

Strategic Planning as a Management Tool for School Principals in Rural Schools in the Motheo District

Gawie Schlebusch and Masese Mokhatle

Central University of Technology, Free State, Mothusi Road, Box 1881, Welkom, South Africa

KEYWORDS Planning. School Management. School Governing Body. School Reform

ABSTRACT Strategic planning basically includes a group of instruments, operations and concepts structured to help managers, leaders and planners think and act strategically. The planning process comprises a definition of the goals, a valuation of the resources available for meeting the goals, and the definition of definite plans or initiatives that are intended to achieve the goals. The process usually includes a classification exercise that identifies the highest priority initiatives. The study indicates how strategic management fits into the management process. Strategic planning ensures that the school is associated with the changing internal and external environment. This planning is formulated by top management and focuses on the entire organization. A qualitative design was followed in which the opinions of principals were sought through the use of semi-structured interviews. The findings of the study indicate that strategic planning does not occur in many schools in the Motheo district. If a form of strategic planning does occur, School Governing Body (SGB) chairpersons are often excluded in the drafting and implementation of these plans. Collaboration between School Management Teams (SMTs) and SGBs is needed to ensure the successful drafting and implementation of strategic plans.