3 Poverty and inequality in the Gauteng city-region

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Being fast and not very spatial doesn’t make you any better in spatial kinds of things; you probably just get the wrong answer more quickly.

– Howard Gardner

The Gauteng city-region covers the whole of Gauteng province as well as outlying economic centres and apartheid-induced displaced urbanisation in at least four neighbouring provinces. Johannesburg is the beating heart of the economic powerhouse that is the city-region, which generates over 40 per cent of national GDP. In this chapter I argue that Johannesburg needs to be understood within its broader socio-economic context, that of the Gauteng city-region. A focus on poverty and inequality shows that Johannesburg fares well when compared to other parts of the city-region, but also highlights the inequalities within the city itself, and their relative severity. Spatially understood, relative deprivation may be a better measure for understanding need, provision and protest (the context in which much writing and activism around poverty is located) in Johannesburg than national measures of absolute poverty, given the relative affluence of the Gauteng city-region and the extent of basic needs that have been met since 1994. I then briefly analyse the way in which the City of Johannesburg has attempted to use a multiple deprivation index to allow spatial targeting of ‘the poor’, and suggest that if this were combined with a more nuanced approach that includes value and attitude data about people’s ‘headspace’ (unattainable from Census data, for obvious reasons), the targeting may be more effective. Finally, I
argue that post-apartheid Johannesburg – like the city-region it sits in – is far from static. Class formation, population movement, spatial growth and shrinkage are occurring apace (though the pace is, predictably, politically contested). Empty spaces can be filled with shacks seemingly overnight, as Gauteng’s population continues to grow at 2.6 per cent per annum in a country where birth rates are dropping; but can empty just as fast (GCRO 2011a). However, all these processes – urbanisation, class formation and so on – are dogged by the persistence of apartheid’s racially segregated townships, post-apartheid’s (equally racially segregated) inner-city slums, and new (similarly profiled) informal settlements that have emerged and spread post-apartheid. The new geography has done little to uproot apartheid geography.

Poverty and inequality

It is quite remarkable that, in a country regarded as among the most unequal on earth – with poverty apparently afflicting between 45 per cent and 55 per cent of the population (DSD 2002), and where poverty was the first word (and the focus of the first paragraph and section) of the African National Congress’s (ANC’s) 1994 blueprint for government, the Reconstruction and Development Programme – the country has spent years fighting over how to define poverty, and thus how to measure and understand it. The literature on the topic is rich and diverse and has been reviewed elsewhere (Everatt 2003). Since 1994, government departments, civil society organisations, academics and others have proposed a wide range of possible poverty measures and approaches. These range from income and asset poverty to calorific intake to a sustainable livelihoods approach, where the focus is on the capacities and potentialities the poor have, rather than on the assets and income they lack.

The result was a proliferation of definitions of (and disputes about) poverty, as national, provincial and local spheres of government all set about designing and implementing anti-poverty programmes, indigent policies and so on, using their own definitions of who is poor, as well as different targeting strategies to try to locate them spatially. Academics and consultants were marshalled to develop robust (and/or politically palatable) definitions (Everatt 2009).

Inequality is commonly twinned with poverty in much literature – rather in the way that monitoring and evaluation are run together because they are related, despite being very different activities – though that literature spends far more time on poverty than on the more complex issues associated with inequality. Gini coefficients are most often used to try to measure post-apartheid inequality, with a notable focus on the growth of intra-African inequality but at the expense of issues such as spatial inequality, a glaring challenge exacerbated by the resilience of apartheid social engineering.

Statistics South Africa did not help the situation very much when its long-awaited report on the issue, Measuring Poverty (Stats SA 2000), offered three different models for measuring different types of poverty. This in turn reflected differences within the ruling ANC and its Tripartite Alliance partners about the same issues.
Although a range of definitions exist and generate different figures, it is reasonable to assert that at least half the South African population lives in poverty, dropping to less than half in the city-region. The available data indicate that Africans are most likely to be poor, women are more likely to be poor than men and rural poverty is deeper than urban. On the one hand this is a matter of substantial concern, especially after two decades of post-apartheid government ostensibly targeting poverty as the ‘enemy’ in its various ‘wars’ on poverty. On the other hand it is also clear that poverty has reduced (although not enough), and is lower in Gauteng than elsewhere (but nonetheless traps hundreds of thousands of its residents).

In every measure cited above and in other relevant literature, the Western Cape emerges as the least poor province, followed by Gauteng. But different measurements, using different data, predictably produce different results. In 2004, the Human Sciences Research Council, using a poverty line of a four-person household with an income of R1 290 per month at 2001 prices, found that 32 per cent of the population in the Western Cape lived in poverty, rising to 42 per cent in Gauteng – double what the Socio-Economic Review of the Gauteng Treasury found (Gauteng Treasury 2012; HSRC 2004). Of the population in the predominantly rural Eastern Cape, 72 per cent lived in poverty, and this figure rose to 77 per cent in Limpopo. The HSRC also argues that ‘Gauteng’s poverty gap has grown faster between 1996 and 2001 than all other provinces’ because of its dramatic population growth (HSRC 2004: 2). But these figures fail to account for the introduction of social grants post-2000, which have made a massive impact on poverty levels nationally and provincially, particularly in urban areas (see for example Meth 2004a, b, 2006, 2008).

Other sources of income information are available. Both Statistics South Africa’s Community Survey (StatsSA 2007) and the Gauteng City-Region Observatory’s Quality of Life surveys (GCRO 2009, 2011b) provide recent data segmented at municipal level. Both point to spatial inequality in very stark terms, even when using merely monetary (income) data to make the point.

Johannesburg, poverty and deprivation

In its ongoing attempt to identify and target poverty pockets in Johannesburg, the city relies heavily on the Centre for the Analysis of South African Social Policy’s deprivation analysis of the metropolis. The Centre produces a national multiple deprivation index as well (Noble and Barnes 2008; Noble et al. 2007). In the words of Noble et al. (2007: 3), drawing on Townsend (who argued that material deprivation could be measured in a population), ‘Deprivation refers to people’s unmet needs, whereas poverty refers to the lack of resources required to meet those needs.’

This phrasing can be contested, given that deprivation derives from the verb – meaning that people have been deprived of what they need to meet their requirements. In Noble et al.’s formulation, poverty is seen as being related to the more passive absence of resources to meet basic needs. There is something of an internal contradiction here, between actively
depriving people of assets – which apartheid most certainly did – and lacking certain material assets due to poverty. Such distinctions (deprivation vs poverty) have to take forward the debate if they are to be of value. It seems that the strength of the approach in this context (i.e. sub-regional) is the construction of datazones and the ability to measure poverty (or deprivation) at lower levels than ward or municipal level. The insistence on deprivation – I argue that the authors are in fact measuring poverty – does not take forward the debate around poverty definitions. However, that in no way detracts from the value of the output, which is fascinating.

It is also an interesting approach for a metropolitan municipality to adopt, given that ‘to deprive’ is a pejorative verb relating to stripping or taking away assets, whereas poverty does not derive from the verb ‘to impoverish’. ‘To deprive’ means to deny the use or possession of something, whether applied to people or places – and 20 years into democracy, it is increasingly the democratic government at which the finger of blame will point, rather than the previous apartheid governments that deliberately withheld services and assets from people based on race. Townsend (initially) had argued that an index of ‘deprivation’ could be made up of unemployment, non-car ownership, non-home ownership and overcrowding in the home, applied to Great Britain (Townsend et al. 1988; the index grew in subsequent iterations). Townsend was not merely mapping poverty: the centre that took his name at Bristol University is well known for its more pointedly titled ‘Poverty and social exclusion’ studies, which nod more strongly in the direction of deprivation and its outcome, exclusion.¹

Are there people in the Gauteng city-region living in poverty? Absolutely. Were people of colour deprived by the apartheid regime? Absolutely. Is ‘deprived’ an appropriate word to use to describe poor people in Johannesburg? That is where the etymological challenge becomes more evident. The city nestles in a province where only two-thirds of residents were born locally – it is a province of migrants, with an annual population growth of some 2.6 per cent, and a democratically elected government seeking to deliver an entire package of social support interventions to an ever-growing population. That seems difficult to define as deprivation.

As a noun, deprivation refers to ‘the damaging lack of material benefits considered to be basic necessities in a society’.² However, the meanings of noun and verb are inseparable, so the City of Johannesburg is in effect using an analytic tool that points the finger of blame at that same city for denying people the basic material necessities required for decent living. The premise is that a suite of measurable material goods are a prerequisite for citizenship, and that their absence is the result of withholding those goods and services (‘deprivation’) rather than their mere absence, which may be an equally compelling argument in a province of so many migrants, internal and cross-border, and concomitant population growth. The deprivation modelling used by the city is presumably an attempt to define a minimum threshold of basic needs below which no one should live, which is precisely what many poverty definitions do as well (e.g. asset poverty).

The value of the output lies in the modelling of datazones rather than the analytic framework of deprivation. But what goes into a measurement tool determines what will
come out. Thus, relying on Census data – unavoidable if one is to do datazone modelling – ensures reliance on head of household responses, and on only ‘objective’ measures being used. The Census cannot measure key components of poverty (or, even more so, of deprivation) – alienation, anomie, extreme views that push one to the fringes of society, the distance to schools, police and security services, clinics and hospitals, and a host of other variables.

In other words, where the original design for the city’s deprivation modelling talked of multiple variables being used – number of primary and high schools, clinics and hospitals, police stations, taxi routes, crime levels and others (CoJ 2008) – in the end, the limitations of using Census data ensured that income, employment status, some assets (access to television/radio), self-reported health status, educational attainment and living conditions (access to piped water, electricity, sanitation, living in a shack and overcrowding) were the variables actually used (Noble et al. 2007). This is an expanded list of variables from Statistics South Africa’s proposed poverty-measuring models published in 2000 (Stats SA 2000) and the newness lies not in the data – widely analysed and published – but in the localised modelling. The question that flows from this is: what then is being modelled? Nowhere in the documentation (beyond the quotation above) is there an explanation as to why this set of variables measures deprivation rather than poverty, or why provision of these assets would lift people from a state of deprivation to one where they have sufficient resources to become active in changing their lives. Data without an accompanying analytic framework lose their value, and there is some danger of that occurring here.

There is also no space in the current model for movement in and out of poverty, though there is a stated intention to rerun the data against 2011 data, which will provide a fascinating time-series model. This limitation is not the fault of the authors or city officials. Cancellation of the 2006 Census meant that 2001 data had to be used. However, since 2001, social grants have been introduced on a massive scale, impacting significantly on poverty levels. In addition, Gauteng enjoyed significant economic growth before the global recession, suggesting that people may have moved both out of and potentially back into poverty. The 2001 data cannot reflect these and other dynamics. The 2001/2011 comparative modelling will be a fascinating output, but at the time of writing, it was not yet publicly available.

Either way, we are back in the discourse of basic needs and material goods, and while these are not in any way underestimated, it is increasingly evident (among those using value and attitude variables alongside measurements of material goods or lack thereof) that the challenges facing both national and sub-national governments in South Africa lie far more in the psychosocial realm than in that of the lack of clean water or sanitation, important as these are. Ongoing racism, xenophobia, homophobia, deepening conservatism towards the rights of women and children, growing levels of alienation and anomie (all tracked by the Gauteng City-Region Observatory) point to this fact, over and over. The global move to measuring ‘wellness’, ‘gross national happiness’ and so on indicates a move beyond solely economic indicators to a more rounded understanding of what people need in their lives. And, ironically, this is nowhere more visible than in Johannesburg and its city-region, where the roll-out of
services has been remarkably successful but where psychosocial damage remains horribly apparent. The result, I suggest below, is that the city (and province) needs to decide whether a continuous emphasis on service delivery will really transform it into a non-racial, non-sexist space, or whether a different set of far more complex post-apartheid tasks face us.

The key issue at stake is not an academic linguistic debate about deprivation versus poverty, important as these are – or should be – to poverty researchers and programmers. It is the ongoing insistence in government and other circles that the provision of material assets – service delivery – is the solution to the ‘problem’, which is identifying the minimum threshold needed to emerge from poverty. This echoes the 1994 Reconstruction and Development Programme of the ANC and its allies. In 1994, when the ANC took power, this basic-needs approach was entirely appropriate, given the deprivation of the past 46 years of apartheid. But in Johannesburg and the Gauteng city-region more broadly we are approaching the limits of delivery. One in ten residents lives in an informal dwelling – bad, but down from one in four in 1996. Some 2 per cent of citizens lack piped water in their dwelling or yard, but the majority do have piped water in their dwellings. In all, 96 per cent of Gauteng citizens have a flush toilet, light years away from the situation in 1994. And the list goes on (Stats SA 2011). There are still people who lack these assets and services, and they need to be identified and sourced, but the scale of the challenge is so much smaller than it was in 1994. The nature of the challenge – combine alienation and anomie with massive unemployment, xenophobia and widespread protest action – has changed quite dramatically from basic needs to a far more sophisticated narrative about well-being that includes interiority, not merely external, basic-needs indicators. This is as true for the Gauteng provincial government as it is for the City of Johannesburg.

This should not be taken as questioning the value of the deprivation modelling. The map generated by Noble et al. provides fascinating insight into the state of Johannesburg (see Plate 12 in the colour section of this book). However, the policy take-out cannot be ‘the north is rich and the south is poor’, as expressed by some city officials – this scarcely required an exercise of this scale and quality to tell us that formerly white areas are better off than townships or more recently settled areas such as Orange Farm and Weilers Farm in the south. The most striking example is the view of Soweto, reflected in Plate 13. Look first at the base map in Plate 13, where the deprivation index modelling is shown. Areas of need (in red) are clearly evident, but what is most interesting is that these areas are located cheek by jowl with zones that are okay to well off (yellow and green). Put another way, the map shows the massive levels of delivery that have occurred since 1994, and their concomitant impact on the development of class, and class fractions, within places such as Soweto. For the first time we can see, in spatial terms, the impact of public- and private-sector investment in places like Soweto. We can – points made earlier notwithstanding – also see the long-term impact of deprivation, in that the easy take is indeed that the north is well off and the south poor, and the deep south almost uniformly poor.

For a more sophisticated look at the impact or meaning of deprivation, look at the green and red dots overlaying the base maps in both Plates 12 and 13. These are drawn from
the 2011 Quality of Life Survey, with a sample size of nearly 17,000 respondents across Gauteng – by no means a census, but sufficient to demonstrate the point at issue.

The deprivation index is overlaid with a more nuanced measure of ‘headspace’ combined with poverty to generate both quality of life and marginalisation measurement tools (i.e. low quality of life is drawn from 54 objective and subjective indicators; marginalisation is more heavily dependent on psychosocial variables, looking at the values and attitudes of respondents to measure how close to the centre or margins of mainstream society they are located).

It is certainly true that red dots – denoting high marginalisation and low quality of life – cluster in the same spaces where the Noble team’s index find high deprivation, which are either former townships (see the cluster of red dots around Alexandra, for example, or in Ivory Park in Plate 12) or informal settlements. Given that we measure many of the same variables (in the objective section of quality of life), this is not surprising. But then look at how many green dots (denoting high quality of life, low marginalisation) are also found in ‘red’ zones of high deprivation on the base map; or how many red dots (low quality of life, high marginalisation) are found in low- or medium-deprivation green or yellow zones.

The point is simple: accessing the goods and services measured by the deprivation index does not (and could not) transform the respondent into someone now ‘resourced’ and ready to meet their needs. Basic needs are a starting point but are not transformative in and of themselves. Psychosocial issues – xenophobia, racism, alienation, anomie and so on – plague people living in leafy green suburbs as much as they do those living in ‘red’ zones. Until Johannesburg, like the Gauteng city-region and the country, begins to transform the minds of citizens – especially those who were formerly deprived, but not only them – we will retain red and green zones of separate development.

This may seem a trite conclusion, but it is not. It goes to the very core of the ANC’s activities nationally and sub-nationally, which aim to meet basic needs but forget the people that occupy the spaces, live in the houses, drink the water and so on. It is presumably in response to a similar set of urgings that the National Planning Commission lays so much emphasis on an active and engaged citizenry: the model of delivery of services, without focusing on the development of the people of South Africa, has distinct temporal as well as budgetary limits (NPC 2011). The data suggest that those limits, in Gauteng and in Johannesburg, have been reached.

Demographics and movement
Statistics South Africa’s 2007 Community Survey estimated the population of Gauteng to be over 10.4 million (10,451,709) in 2007. With the population of newly incorporated Merafong, this brings the total to more than 10.6 million (10,667,574). The outer ring of towns and urban centres in the broader city-region stretching beyond Gauteng was estimated to have a 2007 population of almost 3 million (2,948,377). The entire city-region has a population of some 13.6 million. Census 2011 increased these figures again, with
Gauteng growing to 12.3 million people and the city-region (using a 175 km radius from the centre of Johannesburg) to 16.8 million. It is worth noting that none of the neighbouring provinces (Free State, North West, Mpumalanga and Limpopo) has a population in excess of 6 million people. Gauteng occupies less than 2 per cent of the land mass, but a quarter of the South African population is squeezed into that space.

Gauteng is witnessing significant internal shifts in its population. The populations of larger municipalities such as Johannesburg and Tshwane continue to grow fast, while outlying reaches of the metropolitan region are seeing stagnating or even declining populations. Informal settlements are being replaced by formal housing in some instances. In many others, however, informality has made its way into the heart of the metropolitan municipalities, with informal backyard shacks accounting for over 300 000 households. The poor are being forced to follow the job market and/or the better service provision offered by cities than by poorer municipalities in the city-region. Plate 26 shows where employment densifies (the red heat spots) – far from the swathes of people living in poverty to the north, west and south of the red centre of the map.

This evident spatial mismatch between where people were forced to live under apartheid (and where many have been forced to remain) and where jobs are located, compounds urban poverty. Employment opportunities are concentrated in the heart of the city-region, far from dormitory townships and informal settlements, or are spread widely at low job densities. A significant proportion of jobs are located in areas where the job density is lower than ten jobs per hectare (Bertaud 2009). Large numbers of workers and work seekers who live in dispersed residential areas commute over an hour each morning to and from sites of employment. Public transport fares are often high, and as a result individuals in spatially dispersed residential areas may not always be able to fully participate in the Gauteng labour market (Bertaud 2009). According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s Territorial Review (2011) of the Gauteng city-region, an average of 20 per cent of household income in Gauteng is spent on transport, underlining the point.

Demographic evidence suggests that three-quarters of Gauteng’s future population increases will be attributable to natural growth. However, migration will continue to be a strong driver. Gauteng is a major attractor for internal migrants from other parts of South Africa, as well as for international migrants, especially from the African continent and increasingly from Pakistan, Bangladesh and China. The city-region is the primary destination point for immigrants (Landau and Gindrey 2009).

There is evidence (see for example GCRO’s ‘State of the Gauteng City-Region’ reports for both 2009 and 2011) that many internal migrants still follow the patterns of circular labour migration established under apartheid. They may come to the Gauteng city-region looking for work, but their intention is not to stay, or not for long anyway. Rather than establish permanent homes in Gauteng cities and towns, many migrants seek to extract as much value as possible from being in the metropolis, sending money home to families that remain in rural areas whenever they can, and hoping to ‘retire’ to their place of origin in as short a time as possible. Similarly, many foreign migrants regard Gauteng as a temporary
stopover on their way to another global centre, preferably in the developed world. Some survey evidence suggests that up to a third of foreign migrants from certain national groups expect to be in another country, which is not their home, within two years (Landau and Gindrey 2009). This has profound implications for what such people expect from the state, what they are prepared to invest in the state (via taxes) and local community, and what the local state should be providing to them. But that is easier said than done given that targeting and delivery in current practice work beyond the self-targeting, individual level.

Gauteng is the engine of the South African economy. In 2010, Gauteng contributed 36 per cent of the national GDP, the largest contribution of any of the country’s provinces; for the city-region, that figure rose to 43 per cent (OECD 2011). The Gauteng economy has also grown quickly over the last five years, generally faster than the South African economy as a whole, although the impact of the global recession has been severe, stalling production, constricting household consumption and devastating employment in both the formal and informal sectors (Gauteng Treasury 2009).

Although Gauteng grew as one of the world’s most important gold-mining centres, today the tertiary sector dominates the metropolitan economy, contributing 70.3 per cent of economic value. The secondary sector contributes 27.6 per cent with construction in particular growing quickly, albeit off a small base. The relative growth of the tertiary sector over the past few years, from 68.6 per cent in 2001 to 70.3 per cent in 2008, has been accompanied by a steady decline in the weight of the primary sector. Mining and agriculture made up 3.4 per cent of the Gauteng economy in 2001. Today the primary sector contributes a mere 2.1 per cent of economic output.

The GDP per capita for the Gauteng city-region at the end of 2009 was R36 000, with an estimated GDP of R386.4 billion. The Gauteng economy is dominated by the formal sector. However, the actual number of jobs in the informal sector and its contribution to total value produced is underestimated due to the lack of monitoring and regulation of the sector (Quantec 2009).

Poverty, race, space and unemployment

There is a historical dimension to poverty which gives it both a racial and a spatial edge. Poor households – using the indigence measure of a monthly household income below R800 – cluster around the townships created by apartheid and dominate the south, as well as the northern border of the city-region, previously part of the homeland system of apartheid. Looking at race and poverty spatially reflects quite clearly the clustering of issues that should be borne in mind when analysing poverty in the area, or when responding to it.

The challenge is highlighted by Punt et al. (2005). They stress the racial dimension in Gauteng’s poverty profile where whites show virtually no evidence of poverty (1.1 per cent), true also of Indians (6.5 per cent) but rising among coloureds (16.3 per cent) and doubling again among Africans (33 per cent). While much media attention has focused on the fact that class differences are emerging among Africans, the bald fact remains that
poverty overwhelmingly affects Africans, and barely touches whites or Indians, with coloureds somewhere in the middle. Moreover, as Naidoo (2011) has argued, while the gap between rich and poor Africans has indeed grown rapidly post-apartheid, the gap has grown at a very similar pace for all four race groups (for example, between 1996 and 2001 the Gini coefficient for Africans rose from 0.66 to 0.72; for coloureds, from 0.56 to 0.64; for Indians, from 0.52 to 0.60; and for whites, from 0.50 to 0.60). These figures differ again from those quoted previously, though they are national rather than Gauteng-specific (let alone Johannesburg-specific). Media attention has been strongly focused on intra-African inequality, and oddly silent on the more general – deracialised – problem of growing inequality in South Africa. The data cited earlier suggest that both inequality and the role or impact of cities on inequality deserve serious attention.

Gauteng is some way ahead of most provinces in its developmental profile, as suggested earlier, though the challenge is continual due to the ongoing migration from other provinces and other countries compounding natural population growth. Targets are continually changing as the population continues to grow faster than anywhere else in the country. The challenge is exacerbated by the high levels of unemployment that plague the province and the country. Unemployment is a critical challenge for the metropolitan region of Gauteng, as it is for South Africa as a whole. As Figure 3.1 shows, Gauteng has the largest share of national employment in comparison to other provinces, but also the largest share of unemployed people. The global recession has exacerbated unemployment in the region, and hardest hit are those in the least protected sectors – domestic work and the informal sector (Stats SA 2009). The massive slice of employment share reflects the magnetic pull of the Gauteng city-region; the almost equally massive size of the unemployment share reflects the challenge of entering the workforce once in the region.

**FIGURE 3.1.** Relative share of South Africa’s total employed and unemployed per province

*Source: Stats SA (2009)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Employed</th>
<th>Unemployed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limpopo</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mpumalanga</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gauteng</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KwaZulu-Natal</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free State</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Cape</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Cape</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Cape</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
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Unemployment is highest among Africans, among young people and among women – young African women and young African men suffer extremely high rates of unemployment. Just over 53 per cent of African men aged 17–24 are unemployed, dropping to 48.8 per cent among coloured men, 21.9 per cent among Indian men and 13.5 per cent among white men of the same age. In the 25–34 cohort, the corresponding figures are: African men 29.1 per cent, coloureds 24.8 per cent, Indians 7.8 per cent and whites 4.1 per cent. If we expand this to cover the whole city-region, the figures change and drop – 28.8 per cent of African men are unemployed, 24.5 per cent of coloured men, 7.4 per cent of Indian men and 4.2 per cent of white men.

Young African women suffer catastrophic levels of unemployment, with 68.8 per cent of 17–24 year olds unemployed in Gauteng and rising to 69.8 per cent in the city-region as a whole. In the 25–34-year-old cohort, this drops to 49.3 per cent in Gauteng and 51.1 per cent in the city-region. For coloured women aged 17–24, unemployment stands at 48.6 per cent (49.2 per cent in the city-region), halving among Indians to 23.4 per cent (barely changed at 23.7 per cent for the whole Gauteng city-region) and halving again to 15.6 per cent (or 17.5 per cent in the city-region) among white women.

If we look at the 35–49 cohort, we find the rate of unemployment for African males stands at 20.8 per cent in Gauteng and 19.6 per cent in the city-region; for coloured men, 20.3 per cent and 20.2 per cent respectively; for Indian men, 8.0 per cent and 7.7 per cent; and for white men, 3.1 per cent and 2.9 per cent. For women in the same age cohort, the rate of unemployment remains higher: for African women in Gauteng, 34.4 per cent and 34.7 per cent in the city-region; 26.9 per cent for coloured women in both Gauteng and the city-region; for Indian women, 12 per cent and 11.7 per cent; and for white women, 6.2 per cent in Gauteng and 6.8 per cent in the city-region.

The structural racism (Taylor 2012) of the South African economy ensures that Africans bear the brunt of unemployment, but race, age and gender combine to ensure that young African women do so disproportionately; gender continues to combine with race in keeping more African women unemployed than any other group. Using Census 2001 data in 2006 wards, Plate 14 shows that unemployment’s racial profile also has a spatial profile, locked into the townships in which Africans, coloureds and Indians remain largely located.

With endemic unemployment, Plate 14 shows the dispersal at ward level of unemployment across the province, picking up the north and west in particular, but with red wards – the 50 worst-off wards of the 508 in the province – moving up from Orange Farm and Soweto in the south to reflect the location of many of apartheid’s townships. Wards are not an ideal unit of analysis, given that they are political/voting constructs and not developmental units, thus may include very different community types in a single ward. The map nonetheless makes the spatial point.

A similar picture emerges if we use another poverty proxy – a self-targeted mechanism, the uptake of social grants, also mapped at ward level (Plate 15).

Again, while some pockets of poverty can be found in the Johannesburg inner city and some of the townships, Soweto and Orange Farm most obviously, swathes of poverty are...
Changing SpaCe, Changing City

Quality of life

The issue can be viewed from the other end of the scale, by looking at the quality of life enjoyed by residents of the Gauteng city-region. City-regions provide, or should provide, high-end quality of life – that is their attraction. They are urban concentrations of economic activity, offering suburban and city dwelling, wealth and opportunity, concentrations of professionals and higher education institutions, as well as art, culture and recreation. But cities and city-regions also rely on the labour of workers, many of whom are denied access to precisely those amenities and recreational outlets that make ‘city living’ desirable.

Nowhere is this inequality more pronounced than in South Africa. Apartheid tried to keep cities ‘white’ and forced black South Africans to live in townships, zoned by race, kilometres away from cities and often physically buffered by industrial belts, motorways or topography. In post-apartheid South Africa, cities and city-regions have therefore had to focus on inclusion, openness and challenging race-based inequalities while remaining economically competitive in a context of globalisation.

The Gauteng city-region exemplifies these challenges. The polycentric region of cities includes Johannesburg, with the largest economy on the continent; Tshwane (formerly Pretoria), the administrative capital of both apartheid and democratic South Africa; and Ekurhuleni, a centre of heavy industry and manufacturing. Each had – and still has – adjacent townships zoned for African, coloured or Indian citizens, and the maps above suggest that movement out of these areas and the creation of more integrated residential areas has taken longer than perhaps anticipated. The physical separation of people on the basis of race, combined with class as black elites have moved out of townships and into formerly white suburbs, remains a key challenge.

Measuring quality of life

Quality of life studies abound, locally and internationally, but few use rigorous multivariate statistical analysis to reach defensible conclusions. The Gauteng City-Region Observatory used the 2009 Quality of Life Survey to fill this gap. The survey allowed us to commingle
analysis of objective and subjective indicators – some 54 variables in all – to provide a rigorous definition and analysis of quality of life. The dimensions and indicators (with their variables) are shown in Table 3.1.

The logic is clear from a quick scan of the variables. Quality of life includes both objective factors – access to services, connectivity, food security, jobs, services and so
on – and deeply subjective matters, ranging from alienation and anomie to racial and communal trust and faith in the institutional machinery of South Africa. Many people may hold extreme views on one or two issues, but measured across multiple variables, their extremes are placed and understood in the context of views on a wide range of issues and areas of life. In Figure 3.2 low scores are bad news, high scores are good news. Respondents are scored from 0 to 1 for each domain in the key, where 1 would be ‘perfect’.

The figure makes clear that work (both unemployment and poor-quality jobs), ‘headspace’ and crime-related issues are the key dimensions pulling down the quality of life in the Gauteng city-region. On the positive end of the scale, government investment in infrastructure, housing, health and the like has driven scores up in the midst of the global financial crisis. But it is clear that the bonds of mutuality are slipping – the variables of community, family and socio-political (which measure social capital, engagedness, participation and the like) are all on the decline. Basic needs are being met in terms of bricks and water, but the complexities of dealing with the people that live in the new houses and enjoy those basic needs are currently beyond us. The key problem is not one of rolling out services (important though this remains), but dealing with the psychosocial issues that beset those living in post-apartheid Johannesburg and the broader city-region in which it lies.

Taken as a whole, the quality of life scores for the Gauteng city-region (Figure 3.3) skew towards the upper end of the scale, with a mean between 6 and 7 out of 10 (where 10 is ‘perfect’). No respondents score below 2 out of 10 but a fair proportion score above 8 out of 10. Over the two years between the two Quality of Life surveys, the mean score drifted slightly upwards, from 6.24 in 2009 to 6.25 in 2011, indicating the resilience of the city-region in the face of the global recession.

**Figure 3.2:** Dimensions of quality of life: Mean scores per dimension, 2009 and 2011

*Sources: GCRO (2009, 2011b)*
FIGURE 3.3: Quality of life index, 2009 and 2011
Sources: GCRO (2009, 2011b)
But it clearly matters where in the city-region you live: quality of life is unevenly distributed, with wealthier municipalities like Randfontein and Midvaal, and the bigger cities of Johannesburg and Tshwane at the upper end of the scale, and smaller municipalities on the fringes of the city-region at the bottom of the scale (see Figure 3.4). Worryingly, Ekurhuleni – with its manufacturing base very hard hit by the recession – fared second worst in 2011. This may explain why, between 2001 and 2007, five municipalities on the fringes of Gauteng shrank, while the three metropolitan centres and smaller municipalities in the centre of the province grew. The spatial location of poverty, concentrated on the fringes of the city-region, is driving people into the wealthier, better-serviced centre, where more functional metropolitan municipalities provide services with substantial outreach. Since this survey was conducted, Tshwane has been re-demarcated and is now – its advertising hoardings boast – ‘the largest city in Africa.’ (This is presumably a spatial claim since the new city covers 16 000 square hectares.) Whether swallowing dysfunctional municipalities in ever-larger cities is an effective remedy to poverty remains to be seen.

Given South Africa’s history of racial oppression, it is to be expected that socio-economic and demographic factors will have a direct impact on quality of life in the city-region. To better understand some of these dynamics, we used correspondence mapping. This technique allows variables to be displayed in space where their relationships across two or more dimensions can be shown. The variables must be discrete – nominal, ordinal or continuous variables segmented into ranges. The map produces a measure of distance between two points (the points are values of the variables); distance is a measure of correlation, so the smaller the distance the higher the correlation and vice versa.

We found that high quality of life in the Gauteng city-region correlates very strongly with living in a formal dwelling, having a job and, crucially, a tertiary education (Figure 3.5). The reverse is true for low quality of life. It was also not surprising to find that white, Indian

![Figure 3.4: Quality of life: averages by municipality and metropolitan areas, Gauteng, 2011](source: GCRO (2011b))
and coloured respondents were far more likely to enjoy higher quality of life, although it was noticeable that coloured respondents (including a large working-class group and a large middle-class group) were being pulled in two directions. Also, the African cohort, most importantly, were not right next to ‘poor’ or ‘below average’ quality of life but were somewhere between these and ‘good’ quality of life, reflecting the ongoing transformation of post-apartheid South Africa.

This is not a causal analysis – correspondence mapping demonstrates the strength of relationships between variables rather than ‘proving’ a causal link. But the closeness of secondary and tertiary education to the more positive end of the quality of life scale, combined with the national and provincial government emphasis (and expenditure) on education, suggests that although quality of life may not improve dramatically, investments are being made in the right area.
Conclusion

Johannesburg, like the Gauteng city-region, is a place of contrasts and extremes. But it is not home to ‘the poorest of the poor’, or not in large enough numbers to draw easy conclusions about ‘a war on poverty’. Service delivery has been very successful and Johannesburg boasts a high quality of life – but it is not yet a better life for all, as the ANC’s election slogan would have it. And while inequality – of access, income, opportunity and so on – remains, the city and the broader city-region will remain volatile places in which to live and work.

The challenge facing policymakers in this economic powerhouse is – what next? Basic needs encapsulated the immediate post-apartheid challenge, where the provision of water and sanitation was as much to do with restoring human dignity as with providing basic services. But a far more sophisticated narrative and policy suite is required to raise our targets from basic needs to inclusion, fighting inequality, challenging the negative psychosocial tendencies visible in survey respondents, and the like. Building toilets and houses, tarring roads – these were the easy, if expensive, challenges. The far more complex challenge now is knitting together a rent social fabric, and changing policy gears so that deep-seated redistribution provides a solid base from which to challenge inequality. Poverty is not dead, but it is at least manageable, and interventions such as social grant provision have been and remain successful. But challenging inequality, and the relative deprivation that accompanies and fuels it, is the core challenge facing all spheres of government in Gauteng.

Notes

1 For more, see http://www.bristol.ac.uk/poverty/definingandmeasuringpoverty.html
2 See https://www.google.co.za/?gfe_rd=cr&ei=I6M-U47NHond8geU-4CYAw#q=deprivation.
3 Both available at www.gcro.ac.za.
4 Gauteng’s GDP at constant 2000 prices (Quantec 2007) divided by Gauteng population size (Stats SA 2007).
5 The point is valid for Plate 15 as well.

References


