Editorial

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Given the breadth, depth, and diversity of scholarly contributions emerging from the 2025 SAERA conference, this conference special issue has been organised into two issues. The second issue (#107) is scheduled for publication within a month of the publication of the present issue (#106). While each issue brings together distinct contributions, collectively, they provide a comprehensive reflection of the scholarship and debates that characterised the 2025 SAERA conference. Issue #106 establishes the conceptual foundations for understanding polycrisis and explores what the concept means for education, including how education is being reimagined and reconceptualised. This issue also examines the philosophical, ethical, and policy responses required to navigate education in times of polycrisis.

The multi-authored article by Suriamurthee M. Maistry and colleagues "Critical Perspectives on Polycrisis in South African Education," brings together 11 scholars' perspectives on the intersecting crises shaping South African education. It examines apartheid's enduring legacy, governance failures, infrastructure challenges, persistent inequalities, and resource constraints. The article by Tanya van der Walt and Tamar Meskin "Thinking Otherwise: Metaphor as Framing, Methodology, Epistemology, and Pedagogy in a Time of Polycrisis," examines metaphor as a cognitive and practice-based principle in theatre and performance education research during times of polycrisis. In their article "Metaphors of Becoming: A Collaborative Self-Study of Hope and Affirmative Ethics in Times of Educational Polycrisis," Nontuthuko Phewa and colleagues examine how metaphor and reflexive inquiry support teacher educators in navigating educational polycrisis. In the article "Challenging a 'Rock and a Hard Place' in the Higher Education Polycrisis: A Reflexive, Arts-Based Poetic Self-Study," Linda van Laren explores how academics can navigate the interconnected challenges of the higher education polycrisis.

The interpretivist study by Phumla S. Mavuso and Selloane Pitikoe, "Torn Between My Africanness and the Eurocentric Curriculum," examines relationships between African

spirituality, ancestral calling, and high school students' well-being in Eswatini. The article by Eyitayo J. Ajayi and Eunice Nyamupangedengu, "Conceptualising Ubuntu in Life Sciences Teacher Education: A Model for Integrating Values Within Scientific Concepts," develops an interconnectedness model linking Life Sciences concepts with Ubuntu values in pre-service teacher education. In their article "Mindfulness, Neurodiversity, and the Purpose of Education in Polycrisis Times," Micaela Gillespie and Carmelita Jacobs explore adapted mindfulness practices with three autistic adolescents in a South African school. "Learning in Time and Space Through Teacher Agency and Rhythmic Pedagogies of Inclusion" by Elzahn Rinquest, reconceptualises inclusive pedagogy in South African special schools as a rhythmic, relational practice shaped by teachers' spatial and ethical agency.

The article "The Lesotho Basic Education System in the Era of Polycrisis: A Critical Policy Analysis of the LBECP 2021," by Mahlompho Tsiane and colleagues, critically analyses Lesotho's 2021 Basic Education Curriculum Policy and its coherence in promoting competency-based education. In the article "Challenging Precarity Through a Mentorship Programme for Aspirant School Principals: A Behavioural Economics Perspective," Douglas Andrews and Ruksana Osman examine mentorship as a support mechanism for aspiring school leaders in South Africa. The article by Bongani J. Khoza and colleagues "Productive Adaptation: Mushfaking as a Transformative Tool for Sustainable Higher Education in Metapedagogy," develops mushfaking into an African-centred metapedagogical framework for navigating constraints in higher education.

In their article, "A Framework for Module Template Development Using Authentic Teaching and Learning: A Professional Engineering Case Study at the University of KwaZulu-Natal," Nishani Harinarain and Labby Ramrathan have developed a practical framework for embedding and assessing competences within higher education module design. Nosihle V. Sithole's article "Global Competence in Higher Education: The Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes South African Accounting Students Need," examines the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for global competence in accounting education. "Rethinking Assessment in a Time of Polycrisis: Transformative Practices for Supply Chain Management Education in South Africa" by Nikita Reddy-Ramsunder and Labby Ramrathan examines assessment practices in a South African Supply Chain Management programme in VUCA conditions.