

Conflict Management and School Leadership

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ABSTRACT Schools are prone to conflicts and breakdown in communication especially in an age where all role-players are aware of their rights. School-based conflict can be ignited by a number of aspects. Yet school principals as managers, are expected to be able to creatively address conflicts in their schools. This was a qualitative study that included eight school principals from four primary and four secondary schools in two historically black African areas (townships) in the Gauteng Province, South Africa. The participants were interviewed and their schools were observed as well. The study found out that few principals are prepared adequately for conflict management. They tend to misunderstand the role of conflict and maintain that it should be immediately avoided or halted. The discussion closes with recommendations, and among these is the need to empower school principals with conflict management training before they assume their leadership positions.