

Teachers' perceptions of the Integrated Quality Management System: lessons from Mpumalanga, South Africa

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This article examines the attitudes and perceptions of teachers regarding the implementation of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). In doing so, it aims to contribute to the global discourse of change management in education. The system is intended to develop educators by enhancing their capabilities to inculcate a culture of teaching and learning. Using a qualitative research design, in which open-ended interviews were conducted, the study canvassed the views of stakeholders resulting from their personal experiences of IQMS. Having reflected on the current implementation model, the major contribution of the study is to posit an alternative model. The alternative implementation model proposes a bottom-up approach; continuous development; sustained (rather than once-off) training conducted by credible teams of eminent persons and strong leadership. Furthermore, the model should be well-resourced and be anchored on partnerships; concurrency of thrust; staggered changes and based on the following principles adapted from development discourse: participation, empowerment, ownership, learning, adaptability, and simplicity. There is consensus among stakeholders that the IQMS was implemented too rapidly. They recommended a longer, continuous training period that focuses on teacher development, thus delinking money issues from the IQMS, as well as engaging dedicated teams in order to ensure impartiality.

Keywords: education; educators; Integrated Quality Management System; learning; principals; teaching; teacher development

Introduction

This article examines the attitudes and perceptions of teachers towards the implementation of IQMS in the Mgwenya Circuit in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa by looking inwards in order to understand the implementation process and to posit an alternative implementation model to inform practice. This study is important to inform practice and policy on implementing such systems in countries undergoing transformation as well as those with scarce resources and a high level need, as change should be managed judiciously for organisational effectiveness and efficiency.

The IQMS came about as a result of an agreement concluded in the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC, Resolution 8 of 2003), the essence of which was to bring together three programmes, the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS), the Performance Measurement System and the Whole School Evaluation (WSE) (Republic of South Africa (RSA), 2004). In terms of the DAS, individual educators are evaluated to measure their capabilities, followed by the formulation of an individual development plan. The Performance Measurement System was designed to assess individual

teachers for grade and salary progression, incentives and rewards (RSA, 2003). The WSE aimed to examine the effectiveness of a whole school with respect to its core function of teaching and learning. The IQMS is a policy designed to help teachers to identify their shortcomings and undergo personal development as well as improve the culture of teaching and learning at school. According to Oswald and De Villiers (2013:3), the foundations of this ambition are enshrined in the Education White Paper 6: “*Building an inclusive education and training system*”, which was intended to transform the education system to ensure quality education for all learners.

Problem statement

Anecdotal evidence in the Mgwanya Circuit showed that teachers were uneasy about the IQMS and its implementation. Morale seemed to be low and some teachers felt that the IQMS did not meet their developmental expectations, as even those who were supposed to develop them, did not seem to have the right answers. Instead of focusing on development, teachers score themselves highly in order to increase their remuneration. Blatant cheating threatens the system, resulting in some teachers losing confidence in the IQMS; they consider it a waste of time, money and other resources. If this problem is not addressed the Department of Basic Education runs the risk of losing veteran, experienced staff. Indeed, the anecdotal evidence suggests that some teachers are considering early retirement due to frustration with IQMS. This may impair the quality of teaching and learning.

Therefore, the aim of this study was to assess the perceptions and attitudes of teachers’ towards the implementation of the IQMS for developmental purposes in the Mgwanya Circuit, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. The objectives of the study were:

- To unpack the perceptions and attitudes of teachers with regard to the IQMS;
- To identify the challenges the teachers are experiencing with the implementation of the IQMS; and
- To develop an alternative implementation model for the IQMS.

Literature

Change management

This article makes a contribution to the global discourse of change management in education. A number of change theories have been proposed in literature; these include Kurt Lewin’s Three Step Change Theory, Lippitt’s Phases of Change Theory, Prochaska and DiClemente’s Change Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, The Theory of Reasoned Action and Planned Behaviour, Bullock and Batten’s Four-phased model of Planned Change and so forth (Kritsonis, 2005). This article reflects on a case in which implementation of change produced theoretical reverberations characterized by discordance, hence giving relevance to the theories of change in this discussion. According to Kritsonis (2005), Kurt Lewin postulated the Three-step Change theory comprised of unfreezing, movement, and re-freezing. In this theory Kurt Lewin

recognises that there are driving as well as restraining forces; these need to be considered when implementing change (Kritsonis, 2005). There have been a number of critiques of these models. For example, Burnes (2004 cited in By, 2005) maintains that models of planned change are not capable of coping with rapid, transformational change and are not applicable to crisis situations, which may not allow widespread consultation. Furthermore, it is claimed that they ignore organisational conflict and politics. As a solution Burnes (2004 cited in By, 2005) argues that change must be open-ended, continuous and bottom-up to constitute what is termed the emergent approach as opposed to the planned approach. Dunphy and Stace (1993 cited in By, 2005:375) observed that there is a range of approaches to change beyond planned change and emergent approaches given the volatility of the environment. Hence, they suggest the situational / contingency approach which posits “one best way for each” rather than the “one best way for all”. Nonetheless, Burnes (1996 cited in By, 2005:377) argues that organizations must have more “choice” and therefore should not necessarily submit to exigencies from the outside but should rather decide the route they want to follow in the change process.

According to By (2005), while some theorists focused on the change process, including Kurt Lewin, others, including Kanter (1983, 1989) with his Ten Commandments for Executing Change; Kotter (1996) with the Eight-Stage Process for Successful Organisational Transformation and Luecke (2003) with the Seven Steps, offered practical guidance to managers for implementation. As such, Kotter’s (1996) Eight stage model incorporates the notions of creating urgency, forming a powerful coalition; creating a vision for change; communicating the vision; removing obstacles; creating short-term wins; building on the change; and anchoring the changes in the organisation’s culture (By, 2005). According to Banathy (cited in Menchaca, Bishoff & Dara-Abrams, n.d.), from a systems theory perspective, change to any part of an educational system requires knowledge and a solid grasp of how the parts of the system are interrelated. To this end, Reigeluth and Garfinkel (1994 cited in Menchaca et al., n.d.) define two types of change: piecemeal change which is concerned with modifying a part of a system and systemic change which involves the modification or replacement of an entire system. Jenlink, Reigeluth, Carr and Nelson (as cited in Menchaca et al., n.d.) argue, for change to succeed, stakeholders must develop a vision of the new system and have a sense of ownership and empowerment. Menchaca et al. (n.d.) observe that change processes require constant monitoring to assess progress. Farias and Johnson (2000:378) argue that “change without a people focus does not have a great chance of success”.

As change involves people, there is bound to be resistance to it. Zaltman and Duncan (1977 as cited in Waddell & Sohal, 1998:543) define resistance as “any conduct that serves to maintain the status quo in the face of pressure to alter the *status quo*”. Terziovski (1997 cited in Waddell & Sohal, 1998) established that resistance on the part of both workers and some layers of management is an impediment to the

utilization of quality management practices. While classical organizational theory views resistance as “adversarial”, Waddell & Sohal (1998:544), argue that there is utility in resistance and that “it is a fallacy to consider change itself to be inherently good”. They add that resistance may help flag those areas that may not have been well thought out and “perhaps plain wrong” (Waddell & Sohal, 1998:545). In their view, resistance to change is instead a “critical source of innovation in a change process” as it opens up new possibilities and alternatives (Waddell & Sohal, 1998:545). Kritsonis (2005:6) concludes that, “There is no right or wrong theory to change management. It is not an exact science.”

The theories of change allow for a holistic approach to the change management process by providing change management techniques such as feedback and counseling. This could be linked with the performance management philosophy which embraces motivation theories espoused by theorists such as Abraham Maslow with his hierarchy of needs; Frederick Herzberg’s two-factor hygiene and motivation theory and Victor Vroom’s expectancy theory. Reflecting the complexity of the management function, current trends include systems thinking, emotional literacy, organizational citizenship and employee involvement.

Integrated Quality Management System

Mestry, Hendricks and Bisschoff (2009) argue that Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of teachers is essential to create effective schools. Furthermore, Chisholm (2004) notes the poor results achieved in the senior certificate examination as well as the dropout rate of children, especially in black schools, in South Africa reveal that teachers are not performing at an optimum level. Mestry et al. (2009:488) argue that professional development is an important strategy to improve educators’ skills and knowledge in the interests of quality teaching and learning. For “professional development to be effective, motivation should be intrinsic rather than extrinsic”. The implementation of the IQMS implies that professional development should be placed high on a school’s agenda.

The professional development of teachers could be seriously jeopardised because IQMS has not yet been successfully implemented in some provinces, while in others, implementation is very slow. Some of the reasons cited by Mboyane (2002) are that the National Department of Education’s advocacy programme on IQMS is not intensively driven: the approach is top-down, the training is often once-off and in some provinces training is outsourced to institutions of higher learning and private consultants who themselves have inadequate knowledge and practical experience to undertake such training, such that facilitators lack insight into IQMS. Mboyane (2002:1) highlights additional problems such as the poor leadership provided by principals and school management teams, insufficient resources in previously disadvantaged schools, the department and principals “forcing” the implementation of IQMS on teachers, the low morale of teachers due to their poor working conditions and remuneration packa-

ges, and the teachers' inability to deal with massive policy changes, such as not getting to grips with Outcomes-Based Education (OBE), the Revised National Curriculum Statements (RNCS) and the National Curriculum Statement (NCS); including resistance by different unions to the "unilateral decisions" taken by the Department on IQMS as factors militating against the implementation of IQMS.

Method

This study used a qualitative research design in order to study human action from an insider's perspective (Babbie, 2013). According to Babbie (2013), before one can observe and analyse one needs a plan, one needs to determine what one is going to observe, and analyse why and how. The researchers used open-ended interviews to study the problem from the participants' perspective based on their personal experiences regarding the IQMS.

Study area

The study was conducted at schools in Mgwanya circuit in Mpumalanga, South Africa. There are 26 schools in the circuit, 16 primary and 10 secondary. This circuit was selected because of its accessibility and because the researchers believed it could provide the rich information necessary to address the research questions.

Population and sample

A population consists of objects which may be individuals, groups, organisations, human products and events, or the conditions to which they are exposed (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). In order to obtain rich information, the researchers identified four schools in the area as sample size does not matter in a qualitative study, but the depth and quality of the information obtained. The four primary schools were selected because of their accessibility/proximity to the researchers. One of the researchers is an educator at a primary school. The researchers' familiarity with primary schools informed the decision to focus on these schools rather than secondary schools. Primary School A had a complement of 16 teachers; Primary School B 17 teachers; Primary School C 15 teachers, and Primary School D 34 teachers. In each school, five participants were interviewed drawn from the population, using purposive sampling which relies on a researcher's experience and/or ingenuity (Welman et al., 2005).

The following participants were chosen from each school:

- the principal, as initiator of change, who does internal moderation of evaluation results and as the workshop organiser;
- the educator, as implementer of the instrument;
- the School Management Team as organiser of INSET (In-Service Training) and other programmes;
- the Staff Development Team (SDT), as liaison between the department with respect to priority needs such as INSET, short courses, skill programmes or learnerships; and

- the Development Support Group (DSG) which provides mentoring and support. The researchers recruited information-rich key participants in the research process until relevant data were obtained to draw meaningful conclusions. To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, the research report was given to the participants to confirm the findings. One of the limitations of the sampling strategy employed is that only logical generalisations and not statistical generalisations can be made based on this study. It is also not the ambition of this study to make statistical generalisations associated with probability sampling in which generalisations are possible from a sample to a population. Thus, this study allows for comparison of similar experiences or is illustrative of such experiences.

Data collection

Permission was sought and granted from the relevant authorities to visit the schools. At the beginning of each interview the interviewer explained the purpose of the study to the educators and sought the participant's voluntary cooperation. All protocols appropriate for such research were observed, such as informed consent in which each participant signed a consent form; confidentiality and right to privacy, protection from any form of harm and that participants were not to be treated as objects or numbers (Welman et al., 2005). The study employed open-ended interviews which allowed for a freer flow of information than structured interviews would permit. Probing was used for detailed exploration. The participants were named using the letters of the alphabet MM1, MM2, MM3 and so forth to uphold the principle of anonymity.

Data analysis

Data analysis was undertaken using a thematic approach. This involved the systematic examination of the contents of the interviews in order to record the relative incidence of themes and the ways in which these themes were portrayed (Welman & Kruger, 2001). The contents within each theme were analysed to establish emerging patterns of information as well as differences and contrasting points. The researchers adopted the most critical data for analysis, including verbatim quotes for illustration.

Results

Initiating change and introducing IQMS

The School Management Team is responsible for introducing the IQMS. The principals were supposed to sell the idea, but some were against it due to a lack of clarity. Nkonki and Mammen (2012) maintain that different perceptions of the purpose of the IQMS result in educators implementing it in different ways. They add that it is critical for IQMS programme facilitators to appreciate the cognitive processes associated with interpretations and perceptions which impact on implementation, as these could either bolster or undermine the IQMS. The responses that follow illustrate the way the principals advocated the IQMS:

MM1: *They (the department) did not introduce it properly. The training period*

was short, all the steps were not clearly explained, and even the guiding material does not give the practical part to it.

Another principal had this to say:

MM9: From the beginning I did not know what the IQMS was about and did not understand that it had many challenges. I thought it was about money; and teacher development was not the core issue. It is only now that I am beginning to have a clue of what is happening.

During the interviews it became clear that the influence of the principal plays a vital role in the IQMS. The majority of the participants agree that when the IQMS was introduced, the facilitators rushed into it as though it was an awareness campaign. Teachers felt that not enough time was provided to allow them to digest and familiarize themselves with the concept. Implementation was haphazard, and the advocacy was poor, because those introducing the system were themselves not clear on its objectives. This created the impression that teachers were resisting change. Waddell and Sohal (1998:545) observe that such resistance points to the need to flag areas that may not have been well thought out or are “perhaps plain wrong”. Educators’ perceptions and concerns affect their buy-in, adoption and subsequent implementation of the IQMS (Nkonki & Mammen, 2012).

Training period

Teachers and principals were trained in just one day. While some participants felt that the training period was sufficient, many disagreed. The views expressed are encapsulated in the following excerpt:

MM6: It was not enough. They were rushing it saying time is not on their side [but] this thing [IQMS] needed to be implemented. That is why it is boring. We were packed in a hall, it was not conducive.

The participants felt that they needed more time to comprehend the material. Furthermore, the principals and the School Management Teams were supposed to go back to their schools and explain how the IQMS could be put into practice. Teachers believed that a week’s training would have been sufficient for an understanding of the entire process. A lack of understanding on both sides hampered the process because teachers needed to go further and consult on how to implement the system.

Challenges faced in implementing the IQMS

According to the respondents, some of the challenges are due to the frustrations of not knowing whether one is doing the right thing or not. Some principals used the IQMS as a weapon to threaten teachers, and even to the extent of not recommending that they receive the 1% salary increase:

MM1: People are not honest; no one wants to score himself/herself low, all of us we are looking at the prospect that we must get the 1%. We are afraid to give people low marks even if they deserve them [low marks] because it will look as if you are disadvantaging them to get the money.

If an educator performs according to expectations, he/she gets the 1%. As the above excerpt illustrates, educators feel obliged to give high scores to those peers who are not performing well, so that they can receive the increase.

An educator complained vehemently about class observation:

MM11: *The problem is with the class visit. Teachers totally don't want IQMS especially the observation part in class. They should come up with another way of checking teachers work than observing us in class. I don't feel free if there are people watching me and I make lots of mistakes under such circumstances.*

Teachers feel that observations cause disruptions, if two teachers are evaluating another teacher, who will be in their classes? They feel that it is not their duty to evaluate other teachers as this will not be a true reflection of what takes place in the classroom.

Some educators criticized the IQMS on the grounds of the criteria used to evaluate them.

MM6: *Some of the criteria which are used to evaluate are not fair such as involvement in extramural activities. There are prescribed activities which teachers can engage in. I am in girl guides, but I cannot be credited because it is not on the list of activities.*

Attitudes of teachers

Some teachers had positive attitudes towards the IQMS, while others did not. As with any change, most teachers were initially negative. With time, however, some have come to accept it as a tool that will help them to develop. The skeptics among the educators asked, "how can a blind person lead another" referring to the fact that teachers are supposed to develop one another. Those with high scores are supposed to help those with lower scores. However, the problem is that they score high marks because the scoring is directly linked to remuneration rates, rather than the fact that they are capable. A principal stated that:

MM1: *I don't see any changes with regard to the attitudes of teachers towards IQMS. There are no changes. Everybody focuses on the 1%. Even the time for IQMS is not enough to implement. You may see the weaknesses of the teacher in as far as teaching is concerned. Development must happen within the school. If at the school there is no one who is an expert in that field, who is going to help you?*

Teachers also noted that the workshop conducted at the school was not beneficial, since they were not sure whether or not they were on the right path. Mestry et al. (2009:488) note that, for the IQMS to be effective, educators must understand it well and it be should "flexible enough to take into account the different circumstances of South African schools; and support (internal and external) should be constructive to help schools improve".

Other educators identified positive elements of the IQMS as the following excerpts illustrate:

MM8: *Yes I was enthusiastic about IQMS because it develops us and we also get the 1%.*

A principal reflected on the evolution of attitudes:

MM9: *The attitude of teachers now is positive, except when it comes to the scoring and the 1% – teachers need money. If we can change the attitude that IQMS is not about money, but about development, then we can make progress. Money is only a motivational factor. It is money which is destroying it.*

Those teachers who were positive about the IQMS highlighted cooperation, development and progress in their career, despite the challenges. This is in line with Nkonki and Mammen's (2012) argument that policy makers and administrators should take educators' concerns seriously lest the programme be subverted.

Expectations of teachers

Teachers were asked to list their expectations of the IQMS. The results revealed that they feel that there are no guidelines to follow for the school workshops. They stated that they merely conducted the workshops for the record. Linked to this is the fact that those in charge of the IQMS at district office level do not visit the schools to establish whether the workshops are solving the problems; instead they come to see if the IQMS is being implemented. Another educator highlighted that in primary schools,

MM4: *Your peer will be the person who is teaching the same grade as you are. That teacher must evaluate you. The new teachers benefit from you while most of the veterans think of it as a waste of time. When they conduct the workshops at the district offices, they do not call all the educators. They just call the School Development Group and update them.*

The School Development Group is supposed to report back to the schools. However, many do not do so due to time constraints. Most schools rush to submit the forms in order to receive the 1% increase. Some even complained that what they were doing is worth more than the 1% they are receiving.

MM6: *What I disapprove is what the government is doing to us. After all the hard work, they give us 1%. We work very hard even during school holidays.*

The issue of money is a problem, because some teachers are neglecting the developmental part of IQMS to focus on the money. Teachers score themselves high marks, if one scores 4 that means one is excellent and one must develop other teachers. However, the teachers with high scores are reluctant to help others, thus denying them the opportunity to learn within the school. Nkonki and Mammen (2012) argue that conceptual mastery of the IQMS by educators should be prioritized during the execution stage because this can make or break the programme.

Rating of IQMS

Participants were asked how they would rate the IQMS. None of the participants rated it as excellent. The rating ranged from poor to good, primarily because of the experience they gained while implementing the system. A principal commented:

MM1: *It is 2 out of 5. It does not develop. I don't get it. We don't cover all the steps, because of time. There is no time for this.*

Another principal said that teachers need development, but it is not happening in an acceptable way because other components of the school routine suffer while conducting the IQMS.

Effectiveness of the Staff Development Team in the IQMS

The Staff Development Team is the driving force in the implementation of the IQMS.

One educator, MM11, said,

"If they could have the answers it could have been better. But they do not have the answers. They need experts on IQMS to ascertain if those who develop are indeed doing the right thing".

Self evaluation

In terms of the ELRC (2003), an educator uses the same instrument for performance measurement, developmental appraisal and for evaluating her/himself. One educator commented as follows on self evaluation:

MM19: *I did not evaluate myself. I scored myself high marks because I want the 1%.*

The first step is for teachers to evaluate themselves. Teachers need to know the areas they need help with and those observing will assist and determine how to help. If a teacher pinpoints the areas that he/she wants to be developed in, this facilitates the second step, classroom observation. Those who do not evaluate themselves will do themselves a disservice as the initiative is designed to promote development rather than a salary increase. If teachers are not evaluated, it will be difficult to identify skills gaps.

Feedback after evaluation

It is the responsibility of the Development Support Group to discuss the evaluation with the educator and to give feedback. Issues are resolved and a report is sent to the Staff Development Team for appropriate action. Asked about the feedback, educators responded as follows:

MM13: *Yes, it helps a lot, like now I am able to maintain discipline and do the correct seating arrangement.*

MM14: *Which one, which feedback? Where do we get the feedback? Who must give us that feedback? I don't remember getting any feedback since I have been with this school. It is just the principal shouting at us saying we cannot do this and that.*

The study revealed that most of the educators agreed that they do receive feedback after evaluation, but they are not satisfied with the answers. However, some said they never received feedback.

Scoring

The IQMS uses a rating scale from 1–4. Rating 1 = Unacceptable; Rating 2 = Satisfies minimum expectations; Rating 3 = Good; and Rating 4 = Outstanding. Asked how they were rated on their performance, the educators responded as follows:

MM5: *Yes, I was. Sometimes they give you 4 which is the highest mark. They will say we won't write the 4 on your score sheet. They will give you a 3 because if they give you a 4, you have to go and develop other teachers from different schools. Another principal gave me a 3. I don't know if it is necessary to get below 4 even if you qualify for 4. There is a problem with the scoring.*

MM11: *No, I was not fairly scored. The comments were negative; I was evaluated on things that I cannot change – contextual factors. Overcrowding is not my problem. I am there to teach, so if they comment and say the situation is not conducive for learning and they give you low marks for that – that is not fair.*

The study established that the scoring is problematic because if a teacher is awarded high marks, this implies that the school does not need development. If a teacher receives a 4 on a particular performance standard, he/she is an asset to the school and therefore he/she should develop other teachers. This teacher can be asked to go to other schools to help improve their performance standard.

Capability of evaluators

According to the IQMS guidelines a teacher must choose a peer to evaluate him / her. Some educators were positive about the capability of their evaluators, while others were not:

MM11: *They are capable because at the end you discuss the findings.*

MM13: *No I don't think so. The teachers need training to do that. They are lacking and are not fully equipped. They don't have information.*

It is clear that the value of the evaluation depends on the capabilities of the evaluator. Some educators felt they had benefitted from the comments of the evaluators. Others felt that the exercise was pointless as they felt there was no one within the school who could mentor them. The interviews revealed that qualified teachers with more than 30 years' experience felt that they did not gain anything from the evaluation process.

Overall, the study revealed that principals and teachers feel that the IQMS is a valuable instrument, however, it requires input from all stakeholders to manage it and ensure that it is a success.

Discussion

Teachers felt the department was hasty in implementing the IQMS. For any change to be successful, Jenlink et al. (as cited in Menchaca et al., n.d.) argue that stakeholders must have a common vision of the new system and a sense of ownership and empowerment among the beneficiaries. Money should be dissociated from the system, as teachers neglected the developmental part of the IQMS and focused on money. The training period was too short and insufficient. Most of the participants said that the

training did equip them with the knowledge required to implement the system. Teachers recommended that the training period should be at least a week, followed up by a quick follow up session. It is recommended that the officials who conduct the training should work side by side with teachers while implementing the IQMS. Liaw (2009 cited in Schoeman & Mabunda, 2012:250) argues that when there is support for teaching practice by key stakeholders, the educators “improve in their efficacy as teachers”. This support, it appears, was lacking in the case under study.

Challenges in implementing the IQMS

Teachers questioned the capability and credibility of those who evaluated them, as they are not experts in determining teachers’ performance. They suggested that a team of teachers who are knowledgeable about what is going on in the classroom should conduct the evaluation, rather than officials from the department. Teachers feel that the issues of remuneration and teacher development should be separated and as such the IQMS should just focus purely on teacher development. The IQMS can be effective if the training is thorough. It is recommended that a team be established to investigate the effectiveness of the instrument and provide a new paradigm to guide implementation.

Kok, Rabe, Swarts, Van der Vyver and Van der Walt (2010) argue that regular educator surveys are important to ascertain how they have improved in line with IQMS criteria as well as to provide lessons critical to the adaptation of the programme and classroom approaches.

Effectiveness of the Staff Development Team

The SDT faces the problem of educators who allocate themselves high marks, but when they are asked to assist with the development of teachers, they refuse. In order to avoid cheating and the practice of teachers giving themselves high marks, it is recommended that there should be a dedicated IQMS team. This neutral team should do the work in its own time. It should be composed of persons who know what is happening in the classroom such as retired teachers with a credible record.

Towards a new implementation model of the IQMS

Based on the above findings, we posit the following model for provinces still grappling with the implementation of the IQMS. For Continuous Development, the training should be sustained and not a once-off and be carried out by credible, eminent persons such as retired teachers and experts in their field. These individuals should comprise a neutral/independent team dedicated to the IQMS. This obviates the need to outsource training to institutions of higher learning and private consultants, saving costs in the long run. Principals and School Management Teams should show leadership and be empowered to manage the process. Adequate resources must be provided in previously disadvantaged schools. Partnerships should be forged between educators and the department so that educators can perceive the benefits of the IQMS – it should not be

foisted upon them. The department should adopt a bottom-up approach that recognises the strengths and weakness of each individual educator and those of the school at which the educator is based; a one size fits all does not work.

As this article has established, the IQMS should run concurrently with addressing the low morale resulting from the generally perceived poor working conditions and remuneration packages. Change should be staggered or sequenced without disrupting current work. The IQMS should be implemented according to the following principles adapted from the discipline of Community Development:

- Participation – stakeholders, especially educators should be encouraged to make choices and decisions regarding the IQMS;
- Empowerment – Educators should be provided with the requisite information, knowledge and resources. Thus, training is critical in building people’s self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Ownership – if genuine learning is to take place, all stakeholders should own the IQMS.
- Learning – learning is key to empowerment. This involves a process of unlearning and learning on the part of the principals and educators which accommodates mistakes.
- Adaptability – change and customize when the need arises.
- Simplicity – proceed step by step, chunk by chunk, that is, break down the larger parts into smaller parts and implement them.

In conclusion, the IQMS is a necessary tool to develop staff. However, it has been hampered by surmountable challenges during implementation. It is anticipated that the adoption of the above model, in whole or part, will ameliorate the impact of some of the challenges identified in this article. This is important for countries undergoing transformation, as well as those with scarce resources and a high level of need to benchmark against this experience so that resources are used wisely. It is appropriate to end this article with the insightful words by Scott (2003:69) that “Change is learning and learning is change.”

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