teacher can log in and register daily or weekly and submit his work which the system would evaluate. This system can only be applied if the ministry expected its plan to develop “ideal schools” with all the needed facilities including computers and smart boards, and treats all schools the same. Not only could teachers log in to the suggested portal and submit their work for the class but also students could log into the same system with their accounts and the system administrator can see if the teacher is covering the required curriculum by evaluating the slides made by the teacher and shown to the students. This would be a fair evaluation process so every teacher or employee can have a fair chance in promotions, bonus or moving to another city or school. By developing such a system, the ministry will gain the benefit of more accuracy in the rating scores, as avrently some appraisers are not accurate and not trained well for this job.

- 3- The ministry should reward its employees well according to their performance appraisal ratings to encourage them to give their best in their jobs. This should produce better services to teachers and employees of the ministry, who have higher expectations of getting better workplaces and better careers.

According to the interviewees, some of the teachers ‘do not care’ about their performance appraisal ratings because they already are in the cities where they want to teach and there are no more promotion opportunities because they have been in the service for many years. Consequently, they do not exert much effort to get higher scores in their rating. Others can move to other schools or even get promotions or bonus as which are all considered rewards, based on personal and/or tribal relationships rather than their performance appraisal rating. As a result, the other teachers/employees are not encouraged to give their best as they already know that whatever they do is not counted and the one who has connections will get the bonus. The Ministry of Education needs to develop a fair reward system linked to the performance appraisal system and spread the system in the schools, so the teachers/employees can be encouraged to give their best, as they will know that it is fair and not based on any personal relationships. Moreover, the ministry would create competition among its employees by applying such a system.

- 4- The Ministry of Education should spend more of its budget on maintaining and developing schools and remedying the shortage in the schools' resources, so teachers do not carry the burden of maintenance and other expenses.
- 5- The ministry should put more effort into spreading the culture of TQM among the employees and set a training programme for new employees from the first day before starting to work so they can understand what is needed to be done to achieve the ministry's aims and visions. Another automated system should be developed by the ministry for choosing who can get training programmes regarding TQM, for employees who have not received training on TQM, based on their qualifications and taking into consideration some factors such as their degrees, years of experience and the number of programmes taken.
- 6- Programme trainers should be more familiar with TQM's principles and meanings so they can deliver the information well to the trainees, as the trainers that the ministry is currently using themselves not trained.
- 7- The Ministry should develop the relationship between schools and parents by arranging more meetings and discussing with them the changes in curricula as an integral part of raising the standards of education in Saudi Arabia. In way, the ministry could allay parents' fears about whether these changes will affect their children negatively or not, or whether they are Western ideas, as some believe.
- 8- The top management in the Ministry of Education should be committed to employees' participation and take their suggestions and problems into consideration as employees' involvement is an important element of TQM and motivating quality.

6.5. Limitations of the Study

The research focused on exploring the implementation of TQM in the public sector and makes a significant contribution, yet some limitations should be considered. This study has suffered from a shortage in financial resources and, most importantly, time, like any other study. The time was limited from July until September 2011. The data collection time coincided with the summer holiday in Saudi Arabia and most of the employees were travelling at that time, which is another limitation. Another barrier facing this study and which consumed time was the bureaucracy of the organisation, since it reduced the availability of time to interview the participants. The awareness of the significance of the study and time was another limitation, since the study was conducted in a developing country.

One of the limitations of this study is that it was difficult to cover all the educational departments and schools in the country because of their large number. According to the Information Department in the Ministry of Education, there are 37,749 schools, 501,111 teachers and principals, and 5,178,498 students distributed all around the country (MOE, 2012). Thus, the study lacked the time and financial resources to cover all of these schools due to the large number of students, teachers, and schools. Therefore, the study was conducted in one region and the headquarters of the ministry and one educational department and five public schools. Another limitation which faced this study is that the research did not involve students and parents. It could be interesting to explore their points of view and their impact on the implementation of TQM, since they are considered the customers of the ministry's services. The author faced a shortage of literature in Saudi Arabia regarding TQM and its applicability. Another limitation to this study is that it was conducted in one educational provider in Saudi Arabia, and, consequently, it would be significant if there were another in order to compare them in relation to applying TQM in the education sector. The author did not gain access to the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Public Education Development Project due to the bureaucracy of the system in the ministry, which is another limitation to this research.

6.6. Recommendations for Further Studies

This section presents recommendations for researchers who are keen to conduct research within cultures. Yet, since the current study is considered the first piece of investigative research emphasising the implementation of TQM in the education sector in Saudi Arabia, there are several limitations that need to be noted for the future.

- Considering that the ministry is the only provider of education in Saudi Arabia and there is no other organisation of the same size in the country, and considering the economic and political factors, it would be critical to conduct a study to compare TQM implementation in Saudi Arabia and in another multinational country, such as the United Arab Emirates, where TQM is almost fully implemented in schools, or between two major cities in Saudi Arabia such as Jeddah and Dammam
- It would be interesting if students and parents were involved in the same study in the future.
- It is highly recommended that the same study be conducted at any time of the year other than the summer, so the researcher could meet more participants, whether they were principals, teachers or students.

- To cover a greater number of schools, teachers and students, it is highly recommended to conduct the same research but with a quantitative methodology

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Appendix 1

Interview protocol

Semi-structured Interview Questions

At the beginning I would like to thank you for participating in this study and I would like to show my appreciation of your time. The interview will take roughly an hour or slightly more. I assure you that all of your responses to the interview questions will be confidential. With your permission, I would like to record the interview. The data will be used for academic purposes only. The study focuses on the implementation of Total Quality Management in Saudi Education.

1- To begin with, can you please give me some background about your job?

Prompt; Position name, number of years of experience in the Ministry of Education, qualifications

2- How do you describe Total Quality Management from your understanding?

Prompt; definition, aims, components, principles

3- From your point of view, what is the ministry aiming at by implementing TQM?

Prompt; improve the ministry's performance, increase the employees' quality level?

4- Do you think that teachers' needs receive attention from the ministry's staff?

5- Do the schools' aims correspond with the ministry's vision?

Prompt; if yes, how? If no, does the ministry arrange workshops to develop the schools' performance?

6- Do employees evaluate their work quality? And do they encourage each other to discuss what is expected of them?

7- Can you name factors affecting the implementation of TQM in the educational system?

Prompt; culture, feedback accuracy, centralisation, performance appraisal, training

8- To what extent do you think that performance appraisal is important?

Prompt; finding the weaknesses of the employees, enhancing their performance, determining who needs training programmes

9- From your perspective, are there any factors that affect the accuracy of the performance appraisal?

Prompt; cultural factors such as tribal relations, personal relations or/ and mediation.

10- Do teachers evaluate their schools to ensure their performance improvement and the ministry's performance relatively?

11- In case of performance improvement, does the credit go to the entire ministry's staff or just some categories?

Prompt; if the performance is still low, who gets the blame? Schools and teachers? if yes, how?

12- From your experience, do you think that training and developing the skills of the ministry's staff are priorities?

Prompt; please explain more, how?

13- Do members of educational departments receive any training programmes regarding TQM?

Prompt; if yes, how often? Is the period of the programme enough?

14- From your point of view, are these programmes and workshops useful to all levels of the ministry's staff?

Prompt; to what extent are they useful?

15- Do you think the selection process for these programme is appropriate?

Prompt; if no, what are the factors affecting this process?

16- Is there centralisation in the educational system?

Prompt; taking decisions, employees' participation

17- Do teachers and employees at all levels participate in setting future plans for the ministry?

Prompt; if yes, are these efforts and participation supported by the ministry?

18- Do cultural factors play any role in affecting the implementation of TQM?

Prompt; if yes, how? Is it mediation "Wasta", tribal relations and/or personal relations?

19- From your point of view, do you think that tribal relations and personal relations play any role in the process of increasing quality?

Prompt; How? Give example please. Do you think this role is positive or negative? How often?

20- Are there any other cultural factors affecting the implementation of TQM?

Prompt; if yes, give example please, and is it affecting positively or negatively?

Closing

I would like to thank you for the time you have given for this interview. If you have further information that you would like to add, please feel free to do so. You have shared important information with me that will be a great addition to my research. Thank you for your time and I may contact you for follow-up later.