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BLACK PEOPLES' LIVED EXPERIENCES OF EVERYDAY RACISM IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

Xoliswa MTOSE*

Abstract

The current paper sought to give an account of the lived experiences of racism by black people in the course of their daily life in contemporary South Africa. Through the lens of Essed's theory of everyday racism, the paper explored how the familiar practice in everyday situation continues to be defined by a pervasive racist ideology.

The design of the paper was based on case study using discourse analysis as the data analysis technique. The empirical data used was part of a larger study on emerging black identities in contemporary South Africa. For the purpose of the article, the focus of the analysis was about stories concentrating on times when the participants experienced racism. Consequently, the paper traced the trajectory of old and new mutations of racism in post-apartheid South Africa.

The findings revealed that post-apartheid experiences of racism are seen as both a continuation of everyday experiences of racism. It was also evidenced that legacy of apartheid continues to have an impact on black people, despite the progress made since 1994.

Key Words: Racism, South Africa.

Context of the Study

The experiences of many black people who continue to suffer or suffered the effects of racism suggest that racism is alive, active, pervasive and no less damaging. For that reason, in contemporary South Africa, racism and segregation have been outlawed (Durrheim & Dixon, 2005; Biko, 1978). Meanwhile, Affirmative Action, Black Economic Empowerment and other progressive policies for change have been legislated and implemented (Foster, 2006). Sadly, experiences of everyday racism remain a historical and current reality for black South Africans. This suggests that the legacy of apartheid racism continues to have a significant impact on black people in South Africa. As a result,

* Dr., University of Fort Hare, Faculty of Education, South Africa

contrary to perceptions that racism is now a thing of the past, racism has continued to manifest in many and in different ways (Gibson, 2006). Consequently, the argument that contemporary racism is predominantly subtle may be misleading, from a black perspective.

On account of this misleading perspective, the aim of the current paper was to explore the lived experiences of racism by black people in the course of their daily life, in South Africa. Over the past few decades, there has been much discussion about the changing nature of racism worldwide (Gibson, 2006). Previous studies suggest that part of the discussion has been the hidden nature of racism where, for instance, whites discriminate against blacks when the alternative of their behaviour is plausible or when they will not be held accountable for their behaviour (Ohnson, Lecci & Swim, 2006). Additionally, while social psychologists have suggested that contemporary racism is more subtle in nature than it had been in the time of apartheid, accounts by black people of subtle racism in their daily contact with white people suggest the contrary (Ohnson et al., 2006). In fact, similar view has been shared by even recent studies (ref).

Another argument emanates from what is termed as 'new' and 'old' racism (Steyn, 2004). Literature on 'new' racism suggests that not everyone is persuaded by the notion of "new" racism (Steyn, 2004). Implying that the old racism is still common and that, the supposed decline in negative stereotype has been exaggerated. In support of this view, current reports suggest that 'new' racism is at the bottom not very different from the 'old' racial prejudice (Steyn & Foster, 2008). The 'new' and 'old' racism as both past and present account suggest is a social product (SP) (Steyn & Foster, 2008). There has been variations of the social product framework from different accounts (Tredoux & Dixon, 2009). One particular study in the theory of SP is interdisciplinary theory of racism (Steyn & Foster, 2008). While, Steyn & Foster (2008) suggest SP is presently intensified, others argue SP is not intensive at present (Tredoux & Dixon, 2009). Nonetheless, the idea is not to discount of different aspects of SP, but to use SP as a theoretical framework to understand the current forms of racism as experienced by black people by obtaining the descriptions of their experiences of everyday racism.

Therefore, the theoretical framework that guided this paper was interdisciplinary theory of racism, an idea, which proposed that racism is a social product (Essed, 1991). Furthermore, it proposes that racist ideology governing our society is present in everyday activities. The following is a discussion of interdisciplinary theory on everyday racism.

Philemona Essed's Theory of Everyday Racism

The notion of everyday racism is an "...integration of racism into everyday situations through practices that activate underlying power relations" (Essed, 1991: 50). This suggests that the encounter with racism and the encounter with whiteness are everyday experiences of being black. This is fixed mindedness produces power relations (Steyn & Foster, 2008). There are three main discourses underlying such power relations.

Firstly, it is expected that existence of powers lead to manoeuvring power relations. Based on the notion of everyday racism and power relations, the first implication is that it is expected that the knowledge used by black South Africans to navigate the

everyday world, including language, norms and rules, is different to the knowledge used by the dominant white group.

The second theme in the definition is the notion that “practices with racist implications become in themselves familiar and repetitive” (Essed, 1991:52). These racist practices enable the dominant white group to continue to exploit black people. It is thus, expected that within the racial ideology governing society, racist practices are embedded in governmental policy, hiring practices, education, service organisations, and/or the formulation of academic theories.

The final theme describes the underlying racial and ethnic relations that are realised and reinforced through familiar practices in everyday situations. Consciously, it is explained that “everyday racism is locked into underlying dynamics of relations and forces of racial and ethnic domination and governed by the powers to which they give rise” (Essed, 1991:50). Consequently, it is expected that the interlocking forces include oppression and repression. Yet, oppression is implemented in society through situated practices that create structures of racial and/or ethnic inequality. On the other hand, repression, in the form of prevention or management of the subordinate group’s opposition, is implemented in society to maintain the existence of racial and/or ethnic inequality. In consequence, the concept of everyday racism does not apply to uncommon or incidental acts of racism by the white dominant group but is seen in everyday situations that are impacted by the existing racist ideology.

Following the three discourses, Essed’s interdisciplinary theory of everyday racism was used to govern racist ideology in the current study. It was also used to evaluate a routine of familiar practices that occurred in the everyday situations of black people.

Purpose of the Study

For the purpose of the paper, the focus of the analysis was on stories concentrating on times when the participants experienced racism. Thus, the paper traced the trajectory of old and new mutations of racism in post-apartheid South Africa. Accordingly, the current paper presents accounts of the lived experiences of racism of black people as recounted in their talk about living their everyday lives in post-apartheid South Africa. The stories are interpreted as descriptions of black peoples’ experiences of everyday racism.

Sampling Procedure

The empirical data analysed in this paper is part of a study on emerging black identities in contemporary South Africa (Mtose, 2008). For the purpose of this study, the sample is purposive sampling of post apartheid stories of racism from black peoples’ autobiographies of experiences of racism in South Africa. A starting point for any analysis of blackness is in the accounts of the experience of racism in the lives of black people. The central question which the data in this paper answers is: What are the lived experiences of everyday racism of black people in post apartheid South Africa? Using broad brushstrokes, the aim was to present a description of the way in which racism permeates the experiences of black people in South Africa. As will be demonstrated, such experiences are an ongoing and hurtful feature of encounters and transactions with white people in

South Africa. The analysis is about how these experiences, changed or have not changed black people in the light of the post-apartheid dispensation in South Africa?

In this paper the approach is to understand the current forms of racism as experienced by black people by obtaining their descriptions of their experiences of everyday racism (Essed, 1991). By focusing on the targets' experiences, one can better understand the range of concrete manifestations of 'experienced' prejudice through perpetrators' behavioural expressions of racism that may be relatively easy to observe (Tredoux & Dixon, 2009; Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). This procedure is also beneficial because the respondents can be characterised as the true 'experts' on racism (Mtose, 2008; Wale & Foster, 2007; Essed, 1991). In this study the assumption is that black people in South Africa have accumulation of knowledge of racism which impacts on their understanding of what is perceived as contemporary racism in social psychology.

Sample Size

The sample for this study was 35 black South Africans. The 35 people are diverse in age, class, region of origin, gender and socio economic background, but all lived in South Africa. Diversity in terms of socio economic background in this study was based on the status of the participant's or the family's income range as determined by occupation. The author defined rural as a place of dwelling that has features which are typically of areas that are from city, a place where most people depend on farming and crop growing for living. Urban is defined as an area that is close to an industry and business, close to cities and people are living and working in town. It is important to note that rural and urban areas were used to classify a place in which the participants lived at the time of the interview. The motive was that in South Africa, black people cannot be easily classified as rural or urban as they migrate between the two spaces, due to the past segregation laws. This suggests that while some black people in South Africa today stay in urban areas they have their roots in rural areas and the tendency is to move between these two areas.

Data Collection and Instrumentation

Black identity autobiographies were generated through semi-structured one-to-one interviews. Semi-structured interviews are used and organised around areas of particular interest, while still allowing considerable flexibility in scope and depth". They are referred to as conversations with a purpose. The major aim of semi-structured interviewing is to understand the experiences of other people and the meaning they make out of those experiences. The interviews with the respondents were collected over a period of eleven months, between May 2006 and March 2007. The author interviewed people in rural and urban areas in three provinces, namely Eastern Cape, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. Some of the IsiXhosa (one of the native languages) text was translated into English for analysis in the discussion of findings.

Data Analysis

The analysis in this article highlights the continuity and discontinuity of experiences of everyday racism, as well as highlighting the alternative and new ways in which racism seems to manifest in post-apartheid times. A discourse analyst must distance him/herself from the text. The author identified forms that may assist the researcher in

reflecting on textual activities: they say “by identifying what binary oppositions, recurrent terms, phrases and metaphors present in a text, we begin to see how the text is the product of particular discourses.”

Results of the Study

In this section the study highlights experiences in the autobiographical encounter exclusive to post-apartheid era. For the purpose of the paper and the discourse analysis used for analysing data, the author concentrated on contrasting categories namely: racism omnipresence, racial slurs, discrimination and segregation. In addition to these, the author concentrated on the categories ‘new’ forms of racism in post- apartheid era, namely: hidden racism (double talk) and individualisation into assimilation to whiteness.

Racism omnipresence in apartheid and post-apartheid contexts

The Extract 1 revealed that in the post-apartheid context, racism has been pervasive and a way of life for black people. For example, Yonda shows that racism is ingrained in blackness. What is revealed by this extract is that racism has always permeated black people’s lives. In fact, Yonda makes reference to how black people are always suspected of crime. What we learn here is that in the post-apartheid period racism omnipresence, the experience of racism is the backcloth of their lives as black people. What Yonda testifies is that as a black person one is always encountering racism, and that racism is the narrative of what is happening backstage. For example, Yonda claims that if you are black you always found to be on the wrong. The following is examples of stories of racism presence in the post-apartheid periods as lamented.

Extract 1 [post-apartheid context]

Yonda: X town [name of place] is still a very much a racist town but I feel like these little comments little back chatting and how we still have to bow down to the white man sometimes when especially it comes to the police I feel like the white police do not even want to listen to you because automatically if you black they just do not want to hear your story...if they believe you are wrong because you are black you remain wrong no matter what.

This seems to suggest that racism constructs ethnic differenced between black people and white people; at the/ same time there is an indisputable difference between the social, economic and historical dimensions. For example, Yonda uses “we” to refer to black people and contrasts that with “white man”. In consequence, making a case for all black people; this is what Gilroy (1993) refers to as cultural insiderism. Cultural insiderism illuminates the importance of “otherness”, which is evident in the way a binary opposition is used as advocacy for blackness, while it stereotypes black identity. For example, Yonda uses expressions such as “we bow down to the white man” authoritatively as a cultural member of the oppressed, but at the same time she devalues blackness as inferior as opposed to whiteness. To bow down is a sign of reverence, which means Yonda constructs blackness in terms of slavery.

Racial slurs in the apartheid and post-apartheid contexts

The following are extracts depicting the experience of racial slurs. Extracts 2 and 3 are examples of post-apartheid stories. In extract 3, we see the introduction of the term

“smarties”, which according to the respondents is also derogatory when to refer to black people. This shows the standing of racial terms in post-apartheid times. However, in the post-apartheid period racial slurs tend to be indirect. For example, Sana claims that she overheard white people referring to black people as kaffirs. Similarly, Zifiki testifies hearing people refer to black people as smarties in a milky bar. Symbolically “smarties”, which positions blackness as people of colour, is contrasted to the milky bar “whiteness”. The question posed here problematises black encounter with whiteness, and questions the presence of black students in a university that some regard as supposed to be white. These incidents were perceived by the respondents as being an indirect means of continuing racial slurs in post-apartheid times.

Extract 2 [post-apartheid context]

Zifiki: the elections the SRC elections (*ehe*) they are ridiculous things when they [white students] are advertising their parties like I read something like how come there are so many smarties in the milky bar those were the posters that because we are smarties because we are the kind of people that are at the varsity (*yes*) so basically being here is very out of the racism I’m aware of it very much.

This is supported in extract 3, which suggests that “kaffir” is the derogatory term used in post-apartheid contexts.

Extract 2 [post-apartheid context]

Sana: for instance because I have this incident in first year and I overheard these boers because X [name of university] is 70% white and I overheard them referring to black people as kaffirs like they feel very strong that we are amakafula [kaffirs].

This indirect use of racial slurs is contrary to the direct use of racial slurs in the experiences of apartheid racism. During the apartheid period the word “kaffir” was used as a general nomenclature for blacks, in addition to being a racial slur. However, this distinction in the use of kaffir does not signify that kaffir has ever been used without applying the discourse of blackness in reversal in order to position whiteness as the “other” who is enlightened.

Discrimination in apartheid and post apartheid contexts

Siyo also shares discrimination experiences that occurred in shops in apartheid times. These experiences were directed at black people; an exclusion from social activities, such as shopping, accompanied by ill treatment by white people. Siyo constructs black identity from the perspective of whiteness as she justifies discrimination against blackness when she says “because you are black.” To a very large extent it shows that if you were black, discrimination came as no surprise; it was natural for black people to be discriminated against. In fact, Siyo sees blackness through colonial eyes, as she says “you knew your place.” In a post-apartheid context, the situations are new and the relations are more complex because of desegregation. Classical example is found in extract 4. Siyo had this to say:

Extracts 4 [apartheid context]

Siyo: In the old South Africa you sort of knew your place as a black person ...you were made to know... but you know in the city you could get saturated because whatever you wanted to buy it was brought to you ... you were not allowed to get inside the shop if you wanted whatever they would decide for you they would hand it to you and decide which colour suits you would never be allowed to shop freely you never given an opportunity of looking through what is available and trying them on because you are black.

For example, Nontaba reports her experience of being treated differently from white people, even though they walked into shop as black and white friends. This shows that discrimination in post-apartheid times requires desegregation, because in the past, you would not find black and white people in the same school, camping together, being friends, or walking together to the shop. Clearly, this contact between black and white people is a post-apartheid experience which is contrary to segregation experiences of apartheid. In a comment, Nontaba claimed that:

Extract 5 [post-apartheid context]

Nontaba: We walked into this shop to buy some things, we walked in as a group mixed group... they looked at us in weird way like, how can they hang around with white girls they were just very very confused and they treated us with less respect than they did to the white people and that made me feel bad that there are still people like that around why should I be treated less why should I be made to feel less because of the colour of my skin? ... we were there first but they decided to help the white people before us and even when they were helping the customer service was very bad it was like they are doing because they have to do it.

In an example of discrimination in an apartheid context, Siyo claims that as a black person you knew your place. This is because, discrimination under apartheid was a public affair and it did not come as a surprise. In contrast, under post-apartheid discrimination, respondents show signs of being alarmed when they find themselves being discriminated against. For example, Nontaba claims that she felt that people were questioning why as black girls they were walking together with white girls. She interprets this as discrimination because, according to her, the eyes were not questioning the white girls but rather questioning why they were hanging out with white girls. She uses the term "weird" to describe the curiosity in people's eyes with regard to the girls' relationship. In addition, the service rendered to them as black girls was poor. Unlike Siyo, Nontaba is surprised that they were discriminated against and she also questions why she should be treated as inferior to white people. Clearly Nontaba interprets the racist treatment that she received from white people as being situating her as inferior and white people as superior.

From black peoples' experiences it seems that the element of knowledge as a basis for discriminating against black people is very common in post-apartheid stories. This is evident in Sifiso argument:

Extract 6 [post-apartheid context]

Sifiso: When you get to the University there are still these courses and degrees which were previously eeh not opened to the black guys like the Civil Engineering Electrical Engineering and I recognised that the University

especially the previously predominantly white institutions... after 1994 to enter Engineering Degree you will need say 75% and considering where we come from as black students it is difficult for you to achieve that 75% which means these were reserved for white people so in my view that was also eeh racism in a special type which was eeh carefully and cautiously eeh constructed by the university itself.

For example in extract 6, Sifiso reports having to work harder in order to resist discrimination and prove that he is worthy and able to compete and match white standards. Sifiso reports on discrimination against black people at predominantly white institutions. He claims that the requirements for access to certain degrees and courses are high in order to limit black people's access to them. This differs from the direct discrimination; it is kept silent by the university itself and one only finds out about it when one wants access to the university. In addition, the fact that no one says directly that black people are not allowed in that university, or that there is no public announcement that only a certain number of black people is allowed in that particular university, makes it an indirect means of discrimination. As Sifiso explains, the denial of access to black students is directed at the entry requirements for the degree or course. From these stories this kind of discrimination is seen as alarming, as it appears to happen even though black people do not expect racism in the new South Africa.

Segregation in post-apartheid contexts.

Segregation in the apartheid context was characterised by structural racial differentiation. For example black people reported experiences of segregation in public places including toilets and trains. In the post-apartheid context, the respondents suggest that segregation continues in South Africa today. However, the stories of segregation in post-apartheid times seem to suggest that segregation has taken on a new form. Examples of stories that demonstrate the new forms in segregation racism in post-apartheid times are from extracts 7 to 9.

These experiences can be categorised into three forms. Firstly, although segregation is no longer a policy white people and black people choose to self-segregate by associating racially with other white people or black people only. This differs from the experiences of apartheid racism where respondents constructed segregation as a public affair. Nowadays places are no longer racialised or segregated. For instance Mon commented that:

Extract 7 [post-apartheid context]

Mon: Today we still find pockets of racism ...in my church in the Methodist church the services are divided into two separate meetings. Nobody has declared which meeting should each race group attend but you find that the morning service is for whiter people then at 11 o'clock when the black service starts there is not even a single white only the black people ...this is the trend.

According to Mon in extract 7, segregation racism continues, as he says "we still find pockets of racism". By pockets of racism, Mon sees racism as being hidden and found in certain corners. He gives an example of the members of his congregation who continue to have segregated services even though anybody can attend any service. It seems that

manifestations of segregation racism are still alive today and permanently engraved on the colonial discourse of otherness.

In addition, respondents regard this continuing segregation as relating to differences in culture, for example, in extract 8, Zifiki and testify this. Zifiki makes reference to her own experience of being friends with white people but still emotionally segregated.

Extract 8 [post-apartheid context]

Zifiki: so its very hard for us to mingle at the end of the day as much as we try be friends with white people and Afrikaans people but at the end of the day put us all in one room you will see black people sitting together and white people sitting together (*yeah*) like in the context of the school.

She shares her experience of an attempt to form friendships with whites; however the attempts failed as the reality of segregation persists. She cites an example of schools where black and white learners share one school but are not necessarily desegregated. She seems to suggest that desegregation is more than making friends and being in the same space; it should take the form of mixing together.

The other form is articulated by Sifiso. In extract 9, he seems to be referring to the “pockets” of racism experiences that Mon in extract 7 was referring to. He claims that racism at this university is not a written rule but appears in non-racial criteria that block black’s entry. Sifiso said:

Extract 9[post-apartheid context]

Sifiso: I was staying in a hostel and you will find that there the majority are Afrikaans-speaking students ... you will find out that the equation is 75/25 ...they [whites] want to retain their culture and most of these people come from the farms and they have been taught to treat black person as a black person...you will see such kind of tendencies in the dining halls ...there are categories of tables even if it is not a rule of the University or the hostel but is written rule which says that the table is for a certain racial group... B-3 and when you check that B-3 belongs only to a certain group of Afrikaans speaking people who are from the farms... you will find out that there is segregation which is carefully eeh constructed.

To portray the way racism sneaks into the system he says “a certain block called B-3 and when you check that B-3, which B-3 belongs only to certain group of Afrikaans-speaking people who are from the farms”. This differs from apartheid segregation in that positions for black people and white people were then clearly demarcated; instead, Sifiso claims today, there is pretence of unity in one dining hall, while still being methodologically segregated.

From these experiences, it would appear that segregation in the post-apartheid period continues, but is disguised as non-racial criteria and cultural differences. Gone are the pronouncements of the apartheid times when facilities were clearly marked “black only” or “white only”; nevertheless segregation continues.

Alternative’ forms of racism in post- apartheid era

The 'alternative' forms of racism in post-apartheid era show how racism in the new South Africa has changed in some ways. In this section the author discuss two categories, namely: Hidden racism (double talk) and Individualisation into assimilation into whiteness.

Hidden racism (double talk)

Hidden racism refers the ambiguous and hidden nature of post-apartheid racism, and is the direct opposite of confrontational racism. This form of racism is embedded in language that sounds politically correct whilst in fact still being experienced as racism. The following extracts give evidence of post-apartheid experiences of hidden racism.

In extracts 10 and 11, Mpongo and Mon report experiences of racism that fall between racist actions and politically correct images. Both Mpongo and Mon experienced hidden racism directed against other black people. According to Mpongo a black person was turned away from a salon on the grounds that there was no one trained to cut hair that was not white. This differs from the past in that under apartheid a sign that announced that the salon was for white patrons only would be hung or posted in the salon. In this instance, instead of stating that the salon was for whites only the excuse was given that no one was trained to cut black hair. In other words, in turning the black person away from the salon, the racist policy of the salon was revealed.

Extract 10[post-apartheid context]

Mpongo: here was this chairperson of Human Rights Commission Mr X [name of a person] I think he had a case were he was turned away from a hair salon where he was told his hair could not be done ... he goes to a salon they cannot cut his hair because he is black ... he went to court to challenge that and this guy had to agree his policy is really discriminatory its racist and his justification was that there is nobody who is trained to cut hair that is not white.

Extract 11

Mon: In South Africa today the appointment of black managers is very minimal... black managers who are there have no powers no decision-making powers some of them are there for window dressing purposes that's where now racism you'll find it ... but it's very subtle you'll never make it especially in the upper ecclesia.

In extract 11, Mon reports that today black people are appointed as managers but they do not have decision-making powers in their jobs. He uses the words "window dressing" to show that the image that one sees is that of transformation, that is, black people are in management positions, which is a politically correct affirmative action. However, Mon states, these managers do not have decision-making powers. Mon claims that inside these organisations racist practices are still occurring because power is still in white hands. In essence, with such experiences of hidden racism black people continue to experience oppression positioned in a practice that create structures of racial inequality. However, this time round racism is hidden behind white double speak.

Individualisation to assimilation into whiteness

In extract 12 and 13, Zifiki and Sana make claims to be friends with white people. Zifiki reports that her friendship with white people differentiated her from other black

people. In her talks with her friends the other black people were generally constructed as deficient in comparison to her as an individual black. She reports she has been told that she is able to be friends with white people because she is a clean black, she speaks good English and she has money.

Extract 12

Zifiki: when I got to X [name of school] I befriended a lot of white people and I still have a lot of very good white friends right now... so what used to happen is whenever we used to talk to the white people they would be like to us I know I am friends with you because you are like a clean black...you are one of those clean blacks and stuff and you do not speak with an accentyou do not have that accent that black people have in common ...and you have got money as well you know so yeah you are like better you are a cultured black .

Extract 13

Sana: I had a white friend her name is Amy like we would walk to school together ... this one time we are walking together to our classroom and there is a 'riot'[noise] as girls walk kuyakhulunywa kudiscuswa amasopizi ayizolo [girls are chatting and discussing previous day's 'soapiest'] and then we in and the she says "yhoo black people are loud" and I looked at her and then she realised that she is talking to me she has a black friend Sana and then she says to me but you are not like them ...then I told her that I don't want you to be my friend because its scary because I am black what's wrong with being black and being loud ? ...I felt she has been racist and I was angry to know that side of her actually I was very disappointed because she could have said girls are so loud why black?...I noticed that she is being racist she did not even see who she was talking to there were probably coloureds and Indians in the discussion or white people or white girls.

In essence she understands her inclusion in whiteness as based on her ability to manage to shed race-typical characteristics and become like whites. Not only is black identity individualised and treated as an exception, but in extract 13, Sana is invited to and expected by a white friend to criticise other black people. She is required substitute her black culture for a white culture. Whilst the white friend criticises black people for being loud, she is expected to be a different civilised black who does not shout whilst other black students are criticised for failing to adapt to the civilised white culture.

This shows that even inclusion is experienced as racism. These reported stories of post-apartheid show that people who are familiar with racism are sensitive to the experiences of everyday racism. They understand when they are victims of racism.

Discussion of Results

The concept of everyday racism provided by Essed (1991) was helpful as a means of illuminating what the black respondents were narrating as experiences of racism in their daily lives in post-apartheid context. In linking ideological dimensions of racism to individual attitudes, everyday racism seems to become part of expected (ordinary), unquestioned and normal practice. In this regard, Essed (1991) claims that the concept of everyday racism does not apply to uncommon or accidental racist acts, but rather to everyday situations that are impacted on by existing racist ideology. An example from this

study is the autobiographical narratives that show that everyday racism has changed in some ways, but in so many others has not changed at all.

South African black peoples' experiences of everyday racism are still constructed as a racist ideology governing our society and being present in everyday lives. From black people's stories racism omnipresence, racial slurs, discrimination and segregation are still ongoing forms of racism. In considering the content of these stories, one realises that there are indeed some differences and that there are also common trends that run across apartheid and post-apartheid times. What is common is that racism is still pervasive and a way of life for black people in South Africa. The difference is the complexity of racism in South Africa today because of desegregation.

In apartheid times the experiences of racism were a collective suffering by all black people who had been reduced together to social struggles, political and economic struggles (Mtose, 2008; Van Hiel & Mervielde, 2005). These experiences were seen as black people's way of life that could happen at anytime and anywhere. It did not matter who you were; you could be publicly violated and threatened and there was extensive and widespread inequality and deprivation. In post-apartheid times we have witnessed racism being experienced in different situations. For example, in the post-apartheid era, racism is practised in private places, universities, schools, salons and so on. These are spaces where people are supposed to be equally treated and that are supposed to be integrated.

From the autobiographies, it is evident that black people in South Africa have a cognitive framework that they bring to a situation. The stories of everyday racism were stories that came from events that are happening in the world. The author's understanding of these narratives is that they are the outcome of the experiences and ideas that people attach to them. They show us that the kinds of structures have changed and that the most important thing that has changed is the contact. There is far more contact in the new South Africa than was the case in the past. The new forms are duplicitous; there is an element of being racist towards black people but at the same time they are invited by white people to criticise other black people. This type of contact did not occur in the past (Mtose, 2008; Swartz, 2007). The kinds of experiences have changed. In another sense the kinds of experiences have not changed because there are still racist stereotypes at play; there are still racist encounters with racist whites, who of course no longer rule South Africa.

Everyday experiences of racism are ingrained and black people expect and anticipate them through their cognitive frames. According to Essed (1991), in cognitive experiences the knowledge about racism impacts one's perception of reality. For example, respondents claim that racism is still to a very large extent alive and kicking in South Africa. In so doing, they make reference to the way in which racism is still part of black peoples' lives. From the stories of post-apartheid racism it is evident that racism is ongoing in spite of the fact the new dispensation since 1994.

Racism as an everyday experience is part of everyday life which continues to reproduce racism. These experiences were more prominent in the segregation category in an apartheid context. Segregation laws created a striking contrast in the quality of life between black and white people, therefore these experiences act as a marker of the oppression that continues to reproduce racism. Not only did black respondents narrate

experiences of segregation, but they also constructed segregation as a cognitive experience in which the knowledge of racism impacts on one's perception of reality. From the experiences of segregation in the apartheid context blackness is reproduced as a product of colonialism.

Some of the post-apartheid experiences of everyday racism show how black experiences of racism have changed in some ways. In the double talk, individualisation and assimilation into whiteness categories, stories are all based in the post-apartheid context. This shows that new forms exist in black people's encounter with racism. Instead of using discriminatory language like "blacks are not allowed," as was the case in the past, today non-racial criteria are used and the discrimination is hidden beneath double talk. In the individualisation and assimilation into whiteness categories, for example, respondents did not use racial stereotypes like black people are dirty, or they speak poor English. Instead, the cultural difference "speaking with an accent" is being emphasised. The racist stereotype that blacks are dirty is hidden by being nice to a specific individual portraying the individual as a "clean black."

Everyday experiences of racism are still perceived as power relations and perceive blackness as dominated and a contestation of the dominant position (Norris, Richter & Fleetwood, 2007). For example the stereotypes associated with blackness are still intact in post-apartheid. In post-apartheid times, black people reported stories of being appointed as manager with no decision-making powers. The respondents claim that transformation in South Africa is "window dressing" for a politically correct image of affirmative action and does not translate to power sharing; instead power continues to be in white hands. This suggests that the repetition of racist actions in South Africa has become part of black experiences of everyday life, which implies that racism continues to be reproduced (Eaton, 2006).

Post-apartheid experiences of everyday racism to a large extent show that black people based their experiences on pre-existing ideas of blackness, the existing ideas in a racist society. Although, racism is not "the rule," it is still hurtful and troubling in black people's everyday lives. Not only was it once the norm for the respondents to have experienced racism in their daily lives, but much of the racism experienced was one-on-one, blatant, old fashioned (apartheid) racism. This suggests that experiences of everyday racism are repetitive rather than unique (Norris et al., 2007; Essed, 1991).

Conclusion

The fact that there are common features in apartheid and post-apartheid experiences of everyday racism shows that racism is still alive in South Africa in spite of the fact that it is not part of the law. Everyday racism experiences were and still are the background against, which black people live their lives in South Africa. In conclusion, the author of the current paper argues that the experiences of everyday racism remain a current reality in black peoples' narrated autobiographies. This suggests that the legacy of apartheid racism continues to have a significant impact on black people. In examining these experiences and autobiographical accounts, one feature emerges here, that of an overwhelming and persistent sense of racism.

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