

Abstract

As discontent amongst the poor continues to ignite flashpoints of unrest across South Africa, issues surrounding how to effectively address chronic levels of inequality dominate the national debate. This has progressively put the spotlight on newer points of economic fissure, namely growing inequalities now surfacing more readily within black communities themselves. This research probes the critical issue of how black communities mediate these internal economic cleavages; it does so by focusing on how resource transfers are reciprocally employed between a purposive sample of Gauteng's black professionals and their communities of origin. Measuring levels, types and frequencies of exchange, surveys were used to gather data on the fiscal, time and in-kind resource transfers of respondents, whilst in-depth interviews captured the qualitative meanings attached to these reciprocity repertoires. The findings of this research pivot on three converging notions of exchange found to be active in this equation: *Economies of Affection*, *Moral Economies* and *Enclave Economies*. Economy of Affection rationales shaped how respondents transfers exhibited primarily within extended family support networks, Moral Economy logics dictated the obligatory aspects of 'giving-back' mores, and national Enclave Economy conditions propelled black professionals into enacting intermediary roles between the economic 'centre' and 'peripheries'. Whilst the question of whether Gauteng's black professionals will maintain these unique bridge-spanning roles over the long-term remains open for debate, the stimulating interaction between these 3 notions of 'reciprocity' provokes reflection on their cogence and interaction also within other contemporary southern hemisphere contexts.