

Examining Psychological Outcomes of Racial Inequality for Black South Africans

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ABSTRACT

South Africa remains an unequal society even after almost three decades of ending apartheid. This has put the country in the limelight of the discourse on racism and its enduring effects. This article represents a contribution to the literature on the effects of racism in South Africa as it particularly affects the Black population group. Social inequality during and after apartheid is examined with a highlight of the legal devices that were used to entrench racial discrimination among the citizens of the country. The enduring social inequality for Blacks was emphasised through national survey research that has consistently over the years shown this group to be disproportionately affected. The authors then interrogated using a psychological lens the effects that racial inequality could have on three behavioural outcomes; aggression, crime and social trust for Blacks. These variables were examined in the context of social inequality as a push factor for their manifestations. Lastly, the authors conclude on the importance of providing a forum to uncover and address the trauma of the apartheid era on Blacks. Furthermore, the importance of addressing the socio-economic inequality experienced by Blacks to ensure their wellbeing and capacity for self-restraint from social deviancy was emphasised.

Keywords: Blacks, aggression, apartheid, crime, South Africa, social inequality, social trust

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Introduction

Racism has a long history and continues to pervade social discourse on group relations. This is because most societies exist within the structural, legal, and psychic legacies of racial discrimination. Some societies, more than others continue to be in the limelight of racial discourse because of persistent inequality between their constituent groups. One such society is South Africa. South Africa experiences a high level of inequality between her racial groups and this has been a topic of discussion and research for scholars within the country and beyond. The continued racial disparity prompted this article as the authors from a psychological standpoint are concerned with the effects of such inequality in the country. Specifically, the population group of Blacks captures the attention of the authors given the indigeneship status of this group and as the most disadvantaged of all groups in the country (Mulaudz, 2022; Statistics South Africa ([SSA], 2015).

The experiences of Black South Africans during apartheid deserve special attention as this group experienced the brunt of discrimination and maltreatment relative to the other disadvantaged groups (Anderson et al., 2001; Bhorat et al., 2016; Mphambukeli, 2019). First, the African race was a particular target for European and Western colonisers who because of a need to justify the invasion and exploitation of the African continent and violence against its people incited the idea of racial superiority (Clair and Denis, 2015). Second, Blacks in South Africa were people who fought relentlessly to protect their lands from foreigners who invaded their country and subjected them to the most inhumane treatment. For example, they were displaced to their homeland residents and their citizenship status was trivialised. Third, they were treated with disdain and legally excluded from social and sexual contact with the Europeans, a further emphasis on their “inferior gene” (Cejas, 2007; Khunou,

2017; Mulaudz, 2022). The untold hardship experienced by this group makes it an important focal point for distinctive research and intervention because of the lasting effect such treatment has on the psyche of Black South Africans.

This article is presented in four sections. Section one highlights the racial inequality in apartheid South Africa with a focus on some prominent legislative tools used to ensure the separation and subjugation of Blacks. Section two discusses continued racial inequality for Blacks post-apartheid despite government's efforts to ensure equality and a review of national survey reports on economic and social inequality in South Africa. The third section focuses on the psychological effects of continued racial inequality on Blacks with a review of theoretical postulations and empirical studies. The fourth section concludes and recommends interventions to manage the psychological effects of social inequality.

Racial Inequality in Apartheid South Africa

South Africa is comprised of four different racial groups. Coloured/mixed-race individuals are products of relations between Dutch immigrants and native South Africans and immigrants of other nationalities, Blacks are the indigenous people of South Africa while Whites and Asians are the descendants of European and Asian immigrants respectively.

The racial categorisation in South Africa is a legacy of the apartheid era. The apartheid government placed people into racial categories to ensure physical and social demarcation, emphasise superiority, and ease of administration (South Africa History Online [SAHO], 2019). In apartheid South Africa (1948-1994), the minority White population dominated the political and economic spheres and was portrayed as superior to other racial groups (Cejas, 2007; Khunou,

2017). Different divisive devices both physical and legal were employed by the government of that period to ensure racial segregation. Most notable of these legal devices were the Group Areas Act (1950) which enforced separate living areas for Whites and other racial groups. In particular, this law targeted restraining the movement of Blacks into the city and White-only areas (Saunders, 2003; South Africa History Online [SAHO], 2019). This led to the eviction of non-Whites from areas earmarked for Whites only. Similarly, the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act of 1953 imposed segregation in the use of public utilities such as parks, toilets, cinemas, restaurants and beaches between Whites and non-Whites.

By the various laws promulgated in the apartheid era, there was legalised and entrenched segregation in the political, economic, residential and educational systems among Whites and other racial groups (Mhlauli et al., 2015; Mphambukeli, 2019). Consequently, there were limits and boundaries to physical and social interaction in public spaces. This discrimination led to a marked difference in the social and economic opportunities and development available to the different racial groups more so for Blacks (Bhorat et al., 2016).

Racial Inequality Post-apartheid South Africa

With an estimated population of 59.6 million, South Africa today is considered one of the most unequal countries in the world (Home Office, 2020). It is comprised of 8.8% Coloured/Mixed, 80.8% Blacks, 7.8% Whites and 2.6% Asians (Cook, 2020). Post-apartheid, a democratic government led by the Black-dominated African National Congress (ANC) government came to power in South Africa. To address past injustices of the apartheid era, the ANC-led government took various initiatives to ensure peace and unite South Africans. Such initiatives include legislations and

affirmative action policies such as the South African Human Rights Commission, the law against discrimination in the 1996 constitution, the Equality Act, and the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE). The B-BBEE, for example, aims to advance economic transformation and enhance the economic participation of Black South Africans in the economy. The policy was meant to focus on skills development, employment equity, and preferential procurement indeed issues peculiar to Blacks. However, this initiative has only benefited a few Black South Africans (Lötter, 2022). Others initiatives include a Truth and Reconciliation Commission set up to address past human rights violations and economic policies to ensure redistribution and equal access to socio-economic services. However, despite these various efforts, South Africa remains an unequal society with a majority of Black South Africans still experiencing socio-economic inequalities that impact their life outcomes (Lötter, 2022; Mulaudz, 2022).

The different separatist devices employed by the apartheid government to limit racial interaction are still largely responsible for the economic inequality for Blacks today. For example, the nature of the living arrangements in the apartheid era was such that Blacks occupied the less affluent areas, had poorer living conditions and were mostly employed in low-skilled or menial jobs (Bhorat et al., 2016; Branson and Wittenberg, 2007). While the economic gap of today is not as pronounced as during the apartheid era, literature greatly supports the continued existence of poor socio-economic conditions such as poor education, poor access to healthcare and poor living environment among Blacks relative to other racial groups in South Africa (Bhorat et al., 2016; Home Office, 2020; Naidoo et al., 2014).

In a report by SSA, 2015), the provinces of Gauteng, Eastern Cape,

KwaZulu Natal and Limpopo which are predominantly Black communities had the highest number of households who reported no income and low income in 2001 and 2011 (SSA, 2015). In addition, Black-headed households constituted the highest proportion of households within the no-income and low-income categories in 2001 and 2011. Equally, Borat et al. (2016) using data from SSA, Labour Market Dynamics (2013) found that Blacks relative to Whites and Asians are more likely to be employed in the public sector than the private sector. Blacks constituted 80% of non-union public sector employees who are likely to have less than average education, be engaged in low-level jobs, and have been employed through a government affirmative action effort.

Furthermore, a joint study by the National Planning Commission, SSA, and the World Bank to examine poverty and social inequality in South Africa spanning 2006 to 2015 confirmed social inequality along race lines. Some of the findings of this study are that race is a consistent predictor of poverty and being Black is associated with a higher likelihood of being chronically poor. KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Limpopo (which are Black-dominated) between 2006 and 2015 were consistently the three poorest provinces with KwaZulu-Natal harbouring the largest share of the poor in South Africa in 2015 (“Department of Planning”, 2018).

Similarly, an analysis of the data from the South Africa Demographic and Health Survey 2016, revealed the following: Black women of age 15-19 years relative to other racial groups in the same age category were most likely to have begun childbearing. Blacks also had the highest rate of HIV prevalence. Also, over 70% of White men and women have health insurance coverage while only about 10% of Black men and women have coverage. Furthermore, 78% of White women, 60% of Indian/Asian women, and 62% of Coloured women are more likely than Black women

(32%) to have ever done a Pap smear for cervical cancer screening. Also, Blacks relative to other races reported the most problem in accessing healthcare, the least compliance with taking prescribed medications, poorest health and least likelihood to receive treatment for oral health (National Department of Health et al., 2019).

The Socio-Economic Review and Outlook [SERO] (2019) which focused on socio-economic growth in South Africa in general and in particular the Gauteng Province of South Africa reported the following; Between 2012 and 2017 at the national level and within the Gauteng Province, the Black population has the highest percentage of people living in poverty. Also, although there was an improvement in educational attainment for the residents of Sedibeng, a district in Gauteng province in 2017, compared to Whites (50.6%), Indian/Asian (35.7%), and Coloured (14.9%), only 13.3% of Blacks aged 20 years and above had tertiary education. In addition, Blacks relative to other groups had the highest proportion of individuals with no schooling (SERO, 2019).

These findings show that Blacks relative to other groups are lagging in socio-economic development. The relative poor educational attainment, inequality in access to public services, poor self-reported health, and unemployment are all linked. This is because improvement in any of these socio-economic indicators is likely to lead to improvement in other areas for this group. For instance, acquiring a tertiary education increases the probability of getting a good job which in turn would reduce poverty and other social inequalities (Bhorat et al. 2016; “Department of Planning”, 2018; National Department of Health et al., 2019). Summarily, these reports emphasise social inequality in South Africa and Blacks as the most disadvantaged group despite holding majority status in numerical strength. Although this does not constitute an

exhaustive review of studies on economic inequalities in South Africa, it, however, establishes that Blacks in South Africa have consistently over the years experienced poor living conditions. This review shows how consistently across time inequality varies by racial group. The racial inequality in socio-economic conditions is clearly a legacy of the apartheid period as areas formerly considered homelands exhibit the poorest development in terms of income and other socio-economic markers. The consistency in findings shows the enduring nature of apartheid.

Relationship between Poor Socio-Economic Conditions and Negative Behavioural Outcomes

An important question regarding the lived experience of Blacks is how such living conditions affect life outcomes for this population. Empirical literature has linked poor socio-economic conditions to poor or negative outcomes, particularly among low status or disadvantaged groups.

Blacks in South Africa have been implicated in many social ills. For example, crime rates in the country are highest in provinces that have a high proportion of Blacks (Home Office, 2020; SSA, 2019). Also, they are the most implicated in xenophobic attacks against foreigners in South Africa (Human Rights Watch, 2020). The authors contend that the social deviancy associated with Blacks is an outcome of the socio-economic conditions under which they live and the resultant social-psychological implications such conditions have. The link between poor socio-economic conditions and behavioural problems among marginalised groups has been largely documented in the literature (Akindès, 2018; Balsamanta and Reddy, 2018; Malti et al., 2013). Aggression, crime and social trust are three major behavioural outcomes linked to poor socio-economic conditions among low status or disadvantaged groups (Akindès, 2018; Balsamanta and Reddy,

2018).

Aggression and Violence

The frustration-aggression hypothesis suggests that under conditions of frustration, aggression may likely result (Berkowitz, 1993). Frustration occurs when there is thwarting of some needs and it increases as the gap between goals and accomplishment widens. This might in turn instigate aggressive behaviours. Also, the relative deprivation thesis suggests that when a certain group perceives itself to be deprived of certain resources in comparison to another group it might result in aggressive, violent or antisocial behaviours to rectify the inequality (Myers and Spencer, 2001; Pallmeyer, 2003). As a society undergoes changes such as industrialisation, urbanisation and increasing material awareness, groups/individuals who feel relegated are likely to experience more frustration as goals may become increasingly out of reach. Such poverty, perceived social inequality and exclusion may feed feelings of despair and culminate in violence and community breakdown (Akindès, 2018; Pallmeyer, 2003).

The frustration-aggression link is supported by studies that have examined aggression and violence as outcomes of relegation, discrimination, and frustration. For example, Burt et al. (2012) using data collected from minority youth in the US found that experience of racial discrimination is directly related to increased involvement in crime largely due to the amplifying effect of such discrimination on depression, hostile view of relationships and detachment from social norms. Likewise, Jimenez et al. (2016) found that early exposure to adverse experiences among children from disadvantaged groups was associated with the expression of aggression later in life. Also, using data collected from 2,399 South African adults from all racial groups, Claassen (2017) found that among Black respondents, having a post-secondary school education is associated with less xenophobia. In addition, being

unemployed while in one's prime working years and having a perception that the government is inattentive to one's plight was associated with increased xenophobia.

In another study conducted by Tuwe (2018) with immigrants in New Zealand, the author found that the experience of racism and discrimination at work led to frustration, depression, and stress for these immigrants. Furthermore, the effect of the experience of discrimination and other forms of trauma can be vicarious. Studies have shown that people who experience traumatic events may adopt a pattern of relationships with others characterised by aggression. For example, Braga et al. (2012) reported that descendants of survivors of the Nazi holocaust in Brazil described the pattern of their parent's communication as aggressive.

These studies support the association between experiences of frustration and negative outcomes such as aggression and violence. Adverse experiences such as discrimination and exclusion may deprive an individual of the ability to engage in an optimistic outlook and prime the individual to react defensively and with frustration and anger to any provocation (Malti et al., 2013). In turn, having to experience such negativities for an extended period leads to a persistent pattern of hostility towards others as the individual becomes especially sensitive to threatening cues and overestimates threat levels (Jaspal et al., 2021).

Furthermore, experiences of traumatic events challenge and alter the victim's view or assumptions of the world and themselves (Haskell and Randall, 2019; Jannolf-Bullman, 2006; Norris et al., 1997; Wasserman and Ellis, 2010). Humans are oriented to view the world as a just place where negative outcomes would not come to them. This kind of cognition helps to maintain personal sanity and wellbeing when people are exposed to negativities around

them. However, when there is a direct experience of negative outcomes, an individual has to restructure his/her assumptions about how the world works (Jannolf-Bullman, 2006; Wasserman and Ellis, 2010). Being a victim of a violent incident affects an individual's cognitions in terms of feelings of safety, personal esteem, and interpersonal trust (Malti et al., 2013; Norris et al., 1997; Wasserman and Ellis, 2010). The aftermath of experiencing a violent incident is that people have flashbacks of it, become preoccupied with it, and talk and dream about it (Wasserman and Ellis, 2010). As such the memory of the event remains fresh for a long time.

Another aspect of cognition affected by traumatic events is that victims of such events may become preoccupied with thoughts of revenge on the perpetrator (Field, 2012; Mendeloff, 2009). The embitterment that follows a traumatic event stems from the victim's feeling that some injustice, violations of rights, and threat to self-identity have taken place and motivates a desire for revenge (Gäbler and Maercker, 2011). Such thoughts might bring some sort of comfort to the victim as they may even smile when engaged in thoughts of revenge (Linden, 2003; Linden et al. 2007). Going by the preceding outline, there is psychological evidence that memories of injustice remain with the victim who might derive some comfort from “fighting back” the offender. This supports the frustration-aggression link.

Likewise, frustration, aggression and violence have equally been linked to a poor state of living environment. Living under conditions of high population density, overcrowding, noise, uncomfortable temperatures and unpleasant smell are associated with poor physical and mental health (Berkowitz, 1993; Kuo, 2010; Kuo and Sullivan, 2001; Wahdan et al., 2014). First, psychological research on the role of personal space in mental

health have shown that being able to maintain one's privacy is directly related to wellbeing (Brown et al., 2005; Margulis, 2003; Olonisakin and Adebayo, 2017). Humans have an inherent need to have space. This gave rise to the phenomenon of territoriality, solitude, anonymity and privacy which characterise humans' need for personal space (Adebayo, 2004; Altman, 1975; Milgram 1970). As such, insufficient space or privacy can lead to mood disorders, stress, and aggressive behaviours. This is supported by reports that have shown a high rate of violence and aggression among people living under housing conditions where there is constant encroachment on privacy or where they are entitled to limited space (Bierie, 2011; Dede, 2015; Korkus, 2016; Litman, 2021).

Second, noise and unpleasant smells in the environment can trigger aggression as these environmental conditions can trigger negative emotional states (Berkowitz, 1993). Living in slum areas or an unfit environment is associated with greater risks of aggressive behaviours, violence, and other antisocial behaviours (Bierie, 2011; Kuo, 2001; Kuo, 2010; Wahdan et al., 2014). For instance, Kuo (2001) found police reports of violent crime to be highest in America's poorest neighbourhoods. Similarly, Bierie (2011) found environmental factors of dirtiness, noise and lack of privacy to be associated with increased violence among prison inmates. Perhaps, the most worrisome aspect of living in a violence-prone environment is that it leads to the learning and acquisition of deviant behavioural patterns and positive evaluation of aggressive and violent acts (Akindès, 2018; Crick and Dodge, 1994).

Furthermore, in addition to living under the most unpleasant conditions, having to deal with everyday infrastructural inequalities can be a trigger for violence and aggression among people experiencing poor economic conditions (Balsamanta and Reddy, 2018). The living areas or communities occupied by

people of low socio-economic status usually lack basic amenities such as good water, drainage and toilets. When the basic amenities, for example, water is available occupants of these areas may have to go to communal access points to get their supply. Given that this water may be available for a limited amount of time, the squabble about who gets first, how much one is entitled to and who jumped the queue are all elements that contribute to frustration, stress and aggressive outbursts among people of poor socio-economic status who live in impoverished communities (Westaway, 2006).

The experience of Blacks during apartheid was a traumatic one. Blacks despite being indigenous people of South Africa and the majority experienced and continue to experience the most social inequality in the country. Blacks as the largest population group in South Africa have an estimated current and long-term unemployment proportion of 33.8% and 44.1% (Cook, 2020). Besides from this, a large proportion of this group belongs to the no-income and low-income categories (SSA, 2015) and has the largest proportion of youths who are currently unemployed despite improved educational attainment (SERO, 2019; Branson and Wittenberg, 2007). In addition to this, they are surrounded by constant reminders of their relegation and unequal social status. For instance, land ownership is still a highly prominent reminder of the apartheid legacy as Whites still own the largest share of farmlands in South Africa (Akinola, 2020; Pogue, 2019). Knowing that these lands originally belong to the indigenous people of South Africa and currently owning just a paltry percentage of them can feel demeaning to this group.

Equally, having to live in abject poverty in the face of minority groups' relative wealth would be a constant taunt for Blacks. Appropriation of land by Blacks has thus been a major occurrence in the country as they perceive their actions as a measure to right

past wrongs to them (Pogue, 2019). Most of the homes that are constructed on such lands are done with the barest of comfort. Many of these homes and the communities where they are located lack basic amenities such as electricity, water and sanitary facilities and are described as “squatter camps” and “shantytowns” to depict their poor quality. When some sort of amenities such as water are made available to the occupants who live in these unfit environments, they might have to get it from communal supply points where they have to engage in a squabble with each other for access (Westaway, 2006). The racial trauma experienced by Blacks in the past, the social inequality they continue to bear, and the poor living conditions they endure could culminate in frustration and be responsible for the high rate of aggression and violence associated with this group.

Crime

Maslow's theory of needs (1943) emphasises that physiological and safety needs are the primary of all needs and their prepotency is emphasised by the position they occupy on the hierarchy. These needs are primary, foremost and recurrent for all individuals. When these needs are unfulfilled or the means to fulfil them are challenged, individuals may engage in antisocial or deviant ways to have them met (Gire, 1999). What this implies is that poor socio-economic status could be a push factor for criminal involvement. The link between poor socio-economic status and crime has been adequately documented in the literature (Akindès, 2018; Cheteni et al., 2018; Mathuthu, 2019; Richardson, 2011). For example, Akindès (2018) through a qualitative investigation of push factors for social deviancy found that low socio-economic status, perceived social exclusion or invisibility, and unemployment are factors associated with joining criminal gangs in Abidjan.

Black-dominated communities in South Africa have the highest

reported crime rates in the country (Home Office, 2020; SSA, 2019). Besides from Black communities being largely associated with crime, this population group is also the most implicated in the perpetration of criminal acts in the country. For example, they constitute the largest proportion of inmates in South African prisons (Makou et al., 2018; Shabangu, 2006) and have been largely involved in xenophobic incidents in the country (Human Rights Watch, 2020). Perhaps, the high crime rate among Blacks can be linked to the emotional states of some members of this group. The xenophobic attacks associated with this group could also be because they are the ones who feel the most threatened by the presence of foreigners who are perceived as competitors for the jobs which is already inadequate. If a poor socio-economic status is linked to frustration and aggression, perhaps the concentration of people who might be frustrated and prone to aggressive tendencies could be responsible for high crime rates and violence in Black dominated areas. Blacks have the highest level of poverty in the country. Also, its youth constitute the largest proportion of the unemployed workforce in South Africa (Home Office, 2020; SERO, 2019). Living in a non-conducive environment where employment is difficult to get can be a strong push factor towards a life of crime, particularly for youths who are struggling to be integrated into society (Akindès, 2018; Bangane, 1991). The desire for inclusion in society, particularly the economy can motivate a life of crime for impoverished Black youths. Also living in a crime-prone environment could make an individual begin to see violence as normal (Akindès, 2018; Crick and Dodge, 1994).

Social Trust/Inter-racial Trust

Trust is an important aspect of human behaviour and is implicated in defining the outcomes people have in social interaction. It involves a feeling or perception that another individual has one's interest in mind and would not commit actions that are detrimental to one's interest. Trust is a prominent factor in the success or failure

of a relationship and a critical component of social interaction in multiracial or multi-ethnic settings. In ethnically diverse societies, myriad values, languages, religions, and worldviews may sometimes conflict. These diversities in cultural makeup in multi-ethnic societies emphasise the importance of social trust and complicate the ability to trust. Naturally, as social beings, humans identify with their kin and people of the same natural or social grouping (Olonisakin and Adebayo, 2017). Consequently, intragroup trust facilitates favouritism, devotion and care for members of the same group relative to outgroups (Olonisakin and Adebayo, 2021).

Various research associates low social trust with low social status or belonging to a disadvantaged group (Akindès, 2018; Balsamanta and Reddy, 2018; Dinesen and Hooghe, 2010; Pratsinakis et al., 2017; Smith, 2010). Such low levels of social trust among low-status groups have been associated with perceived discrimination, marginalisation, powerlessness, and exclusion felt by these groups (Akindès, 2018; Balsamanta and Reddy, 2018). Consequently, low-status groups are wary of other groups, particularly dominant groups and the societal structures, agencies and policies that legitimise or represent power differentials. Furthermore, research concerning social trust has also shown that there is higher trust for non-ethnics in ethnically heterogeneous communities relative to homogeneous ones (Pratsinakis et al., 2017; Robinson, 2016). These studies show that living in ethnically diverse communities facilitates inter-ethnic contact which can help mitigate inter-ethnic distrust. Extended positive interaction with non-ethnics can help reveal similar interests with non-ethnics, improve understanding of their cultures and lead to the formation and acceptance of norms that apply to all groups.

In South Africa, social relations among the different racial groups

exist within the context of the historical feud of the apartheid era. The elevation of White minority rights and entitlements over Blacks, the promulgation of laws that ensured the subservience of Blacks and the relatively better social conditions for Coloured/Mixed and Asian individuals led to a high level of distrust for non-group members among Blacks (Akinola, 2020; Brown, 2000; Home Office, 2020). Post-apartheid, inter-racial trust among Blacks is still low due to the continued social exclusion they experience (Akinola, 2020; Jaynes, 2007; Pogue, 2018). Such distrust among Blacks is exemplified by low support for inter-racial marriage (Amoateng and Heaton, 2017; Jaynes, 2007), indignation when their race is misperceived (Jaynes, 2007), distrust of White numerical strength in the workplace (“Report”, 1998) and perceived discrimination in the workplace (Magubane, 2019). For instance, Amoateng and Heaton (2017) found the ratio of ingroup-marriage to outgroup-marriage among Blacks to be 290.3. Also, a report of the National Prisons Project of the South African Human Rights Commission (1998) showed that Black employees in South African prisons were dissatisfied with the relative numerical strength of White staff. Similarly, Magubane (2019) reported that Blacks are uncomfortable with being stereotyped by White colleagues in the workplace and are comfortable only when in the company of other Blacks.

Despite the government's efforts at racial integration, South African communities remain largely racially segregated (Mhlauli et al., 2015; Mphambukeli, 2019). Although there has been a change in the intensity of interaction and relationship between the races compared to the apartheid era, the different races still largely stick together (Amoateng and Heaton, 2017; Home Office, 2020). The poor economic conditions of Blacks could be responsible for their choice to live in ethnically homogenous communities. One reason could be the feelings of inferiority due to their economic wherewithal. Blacks' feeling of inferiority to Whites has been

associated with the economic realities of this group (Fanon, 1967). Also, the experience of discrimination can lead to the internalisation of negative stereotypes by a marginalised group such that they come to accept the negative qualities used to characterise them (Drapalski et al., 2013; Magubane, 2019). In the study by Magubane (2019) on the experiences of Blacks in the workplace, Blacks expressed feeling inferior and doubting their abilities when in the company of White employees. The feeling of inferiority was linked to the historical endorsement of White superiority in South Africa (Magubane, 2019). Thus, economic inequality and internalised stereotypes of being inferior may push Blacks to limit interactions to people of their group.

Conclusion and Recommendations

History can never be erased and 27 years after apartheid scholars and researchers all over the world are still writing and debating the negative legacies of apartheid in South Africa. From the literature reviewed it is obvious that Blacks experience social inequality in almost all spheres of living. While poor socio-economic status is not a justification for deviancy, it is important to know this variable has psychological correlates in that it can affect the human psyche and the ability for self-restraint from behaviours that are antithetical to a society.

Poor socio-economic status affects both physical and psychological health which is important if an individual is to take personal agency or responsibility for his or her behaviours. It is therefore important that the government and all other stakeholders give important consideration to the psychological effect that the living conditions of Blacks had on them during apartheid and after this period. Not only do the physical legacies of apartheid exist for Blacks, but the psychological trauma of that period persists and is passed from generation to generation as each relates history to the

next. Each individual, family or subgroup of Black heritage will have their version of the effect of apartheid. One can easily see how hatred, mistrust and a strive for revenge can be passed from generation to generation. While history cannot be abolished, the trauma must be healed. One important starting point is to unearth the feelings that Blacks still hold about their experience during and after apartheid. This can take the form of research in which Blacks documents the individual and group effects of their experiences in South Africa.

It is equally important to have a forum where Blacks can contribute to what they believe constitute enough reparation for apartheid maltreatment of Blacks. This will give an insight into the depth of hurt or trauma still borne by people of this group and how the government and important stakeholders can address this hurt. Also, walk-in centres for “at-risk youths” to seek psychological counselling may help to address the perceptions and cognitions that may motivate negative behaviours that could threaten societal order. Such counselling could also be provided in institutions of learning starting with primary education to ensure the development of healthy cognitive processes.

All indices of poor socio-economic status such as education, employment, and access to social amenities must also be addressed. The disparity in access to these social services encourages feelings of social exclusion among Blacks and distrust for the government and individuals of other racial groups. Members of the society must perceive fairness and justice in social processes as this is important for intergroup trust and psychological wellbeing. Aspiration for a psychologically healthy populace, effective crime control and social trust in South Africa might remain an elusive goal if efforts to ensure social justice do not come first.

Lastly, while the legacy of the apartheid era still greatly reverberates and perpetuates social inequality and grievances in South Africa, the failure of the different policies and initiatives put in place to address it is also largely implicated. There is consensus that various laws and affirmative action policies to address inequality and justice in South Africa are attributable to corruption and incompetence in the government and amongst officials who are vested with the authority and responsibility to administer these policies (Levy et al., 2021; Lötter, 2022; Mulaudz, 2022; Patel & Graham, 2019). In addition, while the state has initiated various progressive policies such as the National Action Plan and Strategy to Combat Racism, it has failed to successfully implement such plans and commit the resource needed for its actualisation (Mulaudz, 2022). It is therefore paramount that the government take steps to ensure that laws, policies, and institutions put in place to address social inequality, discrimination and unity are committed to the implementation and realisation of these mandates. Rebuilding trust in the government and its institutions can rekindle hope and trust, and encourage compliance with laws put in place to ensure social order.

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