

THE DEVELOPMENTAL APPRAISAL SYSTEM (DAS) AS A MAJOR ISSUE IN EDUCATIONAL POLICY DISCOURSE IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE OF SCHOOLS IN THE FREE STATE

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper, based on a doctoral study, is to examine how teachers in the Foundation Phase of schools in the Free State province perceived, conceptualised and implemented Developmental Appraisal System (DAS) as a component of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). The epistemological and ontological perspectives pertaining to both quantitative and qualitative approaches compelled the researcher to choose the Mixed Method Research (MMR). Data analysis consisted of the inferential and descriptive statistics for quantitative data analysis and, themes, patterns and behaviours for qualitative data analysis. Unbalanced two-way ANOVA, T-test and frequency distributions were used in analysis of quantitative data while themes and patterns resembled qualitative data analysis. The majority of teachers perceived DAS as a developmental process while a sizable minority claimed to the contrary. The Department of Basic Education did not provide direct training to teachers on matters pertaining to both the DAS and IQMS. Furthermore, the money reward earned through the process of DAS was perceived to be a source of conflict between teachers and school management.

Keywords: Developmental Appraisal System (DAS), Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), teachers, Foundation Phase, perceptions

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper focuses on teachers' appraisal system pertaining to their development as a major issue in educational policy discourse in the Free State in particular and the Republic of South Africa (RSA) in general. The issue in this paper points to the arguments that the teacher Developmental Appraisal System (DAS) is perceived to be a problematic component of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). The challenge therefore was to make teachers understand, accept and implement the DAS process professionally, as well as to support the system.

Therefore, any Developmental Appraisal System must be more realistic for it to be successful. It must be funded and implemented according to a sound professional development plan that involves teachers and is completely supported by high quality professional supervision.

2. OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL APPRAISAL SYSTEM: ORIGIN, APPROACHES, PRINCIPLES AND REGULATIONS

Appraisal refers to the process of continuously determining or estimating the value of each employee's performance by systematically “evaluating, judging, assessing and reviewing daily work” (Lekome, 2006: 75, 78). Appraisal compels teachers and managers, researchers and policy-makers in the Department of Basic Education and Culture (DBEC) to engage intensively on issues of teacher developmental appraisal in the country in order to identify each teacher's personal developmental needs and daily performance. In essence, Ramnarain (2008: 20) holds that development appraisal should appraise teachers in a transparent way with the aim to identify areas of strength and weaknesses. This kind of appraisal should lead the process to effective formative evaluation. It is from this approach that development appraisal should adequately address issues that teachers perceive as concerns:

- Whether or not teachers receive regular feedback on the implementation process;
- Whether details about implementation are the same across phases, schools, districts or provinces;
- Whether phases, schools, districts or provinces are complying with the requirements for implementation;
- Whether or not School Development Teams (SDTs), comprising of own supervisor and peer, and School Management Teams (SMTs), comprising of Head of Departments (HODs), Deputy Principal and Principal (Top Structure) are adequately trained to process the implementation of IQMS; and
- Whether or not principals are evaluated regularly by circuit managers.

The above mentioned issues are concerns that serve as gaps and lags in the execution of the appraisal tool. The Department recommends that these gaps and lags can be eliminated by means of Teacher Performance Appraisal System (TPAS) earmarked to establish moderation committees (DOBE, 2012: 3).

3. THE ORIGIN OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL APPRAISAL SYSTEM (DAS) IN SOUTH AFRICA

Since the Soweto schools uprising from 1976s to the 1980s, schools became the centre of political, economic, social and educational struggle throughout South Africa. It was during this period that the idea of developing a new appraisal system acceptable to all stakeholders (Lekome, 2006: 58) was developed to address both the competency and incompetency of teachers as well as to improve the quality of education.

In October 1994, a national conference on School Management Teacher Development and Support was attended by the newly established national and provincial education departments. All the teacher trade unions and concerned organisations were present. Three main principles were derived: “general agreement of the guiding principles, overall consensus on the nature of the instrument and the general agreement on the need to pilot the developmental appraisal system with post level one teachers before implementation” were put forward for debate and scrutiny (Lekome, 2006: 59).

According to the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) (2000:2), an agreement was concluded in the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) (Resolution 8 of 2003) to integrate the existing programmes on quality management in education. The programmes referred to in this context are the DAS that was implemented on 28 July 1998 (as encapsulated in Resolution 4 of 1998). The purpose of Developmental Appraisal (DA) is to appraise individual teachers in a manner that is easily understood and accepted as a tool to evaluate areas of strength and weakness, as well as to draw up developmental programmes (Rambuda, 2006: 60).

Lekome (2006: 58) saw the purpose of appraisal differently: referring to appraisal as addressing competence and incompetence of teachers, as well as improving the quality of education. It is in this context that this study focused on the quality of education in terms of IQMS implementation. The challenge of maintaining the quality of education is not only South African problem but is a worldwide phenomenon.

In Europe, integrated quality management system became a key link in the chain of the creation of knowledge necessary for successful development and implementation of a philosophy of quality in education. There is a growing need (Zivojinovic, 2007:87) in education, particularly related to the developmental appraisal of teachers. Survival and growth can be attained by education which readily adapts to the developmental appraisal system.

According to Gallie (2006:23), contemporary teachers are aware that evaluation is a key to school improvement, because it provides an individual teacher an opportunity to receive feedback for purposes of self-correction. Evaluation also enhances both negative and positive feedback, thus serves as a self-adjusting system. It is therefore imperative that teachers conceptualise developmental appraisal as a tool for self-empowerment and advancement.

In Europe, developmental appraisal is integrated into the IQMS practice as part of knowledge creation (Zivojinovic, 2007: 27). The major aim is to focus on quality as well. Although Gallie (2006:19) defines appraisal in terms of school improvement, the issue of quality forms the central part of the argument for appraisal of teachers in schools. The difference between the two authors, with regard to appraisal, centres on the issue of quality in the IQMS.

4. APPROACHES TO DEVELOPMENTAL APPRAISAL

In this study, the researcher argues that an internally introduced IQMS, compared to an externally established system, is ideal for successful implementation. Experts in the field of quality assurance insist that to ensure a successful implementation of the IQMS (Herselman & Hay, 2002:239-240), it should be initiated and supported from within the institution that ought to implement it. Steyn argues that the fact (2002:109) that policy-makers and teachers perceive the IQMS as a structured, systematic educational tool which leads to an improvement in the learner performance, motivation, self-esteem and confidence, the IQMS may not necessarily be the solution to educational needs.

One needs to understand that the task is not to implement a customary IQMS, but rather to design and develop, by means of involvement and inclusiveness of all stakeholders especially the implementers of the system, a system that would be conducive to the attainment of set goals (Herselman & Hay, 2002:240).

A reflection on the education system in New Zealand could add solutions on solving problems of appraisal in South Africa.

The New Zealand curriculum is based on “market forces ideology of the last century which created confusion, teacher overload and considerable frustration” (New Zealand Council for Educational Research, 2007: 1). Although there are assistance from the Head of Department in the case of South Africa the IQMS coordinators and peer teachers, the IQMS may still be regarded by many teachers as arbitrarily imposed from above. For example, it is alleged that the IQMS has too many assessment criteria, involves too much paper work and too much class disruption. However, the Portfolio Committee on Education (PCE) believes that the development and performance of teachers need to be separate functions dealt with by two separate systems (Portfolio Committee on Education, 1996:1).

5. APPRAISAL AS A CATALYST FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Appraisal should be approached as a process for preparing the ground to enhance teacher personal development and contributing to meaningful partnership (Kohler, 2003:1) between an individual teacher and the Department of Education as an employer. Hammonds (2002:2) points out that it is vital that appraisal is not performed and implemented for its own sake, but should be regarded as an instrument integral to the administration and management of other functions of the school.

The objectivity of developmental appraisal should include accountability and improvement of staff performance.

On the other hand, Noble (2002:58) recommends that for effective implementation of development appraisal, the Department of Education must develop the capabilities and support mechanisms necessary to realise successful and meaningful appraisal. Furthermore, teachers must be assisted to maintain “focused feedback, goal setting, self-assessment and continuing support” (Hammonds, 2002: 2).

Appraisal can be used as a tool for the organisation's realisation of its objectives of providing a better service or product, while at the same time “enhancing staff satisfaction and development” (Monyatsi, Steyn & Kamper, 2006: 427). This implies that, in the case of teachers to whom the study here refers, they must be motivated, committed and keen to understand all that is expected of them. Teachers' understanding of the benefits of developmental appraisal can be formed by employing (Hammond & Morris, 2002: 3) “collaborative partnership or complementary partnership”. This implies that positional power exercised by authority alone will retard innovative endeavours with regard to the collaborative partnership model. This model, designed for teacher development, enhances:

- integration;
- complementarities;
- access to various kinds of knowledge and skills;
- no need for consensus about good practice;
- critical questioning of all ideas about good practice;
- emphasis on student-teachers' understanding of how they can learn;
- individualized progression ; and
- monitoring as a new role to be explored.

On the other hand, “complementary partnership” views the teacher and the Department of Education as having separate and complementary responsibilities. This means that there is partnership, but not necessarily total integration in the system.

The table 1 illustrates some issues which the Free State Department of Education felt necessary in monitoring the implementation of the IQMS as indicated in the table below.

IQMS evaluation tool	Key features
Data capturing	Current, valid, authentic and reliable.
Support functions	Required for effective implementation.
Quality Assurance	Nine focus arias
Challenges	Stimulation of interest and effort.
Resolutions	Evaluation of educators in the province
Purpose	Idea generation
Indaba	Deliberative assembly

Source: (Ntshauba & Majalefa: 2008)

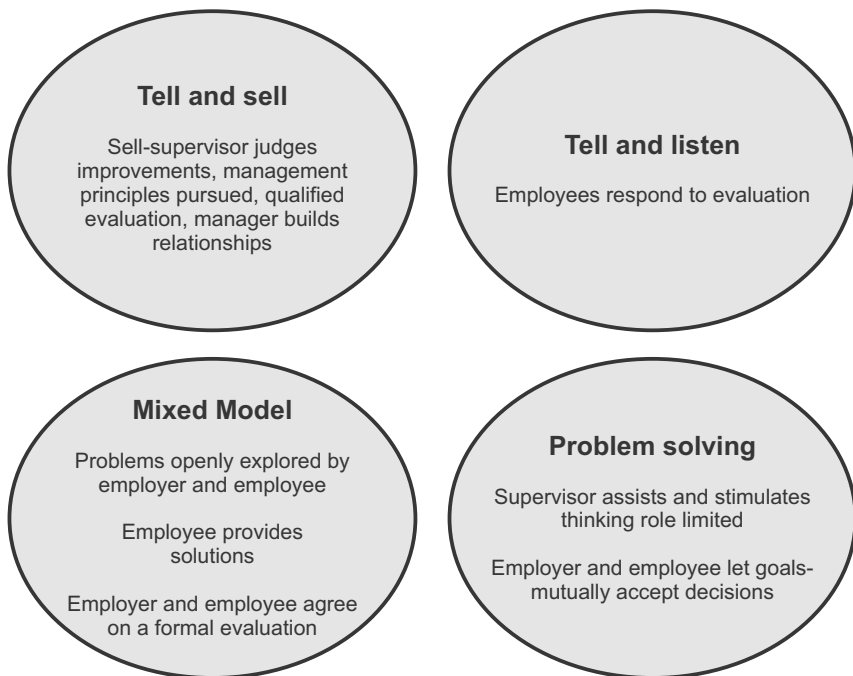
The implications of this professional socialisation of the teaching fraternity are that teachers are involved professionals who are committed, responsible and accountable for the success of the IQMS implementation.

6. THE DEVELOPMENTAL APPRAISAL

The developmental appraisal is an “off-shoot” of the so-called “management-by-objectives (MBO) approach” to performance management, originating from work of Drucker in 1954 (Anon, 2009: 3). In this approach, the nature of work to be performed is agreed and outcomes are formulated in advance and the employee is supported with the necessary assistance and training to facilitate the attainment of outcomes. This approach is supported by Gallie (2006: IV) that teachers need “orientation, knowledge sharing, understanding and the capacity building” to implement policies successfully.

A simple model illustrates the importance of understanding and conceptualising developmental appraisal. This model is called tell and sell, and can also be implemented in schools as an effective communication model.

Figure 1: Developmental appraisal model

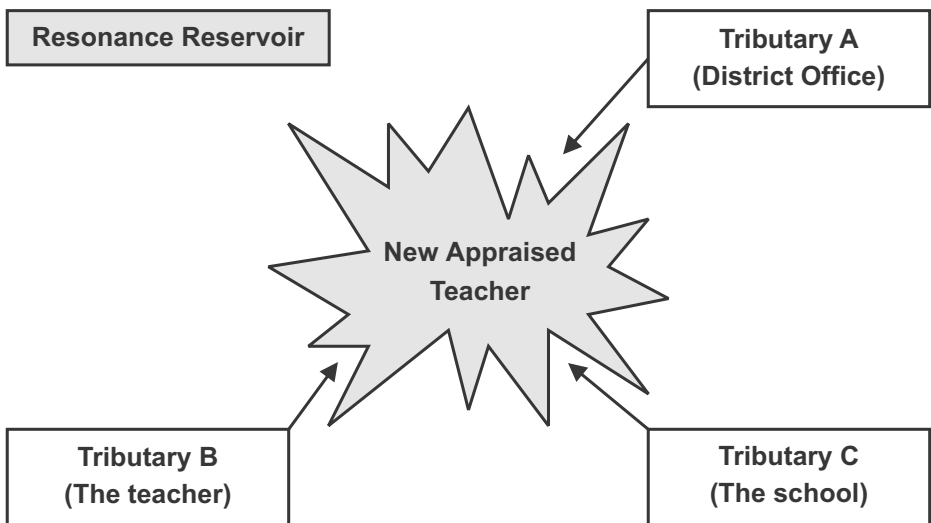


Acas (2012)

Tell and sell approach to problem solving is a mixed model that illustrates the joint appraisal venture in the development of a teacher. (Acas, 2012: 24). Within the new system of education in South Africa, performance appraisal is seen as a transformational process, a process which enhances teacher self-development whereby the teacher becomes “a resonance reservoir to be filled by running streams” a transmitter of transformational education as indicated in the figure below (Rowling, 2003: 11).

The above model implies that successful teacher appraisal consists of a triangular relationship – that of the district office, the school and the individual teacher. Such an approach to developmental appraisal can be defined as “resonance”, meaning “a reservoir of positive atmosphere at school as a workplace”. The “tributaries” that need to fill the teacher (a reservoir) in the school include goodwill, team work, sharing ideas and opinions, constant encouragement, self-discipline, commitment and trustworthiness. (Rowling, 2003:11-12).

Figure 2: Performance appraisal: a transformational route model



7. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AS A BACKWARD BENDING CURVE

Schools are organisations that are seen within the design of an output–throughput driven system. In other words, the teacher's performance appraisal is seen within the context of an output–throughput system. Therefore, the process of working backwards implies “designing down, delivering up” or beginning at the end and working backwards (Kramer, 1999: 24).

Coe (2007:1) points out that performance appraisal should include components of self-evaluation. In this view, teachers would be made responsible for an initial assessment of their own performance against agreed objectives including opportunities to pursue lifelong learning. Appropriate feedback on performance will be provided by the teacher's agreed reviewer, who could be the school, principal or immediate supervisor. While many see performance appraisal as involving concerned parties, Coe (2007:1-2) argues that teachers prepare for the annual review discussion by reflecting on their progress against agreed core areas of work for the previous year, considering whether their job description accurately reflects the requirements of their roles based on the following areas:

- a review of progress towards the individual's objectives for the previous year, or in the first year of operation of the scheme, or a revision of key activities;
- a review of the core areas of the individual's current role and responsibilities and, how these are being interpreted;
- a discussion of the success in the achievement of the objectives or undertakings, and possible remedies thereof;
- agreement of appropriate objectives or activities for the following year linked to the school's plans;
- consideration of the individual's immediate development needs, including training, and other support requirements as well as effectiveness of any training or development carried out in the previous review period; and
- with the agreement of the individual teacher, discussion of long-term career development, including any support required and any opportunities for lifelong learning.

The process above, if applied and concluded (Folger, Konovsky & Cropanzano, 1992:129), could address practical issues that emerge in appraisal processes in schools. Moreover, Monyatsi et al., (2006: 427-428) warn that to appraise performance accurately, evaluators or appraisers must have sufficient skills, knowledge and the motivational skills necessary for a well-conducted performance appraisal that represents a critical area for the test metaphor.

Firstly, this study investigates the “gaps and lags” between successful implementation of the IQMS as well as conceptions and perceptions teachers have about the implementation process. Hartman (2006:4) shows that in Pakistan the bureaucratic approach to developmental appraisal bypassed the importance of teacher knowledge, experience, perceptions, conceptions and idiosyncrasies. This has consequences in terms of teachers' adherence to principles and policies, consistence, policy acceptance and support. Forrest (2008: 3) points out that teacher developmental appraisal should have “purpose, direction, compassion and self-respect” for the appraised and therefore should strive towards attaining the physical, emotional, social and spiritual well-being of teachers.

A statement by the President of the National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) supports the continuing professional teacher development initiative. However, Balt (2008:1) strongly argues that there are no appropriate opportunities for teacher development. The argument further indicates that the IQMS did not provide schools and teachers with a needs driven support from the district offices, and the track record of the department in this regard is not good. The problem seems to occur at the level of District Office.

According to Mayatula (2006:2), the school must come up with a developmental plan for each of its teachers. The implication is that a bottom-up approach to teacher development appraisal is recommended in favour of the present top-down approach. This approach is reinforced by the Department of Education (DoE, 2007:1) that with regard to the IQMS, schools would be held accountable for policy implementation. The implications are that the IQMS had been formulated to achieve teacher professional development. The critical policy analysis for South Africa is expressed in “norms and standards for educators” (2006). The features that characterise the contemporary teacher are:

- a teacher is a specialist in a specific learning area, subject or phase;
- a teacher is a specialist in teaching and learning;
- a teacher is a specialist in assessment;
- a teacher is a curriculum developer;
- a teacher is a leader, administrator and manager;
- a teacher is a scholar, and lifelong learner; and
- a professional who plays a community, citizenship and pastoral role;
- caters for the unique needs of every individual;
- provides opportunities for all children in all spheres of education;
- encourages learners to be critical and divergent thinkers; and
- recognizes the needs of the community, learners, and parents (Forrest, 2006: 1 - 4).

Given the above-mentioned professional characteristics of teachers, the expectation is that the IQMS and teacher developmental appraisal in particular, must start with the teacher. According to Dugmore (2006:4), active steps are needed to restore the dignity of quality teaching as the most important aspect in the development process. Table 2.2 below illustrates the quality teacher development appraisal route model.

Table 2: Quality teacher development appraisal route model

Top management appraisal	Criteria		
Provincial Level Role Components	Developmental appraisal Quality management = shared services Quality planning, Quality assurance, Quality Control and Management consulting		
Higher Management appraisal			
District Office Role Components	Developmental appraisal management Development Appraisal objectives Aligning DA management with DA program Management Developmental Appraisal Management objectives Quality management Integration management approach		
The Principal Role Components	Quality management, Self-review of developmental appraisal, Team review, External developmental appraisal benchmark, Formulation of strategies	Quality planning, Quality standards, Developmental appraisal performance, Implementation process, System approach	Quality assurance, Build-in mechanisms, Developmental appraisal execution, Incorporating quality assurance
Middle management appraisal			
HOD role components	Assist in the formulation of the developmental appraisal, Manage the critical path within the DA, Assist in the quality management DA process, Review regularly DA progress, Forecast potential problems		

Western Cape Education Department (2005:13)

The system of measuring teacher performance can be effective if the contents in the next table can be implemented in Foundation Phase schools in the Free State. The purpose is to boost teacher performance during and after lessons. The Western Cape Education Department uses this tool for the same purpose and have found it effective and efficient.

Table 3: Scoring checklist: teacher performance appraisal

APPRAISER	CRITERIA	SCORE	
		YES	NO
Pre-evaluation appraisal (Appraise e) components	Identify and develop own developmental needs		
	Set standard measurement for own developmental appraisal		
	Establish and increase benchmarking mechanisms		

	Improve mechanisms for teamwork		
	Evaluate and improve processes		
Peer appraisal components	Identify resource or prioritise under - achievement areas		
	Identify interdependent components of developmental appraisal		
	Identify measurable developmental appraisal improvement		
	Compare critical diverging paths		
HOD role components	Assist in the formulation of Developmental Appraisal		
	Assist in the quality management of Developmental Appraisal		
	Manage the critical paths within Developmental Appraisal process		
	Forecast potential problems or conflict		
	Monitor possible under -achievement areas.		
	Ensure compliance within developmental appraisal process		
The principals role components	Quality Management: self -review of developmental appraisal, team review, external developmental appraisal benchmarking.		

Source: Dugmore (2006)

The above mentioned model is derived from a theoretical perspective on the Developmental Appraisal Quality Management System (Dugmore, 2006:5) and can be linked to the Quality Assurance System (QAS) of the Western Cape Education Department in South Africa, as an example of teacher performance appraisal system. Table 4 below indicates the composite score sheet for individual teachers.

Table 4: Composite score sheet for individual teachers

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	MAXIMUM	SCORE
Creation of a positive learning environment	16	
Knowledge of curriculum and learning programmes	14	
Lesson design, planning, development and presentation	14	
Assessment of learners	14	
Professional development in field of work/career and participation in professional bodies	14	
Interpersonal relations, communication and contribution to school development	14	
Extra-Curricular and Co -Curricular engagement	14	
TOTAL SCORE	100	
EDUCATOR'S SCORE has been/has not been ADJUSTED for the current period		

Source: Free State Department of Education (2004)

These two models may serve as useful tool for individual teachers to incorporate an element of self-evaluation (Coe, 2007:1). Moreover, the models compel the teachers to be responsible for their own initial appraisal based on their performance against agreed objectivity, and to identify areas for future development. The performance appraisal system should be done with the minimum of paperwork, and record keeping should be done electronically. Additionally, there should be no link between the review process and probation, salary, promotion or discipline, for which alternative procedures should be formulated. However, (Bush, 2008:1) warns that in South Africa, educators have negative perceptions about the appraisal system as a component of the IQMS.

In New Zealand, for example, Roosevelt (2002:1) demonstrates that those curricula that had their genesis (creation and production) could produce negative results especially if they are not supported by teachers. Hammonds (2002:2) warns that any educational adventure that does not value teacher judgment, especially the concepts of “feedback that is focused, goal setting, self-assessment and continuing support does not bode well for the 21st century quality teaching”.

8. INTEGRATED QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: LESSON OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT BASELINE EVALUATION

Over the decades, countless well intentioned reforms have been introduced to schools by both internal and external experts. Research done by Hammonds and Morris indicates that “no other organisational institution has ever faced challenges as radical as those that will transform the school” (Hammonds & Morris, 2002: 1). In South Africa, one of the most notable educational shifts is the release of the so-called “National Report on Systemic Evaluation in the Foundation Phase”.

According to Kohler (2003:1), the release of the report marked a significant turning point in South African evaluation of teaching and learning. The report contained the first major baseline study on the state of schooling in South Africa since the fall of the apartheid. The South African system of evaluation was piloted in the Foundation Phase and does not only evaluate cognition but added the goals of access, equity and quality as indicated below.

- Starting early for success: a focus on children from 0 to 5 years;
- Developing essential Numeracy skills in the early grades;
- Developing essential literacy skills in the early grades; and
- Early grade reading and Numeracy assessment. (DOBE, 2008: 1).

The Western Cape Education Department lesson observation instrument consists of two sections each designed to address teacher baseline evaluation and summative evaluation. The essence of the baseline evaluation is evaluating the teacher's presentation of the lesson, chosen by the teacher prior to the evaluation activity by the panel. The panel consists of School Developmental Group (SDG).

9. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research design refers to common paradigms which characterise both the qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Both approaches are normally contained in philosophical perspectives – epistemological (theory of knowledge and nature of knowledge) and ontological (philosophy of existence, assumptions and beliefs about the nature of being and existence (Cohen, 2006:1). On the other hand, epistemologically, the researcher and respondents are both considered as independent worlds (Sale, Lohfeld & Brazil, 2002: 43).

In this study, the researcher used a parallel concurrent strategy which merges the qualitative and quantitative data (Mixed Method Research) to help categorise similarities. Categorisation of similarities assisted to resolve problems and at the same time give answers to a multifaceted question (De Vos et al. 2011:92).

Inferential statistics, descriptive statistics, themes and patterns were employed depicting unbalanced two-way ANOVA, T-test and frequency distribution as method of quantitative data analysis.

10. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

IQMS goals could be better achieved, where implementers (teachers) work in procedures resembling open system theories. Although the majority of teachers (82%) perceived IQMS as developmental in nature, a smaller percentage (18%) indicated that it was non-developmental, non-transparent and was biased. These concerns retarded successful implementation of the IQMS.

In order to solve the aforementioned problem, the Tell and Listen Model was perceived as a model that could enhance transparent and unbiased DAS in schools in the country. Furthermore, teacher reflection of previous performance must be taken to be a continuous and routine process. Only of the respondents 44% suggested that authorities should provide direct training or workshops to teachers and not through a second or third person. It was also found out that money reward was a source of conflict between those who got it and those who did not. Firstly, the arguments over the implementation of DAS created a gap between university graduates and college graduates, pertaining to their interpretation of IQMS. Secondly, senior staff detests being evaluated by junior staff, even if the juniors have knowledge and skills to perform this function.

11. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper dealt specifically with teacher perceptions, conceptions and idiosyncrasies pertaining to developmental appraisal system. Six major concerns emanating from teachers' views about IQMS implementation were tabulated. The concerns were actual gaps that existed in the grading and allocation of score amongst teachers. This study investigated the impact of these constraints on teachers' perceptions about the whole IQMS. To this end, literature affirms failure to deal with these constraints may render IQMS implementation null and void.

The process of developmental appraisal needs to empower teachers to attain a sense of autonomy and creativity based on experience, talent and qualifications. The role of the appraiser must be to help teachers maintain value, rigour, effort and depth of the purpose of evaluation. Evaluators should strive to add any new ideas about how the developmental appraisal can empower teachers.

Different models of performance and developmental appraisals have been discussed in this study. The role of appraisers is to select a suitable approach that is consistent with the activity selected for appraisal.

For example, in the United Kingdom, Conlon (2003:1 of 2) insists that appraisal should be seen as a thrilling sequence of operations for preparing the ground in advancing teacher development. It should also be regarded as a continuous process to achieve a common purpose between the teacher and the Department of Education. Moreover, authorities need to be clear about all aspects relating to appraisal in order to maintain its wholeness as an educational instrument.

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