The Consolidation of Democracy in South Africa: A Study of South Africa’s Democratic Consolidation Between the years 2005-2015

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the democratic consolidation process in South Africa between 2005 and 2015. The study applied Linz’ and Stepan’s theory (civil society, political society, economic society, rule of law and state apparatus). South African civil society is still barred with different challenges which include unemployment and underemployment of the black people. South Africa has not achieved the democracy consolidation due to several political challenges that have been discussed in the findings or result section in detail. This study found that South Africa has developed indeed in terms of infrastructure; however, mass poverty is still a challenge to democracy consolidation. South Africa has some of the strongest institutions such as the judiciary that is respected in the whole Africa. However, egocentric politicians have turned these institutions into something that is not recognizable. South Africa has not been consolidating democracy between 2005 and 2015. This is because it has not fulfilled the five arenas of Linz and Stepan’s theory of consolidating democracy. Secondly, corruption, misappropriation of state apparatus, lack of accountability, political autonomy, mass poverty, unemployment, and ineffective empowerment of the civil society are some of the key challenges that were found to hinder further democratic consolidation in South Africa.

Keywords: south Africa, democracy, the rule of law, political society, state bureaucracy, economic society, consolidation, civil society.
1. Introduction

South Africa has since the 1990s found itself in a state of transformation in the field of democracy. This transformation was at first increasingly progressive. The nation has a long history of numerous political and economic inequalities that burdened its righteous governance, as it favored parts of its population, namely the white race, on the cost of the black race (Altman et al., 2015). Once deciding to phase-out apartheid in South Africa, the nation adopted a freer and open society that chose to include the black population as well. The transformation began positively, as the phase-out of apartheid was considered a breakthrough in that part of the world and for humanity. The president F.W De Klerk also eventually announced his release of the political prisoner Nelson Mandela (Beall, Gelb, and Hassim, 2005, p. 683). He was imprisoned on the basis of his beliefs and political opinions. 1994 he was finally freed after over two decades behind bars, and that became the starting point for the democratization process of South Africa. The race laws were revoked and Nelson Mandela’s party African National Congress was now allowed to be active and part of the political arena (Butler, 2005, p. 721). According to Chinguno (2013), the nation was now under new governance with Nelson Mandela as their ruler. He made sure that a development plan was in progress, with the aim to fight poverty and create better circumstances for the black people. However as Cuthbertson (2008) explains, this democratic transition has slowed down immensely, and a lot of research even point at evidence that suggest that it has stopped completely. The development plan has not been fully implemented, as the economical inequalities has persisted and remained unchanged between the two races – the black are still poor, and the white are still wealthy. It seems like the development plan have caused more problems than solutions. A fear of conflict has risen and divided the two races even more. The differences in the lower, middle and higher classes are still visible when examining both races. Furthermore, Lane and Ersson (2007) explains that the blacks are still faced with challenges such as unemployment, lower quality of education for the youth as well as lower quality healthcare. This hybrid regime makes for an excellent study object in the field of democratization and democracy in transition. The topic of study is scientifically relevant, as there are many hybrid regimes that struggle with the democratization process; similar to that of South Africa. As a result, I have chosen to carry out my bachelor thesis with the focus on South Africa during the years 2005-2015, to examine why the democratization process have slowed down or stopped entirely.
1.2. Purpose and research question

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the democratic consolidation process in South Africa between 2005 and 2015. As such, my thesis intends to provide an answer to the following questions:

1. Has South Africa been consolidating democracy between 2005 and 2015? If yes, to what extent has the five arenas of Linz’ and Stepan’s theory (civil society, political society, economic society, rule of law, and state apparatus) contributed towards the consolidation of democracy in South Africa?

2. What are the key challenges for further democratic consolidation in South Africa?

The African National Congress is still the ruling party today, without successful implementation of the presented development plan (Butler, 2005). A prerequisite for a democratic country amongst other things, are to offer a good foundation for a healthy and stable incline in the economic sphere. With that, a relatively even income is anticipated amongst its entire population regardless of class or race, as well as having democratic and good governance in place; for example, a leadership that actualizes its people’s wills.

2. Previous research and theories

2.1 Previous Research

Democratic transition and consolidation is of the key areas that various scholars have studied in their research in South Africa. Hennie Kotze and Reinet Loubser are some of the scholars who have greatly contributed to this discussion. Hennie Kotze is a research associate in the center for International and Comparative Politics (CICP) while Reinet Loubser is a researcher at the CICP. The authors write in their article “South Africa’s Democratic Consolidation in Perspective: Mapping socio-political changes,” that it is expected that most of the countries that transition from the authoritarian regimes to a liberal is most likely to experience social, political, and economic value shifts (Kotze & Loubser, 2016, p. 3). They further explain that countries that have only transitioned from authoritarian to democracy like South Africa may raise the question whether democratic consolidation is occurring or not. The conceptualization of consolidation has been a key challenge in such a country. For them, democracy is never enough; thus, they ask the question of when democrats should relax and say that it is enough.

Alta Folscher and Neil Cole have also contributed significantly to this discussion through their research. Alta Folscher is an independent public finance researcher and consultant and has
worked in over three continents including Africa, Asia and Europe. Neil Cole, on the other hand, was the chief director of the Expenditure planning in the Budget Office Division, South African National Treasury in 2006. They analyze the opportunities that transition to democracy has offered to governance system in South Africa in their report “South Africa: Transition to Democracy offers opportunities for the Whole System Reform”. The authors explain the transition that South Africa went through in 1994 came about with many challenges especially in the management of public finances (Fölscher & Cole, 2007, p. 2). They argue that the transition resulted in a constitutional dispensation that laid down the new structures and power distribution strategies in the state. This, as a result, created and established a new way in which the public funds were allocated and used. They explain that the first period after the country transitioned from the authoritarian regime under President FW de Klerk, the country underwent through tough financial times that increased the government’s borrowing to over 8.7 % of the total country’s GDP (Fölscher & Cole, 2007, p. 2). However, this was the constitutional dispensation created opportunities that ensured that the wastage of resources is limited. Among the principles that are underlying democratic transition reformed include the 1) comprehensiveness and integration, 2) Political oversight and focus on a policy priority, 3) Using information strategically, 4) Changing behavior by changing the incentives, 5) Ensuring the budget stability and predictability while facilitating change at the margin (Fölscher & Cole, 2007, p. 3).

The previous research presented focus on both the democratic institutions in South Africa like the Treasury. Kotze and Loubser’s article focus on the socio-political changes that the South Africa’s democratic consolidation has caused. Folscher and Cole on the other hand focus on the changes that have come with the transition to democracy in South Africa. This study will focus on the socio-political, judicial, and the economic aspects. The next section presents the theoretical framework of the study.

2.2 Theoretical concepts

As one my research questions is seeking to answer to what extent South Africa have been consolidating democracy from a liberalized perspective, theoretical definitions of democracy, democratization and consolidated democracy are relevant to my study, then follows the definition of a Linz and Stepan's consolidated democracy. Furthermore, I will also provide a definition of Linz and Stepan's five arenas of a consolidated democracy which will be the basis of this research study.

2.2.1 Democracy

When discussing the notion of a democracy, it is important to establish a mutual understanding as to what it is, as there are many differing definitions of the concept. The original meaning of
democracy in Greek translates to “the power of the people”. “Demos” means the people and of “kratos” means the power.” (Diamond, 1994, p. 6)

In any democracy, people have the right to choose their leaders. This is done through open, free, regular elections that are fair. The “people” as used in democracy refers to the citizens of that territory; for example, that state (Diamond, 1999). By open, it suggests that it should be a competitive election (Diamond, 1999). This means that multiple parties are allowed to compete. Furthermore, a country cannot be a democracy if there is no freedom of speech or rule of law. To complicate things even more, there are various types of interpretations of democracy, as well as various democratic systems. Joseph Schumpeter defined democracy as “for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote (Diamond, 1994, p. 7).” This may in modern terms be interpreted as “free and fair elections.” This is called the Schumpeterian democracy and it is only one of many available forms of democracy. Some other types of democracy include electoral democracies, elite democracy, polyarchy and consensus democracy to mention a few (Nilsson & Carlsson, 2014, p. 658).

Democracy appears in thick and thin conceptions, depending on how many or which attributes they fulfill. Liberal democracy is the type of democracy that may be considered thick, as it fulfills all ten “thick” dimensions. According to Nilsson and Carlsson (2014), it requires a supportive economic climate as well as a certain degree of social cohesion and political consensus. This is also the type of democracy that also includes all five arenas of consolidated democracy; civil society, political society, economic society, rule of law and state apparatus (Hass & Aidoo, 2015, p. 46). A liberal democracy should be aspired for in any democracy, as it is the most democratic form of governance. It is seen as a tool that is put into place through institutional arrangements, in order to protect the values of freedom (Diamond, 1994, p.14; Nilsson & Carlsson, 2014, p. 661).

2.2.2 Democratization

Democratization entails the liberalization of a previously authoritarian rule. According to Inman and Rubinfeld (2013), it is a very wide political concept, nonetheless a necessary first step towards the consolidation of a liberal democracy. To conduct democratization research implies scientifically analyzing transitions from non-democratic ways of governing towards democratic governance. A non-democratic system is usually referred to as a dictatorship as no free elections exist, while a democratic system is based on free elections (Kearsey, 2007). While some countries manage a successful transition from a dictatorship to a democracy, many failed. This led the field of democratization research to become more widespread as the need for analyzing the multifaceted areas of the problem more in-depth. As the different phases of its development were highlighted, three new key concepts were born – liberalization, transition and consolidation.
What constitutes a completed democratic transition? This question assists in highlighting some challenges to the democratization process. As Linz and Stepan (1996) explain, democratic transition may begin but never reaches completion. Even if a new authoritarian rule does not cease power, the transition is still considered incomplete. As the need to reach an agreement on the specific institutional arrangement for producing a democratic government, we are made aware of the need and the importance of decision-making in the democratic political arena. When there is a present indeterminacy about the core procedures necessary for producing a democracy, the transition is left incomplete. In other words, the consolidation of democracy is put on hold until further notice. These challenges require a thorough and continuous confrontation about the existing ambivalence regarding the democratic institutions among the political elites (Inman & Rubinfeld, 2013). It is not sufficient that non-democratic rulers argue that some liberalizing changes are enough to qualify as a democracy. Therefore, there is a need to introducing a clear standard of what is actually necessary for a completed transition. This would simplify for oppositions to highlight what additional changes that remain for a successful transition. Resorting to such solutions would also prove to be useful in circumstances where the non-democratic regime have collapsed or been overthrown by an interim government which is ruling.

Even if the democratic transition is complete, there are still a number of steps that must be taken in order to consolidate the democracy. Often these include cultivating habits and attitudes amongst the population and the ruling party (Linz & Stepan, 1996). Advancing the characteristics of a consolidated democracy would accord many scholars, improve the overall quality of a democracy – in the behavioral, attitudinal, and constitutional dimensions. This three-dimensional definition of consolidated democracy presented by Linz & Stepan suggests a solution based model that can be applied in the last and final step of democratization. To conclude, a consolidated democracy is essentially a political situation in which democracy is “the only game in town” (Fölscher & Cole, 2007).

3. Linz’ and Stepan’s Consolidation theory

A consolidated democracy needs to have five interrelating arenas in place that reinforce one another. If the people of a territory feel that they lack identification or feel the need that they want to create or join another state, the democratization process is faced with unresolvable problems (Linz & Stepan, 1996). As such, the existence of a functioning state is the first requirement for achieving a modern democratic regime. Once a functioning state exists, five mutually reinforcing arenas must also exist for a democratic consolidation. If such conditions are non-existent, they must be created and put into place.
According to Linz and Stepan (1996), in a consolidated democracy, the five different arenas are constantly in mediation with one another. An example that demonstrates this would be that a civil society in a democracy needs the support of a rule of law. That law would guarantee the rights of association and needs the support of an impartial state apparatus (Linz & Stepan, 1996, p. 9). They will effectively impose legal sanctions in the case of any attempts to resort to illegal acts to prevent the liveliness of civil society, by stopping groups from exercising their democratic right to organize. Furthermore, the political society is the primary source of the constitution and major laws and guidelines that state apparatus make sure the population conforms to. They also produce the overall regulatory framework for the economic society (Linz & Stepan 1996, p.14-15). The work does not end with the completion of democratic transition; as it leaves many tasks that need to be accomplished, conditions that must be established, and attitudes and habits that must be cultivated before democracy could be considered consolidated.

What then are the characteristics of a consolidated democracy? Many scholars, in advancing definitions of consolidated democracy, enumerate all the regime characteristics that would improve the overall quality of democracy.

3.1 Behavioral, attitudinal, and constitutional dimensions

Essentially, by a consolidated democracy a political situation we mean one in which, in a phrase, democracy has become “the only game in town”. First, behaviorally, democracy becomes the only game in town when no significant political groups seriously attempt to overthrow the democratic regime or secede from the state (Linz & Stepan, 1996).

Secondly, attitudinal dimension looks at democracy in terms of how it becomes the only game in town when the overwhelming majority of the people believe that any further political change must emerge from within the parameters of democratic formulas. Thirdly, the constitutional dimension is understood as when democracy becomes the only game in town when all the actors in the polity become habituated to the fact that political conflict will be resolved according to the established norms and that violations of these norms are likely to be both ineffective and costly (Linz & Stepan, 1996, p. 7). In short, with consolidation, democracy becomes routinized and deeply internalized in social, institutional, and even psychological life, as well as in calculations for achieving success (Linz & Stepan, 1996, p. 4-5).

3.2 Civil society

In order to have a consolidated democracy, first, the conditions must exist for the development of a free and lively civil society. In an ideal world, civil society possesses the power to destroy a non-democratic regime. A robust civil society may assist in advancing transitions. It may also generate political alternatives monitor the government and the state. As a result, a lively and
independent civil society is of grave importance in all stages of the democratization process. (Linz & Stepan 1996 p. 8-9)

Civil society offers an environment for social movements, self-organizing groups and individuals, to operate relatively autonomous from the state (Linz & Stepan, 1996, p. 9). These can either be women’s groups, neighborhood associations, intellectual organizations, trade unions and so forth – the list is long. Ordinary citizens may also operate on their own, without membership in any socially formed group or organization. These individuals can be seen; for example, attending a protest march. Sometimes these individuals may cause overwhelming results, especially when they come big in numbers. We have seen this when representatives of the regime are forced to take a stand and consider a growing liberalization towards a regime change. Historically, this has happened many times, often in non-democratic regimes (Linz & Stepan, 1996, p. 15). In the most successful cases, such efforts have paid off as it has sparked a change towards the liberalization of a state. Civil society has long been known for generating ideas and helping to monitor the governance of a state.

3.3 Political society

The political society creates legitimacy in civil society, offers legal guarantees which are anchored in the rule of law, which is governed by an impartial state apparatus. In the political society polity arranges itself to rightfully exercise control and power over the population (Linz & Stepan, 1996). Here the existence of political parties should be thriving. A democratic consolidation requires pluralism in parties, to aggregate and represent differences and allows for political opposition. They craft the constitution and its major laws while managing the framework for the economic society.

3.4 Rule of law

The rule of law has its roots in civil society and political society while the state apparatus makes sure it is adhered to. The rule of law involves a hierarchy of norms that are legitimate and predictable. According to Linz and Stepan (1996, p. 10), a degree of autonomy and independence in the civil and political societies must be embedded in and supported by the rule of law, for the successful consolidation of democracy. The rule of law would ensure legal guarantees for all citizens, protecting their freedom as well as offering them independence. The government and the state must respect and uphold the rule of law for such to be possible. Therefore, constitutionalism is an indispensable condition. Constitutionalism goes further than to settling with a rule under majoritarianism. It demands a strong consensus over the constitution by all, and none is superseded as all have committed to the procedures of governance.
3.5 State apparatus

The state apparatus receives normative support from civil society and political society while making sure the economic society functions accordingly. This type of bureaucracy is needed in the modern democratic government, as an effective capacity to command, regulate, and the extract is necessary. For such to be possible, the requirements are 1) a functioning state and 2) a state bureaucracy considered usable (Linz & Stepan, 1996). If such does not exist, citizens cannot effectively demand their rights be respected. Nor can they receive any basic entitlements. This is one of the biggest challenges in many countries.

3.6 Economic society

The economic society is produced by the political society, is respected by civil society while enforced by the state apparatus (Linz & Stepan, 1996, p. 12). In the economic arena, norms, regulations, policies, and institutions are shaped. An institutionalized economic society where there is a market economy is of the essence for the completion of consolidation. It provides the collective with a pluralism of options. Market intervention and state ownership exist in all consolidated democracies. This is because markets require corporation laws such as the regulation of stock markets; regulated for weight, measurement, and ingredients; and the protection of property - both public and private. Furthermore, no market is perfect and all stands to face failures that must be addressed efficiently and correctly – by an impartial state apparatus. This is in order to guarantee that the market functions well (Linz & Stepan 1996, p. 12-13)

4. Method and material

4.1 Method

I have chosen to carry out a qualitative case study on South Africa. As my method will be theory consuming, already existing literature will act as the source for my gathered information and collection of data, which will be analyzed in my study. Theory consuming basically means that the researcher uses the previously known theories of democracy and democratic consolidation to study and analyze the selected country or state. This however, is achieved by setting the previously studied theoretical concepts against the evidence and material about South Africa. Theory consuming methodology is also perceived to be a testing theory as the results obtained from the study is influenced by the confidence of the researcher on the theoretical concepts.
Further, the methodology adopted in this section is explanatory as it will examine the previous descriptions of South Africa so as to determine the concepts that can help us answer the research questions. Determining the democratic consolidation in South Africa may not be possible if we just focus on the period between 2005 and 2015. We have to get down a little more and examine the previous descriptions of South Africa that can help us establish a comprehensive and evidenced based study by effectively answering the research questions. Therefore, we have to examine the previous form of governance before the country transitioned to democracy.

In this study, I chose to use qualitative method approach because it fits with the needs of the case study. The primary focus of a qualitative study like this is that some issues like policies, institutions, and events are examined and studied by single or more theories. Therefore, this study will try to answer the research questions in the findings section where the researcher will use the material against the set consolidation theory by Linz and Stepan with the aim of answering the research questions. My analysis will focus on the consolidation of democracy in South Africa between the period 2005 and 2015. I will critically analyze the South Africa’s consolidated democracy using the theoretical concepts obtained from the material, Linz and Stepan’s theory of consolidation. This theory will help me with the background concepts that can be used to analyze the conditions for democratic consolidation so as to determine the extent to which South Africa has achieved the consolidated democracy.

A qualitative study is accompanied by various challenges. Therefore, as a qualitative study, this method suffers from reliability challenge. The external and internal influence poses a great challenge in determining the reliability of the study. The reliability of the study can be reduced by the emotional influence of the author. The author might explain and argue points based on his/her point of view or feelings. The impartiality of the author in his/her writing may also be influenced by the external factors such as the outside sources. However, to improve the reliability of the study and the methodology the author must use several studies on the topic. This is going to be achieved by examining some of the leading authors to maintain the validity of what has been studied. Another key challenge related to the reliability is associated with the author’s independence when it comes to the interpretation of the text. People have different approaches that they use to interpret the text; that is why they have different knowledge. Therefore, this study’s conclusion section provides the independence to self-interpret. This, however, improves the reliability just like the quantitative approach employs the data collected in the interpretation of results. It is, therefore, important for the author to explain how results have been collected, analyzed, and interpreted.

4.2 Material

The material that offers the foundation of this study has mainly derived from primary sources, one of which includes Juan J. Linz & Alfred Stepan’s book “Problems of Democratic Transition and consolidation”. In their book, the authors provide the five different arenas in a consolidated
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democracy. The material to be used is mainly collected from the book mentioned above. However, some other materials are obtained from other sources such as academic articles and also books related to the topic. The material was easy to find on the internet, mainly obtained from the Google Scholar. The aim of this study is to expand the knowledge, understanding, and experiences of consolidated democracy. This is achieved by examining the democratic institutions and processes, effective and legitimate democratic aspects in South Africa between the period 2005 and 2015. Therefore, to be able to analyze the democratic consolidation in South Africa, the author uses the theoretical framework explained in the previous section and focuses on the period between 2005 and 2015.

Linz and Stepan’s theoretical framework can be used to analyze South Africa’s democracy and democratic institutions. The author focuses on the democratic aspects explained in the primary source and how South Africa has achieved them. Therefore, to answer the research questions, the author sets the framework criteria against the democratic institutions and processes in South Africa between the period 2005 and 2015.

4.3 Limitations and challenges/Measuring techniques

This study has its limitations as it is only examining the five arenas according to Linz and Stepan’s theory on consolidation of democracy. I am not saying that this theory is the best one, as it most likely has its shortcomings like most theories do. However, due to the character and choice of thesis subject, it felt like the theory had a lot to offer in supporting my study. Another limitation of my study is that it is only covering a decade of the consolidation process in South Africa, between 2005 and 2015. Hence, it will be difficult to pinpoint to what extent it has progressed from the early beginning. This may, however, be counterbalanced with some important timelines provided in previous research on South Africa’s history when the country was infused by apartheid.

5. Background and results

5.1 Background

As have been mentioned in the previous section, it is important to understand the historical context of South Africa’s democratic transition and consolidation so as to be able to understand the country’s political and socioeconomic development. Hayem (2013) state that the last decade of the 20th century marked the beginning of a new journey for the South Africans after a long period of dictatorship and oppressive regime in the country. According to Mattes and Davids (2000), President FW de Klerk announced the end of the oppressive, apartheid regime that also marked the beginning of the new system. Although, the majority Africans who have lived in
oppression in their own country were happy to see the oppression end (Nattrass, 2014); but it was also the beginning of a new challenge. The apartheid government was also experiencing challenges that led to the end of the oppressive regime. For example, the cost of maintaining the system was quite challenging. The system here means the racial segregation where the whites enjoyed every privilege that includes government protection and wealth, while the Africans were underprivileged and forced to work for the whites in their firms and houses for little wages. The apartheid regime could no longer maintain the expenses (Nattrass, 2014). This, as a result, led to the announcement on February 1990, the beginning of the end of the apartheid regime. Van den Berg (2014) asserts that this period marked the beginning of the end of the apartheid system and also the beginning of South African freedom. The new government after president de Klerk was also experienced with a number of challenges including inheriting the socioeconomic problems of the previous regime and also working to ensure that it met the expectations of the Africans of creating a brighter future. This was very challenging especially for the leadership of the African National Congress (Burtler, 2005).

In its transition to democracy, South Africa adopted the rule of law that has been described by different authors as the world’s most progressive constitutions in 1996. For a long time before this period, South Africa was under what authors have described as “the rule of law (Cuthbertson, 2008, p. 291).” This was the most oppressive form of government that has since entered the Guinness book of world records. Cuthbertson (2008) further states that the so-called “rule by law” was part and parcel of the famous oppressive, apartheid regime that did not only deny the native South Africans their rights but also led to the death of thousands of people. As author explains, South Africa’s progressive constitution was founded under values that were expected to conform to the native’s values and rights (Cuthbertson, 2008, p. 283). For example, human dignity, equality, non-racialism, non-sexism, and the supremacy of the constitution were among the key South African values and principles under which the 1996 constitution was founded or established (Cuthbertson, 2008, p. 284). However, it was not easy for the new government to establish democratic institutions and conform to the values highlighted above. In spite of the challenges, the government was able to fulfill some of the promises created under the constitution adopted in 1996. A decade later people were able to rip some of the benefits associated with the democratic transition that marked the history of South Africa in 1996. Some of the main areas that the main areas that the government changed with the adoption of the new constitution were the constitutional amendments that ensured that it did not turn to what Dugard (2015, p. 12) calls “paper tiger.” The amendments aimed at enabling the government to use the little resources that were available at the time to improve the life of the South Africans by improving the country’s socio-economic transformations and development (Dugard, 2015, p. 12).

In spite of the challenges that the new government experienced during the beginning of the transition period, a number of milestone progress were made. For example, 1998, the government increased the expenditure in the education and healthcare sectors so as to improve
the South Africans’ basic lives. By this period, the government had built and upgraded over 10,000 classrooms and over 560 medical clinics (Boughey, 2007). Another key challenge that the government wanted to deal with as quickly as possible was the land issue. The apartheid regime ensured that Africans were left with the few plots of land while the whites accumulated thousands of hectares of land. Therefore, as a way to make Africans get their freedom and their country back, the ANC government (Burtler, 2005); under the land reform registration gave over 53,000 people the land that had been taken away by the white settlers. Housing was a major issue during the apartheid regime as South Africans lived in the quarters of their employers that also turned to slums. Therefore, as a way to improve the living conditions of the majority South Africans, the government under the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) built over one million houses by 1998 for the poor people that lived in the slums (Friedman, 2006). In spite of the changes and improvements done by the new government in the first decade of its leadership, the country’s economic status did not improve either. This further created a new form of inequality due to limited resources as much of the country’s income were used to pay off the apartheid regime’s debts and also fund the development projects by the RDP. When President Thabo Mbeki took office in 1999, the country started to take a new turn in terms of socioeconomic development. He enacted policies that ensured that the country achieved a measure of success. Chinguno (2013) asserts that during Mbeki’s time, inflation and budget deficit reached the low levels that have ever seen in the country. The country’s tax collection improved as the debt level decreased significantly. Although all the congratulations go to his government, the previous government under President Nelson Mandela had done a lot in terms of laying the infrastructure for the development. For example, a number of South Africa’s debts were paid off during the period of Mandela. Schools and medical institutions were established during the first government. Therefore, all these laid a concrete foundation for the next government that only focused on the other development aspects. According to Chinguno (2013), Mbeki’s government created policies that focused on the black economic empowerment. These policies changed the face of the country’s institutions as it created opportunities for black people. It is this period that South Africa witnessed and recorded a higher number of black people making up the middle class and increased elite that controlled the institutions. Despite all these, the country’s mass poverty had not even been cut by half. Most people referred to Mbeki’s policies as a betrayal of the poor people.

5.2 Results

Now that we have examined the background study on South Africa before the period that we have set to study, 2005 to 2015; it is time to begin our actual study. There is going to be a presentation of the framework from 2005 to 2015. It is between this timeline that South Africa’s democratic consolidation and the transition will be examined against the set theoretical framework criteria highlighted in the theoretical approach section. This study aimed at examining the democratic consolidation process in South Africa between 2005 and 2015. Guided
by the following research questions; 1) has South Africa been consolidating democracy between 2005 and 2015? If yes, to what extent has the five arenas of Linz’ and Stepan’s theory (civil society, political society, economic society, rule of law and state apparatus) contributed towards the consolidation of democracy in South Africa? 2) What are the key challenges for further democratic consolidation in South Africa? I primarily focused on the democracy consolidation aspects as explained in Linz and Stepan’s theory. The study’s primary measures include examining how democracy process has been consolidated in various aspects such as civil society, political society, economic society, rule of law, and the state apparatus. The predictions depended on the above highlighted democracy consolidation aspects in a state as explained in Linz and Stepan’s theory. Since this study adopted the literature-based approach, data was obtained from the selected primary and secondary sources. The primary source, Linz and Stepan’s democracy consolidation text provided the author with the theoretical basis of understanding the measures in the study. To be able to answer the research questions, it was necessary to look at every aspect of democracy consolidation using the primary source material. The secondary sources provided me with the data used in the analysis of study measures.

Some of the selected materials presented similar variables; however, each of the material had different concepts to explain about the same variable. For instance, Bhorat, Naidoo, Oosthuizen, and Pillay’s article presented the rule of law which is also presented by Booyen’s article. However, each of the articles presents a different concept about the rule of law; thus, reducing the interference with the interpretation of the findings and hypothesis. For example Bhorat et al. (2015) argue that the inequality is mainly enhanced by the disparity in the rule of law. Certain race is treated better than the other. On the other hand, Booyen (2014) explains that the post-apartheid period in South Africa has been experienced with different challenges that hinder the achievement of democracy. Therefore, each of the articles presents concepts that are different even when the concepts are similar.

The collected data from the selected literature materials were analyzed critically based on the theoretical framework provided in the primary material, Linz and Stepan’s theory of democracy consolidation. The concepts presented by the selected secondary materials were evaluated against the theoretical basis under the five aspects; political society, civil society, state apparatus, economic society, and rule of law. The hypothesis of this paper was that South Africa has not achieved democracy consolidation. Through the question, “has South Africa realized democracy consolidation,” this study used the selected materials to show prove the hypothesis that South Africa has indeed not achieved democracy consolidation by looking at the factors that have slowed down the process of democratization or stopped it entirely. The assumptions of the data were met indeed as most of the selected materials presented issues that have slowed down the process of democratization. It is important to note that this study was literature-based; therefore, the analysis involved evaluating and critically analyzing the selected materials with the aim of answering the research questions. The study met the assumptions that even though South Africa
has tried to achieve the process of democracy, it still lacks behind due to the factors that have been discussed below.

Literature based study is associated with various challenges or limitations including increased error rates. The error rates can be achieved when minimal materials are used. To achieve the validity and reliability of the findings, the researcher needs to engage more materials to be able to get more and different opinions. In this study, I used a total of 30 materials as my data sources; thus, reducing the error rates. This approach provided me with diverse opinions from different scholars about the democratization process in South Africa. Further, the study tried to involve every important group in the study; blacks and whites in the racial analysis. South Africa consists of people from different racial groups; for example, European, Asians, Africans (blacks), Germans, and Chinese. However, this study focused on the main groups, blacks and Europeans who are mainly influenced by the democratization process. The other groups were left out in the study because they were not relevant; they couldn’t change the outcome of the study. Since this study focused on the two groups, blacks and Europeans; this might stimulate further work that will explore all the racial groups in South Africa. My analysis only focused on two major groups. However, this does not mean that other racial groups in the country do not have impact or are not affected by the democracy consolidation process in South Africa. Therefore, future work should be more inclusive and involve the left out groups such as Asian, Germans, Chinese, and even people from the other African countries. The following are the major findings of this study thematically explained in detail.

### 5.2.1 Political society

According to Hayem (2013), South Africa is one of the countries in Africa that have undergone a significant democratic transition since the apartheid regime end in 1990. The scores for the country’s democracy are quite higher than the other African countries. It is not easy to see this, especially for someone who has not understood the country’s historical context. In this study, I explained and analyzed the democracy scores for South Africa by testing and examining the social economic, cultural and institutional models of democracy as explained in the primary source material. It is not possible to explain South Africa’s current democratic stability without first explaining the combination of the institutional and political culture factors in the country. The opposition in most countries across the globe is associated with the superficial activities. However, the case of ANC in South Africa is quite different. ANC as opposition before it took power in 2004 tried to change the face of the opposition worldwide (Burtler, 2005). Its crushing victory in 2004 raised the question of the influence of a dominant party on the functioning of democracy. As Linz and Stepan (1996. 9) explain, the predominant position of a single political party may hinder the process of democracy. However, the case of ANC was quite different; despite being the most dominant political party, that was almost identical with the state, it proved otherwise. ANC proved to be committed to democracy. However, this might have been caused by the encounter with the apartheid regime. Linz and Stepan (1996, p. 12) explain that
democracy in a state can be entrenched through a system of institutions that are supportive and conducive to the democracy stability and consolidation. South Africa through the ANC has also entrenched through the systems of various institutions that have created conducive environment for democracy stability. Linz and Stepan (1996) explain that a democratic government cannot make decisions based on consensus. This according to the authors hinders the state’s legitimacy. It is impossible to please everyone every time. Despite the several attempts by the ANC government to reduce poverty and improve the lives of many South Africans that lived in extreme poverty, many people did not see or feel the impact. The strategies that the ANC government in 2004 enacted did not convince the majority of people who felt that it has not done anything (Burtler, 2005). The financial budget of 2005 launched labor-intensive public skills that aimed at reducing the labor market rigidities. However, it was still a challenge especially in reaching the job growth that was planned. In 2005, the government of Thabo Mbeki was accused of corruption that further limited the scarce resources that would have been used to improve the country’s economy. As a result, president Mbeki relieved President Jacob Zuma now and his deputy by then due to charges of corruption. In the same year, the government agency, Truth and Reconciliation Commission launched an investigation into the fates of many people who disappeared during the oppressive apartheid era. Zuma was later acquitted of all the charges and reinstated as the ANC’s deputy leader (Hayem, 2013).

Despite the challenges that were experienced especially with the first government, under the leadership of the late Nelson Mandela, South Africa has turned to be one of the most and truly multi-racial democratic states in Africa. This has been facilitated and enhanced by the significant political events that have taken place between the time of independence when Mandela took office and now with the governance of Jacob Zuma. According to Inman and Rubinfeld (2013), this has not been easy; achieving the political changes. The democratic transition between 2005 and 2015 was peacefully negotiated; however, the bargain is still holding due to the economic hardships and high rates of unemployment (Hayem, 2013). South Africa has undergone the economic hardships that led to the adoption of the emotional, social, and political intelligence that would build on the achievement of the first government after taking over the country’s leadership from the apartheid regime. However, another challenge arises from the applicability of these strategies so to innovate a new democratic synthesis by integrating the political and economic principles so as to avoid the conflict between the public and the state as having been frequently witnessed in the country. For example, the violence that erupted in 2008 that led to an exodus of foreigners and the corruption cases against the key leaders in the government should never be witnessed again (Hayem, 2013, p. 78). As Hayem (2013), the political animosity that led to the resignation of the second president, Thabo Mbeki in 2008 is some of the political transformations and transitions that have contributed significantly to the democracy consolidation since 2005. As Linz and Stepan’s theory explain, democratic society creates an opportunity for the public to take part in the governance. The authors further explain that democracy is not imposed but rather, the will of the people finds its way. It is the same thing that also happened in 2008 when President Mbeki had to resign following accusation that he
interfered with the investigations on his deputy, Jacob Zuma (Hayem, 2013, p. 81). This kind of transformation is one of the key events that have taken place in South Africa since 2005.

5.2.2 Economic Society 2005-2015

Since the transition of democracy, through the beginning of 2005, South Africa’s economy has significantly improved. The economy has recorded an average annualized growth rate in the GDP. Ponte, Roberts, and Van Sittert (2007) explain that it is approximated that South Africa’s economy has annually grown by 3.8 % since the beginning of 2005. Review of the period between 2005 and 2012 shows that the country’s GDP recorded a significant positive growth. However, the period between 2005 and 2007 is one of the most successful growths in the country’s economy (Ponte et al., 2007, p. 937). Such significant growth and development are associated with the key set of structural economic transformations that took place since the time the apartheid ended. Promoting equality in terms of resource allocation and creation of opportunities was one of the key principles that the first government was established when they took power from the apartheid regime. Although, this has not been the case because two decades down the line we can see South Africans crying of hunger and discrimination (Van den Berg, 2014). The country has adopted some of the key measures to ensure that the majority of the citizens feel the impact of its economic development policies. For instance, the fiscal policy under the Medium Term Budget Policy Statement of 2013 was enacted with the aim of creating a framework that would support programs that seek to improve the social wage, cap spending, improve efficiency, and also shift borrowing to investment expenditure (Nkosi, 2016). The enactment of this policy aimed at reducing the country’s debts that have consumed the majority of its resources that would have been used in the development and improvement of the members’ lives. Again, as Nkosi (2016) explains, the effective debt management strategy has ensured that the country’s debt profile remains sustainable and stable. However, this does not mean that the country is safe. The fiscal deficit still needs to be closely monitored. After the country transitioned from the system of apartheid to one of majority rule in 1994, it experiences one of the greatest inflation rates that left many people languishing in extreme poverty. However, as a means to prevent such circumstances from repeating itself, the financial institutions like the banks have also enacted laws to ensure that the inflation rate is regulated. For example, in January 2009, the framework based on the inflation targeting that was formed by the South Africa Reserve Bank in 2000 was changed and amended to headline inflation (Hassan, 2013, p. 5). This policy aimed at reducing the goal independence of the central bank and promotes the operational independence in monetary policies. As a result, the central bank changed its exchange rate policy that enabled it to supplement the foreign exchange reserves.

The inequality issue has extended in South Africa because of the persistent poverty and unemployment (Hayem, 2013). The access to the basic human needs such as water, housing, and sanitation has significantly increased; thus, increasing the rate of poverty. The inability of the country to move poverty and unemployment has made it difficult for the government to reduce
inequality problem. According to Linz and Stepan (1996, 4-5), democracy consolidation in an economy requires understanding the distribution of income that starts by thinking of income disparities. Many people have blamed the increased rate of unemployment on the inability of the government to invest in the education sector to ensure that skilled personnel are produced to fill the unfilled jobs. Research shows that South African government has constantly increased its expenditure in the education and health sectors with the aim of improving the conditions of the lives of many South Africans that still leave in absolute poverty. Education is one of the key factors that can equalize people in the society. Despite spending more than 7% of its GDP on education since 2005, the government has not yet achieved the required standard as many jobs are still unfilled (Boughey, 2007, p. 7). For example, the recent shortage of teachers in schools in 2012 is one of the indications that the government’s attempts to improve the education sector have not been achieved. In 2012 again a survey showed that approximately 100,000 nursing jobs are vacant in the public sector (Hayem, 2013, p. 87). This problem still persists despite the establishment of various learning and training institutions. However, the problem has been blamed on the skills shortage that is associated with the incompetent training institutions. However, as compared to the period before 2005, the country is said to have improved in terms of access to education and healthcare services. The schools continue to record increased enrollment rates at all levels. This implies that education has improved despite the shortage of trainers and teachers. As Cousins (2007) explain, the government still has a challenge that they still need to address as the society changes with time. South Africans still need to appreciate the democracy consolidation in terms of economic development. As Linz and Stepan’s theory advocates, it is impossible to realize a sustainable democracy without economic justice in a state. Therefore, as Bhorat, Naidoo, Oosthuizen, and Pillay (2015) explain, democracy may not exist in future if the rate of poverty, inequality and unemployment continue to rise as it has happened in South Africa especially in the past recent years. The key challenge for the South African’s current and even future government is to build successful democratic practices that can ensure economic democracy and justice freedoms that can help reduce the paradigm conflict. According to Kersey (2007), the economic and social transitions and transformations take time before their impact can start to be felt especially by the majority population that live in absolute poverty.

5.2.3 State apparatus 2005-2015

This study has further found that South Africa’s democracy is consolidating in terms of institution building. Most of the public institution receives criticisms from the public members and also the opposition. However, they may not function properly if they are not protected against such kinds of unlimited threats. The institutions need to be strengthened as well so as to ensure that public develops and maintains trusts in them. Since the ANC took office in 2004, institutions have been established and strengthened (Nattrass, 2014). This has helped improve the public’s trust in the institutions. South Africa has successfully conducted elections in the past years without conflict because the election body has been strengthened; thus, gaining the public’s
trust. Linz and Stepan (1996, p. 12) argue that in a democratic regime, the extent of socioeconomic development is equally important as the institutional development. The authors discuss the constitutional foundation as one of the key components of a democratic political society. According to Linz and Stepan (1996), consolidated democracy focuses on the development of the normatively positive acknowledgement and appreciation of the key institutions such as political parties, electoral institutions, and legislatures. The previous elections have been free and fair despite the administrative challenges encountered by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). However, as Mkhize, 2015, p. 197) explain, the 2014 elections indicated a marked improvement in the administration of the electoral body and management of elections in all areas across the country. Despite the electoral challenges experienced, the previous election was deemed “free and fair,” that further displayed the extent of democracy consolidation. ANC is the main and dominant political party in South Africa that has enjoyed leadership for over two decades now. However, the other parties also play a significant role in the development of the political society in South Africa. As Linz and Stepan (1996) explain, the major political actors have the responsibility of abiding by the rule of law that protects individual freedoms. Despite the challenges associated with the post-apartheid transition, South Africa has tried to conform to the rule of law and ensure that the individual rights and freedoms are protected.

Accountability is another factor that is linked with the rule of law that South Africa has significantly tried to maintain despite the challenges and shortcomings since 2005 (Mkhize, 2015). There are different varieties of accountability; for instance, the vertical and horizontal. The vertical accountability is where the government conforms to the voters’ needs. This accountability has not been successful in South Africa as it has been weakened by the huge political autonomy that one dominant political party enjoys.

According to Lane and Ersson (2007), the horizontal accountability is where the government monitors and oversees the institutions as part of the constitutional democracy. Some of the institutions that apply to the horizontal accountability include the judiciary, ombudsman, and the commissions. However, the existence of the legal culture in the country has significantly helped to improve the democracy transition since 2005. As Linz and Stepan (1996) explain, the rule of law is one of the key essential pillars upon which democracy is established. Since it assumes the office in 2004, the ANC government has worked to establish a strong legal culture that is associated with the democratic rule of law that ensured the civil liberties, mechanisms towards creating accountability, and political rights of individuals are respected and upheld. Kersey (2007) asserts that although the ANC government has tried to establish the legal culture, but the extent to which the rule of law is upheld has been in question especially with the increased corruption cases and allegations against the top government officials. In 2011, president Jacob Zuma sacked two ministers who were accused of corruption with the aim of improving accountability in the government. However, with the persistent racial differences in
South Africa, it is difficult to establish a positive attitude towards the rule of law and transition of democracy as a whole.

Linz and Stepan’s theory advocates for state bureaucracy as a means to achieving the democracy consolidation. The transition from the apartheid regime leadership was one of the things that contributed to the shortcomings of the administration of the bureaucratic systems by the next government that took office in 1994 (Morgan, 2006, p. 526). ANC took office when most of the systems had broken down and some even disappeared. This, as a result, called for structural changes that aimed at improving the public administration of the state. Despite being regarded with some federal characteristics, South Africa is still seen as a unitary state (Murray & Simeon, 2007, p. 711). This means that power is concentrated in the central government. However, some power is devolved to the provincial and local authorities. Management of the nine recognized provinces that were created after ANC took office in 1994 has not been easy or simple. Various challenges including corruption have contributed to misappropriation and ineffective management of the provinces (Hayem, 2013). A motion was introduced by the ANC legislators to reduce the number of provinces in 2007 with the aim of improving the administration of the bureaucratic systems but did not succeed. This move was criticized by many people especially the opposition, DA that claimed that the government wanted to centralize the powers and give the office of the presidency the total power to make every decision. Although the motion did not succeed, some provinces such as Eastern Cape Town and Mpumalanga are still suffering due to poor public administration. Reducing the provinces to less than nine will not help the country attain the right bureaucratic system. However, as Beck (2012) explains, proper management and improved accountability may significantly improve the status of the people in the two provinces. Many people in the government have been accused of corruption, but little action has been taken against them.

5.2.4 Rule of Law 2005-2015

Since South Africa is a multi-racial society that emerged from the apartheid regime, race plays a significant role in all the aspects of the country (Bhorat et al., 2015). The ANC government wanted to reduce and eradicate the stigmatization where the blacks were discriminated against and even denied to cross the same roads that their whites crossed. The blacks were not even allowed to go the same market and shopping centers that were used by the whites. Eradicating this kind of discrimination and stigmatization was one of the key aims of the government when they attained independence in 1994 (Botha, 2004, p. 43). Even with the coming of President Jacob Zuma in 2014, South Africa had not completely eradicated the problem of racial disparity. According to Bhorat, Naidoo, Oosthuizen, and Pillay (2015), racial disparity is one of the key issues that contribute to the persistent inequality in the country. Some of the strategies to achieve social equality include effective management of ethnic diversity. South Africa is composed of the heterogeneous population that includes Bantu-speaking ethnic groups, European extraction, the coloureds, Khoi, San, and even Asians (Bhorat et al., 2015). All these communities must be
integrated into a democratic society as Linz and Stepan explain. Managing the racial politics has also been a key challenge in South Africa that has extended the persistent social inequalities. During the apartheid regime, the government was composed of the white race only (Booysen, 2014). However, after the apartheid ended and the Africans took office under the leadership of Nelson Mandela, racial politics emerged as a major issue of concern towards achieving democracy consolidation. The ascension of Jacob Zuma into power after President Thabo Mbeki resigned was associated with racial disputes. The Zulu community rallied around Zuma despite the accusations that were laid on him; for example, the rape trial and corruption case. The populism politics that played a key part in the President Zuma’s ascension to power in 2009 is one of the challenges that still drag South Africa behind. As Linz and Stepan (1996) explains, populism system is a challenge in a democratic society because certain politicians take advantage of their popularity to manipulate their people based on emotional response instead of rational thoughts.

5.2.5 Civil Society

The civil society has played a key role in ensuring that the country goes through the democracy transition process. Most of the democratic changes in South Africa were facilitated by the mobilization of the civil society (Tangri & Southall, 2008, p. 702). However, we need to understand the multiple ways in which civil society can serve democracy. As Linz and Stepan (1996) explain, we need to examine the features of civil society that are most likely to promote and enhance the process of democracy consolidation. Generally, civil societies play a crucial part in determining the failures and success of democracy in a state. 2004, 2009, and 2014 elections in South Africa displayed the conditions conducive to the establishment of independent civil society. The contemporary civil society is differentiated in South Africa by the fact that it not only reflects the social structure realities in the country but also transcends the racialized civil society relations (Ponte et al., 2007, p. 947). The civil society started gaining fame and prominence during the time of apartheid when the blacks were not allowed to engage directly with the whites. The civil society ensured that the rights of the workers were improved through public demonstrations. Presently, the civil society has partnered with the state institutions to ensure that that the individual rights and freedoms are protected irrespective of the race and gender (Hassan, 2013).
6. Discussion

Based on the views from the selected literature materials used in this study, this thesis identified various factors (discussed below) that hindered the successful democracy consolidation in South Africa.

Political Society: South Africa has undergone serious democracy transformation since the independence time. However, as this study found, South Africa has not achieved the democracy consolidation due to a number of political challenges that have been discussed in the findings or result section in detail. Just to highlight a few examples, some of the political challenges that have significantly contributed to the ineffective achievement of democracy consolidation include political party’s autonomy. ANC has enjoyed the autonomy of the blacks; thus, giving no room for another political party. Most of politicians want to identify with the autonomous political party so as to attain their political interests. As Hayem (2013) explains, the end of apartheid regime created a new platform for racial disparity. Linz and Stepan’s theory criticizes the autonomy of political parties and explain that it can affect the process of achieving democracy. Therefore, South Africa is still yet to attain democracy consolidation, but it has not reached there yet.

Economic society: As Linz and Stepan explain there is no democracy without economic factors involved. These include the employment rates, countries income, poverty rates, and other economic development. This study found that South Africa has developed indeed in terms of infrastructure; however, mass poverty is still a challenge to democracy consolidation. Many people still languish in poverty and many youths are unemployed. Improving the educations sector created opportunity for many uneducated South Africans to go to school. However, this has not solved things but only worsened them. Many people graduate every year from the hire learning institutions, but they are unable to find employment. As a result, poverty that continues to rise due to unemployment has been found in this study to be a key challenge and obstacle to South Africa’s democracy consolidation.

State apparatus: South Africa has some of the strongest institutions such as the judiciary that is respected in the whole Africa. However, egocentric politicians have turned these institutions into something that is not recognizable. The state institutions seem to work for certain people due to increased corruption. This has reduced the democratic aspects of the institutions such as transparency and accountability. As Linz and Stepan explain, the state institutions should work towards gaining the public’s trusts. However, this has not been the case in South Africa. As will be discussed in detail in the result section, some of the South Africa’s key state institutions such as the electoral body has stand out to be independent and accountable for every democratic step that the country makes. But, this has not been the case all across the state institutions.
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Rule of Law: As a multi-racial society, South Africa is exposed to more challenges that may inhibit the process of democracy consolidation. The attempts to integrate and include all the racial groups in South Africa have not been successful since 1994 when the apartheid regime ended. These findings are also explained in detail in the result section. However, what is clear from these findings is that South Africa is still barred by a number of factors including conforming to the rule of law from achieving the democracy consolidation. The political autonomy enjoyed by certain political parties especially the ANC has not brought democracy in South Africa, but rather caused more disparity.

Civil society: Civil societies have always performed a significant role in the achievement of democracy consolidation in democratic states like United States. However, South African civil society is still barred with different challenges which include unemployment and underemployment of the black people. Hassan (2013) explains that the socioeconomic disparity continues to create a gap between the blacks and the settlers who remained and settled in South Africa.

The above findings correspond to the existing literature on South Africa’s democracy consolidation between 2005 and 2015. As explained by Linz and Stepan in their democracy consolidation theory, democratic states must successfully meet the aspects explained in their text. These findings enhance further on the existing research in the sense that it expands on the discussion about South Africa’s democracy process and also Africa as a whole. Majority of African states have not achieved democracy consolidation, therefore, this study helps in supporting and enhancing the discussion about the African democracy consolidation in the existing literature.

Some of the limitations of this study based on the methodology and design issues include non-inclusivity. The study focuses on one aspect of study which does not involve large sample group. Again, the study has been limited to other people’s assumptions. The gathered data were obtained from the selected materials; this is based on their opinions and findings. Therefore, the decisions are made based on their opinions. This research however, followed and focused on the theoretical framework which is a core component of political studies. The theoretical frameworks and concepts provide the researcher with the background basis on which he/she can establish reliable findings that can expand the study of political science.

7. Conclusions

In conclusion, creating a democratic society requires effective leadership at all levels of governance. However, the case of South Africa has not successfully incorporated the democratic consolidation process because of poor leadership. Elected leaders have had cases in the previous that have affected their accountability and also reduced the public’s trust on them. If the elected
leaders do not respect the rule of law and the democratic institutions that form the basis of a democratic society, it may hinder the process of achieving democracy. Again, this may also hinder the development of legitimacy of the independent institutions such as the electoral commission, judiciary and even the legislative. This study has highlighted and discussed some of the prominent political, social, cultural, and economic factors that affect the democracy consolidation in South Africa in relation to the Linz and Stepan’s theory. From this analysis, it is evident that racial politics, inequality, unemployment, corruption, and poverty are some of the key problems that South Africa still experience despite the democracy consolidation attempts. Through the analysis, we have seen the role of ethnicity that has increasingly taken over and shaped the governance of the country. The rise of populism surrounding the current president Zuma has been associated with his ascension to the top jobs in the country in 2009. Therefore, in an attempt to answer the research questions, South Africa has consolidated democracy irrespective of the challenges inherited from the apartheid regime. Through the establishment of democratic institutions such as the Independent Electoral Commission, the Judicial System, and political parties, South Africa has managed to transform the institutions that were characterized by dominance in the apartheid regime and reinstated democratic and reformed institutions. Based on the research questions, this study has found that despite the attempts by the South African leadership to create a democratic society, it has not been able to successfully achieve the objective. This study met the assumption and proved the hypothesis that South Africa has not achieved democracy consolidation due to the challenges discussed in the findings section. Guided by the Linz and Stepan’s theoretical framework, my analysis focused on the five major aspects of democracy consolidation; political society, state apparatus, civil society, economic society, and rule of law. Analysis of the each of the aspects showed that South Africa has not achieved democracy consolidation between 2005 and 2015. Through critical analysis, I found that corruption, political autonomy especially with the political party, mass poverty, unemployment, misappropriation and misuse of state apparatus, and ineffective empowerment of the civil society are some of the factors that hinder the democratization in South Africa between 2005 and 2015. The findings of this study will enhance on the existing literature on the democratization of South Africa and Africa as a whole. Through the findings, we can deduce the answers to the research questions. First, South Africa has not been consolidating democracy between 2005 and 2015. This is because it has not fulfilled the five arenas of Linz and Stepan’s theory of consolidating democracy. Secondly, corruption, misappropriation of state apparatus, lack of accountability, political autonomy, mass poverty, unemployment, and ineffective empowerment of the civil society are some of the key challenges that were found to hinder further democratic consolidation in South Africa. However, future research needs to examine the influence and role of the other racial groups in South Africa as this study only focused on the two major groups, blacks/Africans and whites/Europeans.
References


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