Research in Business & Social Science

The influence of caring pedagogy on student success and access in one school of education in South Africa

ⓘD *Kgomotlokoa Thaba-Nkadimene* (a)* ⓘD *Duduzile Mzindle*(b) ⓘD *Cephas Makwara* (c)
ⓘD *Mamothibe Thamae*(d) ⓘD *Violet Makwara*(d)

(a)*School of Education, Central University of Technology, Central University of Technology, South Africa*
(b,c,d,e)*School of Education, Durban University of Technology, South Africa, South Africa*

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

The conception and focus of the Siyaphumelela Project were on promoting student success through the support programmes the university's support units rolled out. For the past ten years of the Siyaphumelela Project's life, academic departments were left out and they were not involved during data collection. The primary objective of this conceptual paper was to offer a critical analysis of the impact of the Siyaphumelela Project on student access and success and the influence of Caring Pedagogy on student learning and success in one school of teacher education in South Africa. We used Caring Pedagogy as a frame of reference to reflect on building relationships, compassionate classrooms, and promoting student learning. In this study, we used desktop research. Firstly, data showed that faculties and units operated in silos instead of building solid relationships. Secondly, the research findings identified a need to create compassionate classrooms and caring environments. As part of the conclusion, the paper recommends that Teacher Education adopt Caring Pedagogy perspectives and a holistic inclusive integrated, and empathetic approach. Furthermore, to foster within the Siyaphumelela Project compassionate classrooms and a caring environment that promotes collegial and collaborative working space and student learning and success.

Introduction

The problem this study investigated was to mirror the impact of the Siyaphumelela project on student success, and how they use Caring Pedagogy to support the missing middle students'

The primary objective of this conceptual paper was to offer a critical analysis of the impact of the Siyaphumelela Project on student access and success and the influence of Caring Pedagogy on student learning and success in one school of teacher education in South Africa.

Many students who enter South African universities are educationally and financially challenged, due to the poor schools they attended and their poor family background (Chiramba & Ndofirepi, 2023). The democratic South African government was not successful in dismantling apartheid legacies in the education sector, with the inclusion of basic and higher education. Research still shows high levels of educational inequalities (de Clercq, 2020; Adebayo, Ntokozo & Grace, 2020); disadvantage of certain ethnicities (Soto, 2005), to the extent of having 80% dysfunctional schools (Spaul, 2013), and prevalence of poor public schools (Van der Merwe, 2011). "Inadequacies in school provisioning persist (Thaba-Nkadimene, 2020) in both basic and higher education. Student access and success become a mirage, given the scenario displayed above.

"In the context of South Africa's complex historical legacy of inequality, access to higher education and academic success have become pressing concerns for governments, institutions, and scholars globally" (Chiramba & Ndofirepi, 2023: 56).

Chiramba and Ndofirepi (2023) study identified funding challenges as a major access issue that affects many students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The persisting historical legacy of inequality, which is carried over from communities to universities, shows that the government of the day was not successful in bringing change to previously disadvantaged South Africans. In support of the apartheid legacy that is still holding blacks back, the findings from Thomas and Maree (2022, 99) show that "structural, racialized inequalities in South Africa underpin many apparent student factors that influence academic success in higher education".

Low success in social and economic policy implementation became visible when a gap was identified by research in 2006, of "creating the conditions that foster student success in college" (Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges & Hayek, 2006). still prevails, and the reason is that this gap was not taken seriously. The gap is evident when some students require post-secondary university education, and its non-existential results in 'student missing middle'. Post-secondary university education is the extension of matriculation, despite having qualified with a bachelor's degree for university admission. Universities that do not offer such an education result in many challenged students who add up to 'missing middle' or 'students in the middle'. 'Students in the middle' become stuck in the system and block the access of new cohorts from secondary schools to universities. Despite their blockages and low throughput, universities have terminated and excluded post-secondary university education for such students because universities do not gain; instead, universities opt for alternatives, that is, keeping students, increasing their study fees costs resulting from their increased university stay.

In addition, the South African student financing scheme, namely the National Student Finance Scheme (NSFAS), does not cater to these students who require post-secondary university education. On the other hand, the majority of such students cannot afford university registration without the NSFAS bursary. It has become a university conundrum to implement postsecondary university education without subsidy; instead, they opted for increasing numbers of 'students in the middle' and contributing to low student success. The student success challenge is not only a local issue but a global one. The research conducted in the United States of America in the twenties portrayed a trend and paved a new perspective of looking into student success.

"Creating the conditions that foster student success in college has never been more important. As many as four-fifths of high school graduates need some form of postsecondary education to prepare them to live an economically self-sufficient life and to deal with the increasingly complex social, political, and cultural issues they will face", Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, Hayek, 2006:1).

Kuh and colleagues identified a gap between not being serious about a problem itself and not taking the necessary steps to address it. This report further indicated how the United States of America students require 'post-secondary education' in preparation for the world of work.

The study contributes to the body of knowledge of higher education, specifically, student success and Caring Pedagogy. The purpose of the study is to critically analyse how the Siyaphumelela Project is projecting Caring Pedagogy in influencing student learning in one School of Teacher Education (SoE) in South Africa. The study is informed by the Caring Pedagogy theoretical underpinning, which focuses on collegial working relationships, promoting student learning, improving moral behaviour, and modeling best practices.

This study responded to the primary research questions, namely, 'what is the influence of Caring Pedagogy on student access to success in Teacher Education in South Africa?'. To achieve the main research question, we formulated three secondary research questions, namely,

i. Does the university promote Caring Pedagogy through the Siyaphumelela project that stresses compassion education and building relationships promoting student learning?

ii. What does the university do to create compassionate classrooms, caring environments, and relationships that promote student learning and success?

iii. What is the contributing factor that impedes student success with the Siyaphumelela project in Teacher Education in South Africa?

We got involved in the Siyaphumelela as academia from Teacher Education because of the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) offering. and that our university was fully involved in the project. The case university has been an affiliate of the Siyaphumelela project from its inception. We were invited as academic staff for the first time in 2023, for analysis of transcribed data. From this writing retreat, we got an opportunity to learn more about art-based, visual methodologies, storyboarding, and reflective art-based exercises at the end of the retreat. I was thrilled by the data collected from a Smelly Cake metaphor and narration of students' lived experience and their reflections on their campus life using the story Living Water's metaphor. This exercise has added a wealth of knowledge to us, and the opportunity granted us a new set of competencies for innovative teaching and learning, assessment, and research, specifically with data collection methodologies. The leader of the Hambisa project and her team did a great job of exposing students to multiple innovative teaching methodologies as part of their core duty of supporting students.

Apart from these best practices, we experienced during a three-day writing retreat, we were part of the university delegation to the Siyaphumelela 2024 Conference. In the 2024 Siyaphumelela Conference, the case university had a lot of conference papers to showcase how Siyaphumelela is impacting students' lives and their successes. At the 2024 Siyaphumelela Conference, the university had a lot of conference papers to showcase how Siyaphumelela impacts students' lives and success. Of the more than twenty

conference papers presented by Case University, three were presented by academics from the School of Education and Management Sciences. Presenters from different universities shared best practices, whereas other universities, such as the University of Venda and the Central University of Technology, were newer, with the University of Limpopo not involved.

The fact of the matter is that South African universities need to bridge student access through support programmes that are aimed at promoting student success. From retreats and conferences, we attended, we realized that there are two serious deficits in the Siyaphumelela's operation in this case university, namely, a need to create compassionate classrooms and caring environments and faculties and Support Units working in Silos.

Research and Methodology

Desktop research was used in the paper, and the study of a literature review was conducted, which provided data for this study. Desktop uses secondary data that is already published in one form or another (Cambridge University Press). Data was further analysed using thematic analysis. Wegerif's (2020, par5) support for desktop research is based on his argument that desktop articles "rise above the narrow framing to compare, contrast, refine and reflect" and offer an essential component of research that condenses related research conducted across the globe. Two themes emanated from secondary data, namely, a need to create compassionate classrooms and caring environments and fFaculties and Support Units Working in Silos instead of building solid relationships.

In response to the primary research question, namely, 'What is the influence of Caring Pedagogy on student access to success in Teacher Education in South Africa', we believe that universities can become responsive and inclusive learning spaces through the creation of compassionate classrooms and caring environments (Monteiro Carvalho and Santos, 2021). Research shows a positive relationship between creating compassionate classrooms and caring environments with improved student learning and success (Monteiro Carvalho and Santos, 2021: 661736). The caring classroom offers a connection between students' behavioural and emotional engagement. Research by Monteiro et al. (2021) found that "in classrooms where teachers used more effective feedback creating a supportive classroom environment, students had higher school identification and behavioural engagement levels". The Swedish study by Thornberg, Forsberg, Hammar Chiriac, and Bjereld (2022) explored "the links between teacher-student relationship quality and student engagement" and found that teachers and classroom setting influence students' affective and behavioural engagement at school. In the study on the psychosocial benefits of critical and compassionate classrooms, Wheeler (2024) found that a synergistic relationship between intellectual rigor and emotional support in educational environments promotes holistic student development.

Ethics of care promotes educators' care, concern, support, and understanding of students' challenges by encouraging students to internalise these behaviours and extend them to their peers. According to Noddings (2020), compassion education fosters teachers' understanding of students' emotional and social backgrounds and an inclusive learning environment. Compassionate classrooms reduce students' stress and anxiety, create a feeling of being valued, and enhance academic engagement and personal growth (Garza & Werner, 2021).

Caring Pedagogy emphasises a holistic, integrated and empathetic approach to education, seeking to establish relationships of trust and understanding between educators and students. In addition to building relationships, Caring Pedagogy promotes student learning, moral behavior, and offers modeling and practice spaces.

The care and support for student learning through the Siyaphumelela project

The findings emanate from the research question, does the university promote Caring Pedagogy through the Siyaphumelela project that stresses compassion education and building relationships promoting student learning?'

In reflecting on the high levels of poverty, inequality, and unemployment that expose university students to diverse socio-economic challenges, South African education ministries, and other SADC education ministries had to strategise in minimising the effects of poverty for children and youth who are "deprived of essential care and the chance to develop their optimum human potential" (SADC, 2015: 8). The launching of "The Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL)" programme was adopted and approved at the Southern African Development Community (SADC) meeting held in Zambia in 2008, wherein the education ministries arrived at the resolution to work collaboratively in improving the quality of teaching and learning and offering learners a better learning opportunity. The launching of CSTL was prompted by a need to advance the rights of all children and youth to quality education. And higher education is no exception, as the Department of Basic Education (DBE) as its feeder to higher education still experiences school dysfunctionality and poor schools (Spraul,2013). The Siyaphumela Project was conceived with the primary purpose of servicing universities in South Africa. There is still a need for more programmes of the Siyaphumelela to service the other sectors of higher education, namely, the community colleges, government colleges, and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) colleges. There is a need to foster supportive and caring learning spaces in which "caring teachers nurture their students can promote positive interactions, and ultimately, high student satisfaction and retention," Seary and Willans (2020: 12).

We will use Motta and Bennett's (2018) pedagogies to critically analyse the impact of the Siyaphumelela Project on student access and success and how Caring Pedagogy influenced student learning and success in one school of teacher education in South Africa. The tenets of this care pedagogies that informed this conceptual paper are "care as recognition, care as dialogic relationality, and care as affective and embodied praxis (Seary and Williams, 2020: 12). We strongly support Thapa (2020) who blames teacher education

that promotes specific, mandated-content assessments that are not successful in developing skills and knowledge among pre-service teachers, such as "thoughtfulness, criticality, cultural responsiveness, and caring for the young individuals".

Although the South African higher education system is still struggling to achieve the objectives of the CSTL project, of becoming a caring and supportive institution, there is hope through the Siyaphumelela project. There are good strides for student access to higher education in a democratic South Africa. A positive response in becoming a caring and supportive higher education sector, there is still a challenge that access does not match student success, wherein student throughput portrays a perennial decline without rescue.

The founding of the Siyaphumelela project aimed at offering a platform for student success through conscientizing universities of its core existence, which is engaging in academic projects through teaching and learning, anchored on the adequacy of care and support of student learning and offers of funding opportunities.

Before we engaged with the Siyaphumela Project as researchers, we were concerned that the task was just a ticking-box exercise and collection of data, instead of offering 'just-in-time support according to students' needs. And to some extent, our instincts are still the same and not dismissed at all, because we fail to observe a sustainable success factor within STEM subjects in the case of the Teacher Education Centre. The exercise was geared toward collecting evidence to measure and narrate the student's success. The collected data should transform the learning spaces into caring and supportive spaces and promote student learning and success. As universities create spaces for student access and widen student participation from diversified population groups (Motta & Bennett, 2018), Caring Pedagogy that ensures building better learning spaces for student learning and success in higher education (HE) is minimally used; and it is not reflected or used as a theory guiding the Siyaphumelela Project that aimed at improving student success. We strongly believe in the Siyaphumelela Project. We strongly believe that if the Siyaphumelela project is not grounded in Caring Pedagogy, then the possibility of achieving its intended objectives becomes a far-reaching goal. Our belief is based on the principles of Caring Pedagogy that promote compassion, building relationships, improving moral behaviour, and modeling and practice that directly impact student learning and success.

Creation of compassionate classrooms, caring learning spaces and relationships

The second finding highlights the importance of creating compassionate classrooms, caring learning spaces, and relationships to improve student learning and success. The findings emanate from the research question, 'What does the university do to create compassionate classrooms, caring environments, and relationships that promote student learning and success?' Research shows a positive relationship between creating compassionate classrooms, caring environments, and relationships with improved student learning and success and students' behavioral and emotional engagement (Monteiro Carvalho and Santos, 2021).

Monteiro and colleagues further identified effective feedback grounded on Caring Pedagogy perspectives as a tool for "creating a supportive learning space that fosters students' higher school identification and behavioral engagement levels. Furthermore, caring learning spaces align with the goals of student support initiatives, like the Siyaphumelela Project, aimed at addressing the holistic needs of students and fostering a supportive learning community. Compassionate pedagogy encourages instructors to connect with students, promoting not only intellectual development but also emotional resilience, which is vital for success in higher education. When students experience compassion in their academic environment, they are more likely to engage actively in their studies, seek help when needed, and build confidence in their abilities. Therefore, this finding advocates for training faculty and staff to implement compassionate teaching strategies, enabling a learning environment that nurtures and motivates students to achieve their academic potential.

Compassionate and supportive learning environments engender what Tinto (2014) argues that university access without support is not an opportunity. The Caring Pedagogy, therefore, works in tandem with the possibility of success in higher education, which will minimise terminations of studies for 'students in the middle'.

In support of Monteiro and colleagues, the Australian Education Research Organization (AERO) (2023) argues that "positive teacher-student relationships are supportive and fair, and develop in learning environments where students feel safe, understood and appreciated". AERO further stresses the effectiveness of classroom management in creating safe and supportive learning spaces for all students.

Caring Pedagogy promotes teacher-student relationships, student engagement, and student learning and success in the classroom, within both basic and higher education. In support of Caring Pedagogy, Kim, Kong, Hernandez, and Soban (2023: 185) argue that the enactment of humanizing and Caring Pedagogy through "conveying emotions and forming positive teacher-student relationships made a meaningful impact on student motivation, engagement, and growth. Thornberg, Forsberg, Hammar Chiriac, and Bjereld (2022) examined the links between Swedish teacher-student relationship quality and student engagement and found that teachers and classroom settings influence students' affective and behavioural engagement at school. In the study on the psychosocial benefits of critical and compassionate classrooms, Wheeler (2024) found that the existence of a synergistic relationship between fostering intellectual rigor and emotional support in educational environments promotes holistic student development.

Faculties and Support Units Working in Silos instead of building solid relationships

The findings emanate from the research question, 'What is the contributing factor that impedes student success with the Siyaphumelela project in Teacher Education in South Africa? Research shows that student success is limited by servicing units when academic departments were working in silos (Kekana, 2022; Pretorius, 2021; Moll & Monteith, 2020). Working in silos exposes students to fragmented support, hindering their ability to access resources needed for academic and personal success. There is a need to foster a seamless support system that holistically addresses students' academic, emotional, and social needs. The silo effect is common in universities, among students (Kezar, Hallett, Perez & Kitchen, 2024). wherein academics and support staff, ranging from student administration to student support work in isolation.

Pretorius (2021) identified the educational implication of working in silos that it results in inefficient use of resources and support systems. This fragmentation is particularly detrimental to students within South Africa, who are already faced with inequality that exposes them to additional socio-economic challenges and limited access to resources, heightening the need for cohesive support systems (Moll & Monteith, 2020). The fragmented structure that results from the 'silos effect' may for instance lead to situations where the academic departments focus solely on intellectual development while neglecting students' social and emotional needs, which could be addressed simultaneously by bringing in support services like counseling, financial aid, or career services (Langa & Davids, 2021). Research by Jansen and Walters (2020) identified a need to address the challenge of working in silos, by aligning student support services and academic departments to achieve value-added benefits from a cohesive support structure that significantly enhances the learning experience and student success. The conception of the Siyaphumelela project was founded on Caring Pedagogy, which promotes an integrated approach in which academic and non-academic units collaborate to support students' holistic and integrated, inclusive, and empathetic approach to education that is responsive to student needs (Nkoane, 2020).

Results and Discussion

The Siyaphumelela Project plays a crucial role in promoting student learning and success by addressing socio-economic challenges, enhancing access to education, and fostering a culture of care and support. The project responds to the high levels of poverty, inequality, and unemployment that affect university students in South Africa. The Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) programme, endorsed by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in 2008, underscores the need to provide students with better learning opportunities and support structures (SADC, 2015). The project recognizes the importance of fostering supportive and caring learning environments, where teachers can nurture students through compassionate engagement (Seary & Willans, 2020). Finally, while the Siyaphumelela Project focuses on universities, there remains a gap in its reach, as it does not yet extend to other higher education institutions such as community colleges, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) colleges, and government colleges.

Creating compassionate classrooms and supportive learning environments is essential for student engagement and success. Monteiro et al. (2021) indicate that compassionate classrooms improve behavioural and emotional engagement, leading to better academic outcomes. Caring Pedagogy promotes positive teacher-student relationships, which in turn enhance students' motivation, confidence, and willingness to seek help when needed (Monteiro et al., 2021). Integrating compassionate teaching strategies in the university setting fosters emotional resilience and intellectual growth, ensuring that students feel supported in their academic journeys (AERO, 2023). A lack of compassionate teaching practices results in students struggling with engagement, particularly in STEM subjects, as evidenced in the Teacher Education Centre study (Motta & Bennett, 2018). To address this, universities must provide faculty training on compassionate pedagogy to improve student retention and satisfaction.

The challenge of working in silos in higher education was identified with support running the show, and academia as spectators and sidelined. This is a key challenge limiting student success within the Siyaphumelela Project is the fragmentation of support services, where faculties and support units operate in silos rather than in collaboration. Research indicates that working in silos results in disjointed student services, preventing students from receiving holistic academic, emotional, and social support (Kekana, 2022; Pretorius, 2021). Second, this lack of coordination leads to inefficient use of resources, as academic departments focus solely on intellectual development while neglecting students' social and emotional needs (Moll & Monteith, 2020). A more integrated approach, as suggested by Jansen and Walters (2020), is necessary to align academic and non-academic units to create a cohesive student support structure. The Siyaphumelela Project, grounded in Caring Pedagogy, advocates for a collaborative approach that fosters inclusive and empathetic educational practices, ensuring that student success is not compromised by institutional fragmentation (Nkoane, 2020).

Conclusions

The findings reveal that while the Siyaphumelela Project has made significant strides in promoting student learning and access to higher education, challenges remain in achieving student success. The project emphasizes the need for supportive and caring learning environments, compassionate teaching strategies, and integrated support systems to foster student retention and achievement. However, the persistent issues of socio-economic challenges, fragmented institutional structures, and limited implementation of Caring Pedagogy hinder the full realization of its goals.

By addressing the following recommendations, the Siyaphumelela Project can move closer to achieving its intended objectives of fostering a holistic, inclusive, and caring higher education environment that supports student success.

Firstly, there is a need for expansion of the Siyaphumelela Project to reach beyond universities to include community colleges, TVET colleges, and government colleges, ensuring that all sectors of higher education benefit from supportive learning environments.

Secondly, Academia should be training on compassionate pedagogy and creating caring learning spaces. This can be done through professional development programs for academia to incorporate Caring Pedagogy principles into their teaching practices, enhancing student motivation, engagement, and success (Kim, Kong, Hernandez, & Soban, 2023).

Thirdly, support services should be integrated with academic activities. The universities should establish collaborative frameworks between academic and non-academic units to create seamless student support structures that address academic, social, and emotional needs (Jansen & Walters, 2020).

Fourthly, other streams such as economic and management sciences (EMS) and Languages should be added to the targeted STEM Subjects in the Siyaphumelela project. There should be a developed, tailored interventions within the Siyaphumelela Project to support students in other streams, ensuring inclusivity and fairness to all students, and that they receive the necessary academic guidance and emotional support to succeed.

Fifthly, there should be enhanced institutional commitment that institutionalizes Caring Pedagogy as a core philosophy guiding student support initiatives, ensuring that it is reflected in policies, curriculum development, and faculty training programs

References

Adebayo, K. A., Ntokozo, N., & Grace, N. Z. (2020). Availability of educational resources and student academic performances in South Africa. *Universal Journal of Educational Research, 8*(8), 3768–3781.

Australian Education Research Organization. (2023). Classroom management explainer: Positive teacher–student relationships. *AERO Classroom Management Explainer – Positive Teacher–Student Relationships*. Accessed on 10 December 2024.

Cambridge University Press. (2024). Desk research (Chapter 10). In *How to Do Research*. Accessed on 01 March 2024.

Chiramba, O., & Ndofirepi, E. S. (2023). Access and success in higher education: Disadvantaged students' lived experiences beyond funding hurdles at a metropolitan South African university. *South African Journal of Higher Education, 37*(6), 56–75.

De Clercq, F. (2020). The persistence of South African educational inequalities: The need for understanding and relying on analytical frameworks. *Education as Change, 24*(1), 1–22.

Jansen, J., & Walters, S. (2020). Rethinking student support services in higher education: An integrated approach. *Journal of Student Affairs in Africa, 8*(2), 45–56.

Kim, H. J., Kong, Y., Hernandez, C., & Soban, M. (2023). Student emotions and engagement: Enacting humanizing pedagogy in higher education. *IAFOR Journal of Education, 11*(3), 185–206.

Kekana, T. (2022). Siloed structures and the impact on student experiences in South African business schools. *Educational Research Quarterly, 42*(1), 75–90.

Kezar, A., Hallett, R. E., Perez, R. J., & Kitchen, J. A. (2024). Scaling success for low-income, first-generation in college, and/or racially minoritized students through a culture of ecological validation. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 17*(2), 229.

Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J. L., Buckley, J. A., Bridges, B. K., & Hayek, J. C. (2006). *What matters to student success: A review of the literature* (Vol. 8). Washington, DC: National Postsecondary Education Cooperative.

Langa, P., & Davids, N. (2021). Beyond academic success: The need for a holistic approach in higher education. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 53*(1), 30–50.

Moll, I., & Monteith, J. (2020). Understanding caring pedagogy in the context of South African universities. *Journal of Moral Education, 49*(2), 204–217.

Monteiro, V., Carvalho, C., & Santos, N. N. (2021). Creating a supportive classroom environment through effective feedback: Effects on students' school identification and behavioural engagement. In *Frontiers in Education, 6*, 661736. Frontiers Media SA.

Motta, S. C., & Bennett, A. (2018). Pedagogies of care, care-full epistemological practice and 'other' caring subjectivities in enabling education. *Teaching in Higher Education, 23*(5), 631–646.

Nkoane, M. (2020). Caring pedagogy and the challenges of higher education transformation in South Africa. *Higher Education Review, 50*(3), 341–356.

Noddings, N. (2020). Education as a public good. In *Not for Sale* (pp. 279–297). Routledge.

Pretorius, S. (2021). Structural silos in higher education: Implications for student support. *Journal of Education, 79*(1), 110–122.

Seary, K., & Willans, J. (2020). Pastoral care and the caring teacher: Value adding to enabling education. *Student Success, 11*(1), 12–21.

Soto, N. E. (2005). Caring and relationships: Developing a pedagogy of caring. *Villanova Law Review, 50*, 859.

Southern African Development Community (SADC). (2015). *Care and support for teaching and learning: From policy to practice*. Overport-South Africa: MIET Africa.

Spaull, N. (2013). South Africa's education crisis: The quality of education in South Africa 1994–2011. *Centre for Development and Enterprise, 21*(1), 1–65.

Thaba-Nkadimene, K. L. (2020). The influence of educational provision on teacher performance and learner outcomes among Limpopo primary schools. *South African Journal of Education, 40*(4).

Thapa, S. (2020). Assessing intercultural competence in teacher education: A missing link. In *Visions for Intercultural Music Teacher Education* (pp. 163–176).

Tinto, V. (2014). Tinto's theory in student retention. In M. Yorke & B. Longden (Eds.), *Retention and student success in higher education* (pp. 51–73). Routledge.

Thomas, T. A., & Maree, D. (2022). Student factors affecting academic success among undergraduate students at two South African higher education institutions. *South African Journal of Psychology, 52*(1), 99–111.

Thornberg, R., Forsberg, C., Hammar Chiriac, E., & Bjereld, Y. (2022). Teacher-student relationship quality and student engagement: A sequential explanatory mixed-methods study. *Research Papers in Education, 37*(6), 840–859.

Van der Merwe, A. (2011). Earnings expectations of typical South African university of technology first-year students. *Education Economics, 19*(2), 181–198.

Wegerif, R. (2020). How to write 'desk-based' research in education – Rupert Wegerif. Accessed on 10 August 2024.

Wheeler, D. I. (2024). Talking about teaching: The psychosocial benefits of critical and compassionate classrooms. *Journal of Mental Health and Social Behaviour, 6*(1), 187.