Name

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Course Code

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Response Paper

# **Political System and Health Inequality**

The statistics that delineate the ratio of HIV/AIDS in South Africa as compare to other countries reveal that the black population of the country is most affected by HIV/AIDS. All this owe the unequal dissemination of health care services in South Africa. According to the article - political systems and health inequity. Connecting apartheid policies to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in South Africa- published in the journal of Global health, South African people have experienced tragic consequences. There is no shame in denouncing racism, apartheid, the then National party, and the policies they adopted out of apartheid. Not only the South African population has been affected by apartheid, but it also has negative implications for the neighbors of South Africa (Li). The consequences are long-lasting and South African are unfortunate enough that they have to bear the burden of these consequences for the years to come. Statistics revealed that approximately 50-60 million people in South Africa had a problematic relationship with the policies that rendered apartheid.

Forget wondering if people had tv's - we're talking about generations growing up into the 90's and 2000s without water, sewerage. The white population in South African enjoyed living standard that people enjoy in Western Europe. However, save whites in South Africa, the rest of the population were no different from those living in poorest African countries. They were discriminated based on wages, frequently beaten, abused, insulted, arrested, and imprisoned. There is no doubt that the way apartheid promoted discrimination was forbidding, vicious, and appalling. After being desensitized, there were many problems experienced by black South African people such as fall in living standards, health problems, malnourishment, and rise in crime rate. All these problems owe the laws and policies that were designed to oppress the black South African folks. Many whites - including judges, politicians, English South Africans- hated and did everything they could to dismantle, stop, slow and thwart Apartheid (Li).

Statistically, the standards of Human Development and the level of healthcare inequality in South Africa coincides with the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in South Africa. High social and health care inequality led to high rates of HIV/AIDS infection. this is a legacy of the Apartheid era where women enjoyed fewer rights than men, people of color were treated either as middlemen (esp. the so-called Coloureds and Indians) or cheap labor (in the case of Black South African of Bantu origin), LGBT's were seen as abdominal and not fit as human beings, and White South Africans getting all the best facilities and opportunities.

# **HIV and gender inequalities in South Africa**

There are extremely high levels of homophobia and gender inequality in South Africa so people still have to rely on gay bars and clubs for us to get by. However, the trendy restaurants, bars, dives, and hangouts are becoming more LGBT-friendly thanks to an increasingly inclusive and cosmopolitan crowd that is more focused on tolerance and integration compared to previous generations (Rispel and Popay). Homophobia and sexism remain at high levels and the legacy of Apartheid will not help either as the LGBT community faced severe marginalization and discrimination during that period. The nightlife has been geared towards having the LGBT community integrated and included with a level of organization that one cannot see even in the First World in certain respects.

The mainstream establishments have become inclusive but as the stigma towards the LGBT community remains deplorably high means that LGBT-oriented establishments such as gay bars and clubs will remain a part of our cultural life for the foreseeable future (Rispel and Popay). As for the local scenes, one should head for Cape Town as the city has been ranked as being among the most LGBT-friendly destinations in the world with it being concentrated around the neighborhood of Observatory.

Works Cited

Li, Veronica. “Political Systems and Health Inequity: Connecting Apartheid Policies to the HIV/AIDS Epidemic in South Africa.” *The Journal of Global Health*, 2011.

Rispel, Laetitia, and Jennie Popay. “Confronting Social Exclusion, HIV and Gender Inequalities in South Africa.” *Agenda*, vol. 23, no. 81, 2009, pp. 90–100.