



Comparative Study on Racial Inequality in Higher Education in Brazil and South Africa

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ABSTRACT

This research investigated how racial aspects impacted on access to higher education in Brazil and South Africa, respectively. It also tried to determine how race influenced the completion of higher education in both countries. Based on a descriptive quantitative research design, the researcher retrieved data on enrolment and graduation in higher education from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) in South Africa and *Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira* of Brazil (INEP in Portuguese) and then filtered it using population groups. Each country was assessed individually to identify the panorama of higher education in terms of racial distribution of students. Then similarities and differences were identified, considering both countries' social formation and the structure of their education systems.

The findings of the study were able to uncover the importance of affirmative action policies to tackle racial and social inequalities in higher education in both countries. In Brazil, the findings showed that a total number of vacancies in higher education had a significant expansion during the period of the study. However, the findings revealed that the total number of white students who had enrolled in institutions of higher education and had graduated was greater than the total number of black students, during the period of the research study. In addition, there was a tendency for this gap to decrease over time. The study identified a variation related to the reduction of the gap for graduating black and white students. It seemed slower than the reduction in the gap for enrolment, but both indicators have been improving regarding racial inequalities. The study discovered that higher education system in Brazil had introduced new tools to promote access to education and reduce the dropout rate. Programmes such as the quota system, ProUni, Fies, Sisu and permanence policies were identified as being responsible for improving the indicators of racial equality in higher education in the period of study.

In the case of South Africa, the study was able to determine that the total number of students enrolled in and graduating from higher education had increased in the period studied. On the one hand, black African students represented the majority of students enrolled in and had graduated from higher education throughout the whole assessed period. However, the proportion of black African students in higher education was still not equivalent to their weight in the population as a whole. On the other hand, the reality for white students was the opposite. During the interval studied, the proportion of white students in higher education outweighed

their participation in the general population. Such differences have been reducing over time, suggesting a slight reduction in racial inequality in higher education in South Africa. The study also revealed that racial aspects impacted access to and the completion of higher education in both Brazil and South Africa. The study concluded with policy recommendations. A key recommendation of the study was for the development of policies that would tackle the challenge of dropouts which the study identified as a major issue for the higher education in both countries.

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In loving memory of my mother, Cleuza Regina de Souza Eugenio.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This research study attempted to uncover how racial aspects impacted on access to higher education in Brazil and South Africa and then determine how race influenced the completion of higher education in both countries. It is a comparative study that used a descriptive quantitative research design to assess and determine the extent of racial inequality in higher education in both Brazil and South Africa. It relied on a comparative research framework to compare and contrast the question of race and inequalities in higher education in both countries. This chapter deals with a general introduction of the study and then presents the framework of the problem, followed by the rationale and significance of the study. The research questions, objectives and main assumptions are presented in this section. Finally, main concepts related to this topic are clarified.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study focuses on one specific type of social inequality, i.e., racial inequality and how it manifests itself in higher education in Brazil and South Africa. The researcher had tried to locate her study within the broader literature on race, class and the quality of education in the post colony. In South Africa, colonialism and apartheid, through Bantu education, continued to reinforce a colonial and segregationist type of education after the democratic elections of 1994. The #Fees Must Fall and decolonization of higher education curricula protests which started in 2015 by university students across South Africa are a testament to the racial and other inequalities in a post-apartheid South Africa. For Brazil and South Africa, this panorama is a legacy from slavery, colonialism, apartheid and other segregationist systems which were adopted by particular elite racial groups, and which reinforced patterns of discrimination in the Global South in general and in Brazil and South Africa in particular (Marx, 1998).

Despite Brazil and South Africa being democratic and upper middle-income countries in the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) economic block, they both have high levels of inequality and poverty in the world (Phiri, 2017). These inequalities seem to be driven by race and class factors despite various government interventions, in the form of social provision, in the two countries. In higher education, access to and completion of studies seemed to be defined race, class and other inequalities. Therefore, this study sought to investigate the

paradox whereby education as a tool to address social and racial inequality, enable young people to access good quality education is uneven for individuals of different social strata in Brazil and South Africa. With that in mind, the problem assessed in this study was if there was, indeed, racial inequality in higher education in Brazil and South Africa, how did it manifest over time, and how was such an issue addressed in these countries?

1.3 RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

After more than three hundred years of slavery in Brazil, and almost three hundred years of colonialism and fifty years of Apartheid in South Africa, black students do not seem to have the same proportional participation in higher education. Both Brazil and South Africa are countries with a majority black population, despite the different categories of racial classification in each country. In Brazil, it was only in 2018 that black students represented the majority of students in public higher education (Nitahara, 2019a), which was 130 years after the abolition of slavery in the country. In the same year in South Africa, while African people represented 80.6% of the population (Statistics South Africa [Stats SA], 2021a), black students represented only 69.4% of students enrolled in higher education (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], 2021). Therefore, there was a need to undertake a research to find out why exclusionary patterns based on race still existed in democratic Brazil and South Africa. It was important for the researcher to establish a connection between the current racial inequality and the previous exclusionary systems adopted in these two countries.

Such a connection was investigated in this research, considering that the manifestation of oppression by systemic issues of social division create unequal experiences and different statuses for different groups of citizens (Bhopal & Preston, 2012). A research of this nature serves as a contribution towards the generation of new knowledge, insights and perspectives on the transformation of higher education sector in Brazil and South Africa. It also highlights how blacks could access equitable, quality and decolonised higher education in both Brazil and South Africa. It is hoped that the study will help activists, policymakers, researchers, education leaders, citizens, and governments in the two countries to understand the evolution of the participation of black students in higher education and then put an end to the past colonial and apartheid education system which keeps replicating itself in present times in both countries.

1.4 RESEARCH TOPIC

Comparative study on racial inequality in higher education in Brazil and South Africa.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.5.1 How class and racial aspects impact access and the completion of higher education in Brazil and South Africa?

1.5.2 What is the relationship between racial inequality and structural racism?

1.5.3 Which policies of affirmative action are being implemented in Brazil and South Africa to reduce racial inequalities in higher education?

1.5.4 What recommendations can be made to the Brazilian and South African governments?

1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.6.1 To assess how class and racial aspects impact access and the completion of higher education in Brazil and South Africa.

1.6.2 To correlate racial inequality and structural racism.

1.6.3 To identify policies of affirmative action that are being implemented in Brazil and South Africa to address racial inequalities in higher education.

1.6.4 To arrive at recommendations to governments of Brazil and South Africa.

1.7 RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS

1.7.1 Access and completion of higher education in Brazil and South Africa are impacted by class and racial aspects.

1.7.2 Racial inequality is a consequence of structural racism and intersectional factors.

1.7.3 Policies of affirmative action implemented in Brazil and South Africa impact positively on racial inequalities in higher education.

1.8 CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

1.8.1 Race

“Race is understood, in the social sciences, to be a socially constructed category based on physical or biological characteristics that members of society come to define as significant” (Schaefer, 2008). In this study the concept of race is presented as a political element used by

politicians and religious leaders to perform racist activities and policies (Almeida, 2019) under the shelter of legality and moral acceptance.

The concept of race, according to Almeida (2019), is based on two intertwined and complimentary concepts: biological and ethnic-cultural characteristics. Therefore, racial identification can be attributed by physical traits and/or traditions. This was mistakenly understood as a natural reality for some time, but the concept of race is in fact an element essentially political (Almeida, 2019).

1.8.2 Racial Segregation

Racial segregation refers to “the practice of restricting people to certain circumscribed areas of residence or to separate institutions and facilities on the basis of race or alleged race” (Britannica, 2020). For the Brazilian case, it was exemplified by the differentiation of residences between masters and slaves during slavery. For the South African case, it was illustrated by Apartheid, which was a regime that institutionalised racial segregation. This study argues that such systems have left a negative legacy that impacts both countries socially, politically and economically to this day.

1.8.3 Racial Inequality

Racial inequality refers to “imbalances in the distribution of power, economic resources, and opportunities” (Shapiro, 2004). In this study it is illustrated by the differences in social and economic indicators between black and white people. For data analysis, racial inequality is represented by the differences between the participation of black students in higher education, in relation to the participation of black population at the population as a whole.

1.8.4 Affirmative Action

This refers to “the practice or policy of favouring individuals belonging to groups regarded as disadvantaged or suffering from discrimination” (Oxford Dictionary, 2021). In this study it is understood as policies aiming for the social inclusion of people previously affected by exclusionary regimes. Moreover, it aims to increase the representation of racial minorities in spaces mainly occupied by white people (Almeida, 2019).

1.8.5 Quota system

The quota system is “a method of setting a limit on how much of something a country or company is allowed to have, produce, import, etc” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2021b). The quota system discussed in this research will be focused on vacancies in higher education. For the Brazilian case it is enforced by legislation (12.711/2012) that details the quota system for higher education in public universities. In South Africa, the Equality Act No. 4 of 2000 embraces more than education and also considers employment, healthcare, property, and other spheres. However, it does not indicate or prohibits institutions from using quotas based on race or language to tackle the consequences of past and current discrimination (De Vos, 2013).

1.8.6 Policies of permanence in higher education

According to Vargas & Heringer (2017), due to the low rates of completion of public higher education in Brazil, the National Student Assistance Plan was created in 2008. The plan aims to support the permanence of low-income students enrolled in on-site courses at federal institutions. This plan emphasizes the provision of housing, transportation, and food assistance to support students to continue studies until graduation. Policies of permanence are not limited to, but they also include policies of student assistance. Permanence policies should be designed for each and every university student, whereas assistance policies are intended for those that are in vulnerable situations (Vargas & Heringer, 2017).

1.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented a general introduction of this research. It included the background context, study rationale and title of the research study proposed. In addition, the research questions, objectives and main assumptions were introduced. It also embraced the clarification of terms relevant to the theme of this research. Hereafter, the second chapter with the literature review will summarize the main concepts and theories that support the discussion proposed in this research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This second chapter discusses the literature review for this study. In research, the literature review integrates findings and perspectives from diverse empirical findings, using previous research to build arguments and show evidence (Snyder, 2019). This chapter follows the funnel approach by beginning with global perspectives, definition of main concepts and then focussing on the two cases of Brazil and South Africa. The chapter then presents a theoretical framework that supports this research, and a conclusion is presented at the end.

2.2 INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

This research study is concerned with how racial aspects impact on access to higher education in Brazil and South Africa. It also tries to determine how race influences the completion of higher education in both countries. Brazil and South Africa were chosen by the researcher because of her familiarity with both contexts. However, the challenge of race, inequalities and access to higher education is not only unique to the two countries. For instance, even in the most developed country in the world, the United States, access to higher education by Native Americans is negligible (Brayboy et al., 2015). In the Global South, in countries such as India, the Caste System, which is a form of social inequality, creates barriers for some Indians to access higher education (Subramanian, 2019). Furthermore, even at the lower levels, access to education remains a challenge worldwide. UNESCO (2020) reports that the percentage of youth completing upper secondary school in low-income countries is 4% of the poorest and 36% of the richest. The gap is wider in lower-middle-income countries, where upper secondary school is completed by 14% of the poorest youth and 72% of the richest.

It is with the understanding that there are global inequalities, based on race and other exclusionary forces, that the United Nations promulgated Conventions to urge countries to allow disadvantaged groups to access higher education.

2.2.1 Convention against Discrimination in Education

According to UNESCO (2020), the Universal Declaration of Human Right affirms that education is a fundamental human right for all. It is better detailed in the Convention Against Discrimination in Education, where quality education is recognised to secure the development of the human being, as a powerful tool to lift socially excluded people, and one that helps to reduce the gender gap. However, to be secured as a human right it must include equality in opportunity, universal access, and executable and monitored quality standards.

2.2.2 *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*

This Convention of 1965 gives incentives to the adoption of measures to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and manifestations and prevent and combat racist doctrines to promote comprehension between races. Moreover, it seeks to foster an international community free from racial segregation and racial discrimination (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], 1965). It also embraces the right to education and training irrespective of race, colour, or national or ethnic origin. In addition, it raises the need of education and training to foster understanding and tolerance among racial or ethnic groups and countries.

2.2.3 *World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance*

Also known as the Durban Conference, it is aimed to counteract racism, discussed the origin of racial discrimination and formulated a plan to eradicate the phenomenon (United Nations, 2001). There were four main issues discussed in this conference. Firstly, it was the lack of common problems and concerns at the universal level, as every region of the world has its specific problems. Secondly, the rising tensions in the Middle East and the situation of the Palestinians. Thirdly, the historical legacies as a source and cause of the existing trends of racism. Finally, the discussion on the impact of colonialism was examined (Sundberg, 2002).

2.3 THE CONCEPT OF RACIAL INEQUALITY

Racial inequality still defines access to opportunities such as higher education in both Brazil and South Africa. It was therefore important for this study to examine this issue. Sen's capability approach (2000a) offers the understanding of poverty and inequalities as being wider

than the lack of income. Likewise, racial inequality should also be seen beyond imbalances in income among different races. This is an important dimension, although it represents only a sphere of inequality that may impact others. Racial inequality can also be translated into years of study, homicide rate, incarcerated population, leadership positions in large companies, access to basic needs such as potable water and electricity, and so on. Different treatment and level of access to resources and opportunities throughout time generated different social development indicators for black and white people in both Brazil and South Africa.

According to Jena (2018), international citizenship and global understanding despite creeds, caste, sex, colour, race or place of birth are among priorities of development. Discrimination, then, is a limitation to development as it is used to treat people differently, based on unjust prejudice. Discriminatory practices precede processes of dehumanization, and it was one of the instruments used by European colonialism to destroy and submit colonised populations around the world (Almeida, 2019), and particularly in Brazil and South Africa.

Correspondingly, exclusionary systems not only allowed human differentiation and treatment, but also reinforced it through formal and moral support by political and religious leaders (Almeida, 2019). Such unfair systems legalised and morally justified prejudice, discrimination, and inequalities. For Brazil and South Africa, respectively, slavery, colonialism and Apartheid generated inequalities that permeate institutions of their society and which remain visible to this day.

Not surprisingly, racial inequalities are preserved when racism is structural in a society, as discussed hereafter (Ribeiro, 2019). Thus, these inequalities need to first be identified and questioned. For black people to have equal rights and opportunities, and for any prospect of change to be possible, there should be a recognition of white people, with respect to their privileges and willingness to change the current unjust institutions in both Brazil and South Africa.

From a human rights perspective, social inequality raises the contradiction that some humans are more or less human than others, leading to the naturalization of inequality of rights. Once this understanding is consolidated at the social imaginary level that some individuals have incomplete humanity, it then becomes acceptable that they should not participate equally in the full enjoyment of human rights (Carneiro, 2011). Therefore, fighting the naturalization of inequalities is the first challenge to tackle racial inequality in a particular society. However, the main challenge is managing to address all intersectional factors that lead to it.

2.4 DEFINING HIGHER EDUCATION

Social and economic opportunities available to individuals throughout life are affected by different variables. Formal education is a one such relevant variable (Cruces et al., 2014). For that reason, it would be fair to say that an expansion in education would promote the expansion of opportunities and capabilities that an individual has access to.

Education is a fundamental right for everyone, and it is stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Right promulgated by UNESCO (2020). This right requires free, compulsory, and universal primary education; available and accessible to all secondary education; accessible to all higher education; fundamental education; professional training opportunities; equal quality education; quality teaching and supplies for teachers; and freedom of choice (UNESCO, 2020). Quality education fosters the development of an individual, and it is an effective tool in allowing social inclusion and mobility. Even so, providing free and compulsory education of good quality to all is a major challenge for many countries.

According to UNESCO (2020), one hundred and fifty-five countries manage to legally guarantee at least nine years of compulsory education. When elevating this level to twelve years of study, only ninety-nine countries manage to do so. The pattern indicates that the higher the level, the more challenging it is to offer accessible education. That statement is corroborated by data of individuals studying in Brazil in different age cohorts: 99.6% of children between six and ten years; 99.1% of children between eleven and fourteen years; 88.2% of youth between fifteen and seventeen years; and 32.7% of youth between eighteen and twenty-four years (Nitahara, 2019a). Structural factors, such as distance to school, access to study resources, and quality of education, impose barriers to access basic and secondary education. A greater variety of factors impacts who can access and complete higher education.

Higher education has different characteristics among countries, but it is generally the one offered after secondary education and characterised by issuing a degree or diploma upon completion (Britannica, 2021). For both Brazilian and South African students, reaching this level of study is a distant reality, especially for those coming from underprivileged groups. Despite the adoption of the Convention against Discrimination in Education in 1960 by the United Nations, the path to overcome inequality in education is a long one.

2.5 BRAZILIAN CONTEXT

The Brazilian education system has some peculiarities. It is important to start clarifying that, regardless of the level of study, public institutions offer free education, while in private institutions one has to pay fees to access education. Despite basic education being recognized as a right for every citizen, its quality varies. Basic public institutions cannot offer the same quality in education provided by private institutions. Consequently, students with higher income get access to better quality basic education. When it comes to higher education, the situation is reversed, with public universities offering a better-quality education than private universities. Still, students with more income are those who can enjoy the free and better-quality public universities, as they were the group prepared to pass the entry tests of these institutions. Students from underprivileged groups, previously enrolled in the public basic system of education, have then to pay fees in private universities to access higher education. It is an institutional trap that hinders the development of underprivileged students, providing free education for those who could afford fees, and charging fees from those who struggle to pay them and need to enhance their chances of social mobility.

The quota system in the public higher education in Brazil is a remarkable example of affirmative action policy. First implemented independently by a few universities during the early 2000s, the quota system became a law in Brazil in 2012. According to this law, 50% of the vacancies in federal universities must be reserved for minority segments of the population coming from public schools. Half of this share is dependent on the household income of the student, while the other half is not. The number of vacancies destined to the race minorities is proportional to the demography of the region. The quota system for education, then, has both social and racial criteria (Porfirio, 2021).

After some years of implementation, the quota system for higher education in public institutions has been showing a positive impact for the inclusion of disadvantaged groups. In 2018, for the first time, black students represented the majority of students in public higher education, being 50.3% of those enrolled in public universities (Nitahara, 2019b). Considering that 56.2% of Brazilian population are black (PNAD, 2019), finally having this group representing the majority in public higher education was a historical achievement. However, this distribution in education is still to be reflected in the labour market. A recent observation

reveals that managerial positions are occupied 68.6% by white people and 29.9% by black or brown people (IBGE Educa, 2018).

A more equal panorama is long overdue, considering the long history of social exclusion faced by black people in Brazil. It took years of struggle and revolts during slavery, which Brazil was the last country on the American continent to abolish slavery. Only one hundred years after the end of slavery, did all citizens acquire the right to vote, which was followed by the disclosure of the myth of racial democracy, that permeates the Brazilian society to the present day. Since the beginning of the republic in Brazil, national projects have worked towards institutionalizing racism, including it in the national landscape and camouflaging racial inequality as cultural diversity (Almeida, 2019). The panorama of the country depicts that the ending of an exclusionary system does not represent the discontinuity of social exclusion.

2.6 POLICY AND LEGISLATION

A policy can be defined as a plan of action, or a set of ideas used by governments or other groups of people to support decision-making (Cambridge Dictionary, 2021a). In line with this, legislation can be understood as the preparation and enactment of laws by government representatives (Britannica, 2021). It provides rules and regulations to guide the functioning of institutions and societies.

2.6.1 Policies in Brazil

According to Martins (2004), racial inequalities are an old phenomenon in Brazil. Recent research has shown concentration not only of income, but also in access to goods and services, including education and human capital. Despite drastic changes in the economy of the country, from stagnation to growth, or from inflation to price stability, socioeconomic inequalities have persisted. It does not mean that there was no social progress; however, racial inequalities were not naturally reduced along with social development.

The Brazilian State was mainly responsible for the disclosure of the myth of racial democracy. Since the end of the Brazilian Empire, the country has denied or silenced discussions about racism or racial inequality in the country, exemplified by the suppression of information about race in the national census of 1970 (Martins, 2004). Afro descendants in Brazil were in an alleged racial paradise, but with plenty of benefits for the elites, and a purgatory for the supposed beneficiaries of racial democracy (Marx, 1998).

Changes in that panorama began to occur with the beginning of re-democratization and the new Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil in 1988. It recognized cultural contribution from Afro Brazilians to the nation, and redefined racial discrimination acts as crimes, instead of minor contraventions (Martins, 2004). Also in 1988, the Palmares Cultural Foundation was created. This is a public institution dedicated to promoting and preserving the cultural, historical, social, and economic values of black influence in the formation of the Brazilian society (Palmares Foundation, 2021). Some years later, in 1995 the Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Black Population was created, which achieved small results, limited to changing racist approaches in school curricula and books (Martins, 2004).

A greater result in recognizing and discussing racial inequality in Brazil was achieved during the preparations for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, which was held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001. The Brazilian government adopted a posture of transparency, characterised by active and realistic disclosure of racial inequalities. Supported and encouraged by the President at the time, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA in Portuguese) began the production of indicators disaggregated by race. It conferred statistical precision to the unequal panorama previously raised by activists. These events were followed by the first Brazilian attempts at affirmative action programmes regarding positive discrimination of afro descendants since 2001 (Martins, 2004).

Among policies of affirmative action in Brazil, quota systems for afro descendants have been adopted by a crescent number of public universities since 2003, usually combining racial and socioeconomic criteria (Martins, 2004), which is a way to address both racial and class inequalities. This system has showed itself to be effective in increasing the participation of disadvantaged people in good quality higher education. In 2018, for the first time, black students represented the majority in public higher education, this being 50.3% of those enrolled in public universities (Nitahara, 2019b).

2.6.2 Legislation in Brazil

2.6.2.1 Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil, 1988

The *Constitution of Brazil* (1988) is a historic landmark as regards the country's re-democratization. After years of dictatorship and a military regime, the *Constitution of Brazil*

(1988) was written to recover and establish rights for Brazilian citizens. It mentions racial and educational issues in some of its articles (*Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil, 1988*).

Within the Fundamental Principles' Section, Article 3 consists of the fundamental goals for the country. Item IV states that the wellbeing of all should be promoted, irrespective of origin, race, sex, colour, and age. It means that the development of the citizens of the country should not involve any type of discrimination.

In the Individual and Collective Rights and Duties sections, Article 5 states that everyone is equal before the law. Item XLI specifies that discrimination is a crime, and item XLII establishes racism as a crime with no bail.

There is a specific section for education in this Constitution, and Article 205 declares education as a right of all and duty of the State and the family. It states that education should aim at the full development of the person, their preparation for the exercise of citizenship and their qualification for work.

The Constitution also records that education would be free to the private sector, as long as it met the general norms of national education and were subject to authorization and quality assessment by the public power (*Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil, 1988*).

2.6.2.2 Law 7.716/1989 – Racial Crimes

The purpose of this law is to define crimes resulting from racial or colour prejudice. It establishes penalties for various situation of racial discrimination, such as preventing student enrolment in educational institutions, or denying employment in the private sector (*Racial Crimes, 1989*). The law was sanctioned over thirty years ago; however, the recognition of the need for a legal provision to curb discriminatory practices happened one hundred years after the end of slavery (Vieira, Gina as cited in Jordao, 2019).

2.6.2.3 Law 9.394/1996 – Guidelines and Bases of National Education

This law establishes the guidelines and bases of national education in Brazil. Article 3 of this law expresses three relevant principles to the discussion of equality in education: equal conditions for access and permanence at school; guarantee of quality standard; and consideration with ethnic-racial diversity (*Guidelines and Bases of National Education, 1996*).

2.6.2.4 Law 10.260/2001 – Fies

The Student Financing Fund (Fies) is a programme of the Ministry of Education (MEC) that aims to provide funding to students in non-free higher education courses, i.e., private institutions. Through the National Higher Education Assessment System (*Sinaes*) vacancies are offered by institutions of higher education under the programme (FIES, 2022). Criticisms of this program include the debt it generates in public funds, the high default rate of the program, the risk being mostly from the government and not from educational institutions (Almeida & Riveira, 2021). From the student's perspective, it provides access to higher education; however, it generates a future debt, and this could be one of the reasons for dropout. The great challenge for students looking for ways to finance has always been to avoid indebtedness (Costa, 2020). This refers to the institutional trap where the students who cannot afford to pay for their studies are again the ones who have to pay for them in private institutions. After completing their studies, the likelihood of finding employment remains a challenge.

2.6.2.5 Law 11.096/2005 - ProUni – Programme University for All

Acronym for *Programa Universidade para Todos* (in Portuguese), the programme was created in 2005. *ProUni* is a programme from the Ministry of Education that offers scholarships, full and partial (25% and 50%), in private institutions of higher education (Ministerio da Educacao, 2022). Scholarships are offered to low-income students for graduation courses in private higher education institutions in exchange for tax exemptions (Jardim & Almeida, 2016). The main difference from *ProUni* and the Quota System for Higher Education is that the first targets private institutions of higher education, whereas the latter regulates vacancies in public institutions of higher education. Both programmes require proof of income to offer vacancies at universities. In other words, they are programs for both social and racial inclusion.

2.6.2.6 Law 12.288/2010 – Racial Equality Statute

The purpose of this law is to establish the Racial Equality Statute. The Statute aims to guarantee to the black population the realization of equal opportunities, the defence of individual, collective and diffuse ethnic rights, and the fight against discrimination and other forms of ethnic intolerance (*Racial Equality Statute, 2010*). It has a section focused on the right to education, culture, sport, and leisure.

It is important to note that in Brazil, federal and state institutions of higher education are public institutions. Brazil has many vacancies in private higher education institutions. However, the quota system is not applicable to these institutions. In public higher education institutions in Brazil, there is no charge of fees, education is free, which is why it is called public education. In private higher education institutions, students must pay fees to enrol in studies.

2.7 POLICIES OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN BRAZIL

The discussion so far has argued that where structural racism rules, opportunities and challenges exist they apply differently for black and white people, as well as for people of different social classes. Notwithstanding, some public policies have been managed to tackle racial inequalities by promoting social inclusion of groups of people that were previously disadvantaged. Policies of affirmative action, according to Almeida (2019), are implemented to promote equality and aim to increase the participation of racial minorities, by trying to change the discriminatory logic of institutional processes. These policies are politically and legally recognized. However, this does not minimize controversies inside and outside the institutions in which they are being implemented.

Policies of affirmative action put into practice the principle of equality according to the Aristotelian expression “equals should be treated equally and unequals unequally” (Claire et al., 2014). This idea expresses that people should be dealt with differently according to their different realities and needs, implementing, for instance, specific programmes for targeted audiences that were historically discriminated.

In Brazil, affirmative action policies are broadly based on the legal system, based on policies to promote racial equality in the *Constitution of Brazil* (Almeida, 2019). The racial quota system is one of many other modalities of affirmative action, which can be used in education and in the labour market. In the recent past, a large retailer in Brazil disclosed its high-level trainee program exclusive for black people. This initiative was introduced after the company had recognized that its employees were 53% blacks or brown, while only 16% of them held leadership positions (Narcizo, 2020). It was the first of the type in Brazil, and despite having legal support to be implemented, the program generated criticism from politicians, especially from extreme right politicians. It exemplifies the argument of Almeida (2019) that there are racial conflicts embedded in institutions, which consists of racism and racial inequalities that are structural and complex to address.

2.8 SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

The educational system in South Africa is divided into elementary, secondary and tertiary, with nine years of compulsory education (Macha, 2017). According to Osman (2015) it is a large sector, but also complex and unevenly distributed regarding the communities it serves. You find public, faith-based, secular, corporate, single sex, low-fee private, and high-fee private schools. Although there are high-performance public schools, the quality of education varies among them, and even more so when compared to private schools (Osman, 2015).

Similar to Brazil, South Africa also carries the burdens of European colonialism. First populated by Dutch settlers, internal conflicts arose in South Africa after European annexation of the lands of indigenous people and British incursions to compete for discovered gold. During the nineteenth century, South Africa was divided between conflicting British colonies and Afrikaner republics, rooting ethnic conflicts strengthened by racial prejudice and racist ideologies among Afrikaner descendants against African descendants (Marx, 1998). Despite the victory of the liberal British in the Boer War, previous commitments to enfranchise and advance indigenous black people were abandoned to appease Afrikaners and facilitate so-called nation building among white people. By prioritizing nation-state consolidation, the British allowed Afrikaner rule and, subsequently, Apartheid. This left the native black population on the margins of society and paying the price for white reconciliation. This is a price that is being paid to the present day and thus necessitating the need to implement policies to address racial inequalities.

The *Constitution of South Africa* (1996) states that everyone has the right to basic education. However, most children are attending under-performing institutions, as approximately 80% of the government-funded primary and secondary schools are not performing well (Osman, 2015). The quality of education enjoyed by an individual will influence the opportunities available throughout life, like accessing higher education or securing a good job. Additionally, investing in good quality education is good for both individuals and the society, as a stronger human capital can boost a country's productivity and development, besides being a tool to tackle inequality (Nickolas, 2021). The unfortunate history of racial prejudice in South Africa corroborates both the need and the challenge in offering high quality education for all.

During Apartheid, the Bantu Education Act set a clear example of discriminatory policy in South Africa, where students had access to schools and curricula according to their race (South

African History On-line [SAHO], 2019). This segregation impacted the quality of education available to different groups of race populations. Therefore, the educational system inherited by the first democratic government was fractured not only by race, but also by the type of institution, language of instruction and location (Bozalek & Boughey, 2012). Despite the end of such an Act, racial inequality in education remains. In South Africa, while 72.6% of white students obtain a degree, the reality is that only 57.9% of coloured students and 57.7% of black students obtain a degree (Stats SA, 2017). Moreover, it is expected that these imbalances in education lead to imbalances in the labour market as well. Whereas leadership positions in companies were occupied 65.6% by white people, black and coloured participation represented 15.2% and 5.6%, respectively (Labour Department, 2020).

To address racial inequalities, South Africa has been implementing legislations intended to promote redistribution of economic, political, social, and cultural resources, such as the Public Services Act, the Employment Equality Act, the Skills Development Act and the Skills Development Levy Act (Alexander, 2007). Racial inequalities in education are also being addressed through affirmative action policies, for instance the prioritization of university access by underprivileged black students (Muluh, 2012).

2.8.1 Policies in South Africa

According to SAHO (2011), colonialism started in South Africa with the arrival of the Dutch in 1652, who instituted slavery and the forced labour model in the country. The system was still in practice when the country became a British colony in 1814, who subsequently introduced the Amelioration Laws and finally abolished slavery in 1834 (SAHO, 2011).

However, this action did not allow the development of former slaves. The British were comfortable with the idea of white supremacy and embraced those ideals to avoid a new conflict with the Afrikaner community after the Anglo-Boer or South African War (Marx, 1998). To keep peace and rule the territory, the British preferred to ally themselves with Afrikaners, excluding natives from enfranchisement. The interest in avoiding another intra-white conflict allowed the implementation of many segregationist laws that precluded the development of coloured and black people (Marx, 1998). Segregation became even more restrictive with the implementation of Apartheid, with Acts for population registration and segregation, job reservation, segregation in education, land tenure, and many others enacted during this period.

Apartheid policies in South Africa marginalised coloured and black people, provided segregated, inadequate, and inferior services and opportunities (Durrheim, 2010). For example, the Bantu Education Act of 1953, implemented during this system, limited even more opportunities of black people. Besides institutionalising racially segregated schools, black South African children received inferior education focused on manual skills. In 1959 such segregation was also implemented in higher education, preventing black students from attending white universities (SAHO, 2019).

The legacy of race-based exclusion, poverty and inequality seen nowadays, reveals the need to redress structural conditions that replicate the past exclusionary patterns. Therefore, the first democratic government after the end of Apartheid adopted policies which included programmes of reconstruction and development, restitution, and affirmative action in employment and education (Durrheim, 2010). Policies were developed in an attempt to re-centre transformation and reform in the education sector. Such policy documents include: The Education White Paper 3: A programme for higher education transformation, the Draft National Plan for Higher Education in South Africa, the Report of the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions, also known as Soudien Report (Hlatshwayo, 2020).

The Bill of Rights entrenched in the *Constitution of South Africa* (1996) deliberates on human, civil, political, and socio-economic rights of South Africa's citizens, including the right to basic and adult education (Spren & Vally, 2006). Nonetheless, a variety of factors related to poverty and inequality still hamper the access and the completion of education, such as school fees, clothing, transportation, and proper facilities. It highlights the need to link the right to education with other human rights and basic needs (Spren & Vally, 2006).

The country also has a National Action Plan to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance. The document presents a historical context, regarding what was done on the subject so far, and the list of actions to tackle the issue (Republic of South Africa, 2019). Specific to the education sector, the country has a White Paper for Post-School Education and Training. The White Paper aims to establish strategies to expand the provision of education and training in the country, improve its quality, integrate the post-school system, and establish modalities that support employers in creating a skilled labour force (Van der Bank et al, 2015).

Regarding social inclusion, the Department of Social Development of the South African Government offers social protection services, aiming to improve the quality of life of poor and vulnerable people. The department also manages the Social Grants Programme, offering grants such as child support, pension for older persons and social relief for the distressed (South African Government, 2021). Despite not being directly aimed at educational issues, the grants address disadvantaged people.

2.8.2 Legislation in South Africa

2.8.2.1 *The Bantu Education Act, 1953*

This Act segregated the education system for black and white students, centralising the control of black schools at the Bantu Education Department. By separating the financing of native's education from the general state spending, black children had less investment in their education and, consequently, one with inferior quality (SAHO, 2019).

In 1959, an extension of the *University Education Act (Act 45 of 1959)* also separated tertiary institutions according to race, and thus prevented black students to attend white universities. Education for coloured and Indian people was also segregated respectively by *The Coloured Person's Education Act of 1963* and *The Indian Education Act of 1965*. Investment in the Bantu Education system increased in 1972 only because the private sector pressured for a better instructed black workforce (SAHO, 2019). This is a clear example of the connection between class and racial relations, and how it affects different population groups: the educational curricula of the working class, composed of black people, was defined according to the needs of the class that controls the means of production, which were formed and controlled by white people.

The Bantu Education Act was repealed in 1980, but the South African society still deals with its legacy. The lack of funding and expenditures in South African schools, the lack of training and number of teachers, the poor-quality school facilities, and the unskilled labour curriculum for black schools hampered the socioeconomic development of the indigenous people (Gallo, 2020). Such unequal quality delivery in education reinforced inequalities among races, as evident in constrained educational and economic opportunities for black people.

2.8.2.2 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

Within Chapter 2 of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996) is the *Bill of Rights*. This document establishes fundamental rights of all people in South Africa, including the right to basic education (Spreen & Vally, 2006). According to Section 29(1), every person has the right to a basic education, adult basic education included, and to further education as well, progressively made available and accessible by the government (McConnachie et al., 2017).

Still in the Bill of Rights, section 9 focusses on equality. This section states that everyone is equal before the law, providing people the right to equal protection. People should not be discriminated by race, gender, sex, ethnic, age, disability, belief, culture, and others (*The Bill of Rights, 1996*).

2.8.2.3 South African School - Act 84 of 1996

This Act intends to offer a uniform system for the organisation, governance, and funding of schools and to amend and repeal other laws pertaining to schools. It stipulates that schooling is compulsory for all South Africans from grade one to nine, which represent ages seven to fifteen, respectively (*South African School Act, 1996*).

By supporting the rights of learners, educators and parents and setting out the duties and responsibilities of the state, the Act covers compulsory attendance, admission to public schools, language policy of public schools, curriculum and assessment, religion, code of conduct and representative councils of learners, suspension and expulsion from public schools, governance and professional management of public schools, funding, school fees, independent private schools, and general provisions (Department of Basic Education, 2014).

The Act represented a break with the past, providing major changes for education in South Africa with the aim to facilitate the democratic transformation of education (Maithufi, 1997). This Act was later amended by the Education Laws Amendment Act 100 of 1997, updating definitions, enabling public school to appoint additional staff, and making technical adjustments (*Education Laws Amendment Act, 1997*).

2.8.2.4 Higher Education Act - 1997

With the goal to effect inclusion and equity in post-basic education, the act regulates higher education and covers the establishment, governance and funding of public higher education institutions, the registration of private higher education institutions, the quality assurance and promotion in higher education, and mainly the transitional arrangements and the repeal of certain laws (Government of South Africa, 2023). This legislation was one of the many steps needed to restructure the education system to respond to the diverse needs of the learner population and promote redress.

2.8.2.5 National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NFSAS) - 1999

According to the South African Government (2022), NFSAS is a bursary scheme provided by the South African government and funded by the Department of Higher Education and Training for students who lack the financial means to fund their studies and fail to access study loans, bank funding or bursaries. It is also noted on the NFSAS website that students who pass all subjects, will have 40% of their NFSAS funding for the referred year converted into a bursary, being responsible to pay back the amount of 60% of the loan when they start working.

Advantages of this programme include its comprehensiveness, as students may use the resources for tuition, registration fees, allowance for materials, accommodation, etc. In addition, it is applicable to any course from any tertiary education institution, and since 2018 funding received from NFSAS do not need to be paid back (Ju, 2022). Although it seems a very advantageous option for the student at first glance, NFSAS has eligibility criteria, focusing mainly on students from disadvantaged groups. Consequently, not all students applying for this loan scheme will be granted funding (Ju, 2022).

2.8.2.6 Equality Act or PEPUDA – Act No. 4 of 2000

The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000 aims to prohibit and prevent harassment and hate speech, to promote equality and eliminate unfair discrimination (Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination, 2000). The range of the Act is wide, embracing not only education, but also labour and employment, healthcare services and benefits, land and property, housing, accommodation, pensions,

insurance services, provision of goods, services and facilities, partnerships, professions, and sport (Kok, 2017).

It can be understood as a transformative law, which aims to foster a more egalitarian society with reduced socioeconomic inequalities and also addressing social exclusion (Kok, 2017). The Act is implemented by the Equality Courts, designated to hear and assess matters related to the Act.

2.9 POLICIES OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN SOUTH AFRICA

In South Africa, the implementation of a democratic government in 1994 allowed the construction of a new education and training system focused on democratizing the education sector. The new education system has been dealing with unfair discrimination, increasing access to training and education opportunities, and enhancing the quality of education (Van der Bank et al, 2015). The *Constitution of South Africa* (1996) tenet of equality in the Bill of Rights, establishing fundamental rights to all South Africans, such as the right to basic education speaks to the former issues. It highlights the relevance of equality by including principles of both formal and substantive equality. The former relates to treating individuals in neutral circumstances, while the latter takes into consideration social and economic circumstances to redress inequalities (Nel, 2011). Similarly, the White Paper on Education also uncovers and protects the use of affirmative action policies to redress inequalities (Madala, 1999). The main example of affirmative action policy in South Africa is the Employment Equity Act of 1999, which is intended to promote a diverse and non-discriminatory environment in workplaces after the transition to democracy (Madala, 1999).

2.10 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Brazil and South Africa are still defined by ideas of race from previous eras of slavery, colonialism, and Apartheid, despite governments in both countries putting in place measures to make their societies more equal. The persistence of past exclusionary patterns can be attributed to structural issues which are entrenched in societal systems. The two countries covered in this study have been through years of slavery, colonialism, Apartheid and exploitation of underprivileged groups, resulting in the socioeconomic and political inequalities seen nowadays. The combination of the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) and theories

of social exclusion (Sen, 2000b) assist in illuminating how there are structural obstacles that hinder social mobility of disadvantaged groups. The former example shows how power relations are affected by different variables and reveals how oppression impacts the opportunities available to distinct people.

Intersectionality intends to give theoretical-methodological instrumentality to the structural inseparability of racism, capitalism, and cisheteropatriarchy (Akotirene, 2019). It is to say that racial, class and gender aspects impact how opportunities are to be enjoyed by distinct social groups. Although social mobility is a desire of many, it is a reality for just a few. At the same time, the freedom to choose one's lifestyle is both a means and an end to development, as people's capabilities depend on economic, social, and political dispositions (Sen, 2000a)

2.10.1 Capability Approach

This evaluative approach is a contribution from Amartya Sen, who built this moral framework, proposing that social arrangements should be seen from the freedom people have to achieve or promote the instrumental freedoms they value (Alkire, 2005).

Sen has united the concepts of freedom and *functionings* to discuss capability. Accordingly, capability can be understood as the freedom of a person to choose between different ways of living. *Functionings* are, therefore, the instrumental freedoms one may have in its life, namely political freedom, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees, and protective security (Sen, 2000b). The value of *functionings* is personal and subjective, so they vary across time and from person to person. The lack of *functionings* leads to deprivation of capability, preventing people from living their desired life and allowing their exclusion from social relations (Sen, 2000b).

Sen's approach regarding well-being becomes more comprehensive than the approach of neoclassical utilitarianism, as it is not only aimed at equality of the total utility earned by people, with a characteristic of union, but rather demonstrate the relevance of the ability to perform *functionings*, so that the person has freedom to obtain well-being. The expansion of freedom is of great importance to Sen, as it is through the elimination of deprivations of freedom that a country can achieve development. It is up to the State, then, in addition to providing programs, to strengthen and protect human capabilities (Sen, 2000a). According to Sen (1995) the ability to perform *functionings* constitutes the person's freedom to have well-being.

For Sen (1995) human beings differ from each other in different ways, starting life with different inheritances of wealth and responsibilities, with access to different opportunities that the societies in which they live offer, being able or not to take advantage of them, as well as differences on personal characteristics. The relative advantages and disadvantages that people have can be judged according to several variables, such as income, wealth, utilities, resources, freedom, rights, quality of life and so on (Sen, 1995). Such diversity, for the author, makes it difficult to adequately accommodate the structure to assess inequality.

In regards of inequality, the one that affects income is the sphere that receives the most attention, and this happens due to the hypothesis that income is highly correlated with the other dimensions of poverty, and due to the facility of obtaining data on income for making comparisons (Kuwahara et al, 2009). But as Sen (1995) reminds us, income is not the only delimitation for what a person can or cannot accomplish. The reason for aiming more wealth is the fact that it is a means to obtain more freedom and lead the desired type of life (Sen, 2000a). For the author, economic growth should not be the goal, but rather development with improved life and freedoms enjoyed by the population.

From that perspective, this theory helped this research to uncover how freedom of choice relates to real opportunity to achieve what one values. One of the capabilities that allows the individual to be free to choose to live the kind of life that pleases him is education, and this is also sensitive to inequality. The hypothesis is that inequality in education decreases the capability of individuals, limiting their choices and decreasing the possibilities of achieving the kind of life they desire. If a person aims to access and graduate from higher education, such choice should be supported by the five instrumental freedoms. On the other hand, the reality we see in both countries covered by this study is that youth do not accomplish to complete higher education because of lack of good quality basic education, limited financial resources, distance to educational institution, proper environment to study, nutrition and health, the need to work to provide income for the household, and so on.

2.10.2 Race and Education

The work of Soudien (2012) on race and education in a South African context contributes with practical comprehension on the intricacy of the dynamics of power relations in South Africa post-Apartheid. In his work entitled *Realising the dream*, the author discusses the logic on race in South African school, how racism influences the path to a South Africa without

discrimination, and the contradictions and complexities in the construction of social human beings like us. Such discussion is important for the first objective of this research, as it supports the understanding on how class and racial aspects impact access and the completion of higher education, allowing the identification and comprehension of some barriers to the economic uplifting of black and poor students.

Soudien (2012) explain how race is introduced and embedded through education. Along with the family, school is the institution that influences the construction of individuals personal and social identities. For the South African case, the state's authority and vision of ideal citizen has shaped the schools' goals for young people, including or excluding students from full citizenship. During Apartheid, not only was the South African education system structured with a hierarchical nature, but it also had a racialised curriculum. On the other hand, the post-Apartheid era brought new significant legislation on education, namely, the White Paper on education and training, the National Education Policy Act, the South African Schools Act, the National Norms and Standards for School Funding, and the Early Childhood Development, and beyond basic education the Further Education and Training Act, and the Higher Education Act (Soudien, 2012).

Indeed, the author argues that languages of description for inclusion are incorporated into the law. Nevertheless, its presence is nothing but philosophical, when in fact this language of inclusion is reconstituted to legitimate social hierarchy and exclusion. Two main challenges are still to be addressed regarding the education sector: access and quality. When it comes to access, the law is ambiguous enough to allow schools to apply entrance examinations with language tests, which would consequently impose barriers to black students. In addition, class and racial selection could be implemented through fee maintenance and distance from schools, making good quality schools accessible to black students from more affluent families.

Still, the author believes it is possible for people to access opportunities to choose their preferred lifestyle, in despite of personal characteristics and environments. He argues that differences among people should set the basis for resourceful solutions, instead of discrimination, segregation and racism, overcoming structural systems of domination and subordination.

2.10.3 Racism and inequality

The work of Almeida (2019) on racism and inequality in a Brazilian context contributes to the discussion of this study with the concepts of race, with the political and historical aspects of structural racism, how racism is naturalised, and finally the connections between racism and inequality. This discussion is relevant for the second objective of this study, which is establishing a connection between racial inequality and structural racism.

According to Almeida (2019), the concept of race is based on two intertwined and complimentary concepts: biological and ethnic-cultural characteristics. With that said, racial identification can be attributed by physical traits and/or traditions, but the concept of race is in fact an element essentially political. Politicians have used these elements to create groupings of people, which led to discriminatory policies, where the most influential group would set rules to benefit themselves at the expense of the minority groups. Leaders have made use of this view to facilitate processes of dehumanization, leading to discriminatory practices and genocides (Almeida, 2019). Unfortunately, there are plenty of examples of such events in the world history. For instance, the slave trade from the 15th to the mid-19th century is a remarkable one.

The author argues that racism is a political and historical process, being structural racism derived from both institutional processes and individual behaviours. It is political because it depends on political power to influence the organization of society as a systemic process of discrimination. It is historical as the specificity of the structural dynamics of racism is linked to the peculiarities of each social formation. In addition, Almeida (2019) states that racism, being a political and historical process, is also a process of constituting subjectivities, of individuals whose conscience and affections are somehow connected with social practices. Therefore, racism can only be perpetuated if it is able of producing a system of ideas that provides a reasonable explanation for racial inequality, naturalising racial classification and discrimination.

The social significance of being black or white varies across countries due to multiple political-legal mechanisms of racialization, in addition to cultural, political, and economic differences. For the Brazilian and South African cases, national unity was built upon racism, and not despite of it (Almeida, 2019). Consequently, black and white people had access to different resources and opportunities throughout their life regarding income, health, and education.

Also relevant for Almeida (2019) is the role of meritocracy in racism. The discourse of meritocracy supports, in Brazil, the myth of racial democracy and the denial of racism. In the absence of racism, black people that could not improve their way of living are the only responsible for their condition, as they have not done all in their power to work on their social mobility. In an unequal country like Brazil, meritocracy endorses inequality, misery, and violence, as it makes it difficult to take effective political positions against racial discrimination. In the Brazilian context, the meritocracy discourse is highly racist, since it promotes the ideological conformation of individuals to racial inequality (Almeida, 2019).

Based on Cox (1948) and Myrdal (1944), Almeida (2019) argues that racism should not be treated as a variable external to the economy, but as part of socioeconomic relations. Based on that, racial inequality can be attributed from labour relations to market failures, due to institutional obstacles and lack of information. To tackle racism, then, it would be necessary changes both on behaviours and at the relation between the state and the market.

2.10.4 Interplay among the theories in the study

For this research, the capability approach, race and education in South Africa, and race and inequality in Brazil set the basis for discussing that people should be able to choose, access and complete higher education. Nevertheless, a variety of factors hinder these choices. These theoretical concepts have supported the understanding of the intersection between race, class and education opportunities.

The contribution of Sen (2000a) is to indicate the relevance of providing to individuals their instrumental freedoms, which will allow them to strengthen their abilities and capabilities to be able to choose their preferred type of life. Access to good quality education is one of the means individuals can boost their capabilities. Complementarily, Soudien (2012) shares how discrimination and exclusion generates different experiences for students in South Africa depending on their race and class, affecting the development of their capabilities and hampering opportunities of social mobility. Similarly, Almeida (2019) discusses the political and historical spheres of racism in Brazil, which allowed discrimination to be naturalised and embedded in institutions, generating a structural racism. Addressing the racial inequality consequent of the social formation of both countries requires intersectional and structural policies that will allow individuals to develop their capabilities.

This study argues that the opportunity to access and complete education is limited, both in Brazil and South Africa, due to the social formation of the countries (Soudien, 2012), intersectional factors and structural racism (Almeida, 2019). By not being able to develop themselves with good quality education, people miss the opportunity to enjoy different opportunities and achieve their full potential. Moreover, people experience multiple inequalities and present many identifications that are hardly captured by one theoretical perspective alone (Bhopal & Preston, 2012).

Since this was a comparative study between Brazil and South Africa, the researcher relied on a comparative perspective and thus used comparative public policy theories to understand and analyse education dynamics in the two countries. According to Wong (2016) comparative public policy is an area of interdisciplinary study which uses public policy as a major unit of analysis for comparison across different systems and institutions, usually countries or governments. It typically asks questions about how, why and to what effect different governments pursue different or similar policies. Since basic and higher education are public policy areas (Spren & Vally, 2006), it was important for the researcher to use a comparative public policy perspective to gain more insights into race and inequality in the higher education sector of both Brazil and South Africa. Furthermore, since both Brazil and South Africa are burdened with persistent inequality and poverty almost three decades after democracy, the research had to find out why this was the case. This continues to happen despite both countries having developed ambitious social policies to address the legacies of slavery, colonialism and Apartheid (Phiri, 2017).

2.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter dealt with the literature review and presented the main discussions on existing literature on structural racism and policies of affirmative action. It also included a presentation of the contexts of Brazil and South Africa in terms of their social formation, policies and legal framework on racial discrimination and access to education. Some of the authors cited in this chapter argued that racial inequality is a legacy from exclusionary systems implemented in both countries covered in this study, such as slavery, colonialism and Apartheid. Moreover, the structural racism supports the perpetuation of such racial unbalances, including different experiences when accessing and completing higher education.

The legal framework for prohibiting discrimination, promoting diversity, and fostering access to education is strong in both countries. However, racial inequality is so rooted in institutions that the institutionalisation of the legality of promoting equality is just one of several actions necessary for equality to become a reality.

Therefore, policies of affirmative action are significant tools to promote historical reparation and move towards a society with fairer opportunities. This study aims to provide empirical data to corroborate that there is racial inequality at the Brazilian and South African societies, and policies of affirmative action at the higher education sector is able to tackle directly this issue.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The methodological framework for this research is presented in this section. The method used to collect and analyse data of this study is also presented in this chapter. The set of methods, procedures, and techniques that are used in the implementation of the research plan can be defined as the research methodology (Babbie & Mouton, 2007). It embraces the procedures that assist and guide the execution of a study. It includes the target population, sampling plan, research design, stimulus materials, response measures, data collection methods, and data analysis (Pandey & Pandey, 2015). All items applicable to this research will be presented below, including limitations of the study.

The data collected supported the researcher to assess the participation of black students in higher education throughout time in Brazil and South Africa. This chapter includes the research design, population of the study, data collection method and tools, data analysis, and limitation of this research.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design focuses on the main deliverable of the research, starting with the research problem and highlighting the logic of the research (Mouton as cited in De Vos, 2005). This research investigated how racial aspects impacted on access to higher education in Brazil and South Africa, respectively. It also tried to determine how race influenced the completion of higher education in both countries. It used a descriptive quantitative research design to retrieve data on enrolment and graduation in higher education from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) in South Africa and *Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira* of Brazil (INEP in Portuguese) and then filtered it using population groups. The research design was picked to describe the studied phenomenon and endeavour to comprehend behaviour in a certain context (Babbie & Mouton, 2007), in this case, in Brazil and South Africa. Therefore, a descriptive quantitative research design was the most adequate to visualize the participation of black students in higher education over time and support the discussion on how class and racial aspects impact access and the completion of higher education in Brazil and South Africa. Furthermore, a descriptive quantitative design

scrutinizes the situation according to its current reality. Descriptive research entails the comprehension of attributes of certain phenomenon through observation or the investigation of correlation among phenomena (Williams, 2007). Additionally, descriptive research has a quantitative nature, that usually makes use of questionnaires as data collection method (De Vos, 2005). This research, however, did not use a questionnaire as a tool to collect data. Data was obtained from databases of statistics bureaus of both countries which were studied, and the numeric results were used to corroborate the discussion of the hypotheses from this research, and also correlated literature, the theoretical framework and empirical data.

With that in mind, there are three main hypotheses assessed in this research. Firstly, black and coloured people face structural barriers throughout life, hampering them from accessing good quality education and obtaining a high level of education. That discussion argues that structural racism is one of the barriers, resulting in different population groups to face different challenges and opportunities, leading to or reinforcing racial inequality. Secondly, accessing higher education does not naturally lead to graduating, and once again people from different population groups will experience differently the path to complete a degree. Thirdly, there are ways to limit the perpetuation of certain privileges and promote a process of historical repair in the education sector. Such a position led to an examination of policies of affirmative action in higher education in Brazil and South Africa.

Accordingly, the quantitative method was used to test these hypotheses, which were also based on considerable literature on the field. Thus, the researcher expected to find correlation between racial inequality in higher education and structural racism. Racial inequality is represented by the difference between the proportion of black students in higher education and the proportion of black people in the population as a whole. Furthermore, racial inequality is also pictured by differences between enrolment and graduation rates for different population groups. This was endorsed through statistical data of access to and completion of higher education for different population groups in both countries assessed in this study. In a quantitative study, such as this one, the responsibility of understanding and interpreting quantitative information lies with the researcher.

According to De Vos et al (2005), researchers may select one or more designs that suit their research objectives and goals. Therefore, this study marginally makes use of explanatory research, which aims to establish relationships of cause and effect, attempting to clarify how and why a relationship occurs (Goundar, 2012). For this study, explanatory descriptive research

had embraced a discussion on how the social formation of both countries contributed to the current unequal social panorama, allowing class and racial aspects to affect opportunities available to different groups of individuals. It relied on the correlation between structural racism and racial inequality, to describe how the history of segregation and exclusion of both countries has led to current and lasting racial imbalances.

3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The population of research is the group of people that meets the criteria of characteristics and qualities that the research is targeting (Strydom, 2005). Similarly, the sampling plan is the method of specifying how the results from the target population may be generalised (Pandey & Pandey, 2015). This study used purposive sampling based on its research design. Purposive sampling is defined by De Vos et al. (2005) as a process of selecting participants or cases according to their characteristics that are suitable for the study. Therefore, purposive sampling was considered the most appropriate for this research, as it enabled the researcher to identify the number of black students in higher education over a specific time period in the two countries.

The population for this study included students that had been in higher education in Brazil and South Africa. The selection of such a population was already made by statistics bureaus that collect data in both countries. This study collected, consolidated and analysed the datasets on record. In other words, this study made use of secondary data relevant for the analysis of the study. Data for South African students was retrieved from databases from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). This department provided two indicators relevant for this research. The first one is enrolment, which indicates the total of students that have access to higher education. This dataset provides information on population group, qualification type, gender and home language. The first two parameters were used as this research aims to identify the total of black students with access to universities. Thus, the sample for this study encompassed the total number of students enrolled at their first bachelor degree with the duration of three years or more, including African, Coloured and Indian students. This excluded transfers and post-graduate certificates, irrespective of their gender or language. For comparison purposes, the number of white students in higher education were also identified following the same parameters.

The second indicator provided by the DHET was that of graduates, which indicates the number of students that have completed their studies in higher education. This dataset is available by population group, majors, gender and area of specialisation. For this sample, the researcher considered African, Coloured and Indian students graduating at their first bachelor's degree, with the duration of three years or more, irrespective of their gender or area of specialisation. Similarly, this sample was compared with the number of white students meeting the same criteria. Both indicators for South Africa were available from 1986 to 2019. Nevertheless, the time frame used for data analysis was the one with data available for both countries.

An additional dataset was collected for South Africa in order to allow the comparison of the representativeness of different population groups in higher education with their representativeness of the whole population. The dataset of mid-year population estimates 2021 was retrieved from Statistics South Africa, containing statistical estimations of the population of South Africa by population groups.

In addition, data for Brazilian students was retrieved from the census of higher education by the *Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira* (INEP). The dataset provided by this institution included two indicators that were used in this research. In line with the data collected for South Africa, the first indicator for Brazilian students was enrolment. Due to the differences of the education sector and population classification in both countries, the sample for students in higher education in Brazil encompassed some different variables compared to the sample of South Africa. The number of students enrolled in higher education in Brazil included black and brown students, from public and private institutions, from undergraduate level and all modes of teaching, namely online and on-campus mode.

Similarly, the second indicator from the same dataset was graduates. This sample also included black and brown students, from public and private institutions, from the undergraduate level and all modes of teaching. Both indicators were also collected for white students, under the same criteria, for comparison purposes. However, the Brazilian database was only available from 2009 to 2019. This was the time frame considered to compare data between the two countries. This is due to the fact that INEP did not collect race information in previous censuses.

Finally, data for this research was consolidated to enable a timeline perspective, allowing the assessment of changes on inclusion or exclusion in higher education throughout time. Such

an approach also attempted to correlate these changes with the implementation of policies of affirmative action, supported by the policy document analysis.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

The design selected for the research provided guidelines of the most suitable data collection method, according to the goals of the research. The data collection method is a systematic and technical process to obtain numeric results (De Vos et al, 2005). The definition and clarification of the data collection methods are relevant because the chosen method has an impact on the results of the study, and consequently how to interpret them in the discussion of the research.

As this study used secondary data, measurement procedures and instruments were already implemented by the primary collector of data, namely INEP for Brazil and DHET for South Africa. These government bodies are responsible for collecting and managing data from the education sector in both countries, ensuring that the data available is both reliable and valid.

Even though data from DHET of South Africa is available for a longer time frame, the method of collection differs over time. From 1984 to 1998, the method of collection was through aggregated tables of actual enrolment and graduates at all the public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). In 2000, a new unit record data system was implemented, which gathers data from 1999 to 2019. With this system in place, the HEIs input and submit data themselves, after a required audit procedure before including such data in the dataset. This is the current method of collection for data of enrolments and graduates, including 26 South African Universities (DHET, 2021).

The dataset from INEP for Brazilian students in higher education is part of the Higher Education Census. This census is performed annually by INEP, and it is the most complete research instrument in Brazil on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that offer undergraduate courses and specific training sequences, in addition to their students and teachers. The Higher Education Census uses information from the registry of the e-MEC System, in which records of all the HEIs, their courses and offer locations are kept. Based on these records, the census collects information about the infrastructure of HEIs, vacancies offered, candidates, enrolments, freshmen, graduates and professors, in different forms of academic organization administrative category. The purpose of the collection is to provide reliable statistical information, which allows for knowledge and monitoring of the Brazilian Higher Education system (INEP, 2021b).

When dealing with censuses, according to De Vos et al (2005), probability statistics are not used, because census data frequency counts and percentages are used to present similarities between groups. Through a purposive sampling method, students from disadvantaged backgrounds in Brazil and South Africa were selected from these datasets with the purpose to assess the access and completion of higher education of such students throughout time. Data was utilised in aggregated form; thus, no personal information of any participant was utilised.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION TOOLS AND INSTRUMENTS

The basis of quantitative data collection instruments is the concept of measurement. It can be understood as the process of using specific indicators to describe abstract concepts, assigning symbols or numbers to these indicators according to specific rules (Monette, Sullivan and DeJong, 2002, as cited in De Vos et al, 2005). Accordingly, an indicator is an observation expected to be evidence of the attributes of a phenomenon (De Vos et al, 2005).

To test the hypotheses of this research and presented results, this research made use of secondary data. It comprised data that had already been collected by other organisations, such as government statistics (INTRAC, 2017). The collected dataset of students in higher education in Brazil and South Africa already provided the indicators at the format that were used in this study. Thus, there was no need of adequacy of scores obtained with specific rules for such indicators.

Nonetheless, to enable the analyses required by this research, there were specific rules to be followed for the proper sampling of the population studied. Such rules were discussed earlier in the population and sampling section. After the careful sampling of the dataset, data was managed with a regular spreadsheet program, enabling the analysis of data throughout time. The application facilitated the construction of tables and graphics, which supported the discussion on the correlation of structural racism and racial inequality. Ultimately, the aim was to assess whether access and completion of higher education was sensitive to policies of affirmative action. Graphic presentations illustrate devices to picture data, enabling the comprehension of essential characteristics of frequency distributions (Ferguson, 1976 as cited in De Vos, 2005).

Datasets provided by INEP and DHET composed of numbers only, and did not contain personal identification of the students. Adherence to and respect for local laws regarding protection of personal information, such as Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) for

South Africa and General Personal Data Protection Law for Brazil, were taken into consideration by statistics bureaus before disclosing indicators and publications. As a result, access to datasets from these governmental bodies was the main authorization and consent needed in order for this study to be performed.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis embraces how data will be treated and organised to directly address the research problem, detailing with the statistical procedure used in the research (Pandey & Pandey, 2015). However, data analysis does not provide in itself the answers for research questions. It is necessary to interpret the data and the results to be able to analyse and obtain answers for them (De Vos et al, 2005).

The aim of the analysis is to reduce data to a comprehensible and interpretable way in order to undertake the study, test and draw conclusions on the relations of the research problems (De Vos et al, 2005). The process for comprising data for this research was performed through an accurate sampling of the population, as probability statistics are not used when dealing with data from censuses.

In addition to interpreting data, this study aimed to compare the results and conclusions drawn from theory; correlating data of access and conclusion of higher education to the discussion of structural racism, racial inequalities and policies of affirmative action for the education sector. Also, it was significant when interpreting data from both countries to consider their specificities with regard to population classification and the differences in the structure of the education sector of each country.

3.7 DATA VERIFICATION

To picture how access and the completion of higher education in Brazil and South Africa varies among population groups, this study made use of secondary datasets collected by government agencies of both countries and which were available to the researcher after request. Validity of data is necessary to differentiate research from fiction, keeping its value to be applied to social phenomena (Cozby, 2009). By comparing data results with expectations and assumptions of theories, the process of verification is also being supported.

Therefore, data verification should be performed to assure the set of data collected is reliable. Items to be verified are proper documentation, correct number of cases, correct number

of variables, correct coding scheme, and proper reproduction of the original summary statistics (CSULB, 2021).

According to Lincoln & Guba (1985), there are four constructs to enhance trustworthiness and avoid bias: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The first one relates to the suitability of the findings with the reality (Shenton, 2004). The theoretical approach was based on arguments from relevant authors in this field and used in this research to reinforce this characteristic.

The second construct, transferability, is connected to the concept of generalizability, which refers to the applicability of the findings of the study to other situations (Shenton, 2004). As this research is a comparative study, transferability is one of the premises it relied on, given the specificities of each country. After identifying policies of affirmative action in the education sector in each country, recommendations for both countries were made based on lessons learned and best practices that could be applied in their contexts.

Dependability is the construct that provides the understanding that the findings of the research would be similar if it was to be repeated with similar or the same context (Babbie & Mouton, 2007). Thus, the process of the research must be logical, well documented and audited (De Vos et al, 2005). Finally, confirmability is the ability of the findings of one study to be confirmed by another study (De Vos et al, 2011). In this study, the researcher should be aware of any biases that might impact the discussion of the research.

3.8 LIMITATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

The first limitation faced by this research was the lack of data. In Brazil, the way methods of racial classification were used were influenced by the manifestation of racism in the society, leading the Brazilian state sometimes to include others to omit information about colour in certain people's records (Junior & Silva, 2010). From 1872 to 2000 eleven national censuses were carried out, from which only eight have collected data on colour or race, also varying between self-classification and hetero classification and the categories listed (Junior & Silva, 2010). The evaluation of the evolution of racial inequality throughout time could have been reduced in this study due to the lack of data.

Another point of attention is the difference of classification of the population between the two countries covered in this study. For the most recent censuses, Brazil used the terms black, brown, white and yellow/indigenous (PNAD, 2019). South Africa also uses four types of

classification, which are black, coloured, white and Indian/Asian (Statista, 2021). It also highlights the need to observe the difference of the distribution of the population when comparing indicators between the countries.

Finally, data may not be directly comparable among countries due to different methodologies used to build indicators. The higher education sectors of each country have different structures, and the type of institutions that will compose the indicators must be well-defined.

3.9 REFLEXIVITY

Reflexivity can be understood as the recognition from the researcher on how her beliefs and judgements may influence the study. It involves being conscious of the possibility of bias in the research because of what the researcher knows and believes (University of Warwick, 2017). Hertz (1997) reiterates that reflexivity is a very relevant item to be considered so that the researcher is aware of her biases and feelings, understanding how it may influence the research process.

The researcher expects to provide not only extra evidence that there is racial inequality in both Brazil and South Africa, but mainly to show that there are policies to tackle this challenge and support through their paths of development. This comparison study was undertaken to promote the exchange of lessons learned regarding social inclusion of disadvantaged groups and to appreciate the work of researchers and policymakers that have been fostering the implementation of affirmative action policies.

Moreover, the researcher understood that she had *place of speech* to discuss the theme. This concept was discussed by Ribeiro (2017) in her homonymous book, arguing that the place of speech emphasizes the social place occupied by individuals in a matrix of domination and oppression, within power relations. This researcher is a female black student who was awarded a scholarship from *Prouni*, programme to promote social inclusion of students from public schools in higher education. Therefore, the life experiences of the researcher as a Brazilian black woman contributed to the discussions advanced in this study.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In dissertations, ethical considerations involve a variety of factors. According to Dudovskiy (2016), this should involve voluntary participation, consent and anonymity of respondents,

besides acknowledgement of works by other authors, objectivity, and no use of discriminatory language. In addition, avoidance of harm, privacy and confidentiality of data are relevant ethical considerations (Punch, 2005).

Unlike natural sciences, social sciences have unique, pervasive and complex ethical issues as the object of study are human beings (Strydom, 2005). Dealing with and trying to understand human beings and their behaviours is relevant for social sciences, although this brings along impactful responsibilities regarding accuracy, veracity and ethics. According to Babbie (2001, as cited in Strydom, 2005), researchers must be aware of the general agreement of what is considered proper and improper in scientific research.

Even though this study did not directly deal with individuals, it is their information that was being consolidated and evaluated. Therefore, there must be a commitment to deliver trustworthy discussions and conclusions to government bodies that provided data for this research, and to the scientific community as whole. Ethics is a group of moral principles suggested and accepted in a group, offering expectations on proper conduct towards different stakeholders (Strydom, 2005). Ethical considerations should guide this research at all times.

3.11 CONCLUSION

This third chapter involved a description of methods and instruments used in this research. It intended to connect the objectives of the study presented in the introduction with the data collection process. The next chapter presents the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter number four deals with the findings of the research. This chapter has an empirical and analytical character, making use of secondary data to assess changes in the proportion of the different population groups when accessing and concluding higher education throughout time. The researcher has made use of tables and graphics to facilitate the discussion of findings, which is supported by the research's literature review, the theoretical framework and the researcher's understanding and interpretation of the data.

4.2 DEMOGRAPHY OF PARTICIPANTS

The demographic characteristic most relevant to this study is the population group of the students. Although additional information was available at the datasets provided by institutions from both countries, such as gender and area of specialisation, this study focused on racial matters when accessing and concluding higher education in Brazil and South Africa.

It is important to start highlighting the differences about population groups monitored by statistics bureaus of each country. The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE in Portuguese) is the bureau responsible for, among other responsibilities, conducting research on the ethnic-racial characteristics of the population (IBGE, 2021). The IBGE surveys the colour or race of the Brazilian population based on self-declaration. That is, people are asked about their colour according to the following options: black, brown, white, indigenous or yellow (IBGE, 2022a). Even though indigenous and yellow Brazilian citizens are considered minorities in the country, this data analysis assessed black students in higher education. For IBGE, the black population in Brazil is considered the sum of black and brown people. This research followed the same understanding for its analysis.

On the other hand, Statistics South Africa collects the population's information according to four population groups: black/African, coloured, Indian/Asian, and white (Stats SA, 2021b). Even though white people do not represent the largest population group in South Africa, they are the most advantaged group due to the consequences of colonialism and the Apartheid system. As discussed in the section under Bantu Education, education institutions were segregated according to population groups, and institutions for white students had more

investments and, consequently, better quality (SAHO, 2019). Therefore, the monitoring of racial descriptors is used to produce historical comparisons and context to measure the effects of current policy on redressing discrimination and inequities of the past (DHET, 2020).

4.3 FRAMEWORK FOR DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In the modern world, education is an essential factor for the formation of citizenship and professional qualification (Carneiro, 2011). Moreover, it is and of the tools that will support social mobility, especially for those that have had basic rights limited by legal and normative systems. So far, this study has argued that segregationist systems implemented in Brazil and South Africa have generated long term consequences, with racism embedded in institutions (Almeida, 2019) and posing structural barriers hampering underprivileged populations to make full use of their instrumental freedoms and to develop their capacities (Sen, 2000a).

Tables presented below disclose racial distribution of students in higher education at the period of study, which is from 2009 to 2019 for both countries.

Table 1: Number of enrolments in higher education by population group in Brazil (2009-2019)

Year	Black and Brown	White	Indigenous and Yellow	Information not available	Colour not declared	TOTAL
2009	526.282	1.069.153	47.496	2.299.368	2.011.722	5.954.021
2010	682.344	1.263.896	65.841	2.115.545	2.251.673	6.379.299
2011	807.199	1.435.494	76.762	2.255.937	2.164.297	6.739.689
2012	933.685	1.642.559	72.311	2.469.647	1.919.486	7.037.688
2013	1.131.021	1.829.692	91.024	2.364.798	1.889.442	7.305.977
2014	1.734.066	2.431.006	123.673	958.619	2.580.649	7.828.013
2015	2.172.634	2.903.256	148.183	390.775	2.412.449	8.027.297
2016	2.414.031	3.079.779	172.627	176.521	2.205.743	8.048.701
2017	2.689.796	3.292.585	190.670	65.432	2.048.180	8.286.663
2018	3.027.572	3.533.562	198.436	30.393	1.660.792	8.450.755
2019	3.282.119	3.658.644	204.248	14.355	1.444.458	8.603.824
TOTAL	19.400.749	26.139.626	1.391.271	13.141.390	22.588.891	82.661.927

Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira (INEP, 2021a).

Table 1 presents the population groups of 82.661.927 Brazilian students that had enrolled in higher education from 2009 to 2019. Over time, it is possible to visualize the trend of increase in the total number of students enrolled in higher education. This growth trend accompanies all population groups, at the same time the amount of unavailable information or colour not declared decreases. Although information not available and colour not declared represent more than 50% of the samples until 2013, the number of white students exceeded the number of black students throughout the whole assessed period.

While the number of white students enrolling in higher education grew 242% from 2009 to 2019, the number of black students enrolling in higher education grew 523%. At the referred period, the amount of information not available and colour not declared reduced to 99% and 28%, respectively.

Table 2: Number of graduates from higher education by population group in Brazil (2009-2019)

Year	Black and Brown	White	Indigenous and Yellow	Information not available	Colour not declared	TOTAL
2009	65.649	160.498	4.690	380.863	347.597	959.297
2010	83.459	189.003	7.997	335.005	358.375	973.839
2011	96.903	205.141	9.535	348.146	356.988	1.016.713
2012	115.796	242.645	10.851	371.047	310.074	1.050.413
2013	133.806	262.007	12.964	314.694	267.539	991.010
2014	187.066	312.666	15.093	199.773	312.494	1.027.092
2015	263.547	424.172	19.206	113.322	329.820	1.150.067
2016	300.388	455.031	22.892	71.136	320.002	1.169.449
2017	335.808	486.080	24.115	26.714	327.052	1.199.769
2018	397.147	542.590	29.171	12.766	282.614	1.264.288
2019	432.380	564.382	30.095	4.542	218.677	1.250.076
TOTAL	2.411.949	3.844.215	186.609	2.178.008	3.431.232	12.052.013

Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira (INEP, 2021a).

Table 2 presents the population groups of 12.052.013 Brazilian students that graduated from higher education from 2009 to 2019. Over time, it is possible to visualize the trend of increase in the total number of students graduating from higher education. This growth trend

accompanies all population groups, at the same time the amount of unavailable information or colour not declared decreases. Although information not available and colour not declared represent more than 50% of the samples until 2013, the number of white students exceeded the number of black students throughout the whole assessed period.

Whereas the number of white students graduating from higher education grew 251% from 2009 to 2019, the number of black students graduating from higher education grew 558%. At the referred period, the amount of information not available and colour not declared reduced to 98% and 37%, respectively.

Table 3: Number of enrolments in higher education by population group in South Africa (2009-2019)

Year	African	Coloured	Indian / Asian	White	No info race	TOTAL
2009	225.927	29.507	35.703	113.266	637	405.040
2010	256.465	32.203	36.406	114.170	1.685	440.929
2011	290.497	33.834	36.718	114.101	1.690	476.840
2012	316.618	34.750	35.114	111.496	2.449	500.427
2013	336.093	36.705	35.967	111.960	2.706	523.431
2014	334.858	36.830	35.896	108.387	2.888	518.859
2015	314.322	35.511	33.668	103.112	3.586	490.199
2016	320.848	36.230	31.954	98.134	3.387	490.553
2017	344.717	37.586	31.290	95.446	3.912	512.951
2018	376.422	39.182	30.288	91.564	4.690	542.146
2019	395.781	37.720	27.660	84.182	5.655	550.998
TOTAL	3.512.548	390.058	370.664	1.145.818	33.285	5.452.373

Department of Higher Education and Training, 2021. HEMIS data reports.

Table 3 presents the population groups of 5.452.373 South African students that had enrolled in higher education from 2009 to 2019. Apart from the years of 2014 and 2015 where there was a reduction in the total of students enrolled, over time it is possible to visualize the trend of increase in the total number of students enrolled in higher education. The growth trend is a reality for African and coloured students. However, the number of Indian/Asian and white students tends to decrease from 2012. At the same time, the amount of no information on race

increases. No information on race is minimal in the sample for South Africa throughout the whole period, despite the tendency to increase over time. The number of African students exceeded the number of white students throughout the entire period assessed.

While the amount of African and coloured students enrolling in higher education increased 75% and 27% respectively from 2009 to 2019, the amount of Indian/Asian and white students enrolling in higher education decreased to 22% and 25% respectively. At the referred period, the amount of no information on race increased by 787%.

Table 4: Number of graduates from higher education by population group in South Africa (2009-2019)

Year	African	Coloured	Indian / Asian	White	No info race	TOTAL
2009	27.871	3.866	4.774	20.555	125	57.191
2010	31.453	4.366	4.690	20.456	334	61.299
2011	34.208	4.456	5.109	20.249	524	64.546
2012	40.001	4.778	5.089	20.303	572	70.743
2013	45.948	5.291	5.748	21.548	601	79.136
2014	50.056	5.700	5.667	20.985	448	82.856
2015	42.786	4.867	5.014	19.414	554	72.635
2016	47.242	5.344	5.250	19.462	496	77.794
2017	48.033	5.284	5.316	19.133	538	78.304
2018	51.567	5.753	5.320	18.733	637	82.010
2019	52.611	6.095	5.089	18.059	632	82.486
TOTAL	471.776	55.800	57.066	218.897	5.461	809.000

Department of Higher Education and Training, 2021. HEMIS data reports.

Table 4 presents the population groups of 809.000 South African students that had graduated from higher education from 2009 to 2019. Apart from the year of 2015 where there was a reduction in the total of students graduating, over time it is possible to visualize the trend of increase in the total number of students graduating from higher education. The growth trend is a reality for African, coloured and Indian/Asian students. However, the number of white students tends to decrease from 2009 to 2011 and from 2014 to 2019. At the same time, the amount of no information on race tends to increase. No information on race is minimal in the

sample for South Africa throughout the whole period, despite the tendency to increase over time. The number of African students exceeded the number of white students throughout the entire period assessed.

Whereas the amount of African, coloured and Indian/Asian students graduating from higher education increased 88%, 57% and 6% respectively from 2009 to 2019, the number of white students graduating from higher education decreased 12%. At the referred period, the amount of no information on race increased 400%.

4.4 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.4.1 Enrolment in higher education in Brazil

Brazilian higher education is marked by deep racial inequalities that compromise, to this day, the guarantee of the full right to education for different groups of the population. As it is a level of education accessed at more advanced stages of schooling, these disparities intensify as inequalities build up along the trajectory of students (Senkevics, 2017).

The national systematization of schooling in Brazil started late when compared with other countries of Latin America. It started in the 1930s, were consolidated in the 1960s, and reached universalization around the 1990s (Almeida et al, 2017). Prior to that, there was already a segmentation between public and private education that was not addressed with the establishment of a national education system. In 1956, for instance, only 26.8% of students from elementary school were enrolled in public schools (Abreu, 2005 as cited in Almeida et al, 2017).

Considering high school, which is the level that precedes access to higher education, the quality of education also differs from public and private schools. The Basic Education Development Index of 2005 for students from private schools was 5.6, while for students from public school was 3.1 (Krawczyk, 2009). There is, then, in Brazil, an inversion on quality of education provided according to the level of education and type of institutions: until high school, private institutions provide better quality education, whereas for higher education, public institutions provide a better quality education, which is also free of fees.

Still for the high school level, data gathered by Almeida et al (2017) for Brazil allows to identify that both in 2007 and 2014, 98% students from a lower income threshold were enrolled in public schools and only 2% in private schools. On the other hand, students from a higher

income threshold were 80%, and 79% enrolled in private schools in 2007 and 2014, respectively. With the privilege of receiving better-quality basic education, students from a higher income are better prepared to pass the entry exams for the better-quality higher education institutions. It leads us to conclude that, at least until high school, students from a higher income level have access to better quality education in Brazil.

However, some researchers question the efficacy of indices such as the Basic Education Development Index or PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) to really measure the quality of education. In Brazil, public education institutions are known for providing a more interpretative curriculum, whereas private education institutions focus on examinations and have a stricter curriculum to prepare their students, giving teachers less autonomy (Barba, 2016). This may be the reason why private education institutions perform better on education indices, but there is still the discussion of which type of education is better for the development of the citizen.

Figure 1 below presents the number of enrolments in higher education in Brazil from 2009 to 2019 by population group. It has a significant amount of information not available for the first five years of the sample, but it starts to reduce from 2014. It is from that year onwards that it is possible to identify an increase of enrolment of black and brown students in higher education, but not exclusively, as the number of white students' enrolment also increased. Even so, the number of white students in higher education is greater than the number of black students during the entire assessed period.

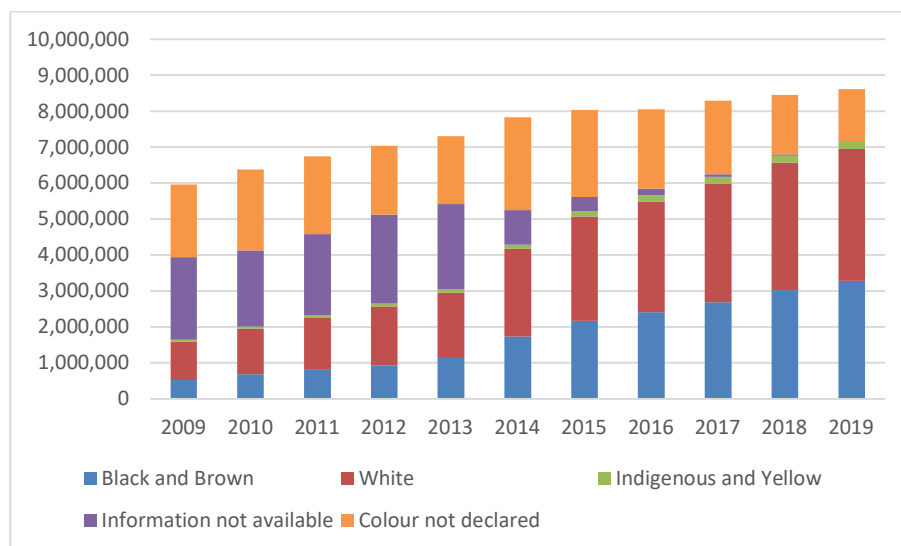


Figure 1: Enrolments in higher education by population group in Brazil (2009-2019).

From figure 1 above, we can also determine the increase on higher education vacancies from 2009 to 2019, which grew by 44%. Vacancies expanded mainly in private HEIs. Despite the advances, the country did not meet the targets of expansion foreseen in the 2001 National Education Plan (Heringer, 2018). The goal set at the plan was that of 30% of youngsters between 18 and 24 years enrolled in higher education in 2011 (*Plano Nacional da Educacao*, 2001). However, only 19.7% youngsters in this age group were enrolled in higher education in 2017 (INEP/MEC, 2018 as cited in Heringer, 2018).

According to Jardim and Almeida (2016), the administration of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, from 2003 to 2011, was a period marked by state reforms towards the universalization of social rights and the introduction of integrated income redistribution policies. A variety of factors imposed pressure on access to higher education in this period, such as economic dynamism, the generation of formal jobs, the universalization of primary education and the expansion of vacancies in secondary education. Although both public and private HEIs have expanded between 2003 and 2013, at the end of this period 87.4% of HEIs were private (Jardim & Almeida, 2016). While access to higher education in public institutions is promoted to disadvantaged groups through the quota system, incentives to access private institutions come from programs such as ProUni and financing tools such as FIES.

Within the period of study, it is also important to highlight the change on Enem, which transitioned from a method of education evaluation to be the instrument to access higher education. Enem is the National High School Exam (*Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio in Portuguese*), instituted in 1998, with the objective of evaluating students' school performance at the end of basic education (INEP, 2022). In 2009, the exam improved its methodology and began to be used as a mechanism for accessing higher education. Enem grades can be used to access the Unified Selection System (Sisu) and the University for All Program (ProUni). They are also accepted in more than 50 Portuguese higher education institutions. In addition, Enem participants can apply for student financing in government programs, such as the Student Financing Fund (FIES) (INEP, 2022). The new Enem provides flexibility that expands the possibilities of entry and geographic mobility of students from higher education.

While figure 1 presented the absolute amount of student enrolment, figure 2 below exhibits the percentage of each population group of students from 2009 to 2019.

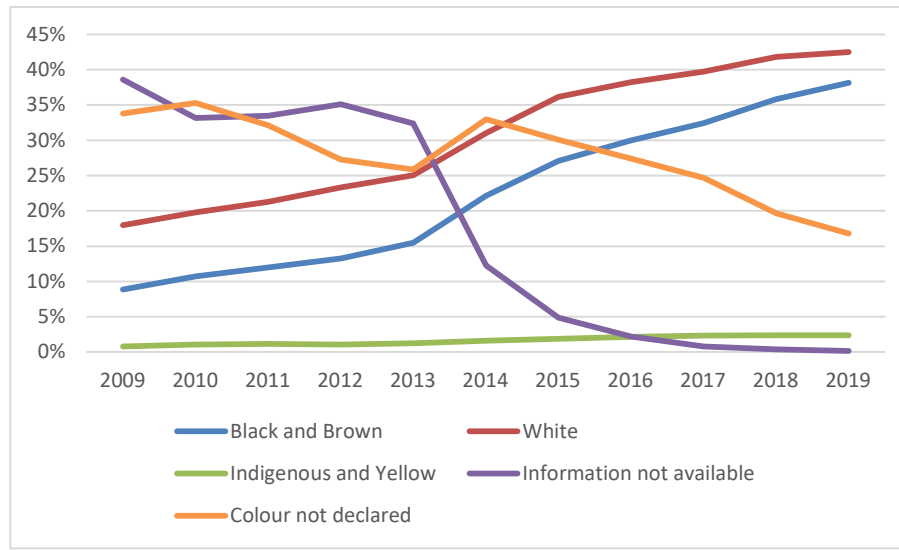


Figure 2: Percentage of enrolments in higher education by population group in Brazil (2009-2019).

From the perspective of figure 2, it is clear to see the inflexion point of information not available in 2013, which represents only 0.2% of the sample in 2019. The year 2014 also presents a change and reduction in the percentage of students that have not declared their colour. It is hard to state the reason why both reductions happened at this period, but different policies were implemented in the interval of the study that may have led to an improvement in the monitoring of race indicators through the new means of entry in higher education.

The participation of black and brown, and also of white students in accessing higher education has a growing trend throughout the whole assessed period. The percentage of participation of both population groups have improved in 2013 and 2015, where it is possible to identify a subtle increase in the slope of their trajectories. As of 2015 there is also a trend towards a reduction of the gap between black and white students enrolling in higher education.

The year 2018 represented a milestone in terms of racial equality in higher education in Brazil. For the first time, black students were the majority in public higher education, representing 50.3% of enrolment at the referred year (Nitahara, 2019b). Unfortunately, this event cannot be identified in figure 2 as it exhibits data from both public and private education. Although black students represented more than half of students' enrolment in public HEIs, the same has not happened in private HEIs, which represent most of Brazilian higher education institutions. This research had listed some existing programs to promote access to private higher

education, like scholarships and financing programs. However, it is not clear if the information about the existence of such programs is effective in reaching a relevant share of disadvantaged groups that could make use of these programs.

4.4.2 Graduation from higher education in Brazil

When students from disadvantaged groups manage to conclude basic education, they face a variety of challenges to access higher education and throughout the way until graduation. For example, completing basic education requires having a proper environment to study with access to energy and sanitation, living in a household with sufficient financial stability, being in a good state of nutrition, succeeding universities' entry tests, and many other interconnected factors. However, the life of the disadvantaged students in higher education by no means without challenges, they are only going to face different one, sometimes summed up with the challenges of the previous stage.

According to Heringer (2018), the diversification of higher education student population in terms of race has raised concerns for the institutions that receive these new students. It raised the need to discuss student permanence policies and which aspects can effectively favour the affiliation of these students into university life. By student permanence policies, Brazilian researchers mean measures to avoid student dropout before they complete higher education. As an awardee of the Prouni programme, this researcher strongly agrees that only fostering access to higher education is not enough. There are different costs involved in student life, such as expenses with books, study materials, meals, transportation and so on. In addition, as an income related scholarship, there was an extra challenge of not being able to earn income, as it might reduce the percentage of the scholarship, or even cancel the student's participation at the programme. According to Costa (2020), blacks are the majority among the poorest in Brazil, whereas the white population is well distributed along the social hierarchy. Therefore, black students face various difficulties to conclude higher education. Several factors or conditions hinder or make it impossible for poor and black students to fully participate in student life. For example, classes' time schedule, opening hours of libraries, meetings of research groups, extension activities, the need to work and study at the same time, among others (Costa, 2020).

Data collected by this research corroborates that dropout is an issue for higher education in Brazil. Figure 3 below presents the number of students that have graduated from higher education in Brazil by population group.

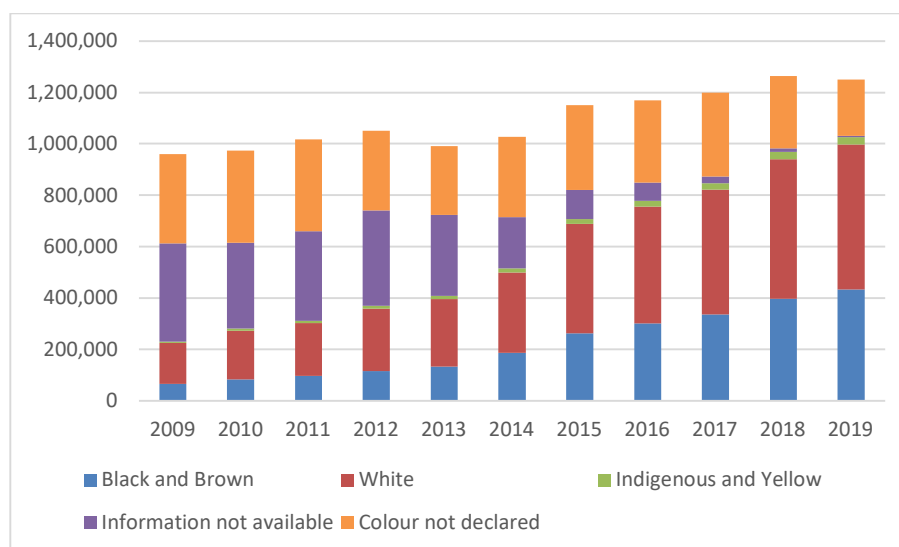


Figure 3: Graduates from higher education by population group in Brazil (2009-2019).

From figure 3 above, it is possible to see that the number of graduates increased from 2009 to 2019. However, it did not follow a steady pattern of growth, as seen with the number of enrolments from figure 1. Similarly, while the growth rate for the interval studied was 44% for enrolment, it was only 30% for graduation. Moreover, considering the whole period of the data analysed, from 2009 to 2019 there were more than 82 million enrolments in higher education. In contrast, only 12 million students graduated from higher education in the same period. In other words, graduation did not accompany the expansion of enrolment in absolute number, tendency or rhythm. This situation leads us to understand that there are, indeed, challenges on the path from enrolment to graduation in higher education.

Similar to what was seen in figure 1 for enrolment, figure 3 for graduates also presents a considerable portion of unavailable data in the first five years of the dataset selected. From 2014, when the amount of information not available starts to reduce, it is possible to see an increase in the number of black and white students graduating. Despite the impactful growth on graduation for black students, which grew more than 500% from 2009 to 2019, the number

of white students graduating from higher education was greater than the number of black students during the whole assessed interval.

Whereas figure 3 presented the absolute amount of student graduation, figure 4 below shows the percentage of each population group of students from 2009 to 2019.

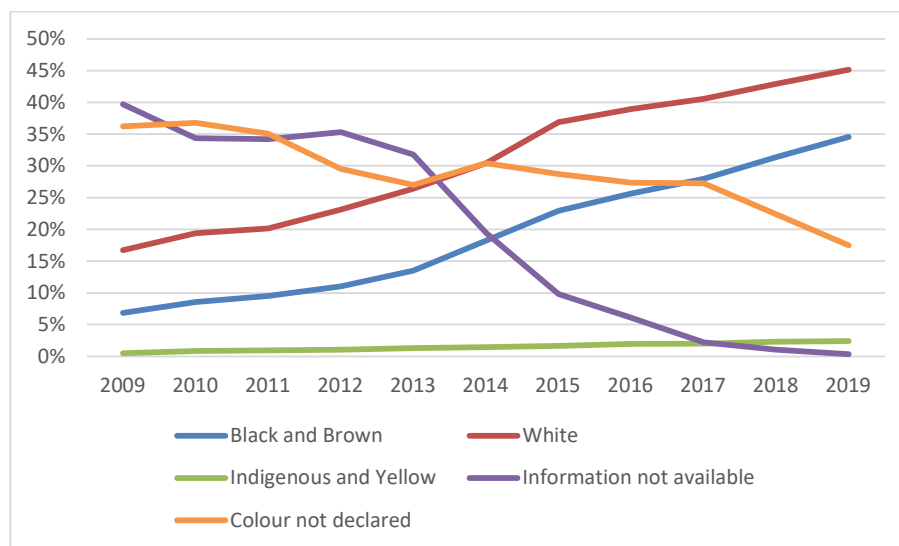


Figure 4: Percentage of graduates in higher education by population group in Brazil (2009-2019).

From the point of view of figure 4, there is an outstanding inflexion point of information not available in 2013, which dropped significantly and represented only 0.4% of the sample in 2019. Even though the number of students that did not declare their colour had slightly increased in 2014, there is a tendency of reduction afterwards. From 2015, there is a significant improvement on the monitoring of race indicators.

The participation of black and brown, and also of white students in graduating from higher education has a growing trend throughout the whole assessed period. The percentage of participation of both population groups have improved in 2013 and 2015, where it is possible to identify a subtle increase in the slope of their trajectories. Yet, the trend towards a reduction of the gap between black and white students in higher education identified in the enrolment dataset was not so easily visible for graduation. For enrolment, the difference between black and white students was 9.2 percentage points in 2009, and it reduced to a 4.4 percentage point

in 2019. For graduation, the difference between black and white students was 9.9 percentage points in 2009, and increased to 10.5 percentage points in 2019.

4.4.3 Dataset or information on race not available for Brazil

The Brazilian Law of Quotas (n° 12.711/2012) is the major example of the policy of affirmative action in the public education sector of the country. Nevertheless, this policy still lacks mechanisms that allow its monitoring and evaluation at a national level, given that the main source of input for such an operation, namely the Census of Higher Education, presents high rates of non-declaration of race (Senkevics, 2017). This panorama is easily identified in tables 1 and 2, where information not available for both enrolled and graduate students had an impactful reduction from 2014. Prior to that, information not available represented 38.6% of the sample for enrolled students, and 39.7% for graduated students, both in 2009.

National plans and statutes emphasize the importance of implementing and monitoring the implementation of affirmative action policies, providing for the inclusion of colour/race item in student data collection forms at all levels of public and private education (Anjos, 2013 as cited in Senkevics, 2017).

4.4.4 Enrolment in higher education in South Africa

With the introduction of a democratic government in South Africa in 1994, the country started a process of multidimensional transformation, involving the social, political, economic and also educational spheres (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). According to Bozalek & Boughey (2012), policies put into practice during Apartheid have left a fractured education system in different dimensions, with bias on race, type of institution, location and language of instruction. The new government had to focus on the development of a single, coherent and good quality education system for all South Africans, supporting the economic and social needs of the society to come (Bozalek & Boughey 2012).

The White Paper on Higher Education from 1997 registered several purposes related to higher education, such as meeting learning needs of individuals, developing intellectual abilities, providing the labour market with high-level competencies, contributing to the socialization of critical citizens, and contributing to the creation and sharing of knowledge (*White Paper on Higher Education, 1997*). The document provides guidelines to the

Department of Higher Education and Training, stating the vision of the government for the post-school system, delineating priorities and strategies to achieve its goals (DHET, 2013).

The National Plan on Higher Education (2001) recognizes access as one of the priorities to transform higher education. It is a first measure that should be articulated with programmes to succeed in higher education if the principle of equity as a means of social inclusion is to be translated into fair opportunities (Cele & Menon, 2006).

Figure 5 below presents the number of enrolments in higher education in South Africa from 2009 to 2019 by population group. Unlike the sample from Brazil, no information about race during the time studied is minimal in South Africa, ranging from 0.2% to 1%. For the interval evaluated, the number of enrolments increased until 2013. For the next two years, the number of enrolments decreased, recovering with a slight increase again in 2016 and maintaining the positive tendency until the end of the period. Considering the whole period studied, the number of enrolments in South Africa grew by 36%. The National Development Plan (2011) set the target of 1.6 million enrolments by 2030 (DHET, 2020). A direct comparison with that target is not possible, as the target embraces a larger category of areas of specialization than those selected for the present study. When all majors are taken into consideration, 1.2 million students enrolled in higher education in 2018 (DHET, 2020).

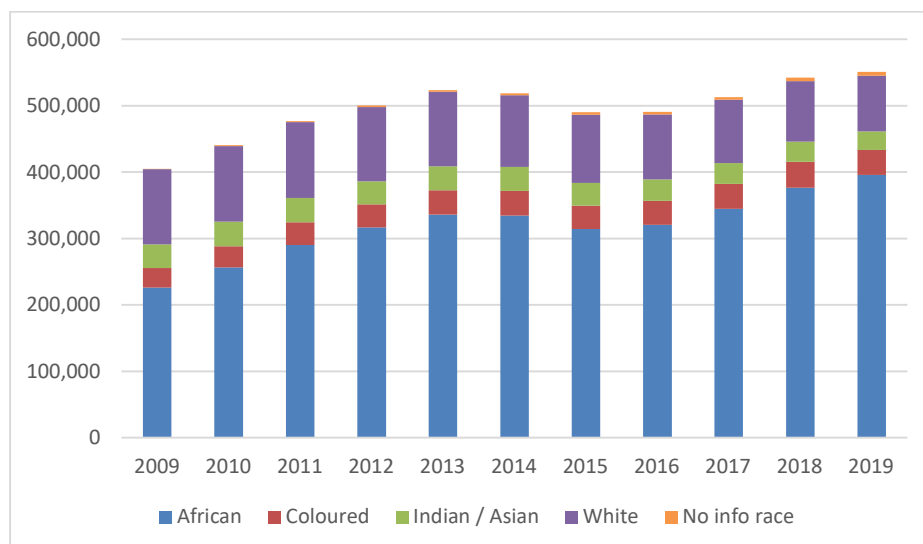


Figure 5: Enrolments in higher education by population group in South Africa (2009-2019).

African students represent the vast majority of students enrolled in higher education throughout the whole assessed period, and their participation increased over time. Coloured students remained practically stable, participating over time, though this presented a small increase. Both Indian and white students had reduced their representativeness in higher education enrolments throughout the period. For both groups, the downward trend started in 2014.

In 2015, the number of enrolments decreased for all population groups. In the same year, students from different universities across the country united to protest against the high cost of higher education in South Africa, a movement that became known as *Fees Must Fall* (Mlaba, 2021). Even though the post-Apartheid era had broken down legal barriers which were previously imposed, other structural barriers still hindered real access to higher education. The higher education available to all today cannot be afforded by lower-income households, and protests organized by students for their right to affordable education resulted in universities cancelling fee increases for 2016 (Mlaba, 2021). Universities have a fundamental role in social transformation, because they are funded by public resources, the state has the means to promote education institutions to implement programs based on redress and equity imperatives (Cele & Menon, 2006).

While figure 5 presented the absolute amount of student enrolment, figure 6 below exhibits the percentage of each population group of students from 2009 to 2019.

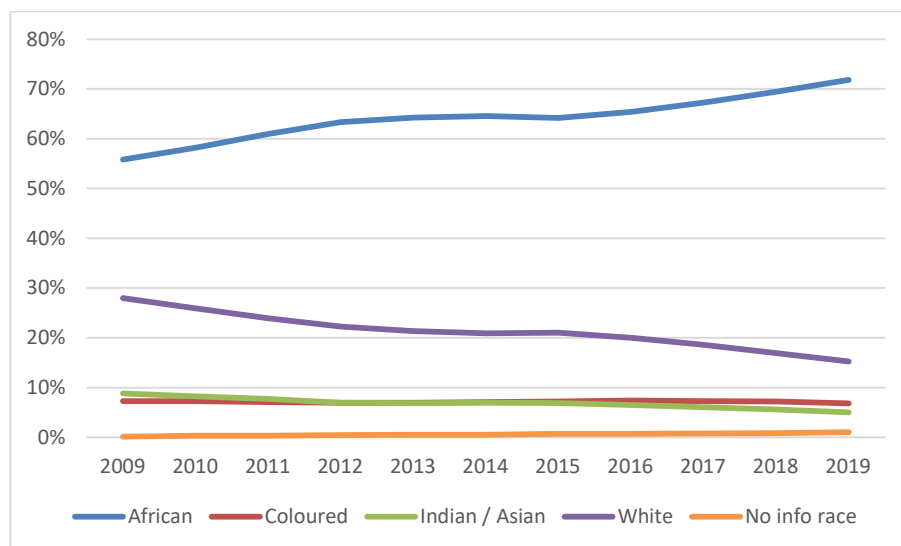


Figure 6: Percentage of enrolments in higher education by population group in South Africa (2009-2019).

Figure 6 presents a clearer trend in total enrolments over time by population group. There are no significant changes in the period. African students, who represent the largest share of students enrolled in higher education, went through a period of stability between 2012 and 2015. Then, they resumed the positive trend, although not very accentuated. Coloured and Indian students also went through an almost constant period, with the representativeness of coloured students surpassing that of Indians in 2013. This small superiority in the proportion of coloured students is maintained until the end of the period.

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) has played an increasingly important role in supporting students from poorer backgrounds attending university. In 2019, over one-third of university students, benefitted from an NSFAS bursary (Khuluvhe et al, 2021).

As well as Indian students, white students also had their participation reduced within the period which was studied, but in a more noticeable way. The percentage of white students showed a negative trend throughout the whole assessed period. According to the mid-year population estimates released by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) (2021a), the white population in South Africa has declined in recent years. Despite significant growth in enrolment rates at universities, university participation rates in South Africa remain well below those of many other countries (Khuluvhe et al, 2021).

Although African students have a high participation in higher education in terms of student population, the number of African students enrolled in higher education is still not equivalent to their weight in the population as a whole. In order to allow the visualization of this panorama, table 5 below was created to show the gap between the percentage of population groups within the entire population and the percentage of population groups enrolled in higher education. When the percentage is negative, it indicates that the participation of the population group is smaller in higher education than it is in the entire population. Therefore, a negative value indicates a student gap. On the other hand, when the percentage is positive, it indicates that the participation of the population group is higher, in higher education, than it is in the entire population. In that case, there is no student gap.

Table 5: Student gap in higher education enrolment by population group in South Africa (2009-2019)

Year	African	Coloured	Indian / Asian	White
2009	-23,2%	-1,7%	6,3%	18,5%
2010	-21,0%	-1,7%	5,7%	16,6%
2011	-18,4%	-1,9%	5,1%	14,8%
2012	-16,2%	-2,0%	4,5%	13,3%
2013	-15,5%	-1,9%	4,3%	12,6%
2014	-15,3%	-1,8%	4,4%	12,2%
2015	-15,9%	-1,6%	4,3%	12,5%
2016	-14,8%	-1,5%	4,0%	11,6%
2017	-13,2%	-1,5%	3,5%	10,4%
2018	-11,1%	-1,6%	3,0%	8,8%
2019	-8,9%	-2,0%	2,5%	7,4%

Department of Higher Education and Training, 2021. HEMIS data reports. StatsSA (2002-2019). Country projection by population group, sex and age.

Table 5 inserts a new variable, and presents a different perspective for data presented in Figures 5 and 6. A superficial look at these figures would lead to the misunderstanding that there is no racial inequality in South Africa's higher education, since African students represent more than half of the student population in higher education. However, the proportion of African students enrolled in higher education is not equivalent to the proportion of African citizens in the population of the country as a whole. The same rationale is valid for coloured students, and throughout the whole interval evaluated. While this gap tends to reduce for African students, it has a small increase for coloured students.

For Indian and white students, the reality is the opposite. Even though these groups have a smaller share of the total enrolment in higher education, they exceed their representativeness when the distribution of population groups within the general population of the country is taken into account. However, this difference has been decreasing over time for both population groups.

These gaps of representativeness among different population groups enrolled in higher education leads to understand that access to higher education occurs unevenly in South Africa. Even though black African students comprise more than 80% of total student enrolment at

public universities, racial inequality continues to exist in the higher education system. The Gross Enrolment Ratio for black African students at public universities was 20%, whereas it was 49% for white students (Khuluvhe et al, 2021).

4.4.5 Graduation from higher education in South Africa

According to Khuluvhe et al (2021), 32.1% of adults have completed secondary school in 2020, which could lead to an increase in demand for post-school education and training. Even with the significant increase in education levels of the South African population during the past decade, only 6% of adults have a degree. In fact, from this small share, less black African people have degrees compared to other population groups (Khuluvhe et al, 2021).

Many are the obstacles on the journey to complete basic education for disadvantaged groups. Accessing higher education is one accomplishment among many other challenges this group will have to face onwards. Examples of challenges are inability to afford university fees, other education costs, getting from and to university, unwanted pregnancy, and the need to work to provide family income (Spren & Vally, 2006). In addition, higher education institutions from different countries, including South Africa and Brazil, are still actors in the production and reproduction of inequality due to the colonial and commodified role they play in society (Dey, 2019 as cited in Hlatshwayo, 2020).

Figure 7 presented below exhibits the number of students that graduated from higher education in South Africa, according to population group, from 2009 to 2019.

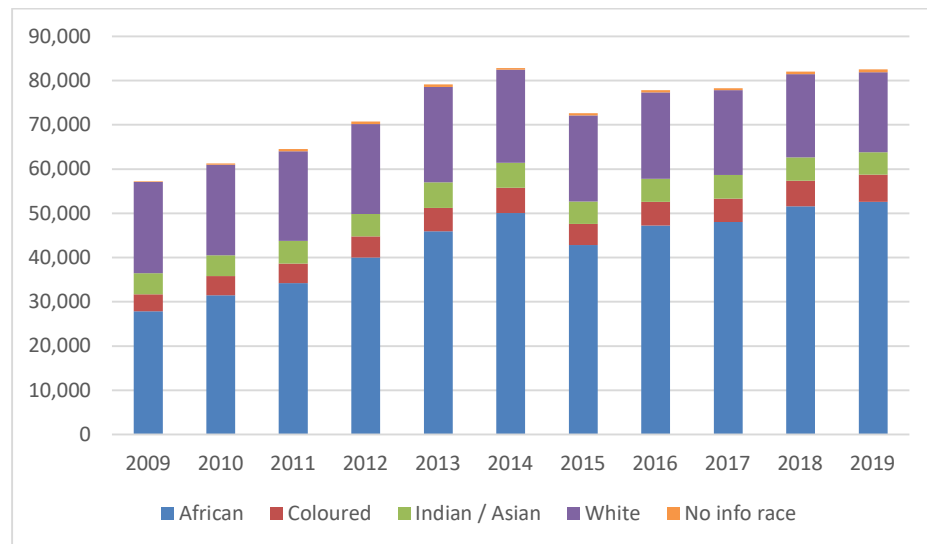


Figure 7: Graduates from higher education by population group in South Africa (2009-2019).

From figure 7 above, it is possible to see that the number of graduates increased from 2009 to 2019. Similar to what was seen in figure 5 for number of enrolments, there is a decrease in 2015 before the number of graduates recovers its positive trend. The general growth rate for the interval studied was of 36% for enrolment and 44% for graduation. Moreover, considering the whole period of data analysed, from 2009 to 2019 there were more than 550 thousand enrolments in higher education. In contrast, only 82 thousand students graduated from higher education in the same period. This event allows the understanding that outcomes from higher education were not proportional to access to higher education in the period of study.

Additionally, figure 7 shows a good participation of African students in the total number of students who graduated, and graduation rates at public universities grew in the period studied for all race groups. Still, black African students were less likely to graduate relative to students in other race groups (Khuluvhe et al, 2021). Whereas figure 7 presented the absolute amount of student graduation, figure 8 below will exhibit the percentage of each population group of students from 2009 to 2019.

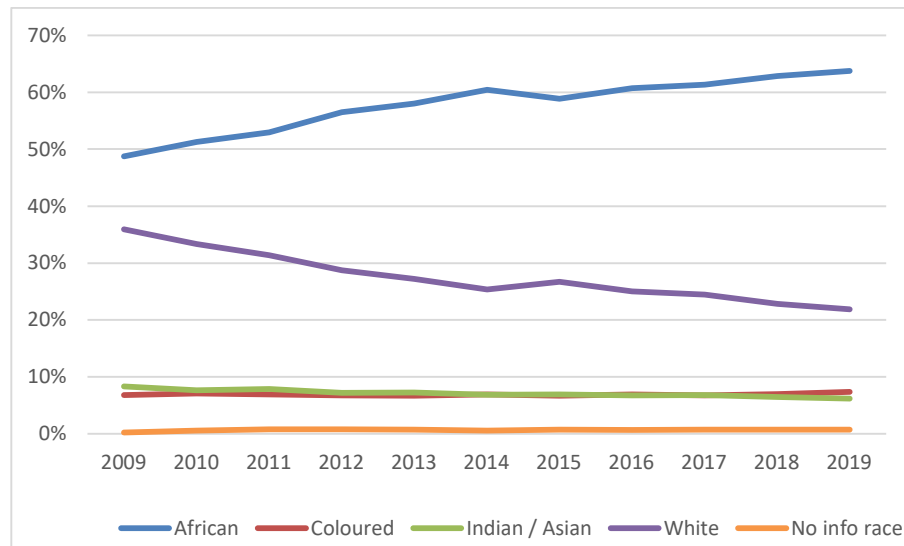


Figure 8: Percentage of graduates in higher education by population group in South Africa (2009-2019).

Figure 8 exhibits a clearer trend in total graduates over time by population group. There are no significant changes in the period assessed. African students, who represent the largest share of students graduating from higher education, had a small drop in 2015, and then recovered the positive trend. Coloured and Indian students also go through an almost constant period, with the representativeness of coloured students overcoming that of Indians in 2014. This small superiority in the proportion of coloured students is not stable, but remains uniform at the last two years of the assessment.

Similarly, Indian students and white students also had their participation reduced within the period studied, though in different proportions. The percentage of white students showed a negative trend throughout the whole period assessed. It may be related to the reduction of white population in South Africa in recent years (Stats SA, 2021a). Graduation rate at public universities at the country improved to 20.6 in 2019. Yet, when taking a closer look by population group, the rate was 19.4 for black African students, and 27.0 for white students (Khuluvhe et al, 2021). Despite the greater participation and positive trend seen in figure 8, black African students are still not performing as good as white students when it comes to the graduation rate.

Similar to the discussion built on enrolment about equivalence of population groups in higher education and in the population as a whole, a student gap can also be identified on data gathered for graduation in South Africa. Such panorama is presented in table 6 below. When the percentage is negative, it indicates that the participation of the population group is smaller in higher education than it is in the entire population. Therefore, a negative value indicates a student gap. On the other hand, when the percentage is positive, it indicates that the participation of the population group is higher, in higher education than it in at the entire population. In that case, there is no student gap.

Table 6: Student gap in higher education graduation by population group in South Africa (2009-2019)

Year	African	Coloured	Indian / Asian	White
2009	-30,3%	-2,2%	5,8%	26,5%
2010	-27,9%	-1,9%	5,1%	24,1%
2011	-26,3%	-2,1%	5,4%	22,2%
2012	-23,0%	-2,2%	4,6%	19,7%
2013	-21,6%	-2,2%	4,7%	18,4%
2014	-19,4%	-2,0%	4,3%	16,7%
2015	-21,1%	-2,2%	4,3%	18,2%
2016	-19,5%	-2,0%	4,2%	16,6%
2017	-19,0%	-2,1%	4,2%	16,2%
2018	-17,7%	-1,8%	3,9%	14,8%
2019	-16,9%	-1,4%	3,6%	14,0%

Department of Higher Education and Training, 2021. HEMIS data reports. StatsSA (2002-2019). Country projection by population group, sex and age.

Although African students represent the largest share of the student population in higher education, as seen in figures 7 and 8, their participation is not the same as their share of the whole population of the country. Table 5 above exhibits the difference between the proportion of population groups in higher education and in the general population. Both African and coloured students present a student gap for graduation, and this gap is reducing for both over time.

For Indian and white students, the reality is the opposite. Although these groups have a smaller share of the total graduates from higher education, they exceed their representativeness when the distribution of population groups within the general population of the country is taken into consideration. This difference has been decreasing over time for both population groups, but this gap is higher for graduates than it was for enrolments. When comparing tables 5 and 6, the gap for African students is -8.9% for enrolments and -16.9% for graduates. On the other hand, white students are 7.4% and 14% above their share in general population for enrolment and graduation, respectively.

In conclusion, social inclusion programs in higher education should not be limited to guaranteeing access to it, but graduation rates should also be taken into account in order to monitor and ensure that equity of access can be translated into equity of outcomes (Cele & Menon, 2006).

4.4.6 Comparative study on racial inequality in higher education

Assessing racial inequality in higher education has an intrinsic challenge of looking at an advanced stage of education, which has already been impacted by the cumulative effects of other inequalities and intersectional factors in earlier stages (Senkevcics, 2017). In addition, the education system of both countries have their own framework. Although the constitutions of both countries state that access to education is a universal right to their citizens, students will experience different realities before and during studies at higher education.

From a general perspective, the datasets selected for each country differ from the type of institutions of higher education, which is a consequence of differences in the way national school systems are organized in each country. In Brazil, 24% of students enrolled in public higher education institutions in 2018 (INEP, 2021a), whereas this index is 90% for South Africa in the same year (DEHT, 2020). Such panorama is not due to the preferences of students, but to accessibility factors such as entry processes, quality of education and affordability of fees. According to the Times Higher Education ranking for Latin America, seven Brazilian universities are on the top ten, six of them being public higher education institutions (BBC News Brazil, 2021). Similarly, all South African Universities on the top five of the Times Higher Education's ranking for the country are public higher education institutions (Times Higher Education, 2022). Therefore, in both countries, public higher education institutions are recognized by providing a better quality education. Nonetheless, public HEIs in Brazil offer free education, while public HEIs in South Africa have considerable fees.

Almeida et al (2017) discuss the historical process of educational national systems being created and consolidated through disputes that generated types of school organization marked by the segregation of school experiences from the privileged groups and the general population. Such panorama can be identified in Brazil back in 1824, when black slaves did not have the right to education assured by the Empire Constitution, and freed blacks were inhibited from accessing education by having to prove income (Ribeiro, 2019). In South Africa, a clear example was the Education Act of 1953. The Act allowed the separation of the educational systems of black, coloured and white students, keeping better investments, curricula and quality schools to the privileged white population (SAHO, 2019).

According to Tjonneland (2017), higher education in South Africa is partially covered by students through tuition fees. Although relatively low when compared with fees from Europe,

they are considered high for most of South African students and impossible to afford with an average South African household income. The main tool used by the state to tackle the financial exclusion in higher education is NFAS, providing loans and bursaries to eligible students. However, this scheme supports a small share of students in need of financial assistance. Middle class students may not meet the income threshold to apply to NSFAS, but the annual increase in tuition fees builds a barrier to these students. Unaffordable tuition fees had sparked the Fees Must Fall movement and demands for free education (Mlaba, 2021).

Despite the challenge of lack of information for the Brazilian dataset during the first years of the interval studied, the participation of black and brown students in higher education has increased throughout time, especially after 2013. This is also the year when a decrease in information not available is identified. Both facts support the argument that the formal implementation of policies of affirmative action in higher education, namely the quota system for public institutions and ProUni for private institutions, summed up to new access possibilities and student financing, have positively affected the access to information about the population group of the students, and allowed more black and brown students to access higher education.

The panorama of racial inequality in higher education has also been improving in South Africa. Despite not having major changes in data during the time evaluated, the number of African students enrolling and concluding higher education gets closer to the proportion of African citizens at the whole population year after year. There is still room for improvement, and for that the funding framework of higher education in the country would have to be reviewed (Tjonneland, 2017)).

As a final remark, the literature review chapter discussed that inequality in higher education is not a consequence of individual preferences or personal factors, but yet a consequence of institutional and intersectional factors. This fact lends to the need for formulation of policies to promote access and support students throughout higher education, encouraging completion of studies and reducing dropout rates. There is no easy formula to address a problem that has institutional and structural barriers, it is necessary to articulate focused policies to tackle a major problem from different perspectives.

4.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented findings from data which was collected from education bureaus of Brazil and South Africa. Data from this research indicate that access to and graduation from higher education is uneven for black and white students in both countries. Despite the progress made, much more progress is needed towards equal educational opportunities in these countries.

The next chapter presents the main conclusions and puts forward some recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The final chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of this study, while taking into account the research objectives and findings. This quantitative study used data on access and graduation from higher education according to different population groups in Brazil and South Africa to assess the participation of black students throughout time. This chapter summarizes the findings and offers recommendations of how to promote a more socially inclusive access and completion of higher education in both countries which were studied.

5.2 SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

The findings and conclusions of this study are in accordance with this research objective. Each country was assessed individually to identify the panorama of higher education in terms of racial distribution of students. Then similarities and differences were identified, considering both countries' social formation and the structure of their education systems. The comparative perspective allowed exploring how institutional arrangements may canalize resources and set expectations that collaborate in the production and maintenance of educational inequalities (Almeida et al, 2017).

5.2.1 Objective 1: To assess how class and racial aspects impact access and the completion of higher education in Brazil and South Africa.

According to IBGE (2022b), social inequalities in Brazil manifest themselves in multiple ways. Inequality by race is relevant in the country's panorama as it involves, in its determination, aspects that are related to the characteristics of the Brazilian development process. This dynamic has produced important cleavages throughout the country's history, leading to the partial inclusion of black, brown or indigenous populations in that process. It has resulted in higher levels of economic and social vulnerability for these groups, which can be seen in different social indicators that have been developed and monitored by researchers and policy-makers. For Carneiro (2011), race socially and culturally constructed is determinant in the configuration of the class structure in Brazil (Carneiro, 2011). The author is emphatic in stating that race and poverty are synonymous in Brazil. Such statement was verified at the

results presented by this research, with white students, with better income conditions, being majority of the higher education population, while they are not the majority of the Brazilian population. Accordingly, for Castro (1998, as cited in Carneiro, 2011), racial inequality is a secondary effect of class inequality. Research that has been carried out on racial inequalities in Brazil, especially by government agencies, has been the main lever for the recognition of black Brazilians as a segment with specific and disadvantageous characteristics in terms of social inclusion in the country. They question the simplification that the issue with Brazil is social, not racial (Carneiro, 2011).

Similarly, South Africa's social formation was marked by a rigid racialized class structure under the Apartheid system. The end of such a system allowed an increase in research on relationships of inequality among categorically-based social groups, investigating race-class intersections (Whitehead, 2013). The consequences of racial discrimination include inequalities in different sectors, and in higher education it is characterized by different experiences and outcomes according to different population groups (Soudien, 2008). Therefore, it is possible to argue that South Africa also faces issues for both social and racial inclusion, due to the connection of race and class of disadvantaged groups.

In Brazil, the total number of vacancies in higher education had a significant expansion. Therefore, the total number of white students enrolled in and graduating from higher education was greater than the total number of black students during the assessed time. However, there is an inclination for this gap to decrease over time. The pace of the reduction of the gap for graduation between black and white students is slower than the reduction of the gap for enrolment, but both indicators have been improving regarding racial inequalities.

In South Africa, the total number of students enrolled in and graduating from higher education has increased in the studied period. African students represented the majority of students enrolled in and graduating from higher education throughout the whole time which was assessed. However, the proportion of African students in higher education is still not equivalent to their weight in the population as a whole. The reality for white students is the opposite; during the interval studied the proportion of white students in higher education outweighed their participation in the general population. Such differences have been reducing over time, suggesting a slight reduction in racial inequality in South Africa.

5.2.2 Objective 2: To correlate racial inequality and structural racism.

According to Almeida (2019), racial inequality is a feature of society in which institutions are hegemonic, and these hegemonic groups make use of institutional mechanisms to impose their political and economic interests. The construction of these institutions takes place throughout the social formation of countries. Both the context of Brazil and South Africa is marked by a history of colonialism, exploitation and segregation. This legacy increasingly reinforced access to privileges for the white population, and social exclusion and vulnerabilities for the black population. When racist practices are already part of the society's daily life, racial discrimination and inequality are routinely reproduced and morally accepted.

It becomes a cycle that is hard to interrupt. When one social group naturalizes the dehumanization and exclusion of another, the power of action is concentrated in the hands of the privileged people, resources are allocated in a way that maintains the status quo. The deprivation of basic rights, such as access to clean water and schooling, makes the struggle for social mobility arduous. Inequalities make it difficult to access institutions that insist on replicating discriminatory actions, and thus structural racism naturalizes the marginalization of disadvantaged groups.

5.2.3 Objective 3: To identify policies of affirmative action that are being implemented in Brazil and South Africa to address racial inequalities in higher education.

Brazil and South Africa recognize the right to education as a basic right. Even so, the higher the level of education offered, the smaller the number of citizens who are able to make use of it. Affirmative action policies are put in place to promote access and encourage completion of studies for disadvantaged groups. According to Carneiro (2011), publications of governmental organisations in Brazil indicating the economic and social inferiority of blacks in relation to whites, suggests that universalist policies, historically implemented, have not been able to change the pattern of inequalities between blacks and whites in Brazilian society. The author argues that the intransigent defence of universalist policies in Brazil maintains kinship with the myth of racial democracy. Both cover processes of racial and social exclusion with a "democratic and egalitarian" perspective that perpetuate privileges, postponing the confrontation of inequalities that shape poverty and social exclusion.

The higher education system in Brazil has introduced new tools to promote access to education and reduce the dropout rate. As both public and private universities play an important role in offering higher education, different programs can be put into place to democratize access to education. The public higher education system follows the guidelines of the quota system, which uses social and racial criteria to reserve a number of vacancies to the disadvantaged group. In addition, Sisu centralized and standardized the selection test to access universities, allowing the use of this result for access to different universities across the country. For private higher education institutions, there are scholarships programs such as Prouni, of financing programs like Fies. Besides access policies, permanence policies to support students while in university are being implemented gradually. The diversification of programs favours inclusion in higher education. Although policies of affirmative action in higher education have been impacting positively indicators of access to higher education for black students, it is possible to find people of African descent that disagree with the system of quotas. For Carneiro (2011), it is a consequence of the efficiency of our society's educational and ideological mechanisms to believe that social mobility is equally available to all, depending on personal efforts of individuals. It also relates to the criticism of Almeida (2019) about meritocracy, accusing those that did not succeed of not trying hard enough.

According to Carneiro (2011), claiming quotas and affirmative action policies does not disqualify the black population. On the contrary, it represents their confirmation as a subject of rights, aware of their condition as a social creditor of a country that promoted the primitive accumulation of capital through the exploitation of slave labour, did not offer any type of reparation to blacks in the abolition of slavery, and continues to deny them integration through the multiple forms of racial exclusion prevailing in society, of which the lack of access to education is one of the most perverse.

Public institutions are more representative of higher education in South Africa. As they depend on state resources, the options for inclusion policies without putting pressure on public resources are more limited. Therefore, the main policy to encourage access to higher education is funding. NSFAS provides loans to low-income students, also offering discounts for good performers. Although it is a necessary tool, it is not yet able to cover the entire student population that needs funding.

5.2.4 Objective 4: To identify recommendations to governments of Brazil and South Africa.

The recommendations will be further discussed in the next section. They involve improving data management, articulating access and evasion control policies, and restructuring financing models.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering some missing elements in the current higher education systems in Brazil and South Africa, this section aims to suggest recommendations to policymakers to improve the identification of gaps, implementation of inclusive policies, and promoting completion of higher education.

Firstly, data collection in Brazil needs to be improved, not only regarding racial information. Whereas Brazil almost did not perform the census of 2022 due to lack of resources (Carranca, 2021), South Africa has adapted its methods and invited the population to register their household for online or telephonic data collection (Stats SA, 2022). It is clear that South Africa recognizes the relevance of monitoring racial indicators not to continue segregating the population, but to build more effective policies to redress the past and tackle racial inequalities. Historical datasets from Brazil reflect how the myth of racial democracy was long accepted in the country (Almeida, 2019).

The Brazilian panorama highlights the need to articulate policies to access higher education, with policies to avoid dropout along the journey of completing higher education in Brazil. According to Costa (2020), in order to maintain the growth of the participation of black students in the higher education, the continuity of public policies for access to higher education is essential. A major impact may be achieved with the combination of racial quotas, new admission modalities, such as Enem and Sisu, and the expansion of access to funding to study at private universities, such as Fies and ProUni.

The barriers to higher education in South Africa are more related to access to funding. To address this issue, a new financial model could promote better access to resources with the use of background data from students (Tjonneland, 2017). Information such as area of residence, household income, and high school attended could be combined to define eligibility for funding through NSFAS. Policies to avoid dropout should also be implemented, as the dropout rate is an issue for the higher education of both countries.

Data for both countries have shown a higher proportion of white students enrolled and graduating from higher education when compared with black students, directly identified on the Brazilian dataset and through equivalence with the proportions of population groups in South Africa. To continue with the trend of reducing racial inequality in higher education, both countries need to strengthen policies on access, support during education, and incentives for completing studies. Due to the nature of the structure of higher education in Brazil, with significant participation from both the private and public sectors, the country has more possibilities to promote policies for accessing higher education and reducing dropout rates. The country should promote the articulation of these policies in public and private education to improve the growth of black student participation in higher education (Costa, 2020). Higher education in South Africa has a greater representation of public institutions, which depend directly on state resources for their maintenance (Cele & Menon, 2006). It bestows less room for implementing more diversified policies on access to higher education, support for student life and reduction of dropout rates. To promote a more inclusive environment, higher education in South Africa needs a new funding framework (Walker, 2021).

Furthermore, it is relevant for both countries to connect education policies with access to the labour market. Educational attainment in South Africa correlates with higher employment rates and better wages (Khuluvhe et al, 2021).

5.4 CONCLUSION

This final chapter presented the conclusion and recommendation of the research. The research involved a descriptive quantitative method to assess how racial and class aspects impacted access and completion of higher education in Brazil and South Africa. The existing literature and theoretical concepts set the basis to analyse and discuss data for racial inequality in higher education. The research uncovered that there was still racial inequality in higher education even though improvements have been made with the implementation of affirmative action policies in the sector.

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