



Language Policies and Educational Outcomes in Multilingual African States: A Synthesis of Research from South Africa

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Abstract

Language policies in South Africa have evolved significantly over recent decades to address linguistic diversity within multilingual contexts. A systematic review of academic literature focusing on official documents, policy papers, and empirical studies published since the early 2000s. There is evidence suggesting that bilingual education programmes in South African schools have improved overall student performance by up to 15% compared to monolingual classrooms, particularly for students from minority language backgrounds. While there are ongoing challenges related to resource allocation and teacher training, the integration of multiple languages into educational curricula has shown promise in enhancing academic achievement across linguistic groups. Policy makers should continue to support bilingual education programmes while also investing in professional development for educators who speak minority languages. Language Policy, Educational Outcomes, Multilingual Education, South Africa

Keywords: *Multilingualism, Bantu Languages, Heritage Language Education, Codeswitching, Linguistic Pluralism, Critical Discourse Analysis, Multicultural Education*

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