

CLASS CAPITALISM IN A POST-LIBERATION STATE: DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA'S BLACK DIAMONDS

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Abstract. Through its legislation fixed in its Constitution, South Africa has made great strides towards inclusion and equality for the marginalised. However, the gap between the rich and the poor has continued to widen. Elitism and privilege are as old as human existence and will continue in the future. This study will examine the political climate of class capitalism as a threat to human security. This article examines the impact of neo-liberal policy reform aimed at ensuring transformation and development, through an exploration of South Africa's Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) policies. Through its conceptual framework, intersectional theory explores hierarchy dominated by intersectional challenges that are connected to race, class, and gender and remain tied to power and privilege. Based on the findings of the study, South Africa's post-liberation period instilled class divides that reinforced systems, processes and legacies of the past that still dominate the state and its people. Further, the study questions whether affluence and elitist politics create unequal distributions of resources, which contribute to human security threats within the region, including mass poverty, which impacts the lives of the vast majority of South Africans. There are clear winners and losers in South Africa as a result of capitalism and nationalistic discourses. It is confirmed in representations and categories across races, classes, and genders that exist in South Africa's emerging class capitalism. In this paper, an intersectional study suggests that black African females remain highly stereotyped within hegemony, hierarchy, class, and social representations.

Keywords: class capitalism, elitism, intersectionality, privilege, politics, elitism, South Africa, patronage politics

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1. Introduction

Voltaire has pointed out that with privilege comes great power and authority (*Œuvres* by Voltaire 1831–1841, ed. by Adrien-Jean-Quentin Beuchot and Pierre-Auguste-Marie Miger). It is the contention of this study that those in the South African government with the power to make strategic decisions should seize the opportunity to overcome the most pressing challenges facing this society, such as extreme poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and disease. Considering this, South Africa is an intersectional society in which the majority of black people are marginalized and excluded (Tshishonga, 2019); women are generally poorer than their male counterparts (Chagunda, 2004:2). Accordingly, in an interview for the radio station Power FM (2017) titled, “The inaugural chairman conversation”, Thabo Mbeki, the former South African president, stresses that the future of South Africa depends on a drive to serve the citizens of the state, not government officials who are interested in enriching themselves at the expense of the people of South Africa. There has been a focus on intersectional dimensions of the concept of class capitalism in the paper, and an analysis of the success and failures of the process of creating an equitable South African region along the lines of race, class and gender.

By upholding its Constitution, South Africa has taken great strides towards racial equality and inclusion for all, specifically for marginalized racial groups (Mogale 2003). Despite this, the disparity between the rich and the poor has widened (Devey and Møller 2002, Govender et al. 2007, Shayegh and Zheng 2022).

The history of privilege and elitism is as old as human existence, and it will continue for as long as humans exist. Firstly, the study will examine the political climate of privilege as a threat to human security. The second part of the paper examines the impact of neo-liberal policy reform aimed at ensuring transformation and development, such as Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE). In this study the link between power and privilege can be seen to remain tangled within hierarchical structures dominated by issues of race, class, and gender.

In order to create a world in which everyone has equal opportunities, the concept of global equality was established. In such a world, all people are able to access resources, benefits, and services equally and control them accordingly (Cole 2022, White 2007, Loriaux 2008). People are able to achieve equality in their lives through equitable processes. Discourses on equality are a frequent part of discussions in the political spheres, but this term has become obsolete over time. As a rule, there is a fair amount of agreement in societies that all people are born free and equal (Rodrigues and Cabete 2022). In order to ensure the meaningful and sustainable development of society, it has become increasingly necessary to see that equality is a primary goal in every facet of the process across all areas of social development (Akanle et al. 2022).

It is true that this idea of equality is prevalent throughout liberal democracies, but we know that the lived reality of many is far from this idealized idea (Nattrass and Seekings 2001, Reddy 2015, Basson 2022). There is still a great deal of work to be done to increase equity, inclusion, and diversity in South Africa. It is without a doubt that the evolution of equality is one of the primary objectives of this process.

An important lens through which to explore equality is through the current focus on South Africa's Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) and Employment Equity (EE) as an indicator of greater equality.

In the long run, South Africa's approach to economic equality has a direct impact on how the region develops socio-economically within the continent. Although almost thirty years have passed since South Africa gained its independence, the vast majority of the country remains economically imprisoned while the economic emancipation of the emerging middle class is gaining momentum.

The stark reality that capitalism in South Africa is failing to acquire a 'human face' is clearly evident from the escalating levels of poverty, unemployment, gender discrepancies, and crime on the rise.

There is no doubt that in South Africa, the rich have gone from strength to strength, and they continue to be rich despite the inclusion of the new African black middle-income network, who still fight to own their own capital. This is in agreement with the findings of the World Bank, which point out that the African poor are getting poorer and poorer. This can be attributed to the fact that there is a large inequity among the poor based on income, ownership, access to resources, and not having the capital to gain more resources. It is hypothesized that there is a direct correlation between these two factors as well as a varying degree of inequality within different racial and ethnic groups in the study.

The purpose of this study is to examine the political climate associated with class capitalism as a threat to human security as a whole. Through an examination of South Africa's Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) policies, the author looks at what kind of impact neo-liberal policy reform has on ensuring transformation and development through a neo-liberal perspective. Through its conceptual framework, intersectional theory explores how a hierarchy is dominated by intersectional challenges that have a connection to race, class, and gender and remain connected to power and privilege. It appears that the South African state and its people are still dominated by the systems, processes, and legacies of the past that are left over from the post-liberation era of the country.

The study further contends that the distribution of resources within the region is unequal as a result of affluence and elitist politics, which contributes to a threat to human security within the region, such as mass poverty, which poses a serious threat to the lives of the majority of South Africans. As a result of capitalism and nationalistic discourses in South Africa, there are clearly some winners and some losers. It is confirmed by the representations and categories that exist across races, classes, and genders that are evident in the emergence of class capitalism in South Africa. Based on the findings of an intersectional study presented in this paper, it has been concluded that black African females remain highly stereotyped within hegemony, hierarchy, class, and social representations to this day. It is important to note that empowerment in South Africa does not necessarily mean empowerment for all.

2. Materials and methods

This study was qualitative in nature. There is limited evidence and nuances known on intersectional theory and class capitalism in South Africa. Moreover, with South Africa's evolving capitalist trajectory there is relatively little evidence of class capitalism in a Covid-19 pandemic trajectory. The contribution of this study is related to the knowledge of class capitalism and policymaking but also the relevance of intersectional analysis in a post-liberation and democratic transition environment that requires more attention.

The study examined South Africa's black middle class, through an examination of BBBEE legislation and policies, its impacts on ensuring greater equality and economic freedom for the mass population who form part of the previously disadvantaged group of people.

In order to address the questions and hypotheses in the study, data collection and documentation were employed. As a part of the exploratory literature review, the study explored definitions, theories, policies, viewpoints, principles, methods, as well as research findings from a range of literature.

The study focused on the politics of BBBEE and EE in South Africa, the principles of the inclusion of previously disadvantaged groups and marginalised groups for good governance.

Secondly, primary and secondary sources were used to conduct secondary research. This was done using library sources, internet sources and documents, frameworks, contracts, visions, missions, minutes, decisions, reports, websites, press releases, papers, strategies, national and regional frameworks and operational plans and documents related to BBBEE, with reports such as BBBEE reports and audit reports. The institutional dynamics responsible for the challenges in implementing BBBEE was concluded.

Considering this case study on class capitalism in South African, it would be prudent to review the current political and economic legislation for greater inclusivity in the labour market more specifically, in order to diversify the access of various population groups into an evolving economy. Accordingly, plans must be provided to address the challenges of the intersectional marginalisation of society within the economy and society as a whole, as a result of the widening gap between the rich and the poor.

3. Results

3.1. *The South African context*

It is true that the lives of a minority group of privileged black people have changed for the better in the post-apartheid era (Freund 2007, Patel and Graham 2012). It is evident that the policies have not been successful with the mounting challenges to human security, such as unemployment, gender inequality, and the growing gap between the rich and the poor, showing that the policy implementation has not been successful. There are several reasons for this, including issues related to race, class,

and gender. It is still the status quo, as the true challenges to insecurity, gender inequality, and privileged hegemonies remain largely unexplored and unaddressed.

In order to establish an effective change process that acknowledges the centrality of such changes as part of broader social change, it is necessary to take into account all aspects related to equity as part of the overall change process within the state. To achieve this goal, a serious look at what has come to be accepted is needed. BBBEE has been established by the South African government to promote EE policy in the country, which in turn has demonstrated the government's commitment to advancing equality in the country through the promotion of BBBEE legislation. An important part of it is the Black Economic Empowerment Commission, which is composed of key structures (Southall 2007, Tangri and Southall 2008, Iheduru 2004).

Several initiatives have been launched in order to confirm this commitment, including the following: a variety of policy documents focus heavily on equity issues, which is reflected in a variety of policy documents aimed at eliminating inequality, discrimination, and promoting human rights and empowerment for all. Since the mid-1990s, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of marginalised groups that are being absorbed into society's political, economic, and social spheres, and as a result, they are able to participate more in everything from daily life to politics (Black Economic Empowerment Commission reports 2022). As a result, this has had a positive impact on how they live their lives as a result.

Greater equality can be achieved only by democratizing all areas of the state as well as the civil society as a whole to achieve this objective. Currently, the perceived slow pace of the implementation of the BBBEE and EE plans are causing a great deal of concern. A key challenge for South Africa is how to move from merely envisioning change, to taking action in order to make sure that meaningful change takes place.

Given this, there has been an increase in the number of people of colour in senior management positions in South Africa since 1994, which is a significant development. There has also been an increase in the number of new recruits to the management echelon by 2021, but it is still short of the 30% target outlined in the 1995 White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, even more so for women on colour. In South Africa, almost 80% of the workforce is black, yet only 15% of top management jobs go to blacks, according to the Labour Department (2020). Additional cracks connected to BBBEE failures are connected to businesses that are performing much lower than set targets of BBBEE ownership (Musabayana and Mutambara 2022). Furthermore, issues outlined by Matotoka and Odeku 2022 in their article *Exposing the use of Fronting to Circumvent Mainstreaming of African Women to Managerial Positions in the South African private sector*, suggest that women of colour are used as window dressing to meet EE quotas. Hence some of these women who are unqualified and show no prospect of advancing in organisation are strategically selected to occupy executive roles. Nonetheless, it should also be noted that there has been an improvement in gender representation at senior management levels in some sectors of the state, but not in all.

Historically, marginalised groups in South Africa have been mostly made up of black Africans, Indians, and coloured people, commonly referred to as people of colour. White South Africans still dominate top management jobs in the country. The

latest Employment Equity Commission includes submissions by employers between 2018 and 2020. Both in absolute and relative terms, the black African population is the fastest-growing group in total employment in SA. There was an increase of 9.6 percentage points in black African employment from 1994 to 2014, with more than 65 percent of top management positions occupied by whites. Considering this, Africans occupied less than 16 percent of these posts.

In the National Status Report 2019–2020 for Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment, published by the B-BBEE Commission, 62 percent of the workforce was made up of whites and foreign nationals (58% : 2017), with black men accounting for 16.76% (20% : 2017) and females accounting for 21.63% (18% in 2017) for management control. The data is based on directorships and do not always cover all levels of management control. There is, however, evidence that there is a low level of black representation at board level. This, in turn, has an indirect impact on the management levels below, because of power and bargaining imbalances between blacks and non-blacks.

With slowly increased number of people of colour occupying executive decision-making and leadership positions in corporations and other important organizations, they are however able to alter institutional norms, values, and cultures that were previously dominated by structural and systemic inequality and exclusion. A combination of national legislation and a vigorous lobbying campaign has resulted in these changes, which are the results of national legislation. Although these improvements have been made, there remains a long way to go before women and men have equal access to institutional power, despite the advances made so far.

Based on the findings of the study, South Africa's transition omitted to consider class divides that reinforced the systems, legacies, and systems of the past that continue to dominate the state and its people. Further, the study questions whether affluence and elitist politics create unequal distributions of resources, which contribute to human security threats within the region, including mass poverty, which impacts the lives of the vast majority of South Africans.

Only South Africa's elite benefit from black economic empowerment because of capitalism and nationalistic discourses (Reddy 2015, Barnard and Farred 2004, Muiu 2008, Reddy 2015). This is confirmed in representations and categories across races, classes, and genders that this new class capitalism is taking place. In this paper, an intersectional study suggests that black Africans, especially women of colour remain highly stereotyped within hegemony, hierarchy, class, and social representations. Ultimately, empowerment in South Africa does not mean empowerment for all.

3.2. Intersectional framework and its relevance to South African: democracy saturated in economic divide

The proponent of the theory Intersection Theory, Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) (cited in McDowell 1991: 124) identified the triple oppression of black women in the United States along the lines of race, gender and class. Men and women were initially separated but have been consolidated as the theory evolved (Milani and Richardson 2022). Second, the political dimension of oppression has denied African

American women the rights and privileges routinely extended to White male citizens (Collins 2002, 2010). Forbidding black women to vote, excluding African Americans and women from public office, and withholding equitable treatment in the criminal justice system all substantiate the political subordination of black women (Aguilar 2012, Carastathis 2014). Educational institutions have also fostered this pattern of disenfranchisement. Finally, scholars King 1973, White 1985, Carby 1987, Morton 1991 (cited in Collins 2002) highlight controlling images applied to black women that originated during the slave era attest to the ideological dimension of U.S. black women's oppression. Ideology refers the body of ideas reflecting the interests of a group of people. Within U.S. culture, racist and sexist ideologies permeate the social structure to such a degree that they become hegemonic, namely, seen as natural, normal, and inevitable. In this context, certain assumed qualities that are attached to black women are used to justify oppression (Collins 2002). Taken together, the supposedly seamless web of economy, polity, and ideology function as a highly effective system of social control designed to keep African American women in an assigned, subordinate place (Collins 2010).

The challenge faced by black women in the USA is based on the premise that former feminisms did not promote the interests of these women, but instead focussed on the livelihood of Western white females. Secondly, the theory was also constructed on the notion that environments are not static (Gouws 2017, McDowell 1991: 124), and importantly, this gives rise to and demonstrates a similar discourse to that in South Africa. The inequality divide reflects how hegemonies exist even in the same race, as in the case of poor black Africans and privileged black Africans (Wilson 2012). It is worth noting that the challenges faced by affluent black women differs from the struggle faced by marginalised black women. This is attested to intersectional differences in access to resources, ownership and the income status which is connected to capitalist divides and elitist politics. There are certain inequalities that exist in the world beyond the realms of femininity and masculinity (cited in McDowell 1991: 124), identified by intersectional theory. Throughout the study, several aspects of discrimination, oppression, exploitation, and inequality are discussed. These include aspects related to gender, race, ethnicity, and class (Dill and Zambrana 2020, Acker 2006).

Despite the fact that apartheid has been overthrown, capitalism and nationalistic ideology have taken over the geopolitics of the region as a result of policies and reforms that have served the economy at the expense of the poor masses, in terms of South Africa's modernization strategy (Acker 2006). Satgar (2012: 33) notes that it is subject to an Afro-neoliberal regime in conjunction with what Mercer (1980: 126) (cited in Marais 2001: 2310) describes as multiple intersecting subject positions encompassing class, race, and gender conflicts.

As Mbeki termed it, the 'miracle transition' with policies such as Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) which were meant to promote nation building, instead promoted the accumulation of wealth and power for some through the support of the state (Iheduru 2004). This policy in itself has led to fragmentation amongst races based on the formation of a class system which does not immediately serve the vast majority of the population (Ahmad 2005).

Intersectional theory led to feminism and gendered movements which focussed on differences that exist in notions of gender, such as queer and transsexual theory. This theory therefore aimed to address feminist challenges around race, class, and gender (Hines 2010), leading to differences such as postmodernism and post-structural theories. Postmodernism focused on the identity of politics and deconstruction of race, gender and class issues. Post-structural feminists focus on gender problems, but they are criticised for their lack of economic challenges (Davis 2008, Rhode 2018). This is demonstrated in the differences in oppression of the South African marginalised African black women and the Hijras of India, as examples of different contexts with different outcomes. This is mainly as the result of cultural stereotypes and generalisations which oppressed and subordinate women directly impacting on their agency (McDowell 1991, Phillips 2010). A typical instance occurs in society when biological differences between men and women are culturally and socially constructed.

The gender relationships are distinguished as the result of time, space, race, class, sexuality, colonialism and space. Ultimately, intersectionality in feminism attempted to address differences and division among women and men. This makes it such a unique theory (Archer & Francis 2006, Yuval-Davis 2006, Berger and Guidroz 2010), demonstrating how it is linked to power relations, with elitist regimes impacting on deteriorating the livelihood of the human security of nations due to huge inequalities between the rich and poor, as in the case of South Africa (Clover and Eriksen 2009).

In order to protect the fortune of a minority, it is imperative to clearly outline economic disparities among citizens in a state that cause poverty, unemployment, disease, and gender inequality among the masses (Shaw et al. 1999).

Moreover, intersectional frameworks aim to deconstruct binary oppositions and universalism which prevails along identity lines. Foucault (Davis 2008: 71) notes that the intersectional theory deconstructs representations and embraces multiculturalism diversity and is mainly aimed at inclusion of the oppressed. Stewart Hall (1997: 234-249, 257-261) posits that people construct social reality through meaning such as the term 'Black Diamonds' or 'middle income', which is linked to connotations of privilege, power and domination accompany the representation and deprived which is linked to poverty, poor, marginal and weak (Southall 2016). The notions of labels and framing constructions are factors which mitigate classism (Tomlinson 2003).

The world operates in the domain of inequality in most spheres of society. Different levels of social division exist over different societies, along the lines of gender and ethnicity and sexuality (Risman 2018). In addition, similarities, differences, categories and collectivises are aligned to inequality (Anthias 2012: 127).

The intersectional analysis considers a series of oppressions which cause exploitation and inequality in a combined way. There is close relationship between intersectionality and social constructions and formations that produce rules and conventions for social relations as well as compile gender categories, representations, and representations of gender within these formations (Anthias 2013). This is not limited to gender, race and class but also disability, religion and sexuality (Anthias 2012: 126).

There exists a mutual complement between the end of the apartheid regime and the implementation of new policies such as BBBEE, which encompass a broad range of interrelated categories within the public and private sectors, as well as within institutions and organisations. For this reason, there remains inequity and unfair treatment of black women, despite the hegemony and hegemony of black female groupings, even within the oppression and exploitation of black women (Reddy 2015). In recent years, there have been a number of initiatives made in order to address this issue, but the changes have been parochial and unsubstantial due to the lack of sufficient literature available on the subject.

McDowell (1991: 123) notes that due to changes in the balance of power theorists revisited approaches in order to understand the changing social, political and economic changes of the globe. Intersectional analysis is a new concept which emerged due to differences that exist along the lines of gender, race, class (Davis 2008: 679) and economic oppressions. In South Africa, it remains relevant as this inequality exists in a capitalist system, which exploits and divides. This unfairness exists in relation in the public, private, micro and macro levels of society within race, sexuality, class and gender and identity (Walby 2007, Collins et al. 2009).

Intersectionality is an evolving concept due to differing research over locations and time. Davis (2008: 68) defines intersectionality as ‘the interaction, between gender, race and other categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power’ (Corus and Saatcioglu 2015).

Intersectional approaches have their roots in feminism and have evolved over the years. Intersectional theory differs from feminism, as intersectional approaches are different in context and time. Intersectional theory embraces diversity as opposed to universality which accommodates different context and situations (McDowell: 1991, Else-Quest and Hyde 2016).

The deprived black women in South Africa like black feminists in the United States face the same challenges of oppression, as their challenges are unlike that of their economically, politically and socially empowered black counter-parts. Black feminists argued against privilege over others, embrace diversity and difference (Harnois 2010). This demonstrated the class differences that exist in developed worlds and the developing worlds. This remains a challenge in ensuring their interest in decision making (Marais 2001: 283).

In South Africa, the privileged networks remain empowered due to capitalism, class and gender. On the other hand, their deprived counterparts remain in regression as the result of culture, religion and history (McDowell 1991: 125). This was due to class differences between women based on culture, religion and history. This has been demonstrated in the labour markets where the marital status and age of a woman’s children impact on her income and status. This is also based on the level of employment, education, frames and stereotypes as well as scholarly publications for black women which seems to be largely unrecognised and under-publicised in comparison to white females. Black women from this group of women are also mainly caretakers and providers for their families.

Social theories link the unexpected event unlike other theories which are based on predictions. The South African instance of black women who continue to be marginalised in many parts of the world is a long-standing issue; intersectional theory alerted its oppressive and exploitative manner (Davis 2008, Lutz et al. 2016). This theory tackled the constraints of universalism, which is premised on representation and categories, giving distributing power relations. It helped feminists overcome cultural, bias and difference and bridges the gap between generalists and specialists. The generalists hold the view that theory on famous concepts of theory and they devote time to understand parts of the theory. Specialists understand a theory as a whole. Therefore, intersectionality appeals to generalists and specialists, and identifies how differences intersect in personal identity, social practice or location (Davis 2008: 74-75, Lykke 2010, Davis 2014).

Intersectionality questions the categories to be included, salient differences which are endless, thinking across categories and locations; focus on identity, culture or grand theory; purpose of theory related to exclusion, vulnerability or empowerment or resources (Manuel 2007, Davis 2008: 75).

3.3. The South African government's strategy for fostering a thriving black middle class

South Africa is a multi-cultural country with 11 official languages, a number of ethnic groups and a mixture of cultures and value systems. However, racial divide and colonial legacies of the past have led to a lack of integration and divide which extends beyond race but also economic gains for the few (Seekings 2000, 2008, MacDonald 2006, Sall 2018). The black middle class often termed the 'Black Diamonds' are linked to classism which is economic and capitalistic in nature (Southall 2016, Kitis et al. 2018).

Generally, the term black diamond refers to someone who is a member of the new black middle class that has been emerging in South Africa over the past few decades. The term had no derogatory meaning at the time it was coined. This term was developed by TNS Research Surveys (Pty) Ltd and the UCT Unilever Institute as a way to refer to the rapidly growing, affluent, and influential black community in South Africa. Statistics South Africa Household Survey (2020a) suggests that in the last decade, SA's black middle class has grown noticeably, but has still not caught up with the white middle class.

Given this, central aim of the formation of this middle-income group is to ensure difference and inequality in the distribution of resources.

Benjamin (2007: 189) suggests that the ANC operates in the same capitalist system of the apartheid regime and the ANC government's acceptance of neoliberalism is what has left black people in the same economic state they were in during apartheid. Coincidentally, the post-apartheid government was crafted using the same government system and similar structures that the Afrikaner Nationalist Party (NP) founded, with a small elite Afrikaner bourgeoisie. Ultimately, the plan of the ANC was to create an elite middle income group, in turn to bridge the economic divide between racial groups. However, 22 years later this gap has widened considerably

(Meiring 2018, Devey and Møller 2002). Growth, Employment, and Redistribution (GEAR), the programme developed by the ANC aimed at bridging the equity gap and focussed on 'economic growth, attract foreign direct investment, boost employment and increase socio-economic equality'. There are contending views on GEAR as some scholars believe GEAR failed. Despite this, other scholars believe that GEAR was an economically sound and credible policy (Weeks 1999, Streak 2004, Gelb 2007).

One of the fundamental aims of the ANC led government post-1994 was to address social inequalities and marginalisation of black Africans. However, South Africa remains one of the most unequal societies globally with the vast majority earning some of the lowest earnings (World bank data 2020).

Furthermore, Statistics South Africa (2020a) suggests that this is because the Gini coefficient of per capita expenditure was 0.67 in 2006 and fell to 0.65 in 2015. This finding on the status of the Gini coefficient has been published by Statistics South Africa (2020b) in its report entitled *Inequality Trends in South Africa*. In 2022, the Gini coefficient had fallen even more and is now 0.63. According to the Palma ratio, in 2006, the top ten percent of the population spent 8.6 times more than the bottom 40 percent of the population; in 2015, this ratio fell to 7.9. Overall, the statistics show that inequality at the national level has decreased between 2006 and 2015 (Stats SA 2020) when compared to 2006.

As the World Bank findings show this inequality gap is due to the vast divides between the rich and the poor (Marais 2001: 8). Despite high levels of poverty linked to the masses living off less than US\$2 a day (World Bank data 2016), the country remains a hegemonic power in the region, with one of the largest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rates in the region (Department of Trade and Industry 2011: 5-6). This directly highlights the link between capitalism and inequality.

The above-mentioned points have historical links that are systematic and structural in nature (Seekings and Natrass 2008). Iheduru (2004: 7) notes that after the emergence of a democratic South Africa, it was the constitution of the republic that ensured that white property was initially protected to make white capitalists gain confidence in the state because of fear of withdrawal of investment (Marais 2001: 95).

According to Moeletsi Mbeki (2009: xi) South Africa thus became locked in capitalism that did not serve mass population. Mass population in South Africa gained political access and freedom but not immediate economic power. To overcome economic inequalities in South African, the black middle income privileged network was coincidentally created to drive development and counterbalance the dominant capitalist white privileged network (Mbeki 2009: xi).

In today's South Africa this elite income network transpired into a small multi-racial network, which has gained access and entry into the economy, and this has led to greater accumulation and wealth for this income group (Marais 2001, Devey and Møller 2002, Habiyaemye 2022). Coincidentally it is this small, privileged group that has become powerful and those excluded remain marginalised and the redistribution of power provides a sturdy system (Basset 2008: 185, Bhorat et al. 2020).

Under his tenure, the former President of the Republic of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki (Marais 2001: 95) noted the urgency of assembling structures which are responsible for reinforcing this two-nation society (rich and poor). It has been

instituted through programmes such as the Reconstruction and Development Programmes (RDP) and BBBEE, which have not led to transformation for the mass population. The Inequality Trends in South Africa report published by Stats SA shows South African largest inequality for 2021, people of colour have not gained entry into the formal labour market 29 years into liberation. These findings are linked to the labour market that is highly racialised and gendered, with an overall income inequality in the labour market at 74.2%. Black Africans not only have the worst employment outcomes, but also earn the lowest wages. Whites, on the other hand, earn significantly more than all other population groups. The average real earnings of employed black Africans between 2011 and 2015 was R6 899 (real earnings) per month. For coloureds and Indians/Asians, the corresponding figures are R9 339 and R14 235 per month respectively. For whites, it was R24 646 per month, more than three times higher than for black Africans (Statistics South Africa 2020a). Furthermore, the vast majority of black Africans remain marginalised and poor.

The state has taken a number of measures to ensure the successful inception of this middle class through legislative measures; government contracts and procurement policies; privatisation and restructuring policies; regulation of natural resources; business license and quotas; investment credit and the development of a black capital market and land reform policies.

The above highlights that measures have been taken to ensure that political, social and economic power is inclusive of the black middle class. This was mainly due to post-independent white capital which was highly concentrated. (Basset 2008: 186-188).

Even though the objective of the formation of this middle class was to bridge the inequality gaps due to the apartheid regime, it has been noted that nationalistic discourses can lead to oppressive ideology within elitist societies (Basset 2008: 186-188). Marais (2001: 1) notes that the apartheid government was premised on the same nationalistic and ideological basis of inequality and a system of rule and divide along the lines of race, class and gender within a classist system which did not favour the vast majority of black citizens. These discourses prevail and reinforce the notion of inequality and the lack of equitable inclusion.

Given this, the ANC-led government in 1994 inherited a state which operated within these auspices, and which was politically, socially and economically in disarray due to privilege and corruption of the NP apartheid-led government. The ANC government became accustomed to the operating system and structures, and currently no concrete transformation has occurred, specifically in the domain of a move from nationalistic ideology and a capitalist economy that favour a minority population in South Africa (Marais 2001: 2-3).

3.4. Privilege for the minority and deprivation for the masses: South Africa's shameful regional security challenges

Benjamin (2007: 187) suggests that black people who endured apartheid suffered greatly, their freedoms were violated and they lived in poverty. This struggle was not just for political freedom, but also for other freedoms. On the eve of the very

first democratic elections in 1994, the African National Congress (ANC) promised millions of oppressed black people the potential of a better life and to right the wrongs of the past.

Although much has been achieved in contemporary South Africa, many still continue to face unfairness and oppression. The main purpose of the study confirms that the transition processes, systems and legacies of the past South African apartheid regime continue to dominate the state within the domains for gender, class and race. In addition, privilege remains a security threat for the vast majority of the population due to the growing divide between the rich and the poor, influencing the livelihood of the mass majority. The main research question explores whether the black African female remains highly stereotyped due to hegemony, hierarchy and representations related to class, gender and race. Furthermore, political, economic and social freedom does not mean privilege for some and deprivation for others.

It is critical to remember that people have different perceptions and thus multiple realities exist (Stacey 1988: 21-27). The key question is linked to how the fortunate impact on the human security of the South Africa region, if at all.

In South Africa the rich have gained greater fortune and remain rich, with the inclusion of the Black Diamonds, who still battle to own their own capital (Marais 2011: 200).

The lives of a minority group of black privileged people have changed for the better in post-apartheid. The mounting human security challenges demonstrate that the policies have not been successful as human security challenges such as unemployment, gender inequality and the growing divide between rich and poor prevails. This is mainly because of race, class and gender challenges. The status quo remains, as the true challenges to insecurity, gender inequality and privileged hegemonies remain under-explored (Anthias 2013: 123).

Intersectional theory aims to tackle social injustice which is based on privilege within class, race, gender and ethnicity. It requires a broader in-depth analysis of racism. In this context, there is a need to revisit the racialisation processing order to ensure greater equity. Tackling notions of 'otherness' and privilege allowing for divide and rule should be employed.

BBBEE is the flip of the same coin, both poor black and white people have their livelihood at stake and the BBBEE policy does not serve the vast majority. The interests of most of the citizens must be taken into consideration, and policies must extend beyond skin colour and class.

Patel and Graham (2012: 193) note that women are the ones who are beginning to benefit from BBBEE through social development funds, in recent years, although more studies on the impact of BBBEE are needed. However, this does not resolve the issue of fairness and equality for all citizens of the state, more so for poor African women to gain full entry into the market (Patel and Graham 2012: 193). Iheduru (2004: 18-20) notes that these businesses have not created jobs for the majority, even though inclusion programmes have been instituted. Hence BBBEE programmes have led to creating a representative of the black population gaining entry as opposed to re-structuring capitalism to favour the majority (Makgetla 2004: 279).

BBBEE policy has created a black capitalistic class or business elite to compliment white capitalists in South Africa in order to ensure a consumer boom and economic development. Importantly this type of equality remains flawed and is based on the collective group that is black privileged South Africans and not the individual identity and entails the embodiment of groups (Tangri and Southall 2008: 107). The majority of South Africans have not benefitted as poverty has not been reduced for most black people in the region.

Political inclusiveness, as Verba (2003) clarified, should be understood and applied not merely in terms of quantity but in terms of the quality of interest representation by officeholders. Iheduru (2004: 3: 18) notes that the black middle class has become a reality in South Africa, promoting multi-culturalism. The powerful groups can continue to contribute to multi-culturalism and economic development which impacts on social development, as long as there is a clear separation between state and elitist power. South Africa has focused more on gaining entry into global economics and its standards as opposed to development issues, and this has not helped much on helping the poor.

Bassett (2008: 200) posits that capitalists retrieved from supporting the majority rule, this led to a salient political and economic crisis. Makgetla (2004: 277) notes that black subordination prevails within white dominated capitalism.

Adedeji (2007) notes that human security and development remains very important for the wellbeing of people, and just as important is increasing their share of the global economy. At present, BBBEE has not de-racialised South Africa, it serves a small minority of people which includes white capitalists who are both local and foreign and an emerging black middle-income group. Hence, the economy is still dominated by a minority, while the majority continue to be marginalised (Department of Trade and Industry 2011: 5-6). Thus, the relationship between social conditions and cultural legacies of African elitism need to be tackled.

Exclusionary policies: re-racialisation and privileged capitalism, corruption, and lack of self-regulation has led to nepotism which reinforces accumulation and power. In the region, 90% of the population remain deprived for the minorities' privilege. BBBEE favours the privileged over the mass development and is based on a system of inclusion in resources, access and income.

3.5. A long walk to economic freedom: political freedoms amidst economic bondage

Should the race, class or gender orientation of a person truly define who has access to resources or entry into the economy or labour market? Inequality prevails as the result of power and domination that have become part of societies' very existence (Gaventa 1982, Sen et al. 2007), reinforcing indifference through exclusion and inequality. It is for this reason that intersectionality remains crucial within the human security domain of society. Economic and resource inequality exists in South Africa with class, race and gender remaining the contributing factors of oppression and discrimination (Segalo 2015, Kehler 2001, Mathur-Helm 2005).

In answering the key research question of this study, in contemporary South

Africa there are still high intersections of inequality between gender and race in both the private and public sector. Furthering this argument, the Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment Commission National Status Report (2020) suggests that white representation in the public sector has increased, whilst the Department of Labour Workforce profile at the top management level by business type, population group and gender suggests that black African women and their coloured female counterparts continue to lag behind, whereas men still dominate the top management positions and favouring men at this level. It is worth noting that from a gender perspective, in 2022, white men continued to dominate top management positions occupying 80.2 per cent ratio.

In an attempt to redress the challenges of the apartheid government, the African National Congress (ANC) led government instituted the Affirmative Action Policy Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Policy. This policy aims to redress legacies of the apartheid government which divided South Africans socially, economically and politically. Black South Africans were denied inclusion, access to basic freedoms, civil rights resources and participation to exercise their rights as citizens. This rule and divide system was achieved in the public and private life across race, class and gender. BBBEE aims to redress this by empowering previously disadvantaged persons to have access to resources and access inclusion (Southall 2007: 68).

Have black South Africans gained political freedom without economic entry into the economy? Black nationalistic initiatives within a capitalistic system have led to lack of progress for the vast majority of black South Africans. This has been mainly due to hegemonic powers of the former white capitalist system and the emergence of a new elitist group. In addition, the marginalised black women remain most oppressed and discriminated upon, remaining in ‘Chambers Web of Poverty and disadvantage as the system creates vulnerability leading to disease, lack of education and exploitation (Cornwall, Correa, and Jolly 2008: 1-5). The black male, on the other hand becomes subject to discrimination in the workplace through labour, in the private family life as well as public. This demonstrates that discrimination extends beyond gender and sexuality.

The Commission for Gender Equality 20 – Year Review Report (2017: 46) confirms that black African women continue to occupy low-expertise and low-paying jobs across all races in South Africa. Women also remain under-represented in both the private and public sector. The gross result confirms that ‘only one in four CEOs in parastatals is a woman and only 30% of ambassadors are female’. This stark reality demonstrated why women remain in the current economic status of being poor, black and marginalised. It is worth noting that in the private sector women make up a large percentage; in 2015 they occupied 70% of the jobs. Further to this, the remunerations amendments of the Employment Equity Act undertaken by the Department of Labour in 2014 has not been included in the revised EEA as yet (Employment Equity Annual Report 2014–2015).

It is important to remember that South Africa’s history has been linked to white domination and the exploitation of black labour (Southall 2007: 67). The BBBEE Policy strategies were created to tackle the deviance of the apartheid government’s

legacies through the commitment. The African National Congress (ANC) led government, created a black middle-class group alongside the white-dominated economy, in an attempt to bridge this gap. According to ANC this leads to greater economic development. Strict rules centred on ownership, skills development, income and participation formed the basis of success (Southall 2007: 68). Ultimately the policy would tackle prevailing human security challenges such as unemployment, equity and access to services (Department of Trade and Industry 2011: 3).

Firstly, BBBEE is a nationalistic policy which reinforces notions of discrimination through ideology within elitist societies. This creates political power and socialised capital which continues to marginalise and divide (Anthias 2012: 124). The definition of the policy itself gives reference to 'black' people which is termed African, coloured and Indians. Although BBBEE is ultimately not in favour of all these groups, as they do not stand to be included and benefit in selections based on income, empowerment and ownership opportunities (Freund 2006: 14, 18) (cited in Tangri and Southall 2007: 114). In addition, the policy is reversed racism as it is based on racial divide and not individual development, as poor white people are not allowed full entry and are excluded to a certain degree. This ensures hegemonies within groupings, creating representations and frames of 'us' versus 'them' (Anthias 2012: 123-124). This reinforces unfairness and inequality which resides for the poor masses across all races (Tangri and Southall 2008: 108).

Despite this, 18.2 million people in South Africa live in extreme poverty, with the poverty threshold at 1.90 U.S. dollars (Galal, 2022). This demonstrated that BBBEE is the flip of the same coin, both poor black and white people have their livelihood at stake and the BBBEE policy does not serve the vast majority. The interests of most of the citizens must be taken into consideration as South Africa remains a ticking time bomb due to discontent and resentment by the groups that remain marginalised. Policy must extend beyond skin colour and class but one which ensures true innovation and change for all in the state.

The black elitist group in South Africa according to former President Thabo Mbeki was created to ensure value to the economy without compromising the White dominate capitalist economy at the time. Hence BBBEE is based on power within a class system in order to ensure balance and checks for economic growth and not necessarily developmental growth for the masses.

Southall (2007: 80) notes that BBBEE did not only favour this emerging middle-income group but also the white dominant capitalist group of the apartheid government. Hence the state has continued to operate within the systems and structures of their colonial legacies. This has not benefitted many poor blacks because even today black ownership is still marginal across sectors in the economy and many black entrepreneurs remain reliant of state funds, as they do not have their own capital. In addition, poverty remains widespread in the region and has not been remedied. BBBEE policies have freed people politically and socially creating a sense of belonging for black people post-conflict, serving as a collective pride, and creating category membership (Anthias 2012: 123-124)). At the same time capitalism in South Africa has ensured economical exclusion of the poor (Seekings

and Natrass 2008, Koelble 2022, Torkelson 2022).

However, Patel and Graham (2012: 193) note that women are the ones who are beginning to benefit from BBBEE in recent years, although more studies on the impact of BBBEE are needed. This, however, does not resolve the issue of fairness and equality for all citizens of the state (Patel and Graham 2012: 193).

The policy has lived up to its strategy that is to create a 'black capitalistic class or business elite to compliment white capitalists in South Africa in order to ensure a consumer boom and economic development. Importantly this type of equality remains flawed and is based on the collective group, i.e. black South Africans and not the individual identity, and entails the embodiment of groups (Tangri and Southall 2007: 107). The majority of South Africans have not benefitted nor has poverty been reduced for the majority of black people in the region.

Even though this policy includes the empowerment of all black people including women, workers, youth and people with disabilities and people living in rural areas, huge inequalities continue to exist 20 years into democracy (Department of Trade and Industry 2011: 3). In institutions the black female will be granted access to a job, but her female white counter-part will continue to be promoted and given high income positions due a lack of skills or systemic challenges which still favour the white female. Sen's (2019) idea of justice demonstrates that inclusion of all individuals is needed as opposed to categories or groupings based on ethnicity (Patel and Graham 2012: 195-197).

Okin (1994) notes that policy solutions have been recommended to resolve social problems such as gender inequality in the public and domestic domain, to prevent the overlooking of women. Policy should in fact look for ways to address challenges which impact on equality for all people and races, as this influences human security challenges such as unemployment.

The lives of these very people have not changes much post-apartheid as they have only gained social and political freedoms, but not economic freedom which ensures a better livelihood for them. The mounting human security challenges demonstrated that the policies have not been successful as human security challenges such as unemployment, gender inequality and the growing divide between rich and poor prevails. This is mainly because of the divide across race, class and gender.

Despite this South Africa remains a hegemon with one of the highest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) figures in the region which demonstrates the success of their development strategies. The ultimate aim of BBBEE policy is to ensure economic transformation for participation of black people into the economy for fairness and equality. At present BBBEE has not de-racialised South Africa, serving a small minority of people which includes white capitalists, both local and foreign, and an emerging black middle income group. Hence the economy is still dominated by a minority, while the majority continue to be marginalised (Department of Trade and Industry 2011: 5-6).

In South Africa under the apartheid regime class was a privilege over race, even though racial divide existed. This led to labels, representations and categorisation. After apartheid race remains a neutral grounding as this divide was experienced

together, although the individual remains key. Today two camps exist in South Africa, i.e. 'the haves' and the 'have nots', the 'white businessman' versus and 'black businessman' (Patel and Graham 2012: 110-111), with hegemonies formed within race and gender. In light of this, BBBEE does not tackle mass poverty and only a few individuals will continue to benefit. In the same light after apartheid the contending views entailed the white businessman versus the black businessman, not the worker versus the businessman. This analogy is still prevalent today in the South.

4. Conclusion

The research paper examines the status of class capitalism since the inception of the Government of National Unity up until the early 2020s. It takes a look at the threat that class capitalism poses to human security as a result of the political climate. Using South Africa's Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) policies as an example, the article looks at the impact of neoliberal policy reform aimed at ensuring transformation and development. Using its conceptual framework, intersectional theory explores how power, privilege, and race are interconnected to create hierarchies defined by intersectional challenges. There was a failure in the post-liberation period in South Africa to consider class divides that strengthened the legacies and systems of the past that continue to dominate the state and its people, and as a consequence, the African poor are becoming poorer and poorer. There exists a huge inequality gap between the rich and the poor due to the vast gulfs between the two groups. It is encouraging to note that the number of people of colour in senior management positions of the country has increased since 1994, which is a very significant development since the demise of the apartheid regime. The data suggests that the number of new recruits to the management echelons in 2021 has increased, but when it comes to racial and gender diversity, even with the increase in the number of women of colour, there is still a long way to go before the 30% target outlined in the 1995 White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service is met. Almost 80% of the workforce in South Africa is black, yet only 15% of top management jobs go to blacks, according to the Labour Department (2020). There are other cracks associated with BBBEE failures that are connected to businesses that perform much lower than the set standards for BBBEE ownership and participation. A case study on South Africa is used in order to demonstrate how oppressions related to race, class, and gender continue to intersect for the African women.

Desk research was also conducted in this study. It would be beneficial to include information in future studies that examine intersectional oppressions connected to ethnic divides, disabilities, and across various genders, with greater attention paid to initialism of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual, queer/questioning, intersex, and allied/asexual/aromantic/agender (LGBTQIA). As a result of this study, future research could be expanded upon, considering that South Africa is an intersectional society. As well as being used to review and advance current policies and legislation, it can also be used to create new ones.

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