

The Case of South Africa

The Societal Impact of COVID-19

Krish Chetty

Abstract

Multiple crises have emerged in South Africa in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. General well-being is in severe danger from the immediate effects of the virus and the longer-term impact of hunger due to a growing economic crisis. While the working-class majority struggle, there is a political struggle for political power playing out among factions in the ruling party. These tensions flared up in the wake of President Jacob Zuma's imprisonment in July 2021, leading to widespread unrest and destruction. These experiences point to a failing economic system that neglected the poor. If this neglect continues, then this unrest may continue. In making this argument, I base my analysis upon the views of political luminaries such as Neville Alexander, Archie Mafeje, and Roger Southall. Their views are linked to the experiences of many South Africans during the pandemic.

Keywords: corruption, COVID-19, pandemic, poverty, socioeconomic development, South African development, unemployment

In early July 2021, while South Africa was in the midst of the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, the country was also in the midst of a dispute between former President Zuma and the National State Capture Commission tasked to identify deep-seated cases of corruption harming the country. President Zuma challenged the legitimacy of the Commission's chairperson, Chief Justice Zondo, and therefore refused to testify at the Commission. Due to this refusal, President Zuma was judged guilty of contempt of court and sentenced to fifteen months in prison (Calland 2021). His imprisonment was followed by a series of riots near his home village, which gradually expanded to widespread looting across two provinces, leaving over 300 people killed and the destruction of property amounting to billions of rands (Reuters 2021; Seekings 2021; Sidimba 2021). While the trauma remains fresh in the minds of South Africans, many are looking for answers that explain this period of unrest and chaos.

South Africa has one of the highest income inequality, poverty, and structural unemployment levels among emerging economies globally (Netshitenzhe 2013). Despite twenty-seven years of government policies attempting to address these disparities, little has changed on average for poor South Africans, with the state failing to provide basic services to a large portion of society. As explained later in this article, when analyzing



the socioeconomic dimension of the COVID-19 pandemic, one notes how it has exacerbated existing developmental crises and created considerably greater challenges for the government to address (Maringira 2020).

Across all provinces in the country, poverty and inequality are widespread. Nationally, the Gini coefficient was reported as 0.65 in 2019, which has remained relatively consistent since 2006 (Statistics South Africa 2019). In addition to these high levels of inequality, 14 percent of households live in informal settlements, with houses constructed using substandard materials and having little access to piped water or sanitation (SERI 2018: 6). Unfortunately, twenty-seven years into democracy, those living in these conditions are predominantly from the black population group. The effects of the Apartheid era Group Areas Act of 1950 remain, with people of color forcefully removed from prime real estate and relocated vast distances away from the economic centers of cities. To date, the population of the country is primarily segregated along racial lines (SERI 2018: 6). This racial distribution of poverty further adds to tensions between racial groups, worsening social cohesion. Thus, a sociocultural analysis of the pandemic highlights how societal tensions were exacerbated through the effects of looting and unrest.

From the sociopolitical perspective, the stresses of the pandemic have also heightened political conflicts. Many have questioned whether the spree of looting and subsequent violence in July 2021 was a form of protest in response to the majority's experiences of poverty or from political dissidents waging an organized campaign to destabilize the country. The timing of the violence also cannot be ignored, as it followed immediately after President Zuma was imprisoned. It also occurred during a period labeled as an Adjusted Level 4 Lockdown due to the peaking of the COVID-19 third wave. Jaco Barnard-Naudé (2021) argues that it was a confluence of factors, including the experiences of extreme poverty, hunger, unemployment, and homelessness, combined with the imprisonment of a populist figure.

Adam Habib (2021) describes the state of hopelessness that is pervasive in poor communities. The lack of service delivery has become generalized across the state, with several institutions weakened by prolonged corruption and incompetent management. However, Habib (2021) also highlights how factions have taken advantage of these frustrations to mobilize people into a state of unrest. The factionalism within the African National Congress (ANC, the ruling party in South Africa) also highlights how vulnerable the institution of democracy has become (Booyesen 2021). Luzuko Gaxamba (2021) argues that while a disgruntled ANC faction may have orchestrated the initial social unrest, the underlying pain points affecting the majority remain. In a country with a history of violent protest and unrest, Gaxamba (2021) warns that these experiences will continue until the country's socioeconomic challenges have been addressed.

Although half of the population was born after the 1994 democratic election, the country and these young people specifically still suffer from the legacy of the Apartheid system, which includes terrible challenges such as gross inequality and high levels

of corruption. After more than a year of repeated lockdowns, these factors have intensified, leading to socioeconomic, sociocultural, and sociopolitical crises. This article describes the interconnected nature of these crises in the context of the pandemic. The core of these crises can be attributed to an incomplete political revolution, as described by Neville Alexander and Archie Mafeje, where the country's leadership adopted pro-capital policies to the detriment of the working class. After twenty-seven years of such policy, the country's inequalities have deepened and social challenges have worsened.

Research Question and Approach

In this article, I am cognizant of Gaxamba's and other political analysts' warnings. In analyzing the societal impact of the COVID-19 crisis, my argument leans on the social quality framework. I argue that the violent societal unrest experienced in South Africa was the logical conclusion for a society contending with several parallel and interconnected challenges such as inequality, well-being, corruption, and political instability. In deploying the social quality (analytical) approach (SQA), I cluster the challenges of the crisis into three dimensions, namely, the socioeconomic, sociocultural, and sociopolitical dimensions. When these crises are neglected for a prolonged period, societal unrest should be expected. The South African case is a cautionary tale for developing and emerging economies grappling with multiple crises, and demands an accelerated effort to resolve these complex and interconnected factors.

Furthermore, my analysis and arguments are intertwined with notions on the four (societal) conditional factors for social quality, namely socioeconomic security, social cohesion, social inclusion, and social empowerment. In my conclusions, I shall use the normative factors of social quality theory (SQT)—namely social justice, solidarity, equal value, and human dignity—as criteria by which to judge the moral impact of the depicted crisis in South Africa.

I ground my argument in the analysis produced by South African political theory luminaries Neville Alexander, Archie Mafeje, and Roger Southall, who wrote extensively on socialist revolutions throughout their careers and the implications of an incomplete national revolution. I refer to the work of researchers who have analyzed these authors' careers and writings, summarizing key arguments relevant to this article. Their analysis is further contextualized by the contributions of Brian Levy, Allan Hirsch, Vinothan Naidoo, and Musa Nxele.

These authors describe the vulnerable transition of economic and political systems and the implications of not addressing the working class's socioeconomic, sociopolitical, and sociocultural needs. The authors warn that these vulnerabilities can be taken advantage of, describing a downward spiral to societal unrest. I connect this argument to the experiences in South Africa since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. I pay attention to these multiple crises by describing the crisis in service delivery and how the poor are often denied basic rights. In doing so, I follow the snowball approach in

collecting literature, and I focus on peer-reviewed sources and news reports detailing the experiences of South Africa.

South African Socialist Revolution Theories

In 2002, anti-Apartheid activist and intellectual Neville Alexander warned that the socio-historical fabric of the country could unravel in the course of a few weeks, citing the experiences of Rwanda and Bosnia. Alexander believed that prejudice could proliferate if those in power fail to confront the societal failures affecting our educational, economic, political, and other state institutions (Motala and Vally 2021). With unabated rises in poverty, hunger, inequality, and unemployment, Alexander warns that tensions in society will increase: “Suffice it to say that unless the Gini coefficient is tackled seriously, all talk of social cohesion and national unity is so much nonsense” (2012: 36).

Alexander has repeatedly argued that without serious actions to reduce inequality superficial attempts to address social cohesion or build national unity will not prove effective (Motala and Vally 2021). Alexander described post-Apartheid South Africa as a society that offers an illusion of freedom. He argues that the new democratic government had failed to provide a normative foundation that addresses the impacts of racial capitalism. His criticism of the post-Apartheid government was often cutting and direct. For example:

Ownership and control of the commanding heights of the economy . . . have remained substantially in the same hands as during the heyday of Apartheid. It is perfectly justifiable to say that what we used to call the Apartheid capitalist system has simply given way to the post-Apartheid capitalist system. The jargon of those who make the decisions has changed (everyone has become “non-racial” and “anti-racist”), a few thousand black middle class people have boarded the gravy train and are being wooed into the ranks of the established (white) elite, but the nature of the state remained fundamentally unchanged. (Alexander 2002: 64)

Accordingly, Alexander believed that describing the country as a rainbow nation did little to advance a shared national identity or the ideals of solidarity when society’s structure was unequal and systems of power and privilege denied opportunities to the working-class majority. It is the historical memory of the injustices of the Apartheid system, combined with a request for the working-class majority to wait patiently for the trickle-down effects of the neoliberal macroeconomic framework, which, according to Alexander, would lead to a social breakdown. Furthermore, the effects of blatant greed and corruption involving public figures or role models will accelerate the country’s descent into violent societal unrest (Cloete 2014). Given the country’s vicious cycle of poverty, Alexander explained:

Only an inveterate denialist or a fool would maintain that the new South Africa as a political and social entity is not currently facing one of its deepest crises . . . Our real concerns are the palpable signs of social breakdown all around us; the ever more blatant examples of greed and corruption involving public figures, who are expected to be the role models for our youth; the unspeakable abuse of children, of the aged and of women; the smug dishonesty, indiscipline and slothfulness of those who are paid to render public services; the lack of respect for life-preserving rules, such as those of the road; the unthinkable violence in so many communities, unknown even in conditions of conventional warfare; the boundary-crossing abuse of all manner of drugs in all layers of society; the massive number of deaths caused by AIDS; the trashing of the public health system; in short, the general mayhem and apparently suicidal chaos that ordinary people experience in their daily lives. These things are our everyday reality. (Alexander 2013: 39–40)

Alexander's analysis was developed over the course of his life. Toward his death in 2012, he had repeatedly criticized the South African government and the economic system's inability to address the multiple crises affecting the country. Archie Mafeje's theories about democracy and development were written before 1990, concentrating on the ideas of a national democratic revolution and a socialist revolution. Mafeje argues that Marxist views, like those shared by Alexander, underestimated the ability of the petite bourgeoisie class to develop a capacity to frustrate attempts to advance societal transformation. Mafeje posited that a national democratic revolution, as experienced in South Africa in 1994, will suffer from the interests of monopoly capital acting in opposition to the needs of the majority (Nyoka 2019: 209–217). As Mafeje noted:

Under conditions of monopoly capitalism, imperialism will abort the national democratic revolution by imposing a petit-bourgeois comprador class whose interests will be opposed to those of the majority of the people. (Mafeje 1986: 117)

Mafeje argues that the path to complete liberation for oppressed people globally requires a deconstruction of dual economies—the informal and the formal. The struggle is incomplete if a portion of society remains oppressed following a democratic revolution that concentrates on race while ignoring class differences. The democratic revolution ignored the moral imperative to implement policies that advance society's social transformation; therefore, Mafeje believed the incomplete revolution could naturally transition to a second-stage socialist revolution, transferring power to the disenfranchised (Nyoka 2020a). Mafeje argued that “socialist democracy is on the agenda precisely because of the unrealizability of bourgeois democracy under conditions of imperialism and monopoly capitalism” (1986: 119). Mafeje believed that South Africa's negotiated transition from the Apartheid system was corrupted, given the strange alliance between the black and white bourgeoisie classes. He believed that both groups were enticed by imperialist gains and began the negotiation intending to

first secure finance capital's interests. During this period, the plight of the proletariat was ignored, and this explains the incomplete revolution (Nyoka 2020b: 215–216).

In 1987, Roger Southall contemplated the options that the country faced in its transition towards majority rule. He believed sociopolitical revolutionaries might succumb to the international Western pressures favoring a capitalist system. At that stage, the alternate view was that the country was in a unique position allowing for the “first genuine socialist society in Africa” (Southall 1987). However, Southall emphasized that the abolition of capitalism was not guaranteed due to the polarity of the international political discourse. Southall further argued that implementing socialist policies within a capitalist framework of democracy may be blocked by the formidable power of private capital. He cited his experiences in Zimbabwe, which followed a similar socialist struggle only to find the Mugabe government of 1987 to encourage capitalism and use the language of a national democratic revolution instead of a socialist revolution (Southall 1987).

Levy and colleagues (2021: 1–4) discuss the unresolved tensions in South Africa twenty-seven years after the first democratic elections. The warnings of Alexander, Mafeje, and Southall have materialized in several forms, resulting in anger due to the distribution of economic and political power. The authors describe the potential accelerating downward spiral with mounting pressures on society, which could present violently. In early 2021, the country experienced weakening economic performance, institutional decay, opportunistic *ethnopolitism*, and anger feeding into each factor. The government seemingly was unable to respond decisively to the multitude of factors that further exacerbated the levels of tension and anger. Globally, Levy and colleagues (2021: 4–12) argue that countries are finding critical weaknesses in their ability to stem the anger resulting from inequalities and exclusion.

Further, the working-class majority are less tolerant of these disparities, requiring governments to make radical changes in order to solve long-lived societal challenges. South Africa's democratic dawn began with existing high levels of inequality due to entrenched racial segregation. By neglecting societal reforms or promoting a redistribution of wealth or income, the working class continue to feel excluded and squeezed, growing angrier. The downward spiral is further accelerated by flagrant abuses of power and by corruption, which were reported widely during the Zuma presidency. Each successive report of corruption adds to a sense of hopelessness and fewer expected opportunities for growth or escape from poverty for the majority (Levy et al. 2021: 55–66). The following sections outline how South Africa has responded to the pandemic and the ensuing crises that have evolved in its wake, echoing the predictions of Alexander, Mafeje, and Southall.

South Africa's Pandemic Context

The health crisis related to the COVID-19 pandemic continues to develop in South Africa, exacerbating further social challenges. The South African President, Cyril Ramaphosa, announced a national lockdown due to the rapid increase of COVID-19 cases on 23 March 2020. The initial lockdown was the most severe, adopting what would be called “Level 5” restrictions. Since then, the country has fluctuated between Level 5 and Level 1 restrictions in response to the severity of the virus. Level 5 restrictions required all South Africans to remain at home, apart from those considered to be in essential professions. Thus, the economy ground to a halt in several sectors. A relatively small proportion of society, predominantly in the services sector, had the option to work from home, when digital connectivity allowed. In addition, alcohol sales were banned, and the South African National Defense Force (SANDF) was called upon to enforce the lockdown regulations (Aljazeera 2020). This Level 5 lockdown was needed to expand capacity within the health sector by setting up emergency hospitals, increasing the number of available beds in hospitals, securing necessary protective equipment, and sourcing additional personnel (Mkhize 2020).

Since March 2020, the country has experienced three waves of the COVID-19 virus, with the height of the third wave experienced during July 2021. As of July 2021, the country remained in an adjusted Level 4 lockdown, requiring the closure of businesses. The Delta variant of the virus has left a deadly trail in the country, particularly within the country's economic hub in the Gauteng Province (Cowan 2021). During July 2021, the country recorded 480,570 new cases, accompanied by 11,415 deaths. Cumulatively, between March 2020 and August 2021, 81,830 people had died officially from the virus, with over 2.7 million cases confirmed through laboratory tests (McCain 2021). On 3 July 2021, the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) reported a COVID-19 test positivity rate of 27.3 percent, whereby almost one in three people were infected with COVID-19 (Pitt 2021). In addition, it is believed that the number of deaths caused by the COVID-19 pandemic is under-reported, given an increase in the number of natural deaths in this period that are far greater than the number of official COVID-19 deaths. For example, among the elderly, aged 60 years and above, excess deaths between June 2020 and May 2021 are more than 140,000 (Cowan 2021). This statistic highlights unaccounted COVID-19 deaths, or a greater number of people dying from indirect health challenges or comorbidities related to the virus.

Due to the immediate health crisis, South African hospitals are overwhelmed and struggling to respond to the scale of the crisis, particularly during the peaks of each wave. While the closure of businesses and public spaces and the suspension of alcohol sales have tended to reduce the spread of the virus and decrease the number of alcohol-related casualties, the health sector's capacity remains stretched and unable to provide appropriate care to all those affected by the virus. In June 2021, with the third wave surging in the Gauteng Province, hospitals were unable to equip the necessary

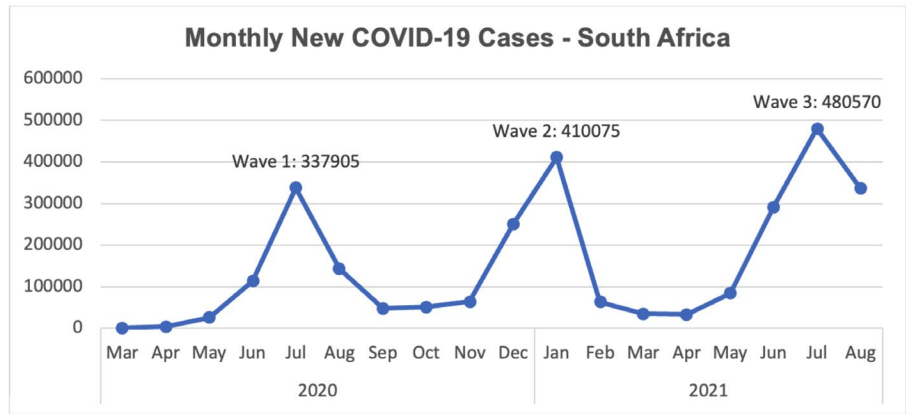


Figure 1. Number of New COVID-19 Cases in South Africa Per Month. Source: WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard (World Health Organisation, no date)

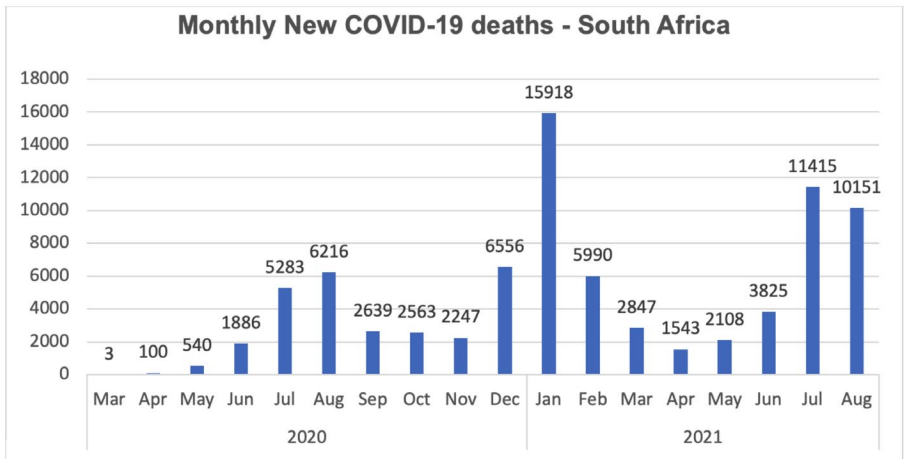


Figure 2. Number of New COVID-19 Deaths in South Africa Per Month. Source: WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard (World Health Organisation, no date)

beds for COVID-19 requirements. Neither had the government increased the budget to employ new health workers to respond to the growing demand. The situation in Johannesburg worsened after the closure of one of its biggest hospitals, Charlotte Maxeke, in April 2021 due to a fire. President Ramaphosa called on the military to be deployed in the province to assist health workers and address this shortage (Kew 2021). Thus, as the Delta variant spread across South Africa, the health sector remained understaffed and short of beds to address the scale of the challenge.

While the number of daily cases has reached record levels during the third wave, the country cannot afford to repeat a total lockdown. It must balance the need for eco-

conomic activity against the risk of spreading the virus, hence the adjusted Level 4 lockdown during peak levels of the third wave (Burke 2021). Given the challenges in the health sector, citizens are desperate to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. However, as of 4 July 2021, the country had vaccinated a little more than 3 million citizens, with health workers, the elderly, and teachers prioritized to receive either the Pfizer or Johnson & Johnson vaccine. A much larger percentage of the population needs to be vaccinated to reach herd immunity. In addition, with a median age of 27 (Statistics South Africa 2016), the country is predominantly populated by young people who will likely be the last in the queue to receive the vaccine. As of July 2021, there is a general shortage of vaccines needed for the entire population. Therefore, the government has to reassess the viability of the AstraZeneca vaccine and accelerate the sourcing and distribution of the Sinovac vaccine to supplement vaccine supply in the country (Pitt 2021). Despite the dire South African situation, in context the country's vaccine roll-out seems more advanced than those of its neighbors on the continent, as several African countries have yet to administer their first vaccine (Imray 2021).

Ultimately, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the poorest in society the most, exacerbating deprivation, hunger, and unemployment. Some analysts believe that these societal tensions may have left those harmfully affected so desperate that they chose to participate in the social unrest of July 2021, having nothing else to lose (Barnard-Naudé 2021). However, by participating in looting and other violence, many may suffer further from greater exposure to the virus. In addition, several pharmacies and clinics were also looted during this period, which will further reduce the health of those with chronic illnesses living in the affected cities. Several vaccine stores were also destroyed during the looting, causing the affected provinces to experience a slower roll-out of vaccinations (News 24 2021).

The Socioeconomic Crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic deepened South Africa's socioeconomic crisis, further accentuating the inequalities and divisions in society. Just as Alexander, Mafeje, and Southall argued over their careers, Black and colleagues' (2020) case studies of South Africa and the United States have posited that these countries' capitalist system has perpetuated inequality providing a foundation for a violent response. In their view, the pandemic has exacerbated these social tensions, which the authors describe as "societal comorbidities." In times of social crisis, Christophe Béné's (2020) empirical studies of food security projects in Africa and Asia show that those with greater resilience capacities such as income, knowledge, and social capital can adopt positive responses to the crisis. They may show a faster recovery or improve their level of well-being.

In South Africa, those living in more affluent suburbs have been more resilient and resistant to the economic shocks imposed by the government lockdowns. In contrast, low-income households residing in vulnerable conditions such as townships

and squatter settlements have experienced higher unemployment, food insecurity, and general misery during this period (Visagie and Turok 2021a). For instance, Justin Visagie and Ivan Turok's (2021b) analysis of spatial inequalities has highlighted the uneven impact of the pandemic. The urban shack-dweller was most at risk during this period and was most severely impacted. The preexisting inequalities exposed the economic vulnerabilities of communities living in these conditions. The authors find that the challenges within the urban areas were more acute because it is the cities that carry the population burden of the country, as 2 percent of the land must support 40 percent of the population. Within informal urban communities, space is a significantly limited commodity.

Before the pandemic, South Africa was recognized as one of the most unequal countries globally (The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Statistics South Africa, and World Bank Group 2018). This inequality is generally delineated along gender, racial, and spatial lines. The poor black majority has the least access to landownership, basic services (water supply, sanitation, and electricity), and quality education (Spaull 2015; Van der Berg et al. 2017). This inequality has persisted in South Africa for multiple generations, with the country recording some of the highest levels of income inequality. An analysis of a 1993 national household survey indicates that poverty in the country was closely aligned to racial demographics, which were directly attributed to the Apartheid policies. It was the Apartheid system that instituted low-quality education, healthcare, basic infrastructure, and transport networks in African communities (Klasen 1997).

However, after twenty-seven years of democratic rule, the government has failed to reverse these trends. In fact, some of the government's redistributive policies, such as black economic empowerment, have increased inequality while benefiting only a small minority. Edward Webster and David Francis's (2019) analysis of inequality based on racial distribution has shown that these policies did not have any meaningful effect on inequality. Instead, they augmented the white capitalist class without addressing structural challenges. These disparities are a source of outrage, causing racial tension in the country. Beyond income inequality disparities, it was found that South African wealth inequality was substantially more acute, with only 10 percent of the population owning 95 percent of all the wealth and assets, while the bottom 80 percent of the population effectively owned none of the country's wealth (Netshitenzhe 2013; Orthofer 2016). This vast gap in wealth emphasizes the differences in classes, as outlined by Mafeje, who warned of these disparities becoming a source of unrest and future revolution.

A repetition of intergenerational poverty creation continues to widen the gap between the rich and the poor. Learners from poor households attend schools of poor quality, which produce school dropouts or learners with low academic performance who struggle to attend university or cannot afford to do so (Van der Berg et al. 2017). Few poor young people can break out of this cycle. At the same time, those from more affluent homes access higher-quality schools, produce better results, and find pathways through higher education institutions into more productive jobs (Spaull 2015). Due

to the high prevalence of unemployed or underemployed low-skilled workers in the economy, these workers have struggled considerably to find new jobs in either the formal or informal economy due to the pandemic. This trend has persisted, despite the country's informal economy accounting for 80 percent of nonagricultural employment (Mkhize et al. 2014: 5). Those in the informal sector have also found it challenging to access the social and economic relief funds such as Temporary Employee–Employer Relief Schemes (TERS), which were made available by the state (Khambule 2020).

While in other countries the informal sector is recognized as a buffer for the economy, with workers who lose work in the formal sector resorting to informal work, this trend is not common in South Africa. Based on an analysis of a nationally representative panel survey, it was found that the country has low labor absorption rates in both the formal and informal economy, resulting in historically high unemployment rates. These statistics are feared to worsen once the cumulative effects of the pandemic have been measured. Potentially, the informal sector may experience high job losses due to the lockdown, limiting informal business opportunities, as workers were physically locked out of employment (Rogerson and Rogerson 2020). In the formal sector, the impact of business closures will be that firms will become more capital-intensive and less reliant on labor in the production process (Francis and Valodia 2020). Women, in particular, have suffered disproportionately more than men in terms of net job losses or a reduction of hours worked. In addition, men have experienced a strong recovery when comparing employment rates between March 2020 and February 2021 (Casale and Sheperd 2021).

In addition, another severe challenge affecting the population's well-being has been the increase in the prevalence of hunger across the country. For example, the Mineral Council of South Africa described how 45,000 mine workers and their families experienced severe food insecurity while mines were closed. Across the country, it was found in 2020 that 40 percent of their survey respondents had indicated consuming less food and 33 percent reported going to bed hungry (Grobler 2020). Food security is an urgent concern that remains, with potential challenges being experienced in the supply of food, in the purchasing power of people to buy food, or in the quality of food production. Low-income households remain most vulnerable. With the closure of schools during the pandemic, supplementary school feeding schemes were also closed, transferring the burden of sourcing food back to poor households (Teresi 2021).

Furthermore, poor South Africans' low resilience against economic shock is due to their having some of the lowest levels of emergency savings globally. Based on a multivariate logistic regression analysis, it was found that low-income households had the least financial capabilities, limited financial knowledge, and lowest amount of emergency savings (Reyers 2019). Being unable to draw on savings meant low-income households could not purchase groceries in bulk and safely isolate themselves in their homes during peak periods of the lockdown. Generally, the size of the poor household is nearly double that of the non-poor household, which has, on average more than five times more disposable income. The lack of disposable income for poor households

requires them to prioritize expenses and concentrate their spending on food, rent, utilities, and transport (Statistics South Africa 2017). Nonessential expenses such as internet access were abandoned, particularly during the peak periods of lockdown.

As of February 2021, the South African Finance Minister reported a few effects of the pandemic and subsequent lockdown. First, official unemployment increased to a record high of 32 percent in the fourth quarter of 2020 (an increase of 3 percent in three quarters). Second, 2.2 million jobs were lost. And third, the economy contracted by 7.2 percent (Naidu 2021). It was also noted that the pandemic negatively impacted all sectors, but business closures were most prevalent in the agriculture, construction, manufacturing, trade, and hospitality sectors (Bhorat et al. 2020). In the longer term, the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic is unknown, with several researchers believing there will be a shrink in demand for goods and services, and reduced production, followed by disruptions to global supply chains (Arndt et al. 2020).

The Sociocultural Crisis

South Africa's adoption of democratic electoral practices did not automatically engender positive social cohesion and equal access to resources. Rather, the racial dimension of poverty and inequality has strained relations between population groups and classes. Puleng Segalo (2015) argues that the "rainbow nation" narrative has done little to address structural inequalities. Without addressing the structural flaws in society, oppressive notions such as racism, xenophobia, and sexism are likely to resonate in low-income communities.

In the city of Cape Town, these structural inequalities are clearly portrayed in two suburbs, given their distinct disparities in access to services. Langa and Claremont present vastly different statistics regarding access to education, basic services, and healthcare as presented in Table 1. This disparity is a legacy of Apartheid, and highlights how services have congregated where residents are wealthier. Langa is an underdeveloped formerly black suburb, while Claremont is formerly white, to use the Apartheid terminology. Claremont has benefited from decades of investment and development, with several businesses and private services located in the vicinity. Langa has not had the same experiences, is more highly populated with larger household sizes, and has higher unemployment rates and school dropout rates.

Only 40 percent of the population aged above 20 in Langa have completed school, compared to the 89 percent in Claremont. And 95 percent of adults between 18 and 65 were employed in Claremont, while Langa has a 40 percent unemployment rate using the country's official employment. Almost none of the houses in Claremont have water or sanitation concerns or are constructed out of substandard materials. In contrast, these figures are much higher in Langa (Statistics South Africa 2012). In terms of healthcare access, there are ten publicly or privately owned clinics in the Claremont area, while Langa has access to a single hospital.

Table 1. Comparison of Claremont and Langa Suburbs in Cape Town

	Claremont	Langa
Population	17,198	52,401
Households	7,365	17,400
Completed School	89%	40%
Unemployed	<5%	40%
Informal Housing	<1%	42%
Lack Piped Water	<1%	33%
Lack Flushing Toilets	<1%	28%
Clinics	10	1
Schools	20	9

Source: Statistics South Africa (2012), Western Cape Education Department (n.d.)

Similarly, in terms of school access there are twenty schools in Claremont to accommodate the smaller population, while Langa has only nine for the larger population base (Western Cape Education Department n.d.). Thus, Langa's education and health services quality is more inadequate and contends with substantially higher demand levels. It is this pervasive inequality that promotes anger and hopelessness among the poor, as described earlier by Levy et al. (2021: 55–66).

The challenges in Langa are typical of lower-income communities across the country, each dealing with population density issues, housing backlogs, informality, and poor access to service delivery. Due to urbanization, low-income informal communities in urban areas receive large numbers of people from rural areas. They suffer from poor urban planning while often facing exponential population growth. Surveys of informal dwellers highlight the uncertainties experienced in these communities. Access to basic resources and functional infrastructure can shift rapidly, further impeding one's living standards (Kovacic et al. 2016).

This trend has ensured that the government's efforts to reduce the housing backlog have been ineffective (The Department of Planning, Monitoring Evaluation 2014). For the past decade, the national housing backlog has remained at 2.1 million, with those without housing living in squatter settlements. Their homes are built predominantly using corrugated iron sheeting or other materials that they can easily or cheaply acquire. In a typical shack, space is at a premium, with room only for sleeping. Often these households lack piped water and electricity, and must share toilets (Maringira 2020). Practicing good hygiene in a township during a pandemic is nearly impossible.

Understanding this background is crucial to interpreting the further restrictions placed on communities during South Africa's lockdowns and the difficulties of implementing these regulations in informal urban areas. The Level 5 restrictions required

all people to remain in their homes, only being allowed to leave to purchase groceries and other essentials. In Langa, where the average household size is three persons, and the average size of a shack is between 6 m² and 20 m², one can begin to understand their difficulties when remaining indoors (Sustainable Energy Africa 2014). The government called upon the SANDF and police to implement these rules, with punitive consequences for those not obeying the regulations. Although the President pleaded with the armed forces to use a light touch, their primary enforcement methods were violent. During this period, 230,000 people were charged with breaking the lockdown regulations. One could be charged for walking home with groceries in hand but not possessing the receipt to prove one's purchases were made that day. One could also be charged for smoking in public and not being able to prove one purchased these cigarettes before the lockdown (Eye Witness News 2020; Haffajee 2020). Those arrested for such offences were placed in crowded jail cells, where the risks of contracting the virus were higher. In retrospect, the humanitarian mission that the SANDF and police were given seems to have failed.

President Ramaphosa asked his armed forces to act as a "force of kindness"; however, despite his intentions, with soldiers patrolling the streets, these measures resulted in the deaths of several citizens, with some cases achieving national notoriety in the media. In one case, Colins Khosa, a young man, was killed by a blow to the head from an SANDF soldier for drinking a beer on his property during the Easter weekend. In another case, a man was shot in the back for raiding a food truck. The President described these efforts by the armed forces as "overly-enthusiastic," euphemizing the deaths of citizens (Haffajee 2020). Several of these crimes against the poor have not been prosecuted. Although the state must protect human dignity, it instead bears responsibility for the humiliation and dehumanization of these people. When poor people are treated as lesser beings, the term "dehumanization" applies (Oliver 2011: 85, 86).

The extremely high population density in South Africa's informal settlements has made such areas ideal breeding grounds for spreading the virus. The inability to wash hands, sanitize effectively, or practice social distancing has led to a higher concentration of the virus in such communities. It has been found that the highest concentration of COVID-19 antibodies was located in South Africa's urban townships. Those located in affluent suburbs and rural areas were less at risk. By May 2021, in Khayelitsha, Cape Town's largest township, it was found that 68 percent of the population tested positive for antibodies (Chambers 2021). These communities are the hotspots for the virus, and they would be better served through awareness campaigns and by distributing masks, sanitizers, thermometers, and information pamphlets than they would by a forceful implementation of lockdown regulations (Faull 2020).

Ultimately, the virus has exposed and emphasized the long-standing inequalities and weaknesses in South African social policies, which has contributed to poor service delivery in impoverished communities across the country. While many believe the virus to be an equal opportunity infector, in reality it is the poor who carry the heaviest burden.

The Sociopolitical Crisis

While the health and economic crisis continue to spiral within the country, a parallel crisis in political power has unfolded following the imprisonment of former President Zuma. Zuma received a fifteen-month prison sentence after failing to appear before the National State Capture Commission. His subsequent imprisonment led to widespread unrest, instigated by his supporters (Barnard-Naudé 2021). With these competing interests vying for political power, the social unrest following President Zuma's imprisonment highlights how some of these actors used ordinary people for sowing social division, engaging in well-financed sabotage of state infrastructure. This looting and destruction was carried out under the slogan of radical economic transformation (RET)—terminology coined by President Zuma (McKinley 2021). Barnard-Naudé (2021) argues that the RET slogan, used during the unrest, was a euphemism used for widespread looting and had little to do with overcoming a capitalist system of government. In the wake of this unrest, the underlying structural inequalities in the country remain. South Africans feel more economically insecure; there is waning trust in the government and less cohesion across society (Kalina 2021; Patel 2021).

Such tensions in the ruling party are not new, but the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed these divisions and the vulnerable state of the country's political institutions. Patronage politics has served to deny communities access to resources and opportunities. These trends co-opt social justice struggles to solidify political power and personal interests, potentially fostering further corruption (Beresford 2015; Isike 2019). Factionalism seems to be a pathology of modern politics in the country, with many power struggles in the ANC dating back to the Mbeki era. These factions have tended to act as a conduit for bargaining while masking rampant corruption and threatening the country's political institutions (Sibanda 2021).

The National State Capture Commission has revealed widespread corruption across public institutions while highlighting the alleged complicity of senior ANC party members, including former President Zuma. The Commission has highlighted the lack of accountability and transparency in public institutions at the highest levels (Rapanyane 2021). As these names emerge, the implicated politicians have resorted to calling the Commission a political witch hunt and have not respected its authority or the rule of law. Their subsequent defiant statements have exacerbated social tensions within the party and across the country (Sibanda 2021). To understand the scale of the corruption under investigation by the Commission, a recent report produced by Unite 4 Mzansi—a South African Institute of Chartered Accountants' initiative—found that the country lost an estimated ZAR1.5 trillion (approximately USD100 billion) to corruption between 2014 and 2019 (Buthelezi 2021). Past corruption between 1994 and 2013 was not estimated.

A recent report submitted to the Commission described state capture as “winning political office and maintaining political office through means that are unlawful, frequently criminal and often violent” (Chipkin 2021: 2). The report further details

the unstable equilibrium in the ANC due to factions competing for power. It warns that the democratization of institutions could lead to a civil war for these positions of power. Ivor Chipkin (2021) describes this as not simply corruption but a new model of patronage politics. This push for political power can be seen in the growth of the President's cabinet, which grew to seventy-one members at the end of President Zuma's term. This number of ministers and deputy ministers has grown from thirty-six positions during President Mbeki's first term (Thamm 2021).

As one example of the corruption experienced during the pandemic, the national government expanded social assistance grants to certain vulnerable people. In this vein, the government added ZAR50 billion (approximately USD3.5 billion) in spending in the form of new and existing unconditional cash transfers between May and October 2020. In particular, the Child Support Grant was increased in size. At the same time, the government also introduced a special COVID-19 grant to assist the poorest 50 percent of households not previously supported by the grants system (Bhorat et al. 2020). However, despite the desperate situation facing poor households in South Africa, the impact of corrupt practices has negated the impact of these policies. The Auditor-General stated that corruption was "amplified" during this period, noting that 30,000 beneficiaries of these grants required further investigation (Maseko 2020).

Other programs making ZAR500 billion (USD35 billion) available for food parcels, personal protective equipment, and TERS have been targeted by corrupt interests, leading to the loss of billions of rands. The government's procurement system broadened eligible suppliers to apply for contract tenders by implementing emergency procurement processes. This flexibility had allowed for fraudulent claims, which have been difficult to monitor. To date, the full impact of this corruption has yet to be calculated (Corruption Watch 2020). To address the looting, President Ramaphosa announced the launch of a new law enforcement unit to investigate the allegations of corruption, particularly against government leaders or relatives of public officials who have benefited during this period. Their efforts denied support to 4.5 million citizens earmarked to receive food parcels and to 7.8 million people who applied for social relief grants (Chutel 2020).

In another example, an audit of the North West Province's municipalities found irregular expenditure amounting to ZAR3.7 billion in 2018–2019. Irregular spending on such a scale significantly impedes service delivery. The audit report highlights failures in accountability by the senior management, ranging from the municipal managers, to audit committees, to municipal councils. The report identifies that every municipality in the province was noncompliant with the procurement regulations (Sibanda 2021). Beyond widespread irregular spending, the country has been affected by corruption that is deeply ingrained into the system of governance.

The tragedy of the July 2021 riots is that the instigators of the chaos took advantage of the country's vulnerable socioeconomic state to gain further political power. The COVID-19 pandemic had devastated poor communities, mainly through the loss of life, loss of work, and increasing hunger. The looting further damaged businesses and compounded several social challenges. Sameer Naik (2021) compared the looting

from July 2021 to the looting carried out against the Apartheid-era government. To date, those businesses affected had not recovered. The question now facing the country is how the state may respond to these multiple crises and rebuild so it can advance its developmental agenda again.

Conclusion

South Africa's anti-Apartheid struggle veterans warned of an incomplete revolution. Three other crises have emerged in the wake of the immediate COVID-19 crisis requiring the government's attention. As mentioned above, these crises pertain to the socioeconomic, sociocultural, and sociopolitical dimensions.

The Socioeconomic Dimension

The Delta variant brought new misery to many households possibly not affected in earlier waves. New record levels of daily cases are recorded, and there is an increasing number of unaccounted excess deaths, which are likely to be attributed to the virus. While the vaccine program expands, our attention is drawn to the continuing humanitarian crisis unfolding during this crisis. While more affluent households can draw upon their savings and purchase groceries and homeware products in bulk, low-income households cannot do the same. In many respects, their conditions of "socio-economic security" have been seriously affected. They are forced to live in uncertainty, unsure of where their next paycheck will be found. This experience has led to greater levels of food insecurity and hunger across the country.

Those living in informal urban areas have been the worst affected by the pandemic. The lack of space and limited opportunities to practice safe, hygienic practices allowed the virus to spread rapidly. Those living in these areas suffer from inadequate healthcare facilities, low-quality education; limited basic infrastructure such as electricity, water, and sanitation; and few formal work opportunities. The dual economies described by Mafeje are clearly portrayed in these communities, with most livelihoods dependent on intermittent informal earnings. As Mafeje argued, liberation is only complete when the dual economies are deconstructed and the national revolution is followed by a social one.

While the country may have undergone a national democratic revolution, the socialist revolution, which the working class supported, was denied. During the negotiated transfer of power in the early 1990s, the agenda of social transformation succumbed to the interests of international monopoly capital. The reliance on the business sector to resolve social challenges has not succeeded, resulting in increased poverty, unemployment, inequality, and several other social ills. Judged by the criterion of social justice, the COVID-19 crisis has seriously worsened the country's moral standards, given the denial of basic human rights and freedoms afforded to the country's least capable.

The Sociocultural Dimension

Without a social revolution, Mafeje argued that the interests of the petite bourgeoisie class would overtake the working class. The democratic revolution, underscored by unbanning political parties, the negotiated transition of the early 1990s, and the 1994 elections, culminated in a neoliberal policy agenda adoption that denied the moral imperatives of social justice and the social transformation of society. Ultimately, the impact of monopoly capitalism led to an intensifying of poverty and inequality.

Intergenerational poverty has been most acute in informal urban communities. Given the inability of post-Apartheid policies to address the racial oppression of the past, the current inequalities are presented racially, adding to the tensions between racial groups. The redistributive policies introduced post-1994 have only further entrenched inequalities favoring a small minority. With those in positions of power neglecting the electorate's needs, racial and class tensions have grown substantially due to the high levels of anger felt by the working-class majority. One expects that the social tensions and thus "social cohesion" in South African society may have only worsened. "Solidarity" is one of the moral principles we pretend to ground our societies on that appears to have seriously been trampled underfoot. Such views are centered in the South African Constitution but were not appreciated by the powerful during these moments of crisis (Netshitomboni 1998: vi).

In addition, these persistent inequalities have led to the dehumanization of poor people. There seems to be a loss of respect for the rights of poor people. The poor have little recourse to challenge situations where a police officer or soldier has infringed their rights. "Social justice" and "human dignity," two essential pillars of decent societies, were being damaged instead of being respected during the pandemic. At the outset of the pandemic, using the army to safeguard the population was the wrong decision. If the SANDF and police were deployed to conduct a humanitarian mission, their forceful approach failed communities, resulting in the unnecessary deaths of citizens. Instead of easing the burden experienced in these communities, the armed forces further increased their difficulties. The heavy-handed approach should have been replaced with a more educational one, which should have built community awareness of how to sanitize effectively and practice physical distancing properly in a dense environment. A moral society would prioritize the duties of civility over such punitive approaches to policing (Vernes and Selous 2006).

The Sociopolitical Dimension

With the ANC's history of political liberation, it maintains popular (although declining) support. The party has managed to use popular socialist rhetoric while embracing neoliberal capitalist policies. This dichotomy may have originated in its drafting of its founding document, the Freedom Charter, which used universal language to build an alliance of movements to act against the Apartheid government (Rametse 2016).

As Southall predicted in 1987, the national revolution succumbed to the Western pressures that supported a capitalist system. Although the ANC government adopted neoliberal policy positions, they were masked in the ambiguous language of transformation and a democratic revolution. This ambiguity allowed a proliferation of political factions seeking greater personal power at the expense of the working class. After twenty-seven years of celebrating the democratic transition of political power and overcoming the system of Apartheid, the South African electorate may only be experiencing the “illusion of freedom” as Alexander described.

Alexander warned that superficial attempts to address inequality and the social challenges of the country would fail. Consequently, the narratives of nation-building and solidarity will prove meaningless as social cohesion breaks down. Alexander warned that expecting the working class to wait indefinitely for the trickling down of social benefits would lead to a breakdown in social cohesion. These warnings appeared to ring true during the social unrest of July 2021. On the surface, it appears that factions in the ruling party have taken advantage of the vulnerable state of the country to advance social discord. While the working class waited for change, the programs to deliver social transformation were weakened by rampant corruption. The frequent reports of corruption have incensed a vulnerable population contending with parallel crises.

The unrest of July 2021 was not new. Many communities have resorted to violent protests to express their anger about their poor quality of life, believing that formal grievances will never be heard (Thomas 2020). In the past twenty-seven years, there have been several service delivery protests in poor communities. Between 1 August 2020 and 21 January 2021, over 900 service delivery protests were recorded across the country. The COVID-19 pandemic seemed to accelerate the frequency of these protests, with many focused on the harsh lockdown regulations and the generally poor delivery of services that were so desperately needed (Martin 2021). However, not until July 2021 did we see such widespread looting affecting strategic centers of the country. In retrospect, although the July 2021 unrest was widespread, it was relatively brief. The riots have played no role in advancing social transformation, and the working class remains neglected.

The pandemic has exposed several weaknesses in South Africa’s economic and political governance systems, resulting in a brief period of unrest and lawlessness. The social revolution demanded by the working class remains incomplete, and South Africa’s economy remains fragile. Potentially, the unrest of July 2021 serves as a warning to those in power—superficial attempts to address inequality and poverty will bear no fruit. Instead, a comprehensive campaign is needed to center the needs of the working class by promoting substantial investments in housing, education, and healthcare, which responds to the scale of the problem. One fears that, if these interconnected and complex crises are not addressed, the riots of July 2021 may only be a precursor to more widespread unrest.

Krish Chetty is a Research Manager at the Inclusive Economic Development Division of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). He holds a Master's degree in knowledge and information management from the University of Stellenbosch. His core research interests lie in applying innovative technologies that contribute to eradicating poverty, inequality, and unemployment. His works span knowledge management, digital inclusion, platform economies, financial technologies, and renewable energy discourses. He previously worked in the HSRC's BRICS Research Centre, representing the HSRC and South Africa in several BRICS academic events. His recent publications cover subjects such as digital literacy, income inequality, online learning, renewable energy contributions to economic development, and FinTech partnerships in BRICS. Email: kchetty@hsrc.ac.za

References

- Alexander, N. 2002. *An Ordinary Country: Issues in the Transition from Apartheid to Democracy in South Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.
- Alexander, N. 2012. "South Africa Today: The Moral Responsibility of Intellectuals." In *Enough Is a Feast: A Tribute to Neville Alexander, 22 October 1936–27 August 2012*, ed. H. Vally and M. Isaacson, 31–37. Johannesburg: Foundation for Human Rights.
- Alexander, N. 2013. *Thoughts on the New South Africa*. Auckland Park: Jacana.
- Aljazeera. 2020. "South Africans Brace for 21-Day Lockdown as Virus Cases Rise." *Aljazeera.com*, 24 March. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/03/south-africans-brace-21-day-lockdown-virus-cases-rise-200324073801136.html>.
- Arndt, C., R. Davies, S. Gabriel, L. Harris, K. Makrelov, B. Modise . . . , and L. Anderson. 2020. *Impact of Covid-19 on the South African Economy: An Initial Analysis*. SA-TIED Working Paper 111. Helsinki: SA-TIED Program. <https://sa-tied.wider.unu.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/SA-TIED-WP-111.pdf>.
- Barnard-Naudé, J. 2021. "Anarchy in the RSA: A Spirit of Revolt without Revolution." *Daily Maverick*, 15 July. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2021-07-15-anarchy-in-the-rsa-a-spirit-of-revolt-without-revolution/>.
- Béné, C. 2020. "Resilience of Local Food Systems and Links to Food Security: A Review of Some Important Concepts in the Context of COVID-19 and Other Shocks." *Food Security* 12: 805–822. doi:10.1007/s12571-020-01076-1.
- Beresford, A. 2015. "Power, Patronage and Gatekeeper Politics in South Africa." *African Affairs* 114 (455): 226–248. doi:10.1093/afaf/adu083.
- Bhorat, H., T. Köhler, M. Oosthuizen, B. Stanwix, F. Steenkamp, and A. Thornton. 2020. *The Economics of COVID-19 in South Africa: Early Impressions*. June. Cape Town: Development Policy Research Unit. http://www.dpru.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/36/Publications/Policy_Briefs/DPRU_PB20_54.pdf.
- Black, S., C. A. Spreen, and S. Vally. 2020. "Education, Covid-19 and Care: Social Inequality and Social Relations of Value in South Africa and the United States." *Southern African Review of Education* 26 (1): 40–61. doi:10.10520/ejc-sare-v26-n1-a4.

- Booyesen, S. 2021. "Time Bomb South Africa: The Building Blocks that Triggered, Facilitated and Sustained the Civil Unrest." *Daily Maverick*, 15 July. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2021-07-15-time-bomb-south-africa-the-building-blocks-that-triggered-facilitated-and-sustained-the-civil-unrest/>.
- Burke, J. 2021. "South Africa Is Going to Get a Third Wave of Coronavirus, even a Fourth." *The Guardian*, 10 January. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jan/10/south-africa-is-going-to-get-a-third-wave-of-coronavirus-even-a-fourth>.
- Buthelezi, L. 2021. "SA Lost R1.5 Trillion to Corruption in Five Years and Continues to Bleed—Report." *News 24*, 23 June. <https://www.news24.com/fin24/economy/south-africa/sa-lost-r15-trillion-to-corruption-in-five-years-and-continues-to-bleed-report-20210623>.
- Calland, R. 2021. "Historic Moment as Constitutional Court finds Zuma Guilty and Sentences Him to Jail." *The Conversation*, 29 June. <https://theconversation.com/historic-moment-as-constitutional-court-finds-zuma-guilty-and-sentences-him-to-jail-163612>.
- Casale, D., and D. Sheperd. 2021. *Gendered Employment Dynamics during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Evidence from Four Waves of a South African Longitudinal Survey*. 12 May. Johannesburg: National Income Dynamics Study. https://cramsury.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/4.-Casale-D.-_-Shepherd-D.-2021-Gendered-employment-dynamics-during-the-Covid-19-pandemic-Evidence-from-four-waves-of-a-South-African-longitudinal-survey.pdf.
- Chambers, D. 2021. "Covid-19 Antibodies as High as 68 Percent in Latest Western Cape Study." *Times Live*, 25 March. <https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2021-03-25-covid-19-antibodies-as-high-as-68-in-latest-western-cape-study/>.
- Chipkin, I. 2021. *Making Sense of State Capture in South Africa*. Johannesburg: National State Capture Commission. <https://www.scribd.com/document/506612384/2021-Making-Sense-of-State-Capture>.
- Chutel, L. 2020. "South Africa's Big Coronavirus Aid Effort Tainted by Corruption." *New York Times*, 19 August. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/19/world/africa/coronavirus-south-africa-aid-corruption.html>.
- Cloete, M. 2014. "Neville Alexander: Towards Overcoming the Legacy of Racial Capitalism in Post-Apartheid South Africa." *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 86 (1): 30–47. doi:10.1353/trn.2014.0032.
- Corruption Watch. 2020. "In South Africa, COVID-19 Has Exposed Greed and Spurred Long-Needed Action against Corruption." *Transparency.org*, 4 September. <https://www.transparency.org/en/blog/in-south-africa-covid-19-has-exposed-greed-and-spurred-long-needed-action-against-corruption#>.
- Cowan, K. 2021. "Covid-19: Gauteng Records Deadliest Week on Record amid Third Wave Driven by Delta Variant—Data." *News24*, 8 July. <https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/investigations/covid19/covid-19-gauteng-records-deadliest-week-on-record-amid-third-wave-driven-by-delta-variant-data-20210708>.
- Eye Witness News. 2020. "230,000 Charged for Lockdown Breaches, Big Drop in Contact Crimes, Says Cele." *Eye Witness News*, 22 May. <https://ewn.co.za/2020/05/22/230-000-charged-for-lockdown-breaches-big-drop-in-contact-crimes-says-cele> (Accessed: 13 August 2020).
- Faull, A. 2020. "State Abuses Could Match the Threat of Covid-19 Itself." *Daily Maverick*, 2 April. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-04-02-state-abuses-could-match-the-threat-of-covid-19-itself/>.

- Francis, D., and I. Valodia. 2020. "Covid-19: The Full Economic Impact Will Only Be Known Later." *Wits.ac.za*, 22 June. <https://www.wits.ac.za/covid19/covid19-news/latest/covid-19-the-full-economic-impact-will-only-be-known-later.html>.
- Gaxamba, L. 2021. "Social Unrest Will Continue as long as High Levels of Poverty, Inequality Exist." *IOL*, 20 July. <https://www.iol.co.za/business-report/opinion/social-unrest-will-continue-as-long-as-high-levels-of-poverty-inequality-exist-961cad42-3b80-4474-99e9-1155b89c2821>.
- Grobler, R. 2020. "Lockdown: One in Three Adults in SA Goes to Bed Hungry, according to Latest Research." *News24.com*, 20 May. <https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/news/lockdown-one-in-three-adults-in-sa-goes-to-bed-hungry-according-to-latest-research-20200520>.
- Habib, A. 2021. "SA's Rebellion and Looting: Political Courage Needed to Address Security Dilemma, to Avoid Being Held Hostage by Rogues." *Daily Maverick*, 23 July. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2021-07-23-south-africas-rebellion-and-looting-political-courage-needed-to-address-security-dilemma-to-avoid-being-held-hostage-by-rogue>.
- Haffajee, F. 2020. "Ramaphosa Calls 11 Lockdown Deaths and 230,000 Arrests an Act of 'Over-Enthusiasm'—Really! *Daily Maverick*, 1 June. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-06-01-ramaphosa-calls-11-lockdown-deaths-and-230000-arrests-an-act-of-over-enthusiasm-really/>.
- Imray, G. 2021. "'This IS INSANE': Africa Desperately Short of COVID Vaccine." *AP News*, 9 June. <https://apnews.com/article/uganda-south-africa-cape-town-africa-coronavirus-pandemic-c5d7c2b0f927c8bd4d8d91fbf2cda1ea>.
- Isike, C. 2019. "Factionalism and Corruption Could Kill the ANC—Unless It Kills Both First." *The Conversation*, 12 May. <https://theconversation.com/factionalism-and-corruption-could-kill-the-anc-unless-it-kills-both-first-116924>.
- Kalina, M. 2021. "As South Africa's Cities Burn: We Can Clean-Up, but We Cannot Sweep Away Inequality." *Local Environment* 26 (10): 1186–1191. doi:10.1080/13549839.2021.1967900.
- Kew, J. 2021. "Hospitals in S. Africa Hub Face Being Overrun by Covid Surge." *Bloomberg*, 26 June. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-06-26/hospitals-in-south-africa-hub-face-being-overrun-by-covid-surge>.
- Khambule, I. 2020. "The Effects of COVID-19 on The South African Informal Economy: Limits and Pitfalls of Government's Response." *Loyola Journal of Social Sciences* 34 (1): 91–109. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342611467_The_Effects_of_COVID-19_on_The_South_African_Informal_Economy_Limits_and_Pitfalls_Of_Government's_Response.
- Klasen, S. 1997. "Poverty, Inequality and Deprivation in South Africa: An Analysis of the 1993 SALDRU Survey." *Social Indicators Research* 41 (1–3): 51–94. doi:10.1023/A:1006892216864.
- Kovacic, Z. 2016. "Probing Uncertainty Levels of Electrification in Informal Urban Settlements: A Case from South Africa." *Habitat International* 56: 212–221. doi:10.1016/j.habitatint.2016.06.002.
- Levy, B., A. Hirsch, V. Naidoo, and M. Nxele. 2021. *South Africa: When Strong Institutions and Massive Inequalities Collide*. Cape Town: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. https://carnegieendowment.org/files/202103-Levy_etal_SouthAfrica.pdf.
- News 24. 2021. "Unrest Fallout: N3 Highway Reopened." *News 24*, 16 July. <https://www.news24.com/fin24/economy/south-africa/live-unrest-fallout-sa-may-face-bread-shortage-as-riots-hit-yeast-wheat-supplies-20210714>.
- Mafeje, A. 1986. "South Africa: The Dynamics of a Beleaguered State." *African Journal of Political Economy* 1 (1): 95–119. <https://n2t.net/ark:/85335/m56d5qn9c>.

- Mafeje, A. 1992. *In Search of an Alternative: A Collection of Essays on Revolutionary Theory and Politics*. Harare: SAPES Books.
- Maringira, G. 2020. "Covid-19: Social Distancing and Lockdown in Black Townships in South Africa." *Kujenga Amani*, 7 May. <https://kujenga-amani.ssrc.org/2020/05/07/covid-19-social-distancing-and-lockdown-in-black-townships-in-south-africa/>.
- Martin, G. 2021. "900 Service Delivery Protests in South Africa over Six Months." *Defence Web*, 20 April. <https://www.defenceweb.co.za/featured/900-service-delivery-protests-in-south-africa-over-six-months/>.
- Maseko, N. 2020. "Coronavirus in South Africa: Misuse of Covid-19 Funds 'Frightening'." *BBC*, 2 September. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54000930>.
- McCain, N. 2021. "Covid-19 in South Africa: 15,500 New Infections as Hospitalisations Reach nearly 15,000." *News24*, 7 July. <https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/news/covid-19-in-south-africa-15-500-new-infections-as-hospitalisations-reach-nearly-15-000-20210707>.
- McKinley, D. T. 2021. "Unrest: Of Understanding, Representation and Explanation." *Daily Maverick*, 20 July. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-07-20-unrest-in-kzn-and-gauteng-of-understanding-representation-and-explanation>.
- Mkhize, S., G. Dube, T. and Quazi. 2014. *Informal Economy Monitoring Study: Waste Pickers in Durban, South Africa*. Manchester, UK: Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/293487845_Waste_pickers_in_Durban_South_Africa.
- Mkhize, V. 2020. "Coronavirus and South Africa's Toxic Relationship with Alcohol." *BBC.com*, 11 August. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-53699712>.
- Motala, E., and S. Vally. 2021. "Neville Alexander's Warning." *Education as Change* 25. doi:10.25159/1947-9417/9913.
- Naidu, S. 2021. "The Impact of COVID-19: The Conundrum of South Africa's Socio-Economic Landscape." *Accord*, 3 March. <https://www.accord.org.za/analysis/the-impact-of-covid-19-the-conundrum-of-south-africas-socio-economic-landscape/>.
- Naik, S. 2021. "It Will Take Years for SA's Economy to Recover from Ongoing Violence and Looting, Warn Economists." *IOL*, 17 July. <https://www.iol.co.za/saturday-star/news/it-will-take-years-for-sas-economy-to-recover-from-ongoing-violence-and-looting-warn-economists-b3be76e5-b758-4e3c-822b-48e6e0f7a834>.
- Netshitenzhe, J. 2013. "Why Inequality Matters: South African Trends and Interventions." *Mistra*, November. [http://www.mistra.org.za/Library/ConferencePaper/Documents/Why Inequality Matters-South African Trends and Interventions.pdf](http://www.mistra.org.za/Library/ConferencePaper/Documents/Why%20Inequality%20Matters-South%20African%20Trends%20and%20Interventions.pdf).
- Netshitomboni, S. 1998. "Ubuntu: Fundamental Constitutional Value and Interpretive Aid." ML thesis, University of South Africa. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/43174989.pdf>.
- Nyoka, B. 2019. *Voices of Liberation: Archie Mafeje*. Johannesburg: HSRC Press.
- Nyoka, B. 2020a. "Mafeje on Black Struggles in South Africa: History and Theory." *Social Dynamics* 46 (1): 1–17. doi:10.1080/02533952.2020.1732719.
- Nyoka, B. 2020b. *The Social and Political Thought of Archie Mafeje*. Ed. M. Seebeer. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Oliver, S. 2011. "Dehumanization: Perceiving the Body as (In)Human." In *Humiliation, Degradation, Dehumanisation: Human Dignity Violated*, ed. P. Kaufmann, H. Kuch, C. Neuhäuser, and E. Webster, 85–97. Zurich: Springer.

- Orthofer, A. 2016. *Wealth Inequality in South Africa: Insights from Survey and Tax Data*. Working Paper 15. Cape Town: REDI 3X3. <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/731511476914370714-0050022016/original/WealthinequalityinSouthAfrica.pdf>.
- Patel, J. 2021. *Social Cohesion Hangs in the Balance as South Africans Feel Economically Insecure: Reflections from the South African Reconciliation Barometer*. Johannesburg: Institute for Justice and Reconciliation. <https://media.africaportal.org/documents/Occassional-paper-7.pdf>.
- Pitt, R. 2021. "Vaccination Roll-Out Expands and Chinese Vaccine Approved while South Africa Battles 'Worrying' Rise in Third Wave." *Daily Maverick*, 4 July. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-07-04-vaccination-roll-out-expands-and-chinese-vaccine-approved-while-south-africa-battles-worrying-rise-in-third-wave/>.
- Rametse, M. S. 2016. "The Significance of the Freedom Charter in the Ideological Debates within the Ruling ANC Alliance in South Africa." In *38th AFSAAP Conference: 21st Century Tensions and Transformation in Africa*. Deakin University: African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific (AFSAAP). https://afsaap.org.au/assets/Mochekoe_Stephen_Rametse_AFSAAP2015.pdf.
- Rapanyane, M. B. 2021. "Seizure of State Organs, Corruption and Unaccountability Promotion in South Africa: Case Study of Jacob Zuma Administration." *African Journal of Development Studies* 11 (3). doi:10.31920/2634-3649/2021/v11n3a12.
- Reuters. 2021. "Counting the Costs: SA Businesses Wrecked by Unrest." *IOL*, 15 July. <https://www.iol.co.za/business-report/companies/counting-the-costs-sa-businesses-wrecked-by-unrest-e0e49e51-b86e-5619-8e6e-f9f69cc10fc5>.
- Reyers, M. 2019. "Financial Capability and Emergency Savings among South Africans Living above and below the Poverty Line." *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 43 (4): 335–347. doi:10.1111/ijcs.12520.
- Rogerson, C. M., and J. M. Rogerson. 2020. "COVID-19 Tourism Impacts in South Africa: Government and Industry Responses." *Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites* 31 (3): 1083–1091. doi:10.30892/gtg.31321-544.
- Seekings, J. 2021. "Making Sense of Disorder: Seven Days of Anarchy and Government Inaction that Changed South Africa." *Daily Maverick*, 20 July. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-07-20-making-sense-of-disorder-seven-days-of-anarchy-and-government-inaction-that-changed-south-africa/>.
- Segalo, P. 2015. "Gender, Social Cohesion and Everyday Struggles in South Africa." *Psychology in Society* 49: 70–82. doi:10.17159/2309-8708/2015/n49a6.
- SERI (Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa). 2018. *Informal Settlements and Human Rights in South Africa: Submission to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing as a Component of the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living*. Johannesburg: Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa). <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Housing/InformalSettlements/SERI.pdf>.
- Sibanda, O. S. 2021. "Factional Splits in the ANC Are an Entertaining Sideshow to the Real Issue Facing the Party—Corruption." *Daily Maverick*, 11 May. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2021-05-11-factional-splits-in-the-anc-are-an-entertaining-side-show-to-the-real-issue-facing-the-party-corruption/>.
- Sidimba, L. 2021. "Civil Unrest Death Toll in KZN, Gauteng Rises to 276." *IOL*, 21 July. <https://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/civil-unrest-death-toll-in-kzn-gauteng-rises-to-276-c6e81aa7-96bb-416d-8f4f-9d685d2d33c8>.

- Southall, R. J. 1987. "Post-Apartheid South Africa: Constraints on Socialism." *Journal of Modern African Studies* 25 (2): 345–374. doi:10.1017/S0022278X00000410.
- Spaull, N. 2015. "Schooling in South Africa: How Low-Quality Education Becomes a Poverty Trap." In *South African Child Gauge 2015*, ed. A. De Lannoy, S. Swartz, L. Lake, and C. Smith, 34–41. Stellenbosch: Children's Institute, University of Cape Town. http://www.ci.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/367/Child_Gauge/South_African_Child_Gauge_2015/Child_Gauge_2015-Schooling.pdf.
- Statistics South Africa. 2012. *Census 2011—Statistical Release*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa. <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P03014/P030142011.pdf>.
- Statistics South Africa. 2016. *Community Survey 2016*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa. https://www.datafirst.uct.ac.za/dataportal/index.php/catalog/85/get_microdata.
- Statistics South Africa. 2017. *Poverty Trends in South Africa: An Examination of Absolute Poverty between 2006 and 2015*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa. <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-10-06/Report-03-10-062015.pdf>.
- Statistics South Africa. 2019. *Inequality Trends in South Africa*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa. <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-10-19/Report-03-10-192017.pdf>.
- Sustainable Energy Africa. 2014. *Joe Slovo Phase 3: Sustainable Densification in Well Located Areas*. March. Cape Town: Sustainable Energy Africa. <https://www.sustainable.org.za/uploads/files/file79.pdf>.
- Teresi, M. 2021. "Effects of COVID-19 on the South African Economy." *Borgen Magazine*, 25 June. <https://www.borgenmagazine.com/south-african-economy/>.
- Thamm, M. 2021. "ANC's Milking of State Coffers Has Become a Way of Life, Explosive Report Reveals." *Daily Maverick*, 4 May. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-05-04-ancs-milking-of-state-coffers-has-become-a-way-of-life-explosive-report-reveals/>.
- The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. 2014. *Twenty Year Review (1994–2014): Background Paper—Sustainable Human Settlements*. Pretoria: The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. <https://www.dpme.gov.za/publications/20 Years Review/20 Year Review Documents/20YR Sustainable Human Settlements.pdf>.
- The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Statistics South Africa, and World Bank Group. 2018. *Overcoming Poverty and Inequality in South Africa An Assessment of Drivers, Constraints and Opportunities*. Pretoria: The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Statistics South Africa, and World Bank Group. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/530481521735906534/pdf/124521-REV-OUO-South-Africa-Poverty-and-Inequality-Assessment-Report-2018-FINAL-WEB.pdf>.
- Thomas, E. 2020. "Why Do Protests Turn Violent? It's Not just Because People Are Desperate." *The Conversation*, 5 June. <https://theconversation.com/why-do-protests-turn-violent-its-not-just-because-people-are-desperate-139968>.
- Van der Berg, S., C. Burger, R. Burger, Mia de Vos, G. du Rand, M. Gustafsson . . . , and D. von Fintel. 2017. *Low Quality Education as a Poverty Trap*. Stellenbosch Economic Working Papers 25/11. Stellenbosch: Stellenbosch University. doi:10.2139/ssrn.2973766.
- Vernes, P.-M., and T. Selous. 2006. "Social Quality in Rousseau." *European Journal of Social Quality* 6 (1): 8–26. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23971869>.
- Visagie, J., and I. Turok. 2021a. *Driven further apart by the Pandemic? Contrasting Impacts of COVID-19 on People and Places*. 8 July. Cape Town: National Income Dynamics Study. https://cramsurvey.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/12.-Turok-I.-_-Visagie-J.-2021-Drive-apart_-Contrasting-impacts-of-COVID-19-on-people-and-places.pdf.

- Visagie, J., and I. Turok. 2021b. "Rural–Urban Inequalities Amplified by COVID-19: Evidence from South Africa." *Area Development and Policy* 6 (1): 50–62. doi:10.1080/23792949.2020.1851143.
- Webster, E., and D. Francis. 2019. "The Paradox of Inequality in South Africa: A Challenge from the Workplace." *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 101 (1): 11–35. doi:10.1353/trn.2019.0035.
- Western Cape Education Department. n.d. *Western Cape Education Department Find A School*. <https://wcedemis.westerncape.gov.za/wced/findaschool.html> (accessed 13 August 2020).