

**STRATEGIC PLANNING: A TOOL FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF
SCHOOLS**

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**STRATEGIC PLANNING: A TOOL FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT
OF SCHOOLS**

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation (“Strategic Planning: A Tool for Effective Management of Schools”) represents my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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MAHLAMBI SB

JUNE 2014

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to

My Dad

MANDLA C MAHLAMBI

And to

My Mother

DUDUZILE J MAHLAMBI

And to

My friend and mate

DUDUZILE A MTHIMKHILU

As well as to

My Children

AMILE

SISANDA ANDA SANDISWA MAHLAMBI

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During the writing of this project.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to investigate the role of strategic planning in the management of schools. Strategic Planning refers to the combined effort of people with interest in education (stakeholders) to develop a common goal for a particular school. Everyone within the boundaries of the school (teachers, learners and parents) then work toward the attainment of such a goal.

From the literature study it becomes clear that strategic planning should commence with a study of the environment. “Environment” is an all inclusive word in this context that refers to both internal and external environments. The internal environment includes inherent factors that strengthen or weaken the school’s position. The external environment includes outside opportunities that the school may have as well as the threats that are brought by outside influences, including other schools or the community. The literature survey supplies a vast amount of evidence to support the belief that successful organisations are goal orientated. What all successful schools have in common is a well discussed mission / goal that people in that particular school works towards. A goal orientated school is characterised by parental involvement in matters concerning the school; by learner performance because of set standards; by educator competence because of available resources for effective teaching; and by teamwork, trust and participation in all activities in the school.

For the purpose of the empirical investigation, a self-structured questionnaire for educators was utilized. The data obtained from the completed questionnaires was processed and analysed by means of descriptive statistics. The findings from the empirical study confirmed that most schools are still lacking in goal setting and- management expert skills.

In conclusion a summary of the study, based on the findings of the literature and empirical studies is presented, with the following recommendations:

- Programmes in the form of workshops should be developed to empower parents in their involvement in schools.
- Implementation of training and education of the school management teams with regard to the running of the schools.
- Further research should to be done to improve planning and management of the schools.

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CHAPTER 1
STRATEGIC PLANNING: A TOOL FOR MANAGEMENT
OF SCHOOLS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Ten years after the end of apartheid, South Africa's education system had undergone rapid changes, most significant of which was the creation of a single and uniform education system. The whole system is governed by several pieces of legislation passed since 1994, including:

1. The National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996;
2. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996; and
3. The South African Qualification Authority Act 58 of 1995.

The motivation behind such legislation was the desire to address the injustices and imbalances created by the former education system. It was envisaged that by implementing these acts, the education system in South Africa would be transformed to cater for the needs of all its citizens. Change was necessary to modify the functions, structure and purpose of the whole system. An element in the process of change that was unfortunately left out, according to the researcher, was effective management of change. It is the researcher's belief in strategic planning as an important tool for the management of schools that has motivated this study.

Despite the policies documented in the above mentioned acts, schools continue to experience problems due to the lack of quality management. Quality management, as described by Sallis (1993:34), is a philosophy of continuous improvement, which can provide education with a set of practical tools for meeting and exceeding present and future customer needs, wants and expectations. The implication of this definition is that schools should be organizations in which each person strives towards improvement of management, teaching and learning. In terms of a quality environment, West-Burnham (1992:102) identifies five key components of the element "quality," namely:

- Vision

- Creativity
- Sensitivity
- Empowering, and
- Managing change

Schools exist to serve human needs and should employ the key components of management mentioned above to structure people's focus to get the job done.

1.2 ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

The National Education Ministry has vested substantial powers in the School Management Team (SMT) and the School Governing Body to enable them to run educational programmes on site. A quality promotion and development programme has been set up to provide strategic planning for the development and implementation of policies and programmes. Many mandated statutory bodies have, in addition, been instituted to monitor and evaluate the performance of public schools. Some of these bodies have been created for the sole purpose of addressing the problem of barriers that may hinder the development, learning and proper management of schools (SASA: South African School's Act 70 of 1996).

School management falls under the jurisdiction of the School Management Team (SMT), which has also been mandated to ascertain that the tasks surrounding the existence of schools are performed and that the policies and programmes of the National Government, as enshrined in the Constitution, are duly implemented. Badenhorst (1991:3-8) identifies and discusses two tasks to be performed by the school. The first is the functional task of a school, which constitutes its actual task. This task defines how learners should be educated and trained in a predetermined manner. For the school to perform its functional task in an effective manner, it is necessary to address the secondary task, namely that of management. The management task is the cornerstone to development. Management in schools deals with organizing, leading, motivating, controlling and determining of procedures, programmes, finance etc. All of the aforementioned functions are collectively known as management activities.

It is the duty of the SMT to manage the activities of the school in such a way that the national agenda for education can be realised. The chief function of the SMT is to plan, organize, correct and control (Van der Westhuizen, 1995:135-136). It is for this reason that one can conclude that the focus of management is obviously directed at the orderly aspects of the school, which is by no means an easy task. The unique structural elements and features that define the school sometimes become stumbling blocks to advancement, especially when the management is not well versed with regard to all management theories.

The secondary task of management is largely affected by the nature of the environment in which the school is situated, that is, the context of existence. Van Fleet (1984:108) explains the way in which socio-cultural forces (environment) shape an organization. These forces influence customer tastes and preferences, employee expectations and attitudes and the accepted role of the organisation in the society. It is therefore clear that the implementation of national policies and programmes are largely influenced by the cultural alignment of the institution. The School Management Plan in rural areas has many additional tasks to perform to fit the policies into a community with its own unique socio- cultural influences.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development that was held in South Africa critically discussed the plight of rural development. The agreement was that poverty and illiteracy should be halved by 2015 (Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development South Africa). If this dream of global development through education is to be fulfilled, the management (SMT) of schools has a much greater job to fulfill in fast-tracking the delivery of basic principles in education. The proper management of schools needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency and the management of schools in rural schools needs strengthened skills to address the managerial crisis which continues to hold back development.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In essence, the questions to be investigated in this study focus on the following:

- What is effective planning and how does it influence the development of an organization?

- Are managers planning strategically to manage schools more effectively?

1.4 AIMS OF THE STUDY

It is against the background provided above that this study seeks to investigate the role of strategic planning in the management of schools. In more specific terms, the aims of this study are:

- To study relevant literature on strategic planning;
- To carry out an empirical investigation on strategic planning;
- To investigate factors that may hinder successful implementation of strategic planning;
and
- To make appropriate recommendations

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS UNDERLYING THE STUDY

On the basis of the aforementioned aims, this study will attempt to answer the following questions:

- What is the School Management Team doing to enhance its management skills?
- What structures have been put in place in schools to encourage maximum participation of all the stakeholders in decision-making?
- How effective are these structures in driving the school to achieve its ultimate goals?

1.6 METHOD OF RESEARCH

According to Mark (1996) research is a “systematic method of enquiry”.

Drew in Mark (1996) states that “research involves a quest for knowledge, one that is conducted in a rational way using scientific methodology. Its purpose is to discover answers to questions and to accumulate dependable knowledge”.

The study will be quantitative in its approach. The researcher will make use of questionnaires to capture relevant data for the purpose of this study. The questionnaires will include closed-ended questions with scale of 1 to 5 (very seldom to often) and open-ended questions which will require of the participants to provide their opinions. The study

sample is drawn from the school management team of primary and secondary schools from the Maphumulo Circuit in the ILembe District.

The data will be captured by means of a questionnaire, which will be analyzed statistically. Standard descriptive and inferential statistic will be employed to discover the trends and the issues in school management from the point of view of everyone within the school setup.

1.7 ELUCIDATION OF CONCEPTS

1.7.1 The School Management Team (SMT)

The SMT is the professional body that runs the school. It comprises of the principal, deputy principal and the HODs (heads of departments). The principal is the head/leader of the organization and is assisted by the deputy principal. The HODs, on the other hand, run the academic part of management, which means that they coordinate different departments and report to the deputy principal or principal (Policy Handbook for Educators 2003: 6-67).

1.7.2 Strategy

Johnson and Scholes (2002:10) define strategy as “the direction and scope of an organisation over a long term, which achieves advantage for the organisation through its configuration of resources with a changing environment and fulfills stakeholder expectations.”

1.7.3 Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is the road map for implementing continuous change in an organisation, thereby ensuring the future. It is an entire system that is geared toward continuously detecting changes in the outside world, deciding how to deal with them, and translating these needed changes into programmes that produce desired results (Fogg; 1999:4).

Blandford (1997:134) defines it as “a long-term planning, which takes into consideration the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation and the external factors such as the government directives”

From the definitions above, it is clear that strategic planning is central to the process of managing schools. It is in strategic planning that the action steps by which an organisation intends to achieve its desired goals are clearly defined. It is through strategic planning that organisational goals are in turned into realities within a set period of time, schedules made to carry out a plan and also define the time frames for the completion of each identified factor in the plan.

1.7.4 Effectiveness

“It is where managers are doing the right thing in the right way at the right time” (Van Fleet 1984:24).

Daft and Marcic (2004:9) define effectiveness as “the degree to which the organisation achieves a stated goal”.

“The extent to which any (educational) organisation as a social system, given certain resources and means, fulfils its objectives without incapacitating its means and resources and without placing undue strain upon its members” (Reynolds and Bollen et al 1996:3)

If a school is to be effective its management should have attributes such as strong positive leadership, staff involvement and positive school ethos. It should encourage good practice which is directed at developing the attribute stated above. The measure of the school’s effectiveness is the ability of the staff to work toward achieving the School’s goal.

1.7.5 Management

Massie and Douglas (1985:516) define management as “a process by which a cooperative group directs the use of resources (money, people and things) toward a common goal.” In management, activities are coordinated so that they are completed effectively with and through people. Management activities include planning, organizing, leading and controlling.

“Is the attainment of organisational goals in an effective and efficient manner through planning, organizing, leading and controlling organisational resources” (Daft and Marcic 2004:7)

Two important ideas come out of the definition above (I) the functions of management and (II) the attainment of organisational goals in an effective and efficient manner. Schools today have to cope with diverse and far-reaching challenges, and, solid management is the key to help them remain healthy and productive. The managers therefore need to recognize the complexities of today’s education systems. It is through management that the efforts of members of the organization are co-ordinated, directed and guided towards the achievement of goals.

1.8 FURTHER COURSE OF STUDY

The entire study is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1 provides the general orientation to the study, stating the problem and the aims of the research.
- Chapter 2 provides an in-depth review of the literature. It furthermore covers the theoretical framework of the role of strategic planning in the management of schools.
- Chapter 3 examines the methodology and research design.
- Chapter 4 focuses on analysis and interpretation of the gathered data.
- Chapter 5 presents recommendations of the study.

1.9 SUMMARY

This chapter provides an exposition of the problem relating to school management in rural areas. It further outlines the statement of the problem and the aims of the study, while providing a brief summary of the method of research, which is explained together with other relevant concepts applicable to this study. Finally, the structure of subsequent chapters is provided.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The core mission of any school is to improve the educational achievements of all its learners. This basic function of the school can only be realized if all the stakeholders are actively involved (Everard & Morris 1990:11).

The greatest challenge South African educators are faced with is that of transforming educational institutions to safe and stimulating environments of learning. This task is made even more challenging by patterns of lifelessness and lack of stimulation currently found in schools (Snyder & Anderson 1986:1). As long as all parties with have an interest in education, namely the stakeholders, fail to pull together, the funding of education will have little effect on envisaged changes. What is needed in South Africa are schools that develop quality aims in the interest of learners – aims with regard to curriculum design, quality teaching, academic achievements and the creation of sound links with the local community. In short, South Africa needs to develop effective schools.

Potter & Powell (1992:5) argue that effective schools satisfy external criteria, such as demands of parents and learners, and that they perform well when measured against comparable institutions in regard to key areas of performance such as in results.

Harber & Davies (1997:27) provide the following list of characteristics of effective schools:

- Productive school climate and culture;
- Focus on learner acquisition of central learning skills;
- Appropriate monitoring of learners' progress;
- Outstanding leadership;
- Active parental involvement ;
- Effective instructional arrangements and implementation; and
- High expectations and requirements for educators.

According to Keith and Girling (1991:18), an effective school is characterised by learner performance and educator perceptions; it exhibits a culture of mutually reinforcing expectations, trust, staff interaction and participation in the development of instructional goals, curriculum and classroom practice.

2.2 LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS

It is important for people to know exactly what is expected of them (Dunnford, 2000:153). Such knowledge empowers them to make sound decisions and allows each individual to know his/her role in the organization. The reforms that have been affected in South Africa's education system over the past decade have given rise to a new system of management. Furthermore, the conditions under which schools function, constantly call on them to match the demands of their environments (Morrison; 1998:13). For this reason, management in schools has to undergo change, and priority areas need to be developed and discussed to give rise to new, contemporary management styles.

According to Basson (1995:466), the modern school has become a complex organisation due to its size, the high degree of specialisation and the variety of outcomes that it has to cater for. Due to modernization, the school's management role has changed dramatically. Van der Westhuizen (1997:57) states that education management cannot be restricted to the principal or the educators in the school situation only as management occurs on all levels of the system and is the subject of meetings, school governing bodies and learner affairs. The parent and the educator each have a special and important role to play in the management of education of a child. Van Schalkwyk (1990:27) is of the opinion that parental involvement has a significant effect on the quality of the learners' experiences with regard to teaching and learning in the school, and also with regard to their results. For this reason, a fundamental change is required in the philosophy of the organisation of education (West and Ainscow, 1988:15).

It is inevitable that local school management must find a way of re-conceptualizing school as a planning and a management structure. Yet, it seems to be an unattainable goal for

schools to make such adjustments, due to the fact that the management is still to develop new patterns of management in the face of pressures of increased competition from well developed schools (such as the so-called 'Model C' Schools) and limited resources.

For a school to develop it must strive to exist in the future (West and Ainscow 1988:15). South Africa's education reform laws leave the destiny of the school dependent on its own actions. For this reason, it seems farfetched to conceptualise the future of the school. In short, the priority is developing skills that relate to the long-term existence of the institution, which is mostly referred to as strategic planning and management. To cope with a more competitive environment, a more sophisticated analysis is necessary, as is a more rapid translation of plans into action with regard to strategic planning (Montgomery and Porter 1991: xi). Such planning determines the purpose, objectives and desired levels of attainment with regard to envisaged outcomes and allows the opportunity to decide upon actions for achieving desired objectives within an appropriate timescale (Thompson, J 1997:18).

One of the hallmarks of successful management is the ability to create, articulate and sustain a vision of the future (Jenkins, 1991:36). This statement proposes the idea of planning ahead by prescribing the way forward and giving a clear indication of where the school is going. Since 1999 the Department of Education has been ordering schools to draw up and submit School Development Plans (S-D-Ps). The institutions were requested to indicate in their plans priority areas for development and to explain how they intended going about with the implementation thereof. Nevertheless, the School Development Plan has had little effect in the development of schools in rural areas. As Harrison and John (2004:20) explain, the broad environment has a tremendous influence impact on a firm and performance. The performance of management in rural schools can therefore also be seen as largely influenced by the environment.

The changing circumstances within which schools operates will require proper planning and proper management of important activities carried out within the school. These tasks were mentioned in Chapter 1 as functional and management tasks.

The process of planning offers these advantages:

- Learning about the realities of the business;
- Focusing on critical issues;
- Enabling the review of alternatives futures;
- Setting performance standards; and
- Providing guideline to staff (Chandler: 1987:4).

2.3 BACKGROUND TO STRATEGIC PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

The planning function has received increased attention as organisations venture deeper into the notion of service delivery. As the modern world is continuously changing and differs vastly from past certainties, the need for planning is clear. Managers can be sure of one thing – the future will always be different from the past, and they better prepare for changes to come (Massie and Douglas 1985:107). The benefit of planning ahead is that the organisation benefits from being proactive rather than reactive in shaping its own future. Managers can sit back and be dictated to by events, or they can develop a strategy to influence events. Good managers will develop strategies to exert influence over events and planning is one such strategy.

2.4 THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Strategic planning is a process that begins with the setting of the organisation's aims and then goes on to define the strategies and policies to achieve them by analysing the environment for opportunities and threats while building on the strengths and correcting weaknesses within the organization (Steiner, 1979:14; and Barnett and Willsted, 1988:8).

Bryson (2004:32) identifies a ten-step strategic planning process, but for now the researcher believes that the first seven steps of this process are the most important ones to help schools develop. The seven steps are as follows:

1. Initiate and agree on a strategic planning process;
2. Identify organizational mandates;
3. Identify and clarify organisational mission statement and vision;

4. Assess the external and internal environments to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats;
5. Identify the strategic issues facing the organisation;
6. Formulate strategies to manage the issues; and
7. Review and adopt the strategies or strategic plan.

Step 1: Initiate and agree on a strategic planning process

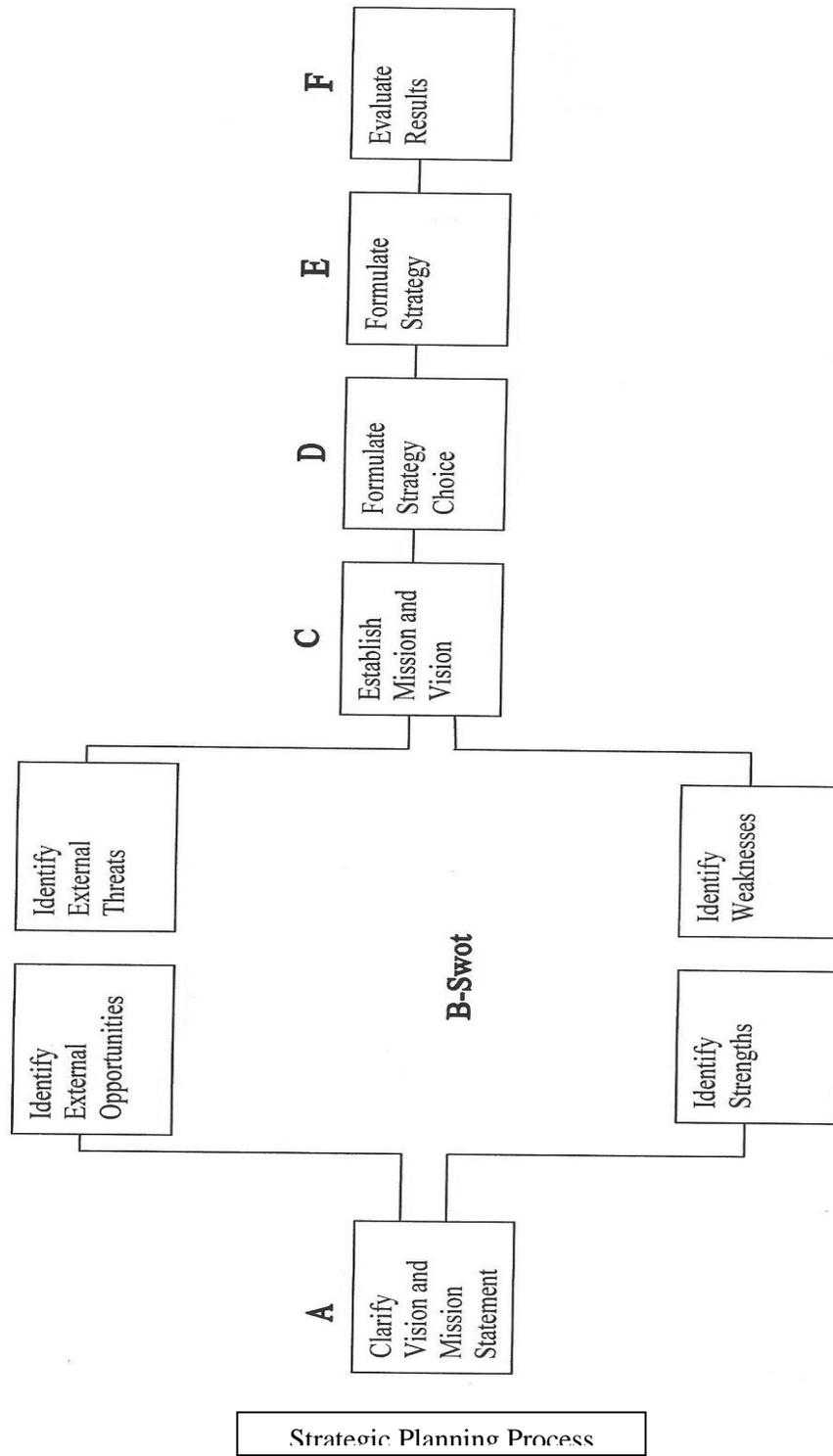
The purpose of this step is to open communication channels for negotiation and agreement among key internal decision-makers (Bryson, 2004:34). The stakeholders have to agree on how the whole process is to be channeled, as well as on the role-functions and the membership of the strategic planning team.

Step 2: Identify the organization's mandates

All schools are mandated by the state to perform predetermined tasks. The mandates will define various requirements, restrictions, expectations, pressures and constraints that the organization faces. The official mandates of the organisation will be outlined in relevant legislation, policies, ordinances, charters, articles and constraints (Bryson, 2004:37).

Steps 3 -7

These steps can be summed up by means of the schematic diagram (below) as presented by David (2005:54).



Source : David F.R 2005 Strategic Management: Concepts and Cases
 Prentice Hall, South Carolina pg54

A. Clarify vision (goals) and mission statements

The mission statement ensures unanimity of purpose within an organisation, thereby helping to provide a basis for the allocation of resources to help facilitate objectives into work structure in such a way that cost, time and performance parameters can be assessed and controlled (David, 2005:56). In this phase, those tasked with planning have to clarify the organization's vision and mission statements in order to justify its existence.

B. Assess the external and internal environments (SWOT analysis)

The abbreviation SWOT refers to the strategic planning method used to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats involved in a business, for our purposes, in school. The planning team analyses the organization's external and internal operating environments. External environment analysis aims to identify opportunities and threats. Examining the external environment will give the organization a chance to review its competitiveness as well as the social and technological factors that may affect its existence (Hill and Jones, 1992:13).

Another component of SWOT analysis in strategic planning is the analysis of the internal environment; it pinpoints the strengths and weaknesses of the organization. Such analysis involves identifying the quality of resources available to the organization.

C. Establish the organisation's mission statements and vision

After the SWOT Analysis, the planning team needs to revisit the mission statement and vision of the organisation. This will help the team to ascertain whether the goals and vision are still in line with the ever-changing environment. If a need arises for changes to be made, this should be communicated effectively and a new vision and goals should then be adopted.

D. Formulate strategy choice

This is a process of generating a series of strategic alternatives, given the goals of the organization, its internal strengths and weaknesses, and external opportunities and threats (Hill and Jones, 1992:14).

If the planning team cannot agree on a course of action due to intense competition, limits from legislation, opposition from pressure groups or scarce resources, new target objectives need to be set.

E. Implement Strategy

A strategy is only useful when it has been implemented (Thompson, 1993:32). An action plan should be developed before implementation and it should detail the following, as suggested by (Bryson, 2005:50):

- Implementation roles and responsibility;
- Expected result;
- Schedules;
- Resource requirements and sources;
- Communication process;
- Review, monitoring and correction procedures; and
- Accountability procedures.

To ensure that its strategy works, the organisation needs to adopt the correct structure. The organisational structure refers to the manner in which the elements of an organisation are structured to achieve certain objectives (Badenhorst, 1991:75).

Badenhorst furthermore (in pages 76-78) identifies and discusses different organisational structures. These are:

- Chaotic structure;
- Authoritarian structure;
- Weberian structure; and
- Professional structure.

Organisational structure reflects power structures and, again, delineates important relationships and emphasises what is important in the organisation (Johnson & Scholes 2002:235).

F. Evaluate Results

Once a strategy is implemented, its execution must be monitored to determine whether its objectives are being achieved. The monitoring of implemented strategies will indicate whether modification is required or not or whether replacement needs to take place, and/or maintained.

2.5 Levels of Strategic Planning

Strategic managers are found not just at the apex of the organisation but also at different levels within its hierarchy (Hill and Jones, 1992:20). The three main levels of management are:

- The corporate level;
- The business level; and
- The functional level.

Each of the three levels is assigned a specific role and this role is important in the implementation of strategic choice.

- *The corporate level*

Corporate level management is represented by the Chief Executive Officer. In schools, the Chief Executive Officer is the principal, the School Governing Body and other external partners who have an interest in the development of the school. The roles of these people define the mission and goals agreed upon.

Johnson & Scholes (2002:271) indicate that the corporate level can add value to their roles by:

- * Improving efficiency – making sure that available resources are shared;
- * Providing expertise and services not available elsewhere;
- * Encouraging collaborations and co-ordination of effort; and
- * Setting standards arising from the performance of individuals and interviewing them to improve performance

- *The business level*

In schools, the business level consists of heads of departments. The role of these people in strategic planning is that they translate the general statement of intent from the mission statement. Generally, they monitor the implementation of policies and procedures.

Unit strategies (to achieve competitive advantage) arising from business level includes:

- A differentiation strategy which seeks to provide services that are unique from competitors;
- The ability to achieve a position to become the industry standard recognized by customers; and
- The functional level

The people in this level are responsible for the implementation of strategies agreed upon. At schools, this sector comprises of educators and all the resources used in and out of the classroom.

2.6 SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

School management is a complex activity, and a major focus of management should be directed at the orderly aspects of the school. This important role of management includes the establishment of an environment in which creativity flourishes and where immediate and major goals can be realized. To do this, managers need to identify barriers to development and then develop strategies to solve them.

Planning plays an important role in a school, and good planning can help a school to achieve its objectives (Badenhorst 1991:23). It is through planning that constraints to management are identified so that attempts can be made to remove them. As shown in the whole process of strategic planning, planning entails regularly comparing what is happening outside the organisation by monitoring the environment, by benchmarking and carrying out a competitor analysis to establish what is happening internally. In this way statements are made and a vision (a new direction) is developed.

One of the great advantages of strategic planning is that it stimulates the future interrelationships of parts, forces the setting of objectives, reveals and clarifies future opportunities, threats and performance measurement (Steiner, 1979:41). Strategic planning greatly encourages people to participate in decision-making. It allows them to use their skills helping the organisation achieve forecasted results. Clearly, strategic planning and management can be seen as processes through which internal and external resources are brought together to produce products and services and through these, satisfactory outcomes for all the organisations and- stakeholders (Thompson, 2001:81).

2.7 SUMMARY

It can be concluded that strategic planning plays an important part in the contemporary management of rural schools. The overall implication of strategic planning is that collaborative participation is ensured in decision-making. Charlton (1993:06) notes that lack of vision should be regarded as a recipe for the downfall of an organization. This statement suggests that an all out attempt must be made to develop a clear vision to be able to govern the activities in a school.

The next chapter focuses on research methodology and fieldwork.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives an outline of the research approach in this study. The method for collecting, presenting, analysing and interpreting data are also outlined and presented.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND INSTRUMENTATION

3.2.1 NATURE OF RESEARCH DESIGN

The design of the research is the overall plan of how the research will be conducted. Thomas (1990:10) indicates that the research design indicates activities the investigator and participants should perform and the order in which it should occur. Schumacher and Macmillan (1993:31) define research design as ‘the plan and structure of the investigation used to obtain evidence to answer research questions’. The design describes the procedures for conducting the study, including when, from whom (participants), how (the instrument) and under what conditions data is obtained. A research design encompasses all employed activities used in planning for the research (De Vos: 1998; 77)

The descriptive method that was used was the survey because the researcher felt that it would be consistent with the aims of the study as stated in Chapter 1. Stangor in Nzimande (2003:24) asserts that the survey is a widely-used method of collecting data about a group with the intention of learning what people think, feel and do in relation to the information sought. The survey is one of the most feasible methods of research for the researcher to select random sample from a population (Borg and Gall 1979:27). The research instrument used in the survey was questionnaire.

3.2.2 INSTRUMENTATION

a) THE QUESTIONNAIRE AS A RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The questionnaire was selected as the research instrument because the researcher considered it to be the best fitted instrument for the requirements of the study. A questionnaire consists of a series of questions or statements that elicit individual responses. Anderson (1990:207) points out that a questionnaire permits the collection of reliable and reasonably valid data in a relatively simple way – cheaply and in a short space of time.

The rationale for using the questionnaire in this study was to obtain facts and opinions about the planning and management of schools which would afford the SMT members the opportunity to comment confidentially on their own experiences as leaders in developing schools. Anderson agrees that questionnaires tend to sharpen what a researcher really wants to know and they greatly facilitate data analysis. Questionnaires motivate the respondents to communicate the required information; so that they know, like/dislike and think can be measured. As a research instrument, it affords a good measure of objectivity in finding and coding the responses of the selected population.

b) CONSTRUCTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Anderson (1990:207) states that it is difficult to construct a good questionnaire. Sloppy-looking questionnaires turn people off, as does lengthy questions and questionnaires requiring lengthy responses (Gay, 1992:224). Considerable care and attention need to be devoted to the construction and revision of a questionnaire. Cohen and Manion (1994:92) believe that an ideal questionnaire possesses the same properties as a good law: it should be clear, unambiguous and uniformly workable.

The researcher decided to use two types of questions, namely closed-ended questions and open-ended questions, as recommended by Ary et al (1972:170).

The questionnaire contained grids each marked from 1 to 5, in which the respondents were required to circle the number of the given answer that most accurately matched their responses to a given question. The five-point scale grid was divided as follows:

1	2	3	4	5
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- 1 Not very important/ very seldom
- 2 Not important
- 3 Partially important
- 4 Important/ often
- 5 Very important/ very often

3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

3.3.1 TARGET POPULATION

In any research project, it is impossible for the researcher to include every individual within a particular research population. According to Mellville and Goddard (2001:35), in the context of research, a population is any group that is the subject of the research interest. Borg and Gall (1979:179) concur with this definition and add that a researcher depends upon the input of individuals within a population so that the result of the research can reflect a generalised result that reflects the group. Due to a number of factors, e.g. time, accessibility and financial constraints, to mention a few, a population cannot be investigated in its entirety, but a smaller group, or sample, from this population can be selected to represent the group.

The population selected for this study was that of primary and high school management teams in the Ilembe District, which is predominantly comprised of deep rural areas. The researcher randomly selected SMT members as respondents that could be considered an adequate sample for reliable data analysis by means of descriptive statistics.

3.3.2 SAMPLING

The research was conducted in primary and secondary schools in Maphumulo District which falls under the KZN Department of Education, North Durban Region. 80 educators were targeted for this study. In this manner the research presents a sample of the schools in Maphumulo District.

The researcher used a systematic sampling for this research. A list of school was obtained from the district offices. The researcher then interacted with the principals of the selected schools to explain the importance of the research. The most important factor in the sampling process was the feasibility that the researcher chose schools that were accessible (to hand in and collect the questionnaires), because Maphumulo area is a deep rural area where some parts are not easily accessible.

3.4 ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

3.4.1 PERMISSION TO CONDUCT THE SURVEY

Data gathering in a process of investigation involves a measure of invasion of personal privacy (Mdingi, 1999:21). Mdimove (2004:32) emphasizes that before sending out the questionnaire, the researcher should obtain permission to contact respondents from the highest authority in each unit. Bearing this in mind, the researcher secured permission from the Education Department via the District Manager of Ilembe District's eThekweni Region (see letter in appendix 1). Another letter was sent to the Circuit /Ward Managers and School Principals (see letters in appendix 2 and 3 respectively).

In the aforementioned letters, the researcher mentioned the importance and purpose of the study as well as the time envisaged for completion, while guaranteeing confidentiality and strict anonymity for respondents.

3.4.2 DISTRIBUTION AND RETURN OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Written questionnaires for this study were promptly delivered by the researcher and sufficient time was allowed for the respondents to complete them so that they could be collected from the respective schools later on, according to plan. The researcher opted for this method because of the following advantages:

- Using this method is cost effective in terms of time and in comparison with costs associated with other methods of gathering data.
- This method was seen to be non-descriptive, as respondents would complete questionnaires in their own free time.
- The data gathered is more easily analysed and interpreted than data obtained through verbal responses.

The researcher also considered some of the disadvantages of written questions, as highlighted by Sax (1979:25):

- The emotion of the respondent is difficult to check, while an interview permits rapport to be established.
- The percentage of returns depends on the length of the questionnaire, the complexity of questions asked, and the extent to which the respondent believes his responses are important.

3.4.3 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

According to Ary et al (1996:262), research is always dependent on measurement and it should be borne in mind that every research instrument should possess the important characteristics of validity and reliability.

Validity is the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure (Gay L.R 1987:155). In this study questions were structured and organized in such a way that the SMT members would supply the required information without undue misunderstanding, as the questions dealt with their day-to-day activities.

Sax (1979:206) defines reliability as the extent to which measurement reflects true individual differences among respondents. On the other hand, Ary et al (1972:262) define reliability as the extent to which a measuring device is consistent in measuring whatever it measures. This quality is essential in any kind of measurement.

It is difficult for the researcher to guarantee reliability as this will be affected by the following factors suggested by (Bailey 1987:73-74):

- Fluctuation in the mood or alertness of respondents due to illness, fatigue, heart-felt feelings, good or bad experiences, and differences amongst the group members.
- Differences in scoring and interpretation of results posed by the problem of respondents who give answers to questions without thoroughly considering their meaning.
- Random effects by respondents who guess, or check off attitude alternatives without trying to understand them.

The researcher focused on both the secondary and primary schools. The research was all inclusive namely, taking into account all the people who are directly linked to functioning of the school (management and educators). The researcher wanted to find out if there was a gap between managing schools (management) and the perception of the educators towards management of schools

3.5 PILOT STUDY

Sarantakos (1993:227) asserts that it is vital for the researcher to familiarize himself with the environment in which the research is to take place. Huyseman (1993) considers the pilot study as a necessity in ensuring the validity and reliability of the instrument. It was therefore necessary that a pilot study be conducted to ascertain whether respondents have the same understanding of the questions that the researcher intended to mean. The researcher then gave out questionnaires to two schools that were not part of the randomly selected schools for the survey. The responses that were received after briefing the respondents indicated that there was nothing wrong with the arrangement and language used in the formulation of questions.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Hitchcock (1989:51) states that the subject of study is the learning and behaviour of humans and the nature of research must not embarrass, hurt, frighten or negatively affect the lives of people. When the questionnaire was drawn up the following were taken into account:

- a) The right to privacy and non-participation.
- b) Unnecessary questions were avoided and no individual item responses were recorded.
- c) The researcher obtained direct consent for participation in the research.
- d) The respondents were given confidentiality because all data was rostered by number rather than by naming.
- e) All the questionnaires were destroyed as soon as the study was completed.
- f) All the questionnaires were to be collected by the researcher.
- g) The respondents to remain anonymous because the questionnaire does not cater for individual names.

For this study the researcher fully described the nature of the research to the willing participants. The researcher informed the participants that he is a registered educator; currently pursuing his Master's Degree with the University of Zululand .The participants were informed of their rights to decide at any time to terminate their participation. The participants were also made aware of the fact that their identities were not needed and that data obtained will be reported anonymously, thereby protecting their identity and privacy.

3.7 SUMMARY

In this chapter the researcher discussed the methodology used in investigating the assumptions stated in Chapter 1. The analysis of the questionnaire will be dealt with in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of data collected by means of the questionnaire, which was divided into two sections, namely section 1 covering personal data of respondents and section 2 the questions on each theme.

Research findings are presented within the following main themes drawn from the aims of the study, namely:

- 1 The strategies designed by the school to enhance the quality of management in schools.
- 2 Structures that have been put in place to meet the challenges of management.
- 3 Ways and means used in schools to monitor the management processes.
- 4 “Stakeholderism” versus the management of schools.

4.2 THE PROCESSING OF DATA

The collected data was captured in a format that would permit analysis and interpretation. This involved the careful coding of the 71 questionnaires completed by the educators. The coded data was transferred onto tables and analysed to interpret the results by means of descriptive statistics.

4.3 PRESENTATION OF DATA

In this study descriptive research was employed with the aim of describing educators’ perceptions of strategic planning and effective management of schools. The research was primarily concerned with the nature and degree of existing situations in schools.

4.3.1 Gender of respondents

Table 1: Frequency distribution according to the gender of the respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	33	46%
Female	38	54%

Total	71	100%
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Table 4.1 shows that there are 8% more female educators than males in the research sample. The SMT should consist of more females than males according to the findings.

4.3.2 Age of respondents

Table 2: Frequency distribution according to the age of the respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
21 – 25	3	4%
26 – 30	9	13%
31 – 35	20	28%
36 – 40	23	32%
41 – 45	8	11%
46 – 50	6	09%
56 – 60	2	03%
Total	71	100%

Table 4.2 shows that the highest percentage i.e. 32% of the respondents who participated in this research were in the age group 36 to 40 years, while the second lowest i.e. 4% of the respondents were in the 21-25 age group. Sixty percent of the respondents were between 31-40 years of age. The research sample group therefore comprises of a relatively young to more mature educators, who, depending on their approaches, are capable of adopting and adapting to new challenges at work. Some more mature educators tend to feel at ease with the status quo and resist changes if they can.

4.3.3 Post level of respondents

Table 3: Frequency distribution according to the age of the respondents

Post Level	Frequency	Percentage
Principal	9	13%
Deputy Principal	4	6%

HOD	13	18%
Educator (PLI)	45	63%
Total	71	100%

The findings in Table 4 show that most of the schools do not have deputy principals. This has implications on how the schools are managed because delegation of work becomes a problem. Principals are burdened with management tasks and some of the core tasks are therefore neglected and compromised.

4.3.4 Years in the current post

Table 4: Frequency distribution according to the number of years in the current post

Completed years in the post	Frequency	Percentage
0 – 5	28	40%
6 – 10	24	34%
11 – 15	14	20%
16 – 20	3	4%
21 - 25	1	1%
26 – 30	1	1%
Total	71	100%

The findings in Table 4.4 show that the highest percentage of participants (i.e.40%) has less than 5 years experience in their current posts. Potentially, this is the group of educators who can be moulded to meet the challenges of management in education. Table 4.4 also reveals that 34% have between 6-10 years experience. Twenty percent of the respondents have 11-15 years experience. Only 6% of the respondents have experience of 16 years and more. On a further analysis of the questionnaire it could be suggested that the low experience of principals attributed to the movement out of the system of the experienced educators and the appointment of the new management.

4.3.5 Years of teaching experience

Table 5: Frequency distribution according to respondents' years of completed service as educators

Completed years of service	Frequency	Percentage
0 – 5	17	24%
6 – 10	19	27%
11 – 15	22	31%
16 – 20	6	8%
21 - 25	5	7%
26 – 30	2	3%
Total	71	100%

Table 4.5 reveals that 90% of the respondents in the research sample have less than 20 years teaching experience, while only 10% have more than 20 years of teaching experience. This can be attributed to the fact that many senior educators leave the profession for different reasons, e.g. early retirement, voluntary severance packages or ill health. The implication of this is that much needed management experience leaves the field. The new educators may be found wanting in terms of management skills and experience.

4.3.6 APPLICATION OF DATA

Table 6: Frequency distribution according to respondents' perceptions of strategic planning and effective management of schools

As the member of the school team how often do you:

Items		1	2	3	4	5	Total
1. Meet for general meetings	N	4	9	31	14	13	71
	%	5%	13%	44%	20%	18%	100%
2. Study the needs of the							

environment with other educators so as to offer effective teaching	N	3	9	26	23	10	71
	%	4%	13%	37%	32%	12%	100%
3. Explain school goals to one another.	N	2	8	30	16	15	71
	%	3%	4%	42%	23%	21%	100%
4. Check the school's performance against its future goals as set out in the mission statement.	N	3	6	29	19	14	71
	%	4%	8%	41%	27%	20%	100%
5. Test or experiment with new ideas.	N	2	8	27	20	14	71
	%	3%	11%	38%	28%	20%	100%
6. Check class and general work from other educators.	N	6	10	26	15	14	71
	%	8%	14%	37%	21%	20%	100%
7. Recognize good work from each other.	N	3	-	26	28	14	71
	%	4%	0%	37%	39%	20%	100%
8. Encourage good relationships based on mutual respect and trust.	N	1	2	23	20	25	71
	%	2%	3%	32%	28%	35%	100%
9. Delegate responsibilities to other educators.	N	3	4	29	20	15	71
	%	4%	6%	41%	28%	21%	100%

11. Use suggestions from other members of the school.	N	-	4	30	15	22	71
	%	0%	6%	42%	21%	31%	100%
12. Transfer information that is meaningful to those involved.	N	-	4	25	18	24	71
		0%	6%	35%	25%	34%	100%
13. Give support in order for educators to work diligently.	N	-	7	21	29	14	71
	%	0%	1%0	3%0	4%1	%19	1%00
14. Discuss teaching strategies and techniques with educators.	N	3	5	28	20	15	71
	%	4%	1%8	39	2%8	2%1	%100

According to the frequency of the responses in Table 4.6 the majority of respondents were somewhere in-between at (3) i.e. partially important, in terms of the five-point scale grid, indicating that they neither believe it is important (often do it) nor unimportant (seldom do it).

General meetings (1): Forty-four percent of the respondents felt that it was not enough and they gave it a score of 3, right at the centre of the scale. Van Deventer & Kruger indicates that meetings are held for the following purposes:

- 1 To exchange ideas and share information.
- 2 To create a work environment that stimulates the generation of new ideas through the rapid exchange of thoughts and views.
- 3 To reduce semantic problems through face-to-face interaction.
- 4 To get the people present to be more committed to stated proposals or procedures than they might otherwise be.

General meetings help the stakeholders share ideas and develop a strategy on how to achieve set objectives. It is where everybody makes an input about where the school is going, what needs to be done, set the time frames, put monitoring tools in place and make checks and balances.

Needs of the environment (2): The nature of work has always been determined by cultural norms. Cultural norms have shifted over the years, mainly due to the Renaissance and the Reformation (Van der Westhuizen, 2002:272). Though 37% of respondents thought that this area had not been covered thoroughly, 46% of the respondents (scale 4 + scale 5) indicate that people are starting to realize the importance of environment for effective teaching. The management of schools entails incorporating the diverse and broad ideologies of the environment in which the school is situated to solve the current and the future needs of the community.

Goal (3): According to Wilson and Corcovan (1998:74), a strong organizational culture is always endorsed by the common goals of those involved with the school. A large percentage of the respondents, 42% were sceptical about whether they were really doing what they should be doing about explaining the goals. One fundamental foundation of strategic planning is that goals should be set and clearly defined. The findings of this investigation is that goals are not completely defined to stakeholders which could create chaos as everyone tries to accomplish tasks that are not commonly shared.

School performance and goals (4): Forty-one percent (41%) of the respondents thought that it has not been done properly. They gave it a scale point of 3, which is in the centre of the scale. School performance is closely linked to the accomplishment of set targets or goals. If these targets are not clearly defined than chaos will result within the school. It is encouraging that more than half (59%) of the respondents can identify the link that lies between the performance of the school and the goals it wants to achieve.

Experimentation with new ideas (5): With regard to frequency distribution, 3 – 75 (years of teaching experience) eighty-two percent (82%) of the respondents had less than 20 years of

experience. This would indicate that the educators are vibrant, energetic and fresh from training, bringing new ideas about teaching and management into the education system. Forty-eight percent (48%) of the respondents indicated that they shared and experimented with new ideas. The challenge that now exists is how are these ideas implemented and incorporated into the existing structure of the school. Schools management through planning has to develop a platform for sharing ideas while they are still fresh in the educators. It needs to make sure that the environment encourages everyone in decision making.

Monitoring (6): A continuous assessment system ensures that the teaching and learning outcomes are attainable for educators and learners (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2005:253). Forty one percent of the respondents report monitoring (checking of class and general work) as an important and deserving undertaking. Thirty seven percent still feel there are still some improvements that are needed concerning monitoring. Monitoring helps an organisation check where it stands in relation to set goals. It helps the stakeholders monitor their progress, and- how far they are from achieving these shared goals. It also helps the school make adjustment where necessary to re-align progress made with actual desired outcome.

Recognition (7): Recognition is important because people respond better to positive reinforcement than to punishment (Van der Westhuizen, 2002:292). Losoncy (1995:14) states that an effective leader builds a motivated team by being a positive influence and by recognizing good work performed. Almost all the respondents in the research sample i.e. 90% agreed that recognition was an important and worthy undertaking. It becomes the responsibility of all the stakeholders to develop a tool for recognising outstanding work. Such undertaking should not be a one-man's show where the principal makes all the decisions on who should receive the accolades for such an act.

Good relationships (8): Sixty-three percent of the respondents agreed that good relationships were important and that they should be encouraged. Smit & Cronje (1999:298-300) provide some guidelines for creating harmonious relations, such as:

- 1 Take into account the opinions, insights and feelings of staff members.
- 2 Delegate tasks, responsibility and authority.
- 3 Openness encourages the establishment of healthier relationships.
- 4 The exchange of ideas.

It is through good relationships that individuals begin to share their visions for the institution and how this vision could be achieved. A sense of trust is developed where each stakeholder take it upon themselves to implement the agreed policies without a fear of being a victim or being sabotaged for trying their best to uplift the school.

Delegation (9): Forty-one percent (41%) of the respondents felt that delegation is not done as frequently as it should. Once the division of work in the school has been completed, and has been structured into departments and units, responsibilities and authority must be allocated to each post in the school structure (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2005:118). It is through proper delegation that the talents in individuals are unearthed. It is therefore the duty of the management to study individuals in the institution and to assess what they are good at, what assistance they may require to complete tasks and the resources they will need to achieve the desired outcome.

Using suggestions (11): Fifty-two percent of the respondents said that they used suggestions from other educators. It must be noted that people come into a school with special skills, and that these skills must be shared by everybody within the school. Once people or individuals feel that their contribution is valued, they will then contribute even more to the advancement of the school. The school as a learning institution then grows in stature and the customers will be satisfied with the results.

Transfer of information (12): Van Deventer & Kruger, (2005:226) believe that the information that should be transferred must be timely, accurate and relevant to a particular situation. The quality of the decision is related to the quality of the information (Smit & Cronje, 1999:192). Fifty-nine percent of the respondents shared the same sentiments that they transferred information.

Give support (13): Educators need support in the execution of their duties. Schools need to make sure that resources are available and can be accessed by those who need them. Sixty percent of the respondents agreed that support is often given to help them work diligently. The support which is given needs to be closely monitored to determine whether it is indeed effective. When support is given individuals feel part of the team and valued in the institution. This in turn increases their motivation towards the achievement of set goals for them to accomplish.

Discussing teaching strategies (14): Forty-nine percent of the respondents suggested that they did discuss teaching strategies, but 39% of the respondents felt that not much is being done about this, beyond discussion. Because some of the respondents are still young in the field, new teaching strategies lie untapped within individuals because no one is allocated to monitoring their implementation. Learners might be losing on new methods of learning thus impacting the final results at grade 12. Much needs to be done by the schools so that new teaching strategies are discussed and shared by the stakeholders within the school. Especially between the more experienced and the new entrants with less experience. This could be achieved by departmental meetings where the HOD's encourage the mass participation of sharing ideas on how to improve teaching and learning in the school.

Table 7: Frequency distribution regarding educators' perceptions about autonomy, motivation and parent involvement

As a member of the school team, how often do you:

Item		1	2	3	4	5	Total
1. Allow other educators autonomy of their work-related duties.	N	2	4	32	24	9	71
	%	3%	6%	45%	33%	13%	100%
2. Highlight school's achievement to each other.	N	-	7	22	25	17	71

	%	0%	10%	31%	35%	24%	100%
3. Jointly meet with parents to solve problems.	N	10	8	30	17	6	71
	%	14%	11%	42%	24%	9%	100%
4. Communicate school's goals to stakeholders to help school develop.	N	5	10	26	22	9	71
	%	7%	14%	37%	31%	11%	100%
5. Come together with parents to solve problems.	N	9	12	25	13	12	71
	%	12%	17%	35%	18%	18%	100%
6. Accept criticism from stakeholders.	N	6	11	23	19	12	71
	%	9%	15%	32%	27%	17%	100%
7. Consult with parents regarding their children's academic progress.	N	6	9	3	18	15	71
	%	9%	13%	32%	25%	21%	100%
8. Assist stakeholders with access to information they need to make decisions	N	3	6	30	24	8	71
	%	4%	9%	42%	34%	11%	100%
9. Assist stakeholders to perform tasks within the limits of available resources.	N	3	9	30	20	9	71
	%	4%	13%	42%	28%	13%	100%
24. Motivate people in the							

school towards achieving planned objectives.	N	3	4	27	21	16	71
	%	4%	6%	38%	29%	23%	100%
10. Analyze information for clear understanding and positive implementation.	N	2	6	23	18	22	71
	%	3%	6%	32%	31%	31%	100%

Table 7 reflects that most of the respondents felt that whatever is done is not enough, and they gave this item a score of three (3).

Autonomy of Educators (15): Almost half of the respondents awarded 45% to issues of autonomy. Competent educators must be given tasks and rights to make decisions on a broad range of issues. Autonomy can lead to managerial creativity and ingenuity, which contributes to the adaptiveness and development of the school as an organization (Ivancevich and Matleson, 1990:434). Autonomy gives individuals a chance of implementing shared goals according to individual's skill and speed. The duty of management is monitor and value the changes effected to positively implementing the vision of the institution.

School's achievements (16): A majority of the respondents, i.e. (69%) agreed that they indeed did highlight the school's achievements. Lee and Beard (1992:125) state that educators with achievement motivation demonstrate, among others, the following characteristics:

- 1 That they can be relied upon to see a task through from start to finish.
- 2 Have a great deal of energy and drive and are highly active.

Problem-solving with parents (17): Problem-solving and decision making are continuous management tasks that play a very important part in the management process (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2005:95). (42%) of the respondents believed that parental involvement in decision making and problem solving are still lacking. Parental involvement is both

important and vital in the management of the school. The problem is, if parents are not involved other stakeholders might take decisions that do not impact positively on the desired outcome. Also the non-involvement of parents creates a vacuum through which discord may develop.

Communicating school goals (18): Wilson & Corcovan (1998:74) declare that a strong organizational culture is always endorsed by the common goals of those involved with the school. (42%) of the respondents believe that they do enough in communicating the school goals to stakeholders. This is a positive step towards realising the vision and goals of the schools. Once the school has a shared and understood goal it becomes easier to monitor the functionality of the school and make necessary changes to processing level of activities. It is also crucial that the management put in place a monitoring tool to ascertain what individuals do and that, impacts positively on the desired outcome. A tool that makes sure that what happens inside the class (teaching and learning) is done in the spirit of achieving the desired goal.

Accepting criticism (19): Forty-four percent of the respondents state that criticism is often accepted. Criticism that is constructive is always important because it serves to build individuals. It should be noted that criticism should be done positively. It should not be a personal attack on a person's character but simply focus on an act that deviates from agreed norms that seeks to achieve the goals of the institution. Such criticism should be done in an environment that allows freedom of expression for the guilty party so that their views on the act are listened to.

Consulting with parents (20): Consultative Management provides answers to a management dilemma. A manager can obviously not be a specialist in everything, nor can he/she be an expert in all the details and operation processes of the school; and he can certainly not anticipate and solve every problem that arises (Carlson, 1992:58). Forty-six percent of the respondents indicated that consultation with parents is something that is emphasized in their schools. Consulting with parents help them to be aware of all the changes taking place, the progress the school is making and giving them a chance to be

involved in the education of their children.

Assistance to stakeholders (21): Forty-two percent of the respondents felt that the assistance given to stakeholders is enough, even with the limits of available resources. There is much that needs to be done in this area. Assistance given to individual people of the team goes a long way in achieving the goals of the institution. As the schools in this area are found predominantly in deep rural area of the province, greater assistance in developing management tools that will lift the school to the required level as per government educational goals is required.

Access to information (22): Schools need to develop information systems unique to their character. Information systems are people procedures as well as other resources used to collect, transform and disseminate information in an organisation (Smit & Cronje, 1999:194). Forty-six percent of the respondents believed that the amount of access to information currently given is enough to help stakeholders make decisions. Information about the school should be easily accessible to all the stakeholders. People should be aware where the school is in relation to the desired outcome and national department vision.

Motivation (23): Fifty-two percent of the respondents indicated that motivation is indeed being given to people at schools. Motivation depends on behaviour, which has two elements, people's needs and aims. The process of motivation is indicated by a conscious awareness of an unsatisfied need (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2005:149). Motivation is the key in unlocking the potential of attainment an individual can offer. It should be seen as a one of the key resources management applies to achieve desired outcomes. Whether it is done verbally or through an incentive, motivation should not be overcompensated. It should be done as a tool for recognition of job well executed.

Analyze information for implementation (24): Fifty-six percent (56%) of the respondents agreed that they seldom analysed information. Analysing information can assist the school in making and understanding adjustments and in positive implementation of responsibilities. It also helps the school plan the implementation of policies in a manner

that is unique to the individual school. When information is analysed all the stakeholders have a clear understanding of the implications of such information and the benefits it will bring to the school.

4.4 Responses to closed question

Question 10 in questionnaire required the respondents to state in their own words how delegation is performed at their own respective schools. Three interesting responses came out here:

- i. 37% of the respondents indicated that delegation was given to people close to the principals of the school.
- ii. 42% of the respondents indicated that delegation of duties is given to the people with lesser duty loads
- iii. 21% of the respondents indicated that delegation of duties is given to people with the necessary skills to carry out the task to completion.

From these responses it is clear that delegation is not correctly performed and the implication of this is that tasks are often left unfinished. The reason being, the majority of the people delegated with the task have no interest of completing the task, or, have no knowledge of how to complete the given task. Because of these reasons, principal of the schools could have an added task of closely monitoring the educators delegated with tasks instead of focusing on managing the school.

4.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter, information derived from the questionnaires issued to educators was presented in frequency tables and the findings were then discussed in relation to the literature study.

The first part of the chapter dealt with an analysis of the biographical information of respondents. Thereafter descriptive statistics were used to analyse the educators' perceptions about strategic planning and effective management of schools.

The following chapter will serve as a summary of the study, including certain recommendations made in light of the findings of the research.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to give a summary of the study, to describe the conclusions drawn, and to make certain recommendations. The empirical research conducted in chapter 3 and the data analysis that followed in chapter 4, are integrated to present the conclusion and recommendations. Attempts were made to collate responses to individual aspects, to arrive at specific conclusions, followed by a set of recommendations, which, it is hoped, may help alleviate the problems identified.

5.2 FINDINGS

5.2.1 FINDINGS FROM LITERATURE STUDY

- An effective school is characterised by learner performance and educator perceptions. It exhibits a culture of mutually reinforcing expectations, trust, staff interaction and participation in the development of instructional goals, curriculum and classroom practice.
- The development of a school depends on its striving to exist in the future. Successful management is always working toward creating, articulating, and sustaining a vision of the future.
- The environment plays an important role in the development of a vision of a school. The SWOT analysis helps the school to understand its internal and external environments, thereby assisting it in making competitive decisions.
- The success of a school largely depends on how a strategy is implemented. Delegation of responsibilities becomes important in the implementation of a strategy. Resources have to be made available and target times must be stipulated.
- Planning encourages people to participate in decision-making; it stimulates the interrelationships of parts, and clarifies future opportunities, threats and performance measurement.

5.2.2 FINDINGS FROM EMPIRICAL STUDY

Some important findings that flow from the empirical study include:

- Almost half the number of the respondents in the research sample indicated that meetings are not held as often as they would like.
- The majority of the respondents in the research study agreed that they explained the school's organisational goals to one another.
- Half the number of the respondents agreed that they had experimented with and tested new ideas.
- The majority of the respondents indicated that they often encouraged good relationships based on respect and trust.
- Half the number of the respondents in the sample stated that suggestions from members were often used to solve problems.
- The majority of the respondents in the research sample indicated that they were not satisfied with meetings with parents to solve problems.
- The majority of the respondents indicated that they often met with parents to discuss the academic progress of learners.

It is evident from the research that most of the planning activities are not well executed. According to indications, the schools will take a long time to move forward or to develop towards achievement of the Department of Education's goal, namely that of producing literate citizens. Certain recommendations based on the literature and empirical studies are discussed below.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3.1 Recommendation 1

Meetings create an environment in which diverse inputs are made. It is in meetings that rational thinking is exercised, decisions made and where planning takes place. Meetings are held for the following purposes:

- To help management plan strategically.

- To exchange ideas and share information.
- To create a work environment that stimulates the generation of new ideas through the rapid exchange of thought and views.
- To reduce semantic problems through face-to-face interactions.

The Department of Education should facilitate workshops for managers and parents to improve on general meetings by:

1. Holding management meetings where the school management team can meet and carry out the management activities of planning, organising, guidance and control. This meeting should be held weekly or bi-weekly.
2. The formal staff meeting: This meeting is held once a term. The reasons for holding such a meeting are to encourage staff development in areas such as teaching and classroom practice (e.g. teaching methods).
3. The informal staff meeting: This meeting could be held in a staffroom ten minutes before the start of school. It helps to facilitate the flow of information, to coordinate activities and to give feedback.

5.3.2 Recommendation 2

The findings of this study reveal that the majority of the respondents are new in the field. This could mean that many important new ideas remain unused. Positive attitudes and values must be inculcated in educators to unleash their knowledge.

The employer should do the following to help educators use their talents and skills more effectively.

1. Improve working conditions by providing adequate resources.
2. Provide in-service – training for new employees.
3. Create a career path for educators.
4. Improve channels of communication.
5. Allow educators opportunities for decision-making.

5.3.3 Recommendation 3

A vision helps an organisation to develop because it allows it to move forward. When a vision is developed, teamwork is developed – and people become a part of the organisation. Everyone works toward the common goal that was discussed and agreed upon. Apparently, some schools do not have such goals that they actually want to achieve.

The employer can assist the school to develop school goals by:

1. Giving workshops and seminars on SWOT analysis and developing a vision from the analysis.
2. Bringing in people from the business sector to come and help schools to develop a vision, because the business sector is well-versed in strategic planning.
3. Encouraging schools to be vocal about the challenges that they experience in their day-to-day functioning.
4. Having schools write a monthly report explaining achievements and areas of concern. Experts should then be brought in to help schools to solve those problems.

5.3.4 Recommendation 4

While the parents are the primary educators of learners, the majority of schools in South Africa are community schools. For this reason it is of great importance that they should become actively involved in their children's education.

1. The Department of Education needs to create forums where parents will be empowered in matters regarding their involvement in schools.
2. Schools should encourage active parent participation in the management of schools.
3. Schools need to co-opt parents who are competent in areas of school management.
4. Full training must be provided to school governing bodies, including on how they should exercise their roles and culture in the school.

The purpose of this study was to investigate strategic planning in a school context by means of a study of relevant literature and an empirical investigation based on data collected to arrive at appropriate recommendations with regard to factors that may hinder the successful implementation of strategic planning in schools.

It is hoped that the recommendations made in this study will be implemented in the interests of improving planning in schools.

5.4 CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to find an in-depth understanding of what issues of management need to be strengthened to improve the quality and effectiveness of planning and management in schools. The findings point out that planning should be the priority for schools to be effective. Findings from the respondents are that schools still lack the planning process thus making the management activities difficult. For schools to run properly in future, programmes should be aimed at enabling the management teams to develop their knowledge, skills and attitude for leadership purposes.

Managers need to be trained and encouraged to acquire innovative strategies aimed at supporting stakeholders and understanding trends concerning planning and management within education institutions. A partnership between educators, parents and Department of Education needs to be strengthened. This partnership will require stakeholders to work as a team. For such practice, cooperation, integration and continuity are essential. Each stakeholder works in partnership, sharing the vision, ideas, plans and values.

It is hoped that the recommendations made in this study will be implemented in the interests of improving planning in schools.

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APPENDIX “A”

**LETTER TO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SEEKING PERMISSION
FOR DISTRIBUTION OF QUESTIONNAIRES.**

P.O. Box 3714
Kempton Park
1620

The Circuit Manager
Maphumulo Circuit
Maphumulo 4470

Dear Sir

RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

The above topical line has reference.

I am doing a Masters of Education in the Department of Educational Planning and administration at the University of Zululand under the Supervision of Dr S. Verhoef.

I would appreciate it if I could be granted permission to conduct research in some of the Primary and Secondary Schools in your Circuit (Maphumulo Circuit). The questionnaire will target school principals and members of the school management teams.

My research examines ‘The Strategic Planning and Management as a tool in the management of schools’.

Thanking you in anticipation.

.....

Mahlambi S.B

P.O. Box 3714
Kempton Park
1620

The District Manager
Ilembe District
Durban

Dear Sir

RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

The above topical line has reference.

I am doing a Masters of Education in the Department of Educational Planning and administration at the University of Zululand under the Supervision of Dr S. Verhoef.

I would appreciate it if I could be granted permission to conduct research in some of the Primary and Secondary Schools in your Circuit (Maphumulo Circuit). The questionnaire will target school principals and members of the school management teams.

My research examines 'The Strategic Planning and Management as a tool in the management of schools'.

Thanking you in anticipation.

.....

Mahlambi S.B

P.O.BOX 3714
Kempton Park
1620

SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL
KZN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PRIVATE BAG X 9137
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR

**RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS IN MAPHUMULO
CIRCUIT**

I am a Masters Degree student currently undertaking an intensive study on the strategic planning for effective management of schools. An urgent appeal is hence made to conduct an empirical research in schools at Maphumulo Circuit. This research is towards my M.Ed. degree and is being carried out under the supervision of Prof G. Urbani and Dr S.M. Verhoef at the University of Zululand.

The topic of my dissertation is Strategic Planning for Effective Management of Schools. For the purpose of this research a questionnaire has been developed, which is to be administered to educators located in Maphumulo Circuit. All information elicited from the research will be treated as confidential and anonymity will be ensured.

The research project will offer invaluable information to all educators as well as to the Department of Education. A copy of the research findings and recommendations will be made available to your department.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely

.....
MAHLAMBI S.B
Tel: 073 6516630

APPENDIX "B"

LETTER FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GRANTING PERMISSION TO DISTRIBUTE QUESTIONNAIRES.



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS

Tel: 033 341 8610
Fax: 033 341 8612

Private Bag X9137
Pietermaritzburg
3200

228 Pietermaritz Street
Pietermaritzburg, 3201

INHLOKOHHOVISI

PIETERMARITZBURG

HEAD OFFICE

Enquiries:
Imibuzo: Sibusiso Alwar
Navrae:

Reference:
Inkomba: 0140/06
Verwysing:

Date:
Usuku: 16 March 2006
Datum:

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to serve as a notice that **Mr S. B. Mahlambi** has been granted permission to conduct research with the following terms and conditions:

- That as a researcher, he/she must present a copy of the written permission from the Department to the Head of the Institution concerned before any research may be undertaken at a departmental institution.
- **Mr S. B. Mahlambi** has been granted special permission to conduct his/her research during official contact times, as it is believed that their presence would not interrupt education programmes. Should education programmes be interrupted, he/she must, therefore, conduct his/her research during nonofficial contact times.
- No school is expected to participate in the research during the fourth school term, as this is the critical period for schools to focus on their exams.


for **SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL**
KwaZulu Natal Department of Education



APPENDIX “C”

**REQUEST TO RESPONDENTS SEEKING THEIR ASSISTANCE IN
ADMINISTERING QUESTIONNAIRE TO EDUCATORS.**

P.O. Box 3714
Kempton Park
1620

DEAR EDUCATOR

**RE: QUESTIONNAIRE: STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR EFFECTIVE
MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS**

At present I am engaged in a research project towards my Masters in Education Degree at the University of Zululand under the guidance of Prof G. Urbani and Dr S.M Verhoef. The research is concerned with the Strategic Planning for effective management of schools.

As one of the selected respondents, I have taken the liberty of writing to you in order to seek your assistance in acquiring information about your experience relating to the research.

I can assure you that all information will be regarded as strictly confidential, and not personal details of any respondent, or school, will be mentioned in the findings, nor will any of the results be related to any particular educator or school.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

.....
MAHLAMBI S.B

P.O. Box 3714
Kempton Park
1620

THE PRINCIPAL

DEAR SIR/MADAM

RE: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DETERMINING EDUCATOR'S PERCEPTION OF STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS

At present I am conducting a research study entitled Strategic Planning for Effective Management of Schools, and educators from your school have been selected to participate in this research programme, I have received written permission from the Superintendent General to enlist the help of your educators to complete questionnaire.

I hereby seek your assistance in administrating this questionnaire to any of 5 (five) educators on your staff. I am aware that in asking for your cooperation I am adding to your already considerable responsibilities and workload. However, I hope that this study will make a meaningful contribution towards the educators' understanding of strategic planning and management.

Arrangements for collection of the completed questionnaire will be made with you in due course. The questionnaire should not take more than 20 minutes to complete.

Thanking you in anticipation for your cooperation and kind assistance.

Yours sincerely

.....
MAHLAMBI S.B

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

QUESTIONNAIRE

***STRATEGIC PLANNING: A TOOL FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF
SCHOOLS.***

MAHLAMBI SB

SECTION A

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Circle the appropriate code or number where necessary.

1. Gender

Male

Female

1
2

2. Your current post level

Educator (PL1)

Head of Department

Deputy Principal

Principal

1
2
3
4

3. Your age (in complete years)

3	5
---	---

Example thirty five years

--	--

4. Number of years in your current post level as at 31-12-2006:
(in complete years)

0	5
---	---

Example five years

--	--

5. Number of years teaching experience 31-12-2006:
(in complete years)

0	7
---	---

Example seven years

--	--

SECTION B

Remember this is not a test of your competence. Please mark your opinion by circling the appropriate number on the scale provided for each question. Give your opinion on a 5 point scale where

1 means not important / very seldom

5 means very important / very often

2-4 means somewhere in between

Mark your opinion by circling the appropriate number on the scale provided for each question. In this questionnaire strategic planning and management are seen as management tasks.

Example:

How often do you revisit your vision goals of the school?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

very often

As a member of the school team how often do you:

1. Meet for general meetings?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

2. Study the needs of the environment (places of work and people of the community) with other educators so as to offer effective teaching?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

3. Explain school goals to one another?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

4. Check the school's performance against its future goals as set out in the schools mission statement?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

5. Test or experiment with new ideas?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

6. Check class and general work from other educators?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

7. Recognise good work e.g. (planning, decision-making) from each other?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

8. Encourage good relationships with educators based on mutual respect and trust?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

9. Delegate responsibilities to other educators?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

10. In the spaces provided below, kindly indicate in your own words how you delegate tasks to other people in the school?

As a member of the school team how often do you:

11. Transfer information e.g. through meetings, notices that is meaningful to those involved?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

12. Use suggestions from other members of the school?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

13. Give support to educators in order for educators to work diligently?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

14. Discuss teaching strategies and techniques with educators?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

15. Allow other educators autonomy in completion of their work related duties?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

16. Highlight the school's achievements to each other?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

As a member of the school team how often do you?

17. Jointly meet with parents, learners and educators to revisit the school's goals?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

18. Communicate the school goals to parents, learners and educators in order to help the school develop?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

19. Come together with parents, learners and educators to solve problems?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

20. Accept criticism from stakeholders (parents, learners and educators)?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

21. Consult with parents regarding their children's academic progress?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

22. Assist parents, learners and educators to perform tasks within the limits of available resources?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

23. Provide parents, learners and educators access to information that they need to make decisions?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

24. Motivate people in the school towards achieving planned objectives?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often

25. Analyse official information (notices or circulars) for clear understanding and positive implementation?

Very seldom

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 very often