

## **Empowering Teacher Teams to Implement the Integrated Quality Management Systems in South African Secondary Schools**

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**ABSTRACT** Teamwork has become critical building blocks worldwide to accomplish organisational goals. Although many educational institutions in South Africa have taken the route of teamwork, attributes such as empowerment and accountability require critical reflection. Teamwork features prominently in the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) policy mandated by the Department of Education, to facilitate the provision of quality teaching and learning, and the continuing professional development of teachers. However, the implementation of the IQMS has met with serious challenges, including principals who lack leadership and managerial skills. Using individual and focus group interviews, we determined the perceptions of teachers and school management teams (SMTs) on how teacher teams are empowered to implement IQMS successfully. The findings revealed that hierarchical structures of secondary schools imposed severe threats to effectively implement the IQMS. The Staff Development Team (SDTs) lacked formal decision-making authority to execute management and leadership responsibilities because power rests mainly with the principal. Most principals in the Kathorus area use the "top-down," autocratic style of leadership instead of collegial and participatory approaches. A model emanated from the study illustrating how teacher teams can be empowered to implement IQMS successfully in secondary schools