Neighbourhood Characteristics and Inequality in the City of Johannesburg: a preliminary analysis
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Abstract

Johannesburg is among the most unequal cities on the planet, and the results of this survey reflect this fact, as two cities emerge: one poor, overwhelmingly black African, with high social capital but poor service access, reliant on state provision of health and education, the other mainly white and Indian (although a fifth of African respondents were in the highest socio-economic status (SES) quintile, suggesting an African elite is prospering), with low social capital but high standard of living. It is the middle quintile – comprising primarily townships formerly zoned for coloureds and Indians – that seems to be taking the most strain, with high levels of psycho-social, health, crime and other negative factors taking their toll. The city emerges as comprising a wealthy suburban population that primarily use private providers (school for children, health care, transport) and tend to be clustered in small, not very socially engaged groups; and the bottom two SES quintiles, where reliance on ‘the economy of affection’ ensures greater social interaction and engagedness, but in a context of high unemployment and poverty. The middle quintile seems stretched close to break point. The city is uneasily balanced on this continuum.
1. Introduction

The School of Governance at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (Wits), is a partner in the Centre for Sustainable, Healthy and Learning Cities and Neighbourhoods (SHLC), based at the University of Glasgow. A consortium of partners from fourteen cities in seven countries have been studying a major and a secondary city – and the neighbourhoods that make them up – for three years¹. This report summarises findings of a sample survey undertaken among respondents in Johannesburg, the largest metropolitan municipality in South Africa. Similar reports will be prepared for all other cities in the project.

The survey is one component of a complex, mixed method, multi-year project. Previous reports have provided detailed analyses of the cities being studied, of neighbourhood typologies, and ways of identifying them within those cities. Having done that in the opening phases of the project, all cities became the sites of surveys (of which this is one), focus groups, in-depth interviews, site visits and other primary data gathering research interventions – precisely as the pandemic hit.

Undertaking a survey during a pandemic is not easy, and our partners at Citizen Surveys (who conducted the survey for us) as well as the ethics committees at both Glasgow and Wits, pushed us hard to protect both fieldworker and respondent (and broader household). Fieldwork was only possible when the alert level permitted: when cases and infections were very low and fieldworkers felt comfortable going into field. Face masks and sanitisers were given to all fieldworkers and also distributed to respondents if they wished.

Respondents became initially very withdrawn and resistant to face-to-face interviews, as South Africa went through COVID-19 waves 1, 2 and 3, coupled with lockdowns, curfews, and restrictions on movement. This reaction was understandable, given the sweep and scale of the pandemic and the fears it generated. Fieldwork in Johannesburg was challenging prior to the pandemic, with gated communities, lifestyle estates and the like restricting movement in and access to more affluent areas. Many other areas, such as some apartment buildings in Hillbrow (with the highest local population densities in Africa) saw buildings being ‘captured’ by criminal elements, while others were simply unsafe to enter due to crime and violence. This forced us into a multi-method data collection strategy, with the sample (see below) split between in-person (computer-assisted personal interviewing, CAPI) and telephonic interviews (computer-assisted telephone interviewing, CATI).

While the benefits and weaknesses of mixing methods are acknowledged, we made the decision as the only way to access the more hard-to-reach areas, such as gated suburbs or estates, particularly with the heightened anxieties that COVID occasioned. In all, the realised sample of 946 respondents included 594 interviewed in-person and 352 interviewed by CATI. Fieldwork also happened in waves because of changed COVID alert levels and official guidance on fieldwork. Intriguingly, by the time South Africa’s third wave (Delta variant) subsided, almost to nothing, respondents who had previously insisted only on CATI seemed to welcome fieldworkers into their dwellings to do in-person interviews. We assume this to be a sign of post-lockdown relief and the need for human interaction; it served also to limit the extent of CATI interviews.

¹See http://www.centreforsustainablecities.ac.uk/
That said, readers should be aware of the impact on data collection – for both fieldworker and respondent – of the pandemic itself and how it may have affected attitudes as well as participation; and our use of CATI and CAPI, where surveys normally use one or the other method. Interviews had to be done in open spaces, socially distanced, with masks and visors in use – we have no way of knowing what effect, if any, this may have had on the fieldwork experience, but a concern is that the rapport fieldworkers establish with respondents, allowing them to ask probing questions, may have been affected by the requirements of personal safety. If so and to what degree, we have no idea.

Figure 1: Fieldwork during a pandemic (Source: Citizen Surveys)
2. Data collection method and the sample

We had two main objectives with the survey: (1) to accurately describe the different neighbourhood types, and (2) to make inferences to the city population. To do so, we employed a stratified, clustered, random sampling method, using Mahalanobis distances to identify the sampling sites. First, we picked five of the ten neighbourhood types we identified in the cluster analysis.

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Figure 2: Small Area Layer starting points (marked in purple) (Source: Google Earth with overlay)

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We did so by ranking neighbourhood types based on median income and then picking five types from across the income range. This was done to ensure a degree of commonality across the 14 city surveys taking place in 7 developing countries, with very different urban histories and current realities.

Second, for each of the five neighbourhood types we picked, we calculated a hypothetical mean and then ranked all neighbourhood in the cluster from closest to furthest from the mean. This was a risky strategy: for example, those households in the highest income bracket are historically those least likely to make themselves available for interview. The advent of COVID-19, lockdown and the use of computer aided telephonic interviews (CATI) for these high-income dwellings yielded positive results (thus reducing the need for weighting) which we may have battled to match in ‘normal’ times – an unexpected positive to come out of the pandemic.

Third, we deployed the field workers to the most typical neighbourhoods (closest to the mean) and asked them to complete as many interviews as possible, after which they should proceed to the second most typical neighbourhood and so forth. Our sampling target was 200 interviews for each of the five neighbourhood types, leaving us with a sample of 1,000 interviews from across the income range. Randomisation was built into each stage, from starting points to selection of respondents (using the birthday rule – whichever household member aged 18 and above had their birthday next was the respondent). Three call backs were required, and if the respondent could not be found or declined, the household was substituted.

The data were weighted using raking, although only relatively light weights were required. First, we extracted the population margins for sex, age, race, and population size in each of the five neighbourhood types, using census data. Second, we calculated weights to correct bias and imbalances in our sample. When the data are being analysed as a whole, for the City of Johannesburg, the margin of error at a 95% confidence interval is 3%. It should be noted that the weights were limited: the combination of CAPI and CATI seems, ironically (given our own doubts about the approach), to have generated very good representivity. The range of the weights went from 0.18 to 7.52.

### 3. Demographic characteristics

The weighted sample includes slightly more male (50.2%) than female (49.8%) respondents, in line with the provincial gender profile. Youth predominate in the sample as in the city, with 50% in the 18-34 age cohort (South Africa’s official youth age definition is 14-35) (NYDA Act 54 of 2008), 41% were aged 35-59, and just 9% were aged 60 and above. Johannesburg is a city of the young and working age populations and seems not to be a city for older people.

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3 Wherever possible, statistics are rounded off; decimals are only used, as here, when required.
Household sizes showed some variation, but 90% of respondents live in a household of up to 5 people (including respondent). A further 8% of respondents have between 6 and 8 household members, with the remainder (1%) coming from larger households.

Gauteng Province, which includes Johannesburg, has a high proportion of people living alone – one in ten, according to the Gauteng City-Region Observatory (https://cdn.gero.ac.za/media/documents/vignette_solo_living_may_2013_gt_final.pdf). In this sample that rose to 25% of respondents who said they live in a household of one – themselves. Whether this is a sampling issue or the effect of the pandemic, lockdown and related policies, further research will have to resolve.

As explained, the sample was drawn from five of ten clusters that emerged from cluster analysis of Census 2011 data, using machine learning, and then refined by socio-economic status bands so that we covered neighbourhoods from wealthy to poor. South Africa is a recent democracy that was preceded by apartheid, a mechanism for racial separation accompanied by denial of rights and services for people of colour, but black Africans in particular. As apartheid ended, so suburbs formerly zoned for whites became open to all – that is, all who could afford the transition from ‘townships’ – which had corralled Africans, separate from Coloureds, who in turn were separate from Indians – to suburbia.

As a result, basic urban terminology (including descriptive terminology) – township, suburbia, etc. – is heavily loaded with South Africa’s history of racist exclusion of people of colour from urban spaces.

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4 These clumsy racial terms are increasingly contested as an apartheid hangover; but government uses them in order to measure the progress of those most negatively affected by apartheid.
Language that has been normalised elsewhere – such as ‘slums’ – is only used as a pejorative in South Africa.) For the purposes of this survey report, we are using five categories labelled simply by their place on the socio-economic status (SES) scale:

- ‘high’: (the wealthy, living in free standing houses, lifestyle estates, golf estates and the like);
- ‘higher middle’: (suburbia, gated communities, some better off (Indian and Coloured) townships);
- ‘middle’: (primarily Indian and coloured townships);
- ‘lower middle’: (African townships);
- ‘low’: (African townships, informal settlements, transitional spaces on Johannesburg borders).

In this report we primarily focus on these categories, since they represent neighbourhood types in Johannesburg. However, issues of race are unavoidable in South Africa, and it is worth noting the racial composition of the clusters – which reflects and constitutes the inequality for which Johannesburg, and South Africa, are so well known. It is certainly positive that 17% of Africans are found in the highest SES cluster, dropping to 7% in the second highest, suggest more of an African elite than a middle class. That said, the top two clusters are dominated by whites and Indians – both of whom are entirely absent from the middle and lower SES clusters.

The poorer clusters are entirely African and coloured, but the higher clusters are a mix of all races, but dominated by whites and Indians. This distribution of race across the clusters should be borne in mind, because clusters are not homogenous; and even where races dominate, neighbourhood clusters extend beyond any single race group, and should not be read as the same thing. The graphic should be read left to right – Africans make up 17% of the top SES cluster, 7% of the second, 5% of the third, and so on.

![Figure 4: SES clusters by race](image-url)
Four in five respondents lived in a formal dwelling of some sort – from detached houses and cluster homes (in gated communities) to flats, rooms within dwellings and formal rooms on the grounds of but outside another formal dwelling (formerly for the use of a domestic worker). This tells us that stating someone lives in a formal dwelling immediately spans a wide arc from the very wealthiest lifestyle estate to a back yard room on someone else’s property. That leaves a fifth of the sample living in shacks, either stand alone or in the grounds of a formal dwelling, or in an informal settlement; and 3% lived in traditional structures (kraals, rondavels, and so on). 

Household size also differs by cluster (and thus by SES): 86% of the sample in the highest SES category lived in households no larger than three people; none lived in households above six people in all. That dropped to 78% among those in the higher middle cluster, 72% in the middle, dropping to 54% in the lower middle cluster living in households not exceeding three people, but rising to 67% among those in the lowest category. This may be a mixture of poverty – a shared pot to eat from, shared security and so on – and may also be in part the result of the large number of informal spaces in this cluster, where ‘space’ is less a concern than squeezing into already overcrowded formal structures. Where no respondents from the higher SES clusters lived in households with more than six members, those at the other of the scale were considerably more likely to live in larger households: 10% of the lowest two clusters had between six and eleven members of the household, true for 8% of those in the middle cluster.

![Figure 5: Household size by SES](image)

4. Housing and living conditions

Living for those in the top two SES clusters is simple: they live in formal, free-standing houses. Given that many sample points were in lifestyle estates, cluster villages, and suburbia, this is not surprising. But the extent to which lower SES clusters spread across a range of formal and informal dwellings, free-standing or in the grounds of the ‘main’ formal dwelling, reveals the extent to which demand is outstripping formal housing stock – for the poor.
The proliferation of free-standing houses – whether private sector built or government-funded (matchbox) houses – is indicative of the need to shift housing strategy in Johannesburg. There is little space left for greenfield development or even extension to existing developments if the aim is a free-standing house and garden. As the graphic makes clear, these all become opportunities for additional rentals – from people living in or building on the space already allocated to a formal dwelling. The health, sanitation, and personal challenges this poses are considerable. If COVID-19 taught us that very high densities are to be avoided, we repeat what has been said for many years: three or four storey, mixed income, medium-density, walk-up apartment buildings are key. They provide services, are secure, and will ease the pressure and demand for new stock without crowding.

Across the sample, 56% of respondents – from all SES clusters – said they owned their dwelling in full (i.e. not paying a mortgage) – for those in cluster 5, the lowest SES cluster, this includes informal dwellings for which no ‘formal’ ownership paperwork exists, but also includes township residents who paid rentals for years under apartheid, and were finally given title deeds when democracy arrived. These patterns of ownership need to be understood in the specific context of urban South Africa. The final major category was private rental stock, accounting for 29% of the sample and ranging from 28% among the lowest SES cluster to 39% among those in the highest cluster. Those without access have limited access to a shared kitchen (2%), or cook in a corridor (1%), inside a bedroom (9%) or outside (2%).

Just 1% of the sample had ‘employer provided housing’ – all among the higher three SES clusters (i.e. housing as a perk). Rentals from government or social housing associations only accounted for 2% of the sample. It is apparent that subsidized and social housing need a significant uptick in Johannesburg, and would have an impact on deracializing suburbs as well.

The number of rooms per dwelling matters at several levels, from dignity to health to sanitation and beyond. While across the sample, 76% of respondents live in dwellings with up to six rooms, 34% of those in the highest SES cluster have 6 rooms in their dwelling, true of half those in the lowest cluster. Looked at in terms of exclusive access to a kitchen, the difference between high and low SES is clear: 97% of the highest cluster have exclusive rights to a kitchen, while 26% of those in the lowest cluster do not.
5. Source of energy

Figure 7 is not a neat graph, because electricity so completely dominates energy (for cooking) that other sources are tiny, and of limited use. The key point is Johannesburg’s reliance on the national grid, which in turn relies on coal-fired power stations: this is the antithesis of sustainability.

The massive dependence on coal-fired mains electricity is remarkable, reflecting the ‘resource burden’ of the country and its history of extractive industry. This is true across the board: from the lowest to the highest SES clusters. A dramatic shift has to occur to wean South Africa off this climate damaging path, but previous decades of subsidised electricity have proved a difficult legacy to remove. The questionnaire did not specify solar power, which is widespread among both rich (getting themselves ‘off grid’) and the poor (solar subsidised by government and donors), but would be unlikely to appear as ‘energy mainly used for cooking’ – lights and hot water may have produced different results. Not statistically significant – but important in terms of health and sustainability – are those few respondents using candles or paraffin stoves for cooking – all coming from the poorest clusters.

In all, 95% of respondents get electricity from the national grid. Off grid solar was only evident in the highest SES cluster, reminding us that climate-saving technology is currently the domain of the wealthy in Johannesburg (though as we noted, solar geysers may have generated a higher response rate than solar for cooking). The issue is not merely connecting to the grid – but affording the cost of doing so. Even in discussion with a fieldworker (i.e. a stranger), 3% of respondents said their electricity came from an illegal connection to the grid (as true of the highest SES cluster as of the lowest), and 1% said they get their power by connecting to a neighbouring dwelling (also illegal).
The use of electricity for cooking may obscure differences between SES clusters, due to historical factors, particularly the reliance on formerly cheap electricity. Water for drinking may be expected to show the differences in Johannesburg across the five clusters, but precisely because Gauteng remains the national economic powerhouse, with Johannesburg at its centre, it has had the resources to drive a basic needs programme. There are legitimate debates about water pricing, especially for the poor – water connections commonly have an external ‘pay as you go’ meter, many of which are routinely vandalised out of frustration, similar to the challenges of affording electricity mentioned above.

6. Service provision

At the onset of democracy in 1994, millions of black South Africans were without adequate (or, in many cases, any) access to basic services – shelter, potable water, power for the dwelling, and so on. This was exacerbated by the freedom to move to urban areas, for example, where previously apartheid had sought to keep urban areas tightly controlled. The African National Congress (ANC) introduced the ‘Reconstruction and Development Programme’ (RDP), which set out a programme of mass delivery to meet basic needs. This included (in the first stage) installing stand-pipes within at least 200m of every dwelling. The second stage of the RDP was to move taps into dwellings.

Sanitation was also an RDP priority but is more complex and expensive to install (in already overcrowded conditions created by apartheid spatial planning). People who received post-1994 ‘RDP’ houses, for example, would be in the lower SES clusters but would enjoy water-borne sanitation. The RDP however also rolled out ventilated pit latrines (VIPs), ordinary pit latrines, chemical toilets, and a range of others. Water stoppages – less frequent than but as concerning as electricity cut-offs – have led high income users to explore more ‘off grid’ solutions (as with solar power for the electricity outages). One result of this is that the highest SES cluster nonetheless shows evidence of off-grid options.
With the population of province and city growing (before COVID-19) at some 2.6% per annum, there is always a degree of ‘catching up’ to do – but this comes on top of the historical backlog that city and province have been facing since 1994. That said, 91% of all respondents said they had flush sanitation in their home; 2% has a pit latrine, 3% a chemical toilet, and 4% were linked to a septic tank rather than the mains. Just 4 respondents said they had no sanitation at all.

When asked whose facilities were used by the respondent’s household, 87% said it was their own toilet, 10% said it was a neighbour’s toilet, and 3% used a communal toilet.

Intriguingly, 81% of the sample enjoy refuse collection from their home, as run by Pikitup, an agency created by the City of Johannesburg to manage refuse. This was high across the board, barring the middle SES cluster, where it dropped to 65%. The challenge lies with the remaining 19% and how they dispose of refuse.

While door-to-door refuse collection dominates Johannesburg, it seems that those in the middle SES category are worst-off, followed by SES cluster 4, both heavily representing Indian and coloured, and African townships, respectively. The fact that 20% of those in the middle category dump in the street or anywhere in the open, with another 5% burning their refuse, indicates the environmental and health damage that is occurring.

![Figure 9: Refuse removal by SES cluster](image-url)
It is not surprising that respondents from the highest two SES clusters were most likely to be very satisfied or satisfied with their dwelling (accounting for roughly 90% of both). As soon as we move towards SES clusters lower down the scale, ‘very satisfied’ decreases markedly, while satisfaction increases – except for the ‘middle’ SES group, where dissatisfaction is highest, and where we have seen in the preceding discussion, respondents seem least satisfied, poised between those who have ‘made it’ and the ‘fear of falling’ back into lower SES clusters.

Figure 10: Satisfaction with dwelling (by SES cluster)

Figure 11: Domestic workers by cluster
Given South Africa’s history of exploiting cheap (black) labour, and reliance on domestic workers among the middle classes of all races, with whites being most obvious in the apartheid era as employers of (often live-in) domestic workers, gardeners, drivers and so on. According to the official statistical agency – Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) – domestic work accounts for over 1.1 million jobs (nationally, in late 2021). It is rather surprising to see 65% of medium/high respondents and 71% of the highest SES cluster respondents reporting no domestic workers at all. It is also notable that while the ‘middle’ SES category continues to look worse off than its SES status would suggest – 99% told us they had no domestic assistance – but it is also notable that domestic workers are apparent even in the poorest SES clusters in Johannesburg, as they have been for many years.

The data reveal some of the inequalities in the City of Johannesburg, where those in the higher SES clusters enjoy all the benefits of city living, while those at the other end face considerably more challenges. That said, the extent to which government services have been rolled out to the poor, while not without challenges, is impressive.

### 7. Migration and urbanisation

With the advent of democracy, South African cities moved into an entirely new set of circumstances, where a settled suburban white population, and corralled African, coloured and Indian population, were both free to move anywhere that resources permitted, and allowed many others to move into the city. As we saw earlier, dwellings have mushroomed in the gardens and other spaces around existing formal dwellings, and informality accounts for a fifth of respondent dwellings. Longevity in a dwelling is a questionable indicator in this fluid situation, but worth considering.

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>1-2 years</th>
<th>3-5 years</th>
<th>6-10 years</th>
<th>10+ years</th>
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<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid/low</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid/high</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 1: ‘How long have you lived in this dwelling?’ by cluster

There seems to be a high proportion of respondents from all clusters, who have not moved in over ten years, as true of 66% in the highest SES cluster to 54% in the lowest. Some of the apparent ‘longevity’ among the poorer clusters may be the simple fact of economics and the inability to afford any change of dwelling. It is worth noting the movement in the lower clusters, and especially the lowest; but note also the 37%-38% of the two higher SES clusters that have only lived in their current dwelling for 3-5 years. These movements reflect our earlier findings, that class movement is active behind the assumptions that accompany different types of locale.

South African political discourse has become increasingly hostile to ‘foreigners’, with increasing bouts of xenophobic violence, and increased rhetoric from every political party on the issue of ‘porous borders’ and the like. Being South Africa, the debate focuses overwhelmingly on African migrants, and then on those coming from Asia – people of colour, in short – who are blamed by South Africans (of all colours) for taking ‘our’ jobs, opportunities, and so on. As such, many foreign-born migrants prefer the safety of going unnoticed, and have a distinct reluctance to be enumerated by surveys or the official census. As such, these figures should be treated with caution.
Because of the heated political rhetoric around ‘foreigners’, it has proved impossible (since 1990, when political changes were first introduced in South Africa making it a less hostile place – in theory – for people of colour) to accurately count the number of non-South Africans living in South Africa, and so the 5% sample here may be accurate or wildly out, we simply do not know. It is striking that 46% of respondents were not born in Johannesburg but have migrated from other cities, rural areas, or other countries. Johannesburg was born out of a gold rush – i.e. global migrancy – and today, given its continued role in the South African economy, it remains a magnet for migrants of all classes, from all backgrounds.

What the data do show is that almost half of all respondents have either always lived in the same neighbourhood (24%) or the same dwelling (24%). This is highest among middle to high SES clusters. In the two higher SES clusters, between 51% and 78% have lived in the same area/dwelling. However, it is also notable that rural migrants make up 17% of respondents and can be found from lowest to highest SES cluster (in the latter, they comprise 19%). The same is true of foreign-born Africans, albeit in smaller numbers.

People migrate for many different reasons.
Overwhelmingly, reasons for moving to Johannesburg among those who had done so, were positive (bought a house, close to family, business opportunities) or aspirational (educational opportunities, opportunities to find work) – only a small number had moved for negative reasons (1% had been evicted from their previous dwelling – equally shared across all five SES clusters).

It is also worth noting that as the economic hub in South Africa, Johannesburg is a space for aspiration and for realisation of goals: it is seen to offer opportunities but also sees them through, for some (became a homeowner – 8% of the sample). The ‘middle/low’ cluster, for example, includes a proportion of neighbourhoods characterised by new and emerging black middle classes, of whom 2% had moved to become homeowners, 5% for better business opportunities, 28% for work opportunities and 5% for better educational opportunities (a further 2% cited better health opportunities). The point is the mix – this is not a ‘welfare drag’ of lumpenproletariat but a mix of those seeking business, educational and health opportunities; those who have bought their own dwellings; and work-seekers.

But there is an equally compelling tale in the ‘small numbers’, the set of responses that are not large enough to even be rounded up to 1%. These include one respondent who had been abused; eight who moved in with their spouse; two who married; two whose previous dwelling was sold, forcing them to move. These sad and happy reasons form the patchwork of lives that knitted together make up a neighbourhood’s character.

As a city of migrants, brought together by the discovery of gold in 1886, the year Johannesburg was founded, the rising tide of xenophobia seems unexpected; but given the unemployment crisis in the country (officially, the rate of unemployment was 34.9% and the labour force participation rate at 55.2% in late 2021 [http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0211/P02113rdQuarter2021.pdf] perhaps less so. One in twenty of our sample had moved from another country to South Africa, dwarfed by internal city-to-city migration (22% of the sample), or South African rural-to-city migration (17%). Unfortunately, this is unlikely to shift political parties who have invested in an anti-‘foreigner’ discourse, and which resonates with many voters.

8. Race and religion

The weighted sample for the City of Johannesburg survey fairly obviously looks like the city demographic profile provided by Stats SA, with 77% African, 5% coloured, 6% Indian and 12% white respondents. What matters, of course, are how those respondents distribute across the SES clusters (among other variables); but it is worth noting that while more rural provinces in South Africa are overwhelmingly African, the two cities being profiled (Johannesburg and Cape Town) both have unique (and different from one another) demographic profiles for both historical and contemporary reasons. In Johannesburg, it is notable that whites are represented at twice their national profile, and Indians are three times more likely to appear in the sample than the census suggests is their national demographic weight. Couple an over-representation of minority groups with an historical legacy that favoured whites, then Indians, and finally coloureds, above Africans; add that to the high representation of those groups in the high SES clusters, and many of the tensions of contemporary South Africa become apparent.

Whites only feature in the two better-off SES clusters; Indians in the top three. Coloureds are most likely to be found in the middle and lower SES clusters, while Africans overwhelmingly
dominate the lowest clusters. While there are many historical arguments about why this inequality is the case, the quarter century of democracy has seen too little movement out of poverty for too many African and coloured citizens. When we recall that in late 2021 the official unemployment rate stood at 35%, overwhelmingly made up of Africans, the conditions exist for xenophobic sentiments to emerge (http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0211/P02113rdQuarter2021.pdf) – which they have done – with the most common complaint being that ‘foreigners’ took ‘our’ jobs.

Religiosity has long been a research focus in South Africa, because faith-based organisations (FBOs), and in particular various Christian churches, have a major following across all groups in society. For neighbourhoods, local places of worship form a key part of notions of ‘community’, and clearly have major potential given how many respondents identify as religious.

9. Education

Education, like health, is a core theme in all SHLC work, given the importance of education and lifelong learning for building sustainable communities. In all, 90% of sampled households had a boy5 child of school going age, although this rose as SES status declined: 3% of the lowest SES cluster households had three boys in the house, while neither of the top two SES clusters had more than two and in 85% of both top two SES clusters, just one boy child. The picture for girl children is similar. Again, 10% of households had no girl children of school-going age, and wealthier households were more likely to have one or two children, rising as poverty rises (3% of the lowest SES cluster had 4 girl-children in the household).

We noted above that FBOs and places of worship can be key in holding together the social fabric, especially in a country which professes such high levels of religiosity. Schools are another key local institution around which communities are built. Sadly, class intervenes and ensures that children

\[\text{Figure 14: Religion in Johannesburg}\]

5The terminology reflects the questionnaire.
of different classes (or SES clusters here) are separated from the time they go to school. As Figure 15 shows, as SES rises, so parents opt out of the state system and increasingly prefer private schooling; this is also aspirational (and in a context where many schools in poor parts of Johannesburg are poorly services, equipped or staffed), and we see that even amongst the poorest SES cluster some children are being sent to private schools. This in turn raises a significant debate about the nature and quality of education in a mushrooming sector of the economy that is based more on fears of poor-quality state education than high quality private education.

Getting to school reflects these socio-economic differences: put simply, better-off children get driven to school or collected by a bus, while poorer children use minibus taxis or walk. This in turn impacts directly on time taken to get to school, where children from higher SES clusters take between 10 and 40 minutes to get to school — mainly clustering in the 21-30 minute category — children from low SES clusters, who may have been placed in schools some distance away in order to benefit from a better education, mainly take between 21 and 60 minutes to get to school, but spread across the various categories with no apparent clustering. That said, children from poorer SES clusters continue to lose play time, socialising time and the like, taken up in commuting to and from school.

On a more positive note, virtually no respondent with children of school-going age in the household reported any child not attending school. Where they did, it was for appropriate reasons — the child being too young, or had finished school and started university, and so on. Two respondents’ answers were “I quit [school]” — reflecting their own experience, not children in the household. The importance of education to respondents (all of whom are past school-going age) is clear. That said, even though we are dealing with small numbers, two respondents said they could not afford school fees and supplies, three did not think school important, 10 felt that children need to go to work and bring in money to the household, and one respondent said their child was needed to clean at home, not attend school. This amounts to a small number of respondents — but every one of them is damaging the life chances of the child they are keeping out of school.

Figure 15: Private/state schooling by SES cluster
Those whose children attend school seem largely satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of schooling. Just 12 respondents rated the quality of schooling as ‘poor’, and 32 chose the neutral mid-point – all others were positive. But the survey took place between waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, which saw massive disruption to the education system generally and schools in particular, which were at various times closed (for months), rotating pupils, undergoing ‘deep cleans- ing’ and the like. The survey asked a series of questions about resources available to support school-going children during lockdown.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Were any of the following available during lockdown:</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper based materials</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadcast media</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult support at home</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older child at home</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private tutor</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from school</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from government</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from NGO</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from parents</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2: Support for school-going children while schools locked down*

Future research will analyse in detail which clusters enjoyed which types of benefits, although the pattern is predictable: broadcast media was available to all (broadcast on the national broadcast-er) while private tutors are almost by definition the preserve of the wealthy, and online support falls between the two (and extended over time as bandwidth and free services were made available).

**10. Adult education**

Learning communities and neighbourhoods do not regard education as the concern only of chil- dren, but are committed to lifelong learning, itself understood in broad terms. The survey instru- ment was extremely broad, asking for any ‘adult education or training of any kind in the last THREE years’ (emphasis in original). This was a deliberate attempt to understand what was happen- ing prior to the pandemic, and during it. Because the notion of lifelong learning – as opposed to classroom teaching and learning – is so broad, the survey asked a number of questions which are briefly summarised here; more detailed analysis will have to follow. Even then, numbers were lower than desirable.
It is immediately apparent that our ‘middle’ SES cluster, which has registered unhappiness across multiple variables, here appear least likely (at 9%) to have had any adult education. But it is positive to note that the lower-end SES clusters were more likely than their opposite clusters to have had some form of adult education.

Nonetheless, we are dealing with small numbers, and frequencies rather than percentages are required – percentages off such a low base can be misleading. For example, 92 respondents had had adult education before February 2020 (i.e. pre-pandemic); 35 respondents received adult education before and after that date; and just 16 respondents had had adult education since February 2020. (In all, 803 respondents had never had any adult education.) Just 48 had had online education, 86 respondents had had face-to-face education, and 7 respondents had used a blended approach (combining in-person with online). Of the respondents who had had some adult education, 51 told us it was not for a qualification of any type, while 91 said it was for a qualification.

Likely funders for the (admittedly limited) adult education included unions (23 respondents), employer provided (47), government (44), NGOs (12), funded by the respondent (55) or a family member (44). The pattern that emerges is of limited provision by service providers, and the cost of adult education in no small way has been pushed back onto the learner: two-thirds of adult learners had paid for themselves or been paid for by a family member. Thankfully, 116 of the 143 respondents who had had adult education, reported that it had helped them at work. Fewer (99) reported that they simply enjoyed learning new things, 81 told us it helped them help their community, 94 enjoyed meeting people and making connections, though only 58 reported that by doing the course they had met someone else’s expectations. (This latter question is challenging to analyse: not meeting someone else’s expectations is not automatically problematic.) Just 29 respondents said they had seen no benefit at all from their adult education experience.

Figure 16: Has respondent participated in any adult education in the last 3 years (prior to interview)?
11. Health

Health is regarded, with education, as core to building neighbourhoods that are places for people to flourish and grow. Many of the questions deployed in the survey are internationally accepted indicators. The most obvious is self-reported health status. This should be seen in context: it is self-reported health status as the country moved out of wave 3 of the pandemic, and the associated lockdowns, curfews and so on.

Given the damage associated with the pandemic – not merely Covid infections, but the challenges in receiving treatments from over-full hospitals for cancer, HIV, TB and so on – we had expected a fairly gloomy picture to emerge. Seen in aggregate, almost 90% of all respondents said their health was ‘very good’ or ‘good’; and while 9% chose ‘moderate’, the cells for ‘bad’ and ‘very bad’ are empty.

When we look at the results by SES cluster, it seems that those in the middle cluster – in which for example apartheid-era constructed Indian and coloured townships are heavily represented – has the lowest positive score, with 69% reporting good/very good health; it is also the cluster most likely to have respondents reporting bad (6%) or very bad (3%) health. But the low and high SES clusters to the left and right (in the graphic) show a very similar pattern, with some 90% claiming good or very good health. Coming out of the pandemic, this is a positive sign.
Readers should see that Figure 18, which seems to tell a largely positive story, is followed by Figure 19 which analyses just one indicator by race, suggesting that future detailed analysis may find considerable nuance and complexity in the data.

Looking across the five WHO indicators, it is immediately apparent that between 66% (feeling active and vigorous all the time or most of it) and 77% (feeling calm and relaxed all or most of the time) are doing well in terms of self-reported results. The category for feeling something ‘more than half the time’ seems to consistently attract 11% - 16% of respondents, while the bottom two categories – the lowest (ranging from 8% - 12%) – consistently attracts one in ten respondents who ‘never’ or ‘sometimes’ share the sentiment.

At aggregate level, the picture that emerges is clearly more positive than a global pandemic might lead one to expect. Generally, the Johannesburg respondents emerge as positive – though we should take these aggregate findings as they are, lacking in nuance but providing an overall set of findings.

If we look at just one of these indicators – feeling cheerful – across the races in the sample, we find that no white or Indian respondents selected ‘never’ not feeling cheerful, and 4% of whites (and no Indians) selected ‘sometimes’. Among coloured respondents, 19% selected ‘sometimes’ (15%) or ‘never’ (4%); among African respondents, 9% chose ‘sometimes’ and 2% ‘never’. While the overall pattern remains consistent – far more coloured and African respondents were likely to choose more frequent incidence of feeling cheerful – but far more white and Indian respondents were likely to be frequently cheerful. This reflects the socio-economic hierarchy in South Africa, which sees whites and Indians in much higher SES categories than coloureds and Africans.
12. Tobacco and alcohol use

Asking respondents about tobacco and alcohol usage can be challenging when respondents may feel that a socially appropriate response exists; further complicated if senior household members are within earshot while interviews are taking place (inevitable in high dense dwellings). In all, 67% of respondents reported never using tobacco products, while 27% reported daily use, with 6% claiming ‘less than daily’ use.

There is a slight trend suggesting that better-off SES clusters are less likely to use tobacco daily (20% of the highest SES cluster) than poorer clusters (25% of the poorest cluster used tobacco daily), but it is a matter of small differences. A similar, if slightly more pronounced pattern is true when analysing alcohol consumption across clusters. Where 45% of all respondents said they never drank alcohol, this ranged from 52% of the top SES cluster and 48% of the lowest, while daily or weekly consumption rose from 6% of the top cluster to 12% among respondents from the lowest SES cluster – a pattern, but not a major difference if neighbourhoods/clusters are used as the basis for analysis.
Respondents were asked to think about the year before COVID-19 struck, and tell us if any household member had needed healthcare but been unable to afford it. While the question focuses on cost, it is not related to a specific health issue – so what it is that was unaffordable is not clear (“was there ever a time when you or a member of your household needed medical care, but were unable to afford it”). This could range from hospital to a headache tablet.

A massive 83% of respondents – higher in the top SES clusters – reported that this had occurred to them or a household member, dropping to 68% in the middle cluster, rising again to 83% and 82% in the lowest two SES clusters respectively. We went on to ask how healthcare costs are normally covered.

Respondents from the higher SES clusters predictably enjoy the widest range of options for paying their health bills, from household resources to private healthcare – but clearly lack or do not need the social capital mobilised by respondents from lower SES clusters when they need to pay their healthcare costs. In these clusters, respondents are heavily reliant on the state system of healthcare (which is subsidised), on household resources, family and friends, and neighbours. On the far right of the table we can see that just 1% of the highest SES cluster would approach neighbours to help with costs – rising to 16% among the lowest cluster.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HH resources</th>
<th>Govt. insurance/medical aid</th>
<th>NGO/charity</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>C’ty</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Neighbours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid/high</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid/low</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Payment for medical costs (pre-COVID-19) (multi-mention)
As asked where respondents normally go for minor and more serious healthcare issues, a similar pattern repeats itself: the highest SES clusters buy themselves out of state care and into the private sector, just as their children were bought out of state schooling and into private.

Health-seeking behaviour – here looking at mild illnesses, and respondents were asked to talk about their behaviour prior to pandemic-related behaviours - show very different behaviours, driven by class. For the top two SES neighbourhood clusters, where disposable income is less of a concern, local chemists and doctors are their normal port of call; as soon as we reach the midpoint (the ‘middle’ cluster and below) the use of pharmacies drops, and the local (state provided) clinic becomes the main first stop. As we have noted consistently in reports regarding healthcare, there are two ‘realities’ in South Africa – one that opens multiple avenues for those who can afford them, and obliges poorer respondents to use state-sponsored healthcare.

COVID-19 of course added an entirely different perspective to healthcare. We do not have space in this report to analyse the impact of COVID-19 in any detail, but it is worth noting that 13% of respondents reported that someone in their household had been diagnosed with the virus – this was spread across all SES neighbourhood clusters, from 10% in the highest to 10% in the lowest cluster, rising slightly in-between.
A cursory glance at Table 4 suggests that the mental/psychological toll of COVID-19 is likely to be deeper and more long-lasting than issues such as access to healthcare – although, that said, South Africa has an official COVID-19 death toll approach 100 000, and a higher excess mortality rate than would be the case without the pandemic. We may also reasonably expect stress levels to rise, given the long-term economic damage wrought by the pandemic, coupled with the personal impact it has had. More nuanced analyses these data by race, class and sex will shed light on whether or not the burden of COVID-19’s impact is shared equally or not.

### Table 4: Attitudes to impact of COVID-19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It has been harder to look after my health during the pandemic</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pandemic has caused me a lot more stress than usual</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pandemic has caused more arguments and fighting in my household</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have lost contact with friends and family because of the pandemic</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have felt lonely more often during the pandemic</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It has been difficult for people in my household to access regular medical treatment due to the pandemic</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It has been difficult for people in my household to access food and other basic supplies due to the pandemic</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A cursory glance at Table 4 suggests that the mental/psychological toll of COVID-19 is likely to be deeper and more long-lasting than issues such as access to healthcare – although, that said, South Africa has an official COVID-19 death toll approach 100 000, and a higher excess mortality rate than would be the case without the pandemic. We may also reasonably expect stress levels to rise, given the long-term economic damage wrought by the pandemic, coupled with the personal impact it has had. More nuanced analyses these data by race, class and sex will shed light on whether or not the burden of COVID-19’s impact is shared equally or not.

### 13. Neighbourhood characteristics

While healthy, learning and sustainable neighbourhoods need the services and inputs that we have analysed above, they also have more intangible qualities that make neighbourhoods desirable (or not) regardless of service delivery. We asked respondents two open-ended questions – the aspect of their neighbourhood they liked most and least – and the recoded results now follow.

![Figure 22: Most liked neighbourhood attribute by SES cluster](image-url)
Former President Thabo Mbeki made a famous speech in 1998, when he was Deputy President, that is worth quoting at this point:

We therefore make bold to say that South Africa is a country of two nations. One of these nations is white, relatively prosperous, regardless of gender or geographic dispersal. It has ready access to a developed economic, physical, educational, communication and other infrastructure. This enables it to argue that, except for the persistence of gender discrimination against women, all members of this nation have the possibility to exercise their right to equal opportunity, the development opportunities to which the Constitution of ’93 committed our country.

The second and larger nation of South Africa is black and poor, with the worst affected being women in the rural areas, the black rural population in general and the disabled. This nation lives under conditions of a grossly underdeveloped economic, physical, educational, communication and other infrastructure. It has virtually no possibility to exercise what in reality amounts to a theoretical right to equal opportunity, with that right being equal within this black nation only to the extent that it is equally incapable of realisation.

This reality of two nations, underwritten by the perpetuation of the racial, gender and spatial disparities born of a very long period of colonial and apartheid white minority domination, constitutes the material base which reinforces the notion that, indeed, we are not one nation, but two nations. And neither are we becoming one nation. Consequently, also, the objective of national reconciliation is not being realised.

This follows as well that the longer this situation persists, in spite of the gift of hope delivered to the people by the birth of democracy, the more entrenched will be the conviction that the concept of nation building is a mere mirage and that no basis exists, or will ever exist, to enable national reconciliation to take place. (http://www.dirco.gov.za/docs/speeches/1998/mbek0529.htm)

It is very difficult to view Figure 22 and not see those two nations, even though the graphic does not show race, but SES status – the period since Mbeki’s 1998 has seen a growing black elite, and black middle class, but the mass of the poor overwhelmingly remains African, with very small representation from coloured South Africans. For higher SES clusters, residents valued safety, tranquillity, good neighbours and location/accessibility. Services are in effect taken for granted; affordability was not an issue. What is notable is that the attributes of place are paramount.

The middle and lower SES clusters are far more likely to have negative responses about place: 49% of the lowest SES cluster said they most liked ‘nothing’ about their neighbourhood. Others emphasised affordability - barely mentioned by the two higher SES clusters (remembering that unserviced shacks are ‘affordable’, not just formal dwellings) – and then the social attributes of their neighbourhood, the good neighbours. Cleanliness, green spaces and safety were barely mentioned by the lower SES cluster respondents. Poorer respondents see people – family, friends, ‘good neighbours’ – as constitutive of neighbourhoods. For those from higher SES clusters, place matters far more than people.
Again, the graphic is lop-sided: the complaints of the higher SES clusters bear little resemblance to those in the lower SES clusters. This is not difficult when the main complaint about their neighbourhood, from respondents in the highest SES cluster was 52% with ‘nothing’ to complain about, followed by 46% with the same ‘non complaint in the second highest SES cluster. The only substantive complaint from the top SES clusters was about crime – true for less than a third in either group, but accounting for two-thirds (68%) of the middle SES cluster, 48% in the medium/low group, and a third of those in the bottom group. It is a timely reminder of the ability of suburbs to export issues such as crime back to poorer areas (by the use of gated communities, armed patrols from security companies, and so on).

Service delivery is not an issue for high SES groups, but is the major complaint of one in five (21%) of respondents from the lowest cluster, and the lowest two clusters both cited dirt. It is ironic that high SES clusters cite transport (by which we take them to mean traffic) as a problem, given the way that apartheid spatial engineering ensured that townships were built many kilometres from formerly ‘white’ suburbs and city centre. As the city has deracialised, and the south of Johannesburg includes (in addition to Soweto and other townships) large informal settlements, so planners have built estates and gated communities further and further to the north. The result is that many high SES respondents – by definition including many whites – are now having to commute for as long as black South Africans did under apartheid.

The problem of bad neighbours, and bad neighbourhoods, seems common regardless of SES status.

When asked about being ‘very satisfied’ with their neighbourhood, this ranged from 37% among the ‘high’ SES cluster respondents, to 24% among the ‘low’ category – not a massive difference, though important. In response to the opposite end of the scale – who was ‘very dissatisfied’ with their neighbourhood – not a single respondent from SES clusters ‘high’ or ‘med/high’ selected the option, while 11% of the ‘middle’ cluster did so, as did 3% of ‘mid/low’ and 7% of the ‘low’ SES cluster.
We need to understand that some neighbourhoods – for the better-off – generate positive responses, within a context of more evident individuation (less citing of good neighbours, for example, as the best thing about their locale). Neighbourhoods can also breed unhappiness, but for other reasons - the major response from poorer respondents was crime and poor service delivery, even as the neighbourhood itself was cited positively for the people who live there. People, place and services combine in different ways across the clusters, and what is good for some is not (in itself, or by not being available) the cause of unhappiness for others.

14. Facilities

We asked respondents about how easily accessible a range of services were, where they lived. The question specified: ‘By accessible I mean that the service is not located too far away, you can access it easily, and you have no concerns about going to it’.

![Table 5: Access to facilities in neighbourhood](table)

Transport emerges as the most challenging in terms of access, and it is precisely the failure of public transport to reach so many people that maintains the semi-legal, semi-formal minibus taxi industry. Nonetheless, it is of concern that on every item, there is between 15% and 60% that do not have the specified service conveniently located in their neighbourhood, including police, post office, bus stops and above all, trains.
15. Safety

Johannesburg is among the cities frequently cited as a ‘crime capital’. That said, 81% of respondents told us they feel ‘completely safe’ or ‘fairly safe’ in their dwelling – leaving 19% to be ‘not very safe’ or ‘not safe at all’ in their own dwelling. Asked about feeling safe at night, 41% said they felt ‘completely safe’ or ‘fairly safe’ in their neighbourhood, but 13% said they never go out at night while 46% felt ‘not very safe’ or ‘not safe at all’. In all, 16% of respondents had been a victim of crime in the past two years, suggesting that the fear of crime is larger than the experience of crime – but no less damaging as a result.

![Graph showing victim of crime in the last two years by SES cluster]

Table 6: Victim of crime in the last two years by SES cluster

We noted earlier that wealthier neighbourhoods and suburbs are able to export crime to poorer areas, because they have the resources to pay for armed patrols, may have gated entrance/exits to the neighbourhood and so on. This in turn was in response to a massive suburban crime wave that accompanied the end of apartheid. The increasingly hard borders to neighbourhoods and suburbs firstly displaces crime onto poorer SES groups in society – who have double or triple the experience of crime in the last two years – and secondly makes social cohesion and knitting together an inclusive social fabric exceptionally difficult.

Behaviours are also different. Among the two high SES clusters, 15% and 9% respectively had attended organised meetings to discuss local neighbourhood issues, rising to 38% and 30% among the lowest two SES clusters. As we keep seeing, high SES clusters tend to be less sociable, less engaged, and more isolated; the reverse is true for poor SES clusters, where people and engagement matter more than place.
Communities also differ by how organised they are, and their assessment of the value or importance of local role-players. We asked, ‘How important have the following individuals and organisations been in managing and maintaining this neighbourhood during the last two years?’ and respondents could tell us they did not know, the organisation in question may not exist, or they played an unimportant or important role in the neighbourhood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Not important</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Doesn’t exist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local govt. officials/politicians</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local employers</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents association</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property owner’s association</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property management company</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable org./NGO</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious leaders</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional leaders</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important individuals</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 7: Local role-players*

While some individuals and organisations are seen to have played an important local role – local government and religious leaders, on the whole – it is clear that no single entity is regarded by half of respondents as doing important local work.

*Figure 24: ‘I belong to this neighbourhood’ by SES cluster*
The higher SES clusters feel a greater sense of belonging to their neighbourhood than respondents from poorer SES clusters. Among those from the poorest SES cluster, one in five (19%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that they felt a sense of belonging, as did 14% in the second lowest group, and a large 27% from the ‘middle’ category. Johannesburg clearly has some way to go to ensure that it is a city ‘for all who live in it, black and white’.

The engagedness with neighbours clearly impacts respondents from poorer SES clusters, but in a positive way. Among respondents from the highest SES cluster, posed with the Likert statement ‘I borrow things and exchange favours with my neighbours’, 51% agreed or strongly agreed, but 36% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. At the other end of the scale, 62% agreed or strongly agreed, with 28% disagreeing more or less strongly. Poorer residents may be forced by circumstance to borrow and share – but their lifestyle and way of engaging people in their neighbourhood also makes this possible. That said, 82% of all respondents said they would work with others to improve their neighbourhood. The spirit, it seems, is willing. But mental challenges also exist, including a feeling of anomie reflected in agreement with the notion that ‘people like me cannot influence events in my neighbourhood’.

Anomie is evident in all SES categories, but is far higher in poor SES clusters. Agreement with the statement hits 51% for the middle SES cluster, then drops back to 30% in the mid/low cluster (already twice as high as the 15% who agreed in the top SES cluster) and 48% in the lowest SES cluster. These levels of anomie do not suggest that stable neighbourhood life is taking root in Johannesburg, especially among the poor. Under COVID-19 conditions, these strained bonds may stretch thinner. Just 37% of respondents said they had received help from neighbours during the lockdowns and curfews that accompanied the various waves of the pandemic – except that the figure dwarfs the 13% of respondents who said they had been helped by local government officials. Even NGOs reached 15% of respondents, while FBOs reached 17%. Neighbours and local structures, it seems, substituted for government during Covid.
It is apparent that the social fabric in Johannesburg, which was already stretched as a result of the changes brought about by ending apartheid – deracialisation (of some spaces), very rapid population growth (in-migration on top of natural growth), the post-1994 crime wave, on-going racial tension – is being stretched yet further by COVID-19 and its after-effects. This requires more nuanced analysis in future outputs to be able to target the most in need groups.

16. Economics and employment status

The South African economy had record level unemployment before COVID-19 laid (further) waste to the economy, with lockdowns and restrictions doing significant damage to the informal economy. In all, 42% of respondents told us that in the 12 months prior to interview, they had worked for less than a month. Just less than a third (30%) had worked for all 12 of the preceding 12 months. Asked about the number of jobs worked, the main category was one (89%) – the remainder were spread across 2–5 jobs, but in small numbers (one respondent had worked 13 jobs, another had worked 12 jobs- or more accurately piece work – but these are outliers). The extent to which this was the state of affairs regardless of COVID-19 is difficult to reconstruct. But we can record the fact that respondents from the top SES clusters – predictably – tend to be either formally employed, or self-employed, with employees, in the formal sector. At the other end of the scale, self-employment without any employees was far more common, alongside working in the informal sector.

Asked about household income, 23% of respondents declined to answer – an improvement for South African surveys, but still a quarter of respondents simply opting out of answering the question. (A further 3% did not know the answer.) In South Africa there is no single definition of indigence – it is set at local level – this is the threshold for accessing social grants. In 2017, for example, 147 out of 257 municipalities in South Africa classified an indigent household as earning a combined income of less than R3 200 per month. Another 11 municipalities adopted a lower income poverty threshold of R1 600 per household per month.

In this survey, we had:
23% refusal,
3% don’t know,
14% said their household has no income at all,
16% of respondents said their households earned between R1 and R1500 per month, falling into the indigence category and available for personal social care as well as free basic services.

It is unfortunate that President Mbeki’s ‘two nations’ words keep being invoked by the data, but we can see two very different worlds: one of secure, formal self/employment, and another of precarious work or unemployment, coupled with low incomes. Analysing this socially, it is evident that this two nations structure is completely unsustainable, and that major redistribution of wealth and of opportunities is urgently required.
Again the ‘two nations’ thesis comes to mind, albeit with possibly less racial emphasis (by 2022) and more of a class emphasis, but household surpluses are the norm for the top two SES categories, while occasional shortages and/or ‘struggling’ is more common to the other three SES categories, along with monthly income covering essentials but no more than that.

In hard economic times, saving may seem a luxury.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Savings account</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension fund</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stocks</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonds</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental income</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other investments</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data seem to bear this out. While almost two-thirds of respondents (62%) reported someone in the household having a savings account, and a third (33%) having a pension fund, everything after that is the preserve of the minority.
17. Assets

If income and savings are low, or skewed towards higher SES clusters, what is the case regarding household assets?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>In household?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorbike</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile phone</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landline</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air conditioner</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fridge</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing machine</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Household assets

Mobile phones, fridges and television sets are ubiquitous, while low landline numbers reflect a changing culture rather than being a useful contemporary indicator of household assets. A third of households lack a washing machine, which in turn creates manual labour generally for a female member of a household – and poor women in particular, given that 88% of the top SES cluster have washing machines, dropping to 17% among the lowest SES households.

COVID-19 and associated states of disaster, lockdowns, curfews, restrictions on trade and the like all impacted people economically. Just 5% of respondents said their income had increased under COVID-19, while 40% said it decreased (31% in the top SES cluster, 43% in the lowest) but thankfully 54% said it had not led to any change in incomes. Similarly – and slightly counter-intuitively, given lockdown – 57% said COVID had had no impact on their working hours, while 36% said they had decreased (just 6% said work hours had increased).

Less happily, 45% of respondents said that their ability to save had decreased under COVID, while 50% said it had no impact on them. Debt also stayed largely constant, with 55% of respondents recording no change: but for 30% of the sample, debt had increased – true of 26% of the highest SES cluster, and 30% of the lowest.

Working patterns inevitably had to change, but 37% of respondents – 15% of the top SES cluster but rising to 52% of the lowest – said the pandemic had had no impact on their job. While 40% of the top SES cluster said they had to shift to working from home, 14% of the lowest SES cluster said the same. In all, 16% of respondents lost their job – ranging from 10% in the top SES cluster to 20% in the lowest.
South Africa has appalling rates of gender-based violence, and here we explore attitudes to gender relations. The questions were all Likert item statements read out to respondents, who could respond across five categories from strongly agree and agree, through a mid-point to disagree and strongly disagree. Where respondents simply said ‘don’t know’, we do not include the response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A woman’s most important role is to take care of her home and cook for her family</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A man has right to punish woman if she does something wrong</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People should be treated the same regardless of their gender</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A man should have the final say in all family matters</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A woman should tolerate violence in order to keep her family together</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A woman should obey her husband/partner</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men should share the work around the house with women.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 10: Attitudes to gender relations (don’t know/refused not shown)*

The data suggest that while there is clear evidence of an understanding of gender equality, and a rejection of violence against women, there remains a stubborn rump of opinion that thinks men can punish women if she does something wrong (6%), that she should tolerate violence ‘for the family’ (5%) and that men should have the final say in all family matters (20%). The fact that so many men agree with violence against women – small percentages equate to large numbers of men – is of profound concern, given how many times this turns to rape and murder. Equally concerning (though possibly less immediate) is the casual sexism of respondents, 59% of whom believe a woman’s place is in the home.

It is apparent that South Africa has a great deal of work to do in the area of gender equality. This is more urgent when we treat gender not as biological sex – as here – but the spectrum of gender identities. Questions talking to the LGBTIAQP+ community may well generate a more recrudescent conservatism that do questions about men and women.

Having analysed the survey data, ending with attitudes to gender-based violence, it seems apparent that one thing that unites South Africans, across race and religion, is conservatism. This may strike the reader as strange, given the country’s very progressive constitution, and recent years (with a national commission into state capture under way, a failed insurrection in 2021, and a massively reduced turnout for the 2021 local elections) suggest that the South African democratic experiment will be undergoing its biggest stress-test in the next half decade or so.
19. Conclusion

The data confirmed some of what we know about different SES clusters through previous research, as may be expected. What is notable, within this framework of data collection, is that this is not about confirmation bias. Instead, the data indicate that the experiences of neighbourhood types despite differences in race, cut across racial lines, such that the neighbourhoods (places) themselves become characteristic of class divisions. These appear to reflect the way large groups of people are treated by the state, or the way that large geographical places are met with the infrastructures of the state, to produce very similar outcomes in neighbourhoods all across the city. This has historical antecedents, but these SES clusters include newer townships, state-subsidised spaces, those located within established townships, and those alongside older townships and suburbs.

What this indicates is a profound reproduction of space, without the deliberately nefarious spatial planning of the apartheid city, but nonetheless distinctive spaces where different classes of residents receive different levels of service from the state, and have different experiences of life in the city. This scenario has been sustained over time, but indicates high levels of frustration for some, a sense of ease and contentment for other places, a sense that certain economic clusters are stuck within self-perpetuating spaces of fewer opportunities to advance and poor service delivery, and other SES clusters are able to navigate out of these self-perpetuating narratives, but towards a market-based freedom.

Thus indeed not only are there two worlds – but two self-perpetuating worlds. And they have staying power – the fieldwork for this survey is very recent, but the sample frame remains Census 2011 – suggesting that at aggregate level, the ‘two nations’ thesis continues to have some salience. There are then obvious comparisons between the different clusters, between those at the mercy of state provision, and those who are not; those who are socially and economically mobile, and those less so; those who are reliant on education and health opportunities provided by the state, community organisations and others, and those who do not need these opportunities and therefore do not make use of them. The growth of private education, healthcare and so on means that these two self-perpetuating worlds can exist in almost complete isolation from the lived experience of one another, starting from birth and continuing through schooling and beyond.

The data also suggest that typical measures of asset bases matter less in such a context where class is not only measured by assets, but incomes, and the ability to live in particular places. Thus households can be asset-rich in poorer neighbourhoods, and not necessarily own property in richer neighbourhoods. The picture is both staid at aggregate level, and much more fluid and interesting when more granular data are used.

Interestingly, the stories of these different sets of places cut across race, and the idea of neighbourhoods similarly are not necessarily spatially determined. Those in objectively better off neighbourhoods measured by SES status, are not more likely to have a greater sense of belonging, community or enjoy living in their neighbourhoods. And those in places that are less well-off, may have a greater sense of belonging and community and a greater belief that they have a say in change in their neighbourhoods.
The wealthiest 5-10% are predominantly white. They occupy perhaps one third of the land (freestanding houses in the northern suburbs), making their wealth and race very visible. The wealthiest 10-20%, on the other hand, are far more mixed. They are the middle class (substantially though not economically/mathematically) and also live in the northern suburbs but in cluster homes/apartments, further from the centre. As such, the validity of Mbeki’s ‘two nations’ argument, to some extent, depends on where you draw the line. Yes, the very wealthy (old money) are predominantly white, but the middle class is not. The very wealthy and the middle class largely live in the same spaces although in different types of housing. They have similar lifestyles and interact publicly and in professional settings (perhaps less so privately). They are one nation - to the extent that it is possible in a country with a recent history of racial segregation. Although far from a homogeneous group, their lives are similar, and at the same time fundamentally different from the remaining +80%, who are stuck at the bottom of the economy with no real opportunities to climb the social ladder. If this is correct, a different ‘two nations’ around class and inequality seems to slowly be the new narrative in the context of Johannesburg.

What we have, in sum, is a wonderful reflection of the city – seen at a more granular level, where place matters profoundly, and where well-being is not measured in terms of city revenues and investment capacities, but by the propensity of households and groups of people to make a life and a living in particular places.
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