

Procedures and Processes Followed in the Appointment of Principals for School Leadership and Management

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ABSTRACT The purpose of the qualitative descriptive study on which this paper is based was to explore the procedures and processes followed in appointing principals for school leadership and management in the Mpumalanga and Limpopo Provinces of South Africa. Using a qualitative, multiple case study approach, fifteen primary school principals were purposely sampled and interviewed by means of semi-structured interviews to explore issues of equity and fairness in principal appointments and pathways to becoming principals. The findings reveal a trend of level hopping and a flawed implementation of the stipulated appointment processes. There was also evidence of power-play among the different stakeholders and micro-politicking in the appointment procedures. Recommendations are that leadership and management skills training should be undertaken by teachers aspiring to be principals and that the criteria for principal appointments should be revised to include higher academic and professional qualifications. A further recommendation is the development of a monitoring tool to ensure quality in the appointment of principals.