

Abstract

This research endeavours to widen the understanding around the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) and school accountability, implications for school leadership practice in Ekurhuleni South District schools in the Ekurhuleni Region, given that there are tensions regarding the IQMS process of school leadership. Through an interpretive case study guided by Leithwood (2003), Darling-Hammond & Ascher, (1991) dimensions of accountability, this study looked to develop information and insights into the IQMS processes and accountability for school leadership. Also, the research explored tremendous tensions, gaps between the intended and actual policy outcomes, and credibility of performance appraisal scores awarded during the performance appraisal of school principals. The study was located in an interpretivist paradigm, which made use of questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis to generate data. Further, this study operated with the underlying assumption that the purpose of IQMS should be to achieve quality performance management and accountability. Therefore, it has been argued that accountability is one mechanism in which IQMS can be attained. Additionally, it was contended that school leadership requires to strategically navigate through policy to manage IQMS and the competing priorities of their duties, roles and responsibilities that extends beyond classroom matters and teaching and learning. This study found that IQMS for school leadership was a complex process and that the ways in which school leadership navigate through the complexity of policy and the various accountability forms is very much dependent on development and prioritisation of duties, roles, and responsibilities. This study has identified that school leadership may be able to establish successful IQMS processes that are both functional and effective if they have clear understanding of their accountability towards their duties, roles and responsibilities associated with government education mandates and District level initiatives, needs and priorities.

Key Words

Accountability
Leadership
IQMS
Performance Management