

**QUALITY MANAGEMENT  
OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES  
IN HONG KONG SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**Thesis submitted for the degree of  
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**by**

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# **Abstract**

This study is the first territory-wide research into the quality management issues of extracurricular activities (ECA) involving the whole population of the frontline ECA masters/mistresses in Hong Kong secondary schools. Survey was the major research method which was triangulated and supplemented by elite interviews and case studies. The two case studies involved an investigation into a unique Hong Kong secondary school using an extension curriculum to replace traditional ECA, and a study into the only school in Hong Kong adopting the ISO9002 quality assurance system in school management. In this study, effective ECA quality management practices were recognized while management deficiencies and quality gaps were identified. The modes of practice in ECA management, and the factors hindering ECA development, were also identified. The perception of management quality in the serving schools from the perspectives of the ECA masters/mistresses, in terms of “ECA management” and “ECA quality and quantity”, was analyzed. This study also challenged the dichotomy of the formal and informal curricula in Hong Kong school education, and criticized the existing examination-oriented and academic-focussed education culture. The findings in this study were scrutinized and discussed with literature concerning Total Quality Management and ECA management. A list of innovative ECA items in Hong Kong secondary schools was generated. For ECA quality assurance, an effective school-based ECA quality management model has been introduced with a model for ECA curriculum development. Finally there were recommendations for improving ECA management and suggestions for further research.



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# Abbreviations

<b>AAPOR</b>	<b>American Association of Public Opinion Research</b>
<b>BERA</b>	<b>British Educational Research association</b>
<b>BSI</b>	<b>British Standards Institute</b>
<b>C&amp;P action</b>	<b>Corrective and Preventive action</b>
<b>CIPP model</b>	<b>Context, Input, Process, Product model</b>
<b>EC</b>	<b>Education Commission (of Hong Kong)</b>
<b>ECA</b>	<b>Extracurricular Activity / Extracurricular Activities</b>
<b>ECR</b>	<b>Education Commission Report</b>
<b>ERASP</b>	<b>The Effective Resource Allocation in Schools Project</b>
<b>HKALE</b>	<b>Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination</b>
<b>HKCEE</b>	<b>Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination</b>
<b>HKEACA</b>	<b>Hong Kong Extracurricular Activities Coordinators’ Association</b>
<b>HKEAMA</b>	<b>Hong Kong Extracurricular Activities Masters’ Association</b>
<b>HKED</b>	<b>Education Department (of Hong Kong)</b>

<b>HKQAA</b>	<b>Hong Kong Quality Assurance Agency</b>
<b>HKSAR</b>	<b>Hong Kong Special Administration Region of the People's Republic of China</b>
<b>IiP</b>	<b>Investors in People</b>
<b>ISO</b>	<b>International Organization for Standardisation</b>
<b>LMS</b>	<b>Local Management of Schools</b>
<b>OTSA</b>	<b>Outstanding Teacher and School Awards</b>
<b>OUHK</b>	<b>Open University of Hong Kong</b>
<b>PDCA cycle</b>	<b>Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle (Shewhart Cycle)</b>
<b>PIC</b>	<b>Personal Information Centre</b>
<b>POC</b>	<b>Price of conformance</b>
<b>PONC</b>	<b>Price of non-conformance</b>
<b>QAI</b>	<b>Quality Assurance Inspection</b>
<b>QC</b>	<b>Quality Circle</b>
<b>QCC</b>	<b>Quality Control Circle</b>
<b>QEF</b>	<b>Quality Education Fund</b>
<b>QI</b>	<b>Quality Indicator</b>
<b>SAMS</b>	<b>School Administration and Management System</b>
<b>SBM</b>	<b>School-based Management</b>

<b>SMI</b>	<b>School Management Initiative</b>
<b>SOED</b>	<b>Scottish Office Education Department</b>
<b>SPC</b>	<b>Statistical Process Control</b>
<b>SWOT</b>	<b>Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats</b>
<b>TABS</b>	<b>Towards A Better School Movement</b>
<b>TOC</b>	<b>Target Oriented Curriculum</b>
<b>TQ</b>	<b>Total Quality</b>
<b>TQM</b>	<b>Total Quality Management</b>
<b>TTRA</b>	<b>Target and Target-related Assessment</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>United States of America</b>

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# Chapter 1 Introduction

*Primary and secondary education provides the foundation for our children and it is here that the commitment to excellence needs to start.* (HKSAR, 1997, p.29, section 80)

## **The Education Quality Reform in Hong Kong**

The international reform in educational quality has become an important worldwide issue (Weller, 1996; Martens and Prosser, 1998), including Hong Kong and Mainland China (Cheng, 1995a, Cheng and Cheung, 1997). Educational institutions are turning their attention to quality philosophy and principles to look for quality services through educational renewal and school restructuring. Hong Kong schools need to be more accountable to the public and quality school education is an issue of general concern in Hong Kong. (EC, 1997)

The Hong Kong Special Administration Region, HKSAR (1997), established a Quality Education Fund (QEF) to encourage innovation, competition and self-motivated reforms in primary and secondary education. (Quality Education Fund Secretariat, 1998) For accountability purposes, HKSAR (1997) suggests schools strengthen school-based management by developing achievement plans, publishing annual reports, and carrying out staff appraisals. HKSAR asks for a school curriculum that promotes the all-round development of children.

Recent education policies proposed by the Hong Kong Education Department (HKED) for quality improvement in education are not fully supported by the public and the

schools. Cheng and Tam (1997) argue that this is resulting from “*the poor understanding of the complex nature of education quality and the lack of a system of education standards and indicators for directing practices and monitoring performance.*” (p.22)

As “*compulsory education must be coupled with good quality experience for students* (Porter, 1993 in Tam, 1995, p.70)”, the Education Commission (EC) (1996) continues to point out the essence of quality education by stating that

*Ideally, education outcome should achieve the aims of education and meet public expectations in an efficient, accountable and cost-effective way... The quality indicators of school education should be translated from the aims of education. Schools could lose sight of their overall goals and become mediocre if they only follow the various indicators slavishly.* (EC, 1996, Section 2.11 on p.6 and Section 3.4 on p.11)

## **The Characteristics of Excellent and Effective Schools**

Deal and Allan (1982) clarify two main characteristics of excellent schools. Firstly, excellent schools have a clear and explicit philosophy or vision, a shared sense of purpose, and a common view of what makes for excellent schooling. Secondly, school leaders pay a great deal of attention to shaping and fine tuning a shared set of values that reflect and promote the vision of the school. (DuFour and Eaker, 1987) The following characteristics are found to be strong supporting for effective schooling:

- clear stated educational goals
- a well-planned, balanced and organized programme for meeting the needs of the students

- a systematic and identifiable process for determining educational needs in the school and place them in order of priority
- a motivated and cohesive teaching force with good team spirit
- a high degree of staff involvement in developing school goals and making decisions
- a principal concerned with his own and his staff's professional development, and able to make best use of his staff's skills and experience
- a system for reviewing programmes regularly and evaluating progress towards goals.

(Education and Manpower Branch and HKED, 1991)

In Hong Kong, the Education and Manpower Branch and HKED (1991, pp.27-28) evaluate the effectiveness of Hong Kong schools and conclude that:

- few schools in Hong Kong have formal, operationally useful statements of their educational goals;
- the Government has no clear, widely known statement of what it expects from the education system;
- few schools appear to have a well developed system for planning their own programmes to meet student needs;
- Most schools appear to have no formal procedures for setting policy and for planning to meet educational needs, and involve teachers and others in the policy and planning process.

Decentralization in Hong Kong education started in 1991 with the School Management Initiative (SMI), which, while giving schools more flexibility in the use of their resources, hold them more responsive to parental and social needs as well as more accountable to their stakeholders (Education and Manpower Branch, 1994). That curriculum development should “*meet the community's need for people who can contribute to Hong Kong's social and economic development*” has been declared a policy (Education and Manpower Branch, 1993, p.16). To achieve these objectives, education administrators are beginning to “*make use of marketing principles and strategies to determine programme needs, institutional missions, strengths and*

*weaknesses, and how best to remain competitive (Michael, 1990, p.23)."*

In education, the objective of marketing is the *"continuous satisfaction of an institution's relevant publics in a way that ensures institutional vitality and growth"* (Michael, 1990, p.24). Therefore, in order to remain viable and competitive in face of falling rolls, and social and political changes, schools in Hong Kong must be clear about customer needs and the extent of customer satisfaction.

### **School Education in Hong Kong**

Different types of schools in Hong Kong are following the statement of aims published by the Education and Manpower Branch of the Hong Kong Government Secretariat in 1993.

#### **The Statement of Aims**

In 1993, the Education and Manpower Branch of the Hong Kong Government Secretariat published a booklet entitled 'School Education in Hong Kong: A Statement of Aims'. ECA is part of the school curriculum and help to accomplish these aims (Chan, 1994; HKED, 1997a). The booklet states the fundamental aim of school education in Hong Kong:

*The school education service should develop the potential of every individual child, so that our students become independent-minded and socially aware adults, equipped with the*



*knowledge, skills and attitudes which help them to lead a full life as individuals and play a positive role in the life of the community. (Education and Manpower Branch, Government Secretariat, Hong Kong, 1993, p.8)*

After consultation, EC (2000) states the generally agreed overall aims of education in Hong Kong for the 21<sup>st</sup> century:

*To enable every person to attain all-round development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics according to his/her own attributes so that he/she is capable of life-long learning, critical and exploratory thinking, innovating and adapting to change; filled with self-confidence and a team spirit; willing to put forward continuing effort for the prosperity, progress, freedom and democracy of their society, and contribute to the future well-being of the nation and the world at large. (p.5)*

### The Different Types of Secondary Schools in Hong Kong

Classifying by the school curriculum, there are three types of mainstream secondary schools in Hong Kong namely grammar schools, technical schools and prevocational schools. (Howlett, 1998) In terms of funding, these schools are either Government schools, Aided schools or Private schools. In the school year 1998/1999, there were 389 government/aided secondary schools and 118 private ones, including both day schools and evening schools. (Census and Statistics Department, 1999) This study investigates the management quality of ECA in the mainstream secondary day schools.

## **The Definition of Extracurricular Activities (ECA)**

*Extracurricular activities in school are considered an indispensable part of education. (Terry, 1930, p.vii)*

ECA, in the form of student activities, started from ancient and medieval times, first in the schools of Greece and in medieval Europe with the emphasis on sports and student government. Later, in centuries before 1930, ECA became an important part in English secondary schools focusing on athletics, debates, publications, dramas and clubs. ECA was introduced in American Schools in 1811 with a structure similar to that of English schools. (Terry, 1930)

Wong and Lam (1996), in their research with HKED and the Committee on Home-School Co-operation into the attitude of parents and students towards ECA, quote the widely accepted definition by Good that ECA are

*Programs and events, which carry no academic credit, sponsored and organized by pupils' or students' organization or by the educational institution, designed to entertain, instruct, and/or provide exercise of interests and abilities; subject to some measure of control by the institution. (Good, 1945, p.7)*

The Dictionary of Education (1973) well describes the nature of ECA in schools using examples:

*"Extracurricular (extraclass, co-curricular, student-) activities" refers to the area of the total curriculum which includes experiences not usually provided in typical classes, such as work experiences, out of school experiences, camp experiences, as well as those clubs, assembly programmes, inter-scholastic and intramural athletics,*

*student government, and other activities under the guidance of the school.* (Dictionary of Education, 1973, p.9)

Frederick (1959) refers ECA to student activities with different terms, including:

- Extracurricular Activities
- Extraclass Activities
- Cocurricular Activities
- Informal Curriculum
- Semicurricular Activities
- Creative Activities
- Activities
- Campus Activities
- Noncurricular Activities
- Allied Activities
- Group Activities
- Intercurriculum
- Third Curriculum (the other two are the *Required Curriculum* and the *Elective Curriculum*)

(Frederick 1959, in Wong, 1994, pp.1-2)

Frederick (1959) continues to discuss the characteristics of a student activity: voluntary participation, approval by school authorities, sponsorship (under the guidance of a professional staff), and no academic credit. Frederick (1959) further quotes Halverson (1956) to emphasize that interests and needs of the participants are the major criteria for students activities. Apart from the educational value of ECA, Fung (1966) has similar advocacy to have fun in ECA.

The difficulty in defining the term ECA arises from “*the instability of the demarcation between the curriculum and the extracurriculum*”. (Fung, 1966, p.1) Fung (1966) further explains that the difficulty is due to the fact that “*the latter is a function of the former*” (p.1) which depends on the accepted concept of curriculum of different persons, and “*the kind of extracurricular activities organized depends on the content of the*

*curriculum*" (p.1) In some countries, ECA refers to the area of learning experiences not usually provided in typical classes. In more advanced countries where educationists consider curriculum as the total experience in schooling, therefore the distinction between curricular and extracurricular activities becomes invisible. (Fung, 1966)

### **Extracurricular Activities in Hong Kong Secondary Schools**

*Extracurricular activities are an integral part of school life.* (Howlett, 1998, p.146)

The term ECA is usually referring to those student activities conducted after school in Hong Kong school context. These activities are informal in nature and are usually separated from the formal school curriculum.

With reference to ECA, Wong (1994, p.1) suggests that educators in Hong Kong should first define the term ECA clearly so as to understand the aims, the functions and the benefits of the activities as well as the relationship between the concepts of ECA and the curriculum.

In order to facilitate student learning through ECA, from 1984 onwards, each secondary school in Hong Kong is encouraged by the HKED to set up a functional post of ECA coordinator (now called ECA master/mistress) to facilitate ECA development within the school. As stated in HKED (1997a), ECA masters/mistresses as middle managers, need to set goals, directions and policies for the implementation of ECA. They need to guide students towards proper concepts and encourage students to participate in the

activities. They are accountable to their respective school principals in carrying out management tasks like manpower planning, activity planning, use of resources, training and support, evaluation and appraisal.

Before the publication of the “Guidelines on Extracurricular Activities in School” by the HKED in 1997, ECA in Hong Kong schools was considered as recreational and leisure activities conducted by schools to release the excess energy of the youngsters. It was not regarded seriously as a part of the school curriculum. Hence Fung (1987) comments that ECA can, to a certain extent, supplement the curriculum insufficiency.

Indeed, the term ECA is rather confusing. *“The present trend is toward use of this term (activities, extraclass) instead of extracurricular activities which is misleading in the light of the new definitions of the curriculum.”* (Dictionary of Education, 1973, p.9) Fung (1987) also quotes Fretwell (1931) that ECA should originate from curriculum activities, and at the same time, ECA can enrich the existing curriculum. But, in the heart of some educationalists, ECA is still just treated as a supplement to the school life and not as a necessary and effective means to full school education. However, ECA in schools is conducive to positive student outcomes (Holland and Andre, 1987; Porter, 1991).

In 1997, the HKED formally recognized the educational value of ECA and considers ECA as important components of the school curriculum (HKED, 1997a).

*Extracurricular activities (ECA) are activities that take place outside regular class teaching and yet are related to student learning. As such, they fall within the scope of the school curriculum.* (HKED, 1997a, p.1)

In most Hong Kong schools, ECA refers to the informal curriculum usually conducted after school hours, which can either facilitate students' learning of the formal curriculum, widen pupils' experience or develop students' interest. However, ECA has a low status in Hong Kong schools because of the heavy emphasis on examination performance (Tin and Tsang, 1999) despite the recognition given to ECA by the HKED in 1997. The details will be discussed in Chapter 3.

According to the results of a study carried out in 1994 into the job stress of the ECA masters/mistresses in Hong Kong secondary schools (Tsang, 1996), nearly half (48.0 percent) of the ECA masters/mistresses reported that they were either in extremely stressful or very stressful situations. One of the major stressors was work quantity overload. And only 56.9 percent of the ECA masters/mistresses had received necessary ECA management training. ECA masters/mistresses are the key persons for the development of ECA in secondary schools, so their leadership and managerial skills will eventually affect ECA quality. A school cannot be an effective one if the quality of ECA is overlooked.

### **The Purposes and Outcomes of this Study**

*Because the extra-curricular program has been so emphasized in recent years, thoughtful students are now trying to discover just which of the values claimed for these activities are really to be found in them. The first step in evaluation must necessarily be a survey of existing practices. (Bellingrath, 1930, p.2)*

This study aims at identifying the essential features for effective management of ECA for quality learning outcomes and customer satisfaction. This study also looks for the

answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the modes of practice in the management of ECA in various Hong Kong secondary schools?
2. Are there any factors hindering the development of ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools? If so, what are they?
3. Are the ECA masters/mistresses satisfied with the ECA educational services in Hong Kong secondary schools?
4. Are there any quality gaps in delivering ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools? If so, what are they?
5. What Total Quality Management techniques can be applied to the management of ECA in school settings?
6. Which Total Quality Education models are effective for the management of ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools?

With the above five research questions, the outcomes anticipated from this study include:

1. Facts about the management of ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools.
2. A reference list to benchmark the outstanding ECA practices in Hong Kong secondary schools.
3. Quality service gaps identified.
4. To establish the degree of customer satisfaction about ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools.
5. Recommendations for quality improvement and suggestions for further studies.

## **Summary**

In this introduction, those basic concepts concerning ECA, effective schools, and the statements of aims of Hong Kong school education have been discussed. Chapter one also reviews the education quality movement in the Hong Kong school context by first introducing some background information concerning Hong Kong secondary schools. The functions and the running of ECA in Hong Kong schools are discussed as well. With the help of the research questions, this chapter also outlines the purposes and expected outcomes of this study.

Following this chapter, in Chapter 2, there will be a further review of literature concerning the concepts of quality management, quality movement in Hong Kong school settings, quality tools and quality gaps. In Chapter 3, there will be a review of literature concerning extracurricular activities. The methodology of the study will be discussed in Chapter 4. With the findings in Chapter 5 and 6, an analysis will be carried out in Chapter 7. In light of the analysis, some recommendations for quality management of ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools are proposed and the conclusions from the research are made in Chapter 8.



## **Chapter 2 Literature Review:**

### **Quality Management in Education**

In this chapter, the main elements concerning effective schools, quality standards and quality of education will be discussed. The quality issues like the definition of quality, the quality process, the principles of total quality management and its pitfalls are scrutinized with the help of literature and using the advocacy of the quality gurus. Some effective quality management tools are also introduced. Since this study is designed to look into the quality in educational service, the customers in school settings will be discussed by identifying the different roles of the students in the quality process. The quality movement in Hong Kong school education are further discussed. Quality awards, like the BS5750/ISO9000 series, Investors in People, and Malcolm Baldrige Award are introduced. By examining the issues concerning service quality and the roles of ECA masters/mistresses, the particulars of management quality of ECA in Hong Kong schools are further exposed.

#### **Effective Schools**

Winch (1966a) emphasizes consumer-based approaches to education quality, so quality can be judged in terms of “value for money” and accountability.

*Accountability means demonstrating quality returns on quality investments with products and services provided more efficiently and*

*effectively to satisfy customer demands and meet their expectations*  
(Weller, 1996, p.30).

Sammons et al. (1995) comment that the great majority of school effectiveness studies focus exclusively on students' cognitive results and only a few on social and affective outcomes. In order to raise people's concern about the importance of non-academic achievement in school education, the EC (1997) of Hong Kong states in its report number 7 (ECR7) :

*Care must be taken not to put undue emphasis on academic achievement at the expense of other areas in assessing a school's performance. We are mindful of the need for a balanced assessment in quality school education...* (ECR7, p.14, Section 2.16)

By quoting Csikszentmihalyi (1990) that "*It is not that students cannot learn; it is that they do not wish to*" (Tomlinson and Cross, 1991, p.71)", Tomlinson and Cross (1991) argue that student effort is the key to higher standards. Similarly, Betts (1992) views education as a system in which there is a need to shift from "an emphasis on instruction" to "an emphasis on learning".

## **Standards and Quality in Education**

Schlechty and Cole (1992) and Eisner (1993) emphasize the importance of having appropriate standards for schools. The terms "standards" and "quality" are two different, but equally important, concepts. Standards in the form of performance indicators (PIs) are one of the tools which are vital to the process of knowing precisely where an organization is and where it wants to be in two to five years' time.

(Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham, 1994) Bowring-Carr and West Burnham (1994) continue to explain that *“An indicator merely points to the possibility of something happening, but not, by itself, proof”* (p.29) and *“PIs are entirely neutral and merely starting points for further detailed investigation.”* (p.30) Quality is a more holistic concept than standards, which are more specific. Standards can serve as a tool to monitor an organization’s progress towards quality. The EC (1994) identifies three kinds of education standards, namely the input standard, the output standard and the process standard.

Quality, on the other hand, refers to fitness for use (Juran, 1989), conforming to requirements (Crosby, 1984), surpassing customer needs and expectations (Deming, 1987), and economy and efficiency. According to the International Organization for Standardisation (1986) and British Standards Institute (1992), quality is defined as:

*the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs. (ISO 8402: Quality – Vocabulary, 1986 in Stebbing, 1989, p.1; British Standards Institutes, 1992 in Dickens, 1994, p.8)*

The EC’s (1994) three classifications of standards discussed above coincide with Tenner and Detoro’s (1992) definition of Education Quality quoted in Cheng (1996):

*The character of the set of elements in the input, process, and outcome of the education system that provides services that completely satisfy both internal and external strategic constituencies by meeting their explicit and implicit expectations. (Cheng, 1996, p.68)*

Gorden and Partington (1993) and Rowley (1997), on the other hand, define

educational quality by focusing on the learning experience of the students. There is no general definition of educational quality (Weiss, 1988). The concept of educational quality depends on the concept of the major purpose and objectives of education in different countries, for different groups and among individuals (Heyneman and White, 1986). Therefore, Weiss (1988, p.73) continues to point out that, “... *we must err on the side of caution by not assuming that what makes one school effective will work in another context.*”

Ramsden (1992) writes, “*Good teaching encourages high quality student learning.*” (p.86) Martens and Prosser (1998) explain that the concept of quality teaching lies in the improvement of how and what the students are learning. Winch (1996a) emphasizes the knowledge and care for the type of service. So the approaches for quality assurance of teaching and learning include (a) a focus on the continuous improvement of student learning, and (b) a focus on the management of staff performance. (Martens and Prosser, 1998)

Glasser (1990b) says that school managers do not manage quality and most school teachers do not think of quality. Winch (1996b) explains why: unlike commercial organizations, education institutions do not need to compete in the market and make profit in order to survive.

The quality of school education relates not just to academic knowledge, but also to the attitudes, skills and values which schools help students to develop (EC, 1994). Sutherland (1990, p.168) claims that “*Everyone agrees that the competence and commitment of teachers are a vital prerequisite for producing an education of quality.*” Quality outcomes also involve budget management, the efficiency of the instructional

delivery system and the use of technology (Weller, 1996). The EC (1997) stresses that education outcomes should achieve the aims of education and meet the public expectations in an efficient, accountable and cost-effective way.

## **The Definition of Quality**

*Some things are better than others, that is, they have more quality.*  
(Dickens, 1994, p.7)

According to Winch (1996b), there are four distinct approaches to quality. Firstly, the total approach which links quality to excellence as proposed by Peters and Waterman. Secondly, the product-based approach suggested by Crosby who associates quality with the precision of the product and defect avoidance. Thirdly, the user-based approach from Parasuraman et al (1985) which aims at customer needs and satisfaction. Fourthly, the value-based approach that defines quality in terms of “value for money”.

There is no satisfactory definition or measurement of quality (Bolton, 1995) and “*the concept of quality of schools is in many ways a confusing one*” (Alkin, 1988). Quality is a disputed concept (Paine, Turner and Pryke, 1992; Doherty, 1997) and is a “slippery concept” (Pfeffer and Coote, 1991; Sallis, 1993) with no consensus definition (Cheng and Tam, 1997), so there is a lack of clarity in the quality assurance systems. Quality can be defined both as an “absolute concept”, like beauty and luxury, and a “relative concept”, like meeting specifications and expectations (Sallis, 1993), according to the application and situation.

## **Education Quality**

Using the concepts of quality from the management literature, Cheng and Cheung (1997) explain the various meanings of education quality:

*The term 'quality in education' has different meanings and has been variously defined as excellence in education (Peters and Waterman, 1982), value added in education (Feigenbaum, 1951), fitness of educational outcome and experience for use (Juran and Gryna, 1988), conformance of education output to planned goals, specifications and requirements (Gilmore, 1974; Crosby, 1979) defect avoidance in education process (Crosby, 1979), meeting and/or exceeding customers' expectations of education (Parasuraman et al., 1985), etc. (p.451)*

Although there are various meanings of education quality (Cheng and Cheung, 1997), Bonstingl (1992a) states that a good education is a process for the overall development of students' abilities, interests and character. These areas of personal constructs should therefore be the direction in which quality education lies.

Harvey and Green (1993, p.10) state that “(quality) means different things to different people, indeed the same person may adopt different conceptualizations at different moments.” In discussing education quality, Cheng (1995b) argues that the conception of education quality is too vague and too simplistic in directing improvement efforts. Tam (1995, p.75) extends Harvey and Green's (1993) conceptualization by grouping educational quality into six areas (Table 2.1). Table 2.2 from Tam (1995) illustrates the different models for evaluating program quality.

Quality As	Examples of Evaluation Models
<b>I. Fitness for Purpose</b>	
1. Satisfying institutional goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Goal model</li> <li>● Others</li> </ul>
2. Meeting customers' needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Customer-oriented model</li> <li>● Goal-free model</li> <li>● Others</li> </ul>
<b>II. Process Perfection, e.g.</b>	
3. Zero-defects in process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Process/delivery model</li> <li>● Educational criticism model</li> <li>● Others</li> </ul>
<b>III. Producing Positive Change, e.g.</b>	
4. Intended outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Objectives-based model</li> <li>● Others</li> </ul>
5. Intended and unintended outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Goal-free model</li> <li>● Others</li> </ul>
<b>IV. Standards, e.g.</b>	
6. Something exclusive and rare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Educational criticism model</li> <li>● Others</li> </ul>
7. Achieving high standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Input-output model</li> <li>● Others</li> </ul>
8. Passing a set of required standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discrepancy evaluation model</li> <li>● Others</li> </ul>
<b>V. Efficiency</b>	
9. Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Management analysis model</li> <li>● System model</li> <li>● Others</li> </ul>
<b>VI. A Variety of Excellence, e.g.</b>	
10. Goal fitness, impacts, standards, and efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CIPP (context, input, process, product) model</li> <li>● Others</li> </ul>

**Table 2.1 Conceptualizations of Quality and Evaluation Models**  
(adopted from Tam, 1995, p.76)

Wayne (1983) emphasises the new quality concept of “*customer satisfactions*”. Deming (1986a), Beaver (1994) and Trott (1997) argue that customer/client satisfaction is just an “acceptable baseline” and we should set our aim further to delight our customers. Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990) state that “*only customers judge quality; all other judgements are essentially irrelevant*” and claim that “*a product or service possesses quality if it helps somebody and enjoys a good and sustainable market*” (Deming, 1993b, p.2). Feigenbaum refers to quality as “*what the customer says it is*” and Peters specifies quality to “*obsessive responsiveness (to customers)*” (Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham, 1994a, p.41). So, quality can be defined as “*fitness to use*” (Ho and Wearn, 1996, p.36). Crosby (1979, 1984) refers quality to the “*conformance to requirement*” with zero defects – “do it right the first time”.

Model	Areas of Concern	Main Elements
Goal Model (Hall)	Does the program clearly specify its own goal? Are the goals met effectively and efficiently?	Identify and assess goals specified in program. Assess program's capacity to fulfill it's own goals.
Input-output Model (Fuller)	What are the inputs and outputs? What inputs (e.g. costs, environment, teachers, etc.) can raise achievement?	Identify and/or measure the quantity and quality of educational inputs. Attempts to correlate input with output data are sometimes made.
Process Model (Porter)	How is the program operated? What is the operation quality? Does every student has equal opportunity to learn?	Develop observation and recording schemes for operation variables and procedures. If possible, separate effects of program implementation from program theory.
Objective-based Model (Tyler, Popham)	Are the students achieving the objectives? What are the gains in different domains?	Choose and specify objectives in behavioural terms, measure students' achievement of objectives (preferably in different domains).
Goal-free Evaluation (Scriven)	Ignoring the official claims, what are all the direct and indirect effects?	Survey program recipients to assess the quantity and quality of all types of program impacts.
Management Analysis (Stufflebeam, Alkin)	What are the options? The costs? What part are effective?	Identify options, making cost estimates, use surveys, questionnaires, interviews, observations to assess effectiveness.
Systems Analysis Model (Rivlin)	Are the effects achieved? What are the effects of the components and of the interaction? Can efficiency be improved?	Quantification of input, process, and output variables, analyse their relationships, assess the weightings of different variables and their interactions.
CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) Model (Stufflebeam)	Are the needs of the target audience met? Is the program properly designed and implemented? Are positive results achieved?	Identify program strengths and weakness, ability to meet needs (context); select/judge installation plan (input); ongoing check on implementation (process); measure and judge attainment (product).
Adversary Evaluation (Owens, Levine)	What are the arguments for and against the issue/program?	Identify issue, prepare evidence and arguments, open forum/debate with public presentation of data.
Educational Criticism (Eisner)	What are the merits and demerits of the program? What are the views of experts?	Critical analysis based on evaluator's expertise and sharp perceptions.
Discrepancy Evaluation Model (Steinmetz)	What is the difference between what something actually is and what something should be?	Helping and facilitating the client who has the responsibility to set standard (S), collecting data on performance (P), and discrepancy (D). Is the difference between (S) and (P) significant?
Consumer-oriented Model (Scriven)	Is the program meeting consumers' needs? Is the quality good and worthy of the costs?	Conduct needs assessment, goal-free evaluation, cost analysis; use surveys, checklists and interviews; use an external independent consumer advocate to conduct and report findings.

**Table 2.2 Characteristics of Some Models for Evaluating Program Quality**  
(adopted from Tam, 1995, p.78)

In Table 2.1, Tam summarizes the different concepts suggested by various quality experts, for example Juran's "fitness for purpose" (Bowring-Carr and West Burnham,



1994a), Crosby's (1979, 1984) "process perfection" and "conformance to requirement". Tam also suggests in Table 2.1 the various models for the evaluation of different aspects of education quality, and further identifies in Table 2.2 the areas of concern and the main quality elements of the different models raised by other experts. These two tables provide guidelines for schools to evaluate the quality of their educational programmes. Since a single evaluation model may not be sufficient to evaluate the overall quality of a particular education programme within a school, the author of this paper recommends that schools adopt an integrated approach by applying different models together, according to different school situations and the characteristics of the different models discussed in Table 2.2.

### **The Quality Gurus**

W. Edward Deming and Joseph Juran are seen as the founders of the quality movement (Weindling, 1992). Both of them emphasize that people in the organization is the main concern for quality, not the product.

Deming, the father of the TQM movement, emphasizes "three Cs" – a focus on Customer, Culture, and Capacity for continuous improvement (Cotton, 1994). "*Work smarter, not harder* (Deming, 1986b)." Deming suggests that it is the organization system that creates production faults. Deming's idea is to get the product "right the first time" to eliminate cost and maintain quality (Winch, 1996b).

To improve production, Deming suggests using statistical methods to reduce variability. He argues that the management are responsible for 85 percent of production faults

(Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham, 1994a). Deming believes that system innovations come from the input of the employees, who are most familiar with the work. The power of TQM concepts derives (1) from their psychological and value-driven base, and (2) from their “totalness” (Rhodes, 1992). Deming’s 14 principles, which should be considered as a whole (Holt, 1993), are:

1. Create constancy of purpose for improvement of product and service.
2. Adopt the new (Deming) philosophy.
3. Cease dependence on inspection to achieve quality. Build in quality in the first place.
4. End the practice of awarding business on the basis of price alone.
5. Improve constantly and forever every process.
6. Institute training on the job.
7. Adopt and institute leadership.
8. Drive out fear.
9. Break down barriers between staff areas.
10. Eliminate slogans, exhortations, and targets for the staff.
11. Eliminate numerical quotas for the staff and goals for management.
12. Remove barriers that rob people of pride of workmanship.
13. Institute a vigorous program of education and self-improvement for everyone.
14. Put everybody in the organization to work to accomplish the transformation.

Juran, the author of “*Managerial Breakthrough*” and “*Quality Planning*”, sees that the empowerment of workforce, to create a culture for continuous learning with autonomy and personal responsibility, is the key for quality success. Juran proposes his famous Breakthrough Sequence for quality: (1) Breakthrough in attitude; (2) Identify the vital few projects; (3) Organize for breakthrough in knowledge; (4) Conduct the analysis; (5) Determine how to overcome resistance to change; (6) Institute the change; and finally (7) Institute controls. (Tse, 1994)

Juran defines quality as “fitness for purpose” and emphasizes reducing the cost of quality by increasing conformance. He also identifies four components for company-wide systematic quality programme: (1) Identify goals and policies for quality; (2) Implement plans to meet the goals; (3) Provide resources to evaluate progress; and (4) Ensure appropriate motivation. (Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham, 1994a)

Juran identifies ten steps to quality improvement: (1) Create awareness of the need and opportunity for improvement; (2) Set explicit goals for improvement; (3) Create an organizational structure to drive the improvement process; (4) Provide appropriate training; (5) Adopt a project approach to problem solving; (6) Identify and report progress; (7) Recognise and reinforce success; (8) Communicate results; (9) Keep records of changes; and finally (10) Build an annual improvement cycle into all company processes. (Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham, 1994a)

Crosby, the author of “*Quality Without Tears*” and “*Quality is Free*”, is again one of the quality gurus who defines quality as the conformance to customer requirements [1]. Crosby emphasizes that the system should be focused on prevention rather than detection [2]. Crosby sets zero defect as the standard of quality [3], and the price of non-conformance to be the measurement of quality [4]. The above four points are what he called the four absolutes of quality. Here are Crosby’s fourteen steps to quality improvement:

1. Establish full management commitment to the quality programme.
2. Set up a quality team to drive the programme.
3. Introduce quality measurement procedures.
4. Define and apply the principle of the cost of quality.
5. Institute a quality awareness programme.
6. Introduce corrective action procedures.

7. Plan for the implementation of zero defects.
8. Implement supervisor training.
9. Announce zero defect day to launch the process.
10. Set goals to bring about action.
11. Set up employee-management communication systems.
12. Recognise those who have actively participated.
13. Set up quality councils to sustain the process.
14. Do it all over again. (Crosby, 1984; Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham, 1994a)

After comparing the different perspectives of Deming, Juran and Crosby, Tse (1994) lists the similarities of their advocacy. They all emphasize the commitment and participation of the top management; collegial team spirit; the development of a quality culture through education; skill training for quality improvement; setting quality standards for measurement; the analysis and recognition of quality costs; continuous improvement; and the participation of staff at different levels. (Tse, 1994)

The concept of quality management has been applied to education by many writers. Table 2.3 gives a summary of the interpretations of Deming's (1988) 14 points in education by some of these authors. Kaufman and Zahn (1993) compare the foci of the Conventional and Quality Management approaches to education in Table 2.4.

Deming's 14 points	Holt's Interpretation in educational context (Holt, 1993)	Adaptation for School contexts (Paine, Turner and Pryke, 1992)
1. Create constancy of purpose for improvement of product and service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What and Why are we doing?</li> <li>Establish the moral purpose of the school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create constancy of purpose for improvements of students, staff and school services</li> </ul>
2. Adopt the new (Deming) philosophy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everybody wins when they cooperate.</li> <li>Make the transformation to the new philosophy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasis on quality teaching and quality schools.</li> <li>Educational management takes initiative in the Quality movement.</li> </ul>
3. Cease dependence on inspection to achieve quality. Build in quality in the first place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design quality in</li> <li>Focus not on outputs but on the activity of teaching and learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>End inspections.</li> <li>Teachers provide learning experiences that produce quality performance.</li> <li>Students should strive for quality to satisfy their customers (teachers, parents, students).</li> </ul>
4. End the practice of awarding business on the basis of price alone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't buy the price tag alone</li> <li>Examine proposed innovations carefully</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working closely with feeder schools and parents to improve the quality of the intake students.</li> </ul>
5. Improve constantly and forever every process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuous improvement</li> <li>Identify and solve curriculum problems in the context of school system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continual evaluation and search for improvement in systems and processes.</li> </ul>
6. Institute training on the job.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide training for skills</li> <li>Invest in teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff development.</li> <li>Appreciate quality role models.</li> <li>Develop skills for students.</li> </ul>
7. Adopt and institute leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institute leadership</li> <li>Establish collegiality and optimize the system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principal leads staff and students to do better.</li> <li>Leadership rather than supervisory role in management.</li> </ul>
8. Drive out fear.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drive out fear</li> <li>Promote mutual respect and trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Point out problems and seek improvement</li> </ul>
9. Break down barrier between staff areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Break down barriers</li> <li>Cooperate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Break down barriers between departments and seek for collegiality.</li> </ul>
10. Eliminate slogans, exhortations, and targets for the staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eliminate slogans</li> <li>Interrogate the system, not the teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove those slogans, exhortations and numerical quotas from outside agencies.</li> <li>Continue self- and group-improvement to replace marks</li> </ul>
11. Eliminate numerical quotas for the staff and goals for management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Method matters</li> <li>Minimize objectives and outcomes; focus on educational encounters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strive for quality at all levels.</li> <li>Should not aim at raising test scores</li> </ul>
12. Remove barriers that rob people of pride of workmanship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek joy in work. No merit pay.</li> <li>No rating of students or teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pride in staff's performance and students' work.</li> </ul>
13. Institute a vigorous program of education and self-improvement for everyone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing education and self-improvement. Not job training, but education</li> <li>Provide further professional studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A vigorous program of education and self-improvement for everyone.</li> </ul>
14. Put everybody in the organization to work to accomplish the transformation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accomplish the transformation</li> <li>Support the program at all levels, from school board to school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyone plays a part in accomplishing the transformation to quality.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.3 Deming's 14 points and their interpretations for educational settings (Kaufman and Zahn, 1993)**

<b>Conventional Management</b>	<b>Quality Management</b>
Conformance to specifications	Client satisfaction and success
Control learner	Self-control
System defines quality	Clients define quality
Learner is passive	Learner is active
Frequent inspection	Continuous improvement
Cost driven	Results driven
Budget-driven plans	Plan-driven budgets
If it works don't change	If it works change
Quality in after-the-fact	Quality is continuous and starts with plans
Change is expensive	Change is profitable
Education costs	Education pays

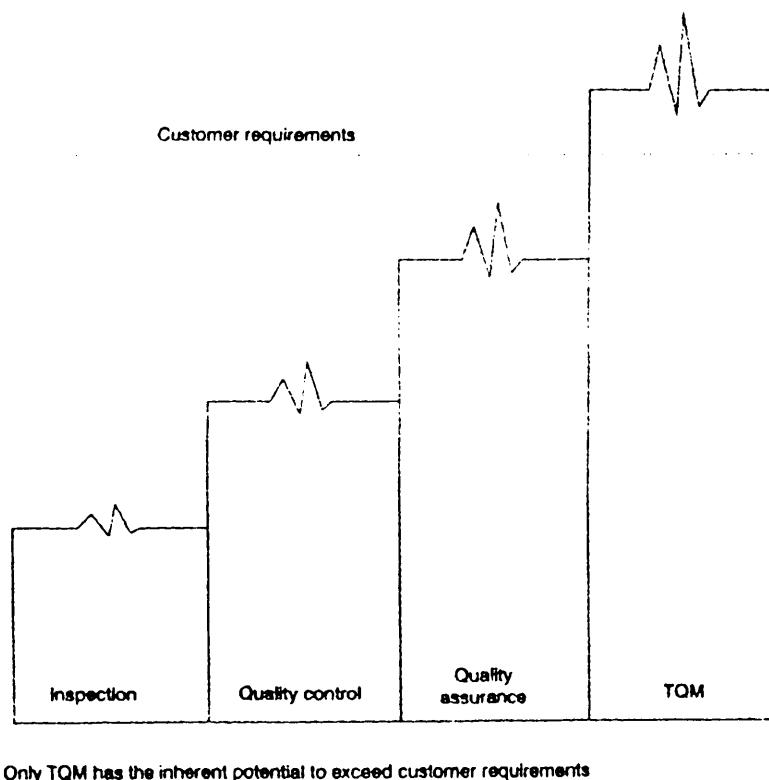
**Table 2.4      The Conventional and Quality Management approaches to education.**

### **The Quality Processes**

Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham (1994a) explain the hierarchy of quality management, from Dale and Plunkett (1990). The four quality management levels are inspection, quality control, quality assurance, and total quality management. Inspection refers to the examination of the products at the end of the production line in order to find out those defective products that cannot conform to the specifications. Quality control focuses on the production process, and reviews and monitors the programmes by searching for feedback from staff and students. Quality assurance is a prevention rather than correction process to guarantee that the quality of the products meets the predetermined specifications and requirements. *“In education, quality assurance examines the aims, contents, resourcing, levels and projected outcomes of modules, programmes, and courses (Doherty, 1994, p.11).”* Quality management is the complete process designed to guarantee the existence of the quality processes. *“In*

*education, (quality management may include) market analysis, curriculum development, strategic and course planning, resourcing, validation, monitoring and review of student learning experiences.” (Doherty, 1994, p.11) Total quality management is an integration of the other processes with its emphasis on customer orientation (Tse, 1994).*

Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham (1994a, p.13) illustrate the characteristics and the hierarchy of quality concepts (see Figure 2.1).



**Figure 2.1 The hierarchy of quality concepts:  
Inspection, Control, Assurance and TQM**

## **The Definition of Total Quality Management (TQM)**

The Total Quality Management concept introduced by Dr Deming had been one of the reasons for Japanese industrial success since the 1950s. TQM is defined by Tobin (1990, p.10) as *“the totally integrated effort for gaining competition advantage by continuously improving every facet of organizational culture”*. Ho and Wearn (1996, p.36) quote the comprehensive definition of TQM from Wilkinson and Witcher (1991):

- *Total: every person in the firm is involved, including customers and suppliers*
- *Quality: customer requirements are met exactly*
- *Management: senior executives are fully committed*

Deming stresses that quality is everyone's responsibility (Weindling, 1992). Rhodes (1992), after scrutinizing the principles and elements of TQM, defines it by emphasizing its continuous improvement aspect:

*Total Quality Management is a value-based, information-driven management process through which the minds and talents of people at all levels are applied fully and creatively to the organization's continuous improvement.* (Rhodes, 1992, p.80)

## **The TQM Principles**

The essence of TQM is based on *“do it right the first time”* rather than *“not do it right and fix it later”* (Crosby, 1984; Eriksen, 1995). But *“doing things right doesn't mean doing the right thing”* (Drucker, 1973; Kaufman and Hirumi, 1992). Eriksen (1995) points out that the thrust of TQM is (a) focusing on prevention rather than inspection;



and (b) identifying and correcting the problem at the source. TQM emphasizes prevention which is at a cheaper cost than fixing the problems.

TQM principles include “*leadership, commitment, total customer satisfaction, continuous improvement, total involvement, training and education, ownership of problems, reward and recognition, error prevention, and team-work* (Ho and Wearn, 1996, p.37)”. TQM emphasizes “*individual values, designing provision to satisfy demand and reduction of costs* (Bolton, 1995, p.17)”.

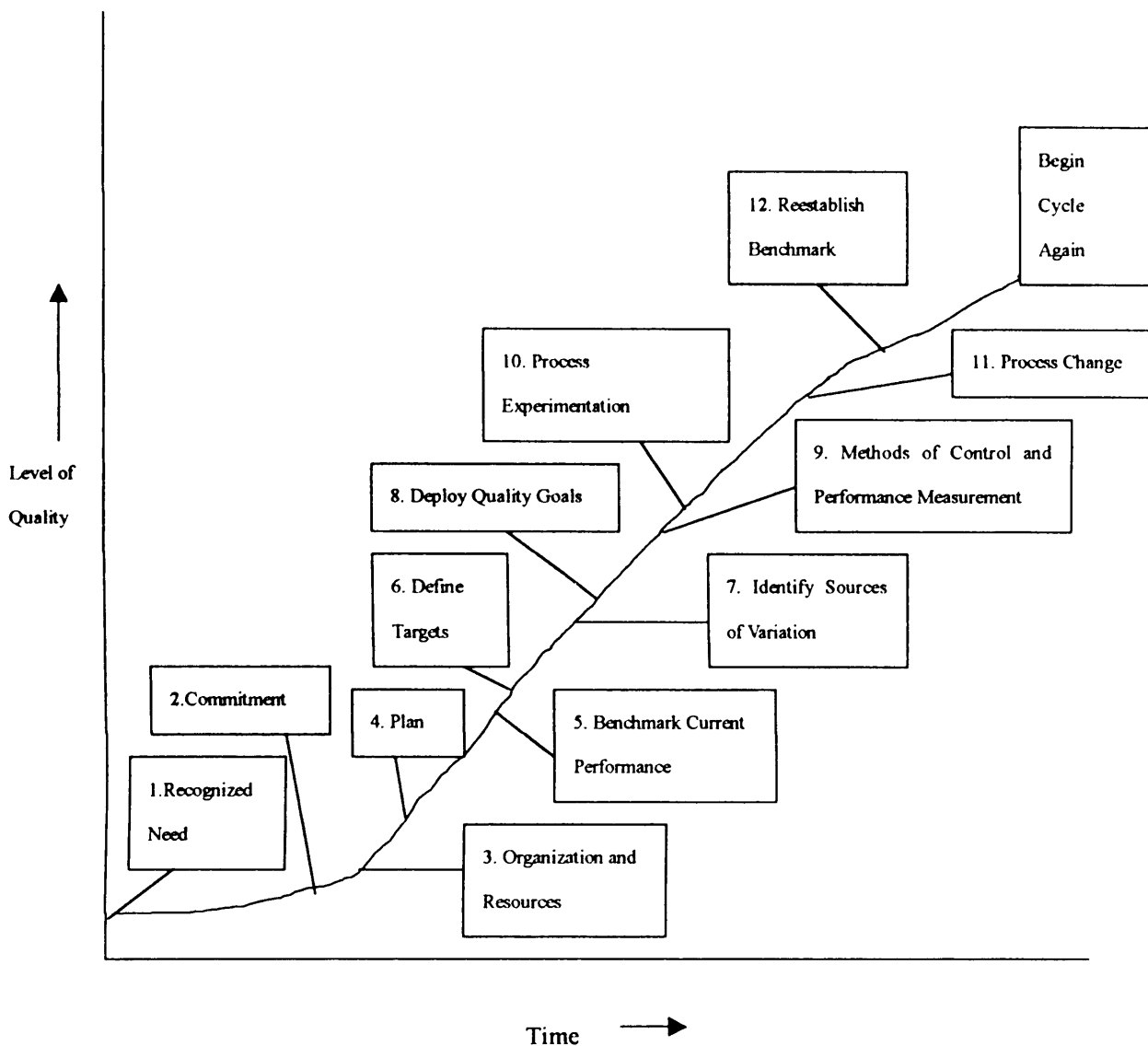
According to the 85/15 rule by the quality guru Juran, 85 percent of an organization’s quality problem comes from poorly designed processes (Sallis, 1993). TQM is not a quick fix (Rappaport, 1993; Holt, 1993) and TQM focuses on “process improvement” (Schmoker and Wilson, 1995) with leadership commitment, on-going training and team building (Rappaport, 1993). TQM is a tool to maximize organization profits by increasing its market share and/or reducing cost (Desjardins and Obara, 1993). With quality management, the organization will have a positive return on investment through client satisfaction (Kaufman and Zahn, 1993).

Doherty (1994, p.17) outlines the generic characteristics of TQM:

- The customers’ expectations and requirements are most important.
- Quality is what meets the customers’ need, not what the producer specifies.
- Quality to the customer depends on the effectiveness of internal client chains – a *sine qua non*.
- Teamwork is essential.
- Hierarchies should be cut down to no more than four levels between the bottom and top management.
- Continuous quality improvement is based on small-scale incremental activities – *Kaizen*.

- Total commitment from management – leadership from the top is essential.
- Long-term commitment is essential – success is never complete, as the constantly changing external environment requires constant re-adjustment of the enterprise.
- The key aim is organizational transformation to a “quality culture”.
- Staff appraisal for development is essential.
- Staff participation and commitment based on education and training are essential.
- Recognition of good performance by individuals or teams is needed.
- Benchmarking and the measurement of change are needed to underpin the system.
- Getting out and getting involved is essential. (Doherty, 1994, p.17)

Laza and Wheaton (1990) develop a twelve-step quality cycle (Figure 2.2). The quality cycle starts from recognition of need, from gaining commitment and planning, to process changes and the reestablishment of benchmarking. The cycle restarts again.



**Figure 2.2 Quality Cycle**

(adopted from Laza and Wheaton, 1990, p.19)

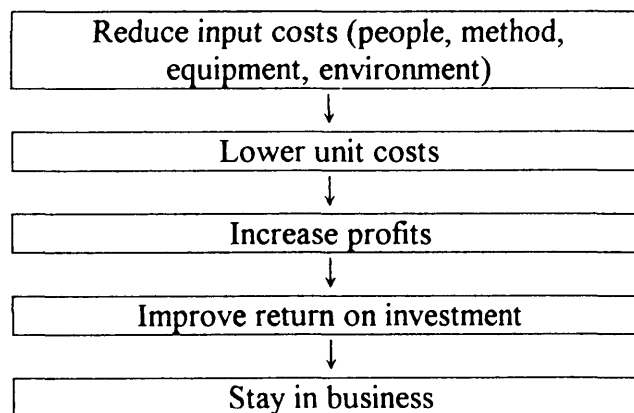
## Quality Costs

According to Crosby (1984), costs of quality include the price of non-conformance (PONC) and the price of conformance (POC). It is the price of non-conformance that the measurement of quality lies. One of the major misconceptions about quality is that quality is costly. The other misconception is that quality costs are the cost of the

quality department or quality function. The defect prevention policy of TQM management will in fact reduce or eliminate the cost for inspection in the traditional management (Eriksen, 1995).

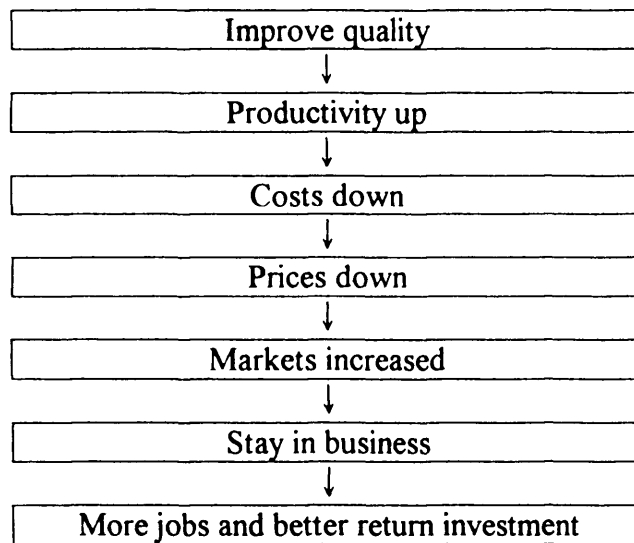
Dickens (1994) identifies four quality costs, namely internal failure costs (cost for production faults), external failure costs (after delivery remedial cost), appraisal cost (cost for inspection and control), and prevention costs (cost of assurance system and audits).

Figures 2.3 and 2.4, adapted in Eriksen (1995, p.17), illustrate the differences between the traditional model and Deming's model of management:



**Figure 2.3     The traditional model**

(Source: *Personnel Management*, 1987 in Eriksen, 1995)



**Figure 2.4 Deming's model**

(Source: *Personnel Management*, 1987 in Eriksen 1995)

These two models are different in that the traditional model emphasizes the reduction of input costs so as to increase profits for company survival, while the Deming's progressive model stresses the improvement of quality for cost reduction and market increase.

### **The Pitfalls of TQM**

Laza and Wheaton (1990, p.19) identify some of the pitfalls of TQM:

- Oversimplification and underestimation of the difficulty of bringing about cultural change;
- Failure to recognize that every company, and every environment, is different;
- Lack of project management and/or the management of TQM implementation as a project;

- Conducting mass training before establishing support systems for TQM;
- Overemphasizing technical tools at the expense of leadership and management issues;
- Applying tools before needs are determined and direction is established; and
- Failure to provide the structure to move the program to supplier or subcontractor organizations.

West-Burnham (1997) summarises the main objections to the total quality approach to management in education: (1) Managerialism denies professionalism; (2) Hierarchical accountability diminishes collegiality and autonomy; (3) The emphasis on leadership denies democracy; (4) Managerialism denies educational values; (5) Management is inevitably manipulative; and (6) Educational outcomes cannot be managed. In the Hong Kong school context, where school teachers do not necessarily undergo initial teacher training before employment, some teachers may not be professional and therefore managerial practices are essential for accountability purposes to ensure that schools' daily practices are economic, efficient and effective. Leadership, either instructional or educational, within a hierarchical structure in schools has demonstrated to be cost-effective in school management in Hong Kong since the 1960s. (OUHK, 2000) Democracy without professional knowledge of teachers and without effective management and leadership may eventually lead to chaos. The author agrees that educational outcomes can hardly be managed but schools should demonstrate a quality process and a collegial culture aiming at quality educational outcomes. Therefore a "totalness" (Rhodes, 1992) in quality management is vital for school success. Some school workers in Hong Kong have a negative attitude towards a total quality approach in the school setting. West-Burnham (1997) explains that *"the many concerns that have been raised about the appropriateness of total quality have usually been based on a limited view of quality – concentrating on aspects of quality assurance rather than the holistic model (p.12)."*

Quality control, to a certain extent, eliminates diversity and encourages uniformity. (Capper and Jamison, 1993; Kohn, 1993a; Bolton, 1995). Sztajn (1992) values the uniqueness of educational products but Holt (1994) is dissatisfied with such “management by objectives” approach that implies a measure of uniformity, ignoring the differences among students. Brandt (1992b, 1992c) criticizes:

*Some educators think that Deming is always seeking ways to reduce variation. In manufacturing processes that makes sense. In people process it may not. ... We must provide for the whole broad range of people and find ways to make them all successful, to experience joy in learning. (p.29)*

By accepting that there are variations, Brandt (1992c) reminds people in the education sector to focus on the process rather than on the product. *“Education is not a product defined by specific output measures; it is a process, the development of the mind.”* (Holt, 1994, p.85) In service context, like education, customers are involved in the process of service delivery (Lehtinen and Lehtinen, 1991; Owlia and Aspinwall, 1996). Costa and Liebmann (1995) further add, *“Process is as important as contents.”* (p.23) This view is particularly important in the ECA management.

Since TQM encourages teamwork at all levels (Holt, 1994; Bonstingl, 1992b) and starts from the top, Oakland (1993) worries about the “obsessional commitment” of those involved without enough consultation. There is a revolution and total culture change when an organization adopts TQM. (Murdock, 1992) *“A school’s culture and ethos will guide action and influence the attitudes and opinions of all who come into contact with it.”* (Hampton, 1994, p.65) The school culture helps the teachers and the students to judge if the school is providing good education and an opportunity for student

learning. (Anderson, 1982; Rosenholtz, 1985 and Oakes, 1989) Therefore, carrying out TQM in schools without first nurturing a suitable TQM culture will eventually lead to failure.

In discussing the implementation of TQM, Davies and West-Burnham (1997) suggest that schools should start with incremental improvements. Schmoker and Wilson (1995) explains:

*Numerous independent studies now explain how the minority of TQ efforts succeed, and why the majority fail: without an emphasis on short-term, **measurable** goals and results, organizations become mired in the activity-centered spirit of failure and expense. (p.64)*

Brandt (1992a) quotes Peters (1992) that 80 percent of TQM programmes in the private sector produce no tangible benefits for the leaders cannot internalize the values basic to quality. The institutional managers or team leaders need to bear the responsibility to share information, set clear goals, build relationships, and recognize good values (Colling and Harvey, 1995).

### **Some Tools for Quality Management**

Deming's Plan-Do-Check-Act Cycle (sometimes called Shewhart Cycle or PDCA Cycle) is the fundamental TQM process to improve a measurable system. Improvement plans are first developed and followed by the implementation of the change. The effect of the change is observed and the act is standardized once it is found successful. The cycle is then repeated for continuous improvement. However, Weller (1993, 1996)



points out that the PDCA cycle is more appropriate for assessing tangible results, for intangible outcomes can hardly be measurable in quantifiable terms.

Statistical Process Control (SPC) is another TQM tool usually adopted in industrial processes involving materials with measurable outcomes to minimize the variations of the products. SPC is rarely used to measure human outcomes that are affected by various influencing factors (Doherty, 1997). There are some other quality management tools:

### Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a business tool for quality improvement. (Turkers, 1996) Spendolini (1992) defines benchmarking as

*a continuous, systematic process for evaluating the products, services and work processes of organizations that are recognized as representing best practices, for the purposes of organizational improvements. (p.25)*

According to Camp (1989), there are three categories of benchmarking. *Internal benchmarking* refers to measuring and comparing performance against internal operations standards. *Industry benchmarking* compares with competitors in the same industry. *Process benchmarking* weighs generic process against operations of the leader in the same function. (Cheng, 1996)

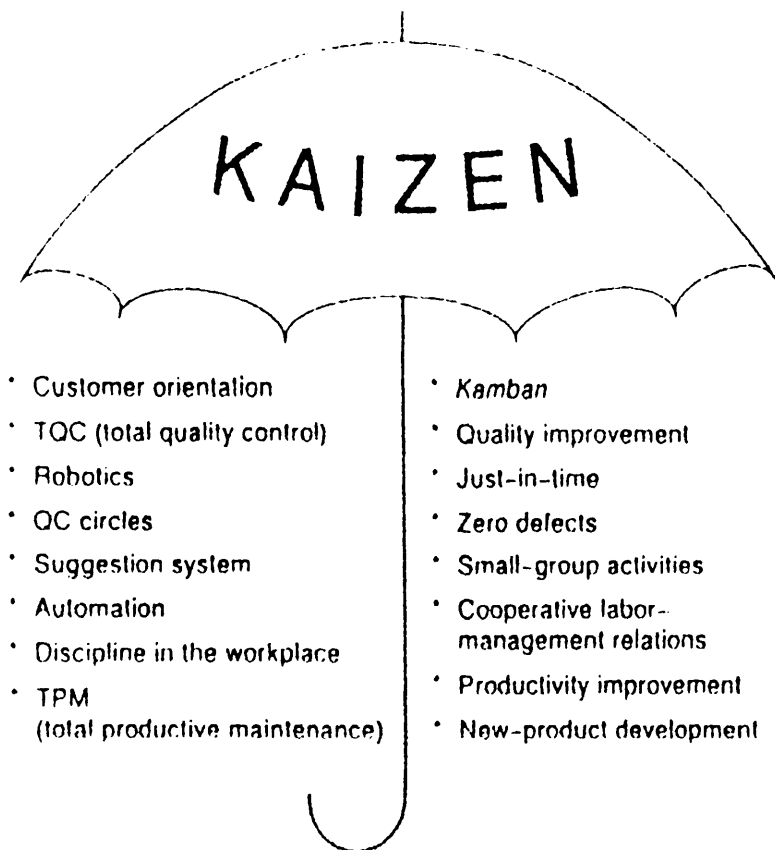
Kaufman (1998) expresses certain reservations about applying benchmarking:

*Because most educational organizations have not moved to properly defined their mission in justifiable and measurable terms, identifying what other does and how they do it may be related to useful results or benchmarking them is likely not to deliver to you the required organizational effectiveness. (p.13)*

As education is about improving society, Kaufman states that, “*One pitfall is benchmarking yesterday’s realities, not tomorrow’s.*” (1988, p.14) Further, Kaufman suggests not to benchmark others but to benchmark perfection.

### *KAIZEN strategy*

KAIZEN, the key to Japanese competitive success, means on-going improvement involving everyone in all our way of life including working life, social life and home life. Unlike the Western result-oriented management of innovation by only a limited amount of trained professionals, KAIZEN generates process-oriented thinking, emphasizes problem-awareness and encourages improvement for better results by all employees. (Pang, 1998) The umbrella concept of KAIZEN is illustrated in Figure 2.5.



**Figure 2.5    The umbrella concept of KAIZEN**  
(adopted from Imai, 1986, p.4)

Pang (1998) recommends that schools adopt the Kaizen approach to (1) build quality culture in schools; and (2) develop performance indicators and the concept of “value-added” improvement.

#### Quality Control Circle (QCC)

Quality Control Circle (QCC) or Quality Circle (QC), that is conceived in Japan, is a small voluntary group (6-8 members) in the workplace to carry out quality control

activities (Ishikawa, 1984; Hong Kong Government Industry Department, 1996a). Ho and Wearn (1996) explain the philosophy behind QCC activities by remarking that QCC contributes to continuous improvement and development of the organization; to respect humanity; to enhance personal and job satisfaction; to give fullest rein to human capabilities and draw out each individual's infinite potentials. Blankstein (1992) suggests teachers, parents, students and the principal form a quality circle to solve management problems.

### **The Application of TQM in the Education Service**

*As TQM finds its way into schools, more and more educators are discovering the natural fit that quality principles and practices have their own aspirations for the continuous improvement of education.*  
(Bonstingl, 1992b, p.4)

West-Burnham (1992) points out that there is an increasing interest in TQM and in its application to educational settings (Bush, 1995). There are four imperatives for applying TQM in schools: the professional, the moral, the competitive and the survival reasons. (Sallis, 1991) West-Burnham (1994) agrees that the conceptual framework of TQM is not welcome by some schools, even though these schools are practicing quality management. Bush (1995) does remind schools to pay special attention when transferring the management models or practices from non-educational settings to school environments.

Education is more like a service than a product (Winch, 1996b). Sallis (1993) explains the major differences: Firstly, in a service industry, there is a direct contact between

the provider and the end-user. Every interaction between people is important because service quality is determined by the customer. Secondly, service must be delivered on time and consumed while delivered. That is why inspection is too late to find out the deficiencies in services. Thirdly, service cannot be serviced or repaired. Service must be right the first time and every time (Winch, 1996b). The TQM goal defined in Laza and Wheaton (1990) is: *“Do the right thing, right the first time, on time, all the time; always strive for improvement, and always satisfy the customer.”* (P.18) Fourthly, the intangible nature of service makes it difficult to identify the outcomes before delivery in certain occasions. The process is then the most important. Fifthly, in most cases, the senior manager may not fully understand the quality requirements of the customers for services are delivered directly by junior employees. Lastly, measurement of successful outcomes in services is very difficult.

Kohn (1993a, p.67) argues that *“the introduction of TQM into the classroom is often driven by the interest of corporation rather than those of children”*. Desjardins and Obara (1993) well justify the difficulties in applying TQM in school settings:

*First, those who are experts on TQM do not understand education, particularly elementary and secondary education. Second, those who understand schooling do not know of TQM. There is a cleavage between industrial scientists and educators... There are not so many who can bridge TQM on one hand and schooling on the other. (p.69)*

Shared vision, with mutual respect for personal vision, is the heart of a learning organization (Dinklocker, 1992; Isaacson and Bamburg, 1992; Sallis 1993; Sagor and Barnett, 1994; Chadwick, 1995; Schmoker and Wilson, 1995). Shared vision refers to *“the governing force guiding each member of the organization, as measured by the*

*consistency of the beliefs, values, and assumptions with the everyday decisions and behaviors of the members* (Scheetz and Benson, 1994, p.57)". Without a vision, any TQM program will fail (Menon, 1992).

In discussing collegiality, Banathy (1991) suggests that the discipline-by-discipline study of education is one of the reasons for the schools to have little success. "*All the pieces of schools must work in a fine synergy – what Deming calls optimizing the system.*" (Schenk, 1993, p.65) ECA, both the inter-disciplinary and cross-curricular ones, provides an opportunity to overcome this problem.

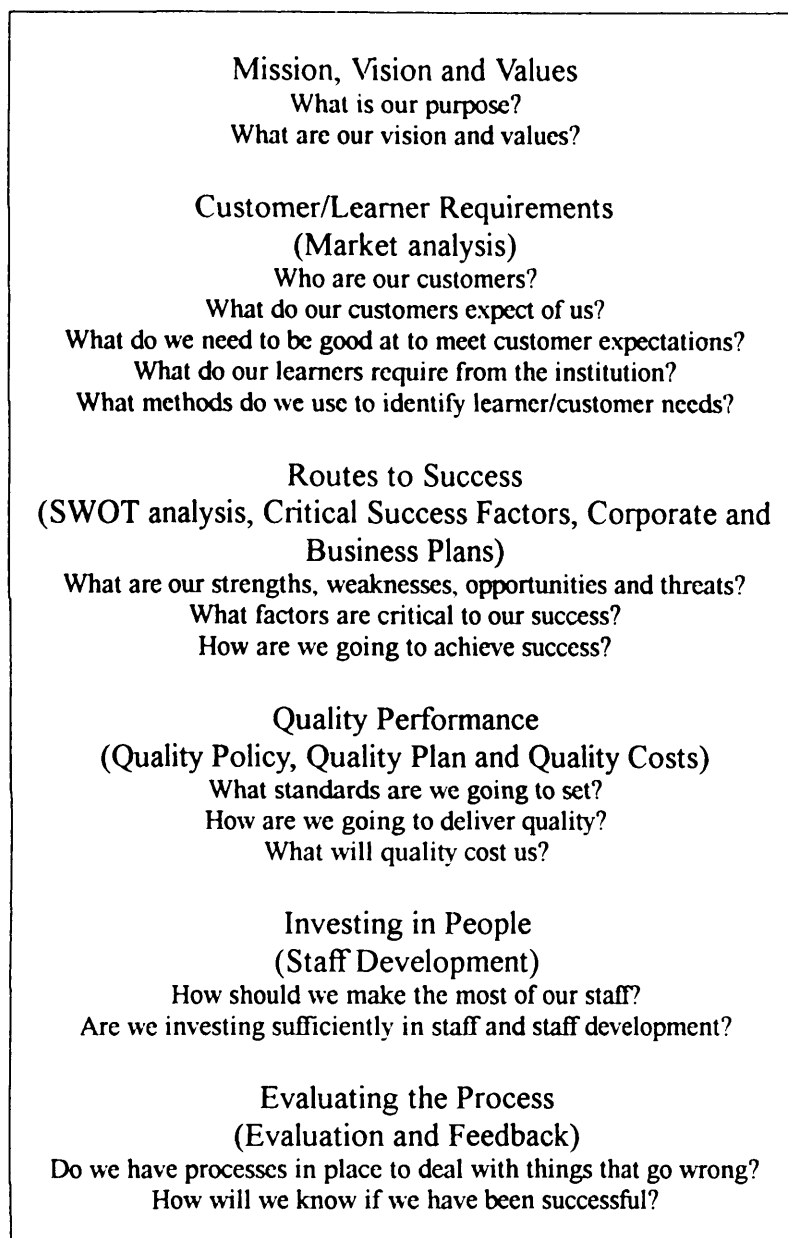
Cheng and Tam (1997, p.24) identify seven models of education quality: Goal and specification model, Resource-input model, Process model, Satisfaction model, Legitimacy model, Absence of problem model, and Organization model. They point out that, in Hong Kong, quality student input is often considered to be a vital indicator of school success while the satisfaction of the management board of an educational institution is a crucial quality indicator. Cheng and Cheung (1997) recommend practitioners to integrate the criteria of all seven models for long-term total school education quality.

Freeston (1992a) discovers that many quality models emphasize the work process and do not acknowledge psychological aspects of change. "*In any organization, total quality is about systemic change* (Cotton, 1994, p.57)." As Timer and Kirp (1988) point out that "*aspiration to excellence cannot be achieved by regulation.*"(p.39), Arcaro (1994) adds, "*TQM makes it easier to manage change.*" (p.93)

Assessment of education quality is a complex issue (Ashworth and Harvey, 1995). "*Education quality is a multi-dimensional concept and cannot be easily assessed by*

*only one indicator.*” (Cheng and Tam, 1997, p.23) Schools, like other organizations, have multiple purposes and performance indicators are merely one way of capturing some of the objectives that are vital to organization’s survival (Gray and Jesson, 1990). There are different views on schooling and it is difficult to have consensus on what the desirable outcomes of schooling should be (Wilcox, 1990).

Teaching quality can hardly be assessed in the short term (Trow, 1993). The imprecise or ambiguous terms, such as curriculum evaluation, academic achievement, or student achievement, lead to serious limitations in quality assessment (Alkin, 1974 and Salcedo, 1988). In discussing the difficulties in describing teaching quality, Porter (1991) emphasizes that even experts “*do not always agree on what constitutes good teaching*”. (p.18) Sallis (1993) brings out the importance of an organization’s commitment in its investment in people, and summarises the main points for evaluating organization quality in Figure 2.6. Sallis (1993) suggests schools to focus on their purposes, customer expectations, situation analysis and planning, quality performance, staff development and the evaluation process. These areas of focus are similar to those suggested by other quality experts that are already discussed in the chapter. However, in the Hong Kong school context, where teachers regard teacher development as the responsibility of the teacher training institutes only, within the six areas suggested by Sallis (1993), the quality of staff development in schools is often overlooked. Again, in the performance indicators (HKED, 1998a) suggested by HKED in 1998 (which will be discussed later in Tables 3.1 and 3.2), which are used in the Quality Assurance Inspection by the HKED to evaluate ECA management quality of secondary schools, staff development in ECA is not mentioned.



**Figure 2.6 The strategic planning process and sequence**

(modified from Sallis, 1993, pp.108-109)

Berry (1997) discusses the perceived barriers and advantages of TQM in school education. There are barriers in philosophy for people, without considering other organization reforms, treat TQM as the only panacea for quality schools. There are barriers due to the unclear linkage between TQM and the improvement of student learning. Barriers also come from the conflicts between professional judgement and the use of statistical analysis to drive decision-making. There are also barriers in the



customer/supplier relationship. Further barriers are rooted from the right first time philosophy that may not be applicable in educational settings for *“experimentation and the examination of alternative processes seem to be requirements of the learning process and subsequently, a desirable aspect of the educational process”*(p.60). There are also barriers in the customer-defined quality concept in the *“value-laden”* school environment (p.60). With the industrial nature of TQM, barriers come from the unclear roles and responsibilities of the school personnel when applying industrial culture in education. Barriers may also come from the characteristic that schools are *“permanent establishments”* (p.60) where TQM may not be appropriate. Finally, barriers result from the need for some inspection process in schools when compared with the industrial counterpart where the built-in quality of TQM is emphasized.

### **Customers/Clients in Education**

*“It is important that everyone agrees on who the customers are and what their needs are.”* (Blankstein, 1992, p.72) The first thing to do is to identify who the customer (Kohn, 1993b) or the client (Wilcox, 1990) of education is. *“Critics of the applicability of TQM principles and concepts to higher education often say that customer is an inappropriate term.”* (Lozier and Teeter, 1993, p.5) Holt (1994, p.85) quotes Deming (1993a) to say that *“We don’t have customers in education.”* Blankstein (1992) views parents and community as the major customers while Bonstingl (1992b) considers them to be the secondary customer. Sometimes, students are considered to be raw materials while parents are suppliers. Davies and Ellison (1995) and Wilcox (1990) identify students as primary clients while parents and

employers are also clients. By defining the child as client in school education, Trott (1997) writes,

*Whether what we provide at school is quality is primarily determined by the clients, their achievement and level of satisfaction, not the teachers, the organization or that of some outside body. Our intention is continuously improve in meeting and exceeding client needs and expectations. (Trott, 1997, p.167)*

The multiple stakeholders in education have many different needs and expectations. (Doherty, 1997) Hixson and Lovelace (1992) suggest that all those involved in the education service should provide assertive leadership for developing a broad-based consensus among various customers. They comment, *“Schools often become battlegrounds on which wars between competing interest groups and constituencies in a broader society are fought.”* (p.27) Laza and Wheaton (1990) encourage organizations to identify their key customers and try their best to satisfy them for the survival of the organization.

In dealing with conflicting demands from various customers, Weich (1982) recommends schools to use the most effective tight coupling management to focus on long-term educational tasks instead of responding to ignorant critics. On the other hand, Pallas and Neumann (1993) contend to use loose coupling techniques in school management so that education institutes can conduct education while simultaneously respond to the conflicting demands of powerful external agents. (Downey, Frase and Peters, 1994) McCulloch and Tett (1996) further explain the presence of conflicts in schools:

*... in a profession like community education where choices are made in a context where ends are not determinate and the value conflicts exist about both ends and means, then judgement is crucial and disagreement inevitable. (p.25)*

At the centre of the educational system, students as the learners are the major focus of the educational process (Muller and Funnell, 1992; Rhode, 1992). Schmoker and Wilson (1993a) quote Fullan (1991), to say that we have historically overlooked students' need and preferences. However, Rhodes (1992) explains that the fundamental weakness of student-centered-ness comes from the isolated personal views of what is best for the children. And the customers have limited expertise in education (Beaver, 1994).

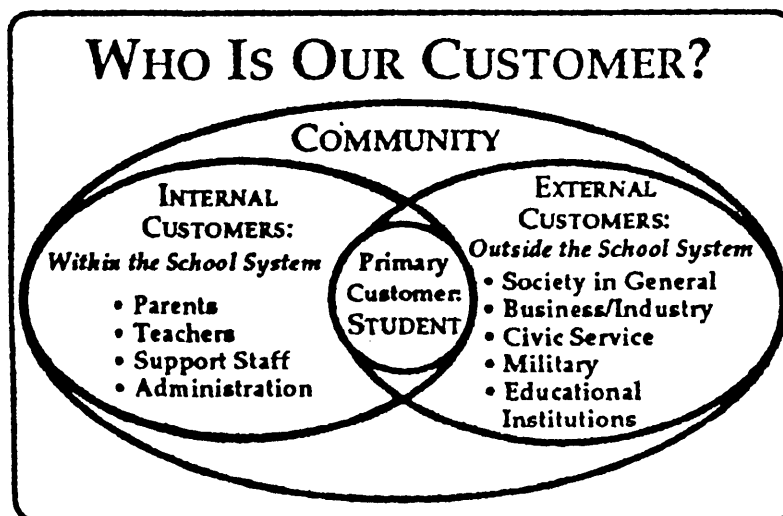
Eriksen (1995) quotes Yorke (1992) that there are two views on students as customers and products:

*One view was that of the student as the **customer** who buys a product (the academic programme) in expectation of some type of life benefit. The second view was that the student becoming the **product** after being transformed by the educational process from a "raw" material into a person with added skills. On this view the buyer is society; directly in terms of the employer and indirectly as a funding body. (Eriksen, 1995, p.15)*

While students are the most important customers (Rinehart, 1993) and the primary customer (Bonstingl, 1992b; Downey, Frase and Peters, 1994), the emphasis is on the needs of the students rather than their desires. The extent to which student can differentiate between needs and wants, is a constraint in regarding students as customers (Davies and West-Burnham, 1997). Rinehart (1993) explains the situation:

*Students cannot be considered the primary customer of education for the purpose of educational quality, for this simple reason: students have no conception of what they must learn; they are, after all, students. ... This does not mean students' needs are neglected ... Focus on students' needs is incumbent on identifying those needs...* (Rinehart, 1993, p.59)

Figure 2.7 from Downey, Frase and Peters (1994, p.24) illustrates the relationship between internal and external customers in educational settings. However, seeing education as an investment, Bonstingl (1992b, 1993) and Schmoker and Wilson (1993b) treat students as workers in their schools. *“What makes the difference in the quality paradigm is the nature of the work.”* (Bonstingl, 1993, p.66). Similarly, Welsh (1992) supports the concept of co-workers in treating students as workers. Beaver (1994) elaborates, *“Students are more than customers purchasing a commodity; they are the integral part of the production or learning process.”*(p.113)



**Figure 2.7** The relationship between internal and external customers in education.

## **The Quality Movement in Hong Kong School Education**

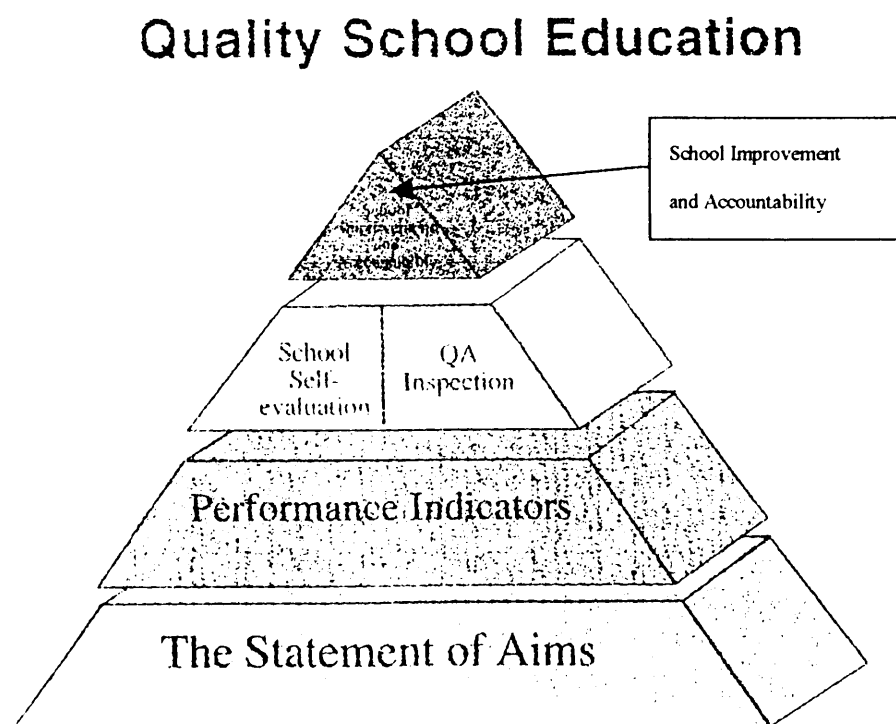
To improve Hong Kong education, seven EC reports were published between 1984 and 1996 concerning school improvement policies in language teaching, teacher quality, private sector school improvement, curriculum development, teaching and learning conditions, special education, language proficiency and quality school education. Cheng (1996) remarks that, although some of the above policies have been implemented, some others are still being carried out very slowly for the lack of financial support and public challenge.

In pursuit of quality in schools, the HKED gradually devolves its management responsibility to individual schools (Ho, 1996). An innovation known as the School Management Initiative (SMI), similar to the Local Management of Schools (LMS) in England, was launched in September 1991, which provides a management framework for school teachers, parents and alumni to have greater participation in school decision-making and management. However, not all the schools welcome SMI due to the tremendous amount of documentary work induced, as well as the incompatible culture for innovation. (Cheng, 1996, Pang 1998) By the academic year 1996-1997, only 30 percent of the primary and secondary schools were adopting the SMI approach in school management (HKED, 1997b).

In September 1993, the Education and Manpower Branch of the Hong Kong Government Secretariat published an important document entitled *School Education in Hong Kong: A Statement of Aims*. After consultation, EC (2000) states the generally agreed overall aims of education in Hong Kong for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The aims were discussed in Chapter one.

In September 1997, the EC published the *Education Commission Report Number 7: Quality School Education* (ECR7), which defines levels of policies that would facilitate quality enhancement in education and pre-conditions for quality education; studies measures to monitor the quality of school process; and recommends proposals to improve quality.

The HKED (1997), in its publication *Quality Assurance in School Education: Quality Assurance Framework*, proposes a quality assurance framework for Hong Kong schools. The framework, which is based on the statement of aims, objective performance indicators, school self-evaluation and Quality Assurance Inspection (QAI) leading to school improvement and accountability, is illustrated in Figure 2.8.



**Figure 2.8**      **Quality Assurance Framework leading to Quality School Education**

(adopted from HKED, 1997, p.2/5)

In the first report of QAI released in autumn 1998, the performance of the voluntary inspected schools was “generally acceptable”. School leadership and self-evaluation were the strongest and the weakest areas respectively. (HKED, 1998b, p.4)

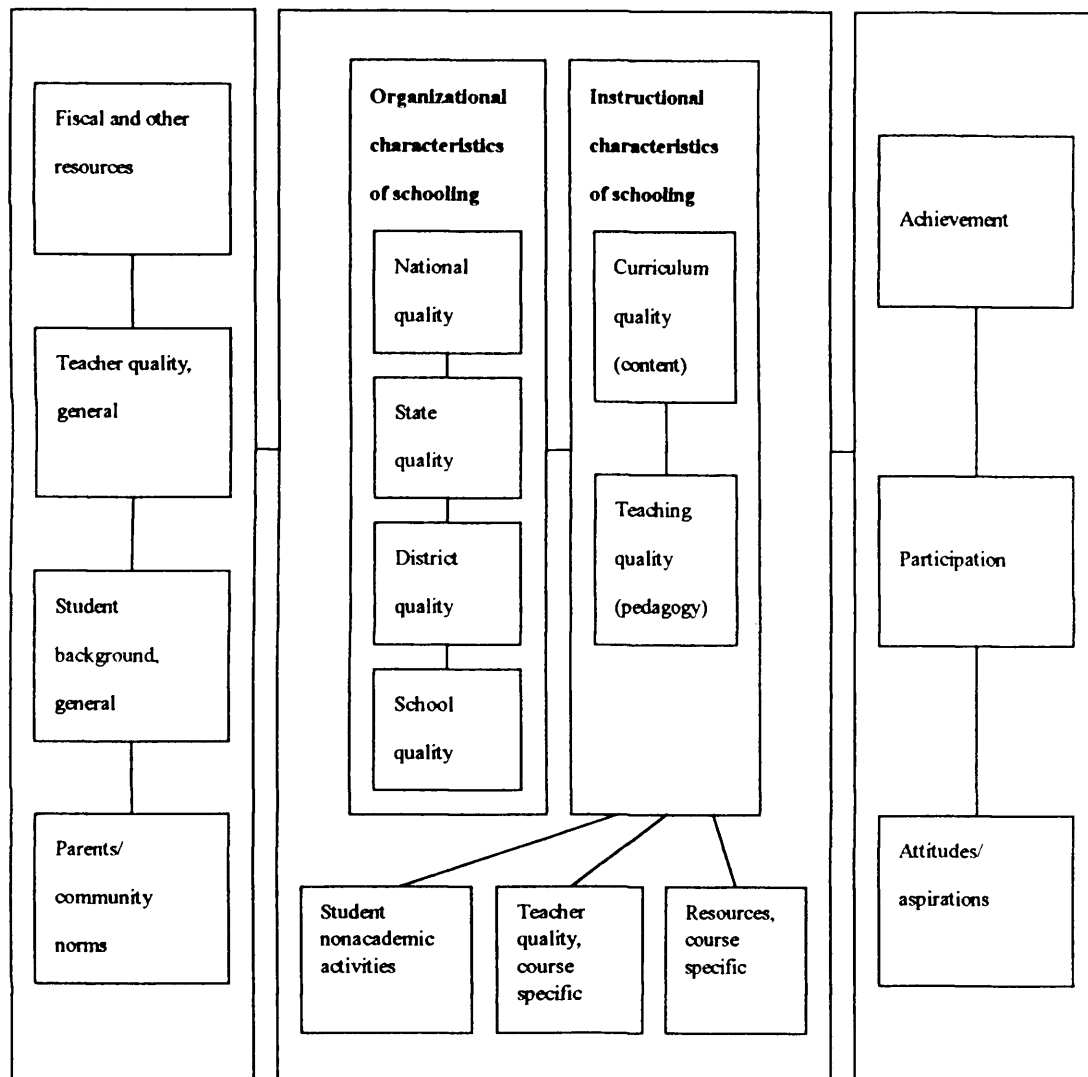
### **Quality Indicators for School Education**

As a standardized professional approach to assess an organization’s effectiveness and efficiency (Fitz-Gibbon, 1990, SOED, 1993; McCulloch and Tett, 1996), Quality Indicators (QIs) for school education are explicit and well-accepted criteria for the audits and assessments of school quality. Useful QIs should be significant, valid, feasible, clear and reliable. (EC, 1994) When discussing the school education in Hong Kong, Cheng (1996) comments that, *“Without sufficient understanding and a comprehensive system of education indicators, up to now we do not know how good our education systems are and how they are linked with developments of our society.”* (p.67)

The three kinds of quality indicators – input indicators, process indicators and outcome indicators (Windham and Chapman, 1990) – can be used (a) to enable schools to make their own assessment; (b) to provide schools with the general profile of all schools for reference; and (c) to enable comparison among schools of similar background. (EC, 1997) Figure 2.9 proposed by Shavelson (1987) distinguishes between inputs, processes, and outputs of education.

Cheng (1996, p.75) further identifies the three considerations for the assessment and monitoring of education quality: (a) the choice of indicators -- input, process, output

indicator, (b) the purpose of evaluation – for internal development and improvement, for accountability and quality assurance, and (c) the types of evaluation – school self-evaluation, external evaluation. He illustrates the details in a matrix (Figure 2.10).



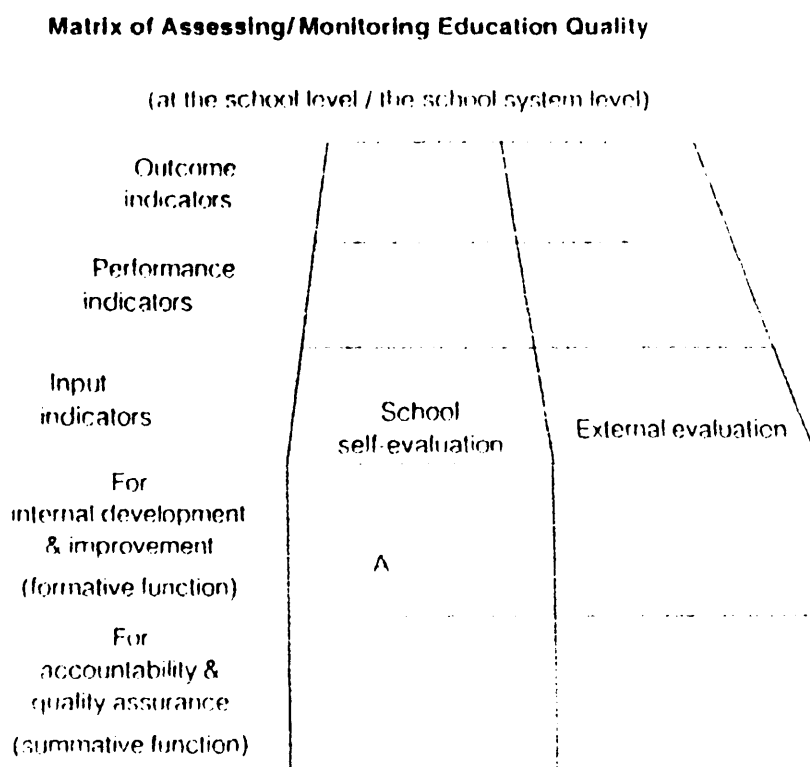
**Figure 2.9 A model of education inputs, processes, and outputs**

By Shavelson (1987) from Porter (1911, p.15)

Quality indicators of school education, useful tools for measuring and monitoring school performance (Gray, 1990), should be developed from the aims of education (EC,



1997). Dooris and Teeter (1994) tabulate the differences between traditional and TQM uses of performance indicators (Table 2.5).



**Figure 2.10 Matrix of Assessing / Monitoring Education Quality**  
(adopted from Cheng, 1996, p.75)

<b>Traditional</b>	<b>TQM</b>
Ranking	Improvement
Input / Output	Processes
Static	Dynamic
Resources	Stakeholders/Customers
<b>Examples</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Competitive analysis	Process benchmarking
SWOT evaluation	Assess of teaching and learning

**Table 2.5 Traditional Versus TQM Uses of Indicators**

Different people may have different definitions of education quality and so are the indicators used to describe education quality. Up to now, there seems to be no universal set of education indicators that is appropriate for all purposes, or different regions or countries. (Cheng, 1996)

### **Quality Standards and Awards**

There are several famous quality standards and awards, including BS5750/ISO9000 series, Investors in People (IiP), BS7850, the European Quality Award, and the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. BS7850 is a British standard providing the essential constituents of TQM while the European Quality Award is awarded to successful practitioners of TQM principles. (Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham, 1994a) The annual Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award is awarded to U.S. Companies with excellence in quality management. The initial application of the Malcolm Baldrige National Award criteria to education was scheduled to commence in 1995. (Arcaco, 1994)

#### **BS5750 / ISO 9000 series**

Quality Standard BS5750 is not TQM (Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham, 1994a). The purpose of BS5750 is, as successful marketing tools, to “*demonstrate to your customers that you are committed to quality* (BSI, 1987).” Tovey (1995) explains, “*The notion of third-party certification comes in relation to the commercial benefits which might well occur from being seen to have addressed quality* (p.33)”.

Arguing that the Standard is vulnerable in ideological, practical, financial and organizational terms, Tovey (1995) continues to question the appropriateness of adopting the Standard in education sector. In industry, the ISO 9000 registration normally takes 18 months to complete (Sallis, 1993). Since BS5750 requires an enormous amount of work in translating it into educational terms and needs opportunity cost, Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham (1994a, p.4) comment that “*(BS5750) has not been demonstrated that registration is so beneficial for a school as to justify the workload.*” However, Bowring-Carr and West Burnham (p.4) agree that BS5750 can, in specific areas of school management, “*make significant contributions to the implementation of a total quality strategy in schools*”.

The standard BS5750 is now named BS EN ISO 9000 (series) by the International Organization for Standardization, ISO. (Doherty, 1995) Within the ISO 9000 series, there are five individual standards. ISO 9000 and ISO 9004 jointly provide guidelines on quality management and its application. The other three standards related to the certification of the operations are:

ISO 9001	covers design, development, production, installation and servicing
ISO 9002	covers production and installation
ISO 9003	covers final inspection and testing

(Hong Kong Government Industry Department, 1996b)

After applying the standard in a British university, Doherty (1995) claims, “*There is no doubt that both TQM and ISO 9000 (series) can be effectively applied to educational organizations.*” (p.5) Therefore, in spite of the heavy workload in translating ISO 9000 to the education context, Bowring-Carr and West Burnham (1994a) and Doherty

(1995) both agree that ISO9000 can be applied effectively in schools and universities. Sallis (1993, p.64) summarises the translation of BS5750/ISO9000 for education in Table 2.6.

The K S Lo College, sponsored by the Hong Kong Management Association, is the first education institute in Hong Kong awarded the ISO 9002 international quality assurance certificate by the Hong Kong Quality Assurance Agency (HKQAA) in March 1998 (Ming Po Daily News, 1998).

BS5750/ISO9000 Part Requirements Main section heading	Translation for Education
1. Management Responsibility	Management's Commitment to Quality
2. Quality System	Quality System
3. Contract Review	Contracts with Internal and External Customers (Student/pupil entitlement, the entitlements of the external customers e.g. Parents)
4. Document Control	Document Control
5. Purchasing	Selection and Admission Policy
6. Purchaser Supplied Product	Pupil/Student Support Services, including Welfare, Counselling and Pastoral & Tutorial Arrangements
7. Product Identification & Traceability	Records of Pupil/Student Progress
8. Process Control	Curriculum Development, Design & Delivery – Teaching & Learning Strategies
9. Inspection and Testing	Assessment & Testing
10. Inspection, Measuring and Test Requirements	Consistency of Assessment Methods
11. Inspection and Test Status	Assessment Records and Procedures including Records of Achievement
12. Control of the Non-conforming Products	Diagnostic Procedures & Methods of Identifying Underachievement & Failure
13. Corrective Action	Corrective Action for Pupil/Student Underachievement and Failure. The System for Dealing with Complaints and Appeals
14. Handling, Storage, Packaging & Delivery	Physical Facilities & Environment, Other Entitlements Offered e.g. Sport Facilities, Clubs and Societies, Student's Union. Drop-In Learning Facilities etc.
15. Quality Records	Quality Records
16. Internal Quality Audit	Validation Procedures & Internal Quality Audits
17. Training	Staff Training and Development, including Procedures for Assessing Training Needs & Evaluating the Effectiveness of Training
18. Statistical Techniques	Methods of Review, Monitoring & Evaluation

**Table 2.6 BS5750/ISO9000 and their translation for education**

(adopted from Sallis, 1993, p.64)

### Investors in People

Investors in People (IiP), initiated in 1991 (Sallis, 1994), is the British “*national quality standard for effective investment in the training and development of people* (Daniel, 1997, p.225)”. As an IiP, the organization makes a commitment to train and develop employees; regularly reviews, and makes plans to meet, the training and development needs of all employees; takes action to train and develop individuals on recruitment, and

throughout their employment; and evaluate the impact of training and development, and implement improvements where a need arises. (Daniel, 1997)

Doherty (1997) summarizes the various aspects of ISO 9001, TQM and IiP (Table 2.7):

	ISO 9001	TQM	IiP
Continuous improvement	yes	yes	
Delight the customer	yes	yes	
People involvement	yes	yes	yes
Process control	yes	yes	
Effective systems	yes	yes	yes
Flat organization		yes	
Internal audit	yes		
External audit	yes		
Internal evaluation	yes	yes	yes
External evaluation			yes
Self-assessment		yes	yes
Compliance	yes		yes

**Table 2.7 Aspects of various quality systems**  
(adopted from Doherty, 1997, p.243)

### **Issues concerning Service-quality**

Tom Peters argues, in *Thriving On Chaos*, that the perceived quality is the single factor affecting the performance of a product or service of a business (Sallis, 1993). Rowley (1997) states that perceived quality is a result of the comparison of expectations with perceptions of performance. Quality is in the form of overall evaluation of a product (Olstavsky, 1985). Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990) emphasize the continuous improvement process for service quality. The process consists of (1) monitoring

customers' perceptions of service quality; (2) identifying the causes of service-quality shortfalls; and (3) taking appropriate action to improve the quality of service.

Carman (1990) stresses that the relative importance of "customer expectancies" is a vital dimension to determine customer satisfaction. By identifying the discrepancy between the customers' expectations and perceptions, Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990) define four service gaps (Gap 1 to 4) which are the major causes of the service-quality gap (Gap 5) perceived by the customers. (Figure 2.11) Rowley (1997) refers to the first four gaps as the understanding gap, the design gap, the delivery gap, and the communication gap.

Gap 1	The Customer's Expectation – Management-Perception Gap (the understanding gap)
Gap 2	The Management Perceptions – Service-Quality Specification Gap (the design gap)
Gap 3	The Service-Quality Specification – Service-Delivery Gap (the delivery gap)
Gap 4	The Service Delivery – External Communications Gap (the communication gap)
Gap 5	The Expected Service – Perceived Service Gap

**Figure 2.11 The five service gaps**

For providing high quality education, school organizations need to (1) provide a quality program to meet the needs of the students (Peters and Wills, 1998), and at the same time, (2) manage the perception of the various stakeholders through continuous satisfaction and improvement. Rowley (1997) further explains the dilemma in meeting the

expectations of the students and other stakeholders of a school:

*In public sector service such as education, where resources are finite and are not, in general, determined by the direct recipient of the service (in this case the students) but rather by other stakeholders through a complex network of different avenues and decision-making processes, it will not always be possible to respond by aligning service quality in accordance with the expectations of current students. In this context, it may be necessary to manage students' expectations. (p.12)*

Finally, Weller (1996) further reminds educators not to over-engineer their product by letting their expertise prevail over customer expectations and not to emphasize too much on customer expectations that may result in elusive, impractical and inexact decisions.

## **Summary**

This chapter outlines the concepts of effective schools, with standards and quality in education. From the literature, the term “quality” is defined and the quality processes are discussed with the advocacy from various quality gurus. The concepts and the principles of TQM, as well as its benefits and pitfalls, are examined. The application of TQM in education services is emphasized. Some quality management tools, such as Benchmarking, Kaizen, and Quality Control Circles are introduced. With the discussion of TQM and its application in educational settings, the customers or clients of education are identified.

The quality movement in Hong Kong School Education is reviewed. The function and



development of quality indicators are explained. Some quality awards like BS5750/ISO9000, IIP, BS7850, the European Quality Award, and the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award are introduced. The service-quality gaps identified by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) is discussed.

In general, quality management in education is therefore an essential accountability process to demonstrate quality returns and improvement by continuously satisfying the demands and expectations of various customers through the development of a quality collegial culture, and the commitment and participation of all staff at different levels in the education institutes. The quality management theories discussed in this chapter, especially those related to the Hong Kong secondary school context, were used to develop the various items of the questionnaire and to construct questions for the interviews and case studies. The quality management principles and concepts were used to analyze the findings of the survey, interviews and case studies.

## **Chapter 3 Literature Review:**

### **Extracurricular Activities**

The main focus of this thesis is the quality management of ECA. This chapter reviews international and Hong Kong literature on this theme.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities of the Extracurricular Activities Masters/ Mistresses in Hong Kong Secondary Schools**

*“There is no formal job specification or duty list for ECA masters/mistresses officially laid down by the HKED.”* (Tsang, 1996, p.5) 89.8 percent of ECA masters/mistresses reported that there was a need to have a clear duty list. (HKEACA, 1994, p.2) According to research carried out by the Hong Kong Extra-curricular Activities Masters Association (HKEAMA, formerly the Hong Kong Extra-curricular Activities Coordinators Association, HKEACA) in 1994, only 29.6 percent of the secondary schools in Hong Kong have task lists or job specifications for their own ECA masters/mistresses. Tsang (1996) reported that 28.5 percent of the ECA masters/mistresses had job specifications or duty lists with clear instructions. 39.6 percent of them had job specifications or duty lists with unclear instructions. The other 31.9 percent of them did not have job specifications at all. (Tsang, 1996, p.73) This unsatisfactory outcome suggests that there might be role ambiguity for ECA masters/mistresses leading to deficient ECA management in the secondary schools.

In order to raise the professional status of the ECA masters/mistresses, the HKEACA (1994, p.3) generalizes the following main duties of ECA masters/mistresses in Hong Kong secondary schools: organizing, planning, coordinating, training, promoting, communicating, monitoring, managing, appraising and evaluating. However, there are different ECA practices in schools:

*In reality, there are variations in the roles and responsibilities of ECA coordinators (masters/mistresses) in different secondary schools. The designated roles and the responsibilities depend mainly on the schools' attitude towards ECA. (Tsang, 1996, p.7)*

HKEAMA carried out a study in May 1997 and found that 60.3% of the ECA masters/mistresses had only 1-5 years of experience of being the manager of ECA in secondary schools while 16.6% of them had 11-20 years of experience. There were only 23.1% ECA masters/mistresses having 6-10 years of ECA management experience. 54.8% of the respondents were trained in ECA management courses. (Tin and Shum, 1998)

Chan (1995) discovered that most ECA coordinators were functioning as teachers rather than managers. Chan also found that experience in ECA was not sufficient to raise managerial effectiveness as an ECA coordinator. In Chan's research, the ECA coordinators were satisfied with their own performance and that of the students in ECA. The results reflected that the ECA coordinators need to be assigned as one of the members of the administration committee in their own school in order to raise their effectiveness in ECA management. The study concluded that highly effective ECA coordinators were initiators in carrying out the role of being an entrepreneur, in that of being the resources allocator and the negotiator.

## **Extracurricular Activities and Youth Development**

Frederick (1959) suggests that student activities can provide opportunities for pupils to search for self by pursuing self-conception and self-perception, by having identity and by promoting confidence. Student activities can also adjust to physical growth. They can help pupils to master the social skills and social adjustment by developing social self-confidence, to relate oneself more adequately to one's peers. Student activities can help pupils to resolve value conflicts and to express values. They can help participants to seek independence and to decide on a life role. Further, participants in student activities can keep up education enthusiasm.

The Commission on Youth in Hong Kong promulgated the voluntary Charter for Youth in 1993 to facilitate youth development. Youth here means people aged fifteen to twenty four with adjustment up to five years in either direction according to situations. (Commission on Youth, 1993) Therefore secondary school students fall into the youth category. Those principles in the Charter related to ECA are:

- Youth should be offered assistance to achieve wholesome and balanced development in the areas of their capabilities and potentials, social values, Chinese culture, respect for others, responsibility towards society, the preparation of themselves to lead a positive and responsible life, participation in community affairs, and concern for environmental protection.
- Appropriate measures should be taken to enable youth to participate in cultural, artistic, sports, recreational and leisure activities. (Commission on Youth, 1993, pp.1-7)

A review on the implementation of the Charter for Youth was carried out in 1995. The responsible preparatory committee for the review reported that:

*The education system should not focus on academic achievement only, but should place stronger emphasis on all-round education, including a comprehensive life education programme, to help prepare the youth for real life challenges.* (Commission on Youth, 1996, p.11)

According to the Joint Statement announced by the world's six non-formal education bodies (International Award Association, 1998; EC, 1999a) in 1998, appropriate educational opportunities covering the totality of the needs of young people should be offered to develop individuals to become *autonomous, supportive, responsible and committed*. (International Award Association, 1998, p.4, section 2.1.4) "*Learning to know*", "*Learning to do*", "*Learning to live together*", and "*Learning to be*" are the four pillars for education throughout life. (International Award Association, 1998, p.5, sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2)

Due to inadequate facilities for sports and lack of support from the principals and school administrators, there are difficulties in promoting sports-related ECA. The development of sports in schools is limited by the competitive examination system. (Hong Kong Sports Development Board, 1991, p.34) City University (1998) further explains that, in order to fulfil the admission requirements of the universities, the secondary school curriculum usually emphasizes too much on academic achievements but the overall development of the students is overlooked. EC (1999a) writes, "*Common criticism of our present education system are that there are many subjects, the homework is heavy, and the examination pressure is intense.*" (p.11)

The Commission on Youth (1996) strongly recognizes the contribution of ECA to youth development:

*The existing education system with the heavy school curriculum took up most of the time of the youth, thus preventing them from actively pursuing ECA. Separately, special funds should be provided to finance more ECA... ECA in schools play a valuable role in broadening the horizons of students. These activities should be provided and developed both within and outside the school to supplement the curriculum. Teachers should be suitably trained to supervise these activities. (pp. 12-13)*

In discussing the shortcomings of the existing university admission system, the EC (2000) identifies that “public examination results are over-emphasized without taking into account students’ all round performance” (p.88) and states:

*Universities used to admit students mainly on the strength of their public examination results. Most schools therefore focus their teaching on those learning areas and abilities that are assessed in public examinations, at the expense of nurturing in students the necessary attitude and abilities which are of paramount importance to their future life. Many schools, students and parents consider it a waste of time to participate in sports and cultural activities, social services and ECA. However, it is exactly through these learning experiences that important abilities like leadership, communication and organisation skills can be fostered... We recommend that (...) admission criteria should be set on the basis of the schools’ appraisal on students, the students’ service record and experiences, their performance at interviews and their public examination results. This will not only help to promote the concept of all-round development, but will also help the universities take in genuinely worthy students. (EC, 2000, p.14, Section 4.14 and 4.15)*

There are some other advantages of ECA:

*Extra activities may give children the opportunity to work with teachers with whom they would not otherwise normally come to contact. (Haigh, 1974, p.7)*

*(Student activities) may offer opportunities where pupils unsuccessful in school subjects may achieve or share success... They are perhaps a form of training for the active use of leisure in an age when life will be less closely focussed on earning money...(Fozzard, 1967, p.26)*

*People who recall their school-day experiences will remember playing games, debating, singing, or carrying on some other interesting pastime with their fellows... Some educators and parents have turned to voluntary group-activities in the school as a means of education. These activities are recognized as agencies through which the dominant philosophy of education and the scientific findings in education are to bear important results. (Hayes, 1930, pp.2-3)*

Levin (1997) identifies the following high-value-added competencies that are central to workplace but are not being developed in schools: initiative, cooperation, working in groups, peer training, evaluation, reasoning, problem-solving, decision-making, obtaining and using information, planning, learning skills, and multicultural skills. These competencies can be integrated into the five dimensions of education already stressed by Confucius (intellectual, physical, aesthetic, communal, and moral) in Hong Kong schools. At this point, ECA can be used as a tool to facilitate the necessary changes in education, and to nurture the workplace competencies as well as the Confucius dimensions in schools. Being one of the stakeholders of Education, the EC (2000) encourages parents to help students to learn effectively by “*providing schools*

*with human and financial support so as to reduce teachers' workload and help schools develop an environment conducive to all-round education.” (p.125)*

ECA has positive effects on youth development in the aspects concerning Knowledge foundation, Creativity, Problem-solving abilities, Leadership skills and Self-independence. (Hong Kong Youth Development Council, 1998) To fully reflect students' personality and abilities in various domains, the EC (2000) recommends schools to have assessments and records of students' overall performance. Apart from recording students' internal examination results, schools are suggested to include the following information in the students' portfolio:

- (i) *Students' records of participation in different types of learning activities (eg. Sports, art, co-curricular activities, community services and work-related activities);*
- (ii) *Comments on students' participation in the above activities;*
- (iii) *Comments on students' personal qualities;*
- (iv) *Comments on students' multiple abilities.*

(EC, 2000, p.76, Section 5.3.33)

Jones (1935) brings out the importance of ECA in school settings and summarizes that *“Curricular and extracurricular activities are complementary... The progressive secondary school used the whole life of the school for educative purposes.”* (Frederick, 1959, p.89)

Fung (1966), being the first researcher into ECA in Hong Kong schools and one of the founders of HKEAMA, in his research concerning the attitude and participation of fifth form students in ECA, concludes that



- (a) ECA provide opportunities for students to have meaningful experiences in a variety of potential leisure pursuit;
- (b) Guidance is indispensable for the realization of the educational value of ECA;
- (c) Poor academic achievement may not be the result of over-participation of ECA but students should be advised to limit their ECA participation;
- (d) In ECA a student learns without knowing that he is learning;
- (e) No academic credit should be given to ECA participation but it should be recorded for assessment of student progress and evaluation of ECA programmes, and
- (f) All ECA should be student-centred. (pp.174-180)

### **Extracurricular Activities and the Teachers**

Haigh (1974) well explains the benefits of ECA for teachers within the schools:

*The real reason some teachers find it easier to get on with children in the out-of-school situation than they do in class is not because the children are more interested in the out-of-school activity than they are in lessons, but because the teacher is. (Haigh, 1974, p.10)*

Educators, social workers and parents realize that ECA “*were not, in fact, extra, but an important part of the total education of young people*” (Frederick, 1959, p.4).

Unfortunately, it is common for Hong Kong teachers to consider ECA as extra duties. Many teachers consider ECA as unnecessary in school education. (Leung, 1999)

Fozzard (1967) concludes that (a) there is an overriding need to encourage ECA for its particular educational value; (b) there is a great need for the collection and collation of

information about ECA; and (c) there is a demand for a minimum of time to be spent on the implications of ECA during the initial teacher training and in other in-service training. (p.52)

The first professional course in ECA, suggested by Fretwell, the “father of the modern extracurricular movement in America”, was offered in 1919 by the Teachers College of Columbia University. (Fung, 1966) In contemporary Hong Kong, there are three professional staff development courses jointly organized by the HKEAMA and the universities for the training of ECA masters/mistresses and teachers. HKEAMA carried out a study in May 1997 and found that only 54.8% of the ECA masters/mistresses were trained in ECA management courses. (Tin and Shum, 1998)

### **The Extracurricular Activities Curriculum**

According to the joint statement on education of young people announced by the world’s six largest non-formal education bodies in 1998, and which is accepted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, education can be classified into three categories: formal education, informal education, and non-formal education. (International Award Association, 1998; EC, 1999; The Federation of Youth Groups, 1999).

*Formal education is “the hierarchically structured, chronologically graded education system running from primary to tertiary education. Informal education is “the process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience (such as families, friends, peer groups, the media or other influences in the environment). Non-formal education is “the*

*organized educational activity outside the established formal system that is intended to serve an identifiable learning clientele with identifiable objectives.” (EC, 1999a, p.4)*

ECA is normally in the forms of informal education and non-formal education which play important roles in the education of youth. From the view of the EC of Hong Kong, *“our priority should be to enable our students to enjoy learning, to enhance their effectiveness in communication, and to develop their creativity and sense of commitment.”* (EC, 1999b, p.15) To achieve these aims, the Chairman of the EC stresses that *“Other than emphasizing on the classroom education, we need to stress on the informal education outside the classroom, and put more effort on coordinating formal and informal education.”* (Leung, 1999, p.9)

To facilitate education reform, the EC (1999b) brings out the concept of “life-wide learning” that *“Learning is not limited to school subjects or examination syllabuses. Students should have a comprehensive learning experience through the formal, non-formal and informal modes.”* (p.16) The Curriculum Development Council (1999) concludes that *“Traditional boundaries between the formal (classroom), informal (ECA), and non-formal (outside school as a social institution) curricula are not to be stressed; instead, they form an integral part of the school curriculum.”* (p.4)

EC (2000) writes

*Learning must transcend the constraints of academic subjects and examinations. Students should be able to take part in a comprehensive range of learning activities both inside and outside the classroom. In the new millennium, we must adopt a broader definition for education in order that students are able to develop multiple abilities. Activities that take place inside and outside the*

*classroom contribute equally to all-round education. (p.10, Sections 3.9 and 3.10)*

EC (2000) encourages schools to make flexible use of the learning time to arrange learning activities such as field investigation/visit, and to “*adopt an integrated and life-wide approach to the provision of moral and civic education, developing students’ moral values and commitment to the country through life experience, ECA, social services, visits to the Mainland and cross-curricular studies.*” (p.34, Section 5.2.19)

*The social sector, including social service agencies, cultural organizations, recreation and sports bodies, uniform groups, youth service agencies, other voluntary groups and the business sector, are ready to support and co-operate with schools in providing diversified learning experiences for students with a view to enhancing the quality of education. Parents can also play an important part in rendering support to education.” (EC, 2000, p.16, Section 4.22)*

In order to facilitate curriculum reform, EC (2000) suggests a cultural change in teaching and learning. One of the key changes is to shift from over-emphasizing academic studies to focusing on whole-person development. The recent education reform in Hong Kong hopes to bring in positive attitudes towards all-round education and to leave opportunities for teachers and students to pursuit excellence in ECA.

### **Extracurricular Activities in Mainland China**

Hong Kong has been one of the Special Administrative Regions of the People’s Republic of China since 1997 and most of its population is Chinese. Hong Kong has a strong Chinese culture, therefore it has to take into account both the recent development

of education in Mainland China and the characteristics of Chinese culture when planning for reform in its education.

The educational value of ECA is highly respected in Mainland China. In the 1980's, educators in Mainland China tried to formalize the name of ECA as "the Second Classroom" to reflect the formal status of ECA in school education. In Mainland China, student activities are now divided into two categories: (a) Formal Activities Curriculum (2-4 periods) within normal school timetable called "Activities Lessons", and (b) Traditional ECA conducted by students after school. (Fung, 1999)

The HKEAMA conducted an ECA educational visit to Beijing and Tianjin in 1999. In the report, Tsang and Tin (1999) explain the development and situation of student activities in Mainland China. In 1993, the Central Government of China announced a central policy to request all the primary and secondary schools to move from the "examination-led education" that stresses on the promotion rates of the schools to the "quality education" that emphasizes the development of citizen qualities. In 1994, the time allocated for activities within the school timetable is ranging from 10.77% to 11.70%. (HKEAMA, 1999, p.5)

ECA is emphasized in Shanghai where the school curriculum consists of three components: (a) Compulsory subjects; (b) Elective subjects; and (c) ECA. This classification of school curriculum is similar to that of Frederick (1959). During the nine-year compulsory education ranging from primary education to junior secondary education, there are 9-12 ECA periods occupying 29.9% of the school time in a week. During the senior secondary school level, there are 6 ECA periods occupying 20% of the school time weekly. (Yeung, 1999)

ECA awards within the country and in international competitions are indicators to evaluate the performance of the schools in Mainland China. If the students of a school gain more ECA awards, the school will have more resources and the teachers in charge of the activities will have a salary bonus. (Chan, 1999) But Chan (1999) does not agree to pay extra allowance for Hong Kong teachers conducting ECA, for the limited amount of allowances will have little effect on the Hong Kong teachers who are all receiving high salaries.

Tin and Tsang (1999, p.43) identify the factors for success in the development of ECA in Mainland China:

- (1) Schools have long-term development planning for ECA;
- (2) There are specific government policies to ensure the practices of ECA in schools;
- (3) ECA in Mainland schools is led by education theories, researches and statistical facts;
- (4) Effective use of community resources for ECA;
- (5) Schools, parents, teachers and students recognize the educational values of ECA;
- (6) Effective use of school premises, resources and equipment; and
- (7) Successful integration of the ECA and the formal curriculum for quality education.

### **The Quality of Extracurricular Activities in Hong Kong Secondary Schools**

Research on the leisure life of Hong Kong students in 1979 concluded that students lacked healthy and varied activities. After 10 years, similar research in 1989 carried

out by the same researchers found that 75.7% of the students had participated in school ECA in the academic year 1988-1989. Results indicated that more students participated in ECA in 1989 and there was a positive change in the attitude of the parents towards ECA when compared with the results in 1979. (Boys' and Girls' Club Association of Hong Kong, Professional Teachers' Union and Colleges of Education Graduates' Association, 1979, 1990)

Li, Chui and Chui (1936) point out two barriers for ECA development: (a) external constraint and (b) the management of ECA. They state that

*(a) External constraint: People claim that students' poor school work, rude behaviours, disobedience to schools, and all other immoral behaviours are the direct results of extracurricular activities. (...) On the other hand, some people criticize that the poor performances of the students are not from ECA itself but from other complicated reasons in the environment. (p.59)*

*(b) Internal constraint: A small number of students participated in excess amount of extracurricular activities leading to poor concentration in school work. This is a common fault in ECA practices. Those students who are respected by others and those with leadership qualities will then inevitably be overloaded in ECA participation. (pp.61-63)*

Li, Chui and Chui (1936) emphasize that “‘ECA should not hinder academic work’, but we also request academic work not to hinder ECA. ECA and academic work are supplementary for achieving education objectives.” (p.82)

Goren (1956) states, “It is true that they have all spoken well of student activities but they have done little to stimulate participation in the part of many students.”

(pp.351-352) Henderson (1963) points out that “*Hong Kong schools exhibit a strong bias towards academic courses*”. (Fung, 1966, p.8)

*If schools recognize the importance of ECA and do not focus solely on the academic attainment of the students, and if ECA theories and practices are enhanced in teacher training, and if parents recognize ECA and put more emphasis on children activities, I believe that the quality and management of ECA in Hong Kong schools can be as high as those in Mainland China.* (Tang, 1999, p.47)

Ka and Yuen (1997) and Ho (1999) emphasize that conceptual change is the prerequisite for successful transformation. A recent study conducted by the Federation of Youth Groups in Hong Kong in 1998, concerning pupils’ views on quality education, concluded

*Heavy homework load may result in discouraging students from taking part in extracurricular activities. This survey found that extracurricular activities had contributed to improved personal growth, including social skills, independent thinking and leadership skills. In view of this, we hope the Government and concerned groups would encourage extracurricular activities in order to guide students towards greater physical and mental development.* (Federation of Youth Groups, 1998, p.52)

In discussing the constraints of ECA, Berk (1992) concludes that there were insufficient theories and methodologies for ECA studies.(Wong, 1994, p.5) Kwok (1998) points out the difficulties in conducting ECA: lack of space, teacher work overload, examination-led curriculum, insufficient training of ECA teachers, unattractive ECA, and unreasonable allocation of financial resources for ECA by the principals in some schools.



The establishment of the HKEACA in 1983 (Fung, 1987) and its Primary School Branch in 1993 provide the foundations for the development of ECA in schools. According to the two studies carried out in 1983 and 1988 by HKEACA, from the teachers' perspective, the four difficulties hindering the development of ECA are: (1) ECA are basically not considered as important by school authorities; (2) Insufficient resources for ECA; (3) Lack of organizing skill in the students; and (4) Heavy workload of the teachers. (Wong, 1994, p.9) Chan, Fung and Kwok (1994) explain that the insufficient support for ECA in Hong Kong society in the early years was due to the influence of the traditional Chinese culture about learning activities. Games and ECA were considered as unproductive to school studies.

By comparing the ECA situation in Hong Kong with that in Mainland China, Tin and Tsang (1999), the Chairman and Vice-chairman of HKEAMA, comment that there is no long-term strategic planning of ECA in the Hong Kong education system. There is not enough theoretical and resources support from the HKED. Some school workers and administrators do not fully understand the functions of ECA in school education, so they have little intrinsic motivation to promote ECA effectively and to improve ECA quality. Unlike Mainland China, Hong Kong has no ECA resources centre for experience sharing. Hong Kong school premises and facilities should be improved. There is insufficient training for ECA teachers. Teachers, parents and students focus mainly on examinations and academic attainments, and they concern little about non-academic quality. Furthermore, teachers in Hong Kong cannot focus much on ECA for their teaching work is overload in quantity. This leads to a result that teachers in Hong Kong can hardly carry out ECA research regularly to improve its education theories and practices.

The HKED (1998a), in its publication *Quality Assurance in School Education: Performance Indicators (for Secondary School)*, summarizes the main indicators for evaluating ECA in secondary schools (Table 3.1 and 3.2).

Tables 3.1 and 3.2 provide guidelines for school self-evaluation, Quality Assurance Inspection, comparison and information in the aspect of ECA services in schools. However, the school's characteristics and background have to be considered when using the suggested performance indicators. The performance of the school should be judged using a value-added approach. One has to realize that the performance indicators are inter-related and they should be used flexibly and sensibly. (HKED, 1988)

Area	Aspect	Component	What to look for?	Source of Information
Personal, Social and Cultural Development	Extra-curricular activities (ECA)	• Planning and Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the school policy on ECA?</li> <li>• To what extent are goals and objectives of ECA explicitly set and geared to the school mission and the interests and aptitude of students?</li> <li>• To what extent does the school provide a balanced range of ECA covering the five types: academic, sports, art, interest and social services? Is there a suitable variety within each type?</li> <li>• To what extent are ECA appropriately arranged and scheduled?</li> <li>• Are there sufficient resources to support ECA?</li> <li>• Are there rules and procedures for implementing and monitoring ECA?</li> <li>• Are suitable personnel enlisted to plan and implement ECA?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation</li> <li>• Discussion and interview with ECA personnel and students</li> <li>• School mission, aims and objectives</li> <li>• Administrative procedures and rules; types and variety of ECA; schedule and frequency of ECA; evaluation records</li> <li>• Records of resources provided; minutes of meetings of ECA groups/clubs/co-ordinating committee</li> <li>• Records of training/guidance for student office-bearers</li> </ul>
		• Implementation and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent are students involved in organising and running ECA?</li> <li>• What advice and help are given to students by advisers and teachers concerned? To what extent are they appropriate?</li> <li>• What are the means employed to promote student participation in ECA? Are all students given equal opportunities to participate in ECA? How is the progress of individual students monitored?</li> <li>• How are ECA evaluated?</li> </ul>	

**Table 3.1 Performance Indicators in Domain III: Support for Student and School Ethos (from HKED, 1998a, p.45)**

Area	Aspect	Component	What to look for?	Source of Information
Non-academic Performance of Students	Participation and achievement in extra-curricular activities (ECA)	• Variety	• To what extent do students participate in a balanced variety of ECA including inter-school activities in the five types: academic, sports, art, interest and social services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation</li> <li>• Discussion and interview with teachers and students</li> <li>• Records of student enrolment in ECA; records of awards and achievements; ECA timetables,</li> <li>• Notice board and related publications; ECA attendance records and evaluation reports</li> </ul>
		• level of participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How active are students in participating in intra-school and inter-school activities as well as open/international events?</li> <li>• How do students feel about participating in ECA?</li> <li>• To what extent are students involved in organising and conducting ECA?</li> </ul>	
		• awards	What are the number and types of awards gained in inter-school activities and in open/international competitions?	

**Table 3.2 Performance Indicators in Domain IV: Attainment and Achievement**  
(from HKED, 1998a, p.57)

### Summary

In this chapter, the ECA curriculum and the development of ECA in Hong Kong education context are scrutinized. The ECA situation in Mainland China and in Hong Kong are compared. The contributions of ECA to students' all-round development and to teachers' job satisfaction are discussed as well. There is also an introduction to ECA staff development. Finally, the performance indicators recently developed by the HKED in 1998 concerning the quality management of ECA are tabulated.

Considering the performance indicators (Table 3.1 and 3.2) suggested in HKED (1998a), the various quality management issues discussed in Chapter 2 and the content of the ECA literature reviewed in this chapter, ECA quality management issues in Hong Kong secondary schools can broadly be classified into the following eight categories: Leadership and planning (for example Deming, 1988; Laza and Wheaton, 1990; Sallis, 1993); ECA culture (for example Cotton 1994; Hampton 1994); Staff development and teacher competence (for example Sutherland, 1990; Paine, Turner and Pryke, 1992); Managing the ECA curriculum content (for example Doherty 1994); Managing the ECA process (for example Doherty, 1994); Managing the ECA outcomes (for example EC, 1997); Managing customer needs, customer satisfaction and external communication (for example Parasuraman et al, 1985; Tam, 1995; Blankstein 1992); and Managing ECA quality (for example Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry, 1990). These categories will be used in Chapter 7 to analyze the results of this study. However, from the suggestions of the interviewees during the 12 semi-structured elite interviews, the author generalized, from the perspective of the interviewees, another set of criteria to assess the quality of ECA in schools. The details of these criteria will be discussed in Table 6.2.

## Chapter 4      Methodology

### **Statement of topic and the importance of the research issue**

This is the first study to investigate the quality management of extracurricular activities (ECA) in Hong Kong secondary schools. There is various research on quality management in education (for example Cheng 1995a, 1995b, 1997) but little has been done in the area of the informal extracurricular curriculum. The author carried out research on the job stress of the extracurricular coordinators (now called extracurricular masters/mistresses) in 1995 and discovered that ineffective personal management and incompetent ECA management were two of the stressors. (Tsang, 1996) The author believes that the improvement of ECA management quality could help the coordinators to reduce their job stress.

As discussed in the previous chapters, quality education and its management in school settings are significant worldwide issues in school education. Extracurricular activities, as an informal component of the whole school curriculum, play an important role in the overall personal development of the students. Without excellence in the management of extracurricular activities, a school can hardly claim to provide quality education to the students.

## **The Aims of the Research and the Research Questions**

This is the first study conducted in Hong Kong that aims at identifying the essential features for effective management of ECA for quality learning outcomes and customer satisfaction. This study also looks for the answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the modes of practice in the management of ECA in various Hong Kong secondary schools?
2. Are there any factors hindering the development of ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools? Is so, what are they?
3. Are the ECA masters/mistresses satisfied with the ECA educational services in Hong Kong secondary schools?
4. Are there any quality gaps in delivering ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools? If so, what are they?
5. What Total Quality Management techniques can be applied to the management of ECA in school settings?
6. Which Total Quality Education models are effective for the management of ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools?

The author was the single researcher and was the Honorary Secretary of HKEAMA by the time of this study. Although the positivist approach in the questionnaire survey would normally be objective in nature, special attention has been made to ensure that the position of being an “insider” in the study would not affect the reliability and validity of the research. Throughout the study, the aim of searching for quality improvement of ECA management in secondary schools was emphasized. This purpose of the study was also highlighted in the covering letter of the questionnaire

(Appendix I) and in the supporting letter from the Chairman of HKEAMA (Appendix II).

### **The approach in this study**

There are positivist and anti-positivist approaches to social research. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) explain the differences between the two approaches:

*Investigators adopting an objectivist (or positivist) approach to the social world and who treat it like the world of natural phenomena as being hard, real and external to the individual will choose from a range of traditional options – surveys, experiments, and the like. Others favouring the more subjectivist (or anti-positivist) approach and who view the social world as being a much softer, personal and humanly created kind will select from a comparable range of recent and emerging techniques – accounts, participant observation and personal constructs, for example. (p.6)*

The positivist approach, using the normative paradigm, sees that human behaviour is rule-governed while the interpretive approach examines the view points of the individual and the concerns of the individual. (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000) In this study, to analyze objectively and statistically using a large-scale questionnaire survey, the researcher adopted a positivist approach in the main study to look into the technical interest of quality management of ECA in secondary schools. This study was focusing on understanding the causes of the discrepancies in quality management and on generalizing conclusions from facts obtained in the specific items of the questionnaire rather than on finding out the feeling of the individuals or on finding out the meaning of certain actions. Therefore the positivist approach was more appropriate as the main stance for this study.



## **Sampling Frame used in the Main Study**

Stratified sampling or random sampling methods were not used in this study because the researcher needed to collect data from all the secondary schools in Hong Kong to look at the patterns of practices of the different schools and the outcomes of different management styles. Again, the aim of the benchmarking section of the questionnaire was to identify the outstanding ECA practices in all the schools so that the researcher could generalize the information for schools to improve ECA quality. Therefore, in order to achieve the aims, a census consisting of the whole population of ECA masters/mistresses in all the 412 secondary schools was undertaken for the study.

## **Discussion of Research Methods**

Appropriate research methodology is essential for achieving high reliability and validity of the results of the study. Since different methods have their own advantages and disadvantages, the characteristics of different research methods, and their appropriateness for this study, will be scrutinized.

### **Questionnaire surveys**

*Survey research can include a status quo study or a study in which the interrelationships of sociological or psychological variables are determined and summarized. (Wiersma, 1991, p.166)*

The author's research is a status quo study concerned with the respondents' ratings about the perception of management quality and the extent of their satisfaction with the

ECA service provided in their own schools. A large number of question items were required to draw sound conclusions. Such data could be handled using statistical methods, such as taking averages and calculating frequencies. For reaching “*a much wider audience and produce much more information* (Wragg, 1994, p.268)”, quantitative methods of survey using questionnaires were appropriate and hence adopted as the major instrument in this study.

In order to find out certain facts concerning ECA management, and to look for patterns of existing practices in different schools, questionnaires with standardized questions were used in this study.

*In a questionnaire survey, the aim is to get standardised information by offering everyone the same stimulus: the same questions presented in the same way, so that any variety in the answers is a true reflection of variety of views and circumstances among the respondents.* (Munn and Drever, 1990, p.33)

Using survey in this study can obtain analytical and descriptive information, extract patterns and make comparisons. (Bell, 1987) Bradburn and Sudman (1988) use various examples to indicate that scientific surveys are useful in strategic planning, policy studies and program evaluation. In addition, Johnson (1994) discusses the probability of obtaining a larger breadth of coverage using questionnaire survey and states that “*surveys typically produce a large amount of factual information which can be cross-tabulated in many ways to provide a wealth of description.*”(p.18)

There were some other reasons why a self-completion questionnaire survey was preferred to interview in this study. A questionnaire survey helped to focus attention on certain areas of information and it collected primary information directly from the

respondents. A self-completion questionnaire survey, when compared with interviews and case studies, could keep the identity of the respondents anonymous and mailed questionnaires could be collected easily. Mason and Bramble (1989) suggest that questionnaire survey are more efficient and economical in collecting a large amount of data in a short period of time. Coleman (1999, p.142) also appreciates the use of questionnaire to *“give time and space for respondents to consider their answers in privacy and at their leisure”* and to *“provide middle managers with opportunity to reflect on their perception of their own role”*.

Since this study is an investigation of strategic planning based on the evaluation of the existing ECA practices in all Hong Kong schools, a questionnaire survey is a most appropriate method. By further considering the advantages of using this approach, such as the efficient use of time, anonymity for the respondents, the possibility of a high return rate and the use of standardized questions (Munn and Drever, 1990, p.2), a questionnaire survey was used as the major method in this study.

In order to make the questionnaire an effective research tool in this study, the following points from Johnson (1994, p.38) were addressed:

- (1) A clear and comprehensible questionnaire for the desired respondents;
- (2) Delivering the questionnaire directly to the desired respondents;
- (3) Motivating the respondents to complete and return the questionnaire on time; and
- (4) Making effective administrative arrangements for the return of the questionnaire.

A covering letter explaining the purposes and potential value of the research had been sent with the questionnaire directly to each ECA master/mistress through their school

addresses. (Appendix I) The importance of having an individual's response had also been emphasized. All replies were guaranteed to be anonymous and confidential. Supporting letter from the chairman of Hong Kong Extracurricular Activities Masters' Association (HKEAMA) was sent with the covering letter. (Appendix II) The respondents were asked to return the completed questionnaire using the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope.

In order to motivate the respondents to complete and return the questionnaires, a metallic bookmark was sent out with the questionnaire to all potential respondents as a souvenir to thank them for their support in the research.

In discussing the response rate of a survey, Babbie (1990) suggests that a response rate of 50% is adequate, a response rate of at least 60% is considered good, and 70% or more is very good. In this study, a satisfactory response rate was expected because this study was fully supported by HKEAMA. The response rate of the main study was 56.3% and could be claimed to be adequate (Babbie, 1990).

However, Munn and Drever (1990, p.5) outline the three major limitations of using questionnaires in research:

- *The information collected tends to describe rather than explain why things are the way they are.*
- *The information can be superficial.*
- *The time needed to draft and pilot the questionnaire is often underestimated and so the usefulness of the questionnaire is reduced if preparation has been inadequate.*

In order to overcome the first two limitations suggested above by Munn and Drever (1990), other research methods such as case studies and interviews, which are explanatory, were adopted in this study to supplement the descriptive questionnaire survey.

### Case Studies

Yin (1981, p.23) defines case study technically as “*an empirical inquiry that (a) investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context when (b) the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which (c) multiple sources of evidence are used.*” (Anderson, 1990, p.158)

Documentation, file data, interviews, site visits, direct observation and physical artifacts are six typical sources of evidence in case studies. (Anderson, 1990) Anderson (1990) explains that data analysis and data verification take place in the field as the data are being collected.

“*The case study is essentially research in depth rather than breadth... This method (case study) is not practical with a large sample.*” (Verma and Beard, 1981, p.61) Individual case studies are time-consuming and expensive in terms of finance. Therefore extensive case studies were not practical in this study. Verma and Beard (1981) warn that “*The cases or the individuals selected for the study may not be representative or typical and hence generalisations will not be valid.*” (p.62)

In this study, it would have been inappropriate to draw important conclusions about the management quality of ECA in Hong Kong schools by just using a few school cases, for the contexts and background of each school might vary greatly. But case studies, on the other hand, can provide insights for the improvement of existing practices.

Bell (1987) mentions that the case-study researcher aims to identify common and unique features within an organization “*by showing how they affect the implementation of the systems and influence the way an organization functions.*” (p.7) Case studies that were in the form of unscheduled interviews could contribute richer information of the management situation and hence were adopted in this study to supplement the questionnaire survey.

Nisbet and Watt (1984) make a detailed comparison between case study and survey by considering the strengths and weaknesses:

*The survey identifies the elements which are common to a number of persons or observations. Its strengths are that it leads to generalizable findings, and its procedures (questionnaire, interview schedule, sampling) are well tested. It has two serious weaknesses. Firstly, it may obliterate the unique features and patterns within small groups, or even within an institution or an individual which may hold the key to the puzzle. Second, the researcher finds only what he seeks: if something is not covered in the survey instrument, it will be missed unless the respondent particularly wishes to supply extra information.*(Nisbet and Watt, 1984, p.76)

*The two approaches can be used to complement each other: together, they represent the macro and micro approaches. A large-scale survey can be followed by case studies, to test out conclusions by examination of specific instances.*(Nisbet and Watt, 1984, p.77)

Anderson (1990) claims that case studies have their own strength in incorporating all type of data from multiple sources and “look for converging evidences” by triangulation to draw clear conclusions. (p.163) When discussing the single-case and multiple-case designs of case studies, Yin (1994) warns that “*Single-case designs require careful investigation of the potential case to minimize the chances of misrepresentation and to maximum the access needed to collect the case evidence.*” (p.148) Yin explains the three rationales for using single-case study:

- (1) *It represents the critical case in testing a well-formulated theory;*
- (2) *It represents an extreme or unique case, and*
- (3) *It is the revelatory case.* (1994, p.147)

In this study, only limited individual case studies had been adopted for in-depth investigation purposes. Two case studies have been carried out in two schools with particular characteristics of ECA management. The rationale of using single-case studies in this research is that, as suggested by Yin (1994), the two individual cases were extreme and unique. One case involved the only school in Hong Kong running the ISO 9000 quality assurance system while the other case was of the single school in Hong Kong adopting an innovative extension curriculum as a replacement for the traditional ECA curriculum.

Since the interviewer had very limited information concerning the ECA management situations within the two schools, in order to look for the management philosophies behind the daily practices and to gather more information about the actual applications of the underlying management theories, unstructured interviews were carried out during the case studies.

Unstructured interviews and limited documentary analyses were the two methods used in the case studies. Interviews were chosen for the two case studies because they provide opportunities for in-depth investigation of practices, clarification of terms, and expression of feelings of the interviewees concerning their daily practices. Since the ECA practices in the two case study schools were new to the researcher, in order to collect data from the primary source and collect relevant information from the frontline practitioners, the interviews were unstructured so as to leave flexibility for the interviewees to present their own perspectives. Documentary analyses relied on the published materials, the web pages and CD ROM materials of the two case study schools. The documentary analyses provided information for the researcher to generate questions during the interviews, to understand more about the practices of the two case study schools and for triangulation purposes. However, due to the anonymity of the questionnaires, it was not possible to triangulate the results of the questionnaires of these two case study schools with the corresponding findings in the case studies. Triangulation was therefore limited to comparing the results of the interviews and the documentary analyses.

### **Interviews**

There are three major categories of interviews: unstructured, semi-structured, and structured interviews. During the unstructured interviews, the interviewers are non-directive and the interviewees are given freedom to express their views. For semi-structured interviews, the interviewers have predetermined schedules before them and they need to complete the schedules during or immediately after the interviews.



During the interviewer-directed and structured interviews, the interviewers prepare the precise question wordings before the interviews and what the interviewers can do is to be “*a reader of a questionnaire*” (Burroughs, 1975, p.104) Wragg (1994) states that semi-structured interview schedules are the most welcome in educational research, for they “*allow respondents to express themselves at some length, but offers enough shape to prevent aimless rambling (pp.272-273)*”.

Slavin (1992) explains why interviews are important as a supplement to a questionnaire survey:

*Questionnaires are a convenient means of collecting attitudinal and perceptual data, but they require that the researcher reduce his or her research questions to a set of items that may be too limited or limiting. An alternative to questionnaires is the interviews, in which individuals are asked specific questions. (p.87)*

Wiersma (1991) also explains why the use of interviews has some advantages over the use of questionnaires:

*(1) if the interview is granted there is no problem with non-response; (2) the interview provides opportunity for in-depth probing and elaboration and clarification of items; and (3) interviews can be used with individuals from whom data cannot otherwise be obtained, e.g. collecting information from educationally disadvantaged people. (p.190)*

Stake (1995) explains the functions of interviews in case studies and highly values the contribution of interviews in providing different perspectives:

*Two principal uses of case study are to obtain the descriptions and*

*interpretations of others. The case will not be seen the same by everyone. Qualitative researchers take pride in discovering and portraying the multiple views of the case. The interview is the main road to multiple realities. (Stake, 1995, p.64)*

Interview is a face-to-face data-collecting instrument which provides researchers with access to what is “*inside a person’s head*” (Tuckman, 1972). “*[Interview] makes it possible to measure what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences), and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs).*” (Tuckman, 1972, p.196) Although interviews are costly in terms of time and effort, Stake (1995) describes what is happening during an interview:

*Each interviewee is expected to have had unique experiences, special stories to tell. The qualitative interviews should arrive with a short list of issue-oriented questions... The purpose of the most part is not to get single yes and no answers but description of an episode, a linkage, an explanation. (Stake, 1995, p.65)*

In discussing the validity of interviews, Burrough (1975) explains that interviews emphasize verbal procedures, therefore great care must be taken to draw inferences. Burrough comments, “*The comparison of the word with the act constitutes a process of concurrent validation which should be adopted as far as possible.*” (p.105) Wragg (1994) also considers the possibilities of inaccuracy and distortion in interviewing and suggests pitfalls such as (1) interviewer bias by using leading questions and (2) sample bias by incorrect selection of sample.

Easterby-Smith et al (1994) point out the fact that “*the large amounts of non-standard data produced by qualitative studies make data analysis problematic (p.347)*”. For qualitative data, instead of imposing an external structure in quantitative data analysis,

they suggest to tease out themes, patterns and categories by deriving structure from the qualitative data to generate grounded theory.

Interviews with ECA masters/mistresses, teachers, and students are best carried out during school hours in school days. *“Interviews are costly in terms of time and effort.”* (Wiersma, 1991, p.190) In this study, due to time limitations, it was not possible to interview a large number of ECA masters/mistresses. Therefore interviews were not considered to be the major research method here because it would not be possible to provide a generalisable overview of opinions by simply interviewing a limited number of respondents.

On the other hand, for in-depth investigation of the subject matter by looking into the different perspectives of ECA experts and, at the same time, for triangulation purposes, twelve semi-structured interviews with experienced ECA masters/mistresses were carried out. These interviews were conducted during an ECA educational visit organized by HKEAMA to the National Education Authority of the People’s Republic of China in Beijing in the period from 4 April to 10 April 1999. These 12 interviewees were so selected and formed the purposive sample (Wiersma, 1991). Hence the interviews were in the form of purposive elite interviews (Anderson, 1990). Anderson (1990) explains what elite interviews are

*(In elite interview) the researcher is not interested in statistical analysis of a large number of responses, but wants to probe the views of a small number of elite individuals. An elite interview is one directed at a respondent who has particular experience or knowledge about the subject being discussed. (Anderson, 1990, p.223)*

There are good reasons for selecting the twelve experienced ECA masters/mistresses as

the interview sample:

- (1) They were involved in wider ECA management,
- (2) They were involved actively in international ECA conferences or events,
- (3) Some of them frequently publish articles in periodicals and contribute ideas about ECA in schools, giving them a good theoretical background in issues concerning ECA management,
- (4) Some of them were HKEAMA executive members,
- (5) Some of them had been engaging in ECA staff development courses in collaboration with the universities in Hong Kong, and
- (6) They could take the ECA experience in Mainland China into consideration and could provide a comparative view on the controversial issues.

The interviewees were well informed of the purposes of the interview and they were told to focus on the areas where improvement in school ECA management could be made. The interviews were conducted in Cantonese. In order to look for management quality in ECA, views on both the advantages and disadvantages of the existing practices were exchanged during the interviews. There were open questions in the interview schedule (see Appendix III). In order to increase flexibility in data collection, variations were provided in how the questions were asked and ordered. The semi-structured interview questions included:

1. What criteria do you use to assess the quality of ECA of a certain school?
2. How can you describe the quality of ECA management in your school? What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats?
3. Are you satisfied with the overall ECA management quality of Hong Kong

secondary schools? What are the existing good practices? Which areas should be improved and how to improve them?

These open questions were aiming to validate the findings in the survey study, to gather more information about practices, to investigate the rationale behind practices and to study the ECA curriculum in some specific schools.

The author being the sole interviewer, had much flexibility to invite the interviewees to express freely their opinions concerning ECA practices and to share their experience in ECA management. The lengths of each interview varied much according to the content of each individual interview, ranging from 20 minutes to 45 minutes.

Due to time limitations, instead of using full transcripts, data collected during the interviews were recorded down in note form. The interviewer, the author of this paper, then analyzed the interview data and some further discussions with the interviewees were carried out to clarify misinterpretations and to look for further insights concerning ECA management.

### **Documentary Analysis**

Documentation can provide evidence for management practices and can be used to check on interview data. *“Most documentary research into management relies on printed sources.”* (Johnson, 1994, p.25) Some school documents, although they are not originally intended for the research purpose, provide valuable data for the study. Robson (1993) comments that in studies of schools and colleges, written curricula,

course outlines and other course documents, timetables, notices, letters and other communications to parents should be taken into account in documentary analysis. *“Documents serve as substitutes for records of activities that the researcher could not observe directly. Sometimes, of course, the recorder is a more expert observer than the researcher.”* (Stake, 1995, p.68)

In this research, documentary analyses were only conducted during the two case studies for testing validity and for triangulation purposes. The documentary analyses used in this study relied on the relevant published materials and articles of the two schools including the materials provided in the Web page and the CD ROM of the schools, the posters on ECA bulletin-boards, and the different forms and documents for ECA management. In the two case studies, the case interviews and the document analyses concurred to produce rich information about the management of ECA in the schools. The author, as the interviewer, first studied some accessible relevant documents of the schools, for example the Web pages and school profiles, to generate rough ideas about their ECA management. During the days of the case studies, from other supplementary sources of documents such as the ECA posters and the procedure manuals of the schools, the interviewer generated relevant interview questions to guide the interviewees to explain their practices and express their view points. And also during the case interviews, the interviewees were requested to provide documentary evidence to support their arguments. The documents could help the interviewees to explain their ECA practices and help the interviewer to generate further questions to explore more information about the modes of practice of the schools.

### Observations

The quality of ECA in a particular school is not easy to be accurately observed by a single observer who is an outsider. The reliability of an observation is subject to objectivity and dependability: *"The extent to which any event would always be classified or described in the same way by the same person or by different observers."* (Simpson and Tuson, 1995, p.63) Again, some events are not accessible to direct observation.

ECA are normally conducted after school hours but the management of ECA is not limited to the time after school. A single observation to a school after school hour can hardly draw any valid conclusion on the management of ECA in that particular school. It is also impractical for this part-time researcher to conduct long-term observation during the school days.

There is also a possibility of the presence of the observer affecting the existing behaviour. On the other hand, time for the observation is often scheduled before the actual observation takes place. Teachers and students may rehearse the scenario so that the results of the observation may not reflect the daily practices.

On one hand, observations can clarify ambiguity in the findings of the interviews, and can serve to fulfil the need for in-depth understanding of certain management practices. On the other hand, there are critics in observations: *subjective, biased, impressionistic, idiosyncratic and lacking in the precise quantifiable measures that are the hallmark of survey research and experimentation.* (Cohen and Manion, 1989, p.129) In view of the various disadvantages discussed above, and due to time constraints, the author

decided not to use observations in this study.

## **Sampling**

Probability sampling and non-probability sampling are the two categories of sampling.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) describe their differences:

*A probability sample, because it draws randomly from the wider population, will be useful if the research wishes to be able to make generalizations, because it seeks representativeness of the wider population... A non-probability sample deliberately avoids representing the wider population; it seeks only to represent a particular group, a particular named section of the wider population. (p.99)*

The availability of time, financial resources, personnel concerns, and facilities are the most influential factors affecting the selection sample size. (Cohen and Manion, 1989 and Wiersma, 1991) Wiersma brings out the fact that “*random sampling is not appropriate or feasible in all educational research, for any of a number of reasons, both practical and conceptual.*” (1991, p.265)

Other than simple random sampling, there are sampling methods such as systematic sampling, stratified sampling, cluster sampling, stage sampling, convenience sampling, quota sampling, purposive sampling, dimensional sampling, and snowball sampling. “*Correct sample sizes depend on the purpose of the study and the nature of the population under scrutiny.*”(Cohen and Manion, 1989, p.104)



Where random sampling is not appropriate, Wiersma (1991) further explains that purposive (purposeful, judgmental) sampling based on “*prior, identified criteria for inclusion*” and on “*the characteristics of the units (sites or individuals) relevant to the research problem*” may be applied. Sometimes, “*comprehensive sampling consists of all units with specified characteristics*” or “*maximum variation sampling including units with maximized differences on specified characteristics*” can be used. (p.265)

When non-random sampling is used, representativeness is no longer argued on a probability basis but on a logical basis that the selection of cases depends on the specifics of the study. (Wiersma, 1991)

Non-probability sampling was adopted in the main study because the aim of this study was to find out the ECA management quality of Hong Kong secondary schools from the perspective of the ECA masters/mistresses. The findings of the study only represented the opinion of the particular group of ECA masters/mistresses in Hong Kong secondary schools. The researcher did not attempt to generalize the results to the population other than the group of ECA masters/mistresses.

For the questionnaire survey in the main study, with the resources available, and with the support of HKEAMA, the whole population consisting of 412 Hong Kong secondary schools were invited to participate so as to increase the reliability of the survey. In order to look into different perspectives of ECA experts, as discussion earlier, purposive sampling (Wiersma, 1991) involving 12 experienced ECA masters/mistresses was adopted in the interviews of the main study. For exploratory purposes, case studies into two critical schools with unique styles of student activities management were conducted.

In the interviews, purposive sampling in the form of elite interviews was used. The selected samples of interviewees were ECA experts who have both territorial and international experience and were participating actively in ECA staff development programmes. The selection of the purposive elite sample was discussed in earlier paragraphs of this Chapter. (pp.95-96)

### **Ethical Concerns in Research**

Babbie (1990) has identified five common ethical concerns in conducting surveys and polls. The five concerns are (1) voluntary participation; (2) no harm to respondents; (3) anonymity and confidentiality; (4) identifying purpose and sponsor; and (5) analysis and reporting.

The British Educational Research Association, BERA, (1992, pp.19-21) emphasizes that all educational research should be conducted within an ethic of (a) respect for persons; (b) respect for knowledge; (c) respect for democratic values; and (d) for the quality of education research.

The American Association of Public Opinion Research, an interdisciplinary association of both academic and commercial survey researchers, generates the AAPOR Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. Within the Code, a published survey research report should provide an accurate disclosure of the following nine research design characteristics (McNamara, 1994):

1. Purpose of the survey
2. Sponsor of the survey
3. Sample sizes used in data analysis
4. Base or response (response rates for sampling plan)
5. Time of interview (dates data were collected)
6. How respondents were contacted (telephone, mail etc.)
7. Definition of target population (inferential base)
8. Exact wording of questions used in survey
9. Error allowance (margin of error)

In this study, from the suggestions of Babbie (1990), the author summarises some possible solutions to the ethical problems in Table 4.1. The ethical issues mentioned in Table 4.1 by Babbie (1990) were handled with appropriate precautions, for example the questionnaires in this study were anonymous and the contents of the questionnaires were kept confidential. A covering letter explaining the value of the study was sent with the questionnaire to the potential respondents to hope for a satisfactory response rate to increase the reliability of the study. Care had been taken to ensure that the results of the questionnaires were used for the original purposes only. Appropriate methods of analysis and triangulation were used to draw reliable and valid conclusions. The AAPOR Code of Professional Ethics and Practices (McNamara, 1994) were strictly followed to ensure that the published survey research report includes accurate disclosure of all the characteristics discussed earlier in the previous paragraphs.

Ethic Concerns	Solutions
1. Voluntary participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve the survey design</li> <li>● Make respondents fully aware of the value and justification of the survey, e.g. an introduction letter to indicate that the survey is voluntary.</li> </ul>
2. No harm to respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sensitive questions should be asked only if necessary and with justifications</li> <li>● Strict confidentiality</li> </ul>
3. Anonymity and confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A responsibility to protect the identity of survey participants.</li> <li>● A respondent should not be identified on the basis of a response</li> <li>● Not to disclose the individual's identity</li> <li>● Inform respondents whether the survey is anonymous or confidential.</li> <li>● If second mailing is needed to increase the response rate, then ask those have responded to ignore the second request (tell survey respondents that the second invitation is sent to all)</li> </ul>
4. Identifying purpose and sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Be careful not to share specific aims of a survey that are likely to affect the reliability of responses</li> </ul>
5. Analysis and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The analysis and conclusions should not be biased</li> </ul>

**Table 4.1      Solutions to ethical problems in the survey study**  
(modified from Babbie, 1990)

## **The Development of the Instruments**

### **The layout of the questionnaire**

The major instrument of this study is a self-completion questionnaire. The English version of the questionnaire is attached in the appendix IV. The international schools are excluded from this survey and all the potential respondents in the rest of the Hong

Kong secondary schools are Chinese. In order to obtain a better response rate, and to prevent misinterpretation of the questionnaire items due to language problems, the Chinese language version of the questionnaire was sent to respondents.

The questionnaire consists of two sections, Part 1 and Part 2. In Part 1, there are three sections: A, B and C. Section A consists of six questions asking for background information about the respondents and their schools. Section B consists of 28 factual yes/no items and 28 other questions with scaled answers asking for respondents' perception concerning the management of ECA in their schools. For the latter 28 items, instead of using the 5-point Likert scale, a selected-response format with 6 ordinal scales is used to prevent respondents simply choosing the middle scale. The questions in Section C are aiming at providing general comments by the respondents. As suggested in Slavin (1992), open-form questions are desirable when complex opinions are expected. Although coding of the answers of open-form questions is more difficult and many respondents dislike the extra workload in completing open-form questions, two open-ended items appear towards the end of Part 1 of the questionnaire to seek more information and feedback from the respondents.

Part 2 focuses on benchmarking information. In question 1, each respondent is requested to list, with reasons for success, the most successful ECA item in the respondent's school. Question 2 is looking for innovative ECA items. With the school names, school addresses and the names of the ECA masters/mistresses voluntarily filled by the respondents, the final question looks for opportunity to carry out interviews and case studies in the schools for in-depth investigation and triangulation purposes.

### *The Validity of the Instruments*

*“A measure’s validity refers to the degree to which it actually measures the concept it is supposed to measure.”* (Slavin, 1992, p.78) Slavin (1992) continues to discuss that there are five major types of validity: face validity, content validity, predictive validity, concurrent validity, and construct validity. For face validity, a researcher has to make an argument to indicate that the scale used in the research is valid. Content validity will be achieved when

*The content of a test matches some objective criterion such as the content of a book, the skill required to do a certain job, or knowledge deemed to be important for some purpose... Content validity is usually established by showing a comparison between the concepts tested by the test items and those covered in the text...* (Slavin, 1992, pp.78-79)

Slavin (1992, p.79) refers predictive validity and concurrent validity to *“the degree to which scores on a scale or test predict later behaviour”* and *“the correlation between scores on a scale and scores on another scale or measure of established validity given at about the same time”* respectively.

Yin (1994) refers construct validity to the establishment of *“correct operational measures for the concepts being studied.”* (p.143) Slavin (1992) explains the term construct validity:

*Construct validity refers to the degree to which scores on a scale have a pattern of correlations with other scores or attributes that would be predicted by a well establish theory... Construct validity is*

*high when we can demonstrate that a scale not only correlates with other measures with which it is supposed to correlate but also fails to correlate with measures of concepts from which it is proposed to be different.* (Slavin, 1992, p.80)

Case studies may be criticized by the fact that “*a case study investigator fails to develop a sufficiently operational set of measures and that ‘subjective’ judgements are used to collect data*”. (Yin, 1994, p.144) Yin (1994) suggests three tactics to increase validity: (a) the use of multiple sources of evidence during data collection, (b) the establishment of a chain of evidence during data collection, and (c) the review of the draft case study report by the informants.

In this study, the results of the questionnaire survey were compared with the findings of the interviews and documentary analyses to see if there was concurrent validity among the findings from the different approaches.

Wiersma (1991) emphasizes that “*the validity of research is always a matter of degree.*”(p.6) Wiersma continues to clarify the concepts of internal validity and external validity:

*Validity in research deals with the accurate interpretability of the results (internal validity) and the generalizability of the results (external validity).* (1991, p.6)

Therefore it is the responsibility of the researcher to attain a balance between (a) the interpretation of the results with reasonable certainty, and (b) the useful generalization of the results. (Wiersma, 1991)

Yin (1994) explains the problem of internal validity by stating that

*A case study involves an inference every time an event cannot be directly observed. Thus, an investigator will 'infer' that a particular event resulted from some earlier occurrence, based on interview and documentary evidence collected as part of the case study. Is the inference correct? Is the evidence convergent? Does it appear to be airtight? A research design that has anticipated these questions has begun to deal with the overall problem of making inferences and therefore the specific problem of internal validity. (p.145)*

Yin (1994) also realizes that external validity is a major problematic barrier in doing case studies. By identifying that survey research is relying on statistical generalization while case studies are depending on analytical generalization, Yin (1994) writes,

*Critics typically state that single cases offer a poor basis for generalizing. However, such critics are implicitly contrasting the situation to survey research, where a 'sample' (if selected correctly) readily generalizes to a larger universe. This analogy to samples and universe is incorrect when dealing with case studies. (p.145)*

Cohen and Manion (1989), quoting Belson (1975, 1986), say that the validity of postal questionnaires depends on (1) whether respondents who complete questionnaires do so accurately and (2) whether non-respondents would have the same distribution of answers as those respondents who complete questionnaires. In this survey, all items and instructions in the questionnaire were made clear and modified after the pilot studies, to ensure that the possibility of misinterpretation was at a minimum. Special measures, such as the support of HKEAMA and the delivery of souvenirs, were taken to encourage a higher return rate of the questionnaire. A supporting letter from the chairman of HKEAMA, emphasizing the importance of the study to ECA management,



was sent together with the questionnaire to each of the potential respondents. A metallic bookmark was sent with the questionnaire as well to thank each potential respondent for his/her support. In order to further emphasize the importance of the study, the Chinese version of the following encouraging statements written by the author of this paper were printed on the metallic bookmark:

*Extracurricular Activity is one of the important constituents of the secondary and primary school curricula. If the education quality and the students' overall development are concerned, the quality of the extracurricular activities should not be overlooked.*

The items in the questionnaire relating to quality were derived from literature concerning quality management, especially in educational settings (for example, Education and Manpower Branch and Education Department, 1991; Sammons et al., 1993; Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham, 1994a, 1994b; Tam, 1995). Two pilot tests were carried out before the main study in order to ensure that no ambiguous items were included in the questionnaire. Since “*the concepts tested in the questionnaire matched those covered in the literature*” (Slavin, 1992, p.79), the questionnaire itself could be considered to have content validity.

### **The Reliability of the Instruments**

Reliability refers to “*the degree to which a measure is consistent in producing the same readings when measuring the same things.*” (Slavin, 1992, p.75) Wiersma (1991) clarifies the term “research reliability” by stating that

*Reliability of research concerns the replicability and consistency of the methods, conditions, and the results... Internal reliability refers to the extent that data collection, analysis, and interpretation are consistent given the same conditions... External reliability deals with the issue of whether or not independent researchers can replicate studies in the same or similar settings. (p.7)*

Cohen and Manion (1989) emphasize that “correct sample size depends upon the purpose of the study and the nature of the population under scrutiny.” (p.104) With resources available, in order to increase the reliability of the survey, the whole population consisting of 412 Hong Kong secondary schools was invited to participate in this study. Out of the 412 questionnaires distributed, 232 of them were returned. The return rate is 56.3%. Out of the 232 questionnaires returned, all of them were found usable. Babbie (1990) suggests that a response rate of 50% is adequate, so the return rate in this survey is considered to be acceptable (see Table 4.2).

According to the Education Department (1999), there were only 290 secondary school teachers who were in the post of ECA masters/mistresses by main duty in the year 1998-1999 when this study was conducted. However, it was not possible to identify the 290 schools. Therefore, questionnaires were sent to the whole population of 412 secondary schools. If only these 290 ECA masters/mistresses are considered, the 232 returned questionnaires constitute an 80.0% response rate, considered by Babbie (1990) to be very good. (Table 4.2) Hence, the results of this questionnaire survey could be considered as representative of the opinions of the existing ECA masters/mistresses in Hong Kong secondary schools in that school year.

Number of questionnaires distributed	Number of questionnaires returned	Response Rate	Babbie's (1990) opinion
412	232	56.3% (if total 412 schools are considered)	Adequate
		80.0% (in respect of the actual number of ECA masters/mistresses who were in post)	Very Good

**Table 4.2      The response rate of the questionnaire survey**

### **Triangulation**

In discussing the importance of triangulation, Stake (1995) writes, *"We assume the meaning of an observation is one thing, but additional observations give us grounds for revising an interpretation."*(p.110) Furthermore, Stake (1995) refers to Denzin's (1984) four major triangulation protocols:

- (1) Data source triangulation – to see if the case or phenomenon remain the same at different times, in other spaces, or as persons interact differently.
- (2) Investigator triangulation – two or more researchers to take a look at the same phenomenon.
- (3) Theory triangulation – choosing co-observers or reviewers from alternative theoretical viewpoints.
- (4) Methodological triangulation – using different research methods to confirm the meaning.

Since the researcher was the only investigator, and it was not possible to have an additional investigator or to have an extra reviewer with a different theoretical perspective, investigator triangulation was not possible and theory triangulation was not feasible. Because the sampling frame consists of all the population of ECA masters/mistresses in Hong Kong secondary schools, data source triangulation was not convenient. Therefore, out of the four methods of triangulation, methodological triangulation was adopted in this study. The results of the questionnaire survey were compared with the results of the interviews to see if there was consistency in the findings. The questionnaire was so designed that sometimes two or more items were asking for similar management issues. The results of those items in the questionnaire were then checked with each other to see if there were contradictions. In case of doubt during the interviews, the information provided by the interviewees could be verified by the relevant ECA documents of the schools concerned.

## **The Results of the two Pilot Studies**

Two pilot studies were carried out and the results were as follows:

### **The first pilot study**

Before finalizing the survey instrument, a pilot run was carried out to check for ambiguity, confusion, deficiencies, and poorly prepared items. Being experts in the field of ECA, the Chairman and one of the committee members of HKEAMA were invited to participate in the preliminary pilot study. They were asked to complete the

original questionnaire. Afterwards, they were interviewed and invited to give their professional comments on the questionnaire design.

The original questionnaire consisted of only one section. In light of the feedback from the preliminary pilot study, the order of the questions was restructured and the questions were categorized into two parts. Part 1 was particularly designed to look for facts about the overall quality of ECA management in all secondary schools as perceived by the ECA masters/mistresses. Part 2 emphasized benchmarking.

The major problem was found in the wording of the original questionnaire when the primary English questionnaire was translated into a Chinese Language one. Due to different language structure and cultural factors, the question items became misleading and confused when the wordings were translated directly from English language to Chinese language. So, the two participants were invited to sit together with the researcher to scrutinize each question item and amend the misleading items using suitable Chinese wordings.

There were some minor modifications to the original questionnaire. In Section A, the options of Question 4 were modified to a more representative classification. For example, option 1 was changed from “1-5 years” to “1 to 3 years”. In order to reduce the number of items to make the questionnaire easier to complete, some overlapping items in Section B were deleted. To obtain more insight from the respondents, an additional question (Part 2, Question 2) asking for innovative ECA programmes was added. A question asking for respondents’ willingness to have interviews and case studies in their schools was added.

## **The second pilot study**

### ***Sampling Frame used and the Nature of Sample in the Second Pilot Study***

Maximum Variation Sampling, “a *selection process which includes units so that differences on specific characteristics are maximized*” (Wiersma, 1991, p.266), and, to save time, stratified convenience sampling were adopted in the second pilot study. Twelve ECA masters/mistresses from the different types of schools (two from government schools, eight from aided schools and two from private schools) participated. These twelve participants were selected from the course members of a management course for ECA masters/mistresses organized by a university in Hong Kong. The aim of the second pilot study was to further examine the appropriateness of the questionnaire items and to investigate whether the researcher could generalize with certainty appropriate conclusions from the answers.

The questionnaires were mailed to the schools of the twelve respondents on 2 November 1998. Telephone follow-up calls were made to the twelve ECA masters/mistresses one week later to ensure that there would be a satisfactory response rate. The respondents were asked to return the self-completion questionnaires to the researcher by mail.

As suggested by Slavin (1992), interviews were carried out in the main study to gather more information and for triangulation purposes. In order to examine the suitability of the interview schedule, two respondents from the pilot study were interviewed on 30 November 1998. These two interviewees were the only two respondents who

responded positively to the author's invitation in the last question of the questionnaire and promised to have interviews with the author. The interviews were conducted in Cantonese. During the two semi-structured interviews, structured and open questions were asked. The interview schedule is attached in the Appendix III. The semi-structured interview questions included:

1. What criteria do you use to assess the quality of ECA of a certain school?
2. How can you describe the quality of ECA management in your school? What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats?
3. Are you satisfied with the overall ECA management quality of Hong Kong secondary schools? What are the existing good practices? Which areas should be improved and how to improve them?

### **The Results of the questionnaire survey**

In Part 1 Section A and B, "Background Information" and "Management of Extracurricular Activities", the frequencies of the choices in each item were counted.

### Background Information:

ITEM	OPTION	Frequency	% of total	Cumulative %
1. School Type	Government School	2	16.7%	16.7%
	<b>Aided School</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>66.6%</b>	83.3%
	Private school	2	16.7%	100.0%
2. Teachers' recognition of the educational value of ECA	Strong recognition	3	25.0%	25.0%
	<b>Average recognition</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	91.7%
	Weak recognition	1	8.3%	100.0%
3. Students' recognition of the educational value of ECA	Strong recognition	4	33.3%	33.3%
	<b>Average recognition</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>58.3%</b>	91.7%
	Weak recognition	1	8.3%	100.0%
4. Experience as ECA master/mistress	1-3 years	3	25.0%	25%
	4-6 years	2	16.7%	41.7%
	7-9 years	1	8.3%	50.0%
	<b>10 years or above</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>50.0%</b>	100.0%
5. Management Training	<b>Yes</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>58.3%</b>	58.3%
	No	5	41.7%	100.0%
6. ECA lessons within school timetable	<b>No</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>83.3%</b>	83.3%
	Yes	2*	16.7%	100.0%
	Others	0		

Highest frequencies in **Bold** letters.

\*1 school with 40 minutes, 1 school with 50 minutes for ECA lessons

**Table 4.3      Results of Section A in the second pilot study**

When the twelve respondents were asked to rate their own perception from a 3-point scale (low, average and high), 66.7% reported that teachers in their schools have an average recognition of ECA educational value while 58.3% claimed that their students have an average recognition.

50.0% of the ECA masters/mistresses were experienced (with 10 years or above) and 58.3% of the respondents had taken management training courses. Only two schools had formalized ECA lessons, so 83.3% of the schools did not have ECA lessons within their normal school timetable.



### Management of Extracurricular Activities:

The first part of Section B requested certain facts about ECA management in schools. In the second part of Section B, the respondents were asked to rate from 1 to 6 certain factors regarding ECA management (see Table 4.4 and Table 4.5).

ITEMS	YES	NO
1. Is there any clear and explicit vision in the management of ECA within the school?	<b>8</b> <b>(66.7%)</b>	4 (33.3%)
2. Does the ECA management team shape a shared value that reflects and promotes school vision?	<b>9</b> <b>(75.0%)</b>	3 (25.5%)
3. Does the ECA department have clear educational goals?	<b>8</b> <b>(66.7%)</b>	4 (33.3%)
4. Is the ECA programme in your school a balanced one?	<b>11</b> <b>(91.7%)</b>	1 (8.3%)
5. Is there any staff professional development for ECA management?	3 (25.0%)	<b>9</b> <b>(75.0%)</b>
6. Is there any evaluation for the whole ECA programme in your school?	<b>6</b> <b>(50.0%)</b>	<b>6</b> <b>(50.0)</b>
7. Are there any records of individual student progress in ECA?	<b>7</b> <b>(58.3%)</b>	5 (41.7%)
8. Is there any ECA curriculum development?	4 (33.3%)	<b>8</b> <b>(66.7%)</b>
9. Is there any ECA evaluation programme in your school?	<b>8</b> <b>(66.7%)</b>	4 (33.3%)
10. Is there any detailed record of school ECA achievement?	<b>8</b> <b>(66.7%)</b>	4 (33.3%)
11. Is there any remedial action for students with weaker performance in ECA?	3 (25.0%)	<b>9</b> <b>(75.0%)</b>

ITEMS	YES	NO
12. Is there any system for dealing with complaints and appeals?	<b>6</b> <b>(50.0%)</b>	<b>6</b> <b>(50.0%)</b>
13. Are there adequate ECA resources and facilities in your school?	<b>7</b> <b>(58.3%)</b>	<b>5</b> <b>(41.7%)</b>
14. Is there any sufficient training programme for teachers within the school to help them to conduct ECA?	<b>3</b> <b>(25.0%)</b>	<b>9</b> <b>(75.0%)</b>
15. Is there any partnership development with external agencies?	<b>6</b> <b>(50.0%)</b>	<b>6</b> <b>(50.0%)</b>
16. Is there any marketing research to find out students' expectation and interests before planning for the ECA programme within the school?	<b>6</b> <b>(50.0%)</b>	<b>6</b> <b>(50.0%)</b>
17. Are there any formal procedures to evaluate client (students, teachers and parents) satisfaction?	<b>2</b> <b>(16.7%)</b>	<b>10</b> <b>(83.3%)</b>
18. Does your school provide sufficient information to the staff, parents and students concerning the recent ECA development of the school?	<b>10</b> <b>(83.3%)</b>	<b>2</b> <b>(16.7%)</b>
19. Is there any staff appraisal programme to appraise teachers' performance in conducting ECA?	<b>7</b> <b>(63.3%)</b>	<b>4</b> <b>(36.4%)</b>
20. Are the staffs within the school committed to ECA quality?	<b>6</b> <b>(50.0%)</b>	<b>6</b> <b>(50.0%)</b>
21. Is there any recognition of good performance for staff concerning ECA?	<b>6</b> <b>(54.5%)</b>	<b>5</b> <b>(45.5%)</b>
22. Is there any cooperation across different departments within the school concerning ECA?	<b>9</b> <b>(81.8%)</b>	<b>2</b> <b>(18.2%)</b>
23. Is the ECA management emphasizing on measurable goals and results?	<b>5</b> <b>(41.7%)</b>	<b>7</b> <b>(58.3%)</b>
24. Is every student having equal opportunity to participate in ECA?	<b>10</b> <b>(83.3%)</b>	<b>2</b> <b>(16.7%)</b>
25. Are there sufficient ECA reference materials in the school library?	<b>6</b> <b>(50.0%)</b>	<b>6</b> <b>(50.0%)</b>
26. Is there sufficient financial support from school regarding ECA?	<b>7</b> <b>(58.3%)</b>	<b>5</b> <b>(41.7%)</b>

ITEMS	YES	NO
27. Is the communication between ECA management and the teachers effective?	<b>11</b> <b>(91.7%)</b>	<b>1</b> <b>(8.3%)</b>
28. Is there any Home-School partnership in the management of ECA?	<b>4</b> <b>(33.3%)</b>	<b>8</b> <b>(66.7%)</b>

**Table 4.4 Results of the first part of Section B in the second pilot study**

From the questionnaire results, with reference to the Performance Indicators (Chapter 3, Tables 3.1 and 3.2) summarized in Education Department (1998a), the following findings were significant:

- 91.7% of the responding schools reported that they were strong in the provision of a balanced ECA programme for their students.
- 83.3% of the responding schools reported that their students were having equal opportunity to participate in ECA.
- Only 66.7% of the responding schools were having clear and explicit policies on ECA, and similarly
- Results indicated that, a relatively large number of schools, 41.7%, did not have sufficient resources for ECA, and
- Only half (50.0%) of the schools were having formal ECA evaluation procedures.

The above results showed that resources and evaluation were the two significant deficiencies hindering the development of ECA in the pilot schools.

Results of the second part of Section B in the second pilot study:

ITEM	% of respondents (total no. of respondents = 12)								Mean Score and Standard Deviation
		1	2	3	4	5	6		
1. To what extent are teachers and pupils involved in the planning of ECA?	Little			33.3 %	50.0 %	16.7 %		A lot	3.83 0.72
2. To what extent do you believe teachers in the school are concerned with the school's ECA objectives?	Little			58.3 %	16.7 %	25.0 %		A lot	3.67 0.89
3. How do you rate the motivation of the teachers in conducting ECA?	Little		8.3 %	33.3 %	58.3 %			A lot	3.50 0.67
4. How do you rate the participation of the students in ECA?	Little			16.7 %	41.7 %	41.7 %		A lot	4.25 0.75
5. What expectations do your school have of your students' achievement in ECA?	Little			16.7 %	50.0 %	33.3 %		A lot	4.17 0.72
6. To what extent is the ECA department sensitive to the needs of the students?	Little		8.3 %	8.3 %	41.7 %	33.3 %	8.3 %	A lot	4.25 1.06
7. To what extent can the ECA programme fulfil students' need?	Little		8.3 %	16.7 %	25.0 %	41.7 %	8.3 %	A lot	4.25 1.14
8. To what extent does your school make best use of staff's skill and experience?	Little			50.0 %	33.3 %	16.7 %		A lot	3.67 0.78
9. To what extent does your school use information technology to assist ECA management?	Little	8.3 %	25.0 %	33.3 %	33.3 %			A lot	2.92 1.00
10. To what extent does your school allow flexibility for teachers to organize ECA to meet clients' needs?	Little			8.3 %	58.3 %	33.3 %		A lot	4.25 0.62
11. To what extent are your students satisfied with the ECA programme provided in your school?	Little			16.7 %	33.3 %	50.0 %		A lot	4.33 0.78
12. To what extent are your teachers satisfied with the ECA programme provided in your school?	Little			25.0 %	50.0 %	25.0 %		A lot	4.00 0.74
13. To what extent is the ECA programme reinforcing classroom learning?	Little		33.3 %	16.7 %	33.3 %	16.7 %		A lot	3.33 1.15
14. To what extent is the ECA programme promoting students' personal development?	Little			8.3 %	41.7 %	50.0 %		A lot	4.42 0.67
15. To what extent is the ECA programme facilitating the teaching of those skills that may present difficulties in a formal classroom setting?	Little		8.3 %	16.7 %	41.7 %	16.7 %	16.7 %	A lot	4.17 1.19
16. To what extent is the ECA programme inculcating certain values that may present difficulties in a formal classroom setting?	Little		8.3 %	16.7 %	33.3 %	25.0 %	16.7 %	A lot	4.25 1.22

ITEM	% of respondents (total no. of respondents = 12)								Mean Score and Standard Deviation
		1	2	3	4	5	6		
17. To what extent is the ECA programme promoting students' social development by broadening their social experiences, the practice of social skills and internalization of moral and social values?	Little			25.0 %	16.7 %	25.0 %	33.3 %	A lot	4.67 1.23
18. To what extent is the ECA programme making school life more challenging and interesting?	Little				16.7 %	75.0 %	8.3 %	A lot	4.92 0.51
19. To what extent does the ECA department meet its promises to clients (students, teachers and parents)?	Little			16.7 %	25.0 %	58.3 %		A lot	4.42 0.79
20. To what extent is the ECA programme reflecting the responsibility for the community and environmental awareness?	Little	8.3 %		16.7 %	58.3 %	16.7 %		A lot	3.75 1.06
21. To what extent are the allocated resources effectively used?	Little		8.3 %	8.3 %	41.7 %	41.7 %		A lot	4.17 0.94
22. To what extent does your ECA management team commit to ECA service quality?	Little		16.7 %	8.3 %	33.3 %	41.7 %		A lot	4.00 1.13
23. To what extent are the goals met effectively and efficiently?	Little		9.1 %		45.5 %	45.5 %		A lot	4.27 0.90
24. How efficiently does the ECA department respond to the feedback and the complaints from the clients (students, teachers and parents)?	Very slow		8.3 %	8.3 %	16.7 %	66.7 %		Very fast	4.42 1.00
25. To what extent is the difference between the planned and actual performance of the ECA programme in your school?	Little		16.7 %	33.3 %	25.0 %	25.0 %		A lot	3.58 1.08
26. To what extent do teachers within the school work towards the school mission through ECA?	Little			16.7 %	41.7 %	41.7 %		A lot	4.25 0.75
27. To what extent can the clients (students, teachers and parents) reach the ECA top management?	Very easy					58.3 %	41.7 %	Very hard	5.42 0.51
28. To what extent is the school encouraging student learning through ECA?	Little			25.0 %	25.0 %	33.3 %	16.7 %	A lot	4.42 1.08

**Table 4.5 Results of the second part of Section B**

The respondents rated quite high (an average of 4.42 out of 6) when asking for the extent of meeting their promises to clients. (Question 19) And again, they reported a rating of 4.42 (out of 6) when asking for the effectiveness of the ECA department in

responding to the feedback and complaints of the clients.(Question 24) From the respondents' perspective, both the teacher motivation in conducting ECA and the student participation in ECA were above average, with average rating 3.50 and 4.25 respectively. (Question 3 and question 4)

The average rating of the extent of students' and teachers' satisfaction of ECA from the respondents' perspective were 4.33 and 4.00 (Maximum rating = 6) respectively (question 11 and question 12). These results reflected that, from the respondents' perspective, in general, both the teachers and the students were satisfied with the ECA programmes provided in the schools.

As from the results of question 9, the twelve schools used little information technology to assist ECA management (average rating = 2.92). Regarding the management of ECA and indicating from the results of questions 2, 3, 8, 13 and 25, the schools need to improve collaborative planning, delegation, team building, motivation and communication skills.

### Results of Section C:

#### Satisfaction of ECA management in the respondents' school in the second pilot study

The degree of satisfaction with the overall ECA management in the schools by ECA masters/mistresses is shown in Table 4.6:

<b>Satisfaction Level</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Cumulative Percentage</b>
Very satisfied	0	0.0%	0.0%
Satisfied	6	50.0%	50.0%
Average	3	25.0%	75.0%
Dissatisfied	3	25.0%	100.0%
Very dissatisfied	0	0.0%	100.0%

**Table 4.6 Degree of satisfaction of ECA management in the interviewees' own schools in the pilot study**

By considering both the quality and quantity of ECA in the schools, the rating of the schools' overall ECA service by the twelve respondents is tabulated below:

<b>Rating Level</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Cumulative Percentage</b>
Excellent	1	8.3%	8.3%
Good	5	41.7%	50.0%
Average	6	50.0%	100.0%
Poor	0	0.0%	100.0%
Very poor	0	0.0%	100.0%

**Table 4.7 The interviewees' rating of the schools' overall ECA services in the pilot study by considering ECA quantity and ECA quality**

When the respondents were asked to indicate if they were satisfied with the overall ECA management in their own schools (Table 4.6), none of them reported "very satisfied" or "very dissatisfied". 75.0% of them reported "satisfied" or "average". When asking for their opinions of ECA services concerning the quality and quantity of ECA provided in their schools (Table 4.7), all the 12 respondents reported "average" or above average. These results reflected that, from the perspectives of the interviewees,

the ECA services in their own schools were above average in terms of quality and quantity, but there might be some areas for further improvement in its management.

The major obstacles hindering ECA service quality reported in the second pilot study

From the point of view of ECA masters/mistresses, the following were the obstacles affecting the service quality of ECA in secondary schools:

- (a) Lack of school top management support.
- (b) Top management cared little about the quality of ECA.
- (c) Examination-oriented education system leading to a poor ECA culture in Hong Kong schools.
- (d) Not enough time for ECA.
- (e) Some principals and teachers did not recognize ECA values.
- (f) Due to heavy workload, teachers were not willing to conduct ECA.

Suggestions from respondents for improving the quality of ECA in schools:

- (a) Students' performance in ECA should be considered as one of the indicators of students' achievements in schools.
- (b) Schools and the Education Department should market ECA by emphasizing its value for students' overall development.
- (c) Instead of emphasizing too much academically, schools should provide ECA opportunities for the all-round education of the students.



### The characteristics of successful ECA (from the perspective of the respondents)

For the second part of the questionnaire, Benchmarking, there were some new and creative ECA items suggested by the respondents. When asking to name the most successful ECA item, 75% of the respondents considered “a large number of active participants” and 66.7% of the respondents considered “win prizes in external competition” as the significant indicators for successful ECA in their schools.

### The Results of the Pilot Interviews

#### Question 1:

What criteria do you use to assess the quality of ECA of a certain school?

#### *Major findings:*

The two interviewees both use the following criteria to assess the quality of ECA in schools – pupils’ motivation and participation, pupils’ achievement in competitions. These results coincided with the findings from the questionnaire survey.

#### Question 2:

How can you describe the quality of ECA management in your school? What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats?

#### *Major findings:*

One interviewee was disappointed with the quality of ECA management of the serving school because the delegation of authority from the top management was not enough.

Both interviewees claimed that their school principals and teachers did not recognize the importance of ECA to students' development and therefore teachers were lacking motivation in conducting ECA.

Question 3:

Are you satisfied with the overall ECA management quality of Hong Kong secondary schools? What are the existing good practices? Which areas should be improved and how to improve them?

*Major findings:*

Both the two interviewees were not satisfied with the present ECA situation and felt disappointed with the ECA management quality of Hong Kong secondary schools, for ECA were not fully supported by school administrators and parents within the examination-oriented culture of Hong Kong society. Education reform might be a possible solution.

**The Appropriateness of the Instruments**

After scrutinizing the results of the pilot studies, the questionnaire used in the second pilot study was found appropriate in terms of reliability and validity, and therefore was adopted in the main study without further amendment. During the pilot interviews with the two respondents, the interview schedule was found to be appropriate and no further amendment of the schedule was required.

## **Summary**

This chapter introduces various research methods and discusses their appropriateness in this study. After comparing the different methodologies, a questionnaire survey was chosen to be the major research tool in this study. In order to gather more information for comparison and triangulation, limited case interviews were carried out as well. In this chapter, ethical concerns in research are reviewed. The development of the instruments with the results of the pilot studies, and the reliability and validity of the instruments, are also discussed.

## **Chapter 5 Presentation of Survey Findings**

### **Sampling Frame used and the Nature of Sample in the Main Study**

In order to arrive at an overview of the up-to-date management practice of ECA in all Hong Kong secondary schools, the whole population, consisting of 412 ECA masters/mistresses from all the secondary schools, was invited to participate in the main study. These 412 secondary schools are day schools excluding English Foundation Schools, International Schools and other special schools such as hospital schools and schools for children with special needs.

### **Collection of Empirical Data**

The questionnaires were mailed to the whole population of 412 ECA masters/mistress in all Hong Kong secondary schools through their school addresses on 8 November 1998. The respondents were requested to return the questionnaire by mail before 28 November 1998. One week after sending out the questionnaire, in order to ensure that there would be a satisfactory response rate, eight telephone follow-up calls were made to the committee members of HKEAMA. The committee members contacted were asked to encourage their fellow ECA masters/mistresses to return the completed questionnaire. However, by the due date, 28 November 1998, the return rate was not satisfactory. So, follow-up letters to remind the potential respondents were sent out to

non-respondents in mid December 1998. By mid January 1999, 232 questionnaires were returned and the response rate 56.3% (which is greater than 50%) could be considered as adequate (Babbie, 1990). Unfortunately the researcher had to send questionnaires to all 412 schools for the 290 schools with ECA masters/mistresses in post could not be identified. As discussed earlier in Chapter 4 (Table 4.2), the response rate was 80.0%, which Babbie (1990) considers to be very good, if only the actual ECA masters/mistresses in post were counted. Since the response rate was acceptable, the researcher could then generalize appropriate conclusions from the answers.

## **Results and Findings**

In Part 1 Section A and B, “Background Information” and “Management of Extracurricular Activities” (see Appendix IV), the frequencies of the choices in each item were counted and tabulated in Tables 5.1 to 5.3.

### **Background Information:**

According to Education Department (1999), the percentages of ECA masters/mistresses in the Government schools, Aided schools and Private schools in the academic year 1998 to 1999 when this study was conducted were 6.9%, 81.7% and 11.4% respectively. As in Table 5.1, the percentages of the respondents in these three types of schools were 7.8%, 84.1% and 8.2% respectively. The percentages of respondents in the three categories were similar to that published in Education Department (1999).

Teachers' and students' recognition of ECA educational value was not as strong as expected. As from the respondents' perspective, there were only 25.9% of the respondent schools with teachers and 19.4% respondent schools with students having a strong recognition of ECA value.

ITEM	OPTION	Frequency	% of total	Cumulative %
1. School Type	Government School	18	7.8%	7.8%
	<b>Aided School</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>84.1%</b>	91.9%
	Private school	19	8.1%	100.0%
2. Teachers' recognition of the educational value of ECA (from respondents' perspective)	Strong recognition	60	25.9%	25.9%
	<b>Average recognition</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>67.2%</b>	93.1%
	Weak recognition	16	6.9%	100.0%
3. Students' recognition of the educational value of ECA (from respondents' perspective)	Strong recognition	45	19.4%	19.4%
	<b>Average recognition</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>74.1%</b>	93.5%
	Weak recognition	15	6.5%	100.0%
4. Experience as ECA master/mistress	1-3 years	74	31.9%	31.9%
	<b>4-6 years</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>35.8%</b>	67.7%
	7-9 years	22	9.5%	77.2%
	10 years or above	53	22.8%	100.0%
5. Management Training	<b>Yes</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>67.2%</b>	67.2%
	No	74	31.8%	100.0%
6. Regular ECA lessons within school timetable	<b>No</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>92.6%</b>	92.6%
	Yes	17	7.4%	100.0%
	Others	0*		

Highest frequencies in **Bold** letters.

\*Schools reporting with irregular ECA gatherings during lessons like singing contests and assemblies are categorized as "No regular lessons" in question 6.

**Table 5.1 Results of Section A**

The results reflected that approximately one-third (31.9%) of the respondents have only 1-3 years of experience in the job but there were not many new schools established during 1995 to 1998. In other words, there was a significant number (approximately one-third) of experienced ECA masters/mistresses who left the post of ECA manager in their schools during these three years. The wastage rate of experienced ECA masters and mistresses in Hong Kong secondary schools appears to be high.

Approximately two-thirds (67.2%) of the respondents had received training in management techniques. Putting ECA lessons into the regular school timetable was not a common practice. Only 7.4% of the respondent schools had regular ECA lessons within their school timetables.

### Management of Extracurricular Activities:

The first part of Section B is asking for some facts about ECA management in schools. The results are tabulated in Table 5.2.

\*Valid percentage in ( ).

ITEMS	YES	NO
1. Is there any clear and explicit vision in the management of ECA within the school?	108 (47.0%)	122 (53.0%)
2. Does the ECA management team shape a shared value that reflects and promotes school vision?	141 (62.7%)	84 (37.3%)
3. Does the ECA department have clear educational goals?	193 (83.2%)	39 (16.8%)
4. Is the ECA programme in your school a balanced one?	206 (88.8%)	26 (11.2%)
5. Is there any professional development for ECA management?	28 (12.2%)	202 (87.8%)
6. Is there any evaluation for the whole ECA programme in your school?	124 (53.9%)	106 (46.1%)
7. Are there any records of individual student progress in ECA?	135 (58.2%)	97 (41.8%)

ITEMS	YES	NO
8. Is there any ECA curriculum development?	47 (20.4%)	<b>183</b> <b>(79.6%)</b>
9. Is there any ECA evaluation programme in your school?	113 (48.9%)	<b>118</b> <b>(51.1%)</b>
10. Is there any detailed record of school ECA achievement?	<b>169</b> <b>(72.8%)</b>	63 (27.2%)
11. Is there any remedial action for students with weaker performance in ECA?	32 (13.9%)	<b>198</b> <b>(86.1%)</b>
12. Is there any system for dealing with complaints and appeals?	61 (26.5%)	<b>169</b> <b>(73.5%)</b>
13. Are there adequate ECA resources and facilities in your school?	106 (46.5%)	<b>122</b> <b>(53.5%)</b>
14. Is there any sufficient training programme for teachers within the school to help them to conduct ECA?	36 (15.8%)	<b>192</b> <b>(84.2%)</b>
15. Is there any partnership development with external agencies?	<b>164</b> <b>(71.9%)</b>	64 (28.1%)
16. Is there any marketing research to find out students' expectation and interests before planning for the ECA programme within the school?	64 (27.8%)	<b>166</b> <b>(72.2%)</b>
17. Are there any formal procedures to evaluate client (students, teachers and parents) satisfaction?	37 (16.1%)	<b>193</b> <b>(83.9%)</b>
18. Does your school provide sufficient information to the staff, parents and students concerning the recent ECA development of the school?	113 (49.6%)	<b>115</b> <b>(50.4%)</b>
19. Is there any staff appraisal programme to appraise teachers' performance in conducting ECA?	<b>125</b> <b>(54.6%)</b>	104 (45.4%)
20. Are the staffs within the school committed to ECA quality?	95 (41.9%)	<b>132</b> <b>(58.1%)</b>
21. Is there any recognition of good performance for staff concerning ECA?	<b>150</b> <b>(65.8%)</b>	78 (34.2%)
22. Is there any cooperation across different departments within the school concerning ECA?	<b>155</b> <b>(68.0%)</b>	73 (32.0%)



ITEMS	YES	NO
23. Is the ECA management emphasizing on measurable goals and results?	102 (44.3%)	<b>128</b> <b>(55.7%)</b>
24. Is every student having equal opportunity to participate in ECA?	<b>214</b> <b>(92.2%)</b>	18 (7.8%)
25. Are there sufficient ECA reference materials in the school library?	70 (30.6%)	<b>159</b> <b>(69.4%)</b>
26. Is there sufficient financial support from school regarding ECA?	<b>156</b> <b>(67.2%)</b>	76 (32.8%)
27. Is the communication between ECA management and the teachers effective?	<b>212</b> <b>(91.4%)</b>	20 (8.6%)
28. Is there any Home-School partnership in the management of ECA?	62 (26.7%)	<b>170</b> <b>(73.3%)</b>

**Table 5.2 Results of the first part of Section B**

There was one interesting comparison between Question 1 and Question 3. For the respondent schools, 83.2% of them have short term goals (Question 3) while only 47.0% of them have long term vision (Question 1). These results might reflect that many schools, instead of focussing on long term ECA strategic planning, aimed at short-term ECA achievements.

Question 6 and Question 9 were both asking if there were evaluation programmes in the schools. The results were reliable for there were only 53.9% (in Question 6) and similarly only 48.9% (in Question 9) of the respondent schools had evaluation programmes for ECA. These results indicated that approximately half of the schools did not have any evaluation process for ECA. However, as from the point of view of the respondents, 88.8% of the respondent schools claimed to provide a balanced ECA programme for their students. (Question 4)

86.1% of the schools did not have any remedial action for student with weaker performance in ECA. (Question 11) 73.5% of the respondent schools did not have procedures for complaints and appeals. (Question 12) These might be the results of lacking evaluation programmes to identify student weaknesses and to assess customer responses.

Question 5 and Question 14 were both asking if there were professional development programmes for ECA teachers. The results seemed to be consistent and was reliable because 87.8% in Question 5 and 84.2% in Question 14 of the respondent schools did not have any of the staff training programmes in their schools in the area of ECA.

79.6% of the respondents reported in Question 8 that schools did not have any ECA curriculum development. 53.5% of the schools did not have adequate ECA resources and facilities (Question 13). From the above results, the lack of evaluation procedures and professional development programmes might affect the efficiency and effectiveness of ECA management. Insufficient ECA resources and facilities, and the lack of ECA curriculum development, might hinder the development of ECA in the schools.

Another interesting point was that 72.8% of the respondent schools had detailed records of school ECA achievement (Question 10) but only 58.2% of the schools had records of individual student progress in ECA (Question 7). In terms of the fundamental aims of ECA, that is to provide all-round education to the students through the extra-curriculum, it might have been accepted that student records would have been perceived as more important than school records.

## Results of the second part of Section B

In the second part of Section B, the respondents were asked to rate from 1 to 6 for some factors regarding ECA management. The results are shown in Table 5.3.

For the following questions concerning the measurement of attitudes, judgements, and opinions, scaling techniques were adopted. Respondents were asked to select from an ordinal scale of 6 to indicate, from their point of view, their rating of the management situation. In general, the higher the number within the scale, the greater the significance of the management situation in the school.

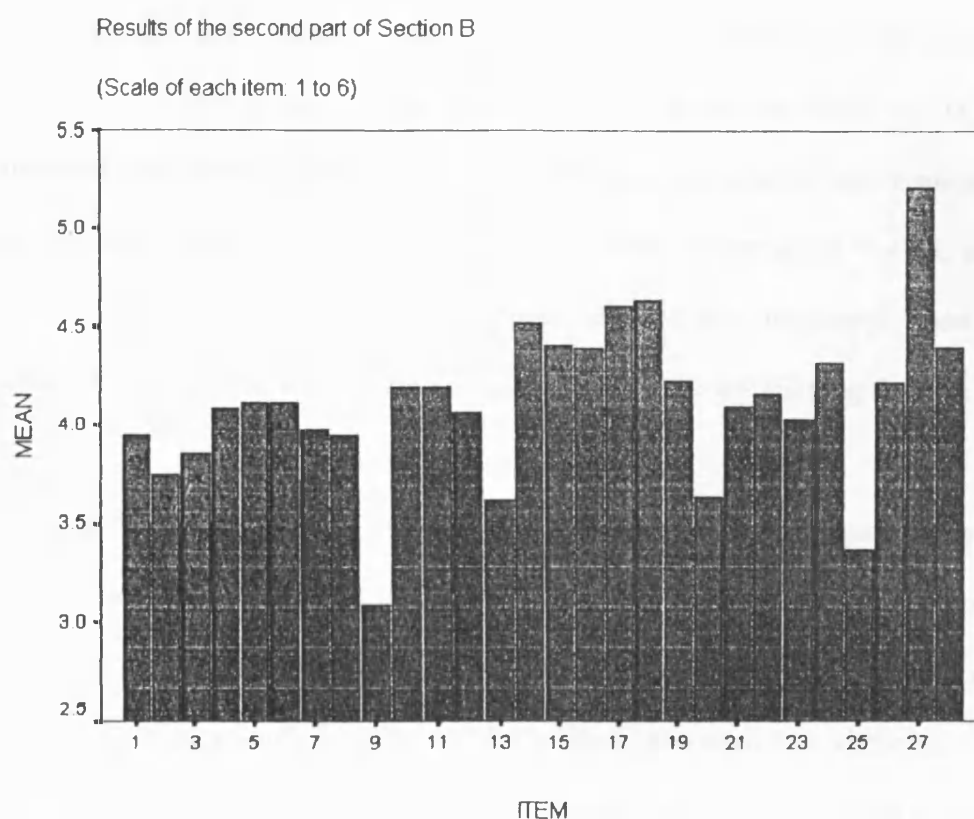
ITEM	Number and valid % of respondents (total = 100%)								Mean Score	Standard Deviation
		1	2	3	4	5	6			
1. To what extent are teachers and pupils involved in the planning of ECA?	Little	2 0.9%	18 7.8%	59 25.4 %	80 34.5 %	56 24.1 %	17 7.3%	A lot	3.95	1.09
2. To what extent do you believe teachers in the school are concerned with the school's ECA objectives?	Little	3 1.3%	24 10.3 %	65 28.0 %	87 37.5 %	41 17.7 %	12 5.2%	A lot	3.75	1.07
3. How do you rate the motivation of the teachers in conducting ECA?	Little	2 0.9%	26 11.2 %	58 25.0 %	74 31.9 %	60 25.9 %	12 5.2%	A lot	3.86	1.11
4. How do you rate the participation of the students in ECA?	Little	1 0.4%	15 6.5%	38 16.4 %	99 42.7 %	66 28.4 %	13 5.6%	A lot	4.09	0.98
5. What expectations do your school have of your students' achievement in ECA?	Little	3 1.3%	18 7.8%	43 18.5 %	76 32.8 %	69 29.7 %	23 9.9%	A lot	4.12	1.14
6. To what extent is the ECA department sensitive to the needs of the students?	Little		13 5.6%	38 16.4 %	99 42.7 %	72 31.0 %	10 4.3%	A lot	4.12	0.93
7. To what extent can the ECA programme fulfil students' need?	Little		12 5.2%	54 23.3 %	104 44.8 %	51 22.0 %	11 4.7%	A lot	3.98	0.92
8. To what extent does your school make best use of staff's skill and experience?	Little	2 0.9%	22 9.6%	57 24.8 %	65 28.3 %	73 31.7 %	11 4.8%	A lot	3.95	1.10
9. To what extent does your school use information technology to assist ECA management?	Little	20 8.6%	50 21.6 %	76 32.8 %	63 27.2 %	20 8.6%	3 1.3%	A lot	3.09	1.14

ITEM	Number and valid % of respondents (total = 100%)								Mean Score	Standard Deviation
		1	2	3	4	5	6			
10. To what extent does your school allow flexibility for teachers to organize ECA to meet clients' needs?	Little	3 1.3%	19 8.3%	29 12.6%	74 32.2%	87 37.8%	18 7.8%	A lot	4.20	1.11
11. To what extent are your students satisfied with the ECA programme provided in your school?	Little	1 0.4%	6 2.6%	31 13.4%	109 47.2%	75 32.5%	9 3.9%	A lot	4.20	0.85
12. To what extent are your teachers satisfied with the ECA programme provided in your school?	Little		7 3.0%	40 17.2%	124 53.4%	52 22.4%	9 3.9%	A lot	4.07	0.82
13. To what extent is the ECA programme reinforcing classroom learning?	Little	8 3.5%	26 11.3%	64 27.8%	90 39.1%	31 13.5%	11 4.8%	A lot	3.62	1.11
14. To what extent is the ECA programme promoting students' personal development?	Little		4 1.7%	20 8.6%	84 36.2%	100 43.1%	24 10.3%	A lot	4.52	0.86
15. To what extent is the ECA programme facilitating the teaching of those skills that may present difficulties in a formal classroom setting?	Little	1 0.4%	11 4.7%	31 13.4%	64 27.6%	98 42.2%	27 11.6%	A lot	4.41	1.04
16. To what extent is the ECA programme inculcating certain values that may present difficulties in a formal classroom setting?	Little	2 0.9%	11 4.7%	31 13.4%	72 31.0%	82 35.3%	34 14.7%	A lot	4.39	1.09
17. To what extent is the ECA programme promoting students' social development by broadening their social experiences, the practice of social skills and internalization of moral and social values?	Little	1 0.4%	8 3.4%	21 9.1%	69 29.7%	85 36.6%	48 20.7%	A lot	4.61	1.05
18. To what extent is the ECA programme making school life more challenging and interesting?	Little	2 0.9%	5 2.2%	20 8.6%	56 24.1%	114 49.1%	35 15.1%	A lot	4.64	0.97
19. To what extent does the ECA department meet its promises to clients (students, teachers and parents)?	Little		12 5.3%	21 9.3%	102 45.3%	83 36.9%	7 3.1%	A lot	4.23	0.87
20. To what extent is the ECA programme reflecting the responsibility for the community and environmental awareness?	Little	6 2.6%	28 12.2%	56 24.3%	99 43.0%	34 14.8%	7 3.0%	A lot	3.64	1.05
21. To what extent are the allocated resources effectively used?	Little	3 1.3%	12 5.2%	30 13.1%	103 45.0%	75 32.8%	6 2.6%	A lot	4.10	0.94
22. To what extent does your ECA management team commit to ECA service quality?	Little		14 6.1%	34 14.8%	94 40.9%	78 33.9%	10 4.3%	A lot	4.16	0.94
23. To what extent are the goals met effectively and efficiently?	Little		14 6.1%	39 17.1%	106 46.5%	65 28.5%	4 1.8%	A lot	4.03	0.88
24. How efficiently does the ECA department respond to the feedback and the complaints from the clients (students, teachers and parents)?	Very slow		10 4.4%	3 13.6%	80 35.1%	91 39.9%	16 7.0%	Very fast	4.32	0.95

ITEM	Number and valid % of respondents (total = 100%)								Mean Score	Standard Deviation
		1	2	3	4	5	6			
25. To what extent is the difference between the planned and actual performance of the ECA programme in your school?	Little		49 21.7 %	70 31.0 %	81 35.8 %	26 11.5 %		A lot	3.37	0.95
26. To what extent do teachers within the school work towards the school mission through ECA?	Little	2 0.9%	9 3.9%	3 13.6 %	90 39.5 %	86 37.7 %	10 4.4%	A lot	4.22	0.94
27. To what extent can the clients (students, teachers and parents) reach the ECA top management?	Very easy		2 0.9%	5 2.2%	27 11.6 %	107 46.1 %	91 39.2 %	Very hard	5.21	0.80
28. To what extent is the school encouraging student learning through ECA?	Little	3 1.3%	11 4.8%	27 11.7 %	74 32.2 %	80 34.8 %	35 15.2 %	A lot	4.40	1.11

**Table 5.3 Results of the second part of Section B**

The mean scores of Table 5.3 are summarized in Figure 5.1 for comparison.



**Figure 5.1 Bar chart showing the mean scores of the results of the second part of Section B.**

Figure 5.1 indicates that Questions 14-18 have relatively high mean scores. From the perspective of the ECA masters/mistresses, ECA in their schools contributed much in the following areas:

- students' personal development (question 14),
- teaching of skills and inculcating values that were difficult to present in formal classroom settings (question 15 and 16),
- students' social development (question 17), and
- enrichment of school life (question 18).

In question 5, the results indicated that there was much variation in schools' expectation of students' ECA achievement (mean score = 4.12, standard variation = 1.14). The results were consistent with those of question 28 where the schools varied much on the extent they encouraged student learning through ECA (mean score = 4.40, standard variation = 1.11). However, the mean scores reflected that, in general, most of the schools were having relatively high expectations of the students' learning through ECA.

There were deficiencies in ECA management. From Table 5.3 or Figure 5.1, question 9 has the lowest mean score of 3.09. The results of question 9 reflected that not many schools were using information technology to assist ECA management (average score = 3.09). Also, in question 9, 30.2% rated 1-2 while 63.0% rated 1-3 within the 6 scales (one being the lowest and 6 being the highest) when they were asked about the extent that their schools were using information technology in ECA management. The use of information technology in ECA management in schools is not satisfactory. The

unsatisfactory result might be due to the lack of computer hardware and software, inadequate technical support or insufficient staff training.

The results of question 27 indicated another serious problem in that the clients (students, teachers and parents) could hardly reach the ECA top management (average score = 5.21, standard deviation = 0.8). In question 27, 39.2% of the respondents rated 6 while 85.3% rated 5-6 within the 6 scales. The results reflected that the clients were not able to contact the ECA top management easily in most of the schools. The situation might be the result of ineffective communication between the clients and the management or the result of the hierarchical structure of school management.

#### Results of Section C:

This section was looking for the degree of satisfaction, from the point of view of each of the respondents, concerning the overall ECA management and the ECA services provided in the respondent's school. With the two open questions at the end of this section, respondents were invited to discuss the obstacles that were affecting the ECA service quality in secondary schools and also to give suggestions for the improvement of ECA services in their schools.

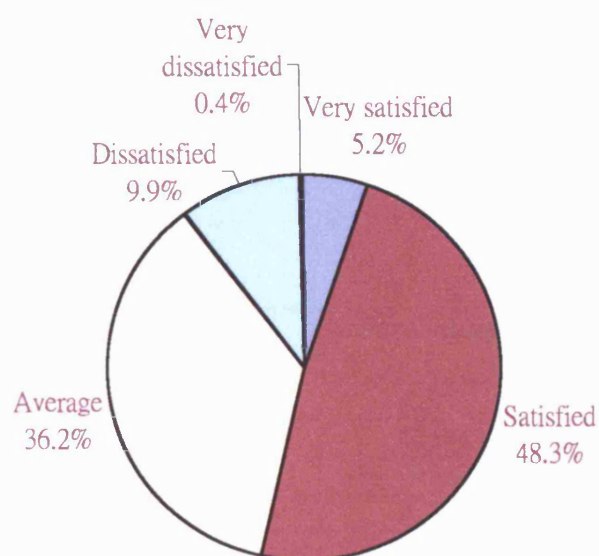
#### *Satisfaction of ECA management in the respondents' schools*

The degree of satisfaction with the overall ECA management in the schools by ECA masters/mistresses is provided in Table 5.4 and Figure 5.2.

Satisfaction Level	No. of respondents	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Very satisfied	12	5.2%	5.2%
Satisfied	112	48.3%	53.5%
Average	84	36.2%	89.7%
Dissatisfied	23	9.9%	99.6%
Very dissatisfied	1	0.4%	100.0%

**Table 5.4** Degree of satisfaction perceived by the ECA masters/mistresses

ECA masters/mistresses' degree of satisfaction of ECA management in their schools



**Figure 5.2** ECA masters/mistresses' degree of satisfaction of ECA management in their schools



From the above table and pie-chart, out of the 232 respondents, only 5.2% of the respondents were very satisfied with the overall ECA management in their serving schools. Most of the respondents (48.3%) rated “satisfied” for the overall ECA management in their serving schools. In other words, 53.5% (only approximately one-half) of the respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with their existing ECA management situations. Another 36.2% reported that the ECA management quality in their schools was just “average”.

*Opinions concerning the quality and quantity of ECA service in the respondents' schools*

By considering both the quality and quantity of ECA in the schools, the rating of the schools' overall ECA service by the 232 respondents is tabulated in Table 5.5 and illustrated in Figure 5.3 below:

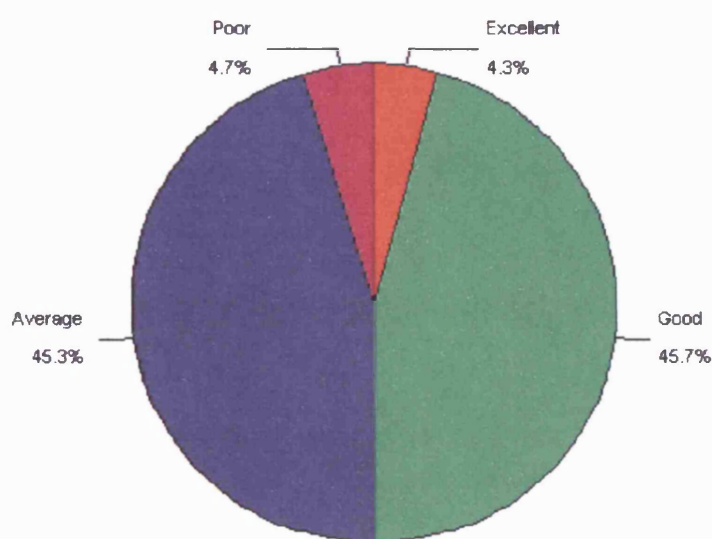
<b>Rating</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Cumulative Percentage</b>
Excellent	10	4.3%	4.3%
Good	106	45.7%	50.0%
Average	105	45.3%	95.3%
Poor	11	4.7%	100.0%
Very poor	0	0.0%	100.0%

**Table 5.5      The rating of the schools' overall ECA service**

From Table 5.5 and Figure 5.3, the results indicated that 50.0% of the respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the existing ECA service. In addition to the 45.3% respondents who selected the “average” option, a total of 95.3% of the respondents believed that the ECA service provided in their schools was average or

above average. The results were positive because only 4.7% of the respondents are dissatisfied with the ECA service provided in their schools. No respondents selected the “very dissatisfied” option.

By considering ECA quality and quantity, from respondents' perspective,  
the perception of ECA services provided by their schools



**Figure 5.3 Respondents' perception of ECA services in their schools**

### **The Major Obstacles Hindering ECA Service Quality**

Question 3 of Section C of the questionnaire asks, from the point of view of ECA masters/mistresses, the obstacles affecting the service quality of ECA in secondary schools. 172 respondents (74.1% of the total number of respondents) answered this question, and the 10 most significant results are as follows. The figure in parenthesis

( ) is the number of respondents having similar suggestions. Quotations are used to illustrate these responses.

- Teachers had little enthusiasm and an improper attitude towards ECA affecting the quality of ECA service. (78)

*“Different teachers may have different attitudes and values towards ECA. Even though some of the teachers do not oppose ECA, they will not participate actively.”*

*“Some experienced teachers who are already promoted to a higher rank do not participate actively while those younger teachers are not motivated to spend much time on ECA because they do not have any opportunity for career promotion.”*

- The school’s mission and the attitude of the school principal limited the development of ECA. Top management of the school cared little about the quality of ECA. (51)

*“Unfortunately, the top management of the schools does not recognize the importance of ECA in school education. Once when there is conflict between academic attainment and ECA performance, the principal’s attitude is towards academic rather than ECA.”*

*“The principal’s and teachers’ knowledge concerning ECA will affect the ECA service of the school.”*

- The school’s human resources, equipment, funding and facilities limited the development of ECA within the school. (45)

*"Lack of financial support, places for activities, and lack of experienced professional ECA tutors for certain activities."*

*"School only gives a very limited financial support for ECA and there are not enough necessary equipment for ECA."*

- Due to heavy daily workload, teachers had little time to conduct ECA. (44)

*"Teachers do not have much extra time and additional energy to conduct ECA because there are too much content in the formal curriculum."*

*"Too heavy the daily workload of the ECA master/mistress. Leave little time for him/her to deal with ECA management."*

- Examination-oriented education system leading to a poor ECA culture in Hong Kong schools. (22)

*"This is a matter of social value: up to this moment, the academic achievement is the single determining factor for student success in this society."*

*"Academic attainment is the most important objective in the hearts of most of the Hong Kong teachers."*

*"People tend to see academic achievement and ECA performance as two contradictory aspects. However, the society emphasizes on academic performance."*

- Teachers lack of professional skills and training in conducting ECA. (21)

*"Teachers lack of professional training in conducting ECA therefore they have little intention to conduct ECA."*

- Not enough time for ECA – Supplementary lessons after school for external examination candidates providing no time for students to participate in ECA. (20)

*“The academic performance of the students is not satisfactory leading to remedial classes or enrichment classes after school. How can students have extra time for ECA?”*

- The inferior quality and low ability of the students affected the ECA quality of the school. (15)

*“The inferior quality of the students affects the enthusiasm of the teachers towards ECA because the ECA teachers need to pay more effort for little results.”*

- Lack of student motivation. (13)

*“Too much pressure on academic achievements of the students leading to too many tests and remedial classes leaves no room for the students to participate in ECA.”*

- Parents misunderstood ECA and considered ECA as one of the major obstacles affecting students’ academic attainment. (11)

*“Parents, teachers and students do not see ECA as having the same educational value as those formal academic subjects.”*

- Teachers considered ECA as extra workload and not regarding ECA as normal teaching duty. (10)

*“Teachers treat ECA as extra workload and explain that they should focus solely on academic subjects.”*

In conclusion, from the results of the questionnaire, the major factors hindering the service quality of ECA in schools include:

- (1) the improper attitude of the stakeholders (principals, teachers, parents and students),
- (2) the daily heavy workload of the teachers and students in the formal school curriculum, and
- (3) the lack of necessary support (human resources, financial, place and equipment) for ECA development.

### **Suggestions from the Respondents to improve ECA Quality in Schools**

Question 4 asks for suggestions to improve the quality of ECA in schools. 168 respondents (72.4% of the total number of respondents) answered this question and the most significant results are shown below. The figures in parenthesis ( ) are the number of respondents having similar suggestions. Quotations are used to illustrate these responses.

- **Strengthen staff training and development (43):** The Education Department, HKEAMA, the teacher training institutes, the schools and the other agencies need to provide initial training courses and in-service staff development programmes to train the necessary ECA skills for teachers. More management courses for ECA masters/mistresses are needed.

*"Teachers lacking theories, skills and knowledge in ECA is one of the most important factors leading to low enthusiasm of teachers in ECA."*

*"Person-job fit. Select the right person for the right ECA."*

- To nurture a suitable ECA culture within the school (32): Schools should strengthen the role of ECA in the whole curriculum and try their best to seek for opportunities to provide all-round education to the students through ECA. Suitable ECA culture should be developed within the schools.

*"ECA should be integrated with classroom learning to reduce its conflict (time conflict) with the formal curriculum."*

*"ECA can be integrated into the regular timetable."*

It is a problem of the dichotomy of the school curriculum -- formal curriculum (subject curriculum) and the informal ECA curriculum. The formal curriculum is sometimes over emphasized in schools for its outcomes can be measured easily and the results of the teaching-learning process can be reflected in regular tests and examinations. On the other hand, one of the characteristics of the informal ECA curriculum is that the outcomes are intangible and not immediate. Actually these two kinds of curricula can be integrated and supplementary to each other.

- The recognition of students' ECA achievement (26): Students' performance in ECA should be considered as one of the indicators of students' achievement in schools and should be written down in their school reports. Some universities have begun to consider students' non-academic performance in their admission process and hence there will be more room for the development of ECA in schools. One respondent reminded:

*“ECA is not solely for university admission and career recommendation purposes. It is the responsibility of the school to change the value of the students towards ECA.”*

- Promote correct attitude towards ECA within the society (23): Schools and the Education Department need to promote ECA theories and to market ECA for students’ personal development.

*“Lack of ECA marketing activities from the Education Department.”*

- Emphasize teachers’ accountability in conducting ECA (23): Teachers’ ECA performance should be considered as an important indicator for staff appraisal and promotion purposes. Teachers’ accountability in conducting ECA should be emphasized.

*“The assessment results of teachers’ ECA performance from the ECA master/mistress should be seriously considered for teacher promotion purposes.”*

- Positive attitude and support from the top management of the school (21): 29.7% of the respondents suggested that the attitude of the principal limited the development of ECA in the schools. It is necessary to strengthen the training of school principals and vice-principals so that they can recognize the educational value of ECA.

*“Without the support from the senior management (principal and vice-principal), what can we do about ECA?”*



- More human resources and support (21): More human resources and effective use of human resources for ECA, such as part-time instructors from external agencies. More clerical staff are needed to assist ECA management.

*“Make best use of external resources such as community centres and social workers.”*

- Reduction and reallocation of workload of teachers and ECA masters/mistresses (19): Reduce daily workloads of the teachers and of the ECA masters/mistresses so as to leave room for them to conduct ECA.

*“We can hardly ask teachers to spare time for ECA because they are fully occupied by teaching the subject curricula. How can teachers have additional energy and extra time for ECA?”*

- More facilities, equipment and financial support (19): More facilities and equipment are needed for ECA. More financial support from the Education Department is required.

*“The Education Department should provide independent grant for ECA, just like the grant for the Discipline and Guidance team and other subject grants.”*

In general, the unfavourable ECA culture hindered the development of ECA in schools. From the feedback of the respondents, this adverse situation was mainly due to

- (1) the examination-oriented culture of education in Hong Kong society,
- (2) insufficient resources support for ECA,
- (3) the ECA educational value was not fully recognized by school senior management,

teachers, students and parents, and

(4) the insufficient pre-service and in-service staff training for ECA.

Therefore, in order to improve the quality of ECA services in schools, all the stakeholders need to recognize the contribution of ECA to student development and, if possible, put the various suggestions of the respondents into action.

### **The Characteristics of Successful ECA**

In part 2, out of the 232 questionnaires returned, 194 respondents answered question 1 which was asking for the most successful ECA in the respondents' school. When the respondents were asked to give reasons for the success of the mentioned activities, the following results were obtained.

Reasons for the success (from the respondents' perspective)	No. of respondents selecting the reason (total no. of respondents = 232)	% of respondents selecting the reason
The teacher-in-charge has expertise in the field.	165	71.1%
There is a large no. of active participants	140	60.3%
Win prizes in external competition.	110	47.4%
Sufficient human resource support from the school	88	37.9%
With the assistance from external agencies	59	25.4%

**Table 5.6      Reasons for the success of the outstanding ECA in the respondents' schools**

Apart from the reasons listed above, cost-effectiveness, interest in and attractiveness of the activity, school's tradition, and principal's support, were the four significant reasons for the success of outstanding ECA in schools.

From the results of Table 5.6, 71.1% of the respondents in this session believed teachers' expertise in a particular ECA is the most important factor for the success of the ECA. This result coincides with the finding in the previous session that teacher training and development in ECA is particularly important for the success of ECA in schools.

Again, 60.3% of the respondents in this session believed that the greater the number of the participants in an ECA, the more likely the success of the activity. ECA is not a privilege for elite with better performance in the field, but aims for providing equal opportunities for all students of the school to learn through ECA. From the perspective of the respondents, the ability to win prizes in external competitions was another indicator for successful ECA.

### **Innovative ECA items in Schools**

In part 2, Question 2 asks for new and creative ECA items in the respondents' school that are uncommon in other schools. The purpose of this part of the questionnaire is to look for patterns of new and creative activities to see if there is any innovative ECA in schools. The 60 new items suggested by the respondents were summarized in the following table.

Categories Total number in ( )	ECA item
Service groups (1)	Sea Activities Youth Group
Academic activities(1)	French
Sports activities (16)	Rugby Fencing Softball Canoe Water-ball Lion Dancing Kung Fu Net-ball Climbing Sports Gymnastic Arts Physical Fitness Plan Lawn Rolling Ball Golf Tai Chi Karado Squash Roller/Skateboard
Aesthetic activities (5)	Chinese Opera Chinese Orchestra Chinese Painting Life Band String Orchestra
Interest clubs (31)	Archery Creative Thinking Gift Wrapping Aviation Japanese Culture Personal Appearance, Skin Care and Health Archaeology Tea Art Broadcasting Ceramic Chinese Dishes Gun Shooting Amateur Wireless Communication Computer Letter-cutting China Studies Car Technology Stage Service Multimedia Creation Investment Flower Art Bird Observation Pats Fish-fighting Adventure Bus Club Audio Visual Comic YoYo Karaok Four-wheel Drive Model Car Collection Psychology

Categories Total number in ( )	ECA item
Others (6)	Self Development Pleasurable Learning Social Manner Furniture Maintenance Society for New Immigrant Students F.1 Student Affair Club

**Table 5.7 New ECA items suggested by the respondents**

Table 5.7 shows that schools were trying to develop a large variety of Interest Clubs and Sports Activities to fulfil the needs of the students and the objectives of the school. The range or the variety of ECA provided by a school is an important performance indicator to gauge ECA service quality (Education Department, 1998). One should realize that the trend of having more innovative Interest Clubs and Sports activities (when compared with other ECA categories) indicated in the questionnaire results might not reflect the actual situation in individual schools.

When considered from the curriculum point of view, and from the result of having more innovative Interest Clubs and fewer new academic items, there might be some indications:

- (a) The management of ECA in schools might mainly serve to supplement the formal (academic) curriculum by providing more opportunities for students to participate in the non-academic areas and to enrich the school life;
- (b) If there were more interactions between the management of the informal ECA curriculum and that of the formal (academic) curriculum within a school, more

creative academic activities could be organized to facilitate student development in both the academic and non-academic aspects.

## **Summary**

In this chapter, the particulars and results of the main study are introduced. Some facts concerning the management of ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools are identified. The degrees of satisfaction with the overall ECA management, and the rating of the ECA service quality in schools by the respondents, are discussed as well. The survey findings are tabulated and presented in pie charts and histogram. With relevant quotations from the answers of the questionnaire respondents, certain obstacles affecting ECA service quality and some suggestions for improving ECA service quality are scrutinized. In the following chapter, Chapter 6, the results of the interviews and the case studies will be explicated. Further analysis on the results of the survey, interviews and case studies will be in Chapter 7.

## Chapter 6      Results of Interviews and Case Studies

### Results of the Interviews

#### The profile of the interviewees

As discussed in Chapter 4, twelve semi-structured interviews, in the form of purposive elite interviews (Anderson, 1990) were conducted in April 1999. The experience of the interviewees is shown in Table 6.1.

<b>Years of experience being an ECA master/mistress</b>	<b>Number of interviewees</b>	<b>%</b>
1-5 years	0	0.0%
6-10 years	4	33.3%
<b>11-15 years</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>41.7%</b>
More than 15 years	3	25.0%

**Table 6.1    Years of experience of the twelve interviewees**

The results indicated that all the interviewees were experienced ECA masters/mistresses with 6-10 years minimum in the position of ECA manager. 66.7% of the interviewees have more than 10 years of experience in the ECA management post.

### ECA quality indicators suggested by the interviewees

The most significant ECA quality indicators identified by the interviewees are shown in Table 6.2.

Criteria used by the interviewees to assess the quality of ECA of a certain school	Interviewee												Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	
A large and balanced variety of ECA	*		*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	10
Students' participation		*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	10
Contribution of ECA to students' personal development	*		*	*	*	*		*		*	*	*	9
Number and category of ECA awards and prizes in external competitions	*		*	*	*	*	*		*		*	*	9
The ability to make the best use of ECA resources both acquired within and outside the school	*	*	*		*	*		*	*	*		*	9
Students' ECA performance	*			*		*	*	*	*		*	*	8
Teachers' participation		*	*	*		*		*	*	*		*	8
ECA meet students' expectation		*	*		*	*	*		*		*	*	8
Students have joy in ECA		*		*		*		*	*		*		6
Word of mouth / Publicity in newspapers					*			*		*	*		4
ECA can provide leadership training		*			*		*		*				4
Quality of paper work and records	*					*				*	*		4
Community participation	*				*								2
Quality of instructors / teachers							*				*		2
Frequent and regular assessment and evaluation						*					*		2

Note: \* represents that the criterion was suggested by the interviewee.

**Table 6.2 Criteria for assessing ECA quality of a school**

When assessing ECA quality, student participation was mentioned more frequently than teacher participation. The contribution of ECA to students' personal development was emphasized and the extent to which ECA fulfils the educational purposes of the school was an important factor in considering ECA quality. The variety and number of ECA



items provided by the school, as well as students' ECA performance both within the school and in external competitions, were also significant indicators for assessing ECA quality of a school from the perspective of the interviewees. The respondents realized that the level of ECA resources in different schools might vary significantly, so the ability of a school to make best use of its resources to organize ECA to fulfil its education objectives was another indicator considered to be significant in assessing the ECA quality of a particular school.

#### Interviewees' perception of ECA management quality in their serving schools

When the twelve interviewees were asked to grade their perception of management quality in their serving schools using a 3-point scale (Good, Average, and Poor), the following results were obtained:

Perception of ECA management quality	Number of interviewees	%
Good	1	8.3%
<b>Average</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>75.0%</b>
Poor	2	16.7%

**Table 6.3 Interviewees' perception of management quality of ECA in their schools**

When asking about the reasons why the interviewees graded the management of ECA in their schools Average or Poor, seven interviewees claimed that the limited resources and the insufficient support from the school top management hindering the development of ECA in their schools.

In discussing existing ECA practices in schools, the following are the main points identified in the SWOT analysis by the interviewees:

#### Strengths

- Easy to mobilize students in schools with favourable ECA culture
- Systematic and quality paper work
- Full support from school top management
- Teachers recognize ECA value

#### Weaknesses

- Insufficient resources support including finance, human resources and time
- Premises too small, limited equipment and poor facilities
- Hierarchical management structure
- Lack of top management support
- Heavy workload of teachers lessens their enthusiasm in conducting ECA
- Teachers regard ECA as an extra duties
- Some parents and students, and even teachers, do not support ECA.

#### Opportunities for improvement

- Joint ventures with other organizations such as youth centres
- Conduct student activities in places outside Hong Kong to overcome geographical limitations
- Encourage students to participate in the activities organized by youth centres and organizations outside the school
- Arouse teachers' awareness of the educational value of ECA through team building and mission formation

- Universities in Hong Kong are now starting to consider students' non-academic performance in their admission procedures.

#### Threats to existing ECA practices

- The increasing stress on academic results in schools suffocates the development of ECA in the schools
- The heavy and increasing academic workload provides no additional time and extra energy for teachers to conduct ECA
- Some schools put more resources on academic improvement and deploy less resources for ECA development.

#### Interviewees' satisfaction with the overall ECA management quality of Hong Kong secondary schools

The interviewees were asked to grade the overall management quality of the secondary schools in Hong Kong using a 3-point scale (Satisfied, Average, Not satisfied). 16.7% of the interviewees (2 interviewees) were satisfied with the overall ECA management quality of Hong Kong secondary schools. *“Under limited resources, the quality and the amount of ECA provided in Hong Kong secondary schools can be considered to be satisfactory.”* (School 1)

Again, a 3-point scale (Satisfied, Average, Not satisfied) was offered to each interviewee when asking about their general perception of ECA management quality of Hong Kong secondary schools. 41.6% of the interviewees classified the existing situation as 'average'. They were not very satisfied with the situation for *“there is no*

*ECA training for teachers"* (School 2) and *"teachers lack leadership skills."* (School 3)

Some of them further explained their views on student participation:

*"Due to limited resources, schools cannot allocate ECA according to students' interest and expectations."* (School 4)

*"Some ECA have more participants but some others have less participants. Within a school, some ECA are active but some are not."* (School 5)

*"Teachers' expertise and students' interest are not compatible."* (School 6)

41.6% of the interviewees were not satisfied with the overall ECA management quality in Hong Kong secondary schools:

*"Students' ECA performance is not satisfactory."* (School 2)

*"For those ECA masters/mistresses with higher competency, they have more freedom to organize ECA within the schools; for those with less competency, they are facing constraints."* (School 8)

*"A school's ECA quality depends on the attitude of the top management of the school. Some school principals focus only academic aspects and do not support ECA."* (School 9)

#### Existing good practices suggested by the interviewees

It is a good practice for each school to have an ECA master/mistress to organize ECA for the students. The competency of ECA master/mistress is the most important for the effectiveness of ECA in school.

Teachers, students and parents realize the importance of ECA for student development. But the academic stress within the school creates an unfavourable culture for ECA. *"Everybody says that ECA is important in school education, but in reality, it is a different matter (teachers, parents and students do not take ECA seriously)."* (School 10)

In a few schools, top management does support ECA development by allocating more resources to the department. But some other schools put fewer resources, in terms of time, human resource and facilities for ECA when compared with that for academic purposes. In order to solve the problem caused by the dilemma of academic and non-academic focuses, one interviewee suggested, *"there should be an integration between classroom learning and ECA to eliminate conflicts."* (School 10)

Without formal assessment, schools were free to conduct ECA. However one interviewee commented, *"Since there is no suitable and recognized instrument for assessing students' ECA performance, students are not motivated and therefore they do not participate actively in ECA."* (School 11) One interviewee said, *"Schools need to know why students do not like to participate in ECA."* (School 5) Schools were recommended to carry out research to investigate students' ECA interest and expectations.

However, there were other opinions. *"People do not take ECA seriously because the higher institutions such as universities and colleges, and also the employers, do not consider students' ECA achievement seriously in their admission or recruitment procedures."* (School 12) Five interviewees suggested that universities and employers

change their attitude towards student achievement in schools and pay more attention to students' ECA performance.

#### Improvements suggested by the interviewees

- Develop existing disintegrated ECA into an integrated curriculum so as to work hand in hand with the formal curriculum to facilitate the overall development of the students.
- Reduce the teaching load of ECA masters/mistresses so that they can concentrated on ECA management activities.
- The management of ECA should be considered as part of the core curriculum in the teacher training courses.
- Instead of solely considering the examination results of the students in the admission procedures, universities also need to consider applicants' performance in ECA, so as to motivate secondary schools to change the existing examination-oriented culture to one that is favourable for ECA development.
- Carry out research to investigate the interests of the students so as to organize suitable ECA to meet their expectations and needs.
- There should be more ECA collaboration among schools.
- Since there is a lack of theoretical and research support for ECA, the pace of ECA development in Hong Kong is slow. Therefore more research concerning ECA should be carried out.
- Schools need to change their attitude towards ECA. One interviewee said, *"Schools need to develop their own school-based ECA curricula so as to motivate teachers, students and parents within the schools to move towards the objectives of ECA."* (School 3) Instead of thinking about ECA as recreation games for students,

schools need to consider ECA as an effective and necessary means towards quality education, to provide more resources (time, money, human resources) for ECA development, and to encourage students participate actively in ECA.

- *“Too much documentary work, and the restrictions from the school top management, will hinder the development of ECA in the school,”* said one of the interviewees. (School 10) Schools are strongly encouraged to develop suitable procedures and a favourable culture to support ECA.
- One of the interviewees who is an experienced ECA master raised the important considerations for improving ECA in schools. *“ECA management needs to consider (a) which curricular experience should be provided to the students; (b) the needs and expectations of the society; (c) the needs and expectations of the students; (d) the willingness and competence of the teachers; (e) the school background and culture; and (e) the resource and environmental factors.”* (School 9)

As suggested by the interviewees, curriculum integration between the formal and informal curricula, staff development and culture development, reforms in the university admission system, more research on literature and practice, can provide opportunities for schools to improve their existing ECA management.

## **Results of the Case Studies**

The case studies in this research relate to two extreme and unique existing practices. School A was running ECA in the form of an extension curriculum while school B was adopting the ISO9000 quality assurance system of management in ECA. In school A,

the author focused on the rationale and practices of its extension curriculum. In school B, the theories and the mode of quality assurance management were addressed.

The case study into school A was carried out on 26 November 1999. In school A, the author spent more than 2 hours with the extension curriculum coordinator and one hour with the principal of the school. Documentary analysis was carried out a week before the interview so that the author could grasp some background information about the management of the extension curriculum and about the student data management system of the school. During the interviews, the interviewee was requested to give documentary evidence for reference.

The case study into school B was carried out on 3 December 1999. Again, one week before the actual interview with the ECA master of the school, the author carried out documentary analysis, such as looking for school information on the school Internet website, to get a preliminary idea concerning the school's ISO9000 quality assurance system. The actual interview with the ECA master lasted for 4 hours. During the interview, with the introduction and explanation of the ECA master of the school, documents such as the ISO manual and procedures of the school's ISO9000 quality assurance system were also investigated. In order to understand more about the rationale and practices of ISO9000 in school B, an interview with the principal was carried out on 25 April 2000 when the difficulties and advantages of adopting the ISO9002 quality assurance system in school settings were discussed.



## Case One: School A

School A is located in the suburban area. As stated on the Internet website of the school, school A was established in 1996 focusing on the overall development of the students through a collaboration of classroom activities and the learning activities extended outside the classroom called the extension curriculum. The school's goal is to provide a whole-person, whole-school, whole-brain education for their students in a collaborative and caring learning community. Sum and Lam (1999) introduce school A by pointing out that the school identified the essential elements for student development, defined the corresponding student achievement indicators, and developed its own curriculum to meet student needs through collegial efforts.

### Documentary Analysis

In order to facilitate student information management, school A developed computer software named Personal Information Centre (PIC). In one of its promoting letters to market its PIC to other schools, school A claimed that *"PIC aimed to be a user-friendly total intranet/internet solution with a full range of functions to enhance information flow, support teaching and learning, monitor progress and target attainments, and facilitate the implementation of IT-related educational strategies with the school setting"*. PIC is a student database management tool used to record student information and student progress in both the academic and non-academic areas including ECA. Teaching staff are requested to input student performance regularly into PIC so that follow-up or remedial actions could be carried out if necessary. Students, parents and staff of the school are authorized to acquire necessary information from the PIC system. (Hong Kong Teachers' Centre, 1999)

In order to understand more about the actual practice of the extension curriculum of school A, a school visit was carried out on 26 November 1999 when interviews with the extension activities coordinator and the principal were carried out.

*Interview with the Extension Activities Coordinator of school A*

In school A, there are four committees looking into the four broad curriculum areas including formal curriculum, pastoral care, extension activities curriculum, and student affairs. For the formal curriculum, there are different subject areas as in most of the other secondary schools in Hong Kong. The pastoral curriculum consisted of discipline, counselling and moral education. The extension activity curriculum plays an important role in students' development. The student affairs section is concerned with the welfare and the careers guidance for the students.

There are five kinds of extension activities included: (1) Regular student activities; (2) House activities; (3) Community Services; (4) Research and Investigation; and (5) School teams. There are regular activity clubs and societies in the school and students normally meet once a week for the activity meetings.

For community services, there are class-based community services organized by the class teachers according to student needs, regular social services and whole-school community services. There was a strong rationale in the school that it is beneficial to organize community services for students so that students could learn to understand and to care more about the society through the interaction with people in the society and by providing services to the need.

Research and Investigation are cross-curricular projects aiming at providing suitable settings for students learning. In other words, some teaching and learning activities in the formal curriculum will be conducted outside the classroom so that there would be an integration of the formal curriculum and the informal curriculum. Research and Investigations activities included visits to museums, visits to traditional villages, trips to Mainland China and so on. One of the reasons of having these kinds of cross-curricular activities was to encourage school teachers to realize that there were collaborations between the formal curriculum and the informal curriculum.

School teams include athletic teams, chorus teams and representatives in creative arts. The objective of having school teams in the school was to develop self-confidence of the students, to promote a sense of belonging to the school through discipline training and through competitions with other schools.

One of the roles of the extension activity coordinator of the school was to lead the teachers and students to conduct various activities towards school mission and to monitor the progress of the activities. The other role of the coordinator was to support teachers and students in matters concerning extension activities, such as outdoor investigations, by giving them relevant information and necessary guidelines. The extension activity coordinator was serving as a facilitator and a supporter for academic extension activities. The school was going to identify certain non-academic performance indicators for subject teachers to assess students' achievement in cross-curricular and academic extension activities conducted outside the classrooms or held beyond the school timetable.

In order to further support the teachers in conducting extension activities, two leadership training courses for the students were conducted in a school year. Necessary forms and guidelines for extension activities were put on the school computer website for the reference of the students and the teachers. Teachers were encouraged to recognize the positive behaviour of the students in extension activities by assessing student performance regularly. In the students' annual reports, there were three areas concerning the extension curriculum: (1) student's participation in extension activities in the form of actual attendance; (2) student's posts or duties in the extension activities; and (3) the performance of the student in grades.

There were hundreds of student performance indicators identified by the school management. The school aimed at training students to be good citizens through encouraging students to work towards the fulfilment of all the indicators in all classroom learning and extension activities. The extension activities adopted the same set of performance indicators in assessing student behaviour. There was a record for each student. Both the classroom teachers and the extension activities teachers were encouraged to reward the students by marking on the records of individual students once the behaviour listed in the indicators was observed. The information will then be transferred into a computer database for further references.

In dealing with the evaluation of the extension activities, teachers' year-end evaluation reports in the form of questionnaires, documents recording the functions or events of individual activity clubs, and also the in-depth discussions between the committee members of the activity clubs and the extension activities coordinator, were the three common methods used by the school to assess the effectiveness of the extension curriculum. When asking about the results of the evaluation, the extension activities

coordinator of the school reported that the school was still finding its direction for further success. The coordinators, from his own point of view, claimed that there was still room for improvement and therefore he was not very satisfied with the outcomes by the time of this interview.

In order to minimize time conflicts, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays were days allocated for interclass or extension activities while the remaining Tuesdays and Thursdays were the days for remedial classes and class-based activities.

There were conflicts arising from limited resources for activities. The extension coordinator emphasized that:

*“There is always a shortage of ECA resources for schools because people in schools often want to have as many resources as possible. Time resources, material resources and financial resources are the most obvious limitations in schools. Sometimes the lack of necessary resources for ECA is due to the improper allocation of resources within the school. In some schools, principals limit the resources allocated to ECA so as to control the development of ECA within the schools leaving more room for the academic development of the students. The nature of resource allocation reflects the education philosophy of the school top management.”*

In discussing the conflicts causing by the acquisition of limited time resources, the extension activities coordinator emphasized the importance of having a focus on student learning when dealing with management of resources within schools.

*“The resource conflicts are the results of teachers' high expectations of the students within the school. If teachers can think beyond themselves and consider the school as a whole, resource conflicts*

*will not be a matter at all."*

The extension activities coordinator agreed that the principal is having a significant leading role in promoting the rationale of balanced learning:

*"Most of the schools claim that they are focusing on the overall development of the students but actually they seldom put it into action. Many schools focus heavily on the academic attainment of the students and put ECA aside. School principal is the most significant person affecting the development of student activities and student learning in the school."*

Within the school, there is a School Planning Committee to decide the organizational structure and the procedures for the whole school to work towards the school mission. Teachers could participate in the Review Meetings to give suggestions and opinions about practices so as to provide opportunities for the school to modify the details of implementations, for the staff to communicate and collaborate to eliminate misunderstandings, and for all participants to compromise on agreed plans. This was a strategic planning process.

In discussing the weaknesses of the existing practices of the extension activities, the extension activities coordinator said that student achievement was hard to measure. He gave an example: *"When students participated in a football match, what were the outcomes in terms of students' development? How to measure and what to measure?"* In other words, it was hard to evaluate the effectiveness of student activities. The school was still developing a set of student performance indicators, which needed to be updated frequently according to the rapidly changing society, before students' achievement in the extension curriculum could be measured effectively.

The extension activities coordinator said that a large majority of the teachers within the school are concerned about the overall development of the students:

*“Teachers, like the students, in the school are longing for a balanced life. But teachers are individual professionals with their own conceptions of what a balanced life should be. The role of the extension activities committee is to try to strike a balance between academic learning and non-academic activities within the school.”*

Staff development of the school was through experience sharing and partnership scheme. The responsible team for the partnership scheme consists of twelve members of the extension activities committee and three other teachers. The scheme provided opportunities for mutual support in organizing student activities. There were also sharing sessions for teachers within the school to express personal ideas concerning school improvement, to exchange self experiences in teaching and learning, and to discuss education issues raised in newspaper articles.

In the areas of computerization, the school used computers for keeping records, documentary work, and internal communication among the teachers. But, at the time of the interview, students seldom used computers for extension curriculum activities.

Finally, school A focused on the quality of the activities rather than the documentary process. So, paperwork at the school was kept to a minimum. There was no ready-made teacher’s manual or student’s manual for the extension activities, but there was an extension activities resource corner in the school library where teachers could get relevant information for student activities. Teachers could also archive information

through the computer website of the school or through experience sharing among the teachers.

### *Interview with the principal*

Resource scarcity was one of the constraints for the development of student activities in schools. The school principal advised school administrators not to focus on whether there was a balance in the allocation of resources among different departments in schools. *“As a school principal, the most important is to make sure that there is a balance in the allocation of resources for a balanced education for the students.”*

The school identified the specific needs of their students and focused mainly on their attainment and performance:

*“What the principal needs to do is to ensure that all the teachers are putting efforts into student achievements.”*

*“We encourage our students to share their happiness in their achievement. We do not mind others knowing the mistakes of the students because ‘trial and error’ is an important learning process of the students.”*

To develop the extension curriculum for the students, the principal said that the school administrators first needed to examine all the learning elements of the formal curriculum within the school timetable, and then try to make up the missing elements that were essential for the overall development of the students by adding the extension supplements.



The school uses the name “extension curriculum” instead of ECA because the principal strongly believes that the name ECA is a misleading term leading to an unfavourable activities culture in schools:

*“The name ‘extracurricular’ could not reflect the fact that student activities were actually one of the important elements of the school curriculum. The name ‘extension curriculum’ could reflect the significance and educational value of student activities. It was a matter of preference and choice for educational values.”*

The principal of school A believes that a school principal needed first to have vision and to recognize ECA as a part of school education before he or she puts efforts to encourage teachers and students to organize and participate in the students activities. *“Sometimes a principal’s upbringing may well explain a lot about his/her educational philosophy and his/her attitude towards student activities.”*

The principal of School A said that a school needed to have continuous improvement but a school might not need to predetermine its long term objectives. *“The school needed to adjust its objectives over time to suit the needs and to meet the changes of the society. Once a short term objective was achieved, a higher objective should be developed and the process would carry on towards the vision.”* Therefore, the principal did not agree with the total quality management concept in school education that, in TQM, the objectives were all predetermined and the school only needed to achieve the set goals. The principal believed that school management using predetermined objectives without adjustment accordingly to the changing situations was not appropriate. The principal added, *“To emphasize on procedures in TQM and focus too much on predetermined short-term objectives will decrease the flexibility and hinder the development of student activities or ECA in schools.”*

Further, unlike TQM schools, school A did not emphasize documents and paperwork.

The principal explained:

*"I find no reasons for teachers to spend tremendous amount of time on paperwork. I would like my teachers to pay more attention to the students. Of course, the records for student achievement are far more important... But what are the documents for? They do not contribute much to student learning."*

The principal emphasized that the school was working towards Sergiovanni's (1991) concept of successful schools, and not towards the concept of effective schools suggested by the School Management Initiative. The principal believes Sergiovanni's (1991) notion that *"What is rewarding gets done"* (OUHK, 1999, p.5).

This case study into School A provided valuable insights for the improvement of the existing extension curriculum for the overall development of the students, and at the same time, gave an example of how to create a top down model of transformational management which created a favourable culture and environment for the student activities.

## Case Two: School B

School B was established in 1994. In August 1997, school B decided to adopt the ISO9002 system as a quality management model to improve the quality of its education services. The school was finally awarded the ISO9002 quality assurance certificate after passing the examination in March 1998.

### Documentary Analysis

As stated on the Internet website of school B, under the ISO9002 system, the school created (1) a favourable atmosphere to chase for competency and a culture for continuous improvement; (2) a general consensus concerning the preferences in providing services to students, parents and the society; and (3) updated concepts in effective use of limited resources through collaboration. Staff within the school can master the philosophy of using facts and data in documents and records to guide and reflect practices.

Under the ISO9002 international certification, with a school administrator for ensuring and maintaining quality standards, the school had to establish a quality policy on various issues concerning school management activities and an explicit quality procedure manual. There were in house audits and external audits to review quality regularly. The main rationale of ISO9002 in the school was “Say what the school does. Do what the school says. Prove that the school does it.”

Table 6.4 from the website of school B shows the areas of compliance with the ISO9002 quality assurance system adopted by school B:

<b>Areas of compliance in ISO9000 quality assurance</b>	<b>Applications in school management of school B</b>
1. Management Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Develop quality policy and objectives</li><li>● Identify the roles and responsibilities of the quality representative and the assistant representative</li><li>● Identify the function and roles of the management structure, for example School Management Committee, School Executive Committee, and Parents' Association</li><li>● Management assessment and Evaluation of administration process</li></ul>

<b>Areas of compliance in ISO9000 quality assurance</b>	<b>Applications in school management of school B</b>
2. Quality System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construct the documentary structure of quality system within the school, including Quality Manual, Work Procedures, Work Instructions and Reference Materials</li> <li>Quality Programming documents for achieving school education objectives</li> </ul>
3. Contract Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation of School Profile to parents and Parents' Handbook.</li> </ul>
4. Design Control	NOT APPLICABLE
5. Document and Data Control	<p>The procedures for distributing, filing, updating and canceling of the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality Manual, Work Procedures</li> <li>Documents and Instructions of different departments, for example teachers' handbook, parents' handbook, Department files</li> <li>Various circulars, memorandums, and forms, for example Duty Lists, Letters to parents, Circulars from the Education Department</li> </ul>
6. Purchasing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff recruitment and appraisal</li> <li>Procedures for purchasing teaching aids and relevant apparatus</li> <li>Procedures for purchasing different items and services to maintain school functions, for example cleaning services, materials for printing etc.</li> <li>Evaluation, selection and monitoring of suppliers, for example school bus, lunch boxes, school uniform, tuck shop, textbook and equipment suppliers</li> </ul>
7. Customer Supplier Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collection, record and storage of student assignments</li> </ul>
8. Product Identification and Traceability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student personal records</li> <li>Registration of new students, Interviews with the parents of the new students, various records and files of individual students, for example parents' information, learning achievements, student conduct records, records of ECA and awards.</li> <li>Career and study records of the graduates</li> </ul>
9. Process Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidelines for Counseling Department</li> <li>Guidelines for Discipline Department</li> <li>Planning of activities</li> <li>School maintenance</li> <li>School safety equipment</li> <li>Roll call and attendance record</li> <li>Award and punishment system</li> <li>Time use of the students</li> <li>Career and study guidance</li> <li>Civic education and moral education</li> <li>Counseling and class-allocation of new students</li> <li>School timetable and assigning teachers to substitute lessons for absent teachers</li> <li>Curriculum design, teaching plan and teaching contents</li> <li>Instruction for classroom teaching</li> <li>Arrangement of classroom observation</li> <li>Library and teaching resources management</li> <li>Management of special rooms</li> <li>Management of audio-visual aids and information technology multi-media</li> </ul>

<b>Areas of compliance in ISO9000 quality assurance</b>	<b>Applications in school management of school B</b>
10. Inspection and Testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Student admission and admission tests</li> <li>● Arrangement of class allocation examinations, uniform tests, attainment tests, half-yearly and year-end examination</li> <li>● Examination paper setting and marking of scripts</li> </ul>
11. Inspection, Measuring and Test Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Standards for assessing student conducts</li> <li>● Audit of examination papers and adjustment procedures</li> </ul>
12. Inspection and Test Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Records of student conducts</li> <li>● Records of student services and activities</li> <li>● Records of awards of the students</li> <li>● Records and reports of the results of different tests and examinations. Distribution and records of student report cards and of the student results in external examinations. Issuing recommendation letters and certificates</li> </ul>
13. Control of Non-Conforming Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Management of students with deviation in behaviour</li> <li>● Standards for failing students in learning achievements and the corresponding remedial actions</li> <li>● Dealing with poor teaching quality and the corresponding remedial actions</li> </ul>
14. Corrective and Preventative Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Management of complaints and follow-up actions</li> <li>● Management of policies for improvement teaching and learning quality</li> </ul>
15. Handling, Storage, Packaging, Preservation and Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Management of dangerous materials and chemicals</li> <li>● Procedures for receiving goods</li> <li>● Management of printed materials and printing quality</li> <li>● Storage of documents, for example records of past students and examination papers etc.</li> <li>● Storage and management of resources and equipment of different departments and special rooms</li> </ul>
16. Quality Records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Storage and management of quality records, for example: timetable, teaching programmes, records of attendance, examination papers and results, bills and receipts of purchasing, internal audit records etc.</li> </ul>
17. Internal Quality Audits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Audit and evaluation of school functions</li> <li>● Audit and evaluation of job effectiveness</li> </ul>
18. Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pre-service training of staff</li> <li>● Quality system training for staff</li> <li>● Subject-based professional development for staff</li> <li>● Staff training records</li> </ul>
19. Servicing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Student career counseling services</li> <li>● Services for past students</li> </ul>
20. Statistical Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Statistics of the test and assessment results of the students</li> <li>● Statistics of the trends of student admission</li> <li>● Statistics of the results of students in external examinations</li> <li>● Statistics of departmental data</li> </ul>

**Table 6.4 Areas of compliance and their application in school B**

The school chose to use ISO9002 instead of ISO9001 for ISO9002 is named “Quality System – Model for quality assurance in production, installation and servicing”. The only difference in the standard requirements between the two systems is the section “Design Control” which is only suitable for organizations with capabilities in the innovative design of products or services.

Although the areas of compliance indicated in Table 6.4 referred to school management as a whole, there were certain areas regarding the management of ECA in the school. From Table 6.4, Product Identification and Traceability (area 8) seemed to be the most important area of compliance concerning ECA. Area 8 relates to the ECA records of the students.

In the application of ISO9002 in school B, the following areas are of little significance for ECA:

- Purchasing (area 6)
- Customer Supplier Product (area 7)
- Inspection, Measuring and Test Equipment (area 11)
- Control of Non-Conforming Products (area 13)
- Quality Records (area 16)
- Servicing (area 19), and
- Statistical Techniques (area 20)

In the area of Management Responsibility (area 1), school B needed to provide quality assurance in assessing and evaluating ECA management. To facilitate the Quality

System (area 2), school B had to provide procedure manuals and work instructions in the area of ECA. The information provided in the school profile and parents' handbook was, in fact, a contract between the school and the parents. According to Contract Review (area 3), information concerning ECA in the documents needed to be verified. There were special requirements in the Document and Data Control (area 5) such as letters to parents concerning ECA, different ECA documents and forms. The area of Process Control (area 9) concerns the planning of school activities, including ECA. The records of students' ECA services, activities and awards were controlled in the area of Inspection and Test Status (area 12). In area 14, Corrective and Preventative Action, the school needed to deal with complaints and policies for improvement in ECA. The storage of ECA resources and equipment is controlled under the area "Handling, Storage, Packaging, Preservation and Delivery" (area 15). Of course, the Internal Quality Audits (area 17) covered all aspects of the school functions including ECA management. Area 18, Training, referred to the staff development in ECA aspect.

In order to understand more about the application and the actual practice of ISO9002 quality assurance system in the management of ECA in school B, a school visit and an in-depth interview with the ECA master of the school were carried out on 3 December 1999. To further understand the rationale and particulars of the ISO9002 practices within the school, another school visit and interview with the principal of school B was carried out on 25 April 2000.

### Interview with the ECA master

The ECA master of school B gave a brief description of how the quality assurance system was developed:

*“To develop the ISO9002 quality assurance system for the school, the principal and the senior management of the school first identified what areas should be under control. Afterwards, the principal started to write the manual and the strategic plan for the controls. Each plan was numbered for easy referencing, for example QM209.09. Under each plan, there were specific procedures for staff to follow.”*

As told by the ECA master of the school, under the ISO9002 system, in order to make controls easier, the procedures for ECA management were kept to a minimum. They were only standards in the form of minimum requirements, for example: there should be more than 100 outings in a year.

The ECA master reported that there were limitations for the development of ECA in the school because the school authority emphasized too much on academic attainment of the students. Only the time on Friday after school was allocated to ECA. Due to time constraints, teachers in the school therefore put less effort in ECA. But still there were irregular large-scaled ECA events held in the school year such as team building programmes, Emotional Quotient training camp, and other educational camps.

In discussing the application of ISO9002 system in ECA quality management, the ECA master of the school agreed that there were still too many limitations. Since there were so many ECA clubs in the school, if all the procedures were totally under control, then



the school needed to develop another ISO9002 system solely for ECA purposes. Practically, there were too many ECA items within the school and the school ECA master might not have enough expertise in all the ECA fields. And also the ECA master explained that *“There is no fixed pattern for ECA”*. Therefore it was not possible to carry out monitoring activities and evaluations professionally and successfully. But on the other hand, in order to provide flexibility and autonomy in the management of individual ECA items, it might not be necessary for the school management to monitor and control all the procedures in ECA. The ECA master declared that, *“What an ECA club needed to do was to submit its year plan, develop its objectives and send in the annual report.”*

As ISO9002 emphasized, “Say what you are going to do, and do what you have said”, under the quality assurance system, all the ECA of the school should have detailed activity records. All the student activities within the school were announced on a board every week in the school and the ECA master then carried out random checking to see if these activities were actually taking place. If there were any deviations from the standards, for example the activity was not actually carried out as scheduled, there would be a remedial “corrective and preventative (C&P) action”. The C&P action involved a discussion between the ECA master and the teacher-in-charge of the activity when the possibilities for improvement would be discussed. *“The major reason is to keep our promises to our customers.”*

In general, under the ISO9002 system, in the area of ECA, what the school controlled were only whether there was an annual plan of individual activity at the beginning of the academic year, whether there were activities in weeks as scheduled, and whether there were detailed and updated records of activities in each week. But the contents

and actual quality of the activities were not assessed. The major focus was to check whether the activities “do what they have said”. One of the advantages of these practices was that the amount and types of activities of individual ECA clubs could be easily monitored. Therefore, the ISO9002 system could be used to control ECA quantity so as to monitor teacher performances because there were documentary records for easy referencing. *“Documentary records are important in ISO9002. Documents are the major focus when applying the system in ECA management in the school.”*

The ECA master of the school stated that the quality of ECA could not easily be measured and assessed. From the views of the ECA master of the school, one of the key difficulties in program or ECA evaluation was whom the assessor should be. He encouraged schools to start the quality assessment of ECA from whether the resource inputs were value for money. *“Surely I am not an expert in all the ECA. Therefore it may not be fair to have me to assess the quality of all the ECA items.”* He suggested schools to invite teachers from other schools with similar ECA experiences to be external assessors in the evaluation process.

In order to fulfil the requirement to meet the standard of ISO9002, internal audits and external audits would both be carried out half-yearly in school B. The external and internal auditors would look into minutes of the meetings, the coherence of the year plan and the actual practices, the performance of the students, and whether records and actions were following predetermined procedures. The ECA master said that *“The result of the ISO9002 certification audit depended much on the cooperation of the teachers in submitting necessary reports and records for examination”*.

For quality assurance, other than external audits, there were internal audits to check if there were any deviations from the standards in all the procedures. If discrepancies were found in the areas of compliance, according to the procedure manual, meetings for corrective and preventative actions would be held for remedy. In order to facilitate internal audits, there were staff development programmes for teachers to master the theories of ISO9002 and the techniques for auditing.

Regular external audits were carried out half-yearly but there were large-scale external audits every two years. The ECA master explained the purpose of the audit:

*“The ISO9002 external auditors will check all the files and records. The external auditors believe that minutes of meetings will provide resourceful information for management evaluation. The auditors will usually first look into the minutes of the meeting and check whether a department has done what has been written down in the minutes. If there are any missing activities found, the department has to explain why the activities are not carried out as scheduled. If the activities are carried out, the auditors will check what the actual contents of the activities are and whether there are detailed records of the activities. The auditors will also chase all the records to see if there is any deviation from the schedules. The auditors will, at the same time, check the ‘after sale practices’, for example the school’s promises to parents. What the external auditors actually do is to check whether all activities are done according to the predetermined procedures in the manual. If there is a minor error, the auditor will request the school to have some correction work. If there is a major mistake, the school will then fail in the certification audit.”*

In order to pass the ISO9002 certification, the school needed to submit the ISO9002 procedure manual to the external auditors to approve. The ECA master explained: “If

*a school wants to pass the ISO9002 certification easily, the school can set lower standards in the procedure manual. ISO9000 series are only mechanisms to guarantee organizations to function according to predetermined procedures set in the organization's ISO9002 manual."* In other words, the quality of the actual activities of the organizations could not be guaranteed under the ISO9002 system.

There were several common quality errors found in the external and internal audits of the school. In general, as told by the ECA master, the discrepancies concerning ECA were (a) insufficient documents and records for ECA; (b) lack of necessary detail in records and documents; and (c) insufficient planning or lack of details in planning; (d) actual activities were not following the year plan and the predetermined schedule. The ECA master further explained that *"The last quality discrepancy was due to the common practice in schools to delegate ECA responsibilities to students so that students would have freedom to organize their ECA to meet their needs and expectations. This was one of the learning objectives of ECA in school education."* But unfortunately this excuse was not accepted by the external auditors.

The ECA master explained that, in dealing with any complaint (one of the procedures within the system) concerning ECA, the School Executive Committee would look into the matter to see if the complaint was reasonable. If so, meetings for corrective and preventative action would follow. *"We welcome suggestions and complaints."*

The ECA master strongly recommended newly established schools to apply the ISO9002 quality assurance system in their school management because there were clear and specific procedures for new staff to follow in all the school activities. The ECA master explained, *"For example in our school, in the area of ECA, QM209.09 is a*

*procedure for school outdoor activities. Under the procedure QM209.09, teachers are requested to submit applications to ECA master, inform parents formally in letters, and so on. Teachers can follow the procedures in the manuals when they are organizing outdoor activities.”*

When asked whether there was an increase in teachers’ workload due to the tremendous possible amount of documentary work in ISO9002, the ECA master of the school claimed that the situation was just the opposite in his school case. *“The department heads did most of the documentary work and had a heavier workload during the stage of preparation of the manuals when compared with that of the other teachers.”* But the overall workload of all the teachers was reduced, for all the documents could be accessed by all the school members and all of the staff could hence answer any public inquiry about all the activities of the school. Teachers could also follow the procedures set out in the manual to prevent mistakes and unnecessary work.

In the school, although there was no annual ECA assessment for individual students, there was a detailed ECA record for each student. If the student performed well in an ECA item, the information will be noted in the student’s school report card. *“We have no assessments but records. Records are essential under ISO9002.”*

To evaluate the effectiveness of individual ECA items, there were self-evaluations carried out by individual ECA clubs. *“We stress on self improvement.”* The ECA committee would also frequently monitor the activities of the ECA clubs. This was the method applied in the school to monitor ECA quality.

When discussing the possibility of having conflicts between the school's ISO9002 quality assurance system and the Quality Assurance Inspection carried out by the HKED, the ECA master explained that the two systems were focussing on different aspects of school management. ISO9002 focused on whether the school was following the predetermined procedures while QAI concentrated on whether the existing practices were proper for school education. The ECA master further explained:

*"If QAI gives a suggestion, one may see that the suggestion is a complaint about the existing practices by the inspectors from the Education Department. But under the ISO9002 system, if suggestions or complaints occurred, the focus of the school is on how to deal with the suggestions so as to improve the existing practices using the corrective and prevention actions."*

#### Interview with the principal

The principal explained the reason why the school initiated the idea of adopting the ISO9002 quality assurance system in its management – to introduce a new mode of school management. It was the idea of the school management committee to try this innovative approach in school settings.

The principal believes that each organization ought to have its quality assurance system. This was the first experience in Hong Kong to apply the ISO concept, which is oriented in industrial and commercial settings, to an educational environment. The principal emphasized, *"Put good management practices together for good results."* The principal claimed that the ISO quality assurance system can be applied in new schools more easily than established ones.

When asked to compare the differences between the ISO9002 quality assurance system and School Based Management (SBM, originally known as the School Management Initiative, SMI), the principal explained

*“There is no framework in SMI. One cannot decide which areas should be under control and which areas should not. ISO clearly identifies that the areas concerning quality should all be under control.”*

The major difference between ISO9001 and ISO9002 systems is the area Control Design that is inapplicable in ISO9002. The principal explained that the school was advised by the ISO certification organization to follow the ISO9002 system instead of the ISO9001 system for there was little flexibility in curriculum design in school settings. The principal further explained

*“Our school uses ISO9002 instead of ISO9001 because there is not much room for curriculum design within the school. Although there are opportunities for school-based curriculum design, most of the existing curricula are following the curriculum suggested by the Education Department and the syllabus by the Hong Kong Examination Authority. It is quite common for ISO schools in the United Kingdom to use ISO9002 instead of ISO9001.”*

At first, there was opposition from teachers within the school to using ISO9002 for the teachers linked the ISO quality system with profit-oriented management. The teachers were worrying about the extent of control applied to them. The problem was finally solved by explaining to the teachers that the aim of the ISO9002 quality assurance system was to improve job procedures and job quality. There was no contradiction between ISO9002 and teachers' professional expertise. Teachers did not need to fully understand the whole concept of ISO9002. Because education is professional, “The

*ISO9002 system would not over-interfere with teachers' work because the school needs to be realistic in applying the system to control the areas that are critical to quality outcomes, and leaving flexibility for teachers to exert their expertise."*

The principal explained the essential elements of ISO9002. Firstly, there are internal regular audits to examine the working situation from time to time. The internal audit used is called the compliance audit, which is procedure-based. Later the audit can be developed into one which is based on effectiveness. The compliance audit can let all the staff within the school, no matter to which department they belong, to understand the work of all the departments. The internal audits of each department are not carried out by the respective line managers, but by any third parties within the school, although the third parties may not have any relationship with the department. This creates an open atmosphere to allow staff from different departments to audit each other for quality. Everybody within the school, including the principal, is included within the system for internal auditing. The principal pointed out that *"The concept of bottom-up auditing or third-party auditing in ISO9002 is not stressed in SMI or SBM"*.

Secondly, external auditing is carried out half-yearly by the accreditation authority, HKQAA. External auditors provide professional judgements to ensure that the quality assurance procedures are followed properly.

Thirdly, there are management review meetings held regularly to examine the internal system. These bi-annual meetings are chaired by the School Management Committee.

Fourthly, there are corrective and preventative (C&P) actions. The rationale is that *"There can be mistakes"*. The staff should admit their mistakes and make records of



the errors. By the C&P actions, the causes of the problems will be investigated and the solutions, using a professional approach, will be generated if possible. Afterwards, follow-up actions should be carried out for remedy. The C&P actions repeat and repeat to aim for improvement in practice.

The principal continued to discuss the school's practice in ECA management. One of the difficulties in ECA management is the staff's concept about ECA – an “add on” or “extra” concept. Teaching staff consider ECA as an extra duty. Another difficulty is that the quality of ECA can hardly be assessed. One can hardly tell if an ECA is good or not.

The school does not have high expectations of ECA, but the school needs to know the particulars of the ECA carried out by the teachers and the students. Therefore planning is essential for ECA. The school also assesses, from the safety point of view, if the guidelines set up by the HKED concerning ECA are following strictly.

The school set its preferences on (1) raising the cognitive standard and skills of the students, that is “academically value-added”, (2) change and reform, (3) administrative management. The school emphasizes “time on task” to ensure that the education opportunities of the students will not be affected by teachers' absenteeism. Teachers, in such circumstances, need to provide supplementary lessons for the students to guarantee that the regular teaching-learning activities are not missing.

The principal realized that young teachers have limited life experience and many of them do not have enough experience in ECA. The principal also understood that the teachers needed to put more effort towards the school's preference discussed in the last

paragraph, that is to stress on “academically value-added”. The school decided to use sub-contractor system to manage ECA. The school used its school grant to subsidize the running cost of employing external instructors or contractors. The students paid the remaining sum. But the school had no clear documents to monitor the ECA quality of the sub-contractors, and also that of the teachers. The school only used document checking, activity observation, and students’ opinions to evaluate the quality of the ECA practices.

Using the ISO concepts, the principal explained that ECA of the school could be assessed by (1) the degree of satisfaction of the customers; (2) the number of complaints; and (3) the results of the sampling survey of the parents. For the best benefit of the students, the principal emphasized that whether students could learn from ECA and students’ degree of satisfaction were the two indicators to assess ECA quality. Teachers within the school were encouraged to apply their professional knowledge to determine what to do in ECA to meet the professional requirements.

The principal said that it is worthwhile for new schools to adopt the ISO9002 quality assurance system because it provides guidelines and procedures for the not-so-competent team of staff. In the established schools, the staff are already following the regulations and guidelines from the Education Department. These guidelines and regulations are already parts of the ISO system. The only missing element is the systematic and procedural approach in management. *“The success of applying the ISO9002 system in the established schools depends on the commitment of the management including the School Management Committee, the principal, and those who are already promoted to high positions.”* In other words, it is essential to develop a management team which is committed to the ISO rationale.

The principal warned school managers not to use the ISO9002 system just as an apparatus to manage the teachers. *“The system should be used to manage the whole school including the principal.”* In School B, the vice-principal dealt with all the complaints but any complaints concerning the vice-principal were handled by the principal. But the principal made it clear that *“We have no reasons to worry about the restrictions from ISO9002 if what we are concerning is our whole-heartedness in providing education professionally.”* The focus of the system is to improve the quality of the education service and not to find out the mistakes of any individuals.

The principal also advised schools not to simply copy the existing ISO9002 quality system from other schools. Different schools may have different contexts and different objectives. *“It is impossible for a school to have competent abilities and sufficient resources to apply ISO9002 in a way that all the preferences and objectives of others schools are put together in one basket.”*

When asked whether there were heavy workloads for staff within the school to draft the ISO9002 manuals and procedures, the principal introduced one of the rationales of the school – two or more persons should not do jobs that can be done by one person. In the initial stage of developing the ISO9002 system for the school, the design and drafting process was carried out mainly by the principal, the vice-principal and the middle managers of the school. The final procedures were drafted by the principal only. The reason was to let teachers have time to concentrate on daily teaching.

Due to a limitation of resources, the school aims at achieving the predetermined objectives and not at pursuing perfection. The principal said that *“Setting up an ISO9002 quality assurance system is hard, but maintaining the system is even harder.”*

The principal provided rich information about the costs for adopting the ISO9002 quality assurance system. The total cost by the time the school was applying for the ISO9002 certification was about HK\$100,000. The cost was calculated in man-days. Each man-day is about HK\$7,000 to HK\$7,500. (To look up the school documents, 1 man-day, about HK\$7,500; site visit, 2 man-days, about HK\$15,000; certification audit, 5 man-days, about HK\$37,500; and other expenditures) The cost for annual certification is about HK\$20,000 and the amount was paid by the School Management Committee. The principal added that *“Following the implementation of SBM in Hong Kong schools, the charges can now be claimed from the school administration grant.”*

The interview ended with a comparison between the ISO9002 quality assurance system and the quality assurance inspection (QAI) of the Hong Kong Education Department. The principal explained that there was no contradiction between the two systems,

*“QAI emphasizes teaching effectiveness while ISO stresses on procedures towards quality. QAI is an expert approach. The inspectors are the experts to make judgements to decide if the teaching practices are effective. ISO focuses on internal and external auditing of management practices, aims at improving management activities through review meetings and C&P actions.”*

### **Comparison between the Results of the Case Studies in School A and School B**

	<b>School A</b>	<b>School B</b>
Name of student activities in the school	Extension Curriculum	Extra-curricular Activities (ECA)
External audit	External audit depended on the Quality Assurance Inspection (QAI) from Education Department	1. Quality Assurance Inspection (QAI) from Education Department 2. External audit by ISO9000 Quality Assurance Certification Authority
Internal audit	Mainly carried out by the Extension Activities Coordinator and the school senior management	Carried out regularly by staff members within the school to check each other if the quality of service met the requirement of the predetermined procedures in the manual.
Performance indicators	Establish student performance indicators for all-rounded education	Establish school performance indicator in terms of procedures and standards
Evaluation of the management of student activities	Focusing on nature and quality rather than quantity	Focusing on whether the management were following exactly as the predetermined quantity and procedures
Management leadership	Transformational leadership	Management by rule and procedures
Instructions and manuals	Simple instructions and guidelines in websites. No formal manuals for teachers and students.	Detailed instructions in the form of procedures manual
Staff development for ECA	Aiming at creating a suitable culture for students' overall development through sharing and partnership	Providing programmes for developing auditing techniques but no specific staff development programme for ECA
Assessment of ECA performance of individual students	Assessing using student performance indicators	No formal assessment
Computerization	Computer software "Personal Information Centre (PIC)" to record students' achievements	Use paper documents to record the participation of individual students.

(to be continued)

	<b>School A</b>	<b>School B</b>
Acquisition of students' ECA information	Through the Extension Activities coordinator, in other school record or in computer database (PIC)	Detailed records of activities therefore information could be accessed easily by all staff within the school
Internal communication	Through computers, intranet and internet websites	Mainly through documents
Teachers' expectations and school's objectives	Focusing on overall development of students	Focusing mainly on academic attainment of students
Major focus in ECA management	Student development	Safety procedures
Activity days in a week	Monday, Wednesday and Friday	Friday

**Table 6.5      The main similarities and differences in the two school cases**

Table 6.5 indicates that school B carried out formal assessment of quality regularly and systematically when compared with school A. School B has a more comprehensive audit system. In addition to the Quality Assurance Inspection from the Education Department, School B had external audit by the ISO9000 Quality Assurance Certification Authority.

As the internal audits were carried out by the Extension Activities Coordinator and the school senior management, School A adopted a top-down auditing system. School B used a collegial auditing approach that staff in different positions of the management hierarchy check each other for correct procedures and quality.

As from the indicators of the two schools, school B focused its assessment on the procedures and standards while school A emphasized student learning. School B was managed by rules and regulations, while school A stressed culture development.

Since school A emphasized transformational leadership, there were only simple instructions and guidelines for teachers and students concerning student activities. But in school B, the management stressed detailed rules and procedures.

School A emphasized student development and used student performance indicators to assess students' performance in various extension activities. School B did not have formal assessment in the area of ECA but the school stressed safety procedures in conducting student activities.

Information concerning ECA could easily be assessed in two schools by their staff. The internal communication in the two schools is efficient. These two functions were facilitated via a computer system in School A and through the systematic management of documents in school B.

## **Summary**

The author interviewed twelve experienced ECA masters/mistresses to obtain their opinions concerning quality indicators in ECA management and to establish their impressions about the ECA management quality of their own schools and of all Hong Kong secondary schools. Two special case studies are discussed; one the only school with an extension activities curriculum and the other a unique school adopting the ISO9002 quality assurance system. This is followed by a comparison between the results of the two case studies. The outcomes of the interviews and the case studies will be used for analysis and triangulation in Chapter 7.

## Chapter 7      Analysis

### **Introduction**

This study aims at identifying the essential features of ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools which lead to effective management including quality outcomes and customer satisfaction. In this chapter, the author examines the findings of the questionnaire survey, the results of the interviews and the data from the in-depth case studies into the two schools with exceptional practices in ECA management. The research results will be classified, triangulated and compared with research presented in the literature.

Doherty (1994) explains that quality assurance is dealing with “*the aims, contents, resourcing, levels and projected outcomes of modules, programmes, and courses*” (p.11). So, in this chapter, the author analyzes the results of this study by classifying them into the following categories: Leadership and planning; ECA culture; Staff development and teacher competence; Managing the ECA curriculum content; Managing the ECA process; Managing the ECA outcomes; Managing customer needs, customer satisfaction and external communication; and Managing ECA quality.



## **Leadership and Planning**

### **(a) Strategic planning: vision and goals**

Most (83.2%) of the schools emphasized short-term goals rather than long-term clear and explicit visions. However there was a relative large gap between the planned and actual performance. The average response was only 4.03 out of 6 when asking whether the predetermined goals were met effectively and efficiently. Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990) refer to this as the Service-Quality Specification – Service-Delivery Gap while Rowley (1997) refers it as the delivery gap. One of the reasons for schools not to have long term goals might be the fact that there were insufficient ECA theories and research to support ECA actions in schools. This argument is supported by Berk (1992) and Wong (1994). Tin and Tsang (1999) also comment that there is a lack of ECA research and there is no long-term strategic planning of ECA in the Hong Kong education system. ECA in schools in Mainland China is led by education theories, research and statistical facts. (Tin and Tsang, 1999)

29.7% of the respondents agreed that school mission will affect ECA development of the school. Deal and Allan (1982) stress that clear and explicit vision providing a sense of shared sense of purpose, and the fine tuning of a shared set of values that promote and reflect school vision, are two main characteristics of excellent schools. Schmoker and Wilson (1995) also emphasize short-term results and long-term goals in applying TQM. Many authors such as Dinklocker (1992), Isaacson and Bamburg (1992), Sallis (1993), Scheetz and Benson (1994), and the Education and Manpower Branch and Education Department (1991) suggest to have clear educational goals while Menson (1992) states that vision is a prerequisite for TQM success. However, there

were still 16.8% respondent schools which did not have short-term goals and 53.0% of schools did not have explicit visions in ECA. A school which has a clear mission may not have explicit ECA vision and ECA commitment.

Schools A and B had different approaches to goals and objectives. School A emphasized short-term objectives rather than long-term goals. The advocacy of the principal of school A coincided with Holt (1994) and Bolton (1995) that quality control, to a certain extent, eliminates diversity and encourage uniformity, so School A did not agree with the practices of ISO9002 to have predetermined long-term objectives. Like Davies and West-Burnham (1997) who suggest “incremental improvements”, the principal of school A emphasized the continuous modification of objectives during the ECA teaching-learning process to meet students’ development needs. Brandt (1992b) and Holt (1994) argue that schools should recognize individual differences of the students. During the case study, the author realized that school A was working hard in this direction. School B, on the other hand, set its objectives mainly on the procedures and quantity of ECA and put safety precautions first. School B was following the ISO9002 quality assurance system with the objectives well planned in advance.

(b) Senior management commitment and leadership

Ramsden (1992) emphasizes high quality student learning. Although 82.2% of the respondents reported that their schools were having a positive attitude in encouraging students to participate in ECA, there were still 29.7% of the respondents who claimed that the unfavourable ECA attitude of their school principals limited ECA development in the schools. The interviewees who received top management support in ECA agreed that this support was a significant strength in ECA management. On the other

hand, those interviewees without senior management support treated the lack of top management support as the major weakness. That explains why Ho and Wearn (1996) suggest leadership and commitment as two of the main TQM principles. With reference to Martens and Prosser's (1998) advocacy for quality of teaching and learning, principals are suggested to have strong commitment to both the contribution of ECA to student development and the management of staff performance during the ECA process. As in Crosby (1984), the establishment of full management commitment to the quality programme is the first step to quality improvement. Hence, from the perspectives of the respondents and interviewees, the commitment of the school top management was essential in ensuring healthy ECA development.

The school principal of school A also stressed that the attitude of the principal towards ECA, due to his/her upbringing, was a significant and influential factor for ECA success. With the top management's commitment to ECA quality, the difficulties and constraints in conducting ECA, such as insufficient resources (Wong, 1994) and unreasonable allocation of financial resources for ECA in schools (Kwok, 1998), may be solved eventually. However, there were different focusing priorities in management commitment in the two case study schools. In school A, top management were committed to ECA quality for student development, while the senior management of school B were committed to procedures and rules in ECA management. The results of this study indicated that, in schools usually under a hierarchical structure, the support of the principal and the senior management is an important factor for ECA success. Schools and their senior management might have different perspectives concerning education. However, just like education reform in Mainland China (HKEAMA, 1999; Tin and Tsang, 1999), the support and the commitment of the central government to all-round quality education are crucial to ECA success in schools.

## **ECA culture**

### **(a) ECA culture**

From the results of the survey, there is an indication that the recognition of the ECA's educational value is not strong in the heart of the teachers and the students in many Hong Kong secondary schools. 45.3% of the survey respondents reported that teachers had little enthusiasm and had an improper attitude towards ECA. Generalizing from the results of the survey, interviews and the case studies, the unfavourable ECA culture was mainly coming from the examination-oriented culture in Hong Kong school education with the academic attainment of the students being over-emphasized. ECA was unfortunately seen to be an obstacle to student academic achievements by the teachers and the parents. The Commission on Youth (1996) and the Hong Kong Sport Development Board (1998) both state that the heavy school curriculum and the examination system limited ECA participation of the students. Heavy homework load discourages students' ECA participation (Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, 1998). Li, Chiu and Chiu (1996) well explain the situation by discussing the external and internal constraints as the barriers for ECA development: poor school work and over ECA participation respectively. Ka and Yuen (1997) treat conceptual change as the prerequisite for the successful transformation of the academic-focussed school atmosphere to a relatively balanced one. The EC (2000) strongly suggests a change to the existing examination-oriented school culture to one that is favourable to the all-round development of the students.

Another reason for the unfavourable ECA culture was the inappropriate attitude of the teachers towards ECA. As from the results of the study, the ECA masters/mistresses

reported that teachers in their schools usually treated ECA as extra duties and additional workload. This fact was frequently mentioned by the survey respondents and interviewees, as well as the principals and the activities masters of the case study schools in this study. Leung (1999) also states the fact that many teachers consider ECA as extra and unnecessary. Tin and Tsang (1999) suggest that the poor attitude of teachers towards ECA originates from the fact that some school workers and school administrators do not fully understand the functions of ECA in school education. As discussed in the previous section, the upbringing of the school principal of a school is a significant factor affecting his/her ECA commitment in the school.

Weindling (1992) states the importance of everyone's responsibility to quality. Frederick (1959), Fozzard (1967) and Hong Kong Youth Development Council (1998) all bring out the significant values of ECA. Holland and Andre (1987) and Porter (1991) both suggest that ECA are conducive to positive student outcomes. Haigh (1974) raise the benefits of ECA to school teachers. So, schools are suggested to stress, especially to the teachers and the students, the contribution of ECA in the student and teacher development so as to create a suitable ECA culture within the school. Without the support of the teachers and students, ECA within the school could hardly achieve high quality.

#### (b) University admission requirements

15.1% of the survey respondents and five interviewees suggest that universities modify their admission requirements so as to consider students' non-academic performance. The EC (2000) has a similar suggestion in the hope of bringing out a conceptual change in the attitudes of teachers, parents and students so as to develop a favourable culture in

secondary schools. Under the existing education system, Wong (1994) states that ECA is not considered as important in schools. Therefore there is an urgent need to change the examination-biased culture to one which is suitable for the overall development of the students in schools. The author is happy to see that there is a gradual change in the universities' admission requirements towards non-academic aspects since the publication of the EC consultation document (EC, 2000).

### (c) Quality culture

The survey results show that ECA quality was not highly regarded in more than half of the respondent schools. Some respondents regarded the inferior student quality as the major factor affecting ECA quality. Many interviewees brought out the necessity of having high quality ECA programmes within the school for high quality school education. This is in the hope that student participation will increase if there are high quality ECA programmes.

However, it is hard to measure ECA quality. Winch (1996b) suggests that there are four approaches to quality: total approach, product-based approach, user-based approach, and value-based approach. As quality is concerned with "conforming to requirements" and "fit for use" (Crosby, 1974, 1984; Juran, 1989), and "satisfying needs" (ISO, 1980; BSI, 1992), School A tried to develop a suitable learning culture for the teachers and the students so as to maintain continuous improvement in ECA quality. Customer satisfaction (Wayne, 1993; Trott, 1997) is stressed in school A. The activities master of school B brought out the difficulties of assessing the quality of individual activity items due to the expertise constraints of the assessors. School B was depending on the ISO9002 quality assurance system to maintain the quality of the

procedures and records of ECA. School A emphasized the user-based and value-based approach in assessing quality that student benefit was the main concern while school B stressed on the total approach that each individual was committed to quality procedures. While corrective and preventative actions were important and necessary procedures in quality assurance, obsessive responsiveness to customers (Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham, 1994a) was also stressed in school B. In order to nurture a suitable quality ECA culture within a school, from the experience of schools A and B, a combination approach concerning both the quality of student learning through ECA and that of the management of the ECA process is suggested for evaluating ECA quality.

#### (d) Culture for continuous learning

Tse (1994) suggests that developing a culture for continuous learning is a key to quality success. Cotton (1994) brings out Deming's idea of focussing on customer, culture and capacity for continuous improvement. To create a culture for continuous learning within the school, both student learning and teacher learning should be emphasized. Most survey respondents and interviewees reported that they encouraged student learning through ECA participation. But little had been mentioned about teacher learning. School A nurtured a continuous improvement culture through the sharing of ECA achievements while School B encouraged teachers to improve job procedures through quality assurance auditing. Although there were continuous improvement activities similar to the Kaizen concept (Imai, 1993; Bonstingl, 1993), the author could not find any evidence of schools using quality control circles (Blankstein, 1992) to improve management. To improve the quality of the ECA services, as suggested by Juran, the author encourages schools to develop "*an organization culture to drive the improvement process*" (Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham, 1994a).

(e) Collegiality

Crosby (1984) asks for an effective employee-management communication system. Deming, Juran and Crosby all emphasize collegial team spirit, the development of culture through education, continuous improvement, and the participation of all staff. (Tse, 1994) A significant number (68.0%) of respondents in the survey reported that there was departmental cooperation within their schools. 91.4% of the respondents claimed that there was effective communication between the ECA management and the teachers.

School A demonstrated a strong collegial culture in the sense that all staff were trying their best to provide quality education to the students. School A demonstrated a very strong collegiality among departments in organizing student activities. School B, under the documentary control in ISO9002, had a cooperative culture in following the consensus laid down in the quality manual. Information sharing (Colling and Harvey, 1995) was found to be effective in school B.

Doherty (1994) states that team work is essential for TQM while Colling and Harvey (1995) encourage building relationships within the organization. The author recommends reducing hierarchies between the bottom and top ECA management to facilitate collegiality. Schools are also advised to learn from each other how the ECA collegial practices work in schools. Because of the unfavourable ECA culture, due to the examination-oriented education system in schools, collegiality between the academic departments and the ECA department is strongly encouraged.



## **Staff Development and Teacher Competence**

### **(a) Staff development and teacher competence**

The survey findings indicate that 31.9% of the ECA masters/mistresses had only one to three years of experience and 62.7% of ECA masters/mistresses had undergone management training. These figures reflected that the existing three management courses for the ECA masters/mistresses provided by the HKEAMA and the universities in Hong Kong could meet the training needs of the experienced ones. These figures are similar to the 1997 HKEAMA study (Tin and Shum, 1998) that approximately 60.0% of the ECA masters/mistresses had undergone management training. In the 1997 HKEAMA study, there were 60.3% ECA masters/mistresses with 1-5 years of experience in the job while in the present study 67.7% of them had 1-6 years experience.

However, frontline teachers in 84.2% of the schools did not receive any staff development concerning ECA. 21 respondents in the survey reported on teachers lack of professional skills and training in conducting ECA. These findings coincided with those in the literature, for example Kwok (1998) and Tin and Tsang (1999), that there was a deficiency in teacher ECA training. Fung (1966) also stresses that guidance is indispensable in ECA. Teachers need to learn how to conduct ECA, to assess student performance and to evaluate ECA programmes. Teachers need to have special ECA training in order to provide quality and safe services to the students. Staff development can be carried out in various forms such as the partnership system and the experience of sharing practices in school A or the special in-house training in ECA procedures and skills in school B. As suggested by the interviewees, staff

development can lead to mission formation and eventually a favourable cultural change. Staff development could also develop an “*unthreatening, purpose-driven and improvement-obsessed culture*” (Murdock, 1992; Schmoker and Wilson, 1995) and to develop “*competence and commitment of teachers to quality*” (Sutherland, 1990). So there is a need to strengthen teacher development in the area of ECA.

#### (b) Monitoring staff performance

The survey results indicate that only 54.6% of the schools had staff appraisal programmes. In addition, 13.4% of the interviewees suggested strengthening the accountability of the teachers in conducting ECA. With the other findings of this study, there seemed to be a fact that ECA were not considered as an important and essential education means when compared with academic learning in most schools. Therefore, in many schools, there were no ECA staff appraisal programmes. But Martens and Prosser (1998) emphasize the need for the management of staff performance for quality assurance.

Sometimes, teachers in schools might be assigned ECA duties outside their own competencies. This made the teacher appraisals difficult in reality, as knowledge and care for the type of service is important in quality assurance. (Winch, 1996a) But in schools like the ISO school, appraisal programmes in the areas of ECA procedures and routine practices could be carried out. The ECA master of school B reminded the author that school ECA masters/mistresses might not have enough expertise in every ECA field to make effective, valid and reliable appraisals of the teachers. Kwok (1988) and Tin and Tsang (1999) also mention the insufficient training of teachers as one of the constraints in ECA development in Hong Kong schools. That is why Deming suggests

instituting training on the job (Holt, 1993) while Crosby (1984) suggests introducing supervisor training. In most schools, teacher self-evaluation is the common practice in monitoring ECA performance of the schools while documentary records are used to justify procedures and operations.

#### (c) Teacher workload

There is an urgent need to reduce teachers' daily workload because 25.9% of the respondents believe that teachers' heavy workload was a significant obstacle for ECA development. Wong (1994), and Tin and Tsang (1999), point out that the overload of teaching and administrative duties is one of the constraints for teachers to conduct successful ECA in schools. Schools are therefore recommended (a) to reduce teachers' workload, if possible, by reorganizing teachers' duties or by employing more clerical staff to reduce teachers' non-teaching tasks, and (b) to look for external support so that ECA can be carried out effectively. However, from the experience of school B, unnecessary workload in ECA can be reduced by setting procedure manuals for teachers to follow.

#### (d) Roles of the activities masters/mistresses

The interviewees emphasized that the competence of the ECA masters/mistresses was the most important factor for efficient and effective ECA management. In the survey, 11.0% of the ECA masters/mistresses asked for a reduction in their daily workload. The heavy workload of ECA masters/mistresses may be due to a lack of job specification or duty list. (Tsang, 1996) The extension activities master of school A, other than the roles and duties discussed in HKEAMA (1994), performed an extra role

to ensure that there was a balance between academic and non-academic activities within the school. Although the EC (1997) emphasizes in its ECR7 to have a search for a balance in academic and non-academic development of the students, it is quite common in Hong Kong schools that their ECA masters/mistresses are not empowered to take care of the academic activities. The ECA master of school B also brought out the fact that the limitation of ECA expertise of the ECA masters/mistresses became one of the difficulties in carrying out their roles. But Chan (1995) suggests that one's experience in ECA is not sufficient for ECA management. Chan (1995) identifies 11 managerial roles of the ECA masters/mistresses and reported that most of the ECA masters/mistresses saw themselves as teachers rather than managers. Since different schools may have different ECA practices, schools are therefore suggested to define clearly the roles and duties of their ECA masters/mistresses to facilitate high quality ECA management. As Chan (1995) suggests, ECA masters/mistresses need to be assigned as one of the members of the school administration committee to enhance their management effectiveness.

### **Managing the ECA Curriculum Content**

#### **(a) Management of ECA content**

A large majority (88.8%) of survey respondents claimed that their schools were providing a balanced ECA programme to nurture the development of their students in moral, intellectual, physical, social and aesthetic aspects. Bonstingl (1992a) states that quality education should be able to let the students have ability improvement, interest expansion and character growth. The International Award Association (1988)

emphasizes the development of individuals to become autonomous, supportive, responsible and committed. Levin (1997) also suggests various high-value-added competencies that should be developed for our students. By considering the International Awards Association's advocacy, with Levin's suggestions and Bonstingl's definition of quality education in mind, the results of the survey reflected that, from the perspective of the ECA masters/mistresses, most schools were providing a balanced ECA programme for their students' overall development.

The teachers in the respondent schools were, on average, given a relatively high flexibility to organize ECA according to student needs. The survey results were coincident with the interview findings that the varieties of the activities and their contribution to student development were considered as significant indicators when considering ECA quality. Both schools A and B were allowing their teachers flexibility to conduct activities to meet students' needs. However, strategic planning is important (Sallis, 1993) especially when schools need to design ECA programmes for quality education. After considering the characteristics of the school and its students, school A emphasized student community activities and services. This indicated that school A had strategic planning of its extension activities and had careful consideration of its activities' content. As school A, schools need to identify the special needs of their students and choose appropriate ECA contents to fulfil their education mission.

Glasser (1990b) states that school managers do not manage quality and teachers care little about quality. The autonomy or flexibility of the teachers to organize ECA to meet client needs is one of the methods to ensure quality through empowerment and delegation of the teachers. Deming suggests stopping dependence on inspection to achieve quality and build in quality in the frontline (Holt, 1993). The empowerment of

the teachers to have autonomy and flexibility in conducting ECA, according to school mission and student needs, can eventually improve ECA service quality.

#### (b) Curriculum development and integration

The EC (1999a) refers to three types of education: formal, informal and non-formal education. The EC (1999b), the Curriculum Development Council (1999) and Leung (1999) recommend coordinating these three types of education to form an integral curriculum to provide comprehensive learning experience to the students. However, in the examination-oriented culture of Hong Kong, teachers, parents and students care little about non-academic quality. (Tin and Tsang, 1999)

Curriculum development and integration can have “*synergy to optimize the system* (Schenkat, 1993)”. But from the results of this study, 79.6% of the respondent schools did not have ECA curriculum development. Curriculum development involves defining learning objectives, selection of learning experience, selection of methods of delivery of learning materials, and evaluation of the curriculum. Without curriculum development, the effectiveness and efficiency of ECA cannot be assured. As well as the integration of the above named curricula, the results of the interviews indicated an urge for curriculum integration between ECA and classroom learning. School A was working the right path to have its own extension curriculum development with curriculum integration between classroom learning and extension activities.

## **Managing the ECA process**

### **(a) Setting standards or performance indicators**

Only 44.3% of survey respondents are working in schools emphasizing measurable goals and results. The interviewees suggested to look for the degree of joy in ECA as a significant factor to assess ECA quality. This is a student-centred approach to evaluate ECA quality. Although this indicator can be used to measure the degree of client satisfaction, a single indicator cannot conclude the overall ECA quality of a school. There are input, process and outcome indicators. (Windham and Chapman, 1990) One can consider Shavelson's (1987) model of education input, process and output indicators to develop appropriate standards for measurement.

To provide a direction for the teachers and students to achieve through ECA, there is a need to develop objectives and indicators according to the Statement of Aims (Education and Manpower Branch, 1993) and the general agreed overall aims of Hong Kong education suggested in EC (2000). Gray (1990), Fitz-Gibbon (1990) and Ka and Yuen (1997) also suggest using performance indicators to facilitate transformation and to measure student achievement. This suggestion coincides with Schlechty and Cole (1992) and Eisner (1993) who claim that it is important to have appropriate standards for schools. School A established a set of achievement indicators for its students and teachers to accomplish through classroom learning and extension activities. The use of indicators in school A focussed on student improvement and on ECA process, and was therefore consistent with TQM. (Dooris and Teeter, 1994)

Deming, Juran and Crosby all suggest setting management standards to assure quality.

(Tse, 1994) School B established a set of procedures in its ISO9002 quality system to ensure that its ECA procedures and performance were following the predetermined standards. Apart from using the ISO9002 quality assurance system, one can consider Camp's (1989) benchmarking techniques to facilitate ECA quality improvement.

#### (b) Resource management

In the survey, 53.5% of respondents claimed that the resources and facilities for ECA were not adequate. However, on a separate question about the ECA budget, 67.2% of schools reported that the financial support was sufficient. These results seem to be contradictory. 12.3% of the respondents suggested to have more human resource and support for ECA. 26.2% of the respondents stated that school's human resources, funding and facilities limited ECA development. These results indicated that schools needed to have more ECA facilities, and especially more human resources, to improve their ECA quality. Wong (1994) mentions insufficient resources as one of the significant difficulties in ECA development. Resource problems might arise from the lack of space within the school premises. Human resource problems might come from insufficient ECA training of teachers (Kwok, 1998), the heavy workload of the teachers (Wong, 1994; Kwok, 1998) and the lack of ECA skills in students (Wong, 1994). However, giving more financial support to ECA might not solve the existing human resource problems in schools if there was no effective ECA management system. Staff development is therefore essential.

Usually in schools, it is the responsibility of top management to allocate resources to the different departments within the school, including the ECA department. Sometimes there is an unreasonable allocation of financial resources for ECA within a school



(Kwok, 1998). But the ECA masters/mistresses have little authority to bargain for more resources. So the effective use of the allocated resources becomes important. The interviewees believed that the ability to make best use of the acquired resources was one of the significant indicators in assessing ECA management quality. The survey respondents also gave high ratings (4.1 out of 6) when asked for their opinions about the effectiveness of using the allocated resources. The results reflected that most ECA masters/mistresses were satisfied with their management of allocated resources.

Collaboration across different departments within a school, and the joint ventures among schools and community organizations (Boys' and Girls' Club Association and Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union and the College of Education Graduates' Association, 1990) may solve some of the limitations arising from the scarcity of allocated resources. Both school A and school B encourage inter-departmental cooperation. School B brings out the importance of effective resource management by encouraging detailed records and proper methods of storage of physical resources.

#### (c) Use of information technology in ECA management and statistical control

Weller (1996) states that quality outcomes involve the effective use of technology. Although Doherty (1997) comments that statistical process control is not suitable for measuring human outcomes, the use of information technology in some situations can simplify the necessary process when dealing with statistical methods to reduce variability in quality (Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham, 1994a). As the EC (2000) suggests having a portfolio of students to record their achievements including ECA performance and participation, the use of information technology can help schools to prepare portfolios for their students.

Survey results indicate that the respondents only rate 3.06 out of 6 when asking about the extent to which they used information technology to assist ECA management. The use of information technology was unsatisfactory. Since the use of information technology involves the financial support of the schools to provide the necessary equipment such as computers and software, the unsatisfactory results might be due to the lack of financial and resource support. The problem might also arise from the lack of suitable computer software for ECA management in the market. School A developed its own computer software, PIC, to record students' achievements. However, there seems to be a necessity to develop a better computer programme in the market to serve the purpose of ECA management in schools.

Only 27.8% of schools carried out research to investigate clients' expectations before planning ECA for them. Statistical research can help strategic planning but Capper and Jamison (1993) remind managers not to rely solely on statistical methods in TQM. The interviewees stated that Hong Kong schools mainly relied on qualitative assessments rather than quantitative ones to assess their ECA programmes. School B was adopting ISO9002 as a means of statistical control but the ECA master of the school reminded school managers not to let the ISO9002 system interfere too much with teachers' work. However, information technology can help schools to carry out qualitative and quantitative analyses if they wish to.

#### (d) Management of the ECA process

Costa and Liebmann (1995) stress that process and content are both important in quality management. Juran states that quality problems come from poorly designed processes.

(Sallis, 1993) Communication between ECA management and the frontline teachers is an important process in delivering and monitoring ECA to narrow down the Service-Quality Specification – Service-Delivery Gap (Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry, 1990). In the survey, 91.4% of respondents reported that communication between the ECA management and the teachers was effective in their schools. So the delivery gap seemed to be not so significant.

To assess the quality of the ECA process, some interviewees suggest using students' performance and the extent that ECA met students' expectation as significant indicators. To ensure that teachers are following the appropriate ECA process, there is a teachers' ECA manual in school A. In school B, the school used documentary data control, process control and planning to ensure the quality of the ECA process. During the interview with the principal of school B, the author and the principal both agreed that there is an urgent need for schools to have clear documents to monitor the "contract out" ECA projects to assure quality and safety.

#### (e) Time allocation for ECA

In Mainland China, the suggested ECA time allocated within the school timetable in 1994 ranged from 10.77% to 11.70%. (HKEAMA, 1999) But Yeung (1999) discovered that, according to the curriculum reform policy of Shanghai, there were actually 9-12 ECA periods occupying 29.9% of school time in a week in junior secondary education and 6 ECA periods occupying 20.0% of the school time weekly in senior secondary education in 1995.

In the author's survey, however, only 7.4% of the respondent schools in Hong Kong had

regular ECA lessons in the school timetables. Furthermore, the students and teachers were not free to conduct ECA after school for there were supplementary formal lessons after school. The lack of time for ECA will “*overlook students’ needs and preferences* (Schmoker and Wilson, 1993, p.62)”. Since there were only a very limited number of schools putting ECA into their school timetables in Hong Kong, there might be an indication that ECA was not regarded as important in schools when compared with the situation in Mainland China. As explained earlier, this may due to the deep-rooted examination-oriented culture in Hong Kong society. Although ECA was not included in the timetables, both school A and school B, to different extents, allocated special time after school for student activities.

As suggested in EC (2000), and from the results of this study, there is an urgent need to change the examination-oriented culture in Hong Kong schools to the one favourable to the overall development of the students. So ECA masters/mistresses have to make sure that a reasonable total amount of time is allowed for students to participate in ECA. Although some schools are trying to formalize ECA by assigning ECA lessons within the school daily timetable, care must be taken to consider further how much total time is allowed for ECA within the timetable and after school.

### **Managing ECA outcomes**

#### **(a) Evaluation of ECA programme**

As Mortimore (1991) adopts a value-added approach to assess school effectiveness in respect of pupils’ progress, evaluation of educational programmes is inevitable.

Doherty (1994) stresses that the continuous quality improvement, Kaizen activities and the recognition of good performance, which are the generic characteristics of TQM, depend on the results of programme evaluation. Cheng (1996) explains that both school self-evaluation and external evaluation can be used (a) for internal development and improvement, and (b) for accountability and quality assurance.

Only approximately half of the survey respondent schools had ECA evaluation programmes. The interviewees use the number and category of ECA awards and prizes in external competitions as significant indicators in assessing ECA quality of a school. However, the participation and the process of ECA are far more important than the results of competitions in ECA. Costa and Liebmann (1995) also emphasize the importance of the process in service organizations. Further, only 2 out of 12 interviewees mentioned that “frequent assessment and evaluation” was an important factor in assessing ECA quality. The results may reflect that many ECA masters/mistresses overlooked the significance of programme evaluation for quality improvement.

Both school A and school B have internal evaluations and external evaluations. School A relies on the QAI as external evaluation while school B relies on both the QAI and the ISO certification agency to carry out external evaluations. QAI focuses on whether the government regulations and safety procedures are following strictly. The external evaluation carried out by the ISO certification agency focuses on whether the organization is following the scheduled procedures to assure quality. Actually, these two kinds of evaluation are essential for assuring ECA quality.

## (b) Recording and management of ECA results

Good (1945) defines ECA as programmes and events without academic credits. There are continuing discussions about whether individual students' ECA performance should be assessed or not. Fung (1966) argues that, although there is no individual assessment of student ECA participation, there should be records of student progress and that of programme evaluation. The EC (2000) proposes assessments and records of students' overall performance and suggests a detailed list of information that should be listed in the students' portfolio, including students' participation and performance in ECA.

Since ECA participation is voluntary in many schools in Hong Kong, it is not a surprise to discover that 86.1% of the respondent schools did not have remedial action for students with weaker ECA performance. As discussed earlier, only 44.3 % of the respondent schools emphasized performance indicators and measurable goals in ECA management and only approximately half of the respondent schools carried out ECA programme evaluation. These results further support the reasons why most schools did not have remedial work for weaker ECA performance students.

It is positive to note that 72.8% and 58.2% of the respondent schools had detailed records of school ECA achievement and of individual student progress respectively. 15.1% of the survey respondents suggested recognizing and recording students' ECA achievement. The interviewees agreed that the quality of paper work and records is a quality factor in ECA management. The interviewees also suggested that systematic paper work is a common strength in ECA management in Hong Kong schools. As discussed earlier, school A used computer programme (PIC) as one of the means to

prepare its ECA portfolio. School B recorded student participation to fulfil the requirements laid down in ISO9002 quality assurance system.

### **Managing Customer Needs, Customer Satisfaction and External Communication**

#### **(a) Customer needs and satisfaction**

Michael (1990) and Weller (1996) discuss the importance of the continuous satisfaction of customers. Halverson (1956) stresses that student activities should meet the interest and needs of the students. Education quality depends on the degree of satisfaction of internal and external constituencies. (Cheng, 1996) The customer satisfaction concept is actually “the fitness to use” (Ho and Wearn, 1996) approach to quality. The quality gurus, such as Deming, Juran and Crosby, stress the improvement process to meet customer needs and requirements. (Deming, 1986b; Crosby, 1984; Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham, 1994a; Tse, 1994) The spirit of TQM lies on customer requirement. (Wilkinson and Witcher, 1991) However, Blankstein (1992) remarks that it is important to agree on who the customers are for there are conflicts between different customers (Laza and Wheaton, 1990; McCulloch and Tett, 1996), while Wilcox (1990) points out that it is difficult to have consensus on desirable outcomes in education. In ECA settings, teachers usually agree with Rinehart (1993), Davies and Ellison (1995) and Trott (1997) that students should be regarded as primary and important customers.

The findings of the survey reflected that 72.2% of the respondent schools did not carry out research to identify customer needs and 83.9% of them had no formal procedures to evaluate client satisfaction. These unsatisfactory results suggest that ECA

masters/mistresses in most schools did not realize the importance of meeting customer needs for their satisfaction. However, the respondents rated quite highly (4.23 out of 6) when they were asked for the extent to which the ECA department met the promises to their clients. Without sufficient ECA market research, one must realize that the promises mentioned here might not fit customer needs and expectations. There might be a Customer's Expectation – Management-Perception Gap (Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry, 1990) or understanding gap (Rowley, 1997).

The suggestions from one of the interviewees gave valuable references in considering a school's abilities to plan ECA to fulfil its customer needs: the curricular experience of the students, the needs and expectation of the society, the willingness and competence of the teachers, the school background, and the resources and environment. School managers therefore need to realize these constraints in ECA management.

Beaver (1994) explained that sometimes customers have limited expertise in education and "*students have no conception of what they must learn; they are, after all, students* (Rinehart, 1993, p.59)". So, with this concept in mind, school A identified what the students had to learn in the schooling process and set up a set of student achievement indicators as "student needs". On the other hand, school B emphasized quality assurance and bounded itself to the contract and its promises to clients.

#### (b) External communication and partnership

Carman (1990) and Sallis (1993) state that customer expectations and perceived quality are major factors affecting service performance and customer satisfaction. The Service-Delivery – External Communication Gap (the communication gap) suggested



by Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990) points to the importance of having communication with various customers with either compatible or incompatible expectations. Monitoring customer satisfaction is hence a vital process for continuous improvement. The interviewees in this study also mentioned that word of mouth and publicity in newspapers are two significant ECA quality indicators.

The survey indicated that 73.5% of the respondent schools did not have systems for dealing with complaints and appeals. 50.4% of the schools had not provided sufficient information concerning the ECA development of the school to the clients. But the average rating of the respondents was quite high (4.32 out of 6) for their effectiveness in responding to client complaints. Sometimes, complaints come from the misunderstanding caused by insufficient communication between a school and its clients. The results suggested that appropriate external communication systems should be developed in schools to bridge the communication gap.

The EC (2000) points out that social sectors and parents play an important role in education. But in the survey, 73.3% of the responding schools did not have Home-School partnerships. Schools and parents are therefore recommended to jointly organize more ECA for the development of the students and to enhance the communication between them. Further, in the interviews, the interviewees suggested that schools have partnership ECA ventures with other agencies both within and outside Hong Kong.

## **Managing ECA quality**

### **(a) Recognition of quality costs and benchmarking**

Crosby (1984) suggests a focus on prevention rather than detection, zero defect and the price of non-conformance as three absolutes of quality. Crosby, Deming and Juran also recognize quality costs. (Tse, 1994) Dickens (1994) identifies four kinds of quality costs: internal failure costs, external failure costs, appraisal costs, and prevention costs. To reduce quality costs, schools are recommended to follow Deming's model of management (Eriksen, 1995) to improve the effectiveness of their ECA services and to encourage student participation by providing quality programmes.

To reduce the costs due to internal failure, external failure and the price of non-conformance, School B was adopting the ISO9002 quality assurance system to prevent mistakes and to eliminate unnecessary work. However, the appraisal cost and prevention cost in developing the ISO9002 certification was too costly (HK\$100,000). Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham (1994) remind that the heavy workload may make quality assurance systems not so beneficial to schools. But Doherty (1995) appreciates the effective use of TQM and ISO9000 for education organizations. To save time and cost, schools may not want to go through the ISO registration process. But schools are suggested to follow the rationale of the quality assurance systems to build in ECA quality.

Internal benchmarking, industry benchmarking, and process benchmarking (Camp, 1989) can provide opportunities for schools to learn from each other for quality improvement. Weiss (1988) reminds that care must be taken when transferring

successful practices to other context. From the perspectives of the survey respondents, successful ECA suitable for benchmarking are those ECA with teachers-in-charge having expertise in the field. Therefore, teacher training is again an important issue for ECA quality. Tin and Tsang (1999) state that, unlike Mainland China, Hong Kong has no ECA resource centre for experience sharing. That is why the interviewees suggested that schools benchmark each other through collaboration among schools aiming at providing quality ECA to the students.

In order to benchmark perfection (Kaufman, 1988), schools are recommended to develop ECA performance standards so that internal benchmarking can be carried out to assure ECA quality. Schools can also compare their ECA performances with that of other schools for industry benchmarking. This may be achieved through inter-school competitions. For continuous improvement, schools can further benchmark the generic processes and practices of the schools with distinguished ECA performance. Unfortunately, to maintain anonymity, many survey respondents did not provide their school names so that the particulars of the outstanding ECA items of individual schools cannot be given to other schools for benchmarking purposes.

(b) Degree of satisfaction of ECA management in the serving school by the ECA masters/mistresses

From the perspective of the ECA masters/mistresses, 36.2% of them reported in the survey that their satisfaction with the ECA management in their schools was average, 48.3% of them were satisfied and 5.2% of them were very satisfied. This result was similar to the findings of the interviews when 75.0% of the interviewees reported “satisfactory” and 8.3% of them reported “good” in their degree of satisfaction with

their ECA management. One must realize that these results were only reported from the point of view of the ECA masters/mistresses participating in this study. As the quality of ECA services in schools should be justified by the customers (Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry, 1990), these satisfactory results could not reflect the actual perception of ECA management quality by various customers. Further studies are needed to investigate the degree of satisfaction of the multiple stakeholders (Doherty, 1997) who may have conflicting expectations (McCulloch and Tett, 1996) of ECA. Beaver (1994) also suggests that schools take into account the experience and perception of the students who are both the customers and producers of the ECA learning process.

Both the extension activities master of school A and the ECA master of school B claimed that their ECA management was generally good. The extension activities master of school A evaluated the satisfaction of ECA management from its effectiveness to enhance student personal development, while the ECA master of school B measured the degree of satisfaction from whether the ECA documents were under control. However, ideally, schools should provide ECA services that are focussing both on students' personal development and on documentary procedures for quality assurance.

- (c) Opinion concerning the quality and quantity of ECA service in the respondents' schools

The HKED published performance indicators for the QAI of Hong Kong schools in 1998, including a statement that the quality and the quantity of ECA are two important indicators in ECA management. (HKED, 1998a) In this study, 95.3% of the

respondents claimed that the quality and quantity of ECA services in their schools were either average, good or excellent. But only 58.3% of the interviewees rated as average or satisfied when asking for their opinions concerning ECA quality and quantity. One will notice that there is a significant difference between the survey and interview results. The difference in the findings may due to the fact that the latter were in the form of purposive elite interviews. The underlying reasons for selecting the twelve interviewees were discussed in the Methodology chapter. Since the interviewees were experts in the field of ECA management, their expectations of management standards, and their degrees of satisfaction of ECA quality and quantity, might be higher than other ECA managers.

From the results of the two case studies, one may see that the degree of satisfaction of the quantity of ECA in a school depends on the school's strategic planning. School A emphasizes the overall development of the students, therefore the principal and the extension activities master of the school were proud of the large quantity of student activities. On the other hand, school B focussed on the academic attainment of the students and hence the school only provides a reasonable amount of ECA. So the degree of satisfaction concerning ECA quality and ECA quantity of a school depends much on the school's mission and focus.

This has been a controversial issue for many years. For example Li, Chui and Chui (1936) consider ECA as a factor hindering the academic learning of students. At this point, the attitude and the commitment (Deming, Juran and Crosby in Tse, 1994) of the school senior management towards ECA are crucial factors to ECA quality. Some secondary schools in Hong Kong might consider ECA as a valuable part of the students' learning process, as suggested in Porter (1991), while some other schools focus more on

the academic learning at the expense of ECA. However, Frederick (1959) and Jones (1935) bring out the importance of ECA while the EC (1997) reminds schools in ECR7 to strike a balance between academic and non-academic outcomes of schooling.

### **Obstacles hindering ECA Service Quality**

The obstacles suggested by the respondents can be categorized into three areas: (1) ECA culture within the school and within the society; (2) human resources, funding and support; and (3) the expertise of the teachers and students.

Without a suitable ECA culture in schools and society, the senior management and the teachers of the schools had little enthusiasm for ECA. Parents misunderstood ECA and treated ECA as an obstacle to the academic attainment of their children. The quality gurus such as Deming, Juran and Cosby also emphasize the importance of senior management commitment, appropriate culture and team spirit for quality pursuit. (Tse, 1994)

The respondents suggested that there was insufficient ECA teacher training either provided by the schools themselves or by the teacher training institutes. Kwok (1998) already raised this deficiency as one of the difficulties in ECA management. Due to the examination-oriented school culture, teachers usually had a very heavy workload and left little time for students and teachers to participate in ECA. The problem became more serious when there were not enough human resources, funding and facilities support in the schools. Resulting from the unfavourable ECA culture and the heavy daily workload of the teachers, as discussed in Leung (1999), teachers in Hong

Kong usually considered ECA as extra duties and unnecessary. All these obstacles suggested by the respondents are similar to those in Wong (1994), Kwok (1998), Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups (1998), and Tin and Tsang (1999). These findings are also similar to those weaknesses in ECA management mentioned by the interviewees.

### **Reasons for the success of the outstanding ECA**

Kwok (1998) points out that insufficient teacher training is one of the difficulties in conducting ECA in Hong Kong schools. Teachers' expertise was also one of the factors for ECA success suggested by the respondents. Both the respondents and the HKED (1998a) considered the level of student participation of the activity and the number of ECA awards to be significant indicators of successful ECA. The respondents further pointed out that, from their perspectives, human resource support and assistance from agencies outside the school were two other contributing factors leading to ECA success. The Boys' and Girls' Club Association of Hong Kong, the Professional Teachers' Union and the College of Education Graduates' Association (1990) encourage schools and community organizations to have ECA joint ventures to solve the human resources and facility problems.

### **Innovative ECA items suggested by the survey respondents**

In Hong Kong, the varieties of ECA provided by a school is one of the performance indicators for assessing ECA management quality of the school (HKED, 1998a). ECA

are usually classified into five major categories: Service Groups, Academic activities, Sports activities, Aesthetic activities, and Interest Clubs. From the results of the survey, out of the 60 innovative ECA items listed by the respondents, only one of them belonged to the Service Group category. But there were 16 innovative Sports activities and 31 new Interest Club activities.

It is not a surprise to see that there was only one innovative Service activity on the list. Service activities usually require teachers with special training and expertise in the field. As discussed earlier, teachers' expertise and the lack of teacher ECA training were two of the major obstacles or difficulties for ECA development in schools (Kwok, 1998; Tin and Tsang, 1999). To fulfil customer needs for quality (ISO, 1986; Bowring-Carr and West Burnham, 1994a; Weller, 1996) and to consider the interest of the children rather than that of the schools (Kohn, 1993), there were many innovative Sports and Interest Club activities suggested by the respondents. The list of innovative ECA items will provide resourceful information for other schools to benchmark each other for better ECA management.

### **Quality Assurance Inspection (QAI) and Performance Indicators suggested by HKED**

Both the Statement of Aims and the performance indicators formed the bases for QAI. (HKED, 1997) When comparing the findings of this study with the performance indicators suggested in HKED (1998a) in the domain III "Support for Student and School Ethos" (Table 3.1) and in the domain IV "Attainment and Achievement" (Table 3.2), most of the survey schools performed well in the areas concerning the provision of a balanced variety of ECA (88.8% of respondent schools) and equal opportunity in



participation (92.2% of respondents schools). Schools performed satisfactorily in the areas concerning school policies (53.0% of respondent schools had no clear and explicit vision), ECA goals and objectives (62.7% of respondent schools had clear goals and objectives), assignment of suitable personnel (67.2% of ECA masters/mistresses with management training; respondents rated an average of 3.95 out of 6 when asking whether the school was making best use of staff skills and expertise) and students' involvement in organizing and running ECA (respondents rated on average 3.95 out of 6 when asking whether teachers and students were involved in ECA planning).

However, there were some unsatisfactory management areas. Insufficient resources support (53.5% of respondent schools did not have sufficient resources), the unsatisfactory arrangement and schedule of ECA (87.8% schools without curriculum development, 92.6% of schools did not have regular timetabled ECA lessons) were two of the deficiencies. Inadequate monitoring and evaluation (53.9% of schools did not have ECA overall evaluation; 51.1% of schools did not have evaluation for individual ECA items; only 58.2% of schools had records of the progress of individual students), little advice and help for students (86.1% of schools without remedial action) were two additional weaknesses. QAI emphasizes school self-evaluation and QA inspection in the quality assurance process. (HKED, 1997) However, from the above research findings, more than half of the schools did not have ECA self-evaluation. This result coincides with the findings in the QAI report, released in 1998, that self-evaluation was the weakest quality area. (HKED, 1998b)

Furthermore, little work has been done on investigating client satisfaction (72.2% of schools did not have market research on student expectation; 83.9% of schools did not have evaluation on client satisfaction) and most schools had an unfavourable ECA

culture (only 19.4% of schools with students having strong recognition of ECA value). Where the number and types of awards gained in inter-school activities were concerned, the respondents generally agreed that awards were one of the significant factors in considering whether an ECA was successful. However, from the results of the survey and the interviews, respondents tended to stress the ECA process and the results when evaluating ECA success. QAI stressed the process, school improvement and accountability. (HKED, 1997) From the above findings, many schools seemed to have a weak sense of accountability in ECA management. Without investigations on client satisfaction, schools might not be accountable to their clients and might lose their direction for improvement in the areas concerning the provision of effective ECA for their students. This might lead eventually to an unsatisfactory ECA culture. Therefore, investigating client satisfaction for accountability, and as a means to self-evaluation, is advisable for ECA management.

### **Quality gaps**

Some of the quality gaps suggested by Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990) and Rowley (1997), relating to the Hong Kong ECA context, were identified from the survey findings. There might be a Customers' Expectation – Management-Perception Gap (the understanding gap) which was mainly caused by insufficient market research on customer expectation. There might be a Management Perception – Service-Quality Specification Gap (the design gap) caused by not fulfilling customer expectations due to insufficient human resources, insufficient funding and poor facilities for ECA purposes. The deficiencies in ECA resources have been found in the two studies by HKEACA in 1983 and 1988. (Wong, 1994) Chan, Fung and Kwok (1994) explain that the

insufficient resource support was the result of the over-emphasis of academic learning at the expense of ECA in schools. To narrow this gap, ECA masters and mistresses need to use the allocated resources effectively and efficiently. Mainland China set a good example in the use of school premises, resources and equipment for ECA. (Tin and Tsang, 1999)

There might exist a Service-Quality Specification – Service-Delivery Gap (the delivery gap). This gap was mainly caused by the lack of teacher expertise, insufficient monitoring of individual ECA items and the lack of ECA programme evaluation in some schools. There might also be a Service Delivery – External Communication Gap (the communication gap) arising from insufficient external communication system.

There are indications of two additional quality gaps from the results of this study especially for Hong Kong ECA situation. The author refers these to be (a) the Formal – Informal Curriculum Gap, and (b) the All-round Education – ECA Priority Gap.

The Formal – Informal Curriculum Gap was caused by the fact that ECA was isolated from the formal curriculum and was considered mainly as informal curriculum in Hong Kong schools. Teachers, parents and students referred to ECA as the informal curriculum which was not emphasized as much as the formal curriculum in schools. The survey findings also indicated that only 7.4% of the respondent schools put ECA into their school timetables. However, in Shanghai, one of the leading cities in education reform in Mainland China, ECA occupied 20.0% to 29.9% of the school time in a week. (Yeung, 1999) Furthermore, the EC (2000, p.4) suggests that schools break down the traditional boundaries between the formal, non-formal and informal

curricula to form an integrated curriculum. To narrow this gap, the author suggests curriculum integration between classroom learning and ECA. CDC (1999) and EC (1999b) have similar advocacy. Mainland China has successful integration of the ECA curriculum and the formal curriculum. (Tin and Tsang, 1999)

The All-round Education – ECA Priority Gap refers to the selection preference of teaching-learning content and objectives by the teachers, parents and students. They usually put most effort on those academic subjects listed on the timetable when compared with that put on ECA after school. Teachers aiming at better examination results of the students tended to use the time after school for supplementary lessons at the expense of ECA. When compared with the situation in Mainland China in 1994, student activities occupied 10.77% to 11.70% of the school timetable. (HKEAMA, 1999) According to the two studies by HKEACA in 1983 and 1986, ECA was not considered important in schools (Wong, 1994). The Federation of Youth Groups (1998), and Kwok (1998) reached a similar conclusion. Earlier in 1936, Li, Chui and Chui suggested that academic work and ECA should not hinder each other. (Li, Chui and Chui, 1936) The EC (2000) states that the over-emphasis on public examinations and the academic focus limit the all-round development of the students. To narrow this gap, the survey respondents and interviewees in this study suggest nurturing a positive culture that is favourable to ECA development in schools. Taking Mainland China experience (HKEAMA, 1999) as an example, it would be helpful if HKED could announce a central policy to move schools from “examination-led education” to “quality education”. The solutions to the identified quality gaps will be discussed in Chapter 8.

## **Summary**

In this chapter, the results of the main study, including the survey, the interview and the case studies, are categorized, triangulated and analyzed with reference to both the conceptual and empirical literature. However, there is only limited empirical literature concerning ECA management in Hong Kong and this is the first territory-wide ECA quality management study in Hong Kong.

The various findings are first categorized into areas including leadership and planning, ECA culture, staff development and teacher competence, curriculum management, process management, outcome management, managing customer needs and satisfaction and external communication, and ECA quality. The results in the three methods of investigation are triangulated, compared and contrasted. Generalizations and interpretations are made. The findings in the open questions of the survey and the interviews are discussed. Issues concerning the obstacles hindering ECA service quality, reasons for the success of outstanding ECA items, and the innovative ECA items are also scrutinized. Finally, the author refers back to QAI in Hong Kong education management, and analyzes the overall quality of ECA services in the respondent schools by comparing the findings of the main study with the corresponding performance indicators suggested by HKED (1998a). The quality gaps in ECA management are also discussed and identified.

## Chapter 8      Conclusions

### Overview of findings

Most of the secondary schools in Hong Kong emphasized short-term goals rather than a long-term explicit vision. Most survey respondents also had a positive attitude towards student participation in ECA. Unfortunately, the unfavourable attitude of the school principal towards ECA limited the ECA development of some schools. Top management support was considered to be a vital issue in ECA management.

A significant number of the schools reported that the enthusiasm of teachers for ECA was weak. In some schools, teachers had an improper attitude towards ECA because they regarded ECA as extra duties. The examination-oriented culture in Hong Kong schools, and the traditional Chinese academic-focussed educational ideology, were found to be the sources of the unfavourable ECA culture. Students' heavy homework load, teachers' heavy teaching load, and the academic-focussed admission system of the Hong Kong universities exacerbated the situation. Only 7.4% of the respondent schools had regular ECA lessons within the school timetable and this result was very unsatisfactory when compared with the situation in Mainland China. Hence, there is a need to create a favourable ECA culture in schools and society.

School A focused on the continuous improvement of the teaching-learning process for students' overall development while School B put its emphasis on procedures and safety by applying the ISO9002 quality assurance system in its ECA management. ECA curriculum development, by integrating the formal academic curriculum and the

informal ECA curriculum, might be one of the solutions to enhance teachers' ECA commitment and to improve the adverse culture.

ECA quality was not treated seriously in more than half the schools. The experience of schools A and B indicate that a combination approach, involving both the quality of student learning through ECA and the management of the ECA process, might be a suitable approach to evaluate ECA quality in schools. A quality culture is the prerequisite.

Team work in both schools A and B was found to be successful in developing a team spirit and in encouraging collegiality among various departments of a school for ECA development. Most survey respondents had effective communication with the teachers in their schools.

The management training courses provided by the HKEAMA and the universities for the ECA masters/mistresses were sufficient. However, frontline teachers in most schools did not receive any ECA training. Hence, ECA staff development might be helpful in equipping teachers with the necessary skills and relevant ECA knowledge.

Only half of the schools had ECA staff appraisal programmes and teacher self-evaluation was the common practice in monitoring staff performance in ECA. From the experience of schools A and B, an ECA manual and other relevant documents were essential for process control to ensure ECA quality. Further, there was a need to have strategic planning in ECA management and the development of appropriate performance indicators to measure student achievement. The interviewees believed that the competence of the ECA masters/mistresses was the most important factor for

effective ECA management.

Most schools were providing a balanced variety of ECA. However, the resources and facilities for ECA were not sufficient in half of the respondent schools and hence the ECA development in the schools was limited. Most ECA masters/mistresses were satisfied with their resource management but more financial and human resource support is needed.

Most of the respondent schools had no remedial action for students with weaker ECA performance. This might be because ECA participation is voluntary in many Hong Kong schools and, from the results of this study, the use of information technology in ECA management is not widespread in schools. School A gave a good example of using computer software to manage student non-academic achievements.

Most of the respondent schools did not carry out market research to identify customer needs and had no formal procedure to evaluate customer satisfaction. Approximately half of the schools did not communicate sufficient ECA information to customers. However, most of the survey respondents were satisfied with their own ECA management and most of them were satisfied with the quality and quantity of ECA in their schools. Market research is essential to evaluate customer satisfaction and is therefore encouraged.

The findings in this study were compared with the performance indicators suggested for Quality Assurance Inspection. The strengths and weaknesses of the existing practices were identified and discussed in Chapter 7. Generally, schools performed well in the provision of different varieties of ECA and of equal opportunities in participation.



Schools performed satisfactorily in the areas concerning school policies, ECA goals and objectives, assignment of suitable personnel and students' ECA involvement. However, schools were weak in ECA resources support, in arrangements and scheduling, in monitoring and evaluation, and in advice and help for students.

From the survey, a reference list of categorized innovative ECA items was generated. Four quality gaps from Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990) and two additional ones from the author were identified. These gaps will be discussed later in this chapter.

### **Answers to the Research Questions**

Question: *What are the modes of practice in the management of ECA in various Hong Kong secondary schools?*

Answer: Most respondent schools did not have proper timetabled ECA lessons and the time after school was frequently occupied by supplementary lessons and so not free for ECA purposes. There were certain deficiencies in ECA management in some schools concerning areas such as strategic planning, setting of ECA standards and performance indicators, quality culture, use of information technology, collegiality and continuous improvement, staff development and teacher competence, monitoring and appraisal. There were a significant number of schools with no ECA curriculum planning, integration or development. Most respondent schools did not have any market research and did not have

formal procedures to evaluate client satisfaction. There were insufficient channels for most schools to communicate ECA information to the clients. However, most of the Hong Kong secondary schools performed particularly well in managing the ECA achievement of individual students, in providing a balance of types of ECA and in equal opportunity student participation.

Question: *Are there any factors hindering the development of ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools?*

Answer: Poor ECA culture, the major factor hindering the quality of ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools, might be a result of the dichotomy of the formal and informal curricula in Hong Kong school education. Society gives too much emphasis to academic attainment of the students and the significance of ECA in student development is sometimes overlooked, leading to an unfavourable ECA culture within schools and Hong Kong society. Furthermore, due to a lack of senior management commitment in schools, and the heavy academic workload of the teachers, the capacity for ECA development is limited. The scarcity of ECA resources in schools also made the situation for ECA development difficult.

Question: *Are the ECA masters/mistresses satisfied with the ECA educational services in Hong Kong secondary schools?*

**Answer:** More than half of the survey respondents and interviewees are satisfied with the quantity and quality of ECA in their schools. However, one may realize that, without market research and client satisfaction investigation, these findings might be unrealistic and reflect only the perspective of the respondents.

**Question:** *Are there any quality gaps in delivering ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools?*

**Answer:** There is a Customers' Expectation – Management-Perception Gap caused from insufficient market research on customer need and expectation; a Management Perception – Service-Quality Specification Gap arising from insufficient resources including human, physical and financial resources; a Service-Quality Specification – Service-Delivery Gap originating from the lack of teacher expertise, insufficient monitoring and evaluation; and a Service Delivery – External Communication Gap arising from inadequate publication of school ECA information to external stakeholders such as parents. There is also a Formal – Informal Curriculum Gap based on the fact that ECA is isolated from the formal curriculum; and an All-round Education – ECA priority Gap grounded in the examination-oriented culture in Hong Kong schools.

**Question:** *What Total Quality Management techniques can be applied to the management of ECA in school settings?*

**Answer:** The TQM principles of total involvement, a quality culture for continuous improvement, and the pursuit of customer satisfaction, can be applied to ECA management. Senior management commitment and staff development are two essentials for successful ECA quality improvement. Schools can apply Deming's model to improve ECA quality by focusing on the production process for (1) cost reduction and (2) an increase in ECA participation due to the improvement of ECA quality. Schools can improve their ECA quality by benchmarking practice at other schools.

**Question:** *Which Total Quality Education models are effective for the management of ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools?*

**Answer:** Curriculum development models can be applied to integrate the formal academic and the informal ECA curricula to overcome the unfavourable ECA culture. In Deming's 14 points (Table 2.3) and the strategic planning process and sequence proposed by Sallis (1993) (Figure 2.6), vision and values, market analysis, performance standards and indicators, staff development, evaluation and feedback are encouraged. Cheng (1996) (Figure 2.10) illustrates a matrix for assessing or monitoring education quality by setting indicators, for school self-evaluation and external evaluation, and for internal improvement and quality assurance.

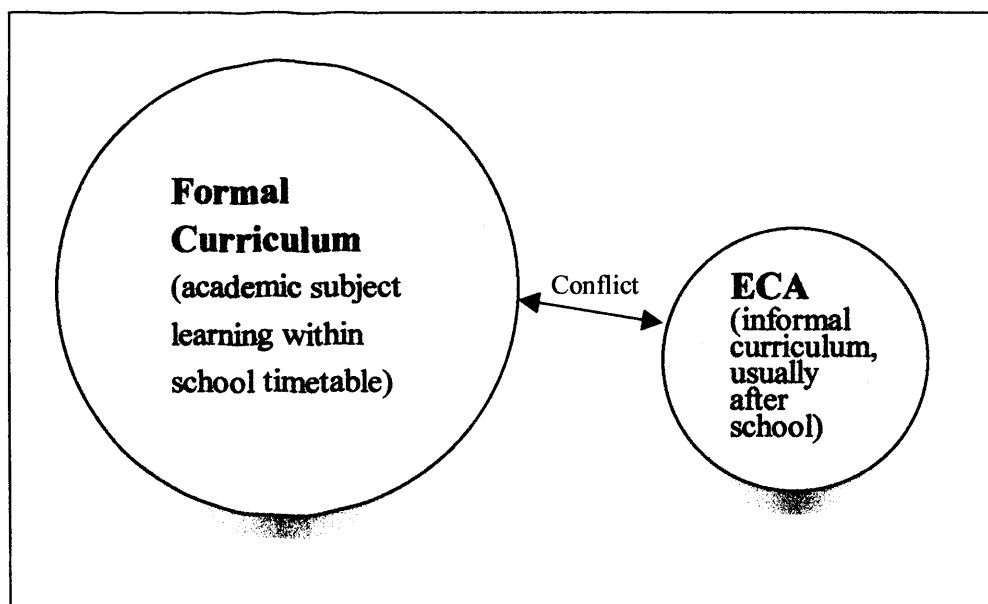
Deming's 14 points, the Sallis model and Cheng's matrix are effective for ECA quality management.

### **Extracurricular Activities Management Models**

Generalizing from the findings of this study, the author has developed a curriculum integration model for effective teaching and learning in both the academic and non-academic areas. A paradigm shift in the roles of ECA masters and mistresses, and a school-based ECA quality management model, are also suggested.

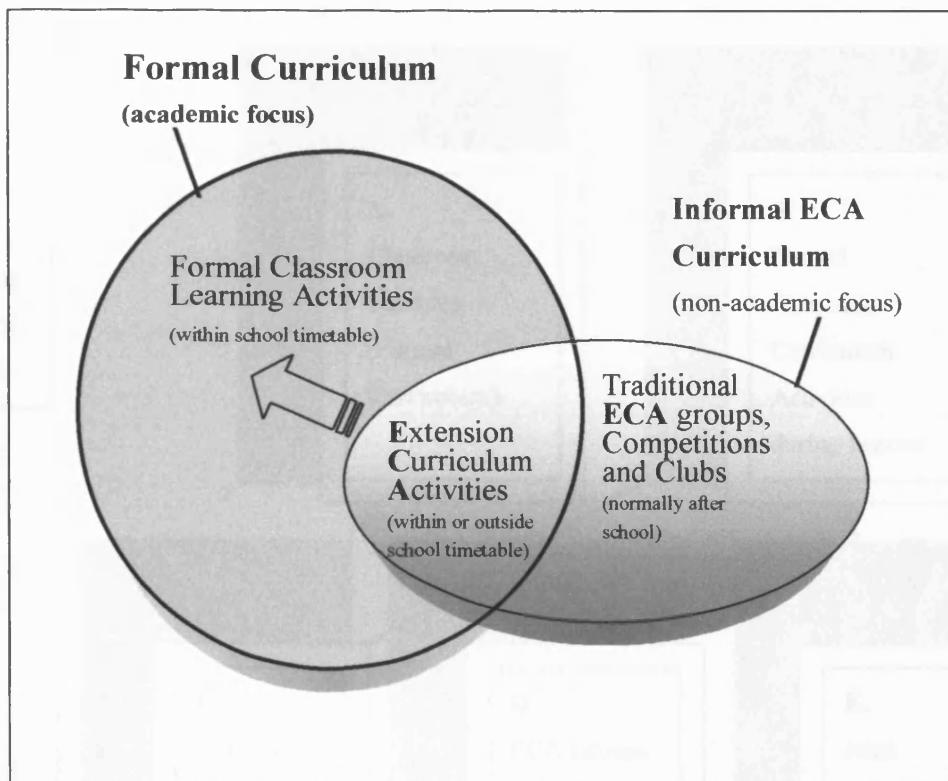
#### **ECA Curriculum Management and Development**

Figure 8.1 illustrates the possible conflicts created by the dichotomy of the existing formal curriculum and ECA.



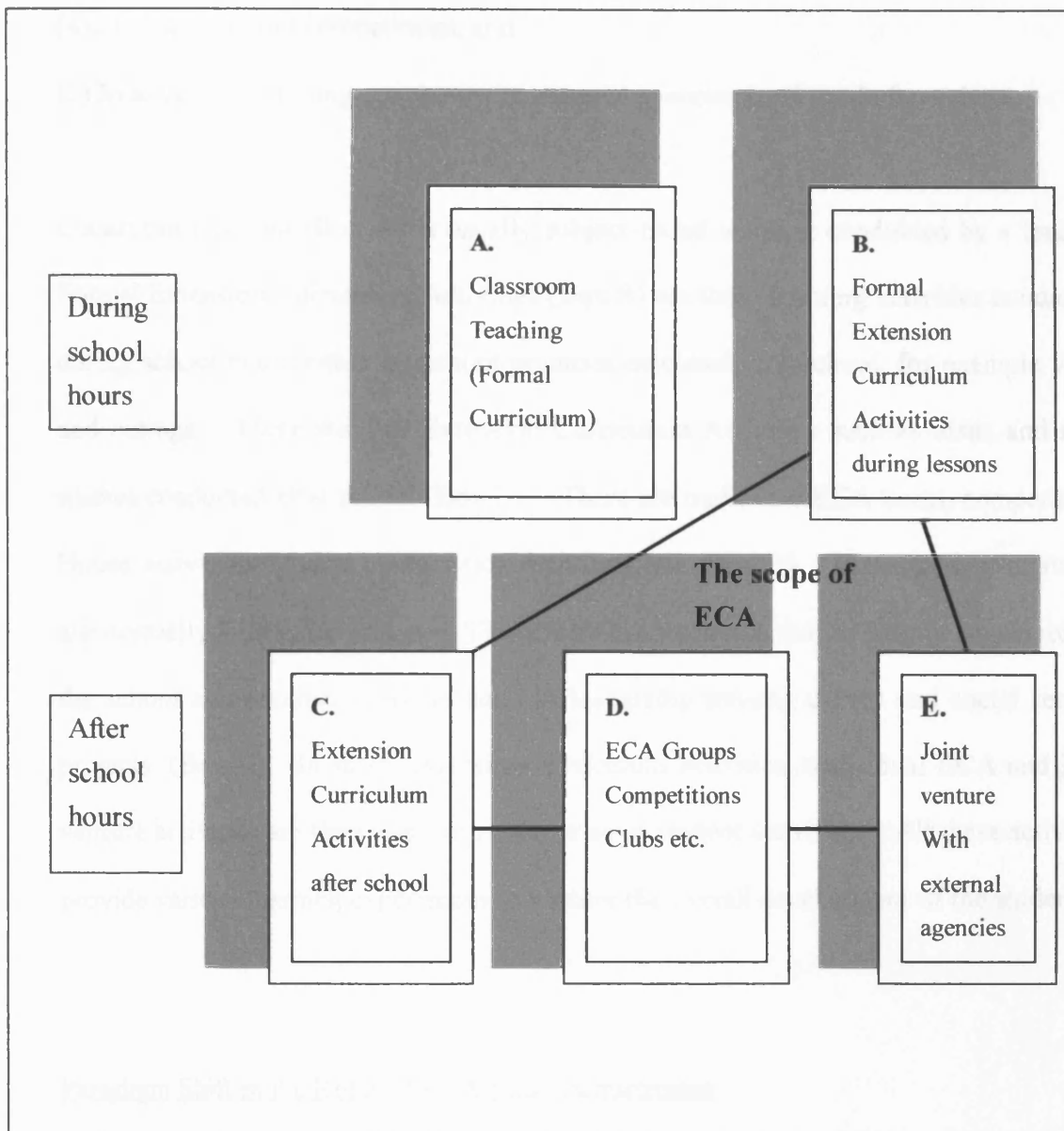
**Figure 8.1 The dichotomy of the existing formal curriculum and ECA**

The existing secondary school curriculum is separated into two major components: the formal curriculum and the informal curriculum. The formal curriculum refers to classroom academic learning which is examination-orientated and the attainment is easy to measure with well-developed examination syllabus and public examination results. The informal curriculum, consisting of the hidden curriculum and the ECA curriculum, is non-academic, intangible and student achievement is hard to measure. As universities emphasize students' academic attainment in their admission requirements, and pay very little attention to non-academic performance of the students, the informal ECA curriculum is usually overlooked in Hong Kong schools. As a result, there are conflicts in resource allocation for the two curricula. More resources such as time, human resources, financial support, equipment and facilities are allocated to the formal curriculum. As the findings of this study demonstrate, insufficient resources are allocated for ECA purposes. Therefore the author suggests gradually breaking down the barrier between the formal and informal curricula by applying curriculum integration techniques to prevent conflicts arising from the separation of traditional ECA from classroom learning. Figure 8.2 and Figure 8.3 illustrate how this could be done.



**Figure 8.2 The possible curriculum integration model for ECA management**

In Figure 8.2, the extension curriculum activities shown at the intersection of the two circles consist of the formal and informal aspects of the school curriculum and provide opportunities to integrate the academic and non-academic learning of the students. What schools have to do here is to make sure that the learning elements that are originally included in traditional ECA are covered in these extension curriculum activities.



**Figure 8.3 Suggested Model for Managing ECA curriculum**

Students' learning experience in schools can be classified into five categories (Boxes A to E in Figure 8.3):

- (1) Classroom teaching;
- (2) Formal extension curriculum activities within the school timetable;
- (3) Extension Curriculum activities;



(4) ECA groups and competitions; and

(5) Joint venture learning activities with external agencies conducted after school.

Classroom teaching (Box A) is usually subject-based learning conducted by a teacher. Formal Extension Curriculum Activities (Box B) are those learning activities conducted during school hours either on school premises or outside the school, for example visits and outings. There are also Extension Curriculum Activities such as visits and field studies conducted after school (Box C). There are traditional ECA items, competitions, House activities, Student Association activities etc. (Box D) These student activities are normally held after school. There are also student activities jointly organized by the school and external agencies such as leadership training camps and social service projects. (Box E) In short, extension curriculum activities, traditional ECA and joint venture activities are the three main categories of student activities. All these activities provide various learning experiences to nurture the overall development of the students.

#### Paradigm Shift in the Roles of ECA Masters/mistresses

Traditionally, ECA is separated from the formal curriculum. However, as suggested in EC(2000), the boundary of the formal curriculum activities and the informal ECA have become unclear. Many different out-of-classroom activities provide learning experiences for the students. There is a need to have a paradigm shift in the roles of ECA masters and mistresses so that they do not concentrate solely on the management of traditional ECA, but ensure that those essential learning elements previously provided in ECA are included in various types of student activities, regardless of whether these activities are formal curriculum activities, extension curriculum activities,

ECA or joint venture activities. One of the suggested roles of the ECA master and mistress is to coordinate all these activities (categories B to E in Figure 8.3) for the effective use of resources and the effectiveness of students' learning.

Table 8.1 illustrates the paradigm shift in the roles of ECA masters/mistresses for ECA management. In the new paradigm, ECA masters and mistresses do not confine themselves to the management of the informal ECA but instead adopt a wider perspective to manage all out-of-classroom student learning activities by applying curriculum integration and development techniques. Instead of providing training solely for the students, ECA masters and mistresses also need to perform a more active role in staff development. Other than managing the allocated resources, ECA masters and mistresses need to be more aggressive in the acquisition of resources for student activities. In the new paradigm, instead of marketing ECA to the students only, ECA masters and mistresses also need to carry out market research and to explore their market opportunities, to include all stakeholders of their schools, to obtain their support for student activities.

<b>Traditional roles</b>	<b>New roles</b>
Organizing interest clubs and activities for students after school	Organizing all out-of-classroom learning experience for students
Planning strategies, objectives and annual ECA programmes	Determining student activities objectives and conducting student activities curriculum planning and development
Coordinating allocated resources	Coordinating out-of-classroom learning activities, time-tabling of activities and bargaining for resources
Training of students	Staff development for teachers and training of students
Promoting ECA within the school	Market research and marketing student activities to internal and external customers; developing a favourable student activities culture

<b>Traditional roles</b>	<b>New roles</b>
Communication within the school and with external agencies to organize activities for students	Internal and external communication to provide learning experiences for the students, and to publicize student activities results to various constituencies
Monitoring the running of ECA	Setting up procedures, programme control and budgeting, monitoring the delivery of learning experiences and encouraging a quality culture for mutual improvement
Managing funds, facilities and equipment	Managing funds, facilities and equipment; Ensuring a reasonable amount of time for student activities
Appraising and evaluating the running of ECA	Appraising the performance of teachers and students in out-of-classroom learning activities and evaluating the effectiveness of the activities curriculum; organizing internal and external audits
Recording of ECA achievements and awards	Recording and documentation of the activities, student participation and achievements

**Table 8.1      Paradigm shift in the roles of ECA masters/mistresses**

### The ECA Quality Management Model

The proposed ECA management model (Figure 8.4), ‘grounded’ in the findings of this study, addresses the problems concerning:

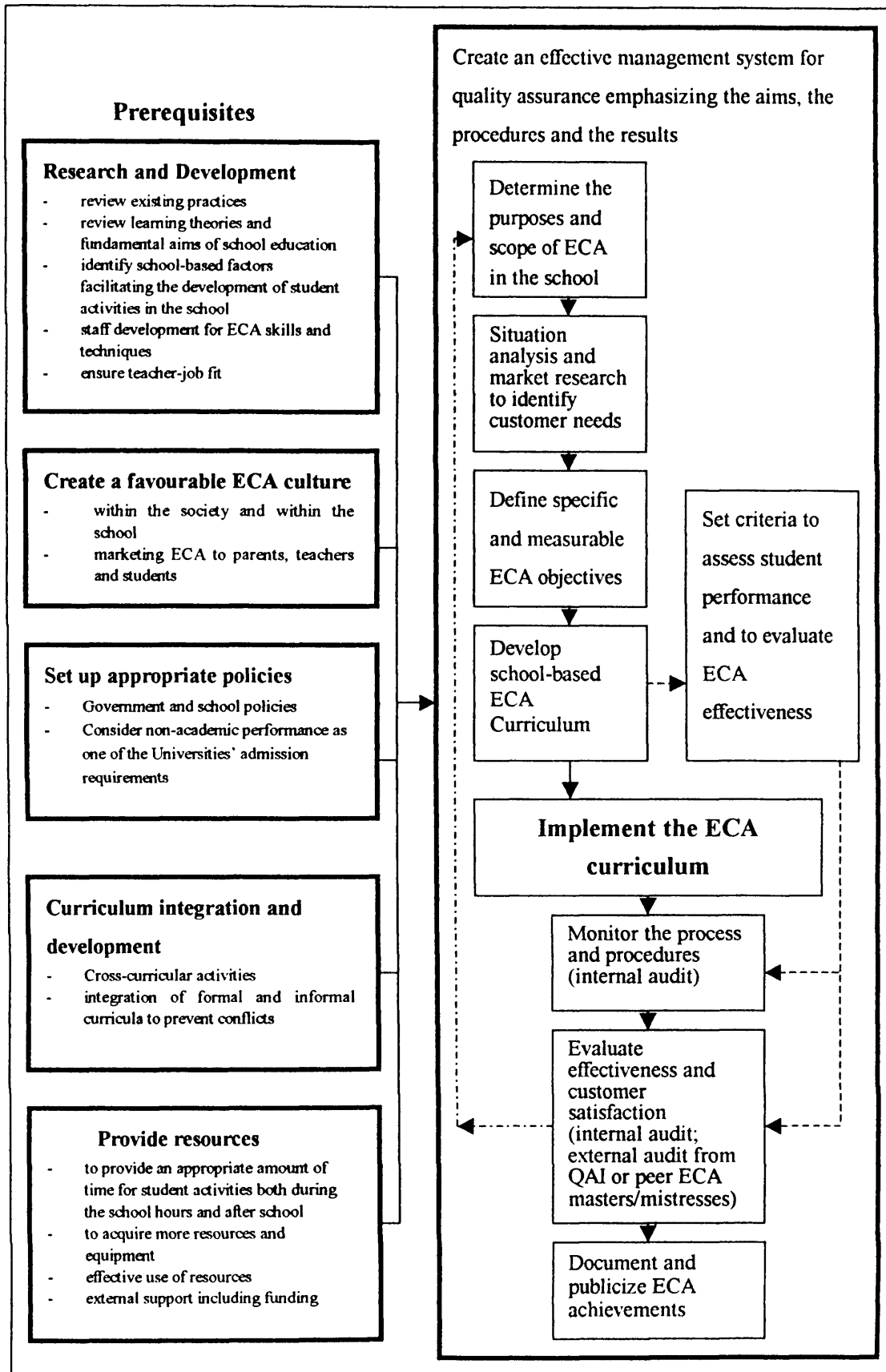
- (1) the existing poor ECA culture within schools and society;
- (2) the ECA constraints arising from the academic-focussed and examination-orientated education in fulfilling universities’ admission requirements;
- (3) the lack of ECA skills in teachers and the unsatisfactory person-job fit in assigning ECA duties to teachers;

- (4) inefficient and ineffective areas of ECA management;
- (5) conflicts in resource allocation due to the separation of the formal and informal curricula; and
- (6) the quality gaps identified.

The model (Figure 8.4) shows five areas which are vital to successful ECA management. They are Research and Development, Favourable ECA Culture, Appropriate ECA Policies, Curriculum Integration and Development, and Provision of Resources.

### *Research and Development*

As suggested in Sallis (1993), the model suggests carrying out school-based research such as a SWOT analysis to review the existing ECA practices to see which ECA practices are of quality and effective, which ECA areas need to improve. The school ECA masters/mistresses need to review learning theories and the fundamental aims of school education so as to bring theory and practice together. The ECA masters and mistresses also need to re-examine the school mission and identify those factors which are favourable for the development of student activities in their schools. Staff development should be carried out to develop necessary ECA skills and techniques for the teachers. The ECA management needs to ensure that there is a teacher-ECA fit within the school. Teacher-ECA fit here means that the ECA duties allocated to individual teachers match the skills and interests of the teacher.



**Figure 8.4 Proposed quality management model for effective school-based ECA management**

## *Culture*

Society-wide and school-wide ECA culture are essential for the development of ECA quality in schools. The school needs to market ECA to the parents, teachers and students by explaining to them the importance of ECA for the all-round development of the children. ECA marketing is especially important in Hong Kong for its school culture is too examination-oriented where the non-academic achievement of the students is not emphasized and is rarely counted in universities' admission processes.

## *Appropriate Policies*

Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham (1994a) encourage the setting up of appropriate policy for quality improvement. The government needs to implement policies to encourage schools to conduct more ECA for the students by providing more resources and encouraging curriculum reform. The universities need to move further towards the direction of considering students' non-academic performance in their admission requirements. The schools also need to set up policies to cultivate an ECA culture in schools so as to bridge the All-round Education – ECA priority Gap arising from the academic-focussed and examination-oriented Hong Kong school culture.

## *Curriculum Integration and Development*

The selection criteria in the universities' admission procedures, and the limited supply of university admission places, also strengthen the importance of the

examination-oriented formal curriculum. As a result, the informal curriculum, which is intangible and where the students' achievements are hard to measure, is overlooked. This is the Formal – Informal Curriculum Gap identified by the author. Deming (1988) suggests to break down barriers between departments. Therefore, to overcome the curriculum problem, schools are recommended (1) to encourage more cross-curricular student activities, and (2) to integrate the formal and informal curricula to prevent conflicts.

### *Resource Provision*

The author also identifies the Management Perception – Service Quality Specification Gap as the provision of resources for ECA is insufficient in schools to meet customer needs. Therefore, schools are encouraged to keep a reasonable balance of time, during the school hours and after school, between classroom learning and ECA. Schools also need to provide more resources and equipment for ECA to meet the development needs of the students and the expectations of various stakeholders. To reduce cost as suggested in Eriksen (1995), ECA masters/mistresses further need to evaluate the effectiveness of using allocated resources and to look for more external support, including resources and funding. Schools are recommended to scrutinize the workload of the teachers and to reduce their unnecessary non-teaching duties so that they can have time and capacity for ECA.

### *Effective Management Model for assuring ECA quality*

In schools with grounded ECA research and development, with favourable ECA culture and appropriate ECA policies, with adequate resources and curriculum development, the management of ECA may not be of high quality, in terms of the effectiveness, efficiency and economy, without an effective total quality management system. There are nine management components in the suggested model. The suggested ECA quality assurance management model requires a whole-school approach in considering ECA as an effective and significant component of the whole school curriculum for students' overall development. ECA quality, including the quality of individual ECA and its management, should be assured during the whole ECA process. In TQM principles, in terms of "totalness" (Rhodes, 1992), ECA quality is everybody's responsibility within the school. The model design takes into consideration the strategic planning process and sequence suggested by Sallis (1993).

#### (i) Determination of the purposes and scope of ECA in the school

The term ECA is a loose concept and its definition varies from school to school, from person to person. Some schools refer to ECA as all student activities outside classroom organized by the school members. Some confine ECA only to the interest clubs and student activities after school. Therefore a school first needs to determine the scope, the purpose, the vision and values (Sallis, 1993) of ECA before identifying strategies for quality ECA management.



(ii) Situation analysis and market research

The model emphasizes school-based determination of ECA purposes to meet school needs according to the research and development results. To determine the aims of ECA, a school needs to consider the school mission set in the school development plan, the school's context and characteristics. The purpose and aims of ECA may indicate the direction for action for all the teachers and students. Sometimes SWOT analysis may be necessary to identify the existing strengths and weaknesses, and to identify possible opportunities and threats in a school. (Sallis, 1993) Literature, including government documents and relevant resources, may provide useful information in the earlier stage of ECA aims formation.

Since quality is determined by the customers (Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry, 1990; Tam 1995), and the needs of the customers are of great importance (Deming, 1987), a school needs to make sure that the aims of its ECA are coincident with the needs and expectations of the various constituencies (Cheng, 1996). Therefore, schools are recommended to carry out market research to identify customer needs. The market research may include an investigation into students' needs and interests, teachers' views and parents' expectation, tertiary institutions' admission requirements and future employers' expectations. This stage is essential to bridge the Customers' Expectation – Management-Perception Gap (the understanding gap) identified in this study.

### (iii) Definition of specific and measurable ECA objectives

Quality performance is a strategic process in evaluating organization quality. (Sallis, 1993) Once the purposes and the scope of ECA are defined, with the findings of the market research, specific ECA objectives can then be identified. Schools are suggested to set criteria to assess students' ECA performance and develop smart, measurable, achievable, realistic, timed objectives and performance indicators. This whole-school ECA vision formation process is important for achieving staff consensus. These objectives should be introduced to the students, teachers and also the parents.

### (iv) Development of school-based ECA curricula

Deming (1998) suggests breaking down barriers between departments. By re-examining the formal and informal curricula, a school can identify those learning experiences which are best conducted through ECA, regardless of whether they are in the form of extension activities or co-curricular activities of the formal curriculum, in the form of the traditional ECA items or in the form of joint ventures with other agencies. These learning experiences form an integrated ECA curriculum which is a component of the whole school curriculum. The development of an ECA curriculum can bridge the All-round Education – ECA priority Gap.

### (v) Implementation of the ECA curriculum

When carrying out the ECA curriculum in schools, to minimize unnecessary conflicts arising from the traditional separation of the formal and informal curricula, schools are recommended not to over-emphasize whether learning is formal or informal. To

facilitate the transformation (Deming, 1988), there is a need to have a paradigm shift in the roles of the ECA masters/mistresses in schools. The ECA masters/mistresses of schools, instead of simply following instructions to carry out ECA coordination tasks, have to develop a school-based ECA curriculum to ensure that all the necessary learning experiences that cannot be introduced in formal classrooms are included in the various forms of student activities.

(vi) Setting assessment and evaluation criteria and the development of quality and performance indicators

A school must determine the criteria for the assessment and evaluation of its ECA services (Sallis, 1993). Quality indicators and performance indicators should be developed and derived from the school's ECA objectives and the ECA curriculum. All the staff and students within the school need to recognize these indicators so as to develop a favourable culture for pursuing ECA quality. The indicators need to be cautiously selected and used skillfully with well-designed procedures and regulations laid down in the school's ECA manual to minimize the Management Perception – Service Quality Specification Gap (the design gap).

(vii) Monitoring the ECA process and procedures

Internal audit is essential for quality assurance. To monitor the ECA process, a school needs to have an ECA manual listing the regulations and procedures for the teachers and students either for quality assurance purposes or for safety precautions. All the quality areas, including the curriculum quality and the teaching quality (Shavelson, 1987) should be monitored. Other than setting appraisal procedures for the internal

staff, it is even more important to set up assessment and evaluation procedures for contracted-out ECA items. Contracted-out ECA items here refer to those student activities jointly organized by the school and other agencies, or the student activities solely depending on outside bodies to maintain its functions. Since the zero-defect concept of quality management (Crosby, 1979; 1984) cannot be applied in ECA, formative assessments of ECA performance of individual items can find out the discrepancies and remedial actions can be followed immediately to ensure ECA quality and safety. This process is essential to minimize the Service-Quality Specification – Service-Delivery Gap (the delivery gap).

(viii) Evaluation of ECA effectiveness and customer satisfaction

Both school self-evaluation and external evaluation are essential in assessing education quality. (Cheng, 1996) The quality of the ECA services of a school depends on the effectiveness of the delivery of the ECA curriculum and the customers' perception of the quality. A school needs to evaluate the effectiveness of its ECA curriculum using the specific objectives and quality indicators developed during the curriculum development stage. The evaluation can be in the form of internal audit or externally in the form of QAI from the Education Department. Peer ECA masters/mistresses are recommended to carry out external audits, for the external audits are valuable opportunities for sharing experience and fellow ECA masters/mistresses are the professionals who are in the appropriate position to contribute advice and suggestions. Customer satisfaction can be evaluated through research. This summative evaluation process can compare the results of the ECA programmes with the indicators and objectives to review the overall ECA services of the school.

(ix) Documentation and publicity of ECA results to customers

A school also needs to document its ECA services for either internal auditing or external inspections. The school should develop a good system of recording and filing. The functions of all the ECA in the schools should be documented, including the activities of individual ECA items, the ECA achievements and participation of individual students, the ECA awards of the school, the particulars of the extension curriculum activities, the details of the joint venture activities, the minutes of the ECA committee, the results of the assessment and evaluation, and the year plan and report of the ECA department.

Customers' perception of a school's ECA service is significant as ECA quality is determined by the customers. External communication is therefore important. (Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry, 1990) A school needs to publicize its ECA results to its customers including students and parents. This is important to enhance the communication between the school and the customers in respect of ECA. Some customers, for example the parents, who are not the first-hand ECA service receivers, may not fully understand what is going on with the ECA department of the school. By publicizing ECA results and enhancing external communication, parents and other stakeholders can recognize the ECA achievement of the students and realize the constraints why sometimes the school ECA department cannot fulfil their expectations, for example school priorities and resource constraints. By considering the achievement and constraints, the customers can make a fair judgement of the ECA quality of a school. This is an important process to bridge the Service-Delivery – External Communication Gap (the communication gap).

## **The Significance of the Study**

This was the first research into management quality of ECA in the Hong Kong secondary school context and was a territory-wide research in which the whole population of Hong Kong secondary schools was involved. This was the first time survey of a large number of frontline ECA masters/mistresses to examine their perceptions of ECA management quality in their schools. This study further challenged the existing examination-oriented and academic-focussed Hong Kong school culture that might be created by the dichotomy of the formal and informal curricula in Hong Kong school education.

Since this was the first research into ECA quality in Hong Kong, the findings of the study helped to identify the strengths and weaknesses in ECA quality management. During the elite interviews, the suggestions from the ECA experts who have both territorial and international experience, brought new insights and opportunities for the improvement of ECA practice in Hong Kong secondary schools.

Further, with the support of the HKEAMA, a high return rate was achieved. The response rate was 80.0% of the ECA masters/mistresses actually in post at the time of the survey. Babbie (1990) considers this response rate to be very good. Therefore, the results of this study reflects the actual situation of ECA management in Hong Kong secondary schools and the author could generalize appropriate conclusions from the findings.

In the two case studies, one of the schools was the only school adopting the extension curriculum approach in student activities management while the other was the unique

ISO school in Hong Kong. The new practices in these two extraordinary schools provided valuable experience for the reflection of ECA management in other schools.

The result of a list of innovative ECA items in this study provided further insight for secondary schools to enrich their existing ECA programmes. The results of the survey, interviews and case studies in this study produced a collection of useful data for schools to compare their practices with those in other schools or to benchmark outstanding ECA practices.

This study gives insights for ECA practitioners including school principals, ECA masters/mistresses and school teachers, by searching for answers to the research questions. New models are suggested for improving ECA management in Hong Kong secondary schools.

## **Limitations**

The study has the following limitations:

1. The research was limited to the government, aided and private grammar secondary schools in Hong Kong. No international schools, no primary schools and no evening schools were involved in this study. Therefore the findings could only be applied to the categories of schools involved in this study.
2. The survey respondents and the interviewees were the ECA masters/mistresses of the secondary schools. Therefore these findings were from the perspective of the ECA masters/mistresses.

3. This study was not designed to investigate the ECA quality perception of the internal customers (such as teachers, parents and students) and the external customers (such as employers and higher education institutes). Therefore the findings might not reflect the actual quality perception of the internal and external customers.
4. Due to the limitations of time for a single researcher only two case studies into schools with innovative and distinctive student activities and management practices were carried out. There may be some other schools with extraordinary ECA management practices.

## **Recommendations**

### **(a) Recommendations for improving daily ECA practice**

#### **(i) *Recommendations to the Education Department***

Instead of discussing “all-round education” as a slogan, the ED is recommended to consolidate the suggestion raised in EC(2000) to set in place procedures and policies to facilitate the transformation of the examination-oriented and academic-focussed school culture to the one which is favourable to ECA and the non-academic achievement of the students.

The ED is recommended to publicize the non-academic achievements of the schools, especially in the areas concerning ECA. The ED needs to develop a set of ECA performance indicators or quality indicators, and a general measuring instrument for



ECA performance of a school. More support, in terms of funding, equipment and human resources, should be provided to schools for ECA purposes.

(ii) *Recommendations to the School Principals and School Authorities*

Senior staff commitment is essential for ECA quality. Schools are recommended not to over-emphasize academic performance but to enhance the all-round development of the students by providing more resources and support for ECA development. Schools are recommended to re-examine teachers' workload so as to release time and capacity for teachers to conduct ECA. Schools also need to develop a quality school culture so that a quality ECA culture can be created.

Schools are suggested to restructure the school timetable to provide more opportunities for the students to participate in ECA. A block-release timetable for student activities is necessary to facilitate student ECA participation.

Schools are also recommended to develop an effective and efficient ECA management system and also a quality assurance system for ECA management. Schools are also recommended to benchmark each other for the improvement of their ECA services. Schools are suggested to provide staff training programmes to develop necessary skills for teachers to conduct quality ECA for the students.

School-based ECA curriculum development is needed and schools are recommended to integrate the existing formal and informal curricula so as to eliminate conflicts and to bridge the priority gap between the two curricula.

(iii) *Recommendations to Hong Kong Extracurricular Activities Masters' Association*

HKEAMA is expected to take a leading role in education reform to create a favourable culture in schools and society for the non-academic development of the students. HKEAMA can be a facilitating agent for schools to exchange innovative ideas and practical experience concerning ECA. More seminars, workshops and conferences for ECA masters/mistresses organized by the HKEAMA can help the improvement of ECA management in schools.

More research into different ECA management aspects is also recommended. More publications in the areas of ECA management can help to document successful and innovative ECA practices and provide information for schools to improve their ECA services. HKEAMA is recommended to organize more international education visits to let ECA practitioners have wider perspectives and more insights into ECA management.

(iv) *Recommendations to teacher training institutions*

As “*comprehensive learning experience through formal, non-formal and informal modes*” is encouraged (EC, 2000), leading to an increase in the number of student activities in schools, there is an urgent need to provide initial teacher training in the areas of ECA management for the student-teachers and to provide refresher training programmes for serving ECA masters/mistresses and teachers.

Teacher training institutions in Hong Kong need to include a core curriculum to train teachers in ECA management so as to equip teachers with necessary skills for

conducting ECA in the schools and to promote a positive attitude towards ECA.

(v) *Recommendations to ECA masters/mistresses*

ECA masters and mistresses are encouraged to improve their management skills and to widen their perspectives by participating in the existing professional development courses jointly organized by the HKEAMA and the universities.

ECA masters and mistresses are suggested to have a paradigm shift in their roles. Rather than simply coordinating various after-school student activities, ECA masters and mistresses are strongly recommended to take a positive role in ECA curriculum development by relating ECA to classroom learning to form an integrated curriculum for student all-round development.

(vi) *Recommendations to tertiary education institutions*

Tertiary education institutions are recommended to consider both the academic and non-academic achievements of the students in their admission procedures so as to help secondary schools to develop a positive culture towards ECA in this examination-oriented Hong Kong education system.

(b) Recommendations for further research

(i) *Research on Quality Management of ECA in Primary Schools*

Students' perception of ECA quality may be affected by their past ECA experience when they were in primary schools. Therefore further research on the quality of ECA in primary schools is recommended. The results of the suggested research can be used, together with those of this study, to further identify the strengths and weaknesses of the present ECA practices in primary and secondary schools, and to seek opportunities for improvement.

(ii) *The development of non-academic achievement indicators and measuring instruments to assess the ECA performance of individual students in primary and secondary schools*

Both primary and secondary schools are recommended to carry out school-based research to develop appropriate performance indicators for assessing and recording individual students' ECA performance. Researchers are recommended to investigate the possibility of developing a general and reliable measuring instrument for assessing students' non-academic performance.

(iii) *Research on customer satisfaction concerning the ECA services in schools*

This study only views ECA quality from the perspective of the ECA masters and mistresses without taking account of the perception of internal and external customers. As quality relates to the satisfaction of internal and external constituencies (Cheng,

1996) and should be defined by the customers, schools are recommended to carry out research to find out customers' expectations (Carman, 1990) and perceptions of the ECA services in the schools.

## **Summary**

The findings of this study show that the existing ECA management structure in Hong Kong secondary schools is rather loose and there are deficiencies in quality areas such as culture development, market analysis, resource and support, strategic planning, monitoring and appraisal, and quality assurance. After analyzing the findings of the survey, the interviews and the case studies, some quality gaps including the understanding gap, the design gap, the delivery gap, the communication gap, the curriculum gap, and the All-round Education – ECA Priority gap were identified. The author advises ECA masters/mistresses to have a paradigm shift from the traditional role of being the coordinators of student activities to a more positive role of being curriculum developers and strategic managers. A model for curriculum integration and a comprehensive model for ECA management are proposed for the improvement of ECA quality in Hong Kong secondary schools. The author concludes with recommendations to various parties on improving ECA management and proposals for further research.

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## **APPENDIX I:**

### **The English translation of the covering letter of the questionnaire survey**

8 November 1998

Dear fellow Extracurricular Activities Masters/Mistresses,

#### A Study on the Management of Extracurricular Activities (ECA) in Hong Kong Secondary Schools

I am the Activities Master of Lok Sin Tong Young Ko Hsiao Lin Secondary School and also the Honorable Secretary of the Hong Kong Extracurricular Activities Masters' Association (HKEAMA). I am now conducting an ECA management study in Hong Kong secondary schools. This is also part of my academic thesis in the Doctorate of Education programme at the University of Leicester, United Kingdom. The aim of this study is to evaluate the ECA management quality in Hong Kong secondary schools and to search for approaches to enhance ECA management effectiveness.

This study is fully supported by the HKEAMA. Your suggestions and experience in ECA management are vital to the success of this study. Your contribution in the questionnaire is much appreciated.

In the questionnaire, there are parts A and B. Part A is designed to have a comprehensive review of the general ECA management issues in Hong Kong secondary schools. Part B is a benchmarking study to identify outstanding ECA examples in schools and their factors of success. Part B is also attempting to collect innovative activity items from various schools. After the analysis, information collected in Part B of the questionnaire will be publicized in appropriate seminars for benchmarking purposes. All the information provided in the questionnaires, including your particulars and your school information, will be kept confidential. The questionnaires will be destroyed immediately after the analysis, therefore the confidentiality is assured.

You are requested to return the filled questionnaire on or before 28 November 1998 using the returned stamped envelop to

Mr. TSANG Wing Hong,  
The Activities Master,  
Lok Sin Tong Young Ko Hsiao Lin Secondary School,  
Area 2A, Lung Hang Estate, Shatin, N.T.

For further information, please feel free to contact me at 7666 6666 (2228) or email me at [tw2228@netvigator.com](mailto:tw2228@netvigator.com). The attached metallic bookmark is a souvenir to thank your assistance and participation in this study. Thank you.

Yours faithfully,  
TSANG Wing Hong (signed)

## **APPENDIX II:**

### **The English Translation of the Supporting Letter from the Chairman of the Hong Kong Extracurricular Activities Masters' Association**

2 November 1998

Dear Extracurricular Activities Masters/Mistresses,

Hong Kong society begins to realize the importance of extracurricular activities (ECA) to the development of the students. Workers in the education sector also recognize the educational value of ECA. Recently, the Education Commission, in its Report Number 7 (Quality School Education), encourages quality school management. ECA as an important element of the school curriculum in the secondary and primary education, ECA management strategies should not be overlooked. Quality ECA management can enhance efficiency and reduce teachers' workload, and at the same time, improve the effectiveness of a school.

The Honorable Secretary of HKEAMA, Mr. TSANG Wing Hong, is now conducting a study in the management of ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools. His study is fully supported by our Association. I am now writing to encourage all fellow ECA masters/mistresses to participate in his study, to fill in the questionnaires and to provide him valuable suggestions concerning ECA management. For further information, please contact Mr. TSANG directly at 7666 6666 (2228).

Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Yours,

TIN Chi Keung (signed)  
Chairman  
Hong Kong Extracurricular  
Activities Masters' Association

## APPENDIX III

### Interview schedule

Date: April 1999

#### Area of investigation:

Quality Management of Extracurricular Activities in Hong Kong Secondary Schools

#### Interview questions:

1. What criteria do you use to assess the quality of ECA of a certain school?
2. How can you describe the management quality of ECA in your school?  
Good / Average / Poor?
  - **If the answer is Good,**
    - Why do you consider it to be good?
    - What are the strengths?
    - Are there any opportunities for further improvement?
    - Are there any threats?
  - **If the answer is Average,**
    - Why do you consider it to be average?
    - Are there any strengths and weaknesses?
    - Are there any opportunities for improvement?
    - Are there any threats?
  - **If the answer is Poor,**
    - Why do you consider it to be poor?
    - What are the weaknesses?
    - Are there any opportunities for improvement?
    - Are there any threats?
3. Are you satisfied with the overall ECA management quality of the secondary schools in Hong Kong?      Satisfied / Average / Not Satisfied
  - What are the existing good practices?
  - Which areas should be improved and how to improve them?
4. Other comments.

#### APPENDIX IV: The Questionnaire (English Translation Copy)

# A Study on the Quality Management of Extracurricular Activities (ECA) in Hong Kong Secondary Schools

Questionnaire Design: TSANG Wing Hong  
11.98

## PART 1

## Section A: Background Information

Please put a ✓ in the appropriate box.

1. School type    (1) Government School    ☐

                      (2) Aided School    ☐

                      (3) Private School    ☐
2. What is your perception of teachers' recognition of the educational value of ECA within the school?

(1) strong recognition    ☐

(2) average recognition    ☐

(3) weak recognition    ☐
3. What is your perception of students' recognition of the educational value of ECA within the school?

(1) strong recognition    ☐

(2) average recognition    ☐

(3) weak recognition    ☐
4. How long have you been the ECA master/mistress of the school?

(1) 1-3 years    ☐

(2) 4-6 years    ☐

(3) 7-9 years    ☐

(4) 10 years or above    ☐
5. Do you have any ECA management training?

(1) Yes    ☐

(2) No    ☐
6. Are there any regular ECA lessons allocated in the normal school time-table?

(1) No such arrangement    ☐

(2) Yes.\* \_\_\_\_ lesson(s) i.e. total \* \_\_\_\_ hours    ☐  
# per week / 6-day cycle / 7 day-cycle

(3) Others, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐

\* *please insert figures*

# delete where appropriate

## Section B: Management of Extracurricular Activities

Please circle the most appropriate answer.

Note: Y=Yes; N=No

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Is there a clear and explicit vision in the management of ECA within the school?  | 1. Y / N  |
| 2. Does the ECA management team shape a shared value that reflect and promote school vision?   | 2. Y / N  |
| 3. Does the ECA department have clear educational goals?   | 3. Y / N  |
| 4. Is the ECA programme in your school a balanced one?   | 4. Y / N  |
| 5. Is there any staff professional development for ECA management in your school?  | 5. Y / N  |
| 6. Is there any evaluation for the whole ECA programme in your school?   | 6. Y / N  |
| 7. Are there any records of individual student progress in ECA?  | 7. Y / N  |
| 8. Is there any ECA curriculum development?  | 8. Y / N  |
| 9. Is there any formal assessment procedures for student achievement in ECA?   | 9. Y / N  |
| 10. Is there any detailed record of school ECA achievement?  | 10. Y / N |
| 11. Is there any remedial action for students with weaker performance in ECA?  | 11. Y / N |
| 12. Is there any system for dealing with complaints and appeals?   | 12. Y / N |
| 13. Are there adequate ECA resources and facilities in your school?  | 13. Y / N |
| 14. Is there sufficient training programme for teachers within the school to help them to conduct ECA?                                       | 14. Y / N |
| 15. Is there any ECA partnership development with external agencies?   | 15. Y / N |
| 16. Is there any marketing research to find out students' expectation and interests before planning for the ECA programme within the school? | 16. Y / N |
| 17. Are there any formal procedures to evaluate client (students, teachers and parents) satisfaction?  | 17. Y / N |
| 18. Does your school provide sufficient information to the staff, parents and students concerning the recent ECA development of the school?  | 18. Y / N |
| 19. Is there any staff appraisal programme to appraise teachers' performance in conducting ECA?  | 19. Y / N |
| 20. Are the teaching staff within the school committed to ECA quality?   | 20. Y / N |
| 21. Is there any recognition of good performance for staff concerning ECA?   | 21. Y / N |
| 22. Is there any cooperation across different departments within the school concerning ECA?  | 22. Y / N |
| 23. Is the ECA management emphasizing on measurable goals and results?   | 23. Y / N |
| 24. Is every student having equal opportunity to participate in ECA?   | 24. Y / N |
| 25. Are there sufficient ECA reference materials in the school library?  | 25. Y / N |
| 26. Is there sufficient financial support from school regarding ECA?   | 26. Y / N |
| 27. Is the communication between ECA management and the teachers effective?  | 27. Y / N |
| 28. Is there any Home-School partnership in the development of ECA?  | 28. Y / N |

For the following factors regarding the management of ECA, please circle the most suitable number. (There are 6 levels, 1 being the lowest, 6 being the highest)

- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. To what extent are teachers and pupils involved in the planning of ECA?   | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 2. To what extent do you believe teachers in the school are concerned with the school's ECA objectives?  | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 3. How do you rate the motivation of the teachers in conducting ECA?   | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 4. How do you rate the participation of the students in ECA?   | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 5. What expectations does your school have of your students' achievement in ECA?   | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 6. To what extent is the ECA department sensitive to the needs of the students?  | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 7. To what extent can the ECA programme fulfil students' need?   | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 8. To what extent does your school make best use of staff's skill and experience?  | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 9. To what extent does your school use information technology to assist ECA management?  | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 10. To what extent does your school allow flexibility for teachers to organize ECA to meet clients' needs?   | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 11. To what extent are your students satisfied with the ECA programme provided in your school?   | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 12. To what extent are your teachers satisfied with the ECA programme provided in your school?   | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 13. To what extent is the ECA programme reinforcing classroom learning?  | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 14. To what extent is the ECA programme promoting students' personal development?  | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 15. To what extent is the ECA programme facilitating the teaching of those skills that may present difficulties in a formal classroom setting?   | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 16. To what extent is the ECA programme inculcating certain values that may present difficulties in a formal classroom setting?  | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 17. To what extent is the ECA programme promoting students' social development by broadening their social experiences, the practice of social skills and internalization of moral and social values? | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 18. To what extent is the ECA programme making school life more challenging and interesting?   | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 19. To what extent does the ECA department meet its promises to clients (students, teachers and parents)?  | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 20. To what extent is the ECA programme reflecting the responsibility for the community and environmental awareness?   | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 21. To what extent are the allocated resources effectively used?   | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |
| 22. To what extent does the ECA management commit to ECA service quality?  | <i>little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot</i> |

23. To what extent are the goals met effectively and efficiently? *little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot*
24. How efficient is the ECA department response to the feedback and the complaints from the internal clients (students and teachers)? *very slow 1 2 3 4 5 6 very fast*
25. What is the difference between the planned and actual performance of the ECA programme in your school? *little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot*
26. To what extent do teachers within the school work towards the school mission through ECA? *little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot*
27. To what extent can the internal clients (students and teachers) contact the ECA top management? *very easy 1 2 3 4 5 6 very hard*
28. To what extent is the school encouraging student learning through ECA? *little 1 2 3 4 5 6 a lot*

### Section C: Other Information

1. Are you satisfied with the overall ECA management of your school?

- (1) Very satisfied ☐
- (2) Satisfied ☐
- (3) Average ☐
- (4) Dissatisfied ☐
- (5) Very dissatisfied ☐

2. By considering both the quality and quantity of ECA in your school, how do you rate the overall ECA service provided by your school?

- (1) Excellent ☐
- (2) Good ☐
- (3) Average ☐
- (4) Poor ☐
- (5) Very poor ☐

3. As an ECA master/mistress, what are the obstacles, if any, affecting the service quality of ECA in your school?

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4. Do you have any suggestions for improving ECA management in schools?

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\*\*\* END OF PART 1 \*\*\*



## PART 2: Benchmarking

Part 2 of the questionnaire aims at identifying outstanding examples of ECA in Hong Kong secondary schools and at providing further ECA information for schools to learn from each others. Your assistance in filling in this Part is important. Information provided in this Part will be summarized and published later as a useful benchmarking tool for all Hong Kong secondary schools.

1. Please list the top ECA item that you, as an ECA master/mistress, consider to be the most successful one in your school?

Name of the most successful activities in your school (Please fill in the name of the ECA group or the individual event)			
Reasons for choosing this activity as the most successful ECA (Please ✓, you may tick more than one box)	There is a large no. of active participants <input type="checkbox"/> The teacher-in-charge has expertise in the field. <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient human resource support from the school <input type="checkbox"/> With the assistance from external agencies <input type="checkbox"/> Win prizes in external competition. <input type="checkbox"/>		Other reasons for the success (Please elaborate)
Within those schools having similar activity item as this one, how do you rate your school's performance in this activity when comparing with other schools?	Outstanding <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>		
Please give some suggestions for other schools if they are going to organize this activity:			

2. We are looking for some new and creative ECA items. If there are special ECA programmes/clubs running in your school that are not common to other schools, please state below for other schools' reference.

The names of the special activities: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 (e.g. horse-riding club) 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

If more information required, would you let me conduct a case study in your school?

Yes ☐ (Please fill in the following information)

Name of School:

\_\_\_\_\_ (English)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Chinese)

Name of ECA Master/Mistress: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

No ☐

End of Questionnaire

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.**

Return Address: Mr. TSANG Wing Hong, The Activities Master,  
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