LOOK IN A NEW DIRECTION

CREATING A SPARK IN TRAINING FOR A HEALTHY AND EFFICIENT WATER SECTOR

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Introduction
Investing in staff and training is inevitable for a healthy and efficient water sector. AquaDactics in South Africa is accredited for NQF level 1 to level 5 and is in partnership with eThekwini Waters & Sanitation, City of Cape Town, Drakenstein Municipality and Department of Home Affairs. However, thus far the outcome has not yielded the desired results as their concepts lack the spark to conquer the South African water sector. After a gap analysis was made, it was found that in order to create a spark or to accelerate the AquaDactics market there needs to be a combination of the youngsters (qualified and unemployed), retired and professors.

Problem Statement
Aquadactics seeks to have a healthy and efficient water sector in South Africa and this is comprised of clean and sufficient water, good sanitation and well operated water and waste water treatment plants. In an effort to achieve this, AquaDactics is dedicated to training trainers to train other professionals in these fields. However, getting this concept off the ground has proved to be a challenge. The proposed study aspires to explore options to create the spark. To do this a gap analysis will be made and used to propose possible solutions.

Objective
• This paper aims at developing strategies that can be used to create a spark to conquer and create a healthy and efficient water sector.

Scope of Study
This study focuses on exploring different concepts that can be used to create a spark. Information on AquaDactics is taken from the case description and interview by participants to Agnes Maenhout who is the organization director and Johan Oost. The assessment for Aquadactics in the South African market was derived using generic ideas/perspective from South African society and determining the needs with reference to capacity building in the water sector.

Methods
A mixed method approach based on interview sessions, critical review of literature and observation are employed in this research. The research design is based on both quantitative and qualitative approaches with regard to collection and analysis of data. These approaches enable the researchers to obtain statistical trends and patterns in data allowing for expert individuals opinions on best practice trends. The “Why”, “How” and “What” questions are addressed simultaneously (Teddie and Tashakkori, 2009). These approaches are sufficient for executing this research objective. Allowing for a comprehensive understanding of how to enhance training for a healthy and efficient water sector.
Result
In the country that is so much in need of proper strategies in generating job opportunities for fresh young professionals, the concept of changing the direction in the training approaches such as creating platforms like dialogues will not only open new doors for employment thus contributing to reducing national crisis of unemployment, but will also be an ideal environment for trainers to know the trainees needs, thus making efficient trainings. Creation of platforms where trainers and trainees have the opportunity to raise issues and have discussion without Imposing ideas and methods to be used. This sort of brings better understanding of what should be done. This saves a lot of time for long and tedious presentations where people get bored and lose the concept. The idea of training people who have different levels of education differently will not only do away with monotony in training but will also optimize maximum participation of trainees thereby contributing to efficiency.

Balancing of the academics and experienced if used as a form of succession can minimize the gap between the professors and professionals with no particular qualification. This will not only save the company from regular operational and maintenance costs, but will also be an important tool for maximization of organizational assets. Time, the most important resource will be saved, and can be utilized in other important commitments of the organization thus improving organizational performance.

Innovation in the solution
The whole concept in creating a spark to conquer the South African market is based on not only addressing the problem in the water sector but also joining this with the current problems in the country such as youth unemployment. The solution that is brought forth creates an enabling environment for job creation while also coming up with a succession plan by creating a platform where knowledge can be exchanged by the professors, retired and young professionals.

Replicability of the solution
The success stories and lessons learned will be incorporated in the expansion of the concept. Since the model is ideal in every environment because it involves multiple stakeholders and coordination, there is a higher percentage of it being implemented with another entity and it brings desired results.
Cost effectiveness
South Africa currently has high unemployed youth and the government have funds available to fund initiatives that generate employment. There being complains about the quality of water treated from wastewater such as:

1. The treated sewage wastewater is not at a quality for further treatment to drinking water and re-use.
2. The industrial wastewater does not meet bi-laws standard for final treated wastewater thus affect further treatment at sewage wastewater and landfills.
3. The acid mine drainage pollutes landfills and rivers.
4. Drinking water not to standard for consumption.

The mentioned above results to high costs from operations and maintenance. Aquadactics training program that combines knowledge from retired and old services and graduates will equip unemployed youth through NQF Level 1 and 2. The water sector will employ already trained youth and that will cut operation and maintainace (O&M) costs. The savings from O&M the Operational and Maintenance will be used for new projects and in those projects more youth will be employed.

Strategy for Implementation / next steps
In order to get this stared the be move towards implementation would be to start with extracting knowledge from the retired and experienced and merging it with the academic knowledge. This can be done in platform such as dialogue training and documentaries. Next would be the recruitment of the youth for trainings and then finally consultations with the stakeholders in the water sector such as the municipalities for partnerships.

Conclusion and Recommendations
The research conducted a gap analysis testing the current training approach that has been used and the effort that have been made to get the ball rolling for these trainings. This research investigated the existing imitations on Aquadactistics in terms of the active participation of stakeholders in the water sector. The concept presents the best practice recommendations for creating the spark. It was demonstrated that integration of academics and experience could actually be a way forward while also addressing unemployment in one package. Future research can be directed to a broader investigation of the research objectives. Case study comparison scenarios can be explored with subsets training facilities across the global continents.
References