

ABSTRACT

This report explores the benefits and moral justification of the current redistributive justice initiatives that have been implemented at Eskom in an attempt to redress past socio-economic inequalities to achieve a just society in South Africa.

It begins by taking a snapshot of Eskom, the main utility that produces and distributes the important electricity commodity in South Africa, in the early years of the post-democratic era, recognising how Eskom was the most efficient and model state-owned entity in the country in the provision of its core services. However, a decade later, the organisation became a shadow of its former self, with rampant corruption, financial mismanagement and constant electricity blackouts that increased poverty and socio-economic inequalities in the country. This paper argues that some of the redistributive justice initiatives currently implemented at Eskom do not cohere with the philosophical accounts of Rawls's Difference Principle and Kant's Formulations of moral law. Some of these redistributive justice initiatives only benefit a few individuals as opposed to the majority of the poor and economically marginalised people, suggesting that some of these initiatives have become the main drivers of corruption in South Africa, which aggravate the socio-economic inequalities in South Africa.

Based on the three main arguments that are discussed in this paper, it is concluded that it is morally unjustifiable to continue with some of the redistributive justice initiatives at Eskom. The majority of poor South Africans will be best served by a cost-effective and efficient Eskom that focusses on the provision of cheap and quality electricity to the country.