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Lecturers' Perceptions of the Implementation of the Integrated Quality Management System in a Limpopo Province TVET College

Authors:

Phetole Emmanuel Ramatsoma (201201077@keyaka.ul.ac.za)
University of Limpopo, Polokwane, South Africa

Mamoloko Florah Rachidi (mamoloko.rachidi@ul.ac.za)
University of Limpopo, Polokwane, South Africa

Mnqobi Banele Njoko (mnqobi.njoko@ul.ac.za)
University of Limpopo, Polokwane, South Africa

Abstract:

Monitoring performance of employees is key to organisational productivity, sustainability, and overall competitiveness. Therefore, the importance of investigating whether any system of performance management is perceived to be adequate cannot be emphasised enough. This study explored the employees' understanding of what the Integrated Quality Management System entails and if they perceived its implementation to be effective at a selected TVET college in Limpopo province. The study employed a qualitative research design method where 10 lecturers and two members of the management team were individually interviewed for the study. The study adopted a thematic data analysis technique. The results show that the participants had a fair understanding of what Integrated Quality Management System is about. However, they were not satisfied with the way it was implemented in their TVET college. This study contributes to the possible future implementation of the Integrated Quality Management System by the TVET colleges. Improved implementation has the potential to improve organisational performance, as well as help with other human resource functions, such as individual growth of employees and decisions for promotion. Additionally, understanding what the system entails has the potential of improving its support.

Keywords:

Performance Management, Integrated Quality Management System, Employee Development, Organisational Performance, TVET, Higher Education

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Introduction

Organizations have goals and objectives that they need to achieve for them to be sustainable, profitable, and competitive. For this achievement, organizations need human resources who are knowledgeable, capable, and performing well. Performance must be assessed at predetermined intervals for growth and development of human resources (Pujiarti, Parameswari & Janamarta, 2021). Performance management is an ongoing process that entails planning goals and objectives that employees need to achieve, following up on the achievement of those goals and crafting strategies for maximizing continuous growth of human resources. Human resource performance, growth, and development are dependent on good management of the organizational performance management system (PMS) (Farida & Setiawan, 2022). For a PMS to be successful, it must be rigorous and thorough, practical, meaningful, specific, reliable, valid, fair, and acceptable (Mio, Costantini & Panfilo, 2022).

There are various forms of managing employee performance that can be utilised by organisations. The Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges in South Africa mostly use the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). The IQMS is a result of an arrangement that was determined in the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC, Resolution 8 of 2003), which brought together three programs, viz., the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS), the Performance Measurement System, and the Whole School Evaluation (WSE). In terms of the DAS, individual lecturers' abilities are evaluated, on which personal development plans are based; while the Performance Measurement System assessed individual teacher performance on which salaries, incentives, and rewards were based; and the WSE evaluated performance of the overall college (ELRC, 2003). The IQMS is a policy intended to assist lecturers in determining their strengths and weaknesses in terms of teaching and learning and, as a result, in developing and improving their skills and competencies. It is also meant to improve overall college performance, as much as it is for remunerative purposes (DHET, 2003:4).

The TVET colleges in South Africa have gone through various transformation stages. These changes moved from them being known as technical colleges, to further education and training (FET) colleges until their current form, termed TVET colleges. Transformation has been accompanied by challenges in the leadership and management of these colleges, including management of the performance of human resources (Sithole, Wissink, & Chiwawa, 2022). Effective management of human resources performance, i.e., lecturers in TVET colleges, has the possibility of translating into improved productivity and consequent good performance of the students (Papanai & Poolkrajang, 2023). Unfortunately, ineffective implementation of the PMS can have an impact on the quality of lecturer skills development and a negative impact on students' teaching and learning experiences and learning outcomes (Mbeche, Riechi & Akala, 2023).

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Against this backdrop of transformation in the college format in South Africa, as well as the effort to continue managing and assessing performance within these colleges, it became crucial to assess whether the implementation of IQMS is perceived to be effective in its application. The performance of lecturers within TVET colleges is particularly important as it impacts their graduates and how these graduates perform in the labour market where they have to apply the skills learnt. Therefore, this study wanted to explore whether the employees of the selected college understood what IQMS entails, how they felt about its implementation in their college and whether they perceived it to be beneficial for them. explored, achieving what it is set to achieve and whether its users understand it.

Literature Review

Performance of TVET lecturers is crucial particularly in highlighting “the critical importance of this occupational group in developing skills of young people at the post-school level and raising the skills of currently employed people” (Paterson, Vally, Mthembu-Salter, Matlin, & Molokwane, 2024:13). Besides, an emphasis of performance within organisations makes business sense, helps develop individual lecturers and eventually, the overall productivity of their organisation (Farida & Setiawan, 2022), which translates into student throughput in a TVET college.

Understanding Performance Management

A performance management system is an organisational process developed to systematically manage and monitor individual or team performance to achieve organisational goals. An effective PMS in any organisation should be tailored to their overall organisational objectives and values (Bauwens, Audenaert & Decramer, 2023; Nyembe, 2022). Performance management is the process of defining clear achievable objectives and targets for individuals and teams within the organisation, as well as the regular monitoring and evaluation of the actual achievement of those objectives. The objectives should be established through a collaborative process between the employee and the employer/supervisor (Farida & Setiawan, 2022). It is imperative that the employee is aware of what the organisation requires of them, i.e., organisational goals and expectations, how they will be measured and how often (Kaliannan, Darmalinggam, Dorasamy & Abraham, 2023).

Periodic evaluation of achievement, or not, of the set objectives, that is, performance appraisal is important to remedy the challenges in a timely way. This performance assessment must be followed by specific feedback given to employees about their performance challenges or success factors and suggest strategies that employees can utilise to improve their performance. Feedback given leads to growth and development of employees through an improvement in skills and competencies through training and development opportunities or mentoring and coaching. Improvement in skills results in an increase in organisational performance and productivity (David, 2023). In addition, the development of

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employees affects their sustained employee motivation for continuous hard work, job engagement, organisational commitment, and job satisfaction (Sani, Sumintono & Abdullah, 2023; Mio, Costantini & Panfilo, 2022). In addition to remunerative and developmental purposes, performance management is also crucial for succession planning, promotion, retrenchment and right-sizing decisions (Rafi, Abd Wahab & Ahmad, 2023), as well as organisational self-protection from lawsuits due to unlawful termination or discrimination (Sithole et al., 2022).

In line with the effect of performance management on employee motivation and improved outcomes, in the educational setting Turk (2008) stated that performance management and appraisal play a crucial role in reforming the educational system. He stated that by developing academic employees, their productivity increases, thereby improving the quality of the qualifications of the graduates from the institutions of higher learning. Employment opportunities are subsequently bettered by this improvement of the quality of the qualifications offered by Higher Institutions of Education. Turk (2008) proposed a model showing the importance of the connection between performance management and appraisal of educators and the quality of teaching, research, and consultation, and eventual quality of student qualifications as well as educator publications. This link is influenced by the nature of the qualifications of the educators, the teaching resources provided, and the quality of students. The emphasis according to Turk (2008) is on the fact that effective management of performance affects the motivation of the employees and their growth and development, all of which are crucial for overall organisation productivity.

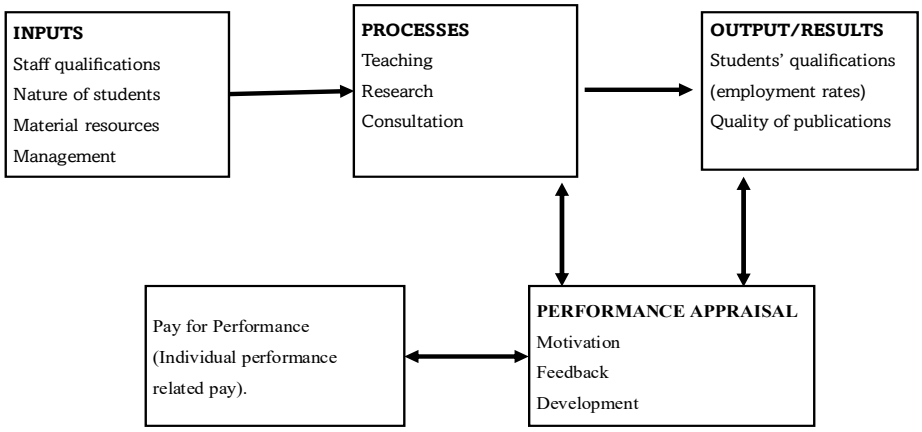

Figure 1: Dependency between performance appraisal and compensation according to personnel input and output (Turk, 2008)

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Benefits of Effective Performance Management

Several authors have documented the benefits of effective performance management to include improved skills development, subsequent organisational performance and productivity; reduced staff turnover; job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job engagement of employees; less lawsuits in case of dismissals, rightsizing or downsizing; effective group and teamwork; more accountable and responsible employees (Warnich, Carrell, Elbert, & Hatfield, 2022). Performance management systems aid in the development of performance improvement plans. Thus, in a teaching environment, improvement of teaching skills and methods improves all kinds of learning during class lessons to improve on learner performance (Oosthuizen, Spencer, & Chigano, 2022).

Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)

There are several forms of Performance Management Systems that organisations can choose to use. The education system mostly utilises the IQMS, which is a programme designed to enhance monitoring of performance of the education system, has a history that dates back to 2003 (ELRC, Resolution 8 of 2003). It is an informational tool to help schools or TVET college administrators identify educators who need additional or specialised performance assistance and to help individual educators improve their instructional practices. The IQMS was designed with the vision to appraise individual educators in a transparent manner to determine areas of strength and weakness and to draw up programmes for individual development (Weber, 2005:64). According to the IQMS for Public FET College-Based Educators Document (2003), the intention of this system was also to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of individuals and structures involved in implementing it are uniform throughout the FET (now TVET) colleges nationally. Malinga, Jita, and Bada (2021) determine that IQMS can be viewed as a standardised procedure for educators fair evaluation of performance and subsequent development. The IQMS for Public FET College-Based Educators Document (2003) further stipulated the importance of accompanying the implementation of the IQMS with training through workshops where educators would have an opportunity to clarify areas of concern. The training structures (ELRC, Resolution 8 of 2003:10) involve the National Training Team (NTT) office that develops the necessary guidelines for training; the Provincial Training Team (PTT), which trains nominated educators from every college campus in each province; and colleges, which nominate educators who have to be trained by PTT. The colleges also ensure that educators understand the IQMS procedures and processes. The provincial office should also ensure that the implementation process in the colleges is continuously monitored and that the results of the colleges' evaluation are captured and processed on time.

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The Rationale for Introducing IQMS

According to the resolution of ELRC (Resolution 8 of 2003) which produced the Integrated Quality Management System for Public TVET (formerly FET) College-Based Educators document (2003:19), IQMS was introduced for college improvement. Its introduction was supposed to help develop the processes needed to improve the quality of colleges with the aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively. IQMS was further aimed at accomplishing the performance of areas across the curriculum, teaching and learning support for learners, leadership, and quality assurance (ELRC, Resolution 8 of 2003:20). The main objective of implementing IQMS was to ensure quality public education for all and to constantly improve the quality of learning and teaching.

Challenges of Performance Management Systems

The relationship between the evaluator and the evaluator during the performance assessment is important as it determines the acceptance of the feedback given and what is done with that feedback. The evaluators should try to be considerate. The acceptance of an appraisal depends on the evaluatees' perceptions of the evaluator's authority, expertise, professionalism, sensitivity and trustworthiness (Mabindisa, 2021:133). Warnich et al. (2022) stated that problems between supervisors and employees arise from the fact that quiet often the objectives of performance appraisal, as well as those of the expectations from the job incumbent are not clear enough, meaning that it is not clear then what exactly is being evaluated. Additionally, in cases where organisations use self-evaluation as part of performance appraisal, supervisors have a tendency to decrease the evaluations where employees rated themselves highly. The linking of appraisal for development with remuneration purposes puts employees in the position of both players and referees, in that as much as they might want to develop and improve their skills, they might rate themselves highly for remunerative purposes (Khanyeza & Katrodia, 2022; Mosoge & Pilane, 2014).

Kanyangale and Chikandiwa (2022) added that another pitfall of performance management systems is a culture of not giving feedback to the employees after appraisal. During the appraisal process, data are gathered by systematic observations, not only to measure current performance, but also to reinforce strengths, identify deficiencies, give feedback, and the necessary information for changes in future performance (Noori, 2021).). Not giving feedback implies that there tends to be an overreliance on previous performance rather than objective current performance. In circumstances where feedback is given, supervisors, i.e., raters, are afraid of playing God, they are not able to give constructive feedback, or they focus on the personality of the employee instead of the kind of goals and objectives that needed to be achieved (Warnich et al., 2022).).

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Performance management systems begin when a job position is defined as filled and conclude when an employee leaves the organisation (Paterson, et al., 2024; Sebashe & Mtapuri, 2011). Yet, many organisations evaluate employees according to a narrow prescriptive set of behaviours at a point in time while ignoring the overall employee representation. Performance appraisal by customers/clients is also subjective, depending on how the customer feels about the service rendered just before they rate the employee. Customers do not necessarily know the correct procedures or standards of operation that need to be followed to render a service, they do not complete the necessary performance appraisal form, and they evaluate an emoloyee, negatively or positively, from an emotional standpoint. Furthermore, the anonymity of customer appraisal, if not communicated properly to the employee, may not be motivating (Jagtap, 2018). Lack of training of supervisors and employees in the performance management systems result in major inconsistencies, subjectivity and favouritism in how performance appraisals are conducted (Khanyeza & Katrodia, 2022; Mgijima, 2014).

Organisations often do not necessarily allocate specific time for performance evaluation. This implies that while some employees and supervisors are able to schedule time properly for performance appraisal, others are not able to schedule effectively, and as a result, other organisational core duties are neglected in favour of completing the appraisal task (Khoza, 2023). Employees may cling to the old ways of doing things, i.e., they may resist change, in the absence of quality leadership. Therefore, performance management and appraisal will have to be monitored and analysed on a regular basis to ensure a progressive learning environment (Njiri, Asesa, & Olel, 2024). TVET colleges lack good systems to develop evaluators and build collaborations with external staff development agencies, due to poor leadership-orientated administration personnel with qualities to ensure capacity development (Papanai & Poolkrajang, 2023).

According to Franzsen (2003), employees sometimes feel like PMS is used by management as a tool for management to control and manipulate employees and to enforce a particular transformation agenda. The traditional process of performance appraisal shows an old-fashioned, paternalistic, top-down, autocratic mode based on organisation charts and fear of job loss which does not consider the uniqueness of each job position and the quality demands of different skills and teaching competencies (Heathfield, 2007:6; Tigelaar et al., 2004:253). Therefore, managers need to understand performance appraisal as part of an integrated PMS and growth/development of the job incumbents.

IQMS, in particular, has reportedly been plagued by implementation problems of being seen as a once-off implementation process, i.e., not as a long-term, ongoing process (Mahlomaholo, 2013). Educators were found to still lack understanding of IQMS Implementation and there is misunderstanding about the advantages of IQMS (Mamabolo, Malatji & Mphahlele, 2022). Additionally, it has reportedly not had proper plans in place, especially in the beginning, or enough budget allocation to it for remunerative

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purposes as well as for training and development of managers and educators (De Clercq, 2010). According to van der Walt et al. (2021), IQMS is also not applied properly or transparently in most cases by educators and leadership, which can be seen through underperforming schools and that there was an absence of feedback so that educators can revise and improve teaching strategies for learning.

Methods and Data

The study sought to understand the lecturers' perceptions of the IQMS as implemented in their college. Accordingly, an interpretivist research paradigm was adopted. According to William (2024) in interpretivism researchers aim to understand how people's various views and experiences shape their understanding of phenomena. The descriptive qualitative research approach was adopted for this research study. The study focused on the lecturers' experiences of the implementation of IQMS at a rural TVET college. The total targeted population for the study was comprised of the Campus Manager, the Heads of Departments, and all the 37 Lecturers in various programmes offered by the selected college. The study adopted purposive sampling techniques to select five lecturers who had been with the college for five years and above and another five who had been employed in the college for less than five years but more than two years. With purposive sampling, judgement is used as who is in a good-enough position to partake in the study in such a way that they make a relevant contribution (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2023). The purposive sampling technique was used to include the Heads of Departments and the Campus Manager in the sample. Therefore, the total sample size was 12 which is acceptable for a qualitative study given that the population itself was below 40.

Semi structured Individual face-to-face interviews were conducted with the help of a research guide containing open-ended questions. According to Ormrod (2023) face-to-face interviews have the advantage of allowing the researcher to build rapport with the participants, thereby having the opportunity to get their cooperation and be able to probe where answers need further clarification. This data collection method was used in the study get in-depth information from the participants. Appointments were secured with all potential interviewees. In a qualitative study, the results are written in narrative format and include direct quotations and other data to support the description of the results. Thematic data analysis was followed to analyse the data collected from the participants. Information obtained from the interviews was read and arranged according to the similarities of the responses. The data analysis followed the 6-phases process of Saunders et al (2023) of familiarising oneself with data, coding the data, generating themes, which are then reviewed, refined, defined and named, culminating with a report. The results were then reported in a narrative format, including direct quotations. The results were then contextualized in relation to the existing literature to show commonalities and differences and checked to ensure completeness.

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The study followed ethical considerations; where permission to conduct the study, informed consent, and ensuring confidentiality of the data of all participants.

Results

Demographic Information of Participants

The demographic information of participants, i.e., their age range as well as departments were they were working is presented.

The age range of the participants in this study is summarised in Table 1 below. The highest and lowest total number of respondents were five and one in the age group range between 25 to 34 years and 55 to 64 years, respectively.

Age range	Number of participants	Percentage
25-34	5	42
35-44	4	33
45-54	2	17
55-64	1	8
Total	12	100

Table 1: Age of the Participants

With regard to the department that the participants worked in, six (6) of them were from the National Certificate Vocational (NCV) (Fundamentals, Civil Engineering, and Transport and Logistics); four (4) were from the Nated/Report 191 (Business Studies, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering); and two (2) can be classified as campus management. The National Certificate Vocational (NCV) was the largest department on campus.

Opinions on the Implementation of IQMS

During the interview process, questions were raised about the participants' understanding of the IQMS process, whether they thought the system was beneficial to them, as well as the challenges of implementing it. The participants were also asked to suggest what they and their colleagues should do to facilitate effective implementation of the system as well as the support required from management.

Participants' understanding of what IQMS is

From the interviews, the participants showed a remarkable understanding of what IQMS is, as shown by their responses. For example, one of them said, "IQMS is the performance management system with

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the aim of improving the performance of lecturers but also the overall performance of the organisation. *As such, it is a quality management system".*

Some could explain further, for instance one of them stated that 'The IQMS is aimed at evaluating lecturers and supporting them where there is a need for support. *It is a management system to measure and improve quality of teaching in the Further Education and Training Sector (FET), relevant to the work of field. It is a quality assurance measuring tool for measuring the quality of teaching and learning in the FET".*

The participants further added that the system is helpful for purposes of development, salary, career progression, and rewards. In addition, some indicated that through feedback provided by managers and students, educators can undergo training and development for professional growth, which can improve the performance of educators in the TVET college.

Opinions on whether the IQMS in the selected college is implemented effectively

Regarding the question of whether participants perceive their college to be implementing IQMS effectively, the results of the study showed that some thought the IQMS implementation is done well while others thought it is not conducted well. There were also disagreements on who is responsible and what purpose it has on campus. One of the participants claimed that 'The campus is doing its best to implement IQMS but for the sake of submitting forms and to obtain a 1% salary increase. *The campus is facing challenges as educators themselves have to help each other by filling out the IQMS forms at the end of the year".*

In support of the management trying their best, despite the resource shortage, another participant stated that "*the supervisors are trying all possible to ensure that they support the development of the lecturers by taking their suggestions, although at times no solutions are available for some of the challenges*". Respondents suggested that all stakeholders must participate, including top management and resources made available for IQMS to be fully implemented.

The participants also seemed sceptical about the implementation of the system. Participants argued that the actual performance of most educators is not up to standard. From the responses, the participants disagreed that the campus is doing enough to implement the IQMS. For example, one of the participants indicated that "*The campus cannot implement the IQMS because there are no committees formed to facilitate the IQMS system, management does not support it, and there are no performance interviews to check new goals for the new season*"; while another stated that "*If the campus management had done enough, the lecturers would have understood the purpose or purpose of the IQMS and would have put effort into filling out the forms so that the campus management could achieve their goal regarding the IQMS*".

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According to the participants, there have been several requests that there be a form of training or workshop on the campus on the proper implementation of IQMS. For example, a participant said that "*others proposed to be trained on how to answer/fill in the IQMS forms*". The participant put blame on the supervisors for not playing their part in implementing the IQMS.

Did the participants feel that the system benefits them?

The participants were asked whether they believed that IQMS was beneficial to them. Some of the participants perceived the IQMS system as beneficial, although they seemed to be looking for motivation to strengthen their morale to make it a success. "*They claimed that 'It is beneficial because it is a measuring tool that tries to measure the strengths and weaknesses of an educator and incentives are given as a result of good work."* They also indicated that the IQMS can be effective and efficient and ensure service delivery if it is properly managed. "*They said that 'IQMS is beneficial, but only if people use it the way it was designed to be used."* Participants also indicated that "*IQMS may help in areas where an educator may be experiencing problems*." Furthermore, they seemed to feel that "*IQMS will help members of an organisation improve the day-to-day performance of their duties*." *It also creates teamwork, which is very effective in the field of education".*

Positive responses came from the most senior lecturers who have been employed by the college for several years. These longer-serving participants also indicated that they would have preferred the system to enhance their daily work. Participants who disagreed that the system is beneficial pointed out that the system does not improve education quality, there is disorganisation during the completion of the forms, there is no information to clarify, they do not receive any support during the process, and they have to leave their classes and duties and spend about two days completing the forms.

Perceived challenges in the implementation of IQMS in the selected college

In response to the question on perceived challenges of implementation of IQMS participants presented several challenges that they encountered, which hindered a satisfactory implementation of the system. The concerns included complaints by participants that some educators still get the notch increment even though their performance appraisal yielded substandard performance. This unfair pay increment, i.e., rewarding nonperforming employees, was reported to be a demotivator for employees who were perceived to be dedicated to produce good results. The participants indicating that another challenge is that they do not understand the system at all and just participate in performance appraisal for the sake of compliance. For example, one participant stated that "I do not understand the IQMS system, I participate in the system just to score myself. *Because there was no induction that took place, the campus cannot conduct IQMS properly".*

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The participants particularly indicated that during the time of performance appraisal they run around looking for their previous year appraisal forms to copy and comply, noting that this kind of appraisal can never be seen to be proper. To make the problem worse, they stated that after running around completing the appraisal, they do not get any feedback.

The lack of class visits by supervisors was also identified as another challenge that is not met as required by the IQMS, in monitoring the performance of an educator. Additionally, all the participants commented that they were not trained on how to conduct performance appraisal and thus during the IQMS appraisal process they are unable to complete the forms independently and fairly. They stated that *"We just receive the IQMS forms to complete without being given information on how to do it. I am supposed to do the IQMS without someone who has experience to help me*".

The participants also added that IQMS implementation does not reflect the accuracy and correctness of an educator and the problems they face in the classrooms particularly because none of those challenges em are solved afterward. They stated that "*IQMS is not a true reflection of what is happening on the ground*. *It is not being implemented as it should.*

Lack of training seemed to be a major challenge. The participants indicated that *"Curriculum officers and human resources personnel should engage lecturers and train them. The training should indicate the purpose of IQMS and how it affects me as an educator. There is a need for procedures to complete the IQMS forms as we often run around seeking help to complete the forms".*

Only two participants indicated that they had been trained on the purpose and implementation of the IQMS. However, they criticised the training and reported that they were still not sure how to implement IQMS properly even after the training. They stated that "*The workshop was not successful, I learnt more reading myself*. *I recommend that we be trained again, and the training workshop should include the policies and standards required by the IQMS"'.*

Suggestions on how participants think IQMS should be implemented

In response to the question of how participants think IQMS should be implemented, several suggestions were offered. One theme that the participants highlighted was the importance of training. For example, one participant said that: "*To implement the system, one has to follow the procedure recommended by the Department of Education. But the specialist in the line function of IQMS must come from the department and conduct induction to all concerned, so that people can know what is expected of them when they fill in the forms".* The need for training to properly implement IQMS was further emphasised by another statement that said "*People (educators) should be inducted, especially seniors, HODs, and peer educators so that IQMS can be implemented successfully. Strategies must be in place to provide training. Workshops to be planned for all campuses".*

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The participants also suggested that to effectively implement IQMS, there should be a follow-up of the activities of the lecturers through inspection of the teaching and learning files, as well as observation of the teachers when they are teaching. Classroom observation would help to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning. The participants also indicated that educators do not understand who is responsible for the implementation of the IQMS, while others do not understand who keeps the completed appraisal forms on campus and to whom they can talk if they have questions about the IQMS process. Additionally, from the interviews, the participants suggested that everyone on campus should take ownership of the system and implementation process, while the implementation should be fair and transparent.

Participants' opinions on what they and their colleagues should do to ensure the effective implementation of IQMS

Another question of the study was on what participants believe they can do to improve the implementation of IQMS. Their comments included one such as "*Colleagues should read the instructions*". However, others did not think they can do anything as reflected by the comment that "*Other lecturers cannot do anything to achieve an effective implementation of IQMS as they were not taught or given a workshop on it*".

Some participants recommended consultation to achieve effective implementation of the IQMS. One of them stated that *"Since IQMS is a challenge for the college itself, local lecturers/educators might not come up with a solution. Campus Managers from all campuses with the Central Office Management need to come together, discuss and come up with the way forward. Colleagues must consult experienced people for help internally... and they should be in a position to accept and correct any weaknesses with IQMS assistance. They should also allow seniors and their peers to assess lecturers".*

Participants from the current study suggested that lecturers should get into the habit of supporting each other. Statements such as *" … and they should support one another where an individual may be lacking"* were uttered during data collection. Others recommended that their colleagues must be honest when they fill out the IQMS forms and be transparent because the forms are for self-development and self-evaluation of their performance levels.

The reason why the participants said that educators cannot come up with solutions was that "*IQMS is not their system, 'it is the system of the Department of Higher Education"*. They also suggested training to enable management members to understand the IQMS process.

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Participants' opinion on what campus management should do to achieve effective implementation of IQMS

The question of asking the participants about their opinions on what their campus management should do to achieve a successful implementation of IQMS prompted numerous responses from the participants. Most of the participants commented that the delay of the campus management in organising the workshop is affecting the effective implementation of the system. As said by one of them, *"The campus management must get a session and train people on performance management, quality assurance and the IQMS system. Supervisors and managers must first be trained before ordinary educators. Management must call a specialist to come and conduct training. '*

From the responses, there were suggestions that campus management should ensure that they provide staff development programmes, including training on the IQMS process. They also found that respondents perceived insufficient effort from the side of campus management and that campus management could have done a lot if they (management) had been trained appropriately.

Discussion

The results of the study indicated that, overall, the participants presented a good enough understanding of what IQMS is and its purpose. However, they were not comfortable with the implied purpose for which their college uses the IQMS, and for that reason they continued indicating that they do not understand it. They also seemed to have an idea of what it should be used for because they indicated what it was not achieving by it not being implemented properly. The study findings were similar to those reported by other researchers who indicated that educators/lecturers understood what IQMS entails, as well as its benefits especially in terms of the growth and development of individuals and the TVET college (David, 2023; Papanai & Poolkrajang, 2023). However, other researchers have also reported that educators lack understanding of the purpose of IQMS and its implementation (Mamabolo et al., 2022).

In general, the participants indicated that their campus does not properly implement IQMS or the purpose for which it should be implemented. They were also not happy with the remuneration based on performance after evaluation and evaluation using the IQMS as they did not understand the criteria used, and therefore they perceived it to be unfair.

The study also indicated that lecturers / participants and those evaluated have not been trained on how IQMS should be implemented and its purpose. This lack of training has led to difficulties in implementing the system. The participants felt that they, and their supervisors in particular, needed training to implement IQMS properly. They also believed that if they work as a team during the appraisal, they might be able to help one another understand IQMS and improve it.. Mamabolo, Malatji and Mphahlele (2022), as well as Sabban, Huliatunisa and Saepudin (2021) also suggested that the training of

managers needs to be given priority and labour unions should be involved in the implementation of the training. Furthermore, the need to train employees to be aware of why it is necessary to implement IQMS and how the system should be implemented could not be emphasised enough (Black, 2024; Nyembe, 2022; Sabban, Huliatunisa, & Saepudin, 2021). Mio, Costantini & Panfilo, (2022) emphasised that training in IQMS can result in understanding its purpose and implementation, thereby increasing support and commitment by employees. If IQMS is well supported, it becomes a development tool for the organisation. According to Malinga, Jita, and Bada (2021) it is desired that the IQMS be an authentic tool used to assess performance of educators/lecturers for their development and evaluation to perform their duties and improve learner education and training.

Other authors like Sithole et al. (2022) added that the benefits of staff training and development programmes on performance reviews promote accountability in human capacity. To reform the TVET sector, leaders should develop themselves through instructional leadership skills (Nkau, 2021:56). This will assist in the effective implementation of IQMS, which remains a question whether it can be achieved or not. The participants claimed that they are just learning on their own how to implement the system.

Participants also expressed the need for classroom monitoring, that is, during teaching, by supervisors for them to have a better picture of what they do. They felt that monitoring would be a better measurement by which they could be evaluated, as well as feedback from students. The need for lecturers' monitoring to improve teaching and learning evaluation was also reported by other research that also reported the importance of continuous follow-up and monitoring (Nyembe, 2022). Constant monitoring of the effectiveness of teaching and learning will help to achieve the objectives and goals of the organisation performance system (Farida & Setiawan, 2022).

Another challenge identified by the participants is the lack of feedback after the evaluation using the IQMS has been achieved. Other researchers, highlighting the importance of appraisal feedback, stated that performance evaluation can create more favourable reactions when it is conducted, discussed, and feedback provided (Khanyeza & Katrodia, 2022). Papanai and Poolkrajang (2023) also reported that feedback, complaints, and testimonials from students and other stakeholders provide opportunities for development and improvement in the teaching and learning of lecturers.

Participants felt that there is not much they can do to improve the implementation of IQMS. They believed that reading the instructions well and being honest, particularly in self-assessment, could also help. Additionally, the participants believed that all stakeholders should take the responsibility of trying to make IQMS more effective. There was also a feeling that the Department of Higher Education and Training can help by sending consultants to various campuses to investigate challenges in IQMS and to train managers as well as educators in the implementation of IQMS.

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Conclusion

This study sought to explore the perception of the implementation of IQMS by lecturers in a TVET college. Interviews were conducted with the participants to get their perceptions. The results indicated that by and large, the participants did understand what the IQMS system entails. However, they continue to encounter challenges with its implementation at their college. Additionally, they believe the IQMS is of little benefit to them, mainly because of the way it is implemented. All the participants expressed uncertainty about the effectiveness of IQMS at their college, but confidence that it could be an effective system if more attention was given to its implementation.

The study makes recommendations at three levels, viz., the individual, team and organisational levels. At the individual level: it is crucial that the individual lecturers attend training sessions offered on IQMS and on overall performance management systems in an effort to empower themselves and to support productivity in their college. Teams within the college, as well as attending the training sessions, should support one another, their supervisors, and their college's performance management for eventual success, which will result in a better student performance.

At the organisational level their college should firstly, offer training and development programmes for individual lecturers as well as supervisors on the purpose of implementing IQMS, how appraisal should be conducted, and the policies and procedures of remuneration following appraisal. Secondly, training should also be about the need to give feedback after the appraisal, how that feedback should be given, and the purpose of giving feedback. This highlights the fact that provision of feedback to employees, lecturers in this context, after appraisal is also crucial. Thirdly, there should be monitoring and evaluation of lecturers in the classrooms during teaching to give a better assessment of teacher performance. Additionally, the students should give feedback on lecturers to provide a better understanding of how the lecturer is performing in class. Finally, there should be training, monitoring and evaluation by the department to assess how IQMS is implemented in colleges.

This study highlights the fact that if a performance management system is perceived to be iplemented ineffectively, its intended value is not seen by those employees who are supposed to learn and develop following performance appraisal. Ultimately, the value of the performance management system is fundamentally affected by the effectiveness of its implementation.

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