

Performance management: the neglected imperative of accountability systems in education

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The first aim of this paper is to clarify the concept “performance management” as an aspect of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). The second is to report on an exploration into the experiences and perceptions of management teams in the implementation of performance management. As part of the qualitative research design, the individual interview was selected for use in this research. Fifteen participants drawn randomly from 24 schools were interviewed. The findings revealed the weakness of integrating development with appraisal since it leads to the neglect of development in favour of appraisal which is linked to incentives. A lack of knowledge and expertise on the IQMS processes such as mentoring, coaching, and monitoring was found to hamper the zeal to implement performance management. Teachers, as co-developers of education policy on the ground, act as a driving force behind the actualisation of transformation in education. The development of teachers is therefore crucial in an education system that is in the grips of transformation.

Keywords: academic achievement; assessment; development; evaluation; management; performance management; school management teams; training; performance

Introduction

In the past 30 years, interest in improving the quality of education has increased nationally and internationally (Kganyago, 2004) with many countries introducing accountability systems that concentrate on making teachers more accountable to the public for the teaching and learning that take place in schools. The underlying rationale for introducing accountability systems is that teachers deliver a public service and cannot be trusted to perform this important service efficiently without being controlled. Education, as a public service, attracts government intervention on many scores. Ndawi and Peasuh (2005) and Carlson (2009) see investment of the state in education as the main reason for holding schools accountable. Accountability systems ensure that governments remain responsive to the needs, interests and desires of the people. They also assure that the expectations of stakeholders about children’s progress in school are met.

In South Africa, the IQMS (Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC), 2003) was introduced as a measure to hold schools accountable. The introduction of this system was not without challenges, the major of which was the integration of disparate appraisal activities, formative and summative evaluation, into one instrument. According to South African Democratic teachers Union (SADTU, 2011), the linking of the

IQMS with pay progression, distorted its developmental purpose and value. In this way, performance management did not receive due attention in the implementation of the IQMS. Moreover, implementation of the IQMS was met with resistance from teachers who considered this accountability system to be a “tough-on-schools” policy aimed at apportioning blame on teachers for the ills of education (Smith & Ngoma-Maema, 2003). The introduction of the IQMS consequently took the form of a power-play between unions and the government. However, because of the public outcry over the poor academic results of Grade 12s (Mogonediswa, 2008), the South African government had no option but to go ahead with the implementation of the IQMS.

Literature study

Accountability systems are a feature of the educational landscape in many countries, including the United States of America (USA), England, Australia and Wales. Through an accountability system, governments are able to determine whether teachers are performing according to the required standards. The assumption is that holding schools and the teachers who work in them accountable will cause them to achieve higher levels of performance thereby ensuring quality education (Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge & Ngcobo, 2008). In most accountability systems, the measurement of performance is coupled with rewards and sanctions (Elmore & Fuhrman, 2001). In the USA, England, Australia, and Wales, accountability systems are linked to academic performance of learners based on national student testing (Linn, 2003; Ladd, 2001; Fitz, 2003). For schools to meet the public and the governmental demands with regard to the academic performance of learners as well as to avoid sanctions, teachers' performance should be continually improved through the action of performance management. Performance management is an aspect of accountability systems whereby teachers within the school are assisted by their supervisors to attain the standards expected of them.

In South Africa negotiations between the government and teacher unions preceded the introduction of the IQMS as an accountability system. Well aware of the problems of the inspectorate system that had been employed in South Africa previously, the parties to negotiations introduced the formative, developmental aspect in the IQMS in addition to the summative, accountability evaluation aspect. The IQMS consists of three related systems, namely, a Developmental Appraisal System (DAS), Whole School Evaluation (WSE), and a Performance Measurement System (PMS). The first constitutes a system whereby a teacher is developed by his/her supervisor to improve his/her performance. According to Mestry, Hendricks and Bisschoff (2009), DAS is a process for determining how a teacher performs in his/her job and then to establish an appropriate improvement plan. This implies that performance management should be carried out before a teacher is appraised and acknowledged the principle that a person cannot be held accountable without clear goals and precise measurement

(Ndawi & Peasuh, 2005). The principle implies that a teacher can only be evaluated once attempts have been made to make him/her more proficient and effective in his/her job (De Clercq, 2008).

Carlson (2009) suggests there is a difference between evaluation for accountability and evaluation for development. On the one hand, evaluation for accountability has a negative effect in that it is a public process in which schools and individuals are more likely to hide rather than confront their shortcomings for fear of appearing bad in the public eye. On the other hand, evaluation for development is an internal process where shortcomings are addressed. The linking of development and performance measurement is, therefore, problematic. According to Maphutha (2006), professional development is neglected when formative and summative evaluations are applied together because teachers will focus on summative evaluation only if it is linked to salary progression. Indeed, extant research in South Africa (Maphutha, 2006; Nkambule, 2010) shows that performance management, aimed at developing teachers, is neglected in favour of summative evaluation. Teachers are tempted to focus on satisfying the demands of summative evaluation in order to gain salary progression, grade progression and affirmation of appointments (ELRC, 2003).

SADTU (2011:96) argues that the linking of appraisal for development purposes and appraisal for remuneration purposes has put the teachers in the position of both players and referees and it insists that those in charge of development cannot be the same people who are in charge of appraisal for remuneration. Hence Draft 4.7. of the Teacher Performance Appraisal (Department of Education, 2011) proposes a de-linking of appraisal for purposes of salary progression and teacher development.

As indicated above, the development of the teacher before being appraised is an inherent feature of the IQMS. Performance management is defined by Liebenberg and Van der Merwe (2004:262-263) as “a process during which the team leader plans, organises, leads and controls the performance of team members”. Performance management is an on-going cycle (not an event) that involves the continuous action of planning, monitoring and review on the part of both the teacher and the team leader (Haynes, Wragg, Wragg & Chamberlin, 2003). The team leader, usually a Head of Department, meets on a one-on-one basis with the teacher to discuss teaching goals and to chart a path of how to achieve these goals.

There is paucity of research on performance management nationally and internationally with the overwhelming majority of research dealing with teacher appraisal. Research in South Africa focuses mostly on the weaknesses of the IQMS as an accountability system (for example, Weber, 2005; De Clercq, 2008) while others investigate aspects of the appraisal system or assessment of teachers (Bisschoff & Mathye, 2009). Some research deals with professional development as an aspect of the IQMS but focuses mostly on the importance of continuous professional development (Mestry et al., 2009). The international trend follows the focus on appraisal. David and Macayan (2010), for example, explored the meaning and process of assessing teacher

performance. A deviation from this trend is found in the research by Ohemeng (2009), which deals with constraints in the implementation of performance management in Ghana. The current research presents a different view from the above studies in that it deals with performance management per se within the IQMS. It focuses on management within an evolving system of education in South Africa where the search for quality education is an on-going concern of the government and the public. Performance management is at the centre of the controversies presently raging in educational circles in South Africa. The concept performance management will be discussed fully in the next section.

Statement of the problem

From the above discussion it seems there is no agreement in the literature about what exactly performance management entails. This disagreement is played out among those responsible for implementing performance management. In a school it means that the implementers lack a clear understanding of performance management and how this should be implemented. Because the effective implementation of performance management is hampered, the major aim of the education system is not achieved. According to Carlson (2009), there is tension between the measurement of performance and a commitment to developing human capacity and skills. Thus the integration of formative and summative evaluation in the IQMS instrument leads to the neglect of the formative aspect. Implementers therefore focus on the summative aspect because it is linked to pay progression.

The major problem examined in this research centres on the neglect of the formative, developmental aspect in the implementation of IQMS in South African schools. The first aim of this paper is to clarify the concept “performance management” (Lebas, 1995:23) as an aspect of the IQMS because of the confusion that exists in the literature concerning this concept. The second aim is to explore the experiences and perceptions of school management teams in the implementation of performance management.

To achieve this aim, the remainder of the paper is structured as follows: The conceptual-theoretical framework on which the clarification of the concept of performance management was based, is presented in the next section. This will be followed by an explication of the research method, followed by a presentation of results. A discussion of the findings and a conclusion rounds off the paper.

Conceptual-theoretical framework

The conceptual framework of this study encompasses an explanation of what performance management entails against the backdrop of structural-functionalist and conflict theories. It will be argued that performance management as such is not considered comprehensively in the available literature, as the emphasis is on the IQMS itself. It will also be argued that conflict theory explains performance management more succinctly than the structural-functionalist perspective despite the fact that the latter has important effects in a particular context.

What performance management entails

One of the reasons for failure to implement performance management in the South African education system is the disagreement about the definition of the concept itself. Leggat (2009), Liebenberg and Van der Merwe (2004), and Ohemeng (2009) argue that many scholars use performance management interchangeably with its associated concepts such as performance evaluation, performance monitoring and performance measurement. An argument will be mounted in this article that performance management does not equal the IQMS, and it is neither performance measurement nor an appraisal system. It is unfortunate that commentators see the IQMS as performance management since this leads to neglect in the actual implementation of performance management. For instance, Bisschoff and Mathye (2009:393) speak of “a post performance management era” and suggest that “South Africa needs to move beyond a teacher performance system as we know it” all the time referring to the IQMS. The same applies to Ntombela, Mpehle and Penciliah (2010), who speak of the IQMS as a performance management system.

Ohemeng (2009) is of the opinion that performance management stems from the idea of managerial control and accountability mechanisms, which expresses the end/means syndrome often projected under managerialism. Indeed, on being appointed, teachers enter into a contract of service in which they agree to perform certain duties related to teaching and learning, while the employer (Department of Education) offers certain benefits such as remuneration (Roussouw & Oosthuizen, 2004). At school level the employer is represented by the principal and the school management team who are charged with the professional management of the school. The role of the school management team is to implement performance management with the purpose of improving a school’s instructional programme and to satisfy educators’ developmental needs (Singh, 2005). Obviously, the Department of Education, as the employer, expects the principal and the school management team to control teaching and learning and to account for the success or failure of the school.

Performance management differs from managerialism because it is people-oriented and aims at developing teachers to make them more effective and efficient so that they match or exceed the standards set for them. Performance management within the IQMS is performed by the Development Support Group (DSG) in that their task involves the mentoring and coaching of teachers. The managerialistic approach of the accountability system is somewhat ameliorated by the fact that the DSG is not a hierarchically determined structure and it is not part of the school management team. It only includes the immediate supervisor of the appraisee, in most cases a Head of Department. Otherwise, the principal and other members of the school management team do not serve on this committee. According to the Personnel Administration Measures (PAM, 1999), Heads of Departments (HoDs) in a school are responsible for the effective functioning of the department and for ensuring that the subjects, learning area or phase and the education of the learners are promoted in a proper manner.

Performance management cannot be seen to mean the same thing as performance evaluation and performance measurement. In the IQMS, performance measurement forms part of performance evaluation and represents the final or summative evaluation of teachers conducted by external agencies once a year. According to Heystek, Niemann, Van Rooyen, Mosoge and Bipath (2008) performance evaluation is a formal, structured process linked to giving recognition or incentives for outstanding performance and it serves as a basis for promotion and salary progression. In contrast, performance management is carried out continuously in the school to develop teachers and it is not linked to remuneration or incentives. It represents a way of capacitating employees in the workplace through accompaniment by a mentor. In fact, performance management may be likened to professional and cultural accountability. Professional accountability means that professional standards are set and adhered to by the professionals themselves rather than being enforced by external agencies. Performance management is professional accountability in that it is carried out by the DSG, which comprises professionals who evaluate other professionals. Cultural accountability refers to the internal development of a unique school ethic and culture of doing things to which members adhere and which is sanctioned by the community of the school (Naidu et al., 2008). In monitoring and supporting teachers, for example, the DSG has no positional power to enforce rules but depends on the ethos and culture of the school to sanction non-complying members.

Kloot and Martin (2000) note that the literature on performance measurement is more extensive than that on performance management because of the confusion surrounding these concepts. Liebenberg (2004:292) defines performance measurement as “the collection of numerical values according to specific rules and procedures”, which are applied to the evaluation of behavioural characteristics and work outputs of a teacher to determine the extent of deviation (if any) from required performance standards. This is reflected in the IQMS by assigning scores to the performance of teachers according to standards set for the particular post level. Lebas (1995:34) concludes that “the processes involved in performance management and in performance measurement are not the same but they feed and comfort one another”.

It appears at this point that the question of what performance management entails can now be answered. Based on the above discussion, the following characteristics of performance management may be deduced:

- Performance management is an action taken internally by designated school members to create and support conditions under which high quality teaching and learning can take place.
- Implementation of performance management involves the execution of the management tasks of planning, organising, guiding and controlling with respect to the performance of teaching and learning activities.
- Performance management aims at capacitating teachers to enable them to increasingly attain and exceed goals and standards set for the particular post level.

- Performance management is carried out throughout the year and prepares teachers for the inevitable performance evaluation and measurement.

Moreland (2009:762) concludes that “performance management is all about celebrating teachers’ achievements, valuing their contribution to the profession, and helping them develop their skills and career path”. However, for performance management to reach lofty heights, school managers must recognise that their role has changed from performance evaluation to the development of staff (Leggat, 2009).

The next section deals with the theoretical frameworks that underpin performance management.

Structural-functionalism as a theoretical framework for performance management
Accountability can be addressed in different forms. Hanushek and Raymond (2001) mention three different ways of addressing accountability: political systems to assure democratic accountability, market-based reforms, and peer-based accountability. The South African accountability system is a mixture of democratic accountability and peer-based accountability. This accountability system was preceded by negotiations between teacher organisations and the government leading to Collective Agreement 8 of 2003, which saw the introduction of the IQMS (ELRC, 2003). The new system replaced the pre-1994 inspectorate system that teachers rejected because the inspectorate functioned by coercive force and enforced compliance with rules and regulations in an allegedly authoritarian, rigid, ritualistic and legalistic atmosphere (Teu & Motlhabane, 2002; Wits Education Policy Unit, 2005; Ntombela et al., 2010). This type of bureaucratic accountability was not geared towards the needs of teachers, learners and parents but towards the needs of the bureaucracy itself, demanding compliance with standard procedures, policy directives and rules. The consequences of this system were rewards and sanctions but no incentives (Naidu et al., 2008).

The system of the IQMS can be explained on the basis of the structural-functional theory, which seeks to describe how order and stability are achieved in an organisation. Structural-functionalism is a framework that claims that society is a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability (Ballantine & Spade, 2007). A school may also be seen in this light as it is composed of different parts that work together to attain the school goals. The structural-functionalist sees an organisation such as a school as consisting of several parts that work in tandem to achieve certain defined goals. Although the different parts are organised to fulfil different needs, they are dependent on one another. For instance, a school is characterised by a hierarchical structure in which each position has a defined function. Thus, school managers manage the school, teachers teach and learners learn. For teachers to teach effectively and for learners to learn effectively, the school must be well-managed. The IQMS was introduced to put an end to the confusion reigning about the evaluation of teachers, following the collapse of the inspectorate system. It was thus an attempt to bring about order and to stabilise the delivery of education. As posited by structural-functional theory, if any part of the system does not function well, then

the whole system is affected and this creates problems (Ballantine & Spade, 2007).

The IQMS is implemented through certain structures that work together to evaluate individuals in the school as well as the whole school. Kagaari, Munene and Ntayi (2010) maintain that through performance management individuals are directed and supported to work effectively and efficiently in accordance with the needs of an organisation. In the IQMS, the DSG is charged with mentoring and support of educators (Department of Education, 2004), as well as with the evaluation of teachers internally in preparation for the summative evaluation conducted externally by government agents. According to Maphutha (2006), the IQMS is the only accountability system in which post-level-one teachers take part. The teacher must first evaluate himself/herself with the same instrument that is to be used in conducting the developmental appraisal and submit the results to the DSG before being assessed by the DSG. The self-evaluation report helps the teacher and the DSG to identify strengths and weaknesses of the teacher upon which the teacher is expected to draw up a Professional Growth Plan (PGP). It is on the basis of the PGP that the DSG initiates programmes to assist the teacher to meet the requirements of summative evaluation thereby developing the teacher. As such, the PGP informs the support and mentoring that is required for developing teachers. Performance management is, therefore, a way of inculcating values, norms, traditions and customs of the school in the teachers, as expressed by the structural-functionalist theory (Tobias, 2003).

It is unfortunate that the participation of teachers in conducting the IQMS excludes principals and deputy principals (Maphutha, 2006). As a result of the DSG being neither hierarchical nor bureaucratic, its members are not accountable to the principal whose role has been reduced to adjustment of scores without the necessary scrutiny of the performance of the teacher. This tendency negates the importance of a leader and his/her possible influence on people. It focuses on management techniques that are administrative or management related, rather than leadership related (Naidu et al., 2008). The power of the principal is embedded in his/her position in the hierarchical structure of the school as an organisation. He/she is the accounting officer of the school and without power, his/her work is crippled. This results in conflict between the principal, the DSG and teachers. It seems, as far as teacher evaluations are concerned, that the principal loses his/her power to control teacher's work (Maphutha, 2006). This trend goes against the arrangement in many countries where the principal is charged with the evaluation of teachers. The presence of such potential conflict means other theories may also manifest themselves in performance management, notably conflict theory.

Conflict theory as a theoretical framework for performance management

As opposed to the structural-functionalist view, conflict theory, in its simplest form, posits a society that is stratified into groups that hold power and groups without power. According to the conflict theory, there is no harmony in society but a struggle between these groups. The group that holds power (the dominant group or status group) main-

tains power by coercing, hiring or culturally manipulating others to comply with its directives. However, the subordinate group is not passive and reacts to actions taken by the status group. Indeed, as Collins (1971) argues, where subordinate groups constitute a cohesive status group, they may have considerable power to avoid compliance. The school may be seen as an organisation consisting of two major groups: the school management team and the teachers. By virtue of holding certain positions the school members of the school management team possess positional power that enables them to enforce compliance by the subordinate group – the teachers. Since the advent of unionism the subordinate group has started to resist the instructions of the school management team thereby precipitating conflict between the two groups. In implementing the IQMS, the school management team derives its power from the agreement arrived at in the bargaining between government and the unions. The subordinate group nevertheless resists the implementation of the IQMS despite its union having agreed to it.

Conflict is notable between the government and the unions as indicated above. The linking of summative evaluation with the development of teachers continues to be a bone of contention between the government and the unions, for example SADTU (2011), aims to reject the proposed Teacher Performance Appraisal in its current form and suggests that performance management and appraisal should be suspended to allow relevant research to be conducted. At school level conflict as notable area of conflict between teachers and DSG members occurs with the allocation of scores to teachers. Nkambule (2010) argues that members of the DSG are intimidated by teachers when allocating low scores, therefore, scores are allocated so that teachers get at least the minimum score to avoid missing the opportunity for salary progression. This means the system does not differentiate between high-performing and low-performing teachers. Another implication of this arrangement is that teachers are reluctant to expose their weaknesses when they complete the PGPs for fear of losing out on salary progression. The IQMS thus completely loses its developmental power.

The following sections contain a report of an empirical investigation on the basis of the conceptual-theoretical framework outlined here.

Research design and methodology

The major aim of the current empirical research was to explore the experiences and perceptions of school management teams with regard to the implementation of performance management under the aegis of the IQMS. This aim is more suitable to an interpretivist framework whereby knowledge is gained through a description of people's intentions, beliefs, values, and reasons, meaning making and self-understanding (Henning, 2004). The use of the qualitative design enabled the researcher to gather non-numerical data, to be immersed and involved in the changing, real-world situation and to record these changes in the real-life context of the participants (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

The structured individual interview was selected as qualitative research design for

use in this research. The choice was based on the fact that performance management is an emotion-laden issue involving the deepest feelings of a person seeing that people are reluctant to acknowledge and face their mistakes. Moreover, the interview allowed the researcher to observe surroundings, that are important in contextualising the responses and to observe the non-verbal language of participants, for instance, expressions of dislike (pulling a face) or like (enthusiasm). A structured interview was conducted using an interview schedule of uniform questions.

Purposive sampling was used to select information-rich key participants who can provide more insights about the topic (Strauss & Myburg, 2001; Neuman, 2006). As McMillan and Schumacher (1993) posit, the interview need not involve a large number of participants. For this reason, out of a total population of 24 primary schools in the Rustenburg Area Project Office, three schools were chosen by random sampling and in each school the principal and heads of departments were individually involved in the interviews. A total of 15 ($N = 15$) participants were interviewed.

Trustworthiness of data was established using triangulation in which responses from transcripts, field notes and draft reports were cross-checked to establish the accuracy of statements. Member checking was also used to establish the trustworthiness of data by playing back the audio-tape to the participants and allowing them to comment. This means the study included criteria of trustworthiness such as truth-value, transferability, applicability, consistence and neutrality (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Data were analysed using the content analysis method. This involved repeatedly listening to the audio-tapes, reading the transcripts and studying the field notes to obtain an overview of the collected data. Data were subsequently coded into segments of meaning that appeared in the form of sentences and phrases.

The authors observed due protocol in relation to ethical issues. Participants were assured of anonymity, protection from harm, confidentiality, and commitment to honesty. The participants first completed the informed consent form in addition to the explanation about the purpose of the research. Participants took part of their own volition and were informed that they could withdraw from participating at any time before, during, or after completion of the questionnaire, without fear of repercussions. The researchers asked and obtained permission to conduct research – first from the District Office, then from principals, and then from the participants.

Findings

Themes were identified from the coding process as follows:

- Knowledge of the performance management concept
- Value of performance management
- Attitudes of teachers towards performance management
- Implementation of performance management
- Problems that hinder the implementation of performance management.

The discussion following is based on the identified themes.

Knowledge of performance management

The literature reveals that performance is often misunderstood and confused with performance measurement and performance appraisal. The responses of participants clearly demonstrated this misunderstanding. Mostly, participants associated performance management with learner performance instead of teacher performance. Participant 3 put it this way: “... *And then we have to look at performance per quarter how learners performed then we do review of the performance.*”

Another participant said: “*So that this thing [performance management] should be a chain so that at the end it is clear that learners have performed well and that the chain did not have breakages.*”

Participant 3 emphasised that “*With performance management we do believe that each and every learner will perform because weaknesses, check-ups, interviews, development ... any other thing will be done through performance management.*”

There were, however, participants who understood performance management in terms of the work of the HoD in the school, but none mentioned the work of the DSG.

Participant 6 explained: “*The duties of the HoD are ... to manage the learning area and manage the staff directly reporting to them and then ensuring that teaching and learning takes place.*”

Another participant (No. 11) echoed the same sentiment but showed greater depth in his/her understanding of performance management:

It's where you manage the personnel in the school under your control in as far as their inputs and outputs are concerned regarding the teaching and learning whereby you look into each other's contribution and how can you improve and assist where assistance might be needed.

In support of the above sentiment another participant said: “*The HoD and the teacher come together to show each other how they can draw a year plan or term which they will employ and then check work to see how they performed.*”

Value of performance management

A recurring theme concerned the value of performance management to the school, parents and teachers. However, but it seems that the participants were actually referring to the value of evaluation. This is illustrated by the following comments:

Participant 9: *... performance management needs to be conducted so that we can see if the children and teachers are performing well and that the parents are also performing well.*

Participant 7: *... that is how we can improve the school situation...that is how we can develop teachers so that they do better in their learning areas.*

Participant 10: *Performance management will force us to plan right from the beginning and to follow the whole plan implementing it, keep on revisiting it especially where there are some loop holes.*

Teachers' attitudes towards performance management

Participants revealed that teachers had a negative attitude towards them when they

started implementing performance management. Teachers sometimes became personal in expressing their negative attitude; often they subjected the HoDs to verbal abuse. Participant 1 captured how the remarks of the teachers became acidly personal by stating the following: *“In performance management there are so many challenges such as laziness, ignorance, non-commitment on some educators they regards [sic] performance management as a direct form of slavery. This is really too much!”*

Another participant captured the mood of teachers as follows: *“It [performance management] becomes a challenge, sometimes they [educators] look at it as if maybe it’s a witch-hunt.”*

Teachers often react by not submitting their records, not attending meetings and not carrying out the work agreed upon in their Personal Growth Plans. This view is expressed as follows by one participant: *“Sometimes the teachers don’t submit their records in time or they totally do not submit and you will find that, err....teachers don’t prepare their lessons thoroughly.”*

Implementation of performance management

Implementation of performance management refers to actions by individuals to activate and sustain performance management; the question is what does the individual do to implement performance management? Participants 1, 2, 3, and 4 stated that they checked educators’ work, ensured that learners’ books were marked and that marks were allocated. They also checked and supervised learners when receiving their performance reports.

In response to the question of how the participants conducted performance management, one participant said:

I conduct it [performance management] informally and formally, sometimes I just go around the classes and evaluate teachers by doing class visits.

Participant 4 said: *HoDs ... guide the teachers and they check learners’ work and they give guidance to the teachers. They advise teachers about the correct methodologies.*

Participants demonstrated that they were knowledgeable about implementing performance management. Some said they held meetings: i.e. phase meetings, grade meetings, morning briefs and meetings with subject advisors but none spoke about one-on-one meetings with the teachers or about meetings with DSG. Some commented as follows:

Participant 9: *... is to check where problems lie and to address them in way of support, in the way of mentoring and coaching so that you build up the reputation of the school.*

Participant 2: *The more the workshops are held, the better the chance we spend to address issues and we engage educators and give them the platform to air their views.*

Problems that hinder the implementation of performance management

Participants alluded to systemic challenges that hampered the implementation of per-

formance management in schools. The greatest challenge was over-crowding of classes which hampered performance and made it impossible to carry out the duties of performance management. One participant referred to the systemic challenges as follows:

Yes, there are many problems we meet...problems that are beyond our control. One problem is overcrowding where I teach almost fifty learners in a class and then I am expected to teach all learning areas, even those that I am not good at. So, do you expect me to welcome performance management while having all these problems?

Another participant said it was impossible to give individual attention in an overcrowded classroom; "... if you give individual attention it means you are going to take three months to cover all the children in the class and there is no time for performance management."

Another challenge involved shortage of resources and staff. It was explained in this way by a participant:

So, you would have a number of areas to control by one individual, obviously that would result in one learning area being neglected so the performance thereof will be affected by lack of man-power. Again, you need resources, for example, you would obviously require a good filing method or you would need a computer and obviously we do not have that at our disposal.

Some participants mapped the way forward while others were discouraged. A forward-looking participant had this to say: "*To make performance management work, we should start to build capacity of teachers and increase their understanding of performance management so that they can understand why their work should be checked.*"

The one who had lost hope said: "*There is no immediate solution. You keep on developing one, one said the road to success is always under construction, you keep on persuading and sometimes you are patient to do this but sometimes you are not.*"

Discussion

The responses showed that performance management was neglected by those who were supposed to implement it, since it was implemented haphazardly. Participants were silent on salient points of implementing performance management. While some aspects of performance management were mentioned, such as checking educators' work, guiding them, mentoring them and ensuring that teaching and learning took place, no formal way of implementing performance management according to its phases was mentioned. This response can be understood because participants often confused performance management with the performance of learners. According to Kagaari et al. (2010:511), new and difficult tasks need learning rather than the setting of performance goals, because high performance is not always the result of greater effort, but of greater understanding. This means that the Department of Education should conduct workshops among teachers to increase their understanding of perfor-

mance management and ensure that it can be implemented efficiently.

The above findings resonate with research on developmental appraisal. Nkambule (2010) found that PGPs are not fully developed as teachers are reluctant to expose their weaknesses lest they lose out on salary progressions. Furthermore, the DSGs tended to assist teachers only to get at least the minimum score so that they would qualify for salary progression. The findings of this research revealed the weakness of integrating development with appraisal since such integration leads to the neglect of development in favour of appraisal that is linked to incentives. Teu and Motlhabane (2002) pointed out that in 2002 educators did not complete self-evaluation forms as required by the IQMS and were, therefore, not able to reflect critically on their performance. It seems the situation has not changed much since then. PGPs are important for development in that they inform the support and mentoring required for teachers. Failure to complete the PGP means there is no plan according to which to carry out developmental activities. Kagaari et al. (2010) point out that employees derive more satisfaction from attaining goals or from making progress towards the attainment of goals than when they fail or make little or no progress.

Our findings also indicate a deviation from the IQMS requirement: – that the DSG be charged with the implementation of teacher development. The responses mostly referred to the academic work performed by the HoDs. Meetings with staff under the tutelage of the HOD were mentioned, but participants failed to mention meetings of the DSG or that they attended such meetings. Neither was there any mention of one-on-one meetings with teachers to discuss the PGPs. Instead of confronting their own shortcomings, schools and individuals are more likely to hide them for fear of appearing bad in the public eye. On the other hand, evaluation for development is an internal process where shortcomings need to be addressed. According to Kagaari et al. (2010), an employee's work ethic improves when he/she perceives that the supervisor or a co-worker supports him/her. The findings in this research tend to confirm the literature findings that the support given to teachers by their supervisors is minimal or non-existent. Maphutha (2006) found that professional development is neglected when formative and summative evaluation are applied together while Nkambule (2010) found that the development aspect of the IQMS is neglected in favour of summative evaluation aimed at ensuring salary progression, grade progression and affirmation of appointments. It may well be concluded that performance management, as an aspect of the IQMS, is not properly understood in South African schools.

Another point of concern is the teachers' attitude towards performance management and evaluation in general. Granted any form of evaluation is intimidating, as Naidu et al. (2008) would have us believe, but the IQMS has been designed precisely to address the fear of accountability systems by allowing teachers the opportunity to be prepared throughout the year for the inevitable summative evaluation at the end of the year. It seems this aim is completely missed in the implementation of the IQMS. Some teachers see performance management as a form of control, "slavery" or "witch-hunt" instead of as support by the management team. This finding underscores

the findings that emerged from the available literature. For instance, SADTU (2011: 13) found the IQMS to be “too time-consuming, too personnel heavy, too bureaucratic and involving too much paperwork”. Kagaari et al. (2010) point out that where control is emphasized employees develop coping strategies such as doing what is minimal or defaulting. According to Collins (1971:1008), if work groups are organised into cohesive units, they may be able to protect their inept members from being judged by outsider standards. The employer may let them be, fearing alienation and dissention if he/she presses them harder.

Participants in this research alluded to systemic challenges and constraints in the implementation of performance management. This finding is supported by previous research. For example, Douglas (2005:15) found that in spite of the introduction of the IQMS, the overall circumstances of teachers remained unchanged. He mentions “overcrowded classes, inadequate learning support materials, unsafe working environments, and uncertainties caused by looming retrenchments” as constraints to the implementation of the IQMS and by extension, to performance management. SADTU (2011) cites lack of resources, an unfavourable learner/teacher ratio, shortage of relevant and qualified educators and a lack of student discipline and commitment as some of the key areas where the government should be focusing.

The findings in this research suggest that performance management can best be explained using the conflict rather than the structural-functionalist theory. In an attempt to bring order and stability, performance management may have brought conflict and instability in schools. This paper shows that performance management is clouded with conflict. From its very introduction and implementation, the IQMS has been riddled with conflict between the government and the unions, notably SADTU. Even at the very outset, the introduction of the Teacher Performance Appraisal, proposed by Draft 4.7 (Department of Education, 2011) was met with resistance by the unions.

Conclusion

There is no denying that teachers play a pivotal role in the transformation of education and in the attainment of the lofty ideal expressed as “providing quality education for learners irrespective of their social, cultural and economic background” (Smith & Ngoma-Maema, 2003:345). Teachers, as co-developers of educational policy through their participation in union activity and as implementers of policy on the ground, act as the driving force behind the actualisation of transformation in education. The development of teachers is therefore crucial in an education system experiencing an overload of policies. It seems, however, that teacher development is a neglected aspect of the performance management system employed in South Africa after the changing of the guard in 1994.

In view of the findings in this research, it may be suggested that performance management, as a way of developing teachers, should enjoy centre-stage in all development workshops offered by the Department of Education. Lack of knowledge and expertise on processes such as mentoring, coaching and monitoring hampers the zeal

to implement performance management. Furthermore, tertiary institutions are challenged to offer programmes that are relevant to teacher development. Training and development, which is a feature of industry, should receive more attention in teacher training institutions especially those offering programmes aimed at developing principals and Heads of Departments. Lamentably, human resource management has never been a strong point in education. It is indeed time it receives earnest attention – lest education falls behind and fails to achieve its goals.

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