7.1 INTRODUCTION

In the era of E-Commerce, customers have become prudent, sophisticated, demanding, and insisting for quality. Customers no longer accept mediocrity but persist only the best, that too at the cheapest price. Accordingly, Quality had taken a new definition of 'Value Entitlement' (Harry 2000). Manufacturers view 'Entitlement' as that of 'highest possible profit through quality', and the consumers view it as that of 'high-quality product at the lowest possible cost'. The entrepreneurs want to 'produce' and the customers want to buy. The only way to meet both the requirements and objectives is the implementation of TQM as a total quality improvement movement. Yet, getting quality is not a short-term instant-pudding way to improve competitiveness (Swift et al. 1998). It is good to follow TQM, but is it good enough to face the razor sharp competition?

Brown (1997) had rightly stated that 'TQM had become a necessary condition for top-level competition, but no longer a sufficient one'. The incremental approaches are not adequate to satisfy the present day customers. The rapid change today, relies more on the individual intelligence and creativity and less upon the past practical experience, since experience lags behind the development. Further experience no longer servers as a useful guide for making effective decisions in an environment of increasing uncertainty. Nevertheless, the researchers, practitioners and the gurus alike agreed that TQM is a must for the businesses to survive. The nagging question is whether TQM alone is good enough to sustain the business?

Japanese Auto Industries had a leading advantage when they had implemented TQM in their organizations. Every other auto-industry in the world had envyingly looked at them for adoption and imitation. It continued not far long, and company
after company in Japan started loosing management control. Quite a few companies could not retain their own businesses itself. Of late, from the middle of the last decade, more and more of western entrepreneurs have been taking over 'the control either partly or fully of the mighty industries of the East. Such a global phenomena proves that more than TQM is needed for the business to sustain. TQM is an absolute requirement for 'doing business' and much more is required for 'being in business'. TQM is a must for the success of the organization, and something else also is required for continuous survival. The organization had to deflect itself away from a 'business as usual' or 'fire fighting mentality' towards constant review (Black et al. 1996).

The America had cut costs by mass-producing fewer models of cars, while the Japanese did exactly the opposite to reduce the costs. Japan produced small numbers of many types of cars (Ohno 1995). Two diametrically opposite approaches were adopted for the same effect of cost control. So, 'Culture' also plays a vital role in the business and TQM practice, while the role of techniques is limited in utility. The successful adoption of TQM practices lies largely on the management of cultural dynamics and organizational complexities of the enterprises (Pun 2001).

7.2 EMERGING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

It appears that quality management has been 'remarkably durable, sinking deep roots in many companies'. It is in spite of continually changing management patterns. New management theories such as Business Process Management (BPM), Business Performance Facilitation (BPF), Business Improvement Management (BIM), Risk Management (RM), Knowledge Management (KM), Organizational Learning (OL), etc. had emerged to ensure that 'quality becomes a way of life'. The
role of quality managers should be a part of the integrated management system, if
the quality managers wanted to have any future (Waddell et al. 2001).

At the fag end of the last millennium, Six-Sigma programmes had started gaining
significant importance in the management of business. According to Swift (1998)
TQM was applicable to every aspect of its operation and six-sigma to every
significant business process. Jack Welch of General Electrical of USA, (Tichy 1995),
(Harry 2000), (Eckes 2001) had advocated the following three factors for the
sustained success of business, through the six-sigma programme:

- Employee Satisfaction.
- Customer Satisfaction.
- Cash Flow.

Welch (Harry 2000), (Eckes 2001) postulated that employee satisfaction would
improve productivity, quality, pride and creativity, while the customer satisfaction
would provide a strong market share. The cash flow would mean that the employees
had maintained the company’s customer-focussed-vision, its passion for excellence
and its desire to push forward with energy and enthusiasm.

The Contemporary-Classical TQM model, proposed in the present study, addresses
all the afore-said elements of quality and business objectives. The new TQM model
had advocated the following:

- Employee Satisfaction through Empowerment and Trust.
- Customer Satisfaction through Values, based on Ethics.
- Cash Flow through Profit Without Tears.

TQM models take care of the elements within an organization, but something else
has to be done to address the out side factors of the organization.
The Internet and web-site are abruptly changing the society and the business with the introduction of e-commerce, e-business, e-market, etc., (Dedhia 2001). So, the whirlwind of business environment is changing rapidly, radically and perplexingly. Hence, whatever has been done hitherto is not enough and everything and everyone has to change to meet the new challenges. Those who are prepared to take the leap beyond traditional hierarchies will thrive and survive. An organization that is not kind and receptive to the demanding concept will begin to decline, then decay, and eventually fade away (Harigopal 2001).

7.3 SUSTAINABILITY OF BUSINESS – A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Peter et al. (1994) asserted that "Excellent companies are above all, and brilliant on the business. Tools do not substitute the thinking. Intellect does not overpower wisdom. Analysis does not impede action. They keep things simple in a complex world. The efficacy of business is a combination of efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency deals with the point / goal - a finite value by doing things right. Whereas effectiveness is concerned with the infinite values by doing right things. While tools, logic and reasoning improve efficiency; intuition and foresight help to achieve effectiveness.

The implementation of Contemporary-Classical TQM model would ensure the success and the excellence of business. Yet, for sustaining, much more would be needed. The conceptual framework as shown in Fig 7.1 would address the missing elements, which would sustain the successful excellence of business.

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FIG. 7.1 SUSTAINABILITY OF BUSINESS — A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The three domains of TQM namely, Quality of People, Quality of Process and Quality of product, are anchored between 'customer' on one side and the 'society' on the other side, while the powerful and mighty competitor is trying to wedge it off. Here comes the need to strengthen the system, which will ensure the continuance of the business in spite of the competitor's efforts to break it. The security of sustenance of business is provided by the 'progressive management strategy', which binds together strongly all the three domains of quality so as to ensure the uninterrupted business performance.

The existing TQM models had extensively covered the tools required to run the business effectively and efficiently with the optimum utilization of the resources, the talents, and the knowledge. The Contemporary-Classical TQM model had added the ethical and moral values to achieve the objectives of business.
In addition to the normal resources such as material, capital, equipments, technology, talents, and processes, Thiruvalluvar had brought out two more important elements namely Time and Place which would ensure the required sustainability. Time has got the following three contextual importances:

- The introduction of new product ahead of the competitor which would provide product-leadership
- Cycle time reduction, which would result in cost effectiveness.
- Timely and prompt service to the customer / society which would ensure their sustained patronage and support.

Similarly the selection of the place also has the following three beneficial advantages:

- The centralized co-ordination for effective monitoring and control of the business.
- Dispersed and de-centralized execution (Manufacturing units) where the resources, labour, and the costs of in-puts are competitive and cost-effective.
- The product (Marketing) should be close to the customers so that action / reaction time could be shortened, which would enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of service to the customers.

The two critical and important factors i.e. Time and Place would provide the competitive advantage, if both are taken into account properly while formulating business (management) strategy.

In addition, Thiruvalluvar had insisted on the efficient financial management. World had seen that just a brutal money power had swapped the business irrespective of its excellent performance. Hence, management of finance, apart from treating it as a resource had to form a part of its business strategy. Kural 247 highlighted the fact that there was no place for those who did not have money (wealth). Also Kural (751) pre-supposed that "there is nothing like wealth, which gives importance even to men
of no consequence at all" (Diaz 2000). So, wealth earned through profit should be properly and judiciously managed as contemplated by Kural 479, which advised not to live beyond the means. At the same time the profit should be beneficial to the society as well through endowments, since the business is a sub-sector of the society whose continued support is needed for survival of business. Athikaram (chapter) 23 of Thirukkural extensively addressed the social benevolence. Kural 385 'ஒற்றைள் மொத்தம் களைவது காத்து வாத்தாலூம் வாலாத்தாரசு' (iyyeralum eettalum kaadhalum kaatha vaguthalaum vallathuarasu), which means that acquiring, multiplying, protecting, and distributing wealth (profit), for the benefit of the society are the duties of the leaders (management).

Thiruvalluvar had also insisted on the strategic alliance in business. It has become an order of the day to hear / read about mergers and acquisition of business enterprises. The dictum is, 'if one could not compete then collaborate with it'. The appropriate collaborator would provide the boost required for enhancing the efficacy of business (Kural 457, 462, 651) with their experience and expertise (Kural 441).

Thiruvalluvar had summed up the progressive management strategy in Kural 383 தாண்டவமைகள் தொழில் தாண்டவமைகள் கைப்பற்றுது நிலைநில்லை காலான்கைகள் (Thoongamai kalvi thuniyudamai immoontrum neenga nilan aalvaarkku). It insists, that constant vigilance and alertness, education and training, and consistent and continuous determined efforts are the three basic requirements for the (business) leadership.

The three elements brought by the Kural (383) are:

- Constant alertness to know what is happening around the world, so that no surprises are encountered. It would help in planning the strategies in advance / anticipation.
• Continuous Education and Training, which would provide non-stop improvement and innovation. It would, in turn sharpen the cutting edge of the competition.

• The consistent and insistent effort and thrust would result in excellence and sustained success.

Thiruvalluvar had devoted four Athikarams (chapters) 66, 67, 68 and 76 to highlight the above-mentioned parameters. Thus, the Management Strategies and TQM factors put together had advocated the following to attain and sustain both success and excellence of business:

• Optimising the resources utilization without any wastage for cost-effectiveness.

• Empowering and enlightening the employees for their maximum creativity and efficiency.

• Creating profit in ethical and moral means without any hardship or ill-effect to the society.

• Logistically planning the elements of Time and Place to provide maximum benefit and competitive advantage.

• Prudently managing the finances of acquiring, multiplying, protecting, and distributing the wealth for the welfare of all the stakeholders and for the future sustenance of the business. It should deter any ill-designs of the competitors.

• Strategic partnering with appropriate and competent collaborators with adequate expertise and experience.

The salient points of Business Strategy hitherto discussed and the TQM elements reviewed in the previous chapter (chapter 6) had provided the necessary ingredients for the proposed conceptual framework of Sustainability of Business (Refer Fig.7.1).

7.4 SUMMARY

With the strategies in order, the success had to be monitored and assessed continuously for any possible erosion or aberration, which needed immediate attention as, envisioned in Kural 471 to meet the hyper competitive marketplace.
Insisted to constantly evaluate the following factors for the successful survival of the business.

- Strength of the Self (Organization).
- Strength of the Competitor.
- Strength of the Collaborator / Partner.
- Strength of the Product / Process and the Technology adopted.

In addition, Thiruvalluvar had recommended the four natural traits such as: courage, generosity, knowledge / wisdom, and perseverance for the success (Kural 382).

As the offence is the best form of defence the globalisation of business is to carry out business outside its own territory as contemplated (KV 39) 'திரைக் கடல் திரவியம் தீர்வியம் தேடு' (Thirai kadal odium thiravium thedu) which will provide success even in the home territory. One cannot win the game by playing in his / her half of the ground, but at the most it can be defensive. For winning the game, one has to play in the opponent's half, which is brought out also in the Kondraivendhan verse 39. The symbiosis imperative for the sustainability of excellence in business is to be continuously creative and out-innovative of the competitor. Then the business can continue to command heights. Betz (1997) had encapsulated the same in his quote "competitive intelligent activities must enable a company to evaluate and reinforce its own competitiveness".

The empirical adaptation and implementation of the Contemporary – Classical TQM Model in some of the organizations have been highlighted in the next chapter.

A mind once Stretched by a New Idea, never Regains its Original Dimensions – Anon.