



Language Policy and Education Outcomes in Multilingual South Africa: An Analytical Survey

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Abstract

Language policies play a crucial role in shaping educational outcomes for multilingual populations in South Africa. A mixed-methods survey was conducted with educators, students, and parents from diverse linguistic backgrounds across multiple provinces. Quantitative data were collected through standardised questionnaires, while qualitative insights were gathered via focus group discussions and interviews. The analysis revealed a significant disparity in educational performance between students who predominantly used their first language at home versus those who did not, indicating that effective language policies are essential for equitable learning environments. This study highlights the critical need for tailored language education strategies to address linguistic diversity and promote inclusive educational practices in South Africa's multilingual regions. Educational institutions should implement bilingual or multilingual curricula, while policymakers must develop comprehensive language policies that support mother-tongue instruction and professional development for educators.

Keywords: *Multilingualism, Bantu Languages, Heritage Language Maintenance, Socioeconomic Status, Ethnography, Quantitative Research, Qualitative Analysis*

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