

Bridging the divide: Leveraging curriculum reforms to address the articulation gap in South Africa's education system

¹Luvuyo Ndawule and ²Lulekwa Baleni

¹North West University, South Africa and ²University of Fort Hare, South Africa

¹Luvuyo.Ndawule@nwu.ac.za and ²LBaleni@ufh.ac.za

Abstract

The persistent articulation gap between basic education and higher education in South Africa poses significant challenges for students, particularly those from under-resourced schools. This study aimed to explore how curriculum reforms at the basic education level might mitigate these challenges and better prepare students for the demands of university education. The main research question this study addressed was: How can curriculum reforms in basic education effectively bridge the articulation gap, enhancing students' readiness for higher education? Grounded in Human Capital Theory, which emphasizes the role of education as an investment in individual and societal development, the study critically examined existing literature, policy documents, and statistical data through a desktop research methodology. This approach allows for the analysis of how curriculum misalignments have historically contributed to the articulation gap and evaluated proposed solutions for reform. Ethical considerations were addressed by ensuring the responsible and accurate use of secondary data, proper citation of sources, and acknowledgement of diverse perspectives to avoid bias. The significance of this research lies in its potential to inform educational reforms and policymaking in South Africa, particularly in addressing systemic disparities and improving student success rates in higher education. By highlighting effective strategies for curriculum reform, the study contributes to the broader goals of equity, inclusivity, and academic excellence in the national education system. The study finds that the articulation gap between basic and higher education in South Africa continues to hinder student success, especially for those from under-resourced schools. This gap stems largely from curriculum misalignments that leave learners without the necessary skills and preparation for university-level study. Viewed through the lens of Human Capital Theory, the research shows how these shortcomings reduce the broader societal and individual benefits of education by perpetuating inequality. It highlights that curriculum reforms such as aligning school content with university expectations, strengthening foundational competencies, and fostering critical thinking are crucial to bridging the divide. The study also emphasizes that disadvantaged learners are disproportionately affected, making reform both an academic and equity imperative. Ultimately, it underscores the importance of policy-driven curriculum reform as a national priority to improve student readiness, success rates, and inclusivity in higher education.

Keywords: articulation gap, curriculum reform, higher education, basic education, South Africa

Introduction

The articulation gap between basic education and higher education in South Africa remains a critical challenge, particularly for students from under-resourced schools. This gap, characterized by the misalignment between high school curricula and university expectations, significantly impacts students' academic readiness and success. Despite various curriculum reforms introduced since the end of apartheid, including Curriculum 2005 (C2005) and the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), the education system continues to grapple with systemic inequalities and disparities in quality (Ngobeni et al., 2023). These reforms aimed to democratize education and address historical injustices, yet their implementation

has often fallen short of bridging the divide between basic and higher education (Gumede & Biyase, 2016). Recent studies emphasize the importance of curriculum transformation in addressing societal needs and preparing students for higher education. For instance, Agbaje (2023) highlights the need for curricula that reflect the realities of African societies, rather than replicating Western models. This perspective aligns with the broader goal of fostering equity and inclusivity within South Africa's education system. Additionally, the integration of vocational training and skills-based learning has been identified as a promising approach to enhance academic readiness and employability (Jobs Guru, 2025; Agbaje,

2023; Fitzsiman, 2018). The theoretical framework grounding this study is Human Capital Theory with Theodore Schultz and Gary Becker as main proponents (Schultz, 1961; Becker, 1964) which posits that education is a key driver of individual and societal development. By investing in curriculum reforms that align with higher education demands, South Africa can enhance students' academic preparedness and contribute to broader socio-economic growth (Fitzsimons, 2018). This study sought to explore how curriculum reforms at the basic education level might address the articulation gap, with a focus on identifying effective strategies and interventions.

Background

The articulation gap between basic education and higher education in South Africa has long been a subject of concern, particularly as it affects students' ability to transition successfully into university environments. This gap, defined as the misalignment between the skills and knowledge imparted in high school and the expectations of higher education institutions, has been exacerbated by systemic inequalities and historical disparities in the education system (Malatji & Singh, 2018). Despite numerous reforms, including the introduction of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), the gap persists, particularly for students from under-resourced schools (Jansen, 1998). One of the key challenges lies in the quality of teaching and learning at the basic education level. Research indicates that many teachers lack the necessary training and resources to effectively prepare students for the demands of higher education. This is particularly evident in subjects like mathematics and science, where students often struggle to meet university standards (Malatji & Singh, 2018).

Furthermore, the lack of collaboration between secondary schools and universities has been identified as a critical factor contributing to the articulation gap (Chauke & Malatji, 2024). Language barriers also play a significant role in widening the gap. Many students transition from mother-tongue instruction in primary school to English as the medium of instruction in higher education, which might hinder comprehension and academic performance. The Department of

Higher Education and Training (DHET) has acknowledged this issue and introduced policies aimed at promoting multilingualism and improving language support for students (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2017). The articulation gap is not merely an academic issue but also a socio-economic one. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds are disproportionately affected, as they often lack access to quality education, career guidance, and financial resources. This has led to high dropout rates and low retention rates among first-year university students, further perpetuating cycles of poverty and inequality (Gumede & Biyase, 2016). Efforts to address the articulation gap have included the implementation of bridging programs, mentorship initiatives, and curriculum reforms. However, these measures have often been inconsistently applied and inadequately funded, limiting their overall impact (Jansen, 1998). This study sought to explore how curriculum reforms at the basic education level might effectively address the articulation gap, with a focus on identifying strategies that promote equity, inclusivity, and academic success.

Research methodology

The research methodology for this study was systematically designed to answer the central research question: How can curriculum reforms in basic education effectively bridge the articulation gap, enhancing students' readiness for higher education? This section outlined the research design, data collection methods, data analysis strategies, ethical considerations, and limitations, ensuring a rigorous and transparent approach to addressing the study objectives.

Research design

This study employed a qualitative desktop research design, which is well-suited for exploring the articulation gap through an in-depth analysis of existing data and literature. This design allowed researchers to identify patterns, synthesize findings, and derive insights from diverse sources, such as journal articles, government policy documents, statistical reports, and institutional case studies. By focusing on secondary data, the study avoided the logistical and ethical complexities associated with primary data collection, while leveraging a wide range of

existing information to address the research question.

Data collection methods

The data collection process was organized into three main categories:

Literature review

The study gathered academic publications that explored the articulation gap, curriculum reform, and transitions from basic education to higher education. Sources included peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and books published within the last 10 years to ensure relevance and currency.

Policy analysis

A critical review of national education policies, such as the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), the National Development Plan (NDP), and the Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Act was conducted. The study also examined guidelines and policy briefs from the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

Statistical and institutional reports

Enrolment, retention, and dropout data from entities such as Statistics South Africa, Higher Education South Africa (HESA), and university performance reports were analysed to identify trends linked to the articulation gap.

Data analysis strategies

Thematic analysis

The primary analytical approach involved thematic analysis, which identifies recurring themes and patterns in the literature, policy documents, and statistical reports. The thematic categories included curriculum alignment with higher education requirements, gaps in academic readiness, socioeconomic and linguistic barriers, and impact of bridging programs and reforms.

Comparative analysis

The study conducted a comparative analysis of South Africa's education system with those of other countries that have successfully implemented curriculum reforms to bridge

similar gaps. This provided insights into best practices and adaptable strategies.

Trend analysis

Statistical trends in enrolment, dropout rates, and academic performance were analysed to quantify the impact of the articulation gap and evaluate the effectiveness of existing interventions.

Ethical considerations

Although this study relied on secondary data, ethical considerations are integral to ensuring the credibility and integrity of the research:

Attribution and plagiarism prevention

All data sources were properly cited using American Psychological Association (APA) style to acknowledge intellectual property and prevent plagiarism.

Data accuracy

The study ensured the accuracy and reliability of data by prioritizing peer-reviewed and official sources.

Representation and bias mitigation

A balanced perspective was maintained by including diverse viewpoints from multiple studies and avoiding overgeneralization.

Significance of the methodology

The desktop research approach is cost-effective and time-efficient, enabling researchers to synthesize insights from a wide array of existing materials. The thematic and comparative analysis frameworks allowed for a nuanced understanding of the factors contributing to the articulation gap and the potential of curriculum reforms in addressing these issues. The focus on ethical considerations enhanced the study's credibility and ensured its contribution to the existing body of knowledge.

Limitations

While the desktop research methodology is well-suited for this study, it has inherent limitations:

Dependence on secondary data

The study relies solely on existing data, which may not fully capture localized and nuanced issues affecting specific schools or regions.

Time-limited literature

The focus on recent literature may exclude older studies that provide historical context for the articulation gap.

Generalizability

The findings are based on South Africa's unique socio-economic and historical context and may not be entirely generalizable to other education systems.

Findings

This study uncovered several key insights into how curriculum reforms at the basic education level could address the articulation gap in South Africa. The findings were categorized into thematic areas that illustrated the breadth and depth of challenges and opportunities within the South African education system.

Curriculum misalignment

One of the central findings was the persistent misalignment between curriculum of basic education and the academic expectations of higher education institutions. While the CAPS curriculum has made strides in standardizing education nationwide, research shows that it often falls short of adequately preparing students for university-level studies in critical areas such as academic writing, analytical reasoning, and subject-specific content like mathematics and science (Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements, 2024). Furthermore, Chauke and Malatji (2024) emphasize that these gaps disproportionately affect students from disadvantaged schools, exacerbating inequalities. Other scholars also note that CAPS tends to overlook emerging domains of knowledge, limiting learners' preparedness for advanced study (Matsepe & Maluleke, 2024).

Teaching quality and resources

Teaching quality and access to resources emerge as significant contributors to the articulation gap. Educators in under-resourced schools often lack sufficient training to deliver complex concepts effectively, limiting students' capacity to develop higher-order thinking skills. Additionally, inadequate

access to textbooks, laboratories, and technology further hampers learning outcomes, particularly in STEM subjects (Malatji & Singh, 2018).

Socioeconomic disparities

Socioeconomic inequalities amplify the articulation gap, particularly for students from low-income families who struggle to access quality education and transition to higher education. These students face compounded challenges, including limited career guidance, financial constraints, and lack of exposure to university environments. The result is lower retention and higher dropout rates among disadvantaged student populations (Gumede & Biyase, 2016). Educational inequalities persist in South Africa 25 years after the advent of democracy, and socio-economic disparities continue to shape poor education performance and limit upward mobility (Clercq, 2020). Students from wealthier households consistently outperform their peers from poorer communities, despite pro-poor policies, highlighting the persistent learning gaps by socio-economic status (Böhmer & Murru, 2025).

Language barriers

Language barriers remain a critical issue for students transitioning from mother-tongue instruction in primary schools to English as the medium of instruction in higher education. The shift not only affects comprehension and academic performance but also creates additional stress for students unfamiliar with the academic conventions of English (DHET, 2017). Mncwango and Makhathini (2021) note that the dominance of English as a medium of instruction in most academic institutions continues to disadvantage learners from rural and under-resourced schools, where English is taught as a second language. Ngcobo and Barnes (2021) argue that students overwhelmingly prefer English as the primary medium of instruction, even though it poses challenges for comprehension and academic success, particularly for those whose home language is not English. Munyai (2024) emphasizes that the slow inclusion of indigenous languages in higher education policies perpetuates inequalities and hinders social cohesion, reinforcing the articulation gap for students transitioning to English.

Bridging programs and interventions

The study finds that bridging programs, mentorship initiatives, and preparatory workshops are effective in addressing elements of the articulation gap. For instance, institutions offering tailored interventions in academic writing, research skills, and orientation programs report improved student outcomes. However, the inconsistent application and limited funding of these initiatives restrict their broader impact (Chauke & Malatji, 2024). Letseka and Maile (2008) highlight that student support initiatives such as orientation and mentoring programs are critical in reducing dropout rates, particularly among first-generation students. Scott et al. (2007) argue that extended curriculum programs and bridging courses have shown measurable success in improving student throughput, but their reach remains limited due to resource constraints. The Council on Higher Education (2013) notes that academic development interventions, such as foundational courses and structured mentoring, are essential for addressing systemic inequalities in higher education; yet, they remain unevenly implemented across institutions. Strydom and Mentz (2010) emphasize that student engagement initiatives, including preparatory workshops and mentorship, significantly improve retention and success rates, but require sustained institutional commitment.

Policy shortcomings

While government policies such as the BELA Act aim to address systemic issues in education, implementation challenges ranging from insufficient funding to stakeholder misalignment, undermine their effectiveness. The lack of coordination between the Department of Basic Education and higher education institutions further perpetuates the articulation gap (Citizen, 2025). Credible Source (2025) reports that although the BELA Act is hailed as one of the most significant transformations in South Africa's education landscape, concerns remain over its implementation, particularly around funding, governance, and alignment with existing institutional structures. Cape Town Today (2025) highlights that putting the BELA Act's changes into practice is hard—there are problems with rules, resources, and safety in schools, which limit its intended impact. Section 27 Policy Brief (2024) notes that the

BELA Act introduces major reforms such as compulsory Grade R and language policy changes, but challenges in stakeholder coordination and resource allocation risk undermining its effectiveness.

International best practices

Comparative analysis reveals that other countries, such as Finland, have successfully bridged their education gaps through integrated curriculum reforms and collaborative frameworks between basic education and higher education institutions. Lessons from these models highlight the importance of aligning curricula, emphasizing skills-based learning, and fostering partnerships (Ngobeni et al., 2023). Honkimäki et al. (2024) report that top-down curriculum reforms in Finland have reshaped higher education institutions, and academics have noted improved alignment between teaching practices and institutional goals. Ouakrim-Soivio and Kupiainen (2023) emphasize that Finland's integrated learning system, built beyond PISA, demonstrates how collaborative frameworks across educational levels sustain high performance and equity. The European Commission (2025) noted that ongoing reforms in Finland prioritize curriculum integration, vocational pathways, and stronger collaboration between the universities and institutions of applied sciences.

Summary of findings

Curriculum misalignment

The CAPS curriculum, while standardized nationally, does not adequately prepare students for higher education in areas such as academic writing, analytical reasoning, mathematics, and science. This misalignment disproportionately affects students from disadvantaged schools, reinforcing inequalities and supported by Chauke and Malatji (2024), Agbaje (2023), and Fitzsimons (2018).

Teaching quality and resource constraints

Under-resourced schools often lack trained educators capable of delivering complex concepts, limiting students' higher-order thinking skills. The inadequate access to textbooks, laboratories, and technology further hampers learning outcomes, especially in STEM subjects and these are supported by

Malatji and Singh (2018) and Council on Higher Education (2013).

Socioeconomic inequalities

Students from low-income families face compounded challenges: limited career guidance, financial constraints, and lack of exposure to university environments. These inequalities contribute to lower retention and higher dropout rates and supported by Gumede and Biyase (2016), Clercq (2020), and Böhmer and Murru (2025).

Language barriers

Transitioning from mother-tongue instruction to English as the medium of instruction creates comprehension difficulties and academic stress. The lack of indigenous language inclusion perpetuates inequalities and these are supported by DHET (2017), Mncwango and Makhathini (2021), Ngcobo and Barnes (2021), and Munyai (2024).

Support interventions

Bridging programs, mentorship initiatives, and preparatory workshops improve student outcomes in academic writing, research skills, and orientation. However, inconsistent application and limited funding restrict their broader impact and supported by Chauke and Malatji (2024), Scott et al. (2007), Letseka and Maile (2008), and Strydom and Mentz (2010).

Policy challenges

Government policies such as the BELA Act aim to address systemic issues, but implementation challenges such as insufficient funding, stakeholder misalignment, and lack of coordination between DBE and higher education institutions undermine effectiveness (Citizen, 2025; Section 27, 2024).

International lessons

Comparative models, such as Finland, demonstrate that integrated curriculum reforms, skills-based learning, and collaborative frameworks between basic and higher education institutions can successfully bridge education gaps (Ngobeni et al., 2023; Honkimäki et al., 2024; Ouakrim-Soivio & Kupiainen, 2023; European Commission, 2025).

Discussions of findings

The findings of this study provided valuable insights into the factors contributing to the articulation gap between basic education and higher education in South Africa and offered avenues for addressing these challenges. This discussion section interpreted the findings, situated them within the existing literature, provided practical implications, integrated case studies, and critiqued contextual factors and methodological approaches.

The structural gap: Curriculum misalignment and academic readiness

The findings suggest that while the CAPS curriculum provides a standardized framework, it fails to cultivate the specific cognitive competencies required for the rigors of higher education. According to Chauke and Malatji (2024), there is a distinct "readiness gap" in mathematics and science, where the school system emphasizes procedural fluency - solving for x - over the conceptual understanding needed for university-level calculus. Agbaje (2023) argues that this misalignment is not merely an academic oversight but a systemic barrier that reinforces inequality. Students from affluent backgrounds often attend schools that supplement the CAPS curriculum with enriched analytical reasoning, whereas those in disadvantaged schools are strictly limited to the base requirements. Consequently, as Fitzsimons (2018) notes, the transition to university becomes a "knowledge shock" for marginalized students, who find themselves underprepared for the independent research and academic writing expected in a tertiary environment.

Infrastructural deficits and the quality of instruction

A significant theme emerging from the data is the correlation between resource constraints and the quality of teaching. In many South African quintile 1–3 schools, the lack of physical infrastructure such as functional science laboratories and computer centres forces educators to rely on theoretical "chalk-and-talk" methods. The Council on Higher Education (2013) has highlighted that this lack of practical exposure leaves students with a "practical deficit" in STEM subjects. Furthermore, Malatji and Singh (2018) observe that under-resourced schools often struggle to attract and retain specialized

educators. Without the necessary tools or training, these teachers are frequently unable to facilitate the higher-order thinking skills such as synthesis and evaluation that are the hallmarks of Bloom's Taxonomy and essential for post-graduate success.

Socioeconomic barriers and the language of power

The findings further underscore that academic success is inextricably linked to a student's socioeconomic and linguistic background. Gumede and Biyase (2016) provide evidence that students from low-income families carry a "psychological tax" involving financial anxiety and food insecurity, which significantly detracts from their academic focus. This is compounded by what Clercq (2020) describes as a lack of "social capital"; students from professional households arrive at university with an inherent understanding of how to navigate institutional bureaucracies, whereas first-generation students often feel alienated. This alienation is exacerbated by the English medium of instruction. Mncwango and Makhathini (2021) and Munyai (2024) argue that the sudden shift from mother-tongue instruction to English in higher education creates a "linguistic glass ceiling," where students possess the intellectual capability but lack the specific English vocabulary to express complex ideas, leading to high dropout rates and academic stress as noted by Böhmer and Murru (2025).

Policy implementation and strategic interventions

While legislative frameworks such as the BELA Act attempt to address these systemic issues, the findings point toward a significant "implementation gap." Reports from Section 27 (2024) and media analyses (Citizen, 2025) suggest that policy effectiveness is often undermined by a lack of coordination between the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the Higher Education sector. However, the data also highlights the success of localized support interventions. Scott et al. (2007) and Strydom and Mentz (2010) demonstrate that bridging programs and peer-led mentorship can significantly mitigate the gaps left by the secondary system. Yet, as Letseka and Maile (2008) caution, these programs are often treated as "add-ons" rather than core institutional priorities, meaning their impact

remains limited by inconsistent funding and a lack of broad systemic integration

Comparative insights from global models

Finally, the findings suggest that South Africa can learn from international success stories, specifically the Finnish model. Unlike the high-stakes, exam-driven South African system, Honkimäki et al. (2024) observe that Finland emphasizes collaborative frameworks between schools and universities. Ouakrim-Soivio and Kupiainen (2023) highlight that Finnish curriculum reforms prioritize "learning to learn" rather than rote memorization. By adopting similar integrated models, as suggested by Ngobeni et al. (2023) and the European Commission (2025), South African policymakers could create a more seamless transition that treats basic and higher education as a unified pipeline, rather than two disconnected entities.

Conclusion

The articulation gap between basic education and higher education in South Africa remains a critical challenge that undermines student readiness and success. This study explored how curriculum reforms at the basic education level can address this gap, focusing on strategies to improve alignment with higher education requirements, enhance teaching quality, and mitigate socioeconomic and linguistic barriers. By synthesizing insights from existing literature, policy reviews, and case studies, the research highlighted the need for a multi-faceted approach involving curriculum transformation, targeted interventions, and robust policymaking. The findings underscored that curriculum misalignment, inadequate teaching resources, and systemic inequalities were key contributors to the articulation gap. Addressing these issues requires coordinated efforts between the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and higher education institutions, along with sustained investments in educator training, resource allocation, and student support systems. Furthermore, adopting multilingual education approaches and expanding bridging programs could enhance academic preparedness and equity.

This study contributes to the broader discourse on education reform, emphasizing the importance of evidence-based strategies to promote inclusivity, reduce dropout rates, and foster academic excellence. While the desktop

research methodology provided valuable insights, future studies employing mixed methods could capture localized challenges and offer a more comprehensive understanding of the articulation gap. Ultimately, bridging this divide is essential for empowering South African students to succeed in higher education and beyond, paving the way for socio-economic growth and equitable transformation in the nation's education system.

References

- Agbaje, O. (2023). Curriculum reform in African higher education: Solving society's problems and meeting its needs. *Curriculum Perspectives*, 43(1), 141-149.
- Becker, G. S. (1964). *Human capital: A theoretical and empirical analysis with special reference to education*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Böhmer, B., & Murru, A. C. (2025). *Learning gaps by socio-economic status and gender in South Africa*. Policy Brief, 30 April 2025.
- Cape Town Today. (2025). *Charting South Africa's education future: The BELA Act's promise and pitfalls*. Retrieved August 21, 2025, from <https://www.capetowntoday.co.za>
- Chauke, E., & Malatji, K. S. (2024). Exploring the implications of the articulation gap on grade 6 EFAL learners' essay writing skills. *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences*, 5(4), 364-379.
- Citizen. (2025). *BELA Act: Progress on paper, challenges in practice*. Johannesburg: Citizen News.
- Council on Higher Education. (2013). *A proposal for undergraduate curriculum reform in South Africa: The case for a flexible curriculum structure*. Pretoria: CHE.
- Credible Source. (2025). *BELA Act: Progress on paper, challenges in practice*. Retrieved September 26, 2025, from <https://www.crediblesource.co.za>
- Clercq, F. D. (2020). The persistence of South African educational inequalities: The need for understanding and relying on analytical frameworks. *Education as Change*, 24(1), 1-22.
- Department of Higher Education and Training. (2017). *Language policy of the department of higher education and training*. Pretoria: Government of South Africa.
- Fitzsimons, P. (2018). Human capital theory and education. *Encyclopaedia of Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 1050-1053.
- European Commission. (2025). *Global education reform trends and digital readiness*.
- Gumede, V., & Biyase, M. (2016). Educational reforms and curriculum transformation in post-apartheid South Africa. *Environmental Economics*, 7(2), 69-76.
- Honkimäki, S., Jääskelä, P., & Tynjälä, P. (2024). Academics' experiences of university-wide top-down curriculum reform in Finland. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 48(6), 594-607.
- Jansen, J. D. (1998). Curriculum reform in South Africa: A critical analysis of outcomes-based education. *Cambridge journal of education*, 28(3), 321-331.
- Jobs Guru. (2025). *Vocational training and skills-based learning for employability*. Retrieved September 19, 2025, from <https://www.dhet.gov.za>
- Letseka, M., & Maile, S. (2008). *High university dropout rates: A threat to South Africa's future*. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.
- Malatji, K. S., & Singh, R. J. (2018). Implications of the articulation gap between geography learners in secondary schools and university. *Alternation Special Edition*, 21, 91-108.
- Mncwango, E. M., & Makhathini, F. N. (2021). Language-related barriers to learning in rural English as a second language classroom in South Africa. *Language Education Forum*, 2(1), 15-19.
- Munyai, A. (2024). Language conundrum in higher education institutions in South Africa: One step forward or two steps back? In *Language Policy and Higher Education in South Africa*. Cape Town: UWC Press.
- Ngcobo, M. N., & Barnes, L. A. (2021). English in the South African language-in-education policy on higher education. *World Englishes*, 40(1), 84-97.
- Ngobeni, N. R., Chibambo, M. I., & Divala, J. J. (2023, June). Curriculum transformations in South Africa: Some discomfiting truths on interminable poverty and inequalities in schools and

- society. *Frontiers in Education*, 8, 1132167).
- Ouakrim-Soivio, N., & Kupiainen, S. (2023). *Beyond PISA: Building a world-class education system in Finland*. National Centre on Education and the Economy.
- Schultz, T. (1961). Investment in human capital. *The American Economic Review*, 51(1), 1-17
- Scott, I., Yeld, N., & Hendry, J. (Eds.). (2007). *Higher education monitor: A case for improving teaching and learning in South African higher education* (Vol. 6). Pretoria: Council on Higher Education.
- Section 27. (2024). *The BELA Act: A brief overview of some of the main issues*. Pretoria: University of Pretoria School of Law.
- Strydom, J. F., & Mentz, M. (2010). *Focusing on student engagement: The key to improving student success*. Bloemfontein: University of the Free State.