Research Article

Challenges Experienced by School Development Team (SDT) in the Implementation of Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)

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Abstract

This study investigated the challenges experienced by School Development Team (SDT) in the implementation of Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). The study adopted a qualitative approach with a case study research design. Purposive sampling was used to select ten participants consisted of four School Development Team (SDT) members (Principals, Departmental head, Whole School Evaluation coordinator and Educators). Individual interviews and document analysis were used to collect data. Thematic approach was used to analyse data. The results of the study revealed that SDT members are not supported enough when it comes to implementation of IQMS. The results of the study further revealed that IQMS has a lot of work and is time consuming. Self-evaluation scores were usually high due to the need for salary progression, not all educators are computer literate, and as a result, they were not able to use computers when performing IQMS activities. The study concluded that IQMS is not effectively implemented because it is implemented for compliance and monetary benefits. The study recommends that: SDT should be supported on regular basis in the implementation of IQMS; IQMS activities and teaching activities should be treated equally; self-evaluation should be done objectively and SDT should be intensively trained on computer literacy.

Keywords: *Integrated Quality Management System, Developmental Appraisal System, Performance Measurement System, Whole School Evaluation and School Development Team*

Introduction

The ushering in of the democratically elected South African Government in 1994 transformed the education system with the aim of improving the quality of education. Thus, the South African government mandated the Department of Basic Education to develop strategies to improve the quality of education in public schools. Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) is one of the systems introduced and implemented by the Department of Basic Education in order to improve the quality of education. IQMS is defined as a comprehensive performance management system for school-based educators to ensure that quality teaching and learning is implemented successfully and was introduced in 2003 (ELRC, 2003:1). The purpose of IQMS is to ensure quality public education for all South African public schools

(ELRC, 2003:3). Importantly, IQMS is informed by Schedule 1 of the Employment of Educators Act, No. 76 of 1998 where the Minister is required to determine performance standards for educators in terms of which their performance is to be evaluated (ELRC, 2003:1).

It should be noted that educators should be appraised to determine whether their teaching and classroom management are effective. IQMS comprises three programmes, namely, the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS), the Performance Measurement System (PMS) and the whole school evaluation (WSE) aimed at enhancing and monitoring the performance of the education system (ELRC, 2003:1).

The issue pertaining to quality assurance and quality enhancement have been major concerns for both basic education and higher education. Many countries are investing quality in basic education to ensure that learners are ready when they exit basic education. Furthermore, different countries are approaching quality enhancement differently, which are discussed below.

Internationally, in Pakistan, Rizwana (2015) states that total quality management (TQM) is used as a strategy to improve the quality of education in public secondary schools. The implementation of TQM had many challenges. In evaluating the implementation of TQM, Rizwana (2015) identified the challenges which impact negatively on the implementation of TQM namely: incompetent educators, ineffective leadership, lack of funding, poor planning, political interference, lack of resources, the morale of educators, and the insubordination of the workforce and the lack of management commitment. In order to address the above-mentioned challenges, Rizwana (2015) advises that there should be special professional training of management officials, sufficient funds and infrastructure facilities should be provided in each school as a matter of priority.

In the United States of America (USA), Bae (2007) states that a quality management system (QMS) is used to improve and provide quality education. When evaluating the implementation of QMS, Bae (2007) has identified a lack of intensive support to schools as a contributory factor in learner performance, and has suggested that schools should be supported to become organised and well-functioning.

In Africa (Kenya), total quality management (TQM) is used as a strategy to provide quality education (Ngware, Wamakuru & Odebero, 2006). The aim of TQM is to promote learner performance. The challenges in the implementation of TQM were that the boards of governors and chairpersons in secondary schools do not provide leadership on TQM practices and not all head educators provide leadership on TQM practices. Thus, the board of governors, chairpersons and head educators should be supported intensively in providing leadership on TQM practices for their schools to perform optimally (Ngware *et al.*, 2006).

In Botswana, a performance measurement system (PMS) was introduced in 1999 after other performance improvement initiatives had failed (Boipono, Tsomele & Mogadime, 2014). Boipono *et al.* (2014) explain that PMS is intended to improve accountability, performance, communication, efficiency and productivity. However, the implementation of PMS was not effective as Boipono *et al*. (2014) mention a number of challenges, such as inadequate training and the school management had difficulties in understanding it, and as such, they were unable to guide and support the educators.

In South Africa (the National Department of Basic Education), IQMS was introduced with the purpose of evaluating educators' performance, developing educators and improving school performance (Department of Basic Education, 2005:1). IQMS is seen as a strategy to improve the quality of education in South African public schools. Significantly, the quality of education in South African schools has improved as a result of using three IQMS programmes, namely: Developmental Appraisal System, Performance Measurement System and Whole School Evaluation (Department of Basic Education, 2005:1). A performance measurement system (PMS) is used as a programme to evaluate educators (Department of Basic Education, 2005:1). The performance evaluation of educators is important as it is intended to identify the educators' strengths and areas of development. However, there are issues around dishonesty and cheating as educators evaluate themselves (Thobela & Mtapuri, 2014). Areas of development are identified through PMS and are addressed through DAS (Department of Basic Education, 2005:1). Educators should be developed intensively. As a result, they will teach effectively resulting in improved learner performance. IQMS is also intended to improve school performance through WSE (Department of Basic Education, 2005:1). The National Department of Basic Education has observed that effective implementation of IQMS impacts positively on learner performance for an example, provinces which are performing extremely well with regard to the matric results is the result of the effective implementation of IQMS (Department of Basic Education, 2019:1).

In the Limpopo Province, IQMS is seen as a strategy to improve learner performance. Shortage of IQMS officials to monitor and support districts makes it difficult to monitor and support the schools effectively with regard to the implementation of IQMS (Department of Basic Education, 2019:1). Thus, lack of intensive monitoring and support resulted in Limpopo Province not performing very well in matric results (Department of Basic Education, 2019:1).

At the district level, IQMS is also seen as a strategy to improve learner performance. Furthermore, monitoring and support of the circuits are carried out. However, the shortage of IQMS officials resulted in circuits not effectively monitored and supported.

At circuit level (Maune), the circuit manager also regards IQMS as a strategy to improve the performance of the schools within the circuit. However, the implementation of IQMS in a circuit, appears to be ineffective as there is no IQMS official to monitor and support educators regularly (Department of Basic Education 2019:1).

Problem Statement

Anecdotal evidence showed that School Development Team (SDT) in Maune Circuit experiences challenges when it comes to implementation of IQMS. These challenges rendered the implementation of IQMS ineffective. Advancing the challenges experienced by the SDT in managing the implementation of IQMS, Thobela and Mtapuri (2014) indicate that in implementing IQMS, educators do not focus on their professional development as their main purpose, instead, they inflate their scores for salary progression. The educators' passion for monetary gain resulted in other programmes of IQMS such as Developmental Appraisal System (DAS) and whole School Evaluation (WSE) being compromised.

IQMS has a lot of work and more time is needed to implement IQMS activities. Bhikisha (2011) concurs that IQMS's workload and time constraints hampered the educators and SDT

to effectively implement IQMS. Consequently, IQMS's workload and time constraints impacted negatively on its implementation.

The SDT is not supported enough in managing the implementation of IQMS as South African Democratic Teachers' Union (2011) points out that STD is not given sufficient support in managing the implementation of IQMS. Successful implementation of IQMS depends to a large extent on the intensive support of SDT in managing the implementation of IQMS.

Shalem, Sapire and Sorto (2014:1) assert that educators are unable to use technology in the classrooms for teaching and learning. It is also acknowledged that SDT experience challenges with regard to using computers as they lack the requisite ICT skills (DBE, 2016:3).

The non-involvement of educators in the designing of the IQMS implementation model resulted in educators finding it difficult to implement the IQMS model as Sebola and Malema(2014) states that change should involve stakeholders in order to have a good chance of success. Sharing the same sentiment, De Clercq (2008) argues that educators were not involved in the designing of IQMS implementation model as an instrument to measure the performance of educators and is therefore not supported by educators. Thus, the challenges experienced by the SDT in managing the implementation of IQMS rendered the implementation of IQMS ineffective. Brookfield theory (lenses) was used to suggest to how effective IQMS can be implemented in schools in Maune Circuit.

Research Question

- What are the challenges experienced by the school development team (SDT) in the implementation of IQMS?

Research Objective

- To explore the challenges experienced by the school development team (SDT) in the implementation of IQMS.

Theoretical Framework

Brookfield's Theory of Evaluation

Brookfield (2005) theory of evaluation was used. The Brookfield theory of evaluation is relevant in the context of this study because it outlines four lenses to be considered for effective implementation of IQMS. The relevancy of the four lenses in the context of this study is discussed as follows:

Brookfield's lens one: Autobiographical experiences of teaching and learning

This pertains to the educator's self-evaluation of his or her teaching practice (Brookfield, 2005). It is the belief of Brookfield that if the educator honestly conducts a self-evaluation about his or her teaching practice, he or she will be in a better position to make judgements about his or her teaching approach. However, in the context of this study, educators were not honest during self-evaluation as Thobela and Mtapuri (2014) point out that the SDT is faced with a challenge of educators who award themselves undeserved high scores for monetary gain. De Clercq (2008) advances the same view that the inflation of scores compromises the integrity and the purpose of IQMS. It implies that the scores obtained by the educators were not a true reflection of the educators' performance.

Brookfield's lens two: Learners' eyes

Brookfield believes that in teaching practice, educators should see themselves through the eyes of learners as this will provide reliable evidence for their teaching practice. It implies that the learners' inputs are indispensable because they may be innovative and creative when it comes to teaching practice issues. However, in the context of this study, IQMS implementation model excluded the learners in the implementation process, for example, the learners were not involved in evaluating the performance of educators. Thus, the exclusion of relevant stake holders such as leaners pose a challenge to SDT in effectively managing the implementation of IQMS.

2.4.3 Brookfield's lens three: Our colleagues' eyes

Brookfield (2005) believes that evaluation by colleagues in teaching practice enables the educator to check, reframe and broaden his/her teaching practice. In the context of this study, the colleagues are the Development Support Group (DSG). The DSG consists of an educator, a peer and the immediate senior of the educator (ELRC, 2003:5). However, there are issues of favouritism and dishonesty as Sebola and Malema (2014) indicate that the SDT is faced with a challenge of DSG who award educators undeserved high scores for monetary gain.

2.4.4 Brookfield's lens four: The educational literature

The lens refers to the scholarly literature to be used in critical reflection of effective teaching and learning (Brookfield, 2005). In the context of this study, the literature also refers to policies, resolutions and IQMS manuals that should guide the practices of the IQMS. However, in this study, educators were implementing IQMS for compliance and mainly for salary progression without adhering to resolutions and IQMS manuals for proper implementation of IQMS as Pylman (2015) points out that not all educators are really positive and enthusiastic to implement IQMS and they are implementing IQMS for compliance.

Research Methodology

The research approach used in this study was a qualitative. Teherani, Martimianakis, Stenfors-Hayes, Wadhwa and Varpio (2015) define a qualitative research approach as the "systematic enquiry into social phenomena in natural setting" and can include "how people experience aspects of their lives." In the context of this study, the natural setting was the school where the SDT is experiencing challenges in the implementation of IQMS. Alase (2017) states that the main objective and essence of a qualitative research approach is to describe the essence of the phenomenon by exploring it from the perspective of those who experienced it in order to understand the meaning participants ascribe to that phenomena. This implies that the approach used in this study is qualitative and is characterised as exploratory and descriptive. The study is exploratory because it is intended to gain insight and understanding of the challenges experienced by SDT in the implementation of IQMS.

Research Design: Case study

This study used a case study research design. Creswell (2008:75) defines a case study as an intensive study of a phenomenon in a specific situation. In the context of this study, a case study was used to explore and analyse the challenges experienced by SDT during the implementation of IQMS in a school in order to gain insight into them. Thus, in this study,

the researcher explored and analysed the SDT's challenges during the implementation of IQMS. Therefore, the researcher was afforded the opportunity to explore, analyse and gain insight with regard to the challenges experienced by SDT in the implementation of IQMS.

Population and Sampling

Population and sampling are discussed as follows:

Population

The population in Maune Circuit consisted of twenty-four (24) principals, twenty-six (26) departmental heads and one hundred and ninety-two (192) educators (CS1) and one circuit manager. The total population of this study was two hundred and forty-two (243).

Sampling Procedures

Purposive sampling was used to select SDT (that is, principal, departmental head, whole-school evaluation coordinator and educator).The SDT was selected on the basis of managing IQMS implementation. The total number of participants constituting a sample was sixteen (16).

Data Collection

Individual semi-structured interviews and document analysis were used as data collection instruments. Creswell (2011:81) defines an individual semi-structured interview as a data collection instrument consisting of predetermined questions. In this study, the data collected was guided by the research question.

Document analysis refers to the systematic evaluation of documents (Bowen, 2009). . In this study, the researcher reviewed the documents with the intention of uncovering the meanings, gain insight and understanding of the challenges experienced by SDT during the implementation of the IQMS.

Data Analysis

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:73) define data analysis as the process whereby the analysed data is arranged into categories and patterns are identified and relationships are found among the categories. In the context of this study, the analysed data were arranged into themes and categories with the purpose of deriving the meaning from them with respect to the challenges experienced by SDT during the implementation of IQMS. Furthermore, the patterns and relationships among the categories were then identified.

Results

The results of this study are summarised in the following themes:

- Support provided to the STD in managing IQMS implementation.
- Time allocated versus completion of IQMS paperwork.
- Score allocation during self-evaluation.
- Integrating technology in the implementation of IQMS.

The above mentioned themes are used to guide the discussion below as follows:

Support provided to the STD in managing IQMS implementation

The participants indicated that insufficient support was provided with regard to the implementation of IQMS. It transpired that support was provided mainly during the summative evaluation. The circuit IQMS coordinators supported the schools during summative evaluation as **SDT3** and **SDT6** share the same view that:

The support is not enough. Support is provided during the days leading to the submission of IQMS summative evaluation documents for verification. Circuit IQMS coordinators provide support during summative evaluation. After verification there is no support until the following year when IQMS summative evaluation is to be conducted.

Similar to the above comment, **SDT 7**, **SDT9** and **SDT14** asserted that:

The support given by circuit and district officials in the implementation of IQMS is not enough. The support given by the peers and departmental head is also not enough due to workload on teaching and learning activities (SDT7).

The support given by the circuit and district officials in the implementation of IQMS is really not enough (SDT9).

The support I receive is not enough. IQMS officials are only visible during preparation and submission of summative evaluation. This is done to ensure that all schools submit all summative evaluation documents and for record keeping (SDT14).

Reflecting on the above participants' comments, it can be argued that the support provided in the implementation of IQMS was not enough. Educators were supported particularly during the summative evaluation. In addition, the circuit and district officials were not supportive enough with regard to the implementation of IQMS. Insufficient support impacted negatively on the implementation of IQMS.

Time allocated versus completion of the IQMS paperwork

The participants indicated that IQMS was time-consuming because of the extra work it brings, particularly during summative evaluation where the SDT had to coordinate the summative evaluation activities. Thus, more time was needed to spend on IQMS activities. Teaching and learning in the classroom was, therefore, compromised. This statement was supported by **SDT1**, **SDT3**, **SDT5** and **SDT8.** Their responses were as follows:

Preparation for summative evaluation submission requires a lot of time. Teaching time is usually sacrificed during this time as I devote more time in summative evaluation activities for timeous submission. In other words spending a lot of time doing summative evaluation is a challenge. (SDT1).

During IQMS summative evaluation I devote more time to IQMS activities and teaching time is put on strain. More time is devoted to IQMS activities because I want to cover all the aspects of IQMS activities in a short time in order to comply with due dates for verification (SDT3).

Here at the school there are lot of activities that are taking place. IQMS also require a lot of time. Self-evaluation has to be done by educators. DSG has to evaluate the educator in the classroom. Teaching time is forever compromised and I feel that I am punished for this (SDT5).

IQMS interrupts normal teaching time. I try to create time for IQMS although it is not enough. Contact time with learners is frequently disrupted. IQMS increases my workload (SDT8).

The above participants' responses raise two salient challenging issues. Firstly, IQMS activities such as summative evaluation was time-consuming. Secondly, teaching and learning were sacrificed because more time was spent on IQMS activities. Thus, reflecting on these two salient issues, one may assert that it was challenging for SDT to find a balance between IQMS activities and teaching activities because IQMS also form part of the school activities.

Score allocation during self-evaluation

The participants indicated that the self-evaluation scores were usually high due to the need for salary progression. The need for salary progression was the cause for inflating scores during self-evaluation. The attitude was that low scores would make one feel incompetent. Undoubtedly, the self-evaluation scores were not always a true reflection of the educators' performance. **SDT 12, SDT13**, **SDT14**, **SDT15** and **SDT16** agreed and shared the same view that self-evaluation was not done properly. Both shared the view that:

Educators usually score themselves high scores even if they do not perform well in some of the performance standards. They are influenced by the need for salary progression. Self-evaluation and scoring is not done properly. Consequently, self-evaluation and scoring do not reflect the true performance of educators in relation to their performance standards.

Based on this response, it became clear that self-evaluation and scoring were not done properly as educators inflated scores for salary progression. Self-evaluation should be done objectively with the intention of identifying the educator's strengths and development needs. Scores should be awarded based on the performance of the educator and should not be inflated because of the need for salary progression. The main purpose of IQMS, which is educator development, should be the priority if educators are to be more competent in the classroom.

Integrating technology in the implementation of IQMS

The participants indicated that not all educators are computer literate and are able to use computers when performing IQMS activities. This statement was supported by **SDT1**, **SDT2**, **SDT4, SDT 10 and SDT 11** who share the same view that:

Integration of IQMS with Information Computer Technology (ICT) is a positive approach. It will help more educators to be computer literate and be on par with the fourth industrial revolution. However, few educators have that skill to use it in performing IQMS activities.

Upon reflecting on the above, it is quite clear that not all educators were computer literate and neither were they all trained in the use of computers. In fact, there was actually no intensive training on computer literacy. Consequently, there were educators who were experiencing challenges with regard to integration of technology with the implementation of IQMS.

Discussion of findings

The results of this study are summarised under the following headings: Support provided to the STD in managing IQMS implementation; time allocated versus completion of IQMS paperwork; score allocation during self-evaluation and integration of technology in the implementation of IQMS.

Support provided to the STD in managing IQMS implementation

The salient challenge which emerged strongly in this study is that the support provided by circuit and district officials in the implementation of IQMS is not enough. As discussed in the

previous literature, Masoge and Pilane (2014) assert that the support of educators in the implementation of IQMS in the form of mentoring is not enough. In the light of the above, one may argue that the regular support of educators by the SDT should be considered as a priority if the IQMS is to be implemented effectively.

Time allocated versus completion of IQMS paperwork

One of the most salient challenges experienced by the SDT revealed in this study is the balance between the time spent on IQMS and teaching activities. Ntombela, Mpehle and Penciliah (2010) concur that the SDT complain that they spent too much time on coordinating IQMS activities and too much time is also spent on IQMS paperwork. Consequently, teaching and learning are neglected in the classroom.

Score allocation during self-evaluation

The study revealed that the SDT is faced with the challenge of educators who award themselves undeservedly high scores for monetary gains. Accordingly, Thobela and Mtapuri (2014) assert that educators focus strongly on monetary issues pertaining to IQMS, and as a result, they inflate the scores for monetary gains. Thus, lack of honesty in the awarding of scores during the educators' self-evaluation was a serious challenge that was revealed in this study.

Integration of technology in the implementation of IQMS

It emerged from the study that SDT and educators experience challenges in integrating technology with IQMS implementation. In support of this, Shalem, Sapire and Sorto (2014:1) point out that educators are experiencing challenges with regard to integration of technology with the implementation of IQMS because they are unable to use technology in the classroom during teaching and learning. Hence, a challenge because the SDT is expected to be competent in computer literacy in order to assist educators during the implementation of IQMS.

Involvement of stakeholders in designing and implementing IQMS implementation model.

The results of the study indicated that SDT and educators complained that they were not involved in designing and implementing IQMS implementation model and as such their inputs were compromised and made it difficult to implement IQMS implementation model. This concurs with Brookfield's theory of evaluation that involvement of SDT, educators and learners in teaching practice matters is important because their inputs are important in improving teaching practice.

Conclusion

The study concludes that intensive support of SDT in the implementation of IQMS is very important if IQMS is to be effectively implemented. The study further concludes that educator development should be a priority when it comes to the implementation of IQMS. In addition, the study concludes that summative evaluation should objectively and honestly done to ensure that educators' scores commensurate with their performance.

Recommendations

Recommendations are discussed as follows:

Support provided to the STD in managing IQMS implementation

SDT should be supported on regular basis when it comes to the managing of the implementation of IQMS. Circuit and district officials should regularly support the SDT in managing the implementation of IQMS. Regular support will promote effective management of the implementation of IQMS.

Time allocated versus completion of the IQMS paperwork

IQMS activities and teaching activities should be treated equally because both of them form part of the school activities. In other words, the SDT should ensure that teaching activities and IQMS activities are treated equally without compromising the other.

Score allocation during self-evaluation

Self-evaluation should be done objectively with the intention of identifying the educator's strengths and development needs. Scores should be awarded based on the performance of the educator and should not be inflated because of the need for salary progression.

Integrating technology in the implementation of IQMS

There should be intensive training on computer literacy. Regular support should also be provided to the SDT in the use of computer in performing IQMS activities. This will enable the SDT to support educators in integrating technology with the implementation of IQMS.

Involvement of the relevant stakeholders

In designing and implementing the IQMS implementation model, the relevant stakeholders such as educators and learners should be involved as Brookfield (2005) in his theory of evaluation maintains that educators and learners should be involved in teaching practice issues as their inputs are important and they can bring amelioration.

The challenges of SDT in managing IQMS implementation could be addressed resulting in effective management of the implementation of IQMS if the management of the implementation of IQMS is grounded on the following components:

- **Involvement:** In designing and implementing IQMS implementation model, SDT, educators and learners should be involved as their inputs are valuable.
- **Collaboration:** For effective implementation of IQMS implementation model, stakeholders should consult one another and work as a unit. This will promote the ownership of IQMS implementation model.
- **Empowerment:** For IQMS to be understood, managed and implemented effectively, training should be intensified to empower SDT and educators.
- **Adaptability:** In the implementation of IQMS implementation model, change should be effected if the need arises. This implies that the implementation of IQMS implementation model should guide by the contextual factors of the schools.
- **Development:** The purpose of IQMS implementation model is about educator development. Thus, IQMS implementation model, should be implemented solely for educator development. This implies that educator development plans should be implemented effectively if the objective of IQMS implementation model is to be achieved.

- **Sustainability:** For IQMS implementation model to be implemented effectively, the provision of resources should be sustained.

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