

A Historical Critical Analysis of Weberianism in Ethnic Entrepreneurship in South Africa: An Essay

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Abstract: This paper interrogated Weberianism and how this ideology was adopted by the architects of apartheid to engineer a race-based economic system in South Africa. The paper used desktop method to collect qualitative literature. Historical Critical Analysis (HCA) theory was adopted for the study. A few successful Black entrepreneurs were handpicked to demonstrate entrepreneurial abilities of Black people who conquered multiple challenges and complexities to establish successful enterprises. The finding refuted Weber's views and Weberian-apartheid assertions about Black capabilities on entrepreneurship. It was evident following the historical critical analysis that exclusion of Blacks from mainstream entrepreneurship was informed by a long time held belief of Weberian thought patterns. It is recommended that the post-apartheid state should prioritise fast-tracking the empowerment of Black entrepreneurs so as to integrate them in mainstream entrepreneurial system. Further research on Black entrepreneurship should seek to focus on the strategies used by successful Black entrepreneurs who conquered apartheid for their successes.

Keywords: Apartheid, Ethnic Entrepreneurship, Historical Critical Analysis, Weber, Weberianism

1. Introduction

Max Weber argued that Europeans were superior, unique and most rational entrepreneurs by choice who had a duty and divine calling as entrepreneurs while 'the others' outside European identities were workers because of their ignorance, laziness, backwardness and arrogance (Terblanche 2014). This assertion is to later emerge profound in the narrative of the exclusion of Black South Africans from mainstream entrepreneurship in apartheid South Africa. That Black South Africans were excluded from mainstream entrepreneurship in South Africa does not opine that others such as Indians were not excluded. Indians for example also suffered the brunt of exclusive entrepreneurship when their businesses were closed for trading in the Orange Free State in 1891. This resulted in widespread protests led by Mahatma Gandhi who was driving the formation of the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) in 1894 protesting against colonial treatment of the Indian people (Chauke, 2021:38). The closure of Indian businesses followed their classification as an 'uncivilised race' through the Registration of Servants Act, Law No. 2 of 1888 when Natal Indians were discriminately forced to carry identification passes (Chauke, 2021:37). Chauke (2021:38) however reported that, unlike the Blacks and Indians, the Coloureds' priviledges were maintained by the colonial masters – to an extent of them enjoying

"similar rights as those of whites up to 1930" for example.

To date the participation of Black South Africans in mainstream entrepreneurship had been low as compared to other ethnic groups of coloureds, Indians and – especially the white counterparts (Preisendorfer et al., 2012). This trend has been explained through a number of paradigms which include among others historical apartheid explanation, financial resources explanation, human capital explanation, traits and mindset explanation and social capital and network explanation for example (Preisendorfer et al., 2012). This paper argues that lack of participation of Black South Africans in mainstream entrepreneurship in South Africa has been the results of the country's historical past. The low participation of Black entrepreneurs in South Africa had also been explained by researchers such as Smuts (1986) who also have corroborated the Max Weber theories on racial capabilities in entrepreneurship. Smuts (1986) for instance went further to even suggest that entrepreneurship was alien to Africans as it has not been part of the African culture and tradition, because Africans supposedly entered entrepreneurship through European colonization of Africa. Reading the work "*Fortunes: the rise and rise of Afrikaner tycoons*" by Dommissie (2021) and compare it with the ideas Smuts (1986) expressed, it becomes evident that ethnic entrepreneurship in

South Africa in particular has been legendary and historical. The dominance of the British entrepreneurship empire in South Africa over, for example, the Afrikaners demonstrates a long history of the ethnicisation of entrepreneurship in South Africa. This assertion opines that entrepreneurial development in South Africa borrows or hinges on the country's social, political and economic transitions (Swartz et al., 2019). These transitions suggest how entrepreneurship development was impacted upon in South Africa – especially for the "previously disadvantages Black South Africans" (Swartz et al., 2019).

Smuts' (1986) assertion reflects properties of Western scholarship traditions which have always 'deliberately' or intentionally portrayed Africans as people who had, and knew nothing prior to the arrival of the European colonisers of Africa – and South Africa's colonial occupation in particular. This ironically reflects on how the British viewed the Afrikaners in South Africa, off course capitalizing on their advanced knowledge and superior skills in entrepreneurship which the agricultural savvy Afrikaners did not have (Dommissie, 2021). Effectively, the Afrikaners were reduced into mere employees in the English dominated economy, and which when taken further had contributed in the creation and perpetuation of Afrikaner poverty in South Africa (Dommissie, 2021). It is amazing that a section of the South African whites known as Afrikaners would even go to an extent of attempting to consider Black South Africans as incapable of modernization, development, civilization let alone entrepreneurship while they too were once on that kind of ethnic description as meted out to them by the British in South Africa. According to Dommissie (2021:12), the Afrikaners were at some point described as "a people who became, surely, the simplest and most backward fragment of Western civilization in modern times" with entrepreneurship for example in colonial South Africa dominated by the English and East European Jewish descendants. Dommissie (2021:1) argued "despite successive Afrikaner-controlled governments having wielded the scepter for many years, white English speakers and Jewish entrepreneurs dominated the South African business world". Dommissie's (2021) study inferred that Blacks and other racial groups in South Africa were not even mentioned in the entrepreneurship cycle. Regarding the Coloureds, Dommissie (2021:vii) reported that he never came across any Afrikaans speaking Coloured persons who became entrepreneurs of note except that they were but

very influential in scholarly and professional fields for example. Patterns of an exclusivist mainstream economy characterized by dominance of the other white section of the South African whites in the Cape Colony created perpetual and pervasive 'widespread poverty' among the Afrikaners to an extent of Dommissie (2021) arguing that there were no known Afrikaner super rich people in the colony those years until the emergence of the Afrikanerbond of Onze Jan Hofmeyr who rose to prominence approximately 1806. It was during the post-apartheid era that the majority of the known Afrikaner entrepreneurs made incredible breakthrough into being notable entrepreneur billionaires (Dommissie, 2021). If what Dommissie (2021) says is a believable assertion on the benefits the Afrikaner entrepreneurs have had in the post-apartheid economic empowerment era, the critical question to ask is: Why couldn't the same system which emancipated the Afrikaner entrepreneurs be used to emancipate Black South Africans from lack of participation in entrepreneurship, and to also create Black South African billionaires? The answer to this pertinent question lies with the historicity of entrepreneurship in South Africa, not necessarily what entrepreneurship became post-apartheid. This paper points finger to Weberian-apartheid historiography of entrepreneurship in South Africa.

2. A Historical Description of Max Weber's Ideas on Ethnic Entrepreneurship

Max Weber's assertion fronted entrepreneurship as an inherent and genetically embedded trait in the white race, and therefore suggests that races he considered as others outside European identities had no capacity to produce entrepreneurs. This is the view shared by Smuts (1986). Perhaps Weber and others such as Smuts (1986) theories on racial capabilities on entrepreneurship should have considered the struggles of the Afrikaner people of the Cape Colony in South Africa since 1652 with regard to making headway into entrepreneurship and mainstream economy to learn that success in entrepreneurship could not have been an exclusion determined by one's ethnic identity. Dommissie (2021) has documented these struggles in detail revealing that white Afrikaner South Africans were the less-entrepreneurial group among the English and East European Jewish communities in the Cape Colony, South Africa at some point. This alone explains why entrepreneurship capabilities could

not necessarily be on account of racial identity as Max Weber had suggested. Ngcamu (2002) refutes the Weberian assertion Smuts affirms contending that, even though, to an extreme supposition, indigenous Africans could not have been entrepreneurs, they still would have learnt it through their interaction and socialization with the colonizers. The problem comes in when the jury is already out that Black people were unable to learn. This is the tenant which the post-apartheid dispensation should seek to alter through vigorous economic transformation policy and its implementation. Just as Dommissie (2021:7) argued that "the rise of Afrikaner business leaders after 1994 was preceded by a long and sustained struggle to secure a place for the Afrikaner community in the spheres of commerce and industry as well", the post-apartheid government in South Africa has no choice but to ensure that the Black community has space secured in mainstream entrepreneurship in the country. The idea here is not to racialize the economy and entrepreneurship in particular but to redress the already acknowledged economic disparities in the South African society – regrettably along racial lines. Guidance could be sourced from President Mbeki's assertion which argued that "no economy can meet its potential if any part of citizens is not fully integrated into all aspects of that economy" (Mafukata, 2012:5). President Mbeki was supported by Mbuli (2008) and Mafukata (2012) who both urged that the post-apartheid government should prioritise eradication of poverty by empowering the 'excluded' Black majority from mainstream economic activities post-apartheid to enter these activities. Despite its widespread limitations and criticism across the colour line, the BEE is not an option but an uncomfortable tool which could be used to drive the Black empowerment agenda to create space for the Black entrepreneurs in the mainstream economy of the country. The criticism that the BEE had only created a bourgeoisie of a Black elite – a debate which escalated during President Thabo Mbeki's era (Ponte & Roberts, 2007) remains challengeable. The same system which made some Afrikaner billionaires post-1994 (Dommissie, 2021) couldn't afford to make every Afrikaner a billionaire. Why should it with Blacks? The BEE was never opined to behave like that. What looked like a useful tool for economic transformation in post-apartheid South Africa in the BEE has been thrown into the dustbin of political contestations of those opposed to the BEE providing redistribution of productive resources and those chartering for "enhanced opportunities for Black

individuals to improve their positions via affirmative action" (Ponte & Roberts, 2007).

Ngcamu (2002) argues from the perspective asserted by Charoux (1986) who also disputed the racial stereotypes and propaganda fronting for European monopoly in mainstream entrepreneurship which viewed indigenous Africans as lacking inherent abilities for entrepreneurship considering that they had no proper skills and attitude to enter entrepreneurship. In his assertion, Smuts (1986) is also heavily contested by Caputo (2001) who viewed entrepreneurship as having been part of indigenous Africa since time immemorial. African entrepreneurship has been in existence, and African indigenous entrepreneurs have traded with the Arabs, Indians and Chinese throughout centuries, trading in, amongst others, gold, ivory and slaves amongst others (Ngcamu, 2002; Musitha, 2020).

3. The Growth of Max Weber and Weberianism Scholarship in South Africa

The influence of Weber and Weberianism in global entrepreneurship scholarship – especially as it regarded entrepreneurship outside peoples of European identities has been on the rise since, and becoming incredibly visible amongst social and economic sciences researchers and commentators in particular. Amongst the emergent literature on the influence of Weber and Weberianism in entrepreneurship is that of Ruef and Lounsbury (2007) and Mody and Day (2014) for instance. Max Weber and Weberianism in fact drew global academic attention across disciplines as his controversies were found to be increasingly drawing scholastic interest amongst scholars of contending views. In South Africa for example, as early as Gerth Mills' various works on Weberianism which he first published post-Second World War in 1947, Weberian scholarship has been on the rise (Seekings, 2008). Max Weber's theories, and the subsequent scholarship thereof grew in popularity and accelerated into fame through the works of Talcott Parsons (1937), H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (1948) and Stuart Hughes (1958), and again approximately 1970 onwards through the works of Stephen P. Turner and Sven Eliaeson (2002) for example (Rijks 2012). Rijks (2012) went on to present the period between 1975 and 1985 as the revival period of Weber and Weberianism labeling the period as "international Weber renaissance", "Weber revival" and/or "renewal". Around the world,

Weber and Weberianism continued to draw intense attention from both critiques and proponents. In South Africa, Leo Kuper (1908-94) and James Irving (1904-69) respectively became well-known Weber and Weberianism scholars (Seekings, 2008). Most recently, Mohammed Rashid Begg (Begg, 2011) went as far as reading a doctorate on Weberian analysis. Begg's thesis chronicles how Weberianism linked with apartheid to influence the socio-economic discourse in apartheid South Africa. Andrew Zimmerman (2006) emerges as a fierce critique of Weber and Weberianism. In fact, Zimmerman (2006) called Max Weber a Social Darwinistic nationalist, imperialist and racist. With Zimmerman (2006), Max Weber was congruent with African perpetual colonization by the West. Zimmerman contended that Weber had to be therefore decolonized (Zimmerman, 2006). Despite the heavy criticisms of Weber and Weberianism, others such as Pitcher et al. (2009) nevertheless defended him arguing that he was in fact "misread" by some of his critiques. This paper adds another critical voice on Weberianism and its influence on apartheid's script on Black entrepreneurship in South Africa.

4. The Link Between Weberianism and Apartheid in Relation to Black Entrepreneurship in South Africa

Max Weber's thought systems and his subsequent Weberianism philosophy as has been demonstrated in the preceding Terreblanche's (2014) assertion have also influenced apartheid South Africa's economic model – especially as it regards Black entrepreneurship. Apartheid economic model classified Black entrepreneurs as lacking in entrepreneurial capacity with regard to, amongst others skills, attitudes, problem-solving abilities, profit motivation and competitiveness (Ngcamu, 2002), in a direct interlink with Weber's views on the supremacy of Europeans versus other peoples outside European identities. Racial attitudinal prejudices borrowed by apartheid from Weberianism disenfranchised Black entrepreneurship in apartheid South Africa. It is this thought pattern which influenced the historical evolution of Black entrepreneurship in South Africa. The assumption is that development and progression of Black entrepreneurship in post-apartheid South Africa was being hampered by historical factors than the challenges and complexities encountered during the current dispensation. This assertion is supported by Ngcamu (2002). This calls for "structural transformation of

the post-apartheid economy" (Mafukata, 2012:6). Given existing attitudes towards Black entrepreneurship in post-apartheid South Africa which still reflect the apartheid era, it would be foolhardy to believe that the economic stimulus which the post-apartheid government is trying to put in place to promote an economic model facilitating advancement of Black entrepreneurship would become the panacea to all the economic challenges affecting Blacks, and therefore reverse all the apartheid created complexities over-night. Stimulating Black entrepreneurship in a racially hostile environment could in fact be irrelevant (Mitchell, 2003), because, amongst many other negative factors, this approach to entrepreneurship had already created a culture of Black dependency on the white economy and entrepreneurship (Ngcamu, 2002). Creating Black dependency has been an apartheid agenda wanting to uphold "hierarchies of race and place" (Pailey, 2019).

Although this paper focuses on the historicity of Black entrepreneurship in South Africa, it however builds on the idea expressed in Ngcamu (2002) who investigated the factors affecting the successes or failures of Black entrepreneurship in South Africa. This paper postulates that the failures of Black entrepreneurship are historical rather than 'emergent' in the post-apartheid system. The post-apartheid South Africa has had sentiments of wanting to blame transformational failures on 'state failure' of the Black ANC government blaming amongst others corruption – and this in fact being hidden element of wanting to justify perpetual white supremacy – not denying that corruption backtracks progression of Black entrepreneurship. The South African economy is still pre-dominantly white in its mainstream sub-sector while remaining Black dominated in the informal subsistence sub-sector. This model entrenched poverty on the informal subsistence sub-sector economy while re-enforcing the mainstream economic sub-sector a white-no-go area for the Blacks. This explains why whites continue to be richer while Blacks continue to sink into the ravaging poverty which some call 'a poverty trap' for the Blacks (Mafukata, 2012; Mafukata, 2020). There has been some call for the democratization of the economy and for the development of a workable transformational agenda which would see attainment of social justice in the post-apartheid state. This paper makes a contribution towards this call, and it therefore argues that in pursuit of the post-apartheid economic agenda

in South Africa which is meant to "enforcing racelessness ...to open up development" (Pailey, 2019), there should be reconfiguration of the mainstream entrepreneurship sector through development and promotion of Black entrepreneurship (Mafukata, 2020). This paper already makes a call which interdicts Weberianism in the post-apartheid state economy. This is to set positive and conducive environment for the promotion of Black entrepreneurship. The paper achieves this by refuting the Weberian assertion that Blacks were incapable of entrepreneurship by presenting evidence of successful Black entrepreneurship in South Africa. The paper persuades the reader to identify that South Africa's state of Black entrepreneurship was fermented in Weberianism, and that this state was only reinforced and completed in the apartheid exclusivist economic approach of the time. The similarities between Weberianists and South Africa's apartheid ideology is demonstrated in Hendrik Verwoerd's argument that Blacks in South Africa had no role in the socio-economic world involving the Europeans just as Weber believed that people outside European identity had no role to play in the life of a European – especially with regard to entrepreneurship for example. Hendrik Verwoerd opined that "Blacks would not be able to perform high-level jobs in "white South Africa" and therefore it was imperative "to prepare blacks for an inferior place in society" (Giliomee, 2012). The exclusion of Black South Africans to enter mainstream economic practice, for example, entrepreneurship was part of this agenda. There have been contending views though with some contending that Verwoerd's apartheid ideology "was aimed at the preservation of racial privilege" (Marx, 2010) not necessarily define ability of the Black people in South Africa. For example, Lj "Wikus" du Plessis contended to the contrary that "the black population be given realistic economic opportunities" (Marx, 2010) in South Africa. These realistic economic opportunities for the Blacks has never been implemented – even post-apartheid. The call for equality to economic opportunities has always met with resistance. Some, even 'outsiders' such as the American 'Africanist' Gwendolen Carter have argued that "there was much that made sense in the nationalist [white claims to resources] arguments" because, in their views, "It is obvious that the lack of opportunities in the South African context for Africans with advanced training makes them frustrated and bitter" (Giliomee, 2012). Carter suggested that racialization of opportunities was important to promote the different cultures of the

peoples in the country – for example, in education (Giliomee, 2012). Whereas Carter had noted lack of opportunities for Blacks in the South African mainstream socio-economic space, she instead affirmed a weird view which suggested that separate education between Blacks and whites was acceptable and therefore justifiable (Giliomee, 2012). Looking both at Weber and Verwoerd, it is evident why apartheid South Africa had created a two tier economy based on race (Mafukata, 2012).

5. De-Racialisation of Post-Apartheid Entrepreneurship in South Africa

The overall output of this paper is promotion of a de-racialisation of the post-apartheid state entrepreneurship. This is meant to open the economy for increased Black entrepreneurship. This approach would facilitate for democratisation of the economic space, promote social cohesion in this highly polarized environment while advancing the constitutional obligation of the post-apartheid state to open the country into an inclusive and pluralistic society. Making use of "communal collection of knowledge" through a well-designed qualitative approach which emanates from facts and/or data and theories and appropriate methods to skeptically interrogate existing knowledge on Black entrepreneurship in South Africa, this paper reveals that scientific knowledge remained provisional, inconclusive "and subject to revision when new evidence emerges" (Sebola, 2019). This paper confronts Weberianism with evidence supporting the contrary on the capabilities of Blacks in entrepreneurship. The readership gets an opportunity to unearth new knowledge while increasing the existing on Black entrepreneurship. This assists the reader's understanding of South Africa's economic patterns from the historical point of view and how this currently unfolds to impact on the present – especially with regard to Black entrepreneurship. The overarching philosophy of this paper is to build a historical discourse on Black entrepreneurship from the Weberian race-based ideology. The paper connects the dots towards the emergence of a public and development administration and governance discourse that was hinged on brutal apartheid and racialism in South Africa while exploring how this scenario dictates into the present. Apart from speaking to the pluralization of the new post-apartheid state's economic discourse, this paper speaks to the policy narrative on Black entrepreneurship in the political economy facet of development paradigms of planning,

administration, governance and practice. In other words, how Black entrepreneurship was planned, administered, governed and practices emanate from South Africa's racial and apartheid history on development which had sought to uphold the socio-economic interests of one race over those of the other. The premise is that current context of how Black entrepreneurship is managed goes as far back as its historicity in Weberianism. History feeds into the present. The paper borrows from the historicity of Black entrepreneurship worldwide as interlinked with Weberianism to unearth the logic explaining why there has been so limited Black entrepreneurs in apartheid South Africa over the years – a pattern which most scholars of ethnic entrepreneurship in South Africa agree persists into the post-apartheid state. The paper argues that creating an active pool of Black entrepreneurs in South Africa would require a vigorous policy position which will seek to cast its nets wider than the current Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policy.

6. Deconstructing Weberianism and its Influence on Entrepreneurship in South Africa

In calling Weber a racist imperialist, Zimmerman (2006) contradicts James M Blaut's (1992) assertion that 'calling someone a racist is deeply offensive' In fact, Zimmerman argues that Weber himself made it no secret that he was indeed racist (Zimmerman, 2006). Zimmerman (2006) refutes the assertion that Weber was misunderstood with regard to his race debate. Several other critics of Weberianism also described Weber as a racist, and Weberianism as a racist ideology meant to promote global White supremacism (Blaut, 1992; Bodemann, 1993). James M. Blaut went as far as even calling Max Weber "the godfather of cultural racism" and "a neo-colonialist" (Blaut, 1992). Bodemann (1993) argued that "Weber writes in openly racist terms" referring to an incident in which Weber strongly suggested that the Polish population in Eastern Prussia were an 'inferior race' of 'lower physical and mental habitus, higher fertility and 'natural' acceptance of a lower standard of living' This alone would not have defined Weber as anywhere different from a racist. It is evident that Weber was a White supremacist who articulated the supremacism ideology and in addition the uniqueness of the 'superior' mentality and culture of this race over the non-Whites (Zimmerman, 2006). Max Weber believed and argued that Whites were to lead global modernity

and civilization than the non-Whites. This is a reflection of apartheid in South Africa. Weber believed in fact that Europeans were to use their superiority, uniqueness and advanced rationality as entrepreneurs to dispense what he considered "duty and divine calling as entrepreneurs" to lead global entrepreneurs against 'the others' who were outside the European identities (Terreblanche, 2014). Weber described his others outside European identities as voluntary workers for the superior whites driven by ignorance, laziness, backwardness and arrogance (Terreblanche, 2014). This is how apartheid in South Africa viewed Blacks – hewers of wood and fetchers of water for the superior white race (Msila & Netshitangani, 2014:279).

This thought pattern still influences global race relations and social, economic and political discourse. The race discourse continued to haunt 'the Global South which remain weighed down by the burden of colonial and apartheid history' which fermented in society a political and economic repressive system of governance which reduced Blacks into non-beings without 'opportunities for economic development and self-realisation' as these 'were deliberately foreclosed' (Ndlovu & Makoni, 2018).

Weber's characterization of the Polish people here reflects similar racial undertones of apartheid in South Africa which defined Black people in similar ways. Evidently, Weberianism like apartheid and colonialism marginalized those who were non-European in bid to sustain the '500 years of Western empire building' crusade which would have seen the dominance of one race by another – even globally (Terreblanche, 2014) to the point of developing doubt on Black achievements and abilities. Traces of Weberianism have been evident in post-colonial and post-apartheid (South) Africa despite the huge belief that (South) Africa has been undergoing some impressive decolonization and democratization process post-apartheid. The continued presence of Weberianism in the post-colonial state in Africa demonstrates that although Africa has been decolonised, coloniality is however still very much alive and remained deeply entrenched in the region. This paper did not concern itself in proving whether Max Weber was a racist or not, but to trace the link, and subsequently the influence of his subsequent ideology of Weberianism on apartheid. This paper traces the influence of Weberianism on the apartheid state which institutionalized and expressed this ideology on Blacks. The paper asserts that Weberianism and

apartheid were surrogates of racism and both did not 'die' with Africa's decolonization and liberation, but instead lived on post-apartheid. Weberianism still forms part of the political economic narrative of post-apartheid South Africa. To deconstruct the narrative which keeps a certain section of the post-apartheid society outside mainstream economic participation, it is critical to have thorough background on how events leading to this narrative originated and evolved in a genesis which could be traced in the Weberianism ideology for example. Correctly so, Ndlovu and Makoni (2018) identified the weakness of the post-apartheid economy in South Africa as having some corroboration with the country's racial historical discourse. In this discourse, Ndlovu and Makoni (2018), like Zimmerman (2006), suggested an emergence of a 'decolonial thinking paradigm to dispel the long-held myth' that the economy should be dominated by an untouchable White monopoly. White monopoly resulted "in the reproduction of economic inequalities" (Ndlovu & Makoni, 2018) which still haunt the post-apartheid state. For an economy as complex as post-colonial Africa with two out of every ten economically active people relying heavily on self-employment (Mills & Herbst, 2012), it is imperative to decolonise the economy and free it from White monopoly domination.

This paper challenges Weberianism on the narrative which argued that "dynamic capitalism requires individuals who possess a distinctive 'mentality' or 'inner motivation' or 'a capitalist or entrepreneurial spirit' (Ingham, 2003), however basing this argument on the supremacy of Whites over Blacks. Evidently, Weber's theorization on capitalism and entrepreneurship posits that Europeans were likely to be more entrepreneurial than African (Americans) for example. As much as racism was the fulcrum of Weber's views, and therefore sponsoring his subsequent Weberianism theory, the main argument of this paper remained anchored on Weberianism's lack of material evidence that Blacks lacked entrepreneurship capabilities – just because they were Blacks. Africans have, contrary to this belief been ardent entrepreneurs since time immemorial – from Timbuktu to Mapungubwe; Great Zimbabwe to Thulamela, and so forth. Africans have been trading in game souvenirs such as ivory, skins in the Soutpansberg (Moeller-Malan, 1953) to the precious jewelries of beads and bangles of the Maputo Corridor in Eastern Transvaal to China, India and the rest of the world (Mellet, 2020).

Outside South Africa, reviewed literature provides evidence of the success of Black entrepreneurship in other countries such as Mali, Botswana and Zimbabwe for example. Dommissie (2021:9) has it that an African Emperor Mansa Musa (1280-1337) of Mali remains the richest African ever in history with assets worth an estimated \$400 billion which could be "double the estimated fortune of the wealthiest of all modern families" and "almost triple the wealth of the frontrunner among the super-rich of today" for example. Emperor Mansa Musa was an established affluent entrepreneur who traded on salt and gold with cross-border markets as far as Egypt, and made a fortune which enabled him to parade it even during religious pilgrimage in Mecca where his entourage would arrive in absolute splendor like no other (Dommissie, 2021:9). There has been some entrepreneurial acumen in Blacks even in the midst of Black oppressions which excluded Black people from the mainstream practice. Black entrepreneurship produced successful Black entrepreneurs in rural and township South Africa, among others Habakkuk Shikoane who was the king of cane furnisher manufacturing based in the former Lebowa Bantustan, Richard Maponya in Soweto, "*Vho (Mrs) Denga na (and) Vho Masindi*" (Mafukata & Musitha, 2019), George Phadziri who founded the massive Phadziri Bus Service at Gogobole Village, West of Louis Trichardt, Elelwani Maria Mulaudzi and her Mulaudzi Bus Services empire at Mandala Village, Fanie Denga Mabirimisa who founded Mabirimisa Bus Services at Luvhalani Village and Ntuseni Jameson Nesane of Tshatala farms at Sane Village, Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, and many others. Black entrepreneurship survived the apartheid turbulence putting to test Weberian-apartheid assertions about Black entrepreneurship.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper interrogated Weberianism as an ideology used by colonial and apartheid South African white regimes to engineer a race-based economic system in South Africa – especially regarding exclusion of Black South Africans from mainstream entrepreneurship. Weberian-apartheid dichotomy viewed Blacks as natural workers while whites were natural entrepreneurs. The paper argued that 'worker' could not be exclusive to Blacks, and entrepreneurship to white. The paper used desktop method to collect qualitative data. The Historical Critical Analysis was adopted to guide the analysis. A plethora

of successful Black entrepreneurs was purposefully handpicked to demonstrate entrepreneurial abilities of Black people. The majority of these enterprises have become successful enterprises contributing immensely in the local economies. The findings refute Weberian assertions about Black peoples' capabilities on entrepreneurship. Exclusion of Blacks from mainstream entrepreneurship was therefore informed by an erroneous long time Weberian-apartheid thought pattern. The Black-white divide witnessed today in the South African economy reflects on the historical genesis the country is emanating from – the idea of economic dominance of the whites over Blacks. This paper therefore problematizes lack of progress regarding advancement of Black entrepreneurship in the history of racialism and apartheidisation of society locating this as far back as Max Weber's theories. The post-apartheid state should prioritise fast-tracking the empowerment of Black entrepreneurs to find space in mainstream entrepreneurship.

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