



Spatial governance of the peripheries in South Africa: Past lessons and a look into the future



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Background: South Africa is characterised by spatial divisions that are a legacy of colonial and apartheid eras that have persisted in the democratic dispensation. These divisions were initially based on race, but they are mutating to be based on class despite the majority of black Africans being confined in the urban peripheries.

Aim: This article aims to examine how governance works in the peripheries to determine lessons that can be learnt to ensure future social cohesion.

Setting: The study was conducted in Johannesburg, South Africa, with participants from the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality, the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), Institute of Security Studies (ISS) and South African Local Government Association (SALGA).

Methods: The study adopted a qualitative approach, interviews and a literature survey were used to obtain primary data. Data were analysed using content analysis.

Results: This study reveals that spatial governance is a complex phenomenon, as there were factors that were not considered post-apartheid era. The adoption of neoliberalism and current approaches to governance have failed to fundamentally transform spaces in Johannesburg, spaces such as Soweto, Diepsloot and Alexandra.

Conclusion: Spatial governance is still influenced by past legislations. There is a need to ensure that there is political will coupled with innovative measures to ensure spatial transformation in South Africa, especially in the peripheral spaces, and to minimise deprivation experienced in the peripheries.

Contribution: This study contributes to understanding of spatial governance and its attributes in urban peripheral spaces.

Keywords: spaces, spatial governance, development, apartheid, municipality, peripheries.

Introduction

Since the 20th century, urbanisation correlated with the emergence of the urban peripheries, especially in large metropolis spaces (Dadashpoor & Ahani 2019). The global urban population is increasing, and predictions indicate an increase in the future. The urban peripheries are the urban development beyond the city's boundaries and are the contemporary reality of modern urbanisation. It is worth observing that more than half of the world's population currently resides in urban spaces (Magidi & Ahmed 2019). Magidi and Ahmed (2019) further indicate that urban growth is because of different factors between developing and developed countries. In developing countries, it is mainly because of population growth and migration. However, in developed countries it is primarily as a result of migration, although developed countries are highly urbanised compared to developing countries. In developed countries, urbanisation is triggered by economic growth and technological development (Brunt & García-Peñalosa 2022). Furthermore, South Africa is urbanising at an estimated 1% annually (Ruihiga 2014). However, large metropolitan spaces witnessed urbanisation between 1.4% and 3.5% between 1996 and 2011 (Marais & Cloete 2017).

The critical factor in urbanisation is that much of it is peripheral and correlates with vices such as poverty, unemployment, urban decay, increased pressure on infrastructure and increased informal housing (Magidi & Ahmed 2019). The South African urban spaces are segregated and depict inadequate spatial injustice and exclusion, which was historically racial and is still racial and also based on class, as the working class and those facing poverty are confined in the peripheral spaces. During colonial and apartheid eras, the law was instrumental in creating and legitimising segregated urban spaces (Strauss 2019). Although colonialism and apartheid have ended, segregated spatial legacies persist in South Africa.

Employing different approaches such as spatial rebalancing, which aims to narrow gaps between different regions; space-neutral approach, which aims for economic growth through economic integration; and place-based approach, where each region develops its own economic potential, to reverse spatial inequalities in South Africa has limited success (Todes & Turok 2018). In 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in which South Africa abstained from voting in favour of the declaration given the context of apartheid, the institutionalised racial segregation and discrimination that the country would later implement (Van Wyk & Oranje 2014). The spatial arrangements of the apartheid era and its resultant spatial governance were against human rights. Van Wyk and Oranje (2014) further indicate that the apartheid government remained aloof regarding human rights, which was evident in the Constitution of Republic of South Africa, Act 110 of 1983. The democratic government in South Africa recognises human rights and they are entrenched in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) through the Bill of Rights. However, the democratic government is still yet to transform the spatial arrangements in South Africa.

This article attempted to scrutinise how the governance works in the peripheries, what lessons we can learn and how to ensure the future cohesion of the peripheries subject to sustainable development goals, especially Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, all within the South African context.

Spatial arrangements in South Africa: The historical overview and contemporary issues

In defining spatial arrangement for this article, we adopt from Maake, Manamela and Meso (2016) as how land occupation is divided in South Africa, based on history and current realities that resulted in whites occupying spaces that have economic potential because of land and livestock dispossession of black Africans. Hence, spatial arrangements are based on geographical divisions, in which race was a major factor, but currently class and to some extent race, are major factors.

The understanding of spatial governance requires establishing the concept of governance first. Governance has diverse meanings; different actors attach different understandings to the concept (Fukuyama 2016). Zondo (2022) associates the concept of governance with delegating power to the lower ranking people, decentralisation and ensuring the participation of all people and representation. Katsamunská (2016) posits that governance is largely concerned with the functions of policymaking and implementation; hence, it gives direction to the society. The government is an actor that gives effect to governance, as the incapacity of the government renders governance futile (Ndreu 2016). Therefore, most of the spatial arrangements in South Africa are the products of government action through

the process of governance (Jürgens et al. 2013). Corruption, poor decision-making and disregard for people are associated with poor governance. Meyer and Auriacombe (2019) associate good urban governance with sustainable development, while Zondo (2022) states that in rural spaces value is lost because of incompetent governance and sustainable development is adversely affected.

Therefore, good governance is a catalyst for sustainable spatial development. As Zondo (2022) substantiates governance in rural spaces and Meyer and Auriacombe (2019) in urban spaces, from the two perspectives, spatial governance implies a delegation of power to people residing in specific spaces while ensuring their full participation to trigger sustainable development. Equally, urban governance includes variables such as spatial planning, decentralisation of power, participation and economic development (Meyer and Auriacombe 2019).

In numerous cases, understanding spatial dynamics in South Africa is usually characterised by national, provincial and urban or rural characteristics, even though other factors can provide insights into spatial dynamics. Historically, race was the basis of spatial dynamics, and there was reservation of specific spaces for whites, and other races had their own spaces (David et al. 2018a). This practice originated in the 1830s as the state and Dutch Reformed Church were the only entities mandated to create towns. The discovery of mineral resources in South Africa led to mining rights and specific spaces being allocated to Europeans only; hence, economic and spatial discrimination emerged (Marais, Denoon-Stevens & Cloete 2020). Furthermore, the discovery of minerals correlated with labour shortage in the mines; the demand by white workers for protection against black competition and the need to ensure cheap labour from Africans (Wolpe 2023). This, on the one hand, met a challenge that the vast majority of black Africans were unwilling to move to urban spaces for labour, and later, they began selling agricultural produce to urban residents for survival and to thwart this, the government of the day promulgated the Land Act, 1913, which allocated about 7% of the land to black Africans, confining them to the reserves (Modise & Mtshiselwa 2013). However, on the other hand, Beinart and Delius (2014) argue that the Land Act of 1913 did not result in the immediate dispossession of land for black Africans; it was the Native Trust and Land Act of 1936 that saw dispossession of land.

Concerning the peripheral spaces (townships), there were requirements that were envisioned by the apartheid government. Firstly, the township was to be further away from the city centre and its expansion had to be away from the town. Secondly, there were to be buffer spaces between townships and towns, and these buffer spaces should surround townships. A township should adjoin another township to minimise space for black Africans, and while townships were surrounded by buffer spaces, there should be an industrial buffer between a township and white spaces. Rail was the preferred method to access townships as

opposed to road, and townships were to be divided based on ethnicity (Philip 2014). This explains that the creation of the peripheries met the needs of the white population while depriving the black population.

The colonial era saw Gauteng's (formerly as the Transvaal) development as a significant economic hub because of the discovery of gold, which led to economic diversification in the same region (Alexander 2004; Thihe 2013). This development correlated with massive state support for the same region concerning economic development. As economic development linked to mining demanded massive labour, the colonial government applied draconian measures to control the movement of black Africans to mining centres, effectively developing the migrant labour system (Alexander 2004; Harington, McGlashan & Chelkowska 2004).

Land Act, Natives Trust Act, homelands and rural areas

As the then government promulgated the Land Act of 1913, it later promulgated the of Natives Trust and Land Act, 1936, which increased the land allocated to black Africans to 13% (Thihe 2013), and this legislation was the basis for the creation of Bantustans or homelands (Qwaqwa, KwaZulu, Bophuthatswana, Gazankulu, KwaNdebele, Lebowa, Venda, KaNgwane, Transkei and Ciskei). The Land Act, 1913, ensured that white farmers had virtually no competition from black Africans, forcing black Africans into peasantry in mines and agriculture.

From the spatial perspective, this created a migrant labour system and urban peripheries as men would migrate to work in the mines, leaving their families in the reserves. In 1923, the legislation, the Native Urban Areas Act, was the basis of race-based residential areas, as black Africans were prohibited from purchasing land in white areas (Todes & Turok 2018). Todes and Turok (2018) further point out that conditions deteriorated in the reserves and later in the homelands because of overpopulation on unproductive land. Furthermore, most of the homelands were far from economic and industrial spaces. This reality also correlated with the restriction of black entrepreneurship by the state.

The homeland system in South Africa created a different kind of peripheries, as homelands were deemed independent entities by the apartheid government of South Africa. Furthermore, the homeland system created spatial differences as different homelands were deprived differently (Whiteside 1985). The homelands were also a method of racial discrimination but concealed as a move towards equality and non-discrimination (Blausten 1976). Van Wyk and Oranje (2014) and Rogerson (2022) point out that the homeland system created legislative discord from the legislative perspective as homelands applied different legislations and policies for spatial planning, which differed from South Africa, as the homelands were deemed to be independent entities or states. Considering townships as peripheral

spaces, townships were initially a compromise, as there was a need for black people to be close to urban spaces for cheap labour but further away from the urban space to ensure racial separation (Philip 2014) and increasing rural spaces.

The historical factors of the peripheries influenced the spatial or space governance in rural spaces, considering that spatial ownership and control were at the centre of both colonialists. Spatial governance in rural areas follows the patterns of colonial order, as rural citizens are still to have substantive land ownership. Tsheola and Makhudu (2019) state that governance of land in rural spaces has continued to perpetuate the effects of Bantustans, depriving black Africans of access to alternatives, independent sources of information, autonomous associations and inclusive citizenship all these are four of the seven basic political institutions of democracy. Rural spatial governance results in the differences between modern and traditional governance systems in rural spaces. Kosec and Wantchekon (2020) echo the similar sentiment as they assert that information alone has failed to improve rural governance. The apartheid government created peripheries in the form of homelands or Bantustans and was somehow deemed independent Bantustans' institutions administered by the apartheid government (Heffernan 2017).

In 1994, the settlement between liberation movements and the apartheid government resulted in the insertion of South Africa into a global economy, in an unprotected manner (Mfete 2020). This could be attributed to the fact that the state was constrained to undertake any radical transformation of colonial and apartheid-era spatial arrangements and social justice undertakings (Pieterse 2019). The literature to date indicates that middle-income states' (government's) undertaking of urbanisation has resulted in housing projects in the peripheries where poor households are located, and these new peripheries tend to restrict the mobility of poor households who dwell in them, as they have to commute and pay higher transport fares (Williams et al. 2022) and attraction of economic development and growth.

Thirty years into democracy South African's most rural spaces and former homelands, are yet faced with the challenge of low economic activity contributing higher unemployment rate. This is despite the National Development Plan vision (National Planning Commission [NPC] 2011) to transform spatial arrangements by 2030 although studies indicate that there have been few spatial changes in South Africa (Francis & Webster 2019). Analysis of the literature highlights that it is created to appear as complex.

This study is underpinned by relative deprivation theory. Relative deprivation is based on comparison when a person or group compares itself to a referent and decides that the referent is better off. The referent can be another group or time. Such comparison can result in frustration and resentment (Smith et al. 2012). Wilkinson and Pickett (2007) find that there is a positive correlation between unequal

societies and problems associated with relative deprivation when income inequality is used as an indicator and determinant of the scale of socioeconomic stratification in society. In relative deprivation, expectations are crucial as when people expect something to happen, and it does not happen they feel resentment (Webber 2007). Relative deprivation has been used to explain a variety of phenomena ranging from health outcomes, propensity to protest and likelihood to join a terror group, and the concept of relative deprivation has been used in different social sciences such as criminology, history, economics and political science (Smith & Pettigrew 2015). In the South African context, comparing black South Africans to white South Africans reveals relative deprivation because of both colonialism and apartheid past, and this deprivation has persisted because of adoption of market-based policies. Therefore, it can be deduced that in South Africa there is a phenomenon of race-based and spatial relative deprivation.

Research methods and design

A qualitative research approach was utilised, and semi-structured interviews were triangulated with desktop research. A total of 16 participants participated in this study. The participants of this study were selected through purposive sampling. Interviews were conducted with the participants from the Human Sciences Research Council, ward councillors from the City of Johannesburg, ward committee members, social movement members, the Institute of Security Studies and residents of the townships and informal settlements. Participants from HSRC and ISS were formally invited to participate in this study, and after securing authorisation, the researcher wrote to prospective participants seeking their permission to participate in the study. The researcher also sought and obtained permission to conduct research in the City of Johannesburg. Interviews lasted between 15 min and 35 min. A systematic literature review concerning spatial governance was explored, because of its potential to eliminate duplication of literature results not matching the purpose of the research, focusing on urban townships (the peripheries). Relevant research articles were analysed and scrutinised for the purpose of this article. This literature review method justified the intention to compare and synthesise evidence, and data gathered were analysed using content analysis (Snyder 2019).

Ethical considerations

The ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from University of Zululand Research Ethics Committee (reference number: UZREC 171110-030 PGD 2021/47). Because of costs and health implications, the researcher used both online platforms such as Zoom and face-to-face methods to conduct interviews. Participation to partake on the study was consented by participants. Some participants chose to be interviewed on Internet-based platforms as concerns about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) were still applicable, despite South Africa was on lockdown alert level 1, where most normal activities had resumed, albeit health precautions

were still applicable to prevent resurgence of COVID-19. Data collection commenced from March 2022 to January 2023 although requests to conduct interviews were made in 2021.

Results and discussion

Content analysis was used to analyse the data. It is an unobtrusive method that determines the trends and patterns of words, focusing on frequencies, relationships, and structures (Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas 2013). Content analysis enables the researcher to categorise words and phrases into a few categories, which allows them to have the same meaning. Furthermore, it assists the attainment of condensed and broad descriptions while providing knowledge and enabling guidance into practical action (Elo & Kyngäs 2008).

In analysing the data, advice from Elo and Kyngäs (2008) was adhered to, as the phases, namely preparation, organising and reporting, were followed. Data were classified into smaller categories (codes), which were words or themes. Data were loaded into qualitative data analysis software, Nvivo 14, for ease of analysis, and codes were developed in which data were categorised.

Table 1 depicts information collected and used to develop data analysis.

TABLE 1: Information used to form data analysis.

Codes	Description
Challenges of spatial governance	These are the challenges that face spatial governance in the South African context
Actors	The actors who shape spatial governance
Economy	Economic influences on spatial governance
History	Historical influences on spatial governance
Politics	Political influences on spatial governance
Class dynamics	How social class determines the peripheral status
Inequity in service provision	How service provision happens in different regions
Lessons	-
Local government and spatial governance	The factors associated with spatial governance in local government
Developmental local government and spatial governance	How developmental local government affects spatial governance
Institutions	How different institutions affect spatial governance in relation to local government
Policy proposals and policies	How policies and policy proposals affect spatial governance
Peripheries and spatial governance	How spatial governance in the peripheries works at local government
Housing provision at the periphery	Housing provision by the state
Infrastructure development and externalities	How infrastructure development displaces low-income people
Literature	What literature states about spatial governance
Mobility in the peripheries:	How being relocated to the peripheries affect mobility
• Gendered dimensions of mobility	How gender intertwines with mobility in the peripheries
• Mobility threats	How mobility in the peripheries comes with security threats
Poor quality housing	The level of quality of housing in the peripheries
Reality	What can be deduced
Views of participants	-



FIGURE 1: Word tree from data analysis.

The codes were then condensed into fewer categories to allow succinct reporting. As content analysis involves the frequency of words, the words that were frequent during data analysis are depicted in the word tree. The most frequent words have a larger font size (see Figure 1).

Evidence, both primary and secondary, indicates that spatial governance, especially of the peripheries in South Africa, is influenced by different factors, including actors, history, politics and economy and the complex interplay of these factors.

History

The history of creating urban peripheries in South Africa stretches back to the days of colonialism. However, different researchers use different lenses; hence, different findings and arguments surface. The differences observed were not necessarily contradictory; they merely revealed the field or the interests of the researcher who conducted the study. Strauss (2019) traces the development of the urban peripheries to 1876, as British officials used legislation to control the settlement of urban blacks. Furthermore, Strauss (2019) indicates that blacks were not allowed to own or purchase land as land could not be registered in the name of a black person. Other scholars, Forde, Kappler and Björkdahl (2021), indicate that segregation was initiated by the colonial government and formalised by the apartheid government, and segregation adversely affected people

categorised as black, mixed race and others as they were confined in the urban peripheries. However, Forde et al. (2021) state that spatial segregation began because of the implementation of the Land Act of 1913; evidence from Strauss (2019) indicates that segregation began earlier than 1913. This implies that the common understanding of spatial segregation is linked to the Land Act of 1913 although other legislations existed before. Therefore, discriminatory land ownership and restrictive policies were central to segregation as black Africans were discriminated and restricted from owning land.

Furthermore, from the historical perspective, Van Wyk and Oranje (2014) state that the discovery of resources prohibited mining and settlement in the areas where resources were discovered to other races except Europeans. Therefore, based on history, spatial realities emerged because of racism, economic interests and competition for land. Strauss (2019) further argues that healthcare concerns were the basis of justifying segregation as the presence of black people became associated with epidemics. The problematising of black presence is not a new phenomenon; it has mutated as it has become spatial. One interview respondent agreed with Strauss (2019) on problematising blacks, albeit spatially:

‘The problems of the peripheries are criminalised and made to look savage compared to the problems of the core. It all has to do with neoliberalism. The core controls everything, while the peripheries control very little.’ (Participant 1)

The given interview excerpt indicates that when it comes to decisions about narratives concerning the peripheries, other stakeholders have decision-making powers that can problematise the challenges facing the peripheries and are portrayed negatively. However, the participant lacks the history of how the peripheries were problematised before, as the participant squarely blames everything on neoliberalism. Furthermore, history intertwines with the present as the peripheries are problematised. In addition, it is evident that the history of problematising blacks cascaded to problematising the peripheries, and Johannesburg is not an exception concerning this phenomenon.

Economy

The economy and history, as far as spatial dynamics in South Africa, intersect. Economic interests were one of the factors that triggered spatial segregation. Williams et al. (2022) looked at how peripheral resettlement in India and South Africa results in low income and precarious employment, thus emphasising the importance of location as far as opportunities are concerned. Therefore, the peripheries are sites of precarious employment and underemployment. Literature and empirical evidence indicate that the peripheries are no longer created because of segregation and discriminatory practices, they are a response to legal and safety concerns, as well as the need for housing in urban spaces. However, this comes with externalities that are adverse for peripheral populations. Pieterse (2021) studied the collapse of urban governance in Emfuleni Municipality and made observations about the economy. Among these are the failure to diversify the economy despite the economic growth of the 1960s and 1970s, the poor economic performance of South Africa compared to other developing countries (2.1% compared to 5.4% annually between 2010 and 2016) and the effects of post-crisis 2008 recession (Pieterse 2021). All these affect spatial transformation ambitions that South Africa or any local government may have. As Pieterse (2021) links the failure of urban governance with economy, it is evident that lack of proper economic planning will lead to governance failure in the future, unless drastic and radical measures are undertaken to prevent this.

Furthermore, the history of homelands cascades to the economy as there has been limited land redistribution, as land redistribution has never been allocated more than 1% of the national budget (Kepe & Hall 2020). The effects of the historic prohibition against entrepreneurship for Africans, which restricts skills and capital, coupled with powerful and formal sector that crowds out new entrants implies that South Africa has a limited informal sector (Neves 2017). The informal sector can act as a shock absorber for extreme poverty. Neves (2017) also agrees with Pieterse (2021) that economic growth is low; hence, there has been declining employment in mining and manufacturing while South Africa adopted de-industrialisation before the services sector was fully developed. Political leadership in South Africa did not plan adequately for spatial transformation, as evidence indicates that South Africa had economic growth during

apartheid. Furthermore, it can also be deduced that the economic performance has placed the democratic government in a reactive mode regarding transforming the peripheries.

Another factor to consider about the economy as far as spatial dynamics are concerned is unequal contribution to the economy as KwaZulu-Natal, Western Cape and Gauteng contributed 65% to the economy in 1996 and 2011, while three metros, Johannesburg, Ethekwini and Cape Town contributed 35% in the same time (David et al. 2018b). This implies a profound phenomenon of uneven development in South Africa. Although Johannesburg contributes substantially to the economy of South Africa, it also has a challenge of uneven development as it faces structural unemployment, income inequality across racial lines and spatial divides, which confine the poor and working class to the periphery (Pieterse 2021). Therefore, it is deduced that the economy of South Africa is not conducive to the ideal of spatial transformation in the entire South Africa. Spatial transformation can be attempted in locations where financial resources are available; however, this can trigger migration for better opportunities and put pressure on infrastructure.

One participant, as far as the economy of the peripheries, stated:

'This question is complex. In the townships I can say we do not have the viable economy, the economy is in the hands of big businesses. So the economic approach is like let big companies provide everything. Moreover, those companies cannot provide enough taxes for local government to provide services. When it comes to governance, I can say our governance in the townships leaves a lot to be desired. Like, what type of governance that results in so many potholes in our roads? What type of governance that results in irregular waste collection? Our governance pushes people to protest.' (Participant 2)

The participant reveals the phenomenon of extractive capital by big businesses in the peripheries. Moreover, there are sentiments about unequal service provision and poor infrastructure maintenance. However, as data were collected during COVID-19, small businesses suffered the effects of lockdown measures, there is a possibility that the interview participant was trying to grasp that reality. The participant also equated governance with municipal service provision.

Politics

Politics, history and economy also intertwine. As the historical subsection reveals some aspects of past politics, this subsection will examine some aspects of contemporary politics and how they affect spatial governance. Concerning the need for housing, there has been political pressure from the government to provide more housing (Williams et al. 2022). However, the politics of housing provision within neoliberal prescripts creates new peripheries. One interview participant said about this:

'Look, the people who designed the system of apartheid were brilliant. Firstly, they have us work for them doing the dangerous work of building the cities. Then, they took the best land for

themselves. They did not stop there; they created the townships for us to live in and created the system we have to pay for, as we paid for their buses and trains to transport us from the township to work. Now the ANC came and gave us a different kind of township, far away from what we are used to.' (Participant 3)

The negotiated political settlement of the democratic era and the adoption of neoliberalism affected housing provision. Housing provision is 100% subsidised by the state, and the need to procure cheaper land to build the houses led to acquiring land further away from the urban core, thus creating or perpetuating the peripheries (David et al., 2018a; Pieterse, 2019). The above interview response indicates that transport provision in the peripheries is a form of extractive capital, as residents in the peripheries have to pay for transport to work in the urban core.

Besides creating new peripheries, other political factors must be considered as they affect spatial governance. The actions of political actors and institutions in local government affect governance (Pieterse 2021). Pieterse (2021) states that the executive mayor system is utilised in urban municipalities, and the mayoral committee is used for governance purposes. The mayor has a prerogative to choose which members from the municipal council will form the mayoral committee, and this has an inherent weakness as the mayoral committee will end up being dominated by one political party and, at times, one faction of the political party (Pieterse 2021). This implies that urban governance, including spatial governance, is subject to the political influences of a party that leads the municipality. Pieterse (2019) points out another factor by political actors that affect governance: in the event of failure to govern by local government, both national and provincial levels appoint technocrats to govern the local government. Technocrats are unelected bodies that possess power because of their technical and or administrative knowledge and expertise (Bickerton & Accetti 2017). Pieterse (2019) states that the use of consultants simplifies complex realities, and they prioritise certain urban investments over others. At times, the use of technocrats is through the use of consultants. One interview participant stated:

'Well, I think I am not supposed to tell you this as it is not directly related to your question. The municipality also uses consultants to advise it on certain matters. Not everything is done by the municipality; at times, consultants are used.' (Participant 4)

In the City of Johannesburg, technocrats advise the municipality as opposed to governing the municipality.

The intersection of class, mobility needs and service provision

Williams et al. (2022) indicate that class is a critical characteristic of the people being relocated to the peripheries, as far as the Indian experience is concerned, and point out the externality of this as it essentially thwarts the mobility needs of the people in the peripheries. It is not only physical mobility that is limited in the peripheries but also economic mobility, as the peripheries are not adequately integrated into transport networks. Furthermore, Williams et al. (2022)

indicate that there are gendered dimensions to mobility, as women and girls are the worst affected by the effects of peripheral resettlement, which limits their mobility because of safety and security concerns. Therefore, there is a nexus between peripheral resettlement and insecurity. David et al. (2018a) indicate that blacks have been and are still confined to the peripheries. It is deduced that the peripheries need adequate transport infrastructure, which connects them to the city's core, and the class composition in the peripheries is mainly composed of the poor and working class. Hence, mobility needs are limited.

Forde et al. (2021) state that a duality of prosperity and poverty characterises urban spaces, and poverty is concentrated in the peripheries. David et al. (2018b) indicate that there is inequity in service provision, and the peripheries receive less municipal service provision. One research participant hinted at this:

'Consider this: in the peripheries, waste is collected less than in the core, there are more water shortages in the peripheries than in the core, and there are fewer resources allocated for the peripheries compared to the core. So, everything is less in the peripheries than in the core.' (Participant 2)

The given interview excerpt indicates that municipal service provision is unequal; hence there is discrimination in service provision, which is largely determined by space and economy. The broader economy's performance is poor, and it perpetuates relative deprivation in the peripheries, while there is pressure to provide more services in the peripheries.

While the peripheries are spaces of relative deprivation and considering the economy's poor performance, Pieterse (2019) asserts that South African urban governments are responsible for dealing with the complex issue of spatial planning and economic development, which largely excluded blacks. In addition, Pieterse (2019) indicates that the City of Johannesburg has policy frameworks to ensure spatial transformation, such as the City Support Programme and Corridors of Freedom, which is both a medium-term and long-term strategy for spatial transformation. It is early to determine the impact of such policy frameworks. Both these policy frameworks are based on the national government grant, the Built Environment Performance Plans (Pieterse 2019). Therefore, it is evident that although there are policy proposals and some financial resources to transform spatial realities, they still need to change realities in the peripheries as the intersection of class and relative deprivation is a reality in the peripheries.

The peripheries and spatial governance

Dadashpoor and Ahani (2019) argue that urban development will be in the peripheries of urban spaces in the future. This implies that spatial governance of the peripheries will be critically important in the future. On the other hand, Williams et al. (2022) argue that the peripheries are not intrinsically disadvantaged; if transport networks are developed and other forms of connectivity, the disadvantages are minimised.

Furthermore, the peripheries face a trade-off between backlogs for housing provision, housing quality, cost and location (Williams et al. 2022). Authorities so far have failed to provide adequate infrastructure in the peripheries (Magidi & Ahmed 2019). It is deduced that the peripheries are here to stay and are challenged by different factors shaping these spaces' governance.

Conclusion

The past concerning spatial governance in South Africa reveals that this spatial dynamics are a result of legislative power, albeit within the prescripts of racism and dispossession of land. Furthermore, the primary lesson from the past is how political leadership failed to envision and prepare for changes that were to come in the future and prepare for fully integrated peripheries. It is evident that the current spatial realities thwart social cohesion as spatial realities perpetuate divide based on race and class and entrench relative deprivation in the peripheries. South Africa and Johannesburg, in particular, need to ensure that the city's core is expanded while investing in infrastructure to ensure the full integration of the peripheries. Transforming the peripheries demands the pooling of resources by all the spheres of government and guarding against the gentrification of certain spaces, as gentrification can displace the poor and working class. In transforming spatial dynamics, the effects of the past, especially considering the effects of the former homelands, need to be considered. Policymakers need to consider the effects of the past on how they affect the peripheries currently and work on minimising these adverse effects while developing policies that will shape peripheries of the future while considering sustainable development. In addition, there is a need for concerted government and private sector engagement and effort to minimise inequality and poverty as this will cascade to spatial realities.

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Authors' contributions

S.B.M. conceptualised the research and wrote the article while N.N.J provided supervision for the article.

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Data availability

Data supporting this study are not publicly available because of ethical reasons, as some of the research participants requested anonymity when participating in the study but

are available from the corresponding author, S.B.M, upon reasonable request.

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