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Johannesburg's inner city private schools: The teacher's perspective

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This study contributes to the literature by documenting the working conditions as well as the socio-economic and demographic profile of teachers employed in Johannesburg's inner city low-fee private schools. A total of 42 teachers, working in 10 randomly selected inner city private schools, participated in a self-administered questionnaire survey. It was found that most were under 50 years of age, Black-African and foreign born (as were many of the owners of the schools). There were three distinct groupings: South African citizens, Zimbabwean nationals and other foreign nationals. Some were found to be underqualified; others had tertiary qualifications but not in education. Most were working there as a stop gap measure until they had completed their degrees or had a better job offer, either in a public school or in the private non-educational sector. Most expressed unhappiness with their low salaries, long working hours and poor working conditions. They lamented the lack of adequate teaching and learning materials, as well as negligible educational infrastructure such as libraries, laboratories and sports fields. Many wanted the South African State to support low-fee private schools better, both financially and managerially. The paper concludes that the embedded apartheid resource backlog of poor infrastructure and under-qualified teachers cuts across both public and at least some private schools.

Keywords: Johannesburg; low fee private schools; migrant teachers; quality education; South Africa

Introduction

The overall teacher profile of private schools in the Johannesburg inner city, and the conditions under which they work, has not been reported in the literature, although some work has been done by Moyo and Nicolau (2016) and Moyo, Nicolau and Fairhurst (2014) on the general living conditions and motivations of these teachers. However, they focused solely on migrant teachers and described them as mostly male, aged between 31 and 40, married with dependents, poorly paid and residing in the Johannesburg inner city. Thus, this study aims to more fully describe the teacher profile and working conditions in these inner city private schools. This study hopes that by casting some light on these issues, the decision-making and policy formulation processes for the South African private education sector can be better informed. Firstly, a brief overview of apartheid education is presented, followed by the transition to a post-apartheid system that began in the early 1990s. It then moves on to review of private schools in the international context and chart the rise of private schools in South Africa. The focus then shifts to the results of the study regarding teachers at low-income schools in the Johannesburg inner city. The article concludes with a discussion and recommendations based on these findings.

Background

Education: From apartheid to post-apartheid

The pre-1994 apartheid education system aimed at privileging white learners over all other official race groups (Pienaar & McKay, 2014). During the apartheid years, the State enjoyed almost complete domination of education provision; and policy was that schools were to be racially segregated and highly unequal (Kalloway, 1997; Swilling, 1991). One mechanism deployed by the State to embed education inequality was to allocate the bulk of the education budget to white schools, rendering schools for all other race groups severely under equipped, under resourced and poorly staffed (Fleisch, 2008; Weber, 2002). For example, in 1978/79, the per capita expenditure on Black-African education was less than one-tenth of the amount spent on white education. Black-African teachers were also paid less than white teachers and were usually significantly under-qualified (Bell & McKay, 2011; Fataar, 2008). Black-African schools were also far too few in number and so they were hugely overcrowded (Horn & Henning, 1997; Johnson, 1982; Maile, 2004).

From 1985 however, some Indian/Asian and Coloured schools, especially primary schools, began to accept Black-African learners. By 1989 some 5,315 non-Indian/Asian students were enrolled in Indian/Asian schools and 8,106 in Coloured schools (Carrim, 1992). But this did not alleviate overcrowding in Black-African schools nor did it cater for the millions not attending school (Gustafsson & Patel, 2006). Thus, by 1990 the De Klerk government faced relentless political pressure to open up white schools to all races (Louw, 2004; Seekings & Nattrass, 2002). The De Klerk government also faced a major funding crisis, and thus, sought to both concomitantly desegregate and semi-privatise white schools (Kalloway, 1997). Subsequently the 'Clase Model' was introduced, launching a quasi-market system or 'cost-sharing model' for public education that involved the

levying of school fees (Woolman & Fleisch, 2006). Fees enabled State funding to be dramatically scaled back, but also meant that desegregation would be limited to those who could afford to pay (Bush & Heystek, 2003; Lemon, 1994, 1995, 2004). But many parents accepted this – in exchange for hitherto unheard of control over the schools through the implementation of school governing bodies (SGBs) (Horn & Henning, 1997). SGBs were empowered to determine enrolment numbers, administer the educational infrastructure, determine school fees and hire additional teachers (Fiske & Ladd, 2004; Hofmeyr, 2000). Although this did increase the total number of places in public education for Black-African children (as these white schools had spare capacity due to low white birth rates and emigration), there were still millions out of school. Furthermore, as these former white schools were well resourced, demand for places was high (Gustafsson & Patel, 2006; Motala, 2006; Msila, 2005).

In 1994, elections in South Africa heralded in the demise of formal apartheid. This resulted in education being deracialised and massive changes wrought to education administration, syllabi and pedagogy, to name a few (Bloch, 2010; Soudien, 2007). Unfortunately, the scale of the apartheid education resource backlog far exceeded allocated funds. Consequently, many of the former Black-African-only schools are still characterised by resource inequalities such as no libraries, no school halls, no computers, no laboratory equipment and few sports fields (McKay, 2015; Soudien, 2007). Thus, many still post poor matriculation results, have a reputation of being dangerous, and are viewed as offering inadequate learning opportunities. Many Black-African learners are also not able to access the former white schools, despite South Africa's fee waiver system. That is, fee-charging public schools must waive or reduce school fees for learners whose household income qualifies them for fee waivers, and such schools are prohibited from denying admission to learners if parents are unable to pay or have not paid school fees. But, an ineffective fee-waiver system, considerable school fee inflation, living outside of the geographical feeder zone, or these resourced schools being massively oversubscribed, all contribute to excluding most of South Africa's population from these schools (De Kadt, Norris, Fleisch, Richter & Alvanides, 2014; Weber, 2002).

Thus, although public education has 'officially' desegregated, it still bears many of the hallmarks of the apartheid era, with poorly resourced public schools located in areas still dominated (numerically) by people of colour. Consequently, one of the significant changes to the education system in the post-apartheid era has been the rise of semi-private and private schools. In particular, many Black-African parents are turning

to the private sector (and low-cost private schools in particular) to meet their unmet needs with respect to obtaining quality education for their children (Redpath, 2006).

Private schools: An international perspective

The trend of embracing private education is a global one. That is, internationally, entrepreneurs and financial organisations are now providing private schooling to both the middle and working class (Hofmeyr, McCarthy, Oliphant, Schirmer & Bernstein, 2013:5). In Africa, private school enrolment has increased by 113% compared to public school enrolment, which has only increased by 52% (Du Toit, 2008). Although some argue that private schools are elitist, only for the privileged, and promote social inequality, the sheer number of low-fee private schools indicate that this may not be the case (Draper & Hofmeyr, 2015; Seboka, 2003). In fact, the provision of Private Education for the Poor (PEP) - whereby some private schools specifically cater to the poor - is a way in which private education can reduce inequality, as it enables poor children to access education that would otherwise be denied to them (Hofmeyr & McCay, 2010; Redpath, 2006; Tooley, 2005, 2007).

There are two main reasons why private school enrolment is increasing. Firstly, there is a strong, unmet demand for education, which the State cannot provide. This is especially true for learners who live in informal settlements, rural areas or who are deemed to be 'too old' for the public school system (Du Toit 2008; Hofmeyr & McCay, 2010). Secondly, parents perceive private schools as offering better quality education, or as places where their children will be taught within a specific cultural or religious framework (Hofmeyr & McCay, 2010). In the developed world, demand is mainly driven by the perception that private education is superior and elitist, whereas in developing countries, private schools mainly fill a demand-supply gap. Thus, in the developing world context, private schools are not necessarily better than public schools in terms of infrastructure, resources and academic performance. They also often pay their teachers low salaries, as demonstrated by India and Kenya (Machard & McKay, 2015; Van der Berg, Van Wyk, Burger, Kotzé, Piek & Rich, 2017).

Private schools in South Africa

Private schools in South Africa are defined by the Independent Schools Association of South Africa (ISASA) as those registered with the relevant authorities, but derive most of their income from non-State sources (Hofmeyr et al., 2013). Before 1994, most private schools were expensive (relative to the free or cheap public education of the time) (McKay, 2018). Private schools were also the first to racially desegregate, with the passing of a

resolution by the South African Catholic Bishop's Conference in 1976. By 1977 approximately 220 learners of other races were attending 'white' Catholic schools and by 1986 some 75 Catholic schools had 4,700 learners of other races enrolled (Christie, 1989). Desegregation in private schools was rapid. By 2010, some 72% of all learners enrolled in private schools were Black-African (Hofmeyr & Lee, 2002, 2004; Hofmeyr & McCay, 2010).

Private schools have become important role players in post-apartheid South African education landscape, with a considerable rise in their number and enrolment levels (Tooley & Dixon, 2006). For example, in 1994 there were 518 private schools. This rose to 971 in 2000 and 1,399 in 2010,ⁱ an increase of 170% (Hofmeyr et al., 2013). In 2013, the National Department of Basic Education (DBE) recorded that 513,804 learners were enrolled in 1,681 private schools, a further increase of 20% since 2010 (DBE, Republic of South Africa, 2015). Total numbers may be higher, as many informal, unregistered schools are not reflected in these official statistics (Van der Berg et al., 2017). The increase is linked to the promulgation of the *South African Schools Act, Act No. 84 of 1996* ([SASA], Republic of South Africa, 1996a) and the *National Education Policy Act (Act No. 27 of 1996)* ([NEPA] Republic of South Africa, 1996b), which grant every person the right to establish and maintain, at their own expense, an independent educational institution. Despite this, compared to Ghana and Nigeria, South Africa has a small private schooling sector, with overall enrolment at only roughly 6% of the total school population (Hofmeyr et al., 2013).

While this increase in enrolment can, in part, be attributed to unmet demand, there are additional factors driving growth, such as a desire for a differentiated educational product, and perceptions of quality and smaller class size. In particular, private school classes in South Africa have typically 16 learners compared to State schools with classes of 30 on average.ⁱⁱ Thus, the desire for better quality education and perceptions of State school inefficiency is also evident in South Africa (Tooley, 2005). Another factor is that companies, 'edu-preneurs' and organisations such as Curro Holdings, Spark Schools, Nova Schools (supported by the Commonwealth Educational Trust) and the BASA Educational Institute Trust (supported by the Public Investment Corporation and the Old Mutual Investment Group SA) have established for profit chains of private schools. They are fast becoming major players in high to medium-fee private education in South Africa (Hofmeyr et al., 2013).

Apart from religious differentiation, private schools in South Africa can also be categorised on

a monetary basis as high-fee, medium-fee or low-fee institutions (Van der Berg et al., 2017). Although some private schools such as Curro and others routinely demand fees that exceed R50,000.00 per annum, the vast majority of private schools are mid- to low-fee schools (Hofmeyr et al., 2013; Selod & Zenou, 2003). In low-fee schools, fees are usually less than R12,000 per annum. Machard and McKay (2015) reported that a typical Johannesburg inner-city private school charges between R5,000 and R8,000 in annual fees. Most of these schools are registered as 'not for profit' organisations and qualify for a government subsidy, as their fees fall below a prescribed maximum (Hofmeyr & Schirmer, 2015). But Hofmeyr et al. (2013) maintain that the subsidy is insufficient (it is far less than what is paid to State schools); and not all qualifying schools received it. Consequently, although the fees are low by South African private school standards, they are more than double the amount charged by similar schools in other developing countries.

Low-fee private schools face many challenges, the most pressing of which is keeping costs down (Hofmeyr & Lee, 2002). Managing costs in an inflationary environment, however, is challenging, and, with no or an insufficient government subsidy and unable to charge enough fees, these schools are often in a financially precarious position. Thus, many low-fee private schools must devise various coping strategies such as renting low-cost buildings, doing minimal maintenance, not providing sports activities and eliminating any 'non-essentials.' They may also resort to hiring part-time teachers or paying lower than normal salaries.

Migrant teachers in South Africa

According to the protocol "Free Movement," Southern African Development Community (SADC) residents are able to move relatively freely back and forth across all SADC borders (Trimikliniotis, Gordon & Zondo, 2008). The bulk of this movement has been into South Africa, primarily by people seeking employment. Johannesburg, the economic hub of South Africa, is home to many African immigrants, especially professionals (including many teachers) who have fled the ongoing political crisis and dire economic situation in Zimbabwe (Chetsanga & Muchenje, 2008; Ranga, 2013; Weda, 2012). Consequently, some 2,070 (8%) of Johannesburg's 26,195 teachers are migrants.ⁱⁱⁱ Cox, Hemson and Todes (2004) revealed that often these migrants are often unfairly compensated. This may be because they lack appropriate legal documents such as work permits and valid passports. Alternatively, it may be that they are employed informally or on a temporary basis, thus denied the benefits and rights

associated with formal full time employment. Such unfair practices have serious implications for their livelihoods (Ranga, 2013).

Aim, Justification and Problem Statement

Johannesburg has an inner city or central business district (CBD), which used to be the historical core of the city, accommodating commercial and retail activities. Traditionally no schools were located in the inner city, as it was not zoned for residential use. Over time, office and retail developments opened up in the surrounding suburbs, eventually eclipsing the CBD and inner city in influence (Crankshaw, 2008). Inner-city economic decline resulted in extensive urban decay. More recently, the inner city is undergoing regeneration and re-purposing as a residential area for poor, marginal, or working-but-poor residents. Thus, the inner city space of Johannesburg is currently used for a diverse range of services, from accommodation and commerce, to transport and education. The inner city private schools of Johannesburg service learners who come mainly from Soweto, and the inner city itself. The socioeconomic profile of these learners is such that the schools can only charge low school fees (Machard & McKay, 2015).

In such a situation, keeping costs down becomes paramount. In that regard, as the International Finance Corporation found that some 85% of a school budget is usually devoted towards teacher salaries, it was hypothesised that the main way these schools keep their costs down is to pay their teachers very low salaries with no housing allowances, medical and pension contributions (Paterson, 2009). This is underscored in the work of Hofmeyr et al. (2013:12), who argue that "... the sector cannot offer salaries that compete with the teacher salary packages in the public sector." As such, these schools will struggle to hire highly qualified teachers and will lose staff to the public education sector.

International contemporary research in education places greater emphasis on learners and rarely focuses on teachers, but Chambers (1985) in a study in the United States of America and Papanastasiou and Zembylas (2005) in a study of Cyprus, both found that private school teachers were less satisfied with their working conditions than those in public education. Chambers (1985) also found that public school teachers earned 60% more than private school teachers. Thus, this study sought to answer the following three research questions: (1) what is the professional, demographic and socioeconomic profile of teachers employed in the private inner city schools of Johannesburg? (2) what are the employment conditions of teachers working in these schools? and, (3) what would they like to see improved or changed in the schools?

Methodology

A database of schools was obtained from the Independent Schools Association of South Africa (ISASA), the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) and the Independent Examinations Board (IEB). These databases show that Johannesburg, has 985 schools, 294 (31%) of which are listed as private. From these three databases, all inner city schools were initially selected. To do this, a broad definition of the inner city was used, which included the suburbs of Berea, Braamfontein, Brixton, Burgersdorp, CBD/City and Suburban, Cottesloe, Doornfontein, Ferreirasdorp, Fordsburg Hillbrow, Jan Hofmeyr, Jeppestown, Joubert Park, Marshalltown, Mayfair, Newtown, Page View, Parktown and Vrededorp. A total of 40 (10 public and 30 private) schools are found in these suburbs. Thus, inner city private schools represent 10% of all Johannesburg's private schools. Some 827 teachers work in these 40 schools, of whom 380 (46%) are foreign born, and 201 (24%) are Zimbabwean nationals. Most of the foreign born teachers are clustered in the 30 private schools.

This study, however, only focused on five inner city suburbs, viz.: Braamfontein, CBD/City and Suburban, Doornfontein, Hillbrow and Newtown as they are home to half (48%) of all the inner city schools (one public and 18 private). Of these 18 private schools, eight receive a 'non-profit' subsidy from the GDE. These five suburbs have a total population of 217 teachers (26% of all inner city teachers). Of this, 199 (92%) were Black African and 168 (77%) are listed as foreign born, most of whom (143 or 85%) were Zimbabweans. Gender wise, there are fewer males than females with a ratio of 48 males to 52 females. Thus, private schools and the employment of foreign nationals demonstrate a highly clustered or concentrated spatial pattern.

During the physical verification process, it was found that some schools were actually outside of the inner city. Others did not exist at all, whilst we found some that had been left off the databases. Many schools occupy former office blocks. The schools are often not distinct from newly established residential apartments and are not easy to recognise. It was not uncommon to find more than one (sometimes three) schools in the same building. They do not resemble 'a traditional school' in terms of architecture and use of space. There were no sports facilities or playgrounds. The study took these issues into account before 10 schools were randomly selected for participation. Thus, the schools that eventually participated did not necessarily appear on the original databases, but all were officially registered schools located in the inner city. Because of this, the profile of the sample teachers may not be in alignment with that reflected on the GDE educator database.

Teachers completed a self-administered questionnaire, where all data is self-reported. Permission for this was sought and obtained from the relevant authorities, where participants could elect to withdraw at any stage, and confidentiality was assured. Only 42 completed questionnaires were returned (a response rate of 21%). Some of the data (salaries, ages and years of experience) was collected in the form of categories in order to increase the response rate to sensitive questions. Thus, midpoint values are used to capture these results. Respondents earning R5,000 or less, are recorded as earning R5,000, and those who earn R15,000 or more are reported as earning R15,000. In terms of qualifications respondents were categorised as 12 if they had completed high school, 13 if they had some college degree/diploma, 14 if they had an undergraduate diploma, 15 if they had an undergraduate degree, 16 if they had a postgraduate certificate, 17 if they had a postgraduate diploma and 18 if they held a postgraduate degree. In addition, open-ended questions were included to establish the views and perspectives of the teachers and give them an opportunity to voice their opinions. The qualitative responses were analysed by coding the responses by category in order to determine the themes that emerged.

Results and Emergent Themes of the Quantitative Survey

The Professional, Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile of the Teachers

Of the respondents, 95% identified themselves as Black African and the remaining 5% identified themselves as Coloured. Men made up 60% of the sample. In terms of age, a minority (24%) were under 30 years of age. The bulk was aged between 31 and 50 (72%). The staff profile is therefore, young, Black African and male. The older teachers were more likely to report that they were foreign nationals. Zimbabweans tended to occupy higher positions in the schools (owner, Head of Department, or Principal).

Of the respondents, 41% were single; while the rest were either co-habiting or married. Most (90%) had at least one dependent child. Men were more likely to co-habit or be married (72%) when compared to women (41%). Of this, some 17% of the teachers had one dependent, 29% had two dependents, 26% had three; 12% had four and 7% had five or more dependents. The average number of dependent children was 2.21, with the mode and median being two dependent children. Males however reported a mode and median of three children each ($M = 3.24$), compared to females with a mode and median of two children each ($M = 2.12$). No woman reported having more than four children, whereas three men had five or more

children (see Table 1). The number of dependent children is possibly an indicator of a financially vulnerable household. This dependency profile is very different from what is expected of educated urban residents in South Africa, however, it is common for immigrants to have more children than the resident population.

In terms of education levels, some 76% of the teachers indicated that they had a tertiary level qualification of some sort, meaning that some 24% are underqualified. There was a large gender difference in this regard, with only 16% of males reporting they were underqualified, compared to 35% of females. Some 50% of the sample reported that they were also enrolled for a qualification of some sort. Of these enrolments, some 7% was for a Higher Certificate, another 5% for a Diploma, with the bulk (38%) enrolled for a Degree. Of the males, 40% were enrolled for some sort of qualification (the most common being a degree (28%)), whereas 64% of the female teachers said they were enrolled for some sort of qualification, with the majority (53%) enrolled in a degree. Thus, female teachers are far more likely to be underqualified than male teachers and were far more likely to be working whilst studying.

The majority (45%) lived in the inner city, followed by 24% who lived in Soweto (19 km away). Others lived on the East Rand and Johannesburg South. Some men, however, lived as far away as Orange Farm (41 km away). There was a marked difference in terms of nationality, with Zimbabweans and other foreign nationals far more likely to live in the inner city compared to South Africans (see Table 2).

The vast majority of respondents (59%) indicated that they were foreign nationals. Of these, most were Zimbabwean (33% overall), followed by citizens of countries such as Mozambique, Lesotho, Iraq, Uganda, Guinea and Malawi. While this employment profile could be partly explained by the on-going out-migration of professionals from Zimbabwe, it is also likely that the Zimbabwean entrepreneurs, who own some of these schools or occupy senior positions in them, actively recruit Zimbabweans or are more open to employing fellow Zimbabweans than other nationalities. Once more there is a marked difference between the genders, with 53% of the female teachers reporting as South African citizens compared to only 33% of males. Thus, the social and demographic profile of these teachers is different in terms of gender, with women teachers more likely to be young, single, with fewer dependents and still studying towards their qualification. They are also more likely to be South African citizens residing outside of the inner city. Male teachers are more likely to be older, married, have many dependents, be foreign nationals and reside in the inner city (see Table 1).

Table 1 Table of comparison by gender: Selected social and demographic profile ($N = 42$)

	Male	Female
Identified as Black African	96%	94%
Under 30 years of age	24%	29%
Marital status: Single	28%	59%
Percentage Zimbabwean	40%	24%
Dependents (mode and median)	3 children	2 children
SA citizens	32%	53%
Percentage living in the inner city	48%	41%
Percentage living in Soweto	20%	29%
Underqualified	16%	35%
Enrolled for a qualification	40%	64%
Percentage with a postgraduate degree	28%	6%

The social and demographic profile of these teachers also differed in terms of nationality. South Africans tended to be single, have the least dependents, be female, live outside of the inner city and were studying towards a qualification. Only a few hold a postgraduate degree but many had 10 years or more of teaching experience (see Table 1). Zimbabweans have the most dependents, are more likely to be male, and live in the inner city. They are the least likely to be under-qualified and the

least likely to be enrolled for a qualification. Other foreign born teachers have a different profile to the South Africans and the Zimbabweans. They are older, generally more qualified (holding a post-graduate degree), yet are less experienced and earned the least. They are also less likely to have many dependents. They usually live in the inner city and many are furthering their education (see Table 2).

Table 2 Table of comparison by nationality: Social and demographic profile ($N = 42$)

	South African	Zimbabwean	Other foreign born
Racial category the teacher identified as	94% Black African	93% Black African	100% Black African
Under 30 years of age	24%	29%	18%
Marital status: Single	47%	43%	27%
Dependents (mean)	2.18	3.36	3
Percentage male	47%	71%	64%
Percentage living in the inner city	29%	50%	64%
Percentage living in Soweto	25%	7%	27%
Underqualified	35%	14%	18%
Enrolled for a qualification	65%	29%	64%
Percentage with a postgraduate degree	12%	21%	27%

Employment Conditions

In terms of remuneration, a significant proportion of the respondents (45%) reported earnings of R5,000 or less per month. Some 24% said they earned between R5,001 and R8,000 per month, and another 10% said they earned between R8,001 and R10,000 per month. Only 17% reported earning over R10,000 per month. The mean salary was R7,087.50 per month; where the mode is R5,000, the median is R6,500, and the Standard deviation R2,800.84. None enjoyed benefits such as medical aid, pension fund and housing allowances that teachers in public schools do. Based on the stated incomes, it can be concluded that the vast majority of the teachers are not well paid.^{iv} Certainly, they earn far less than what public sector teachers earn, which was R15,432 per month in 2013^v (excluding benefits). Most respondents had been teaching in their current schools for less than one year. Dissatisfaction with the working environment and low salaries may result in these teachers being highly mobile between private schools in the hope of finding better working conditions and better salaries.

There was a marked difference in terms of part-time employment (see Table 3). All (100%) of the Zimbabweans were in full time employment, with the other two groups reporting that they were not always employed full time (71% of the South Africans and 73% of the other foreign nationals were employed full time). Full-time/part-time teachers were equally split gender wise. Full-time teachers, on average, earned more than part-time teachers (mean of R7,363.64 vs. R5,785.71). This may be because the part time teachers were still studying towards their teaching qualifications. However, part of the difference in income could be attributed to overall working hours, with some 31% of the full time teachers expected to work a six-day week, usually running Saturday classes for Grade 12 learners.

As Table 3 reveals, employment conditions differed by gender. Males generally reported lower salaries, compared to females (see Table 3). The gender pay difference could be attributed to too much higher levels of experience. Female teachers, despite being less qualified on the whole, were far more experienced than male teachers. In terms of

income and qualifications, a weak relationship existed for qualifications and income ($r = 0.237$ on Pearson, 2-tailed, $p = 0.140$, $n = 40$). Thus, qualifications only influence salaries in a small way. This serves as an indication that either the qualifications of these teachers are not recognised in South Africa, or they lack teaching qualifications. As some teachers indicated that they were actually pharmacists, economists, environmental scientists and accountants, this is likely. Thus, some may be working in this sector as a financial coping strategy, as they cannot find jobs for which they are qualified. It may also be that the foreign nationals do not have a valid work permit and are thus not able to demand remuneration in line with their qualifications.

There were also salary differences by nationality. South African teachers earned less than the Zimbabwean teachers in terms of the mean

(R7,066.67 vs. R8,142.86). Nevertheless, collectively other foreign nationals earned the least (mean R5,772.73). South African teachers had a moderate to strong correlation of $r = 0.506$, $p = 0.54$, $n = 50$ on Pearson's 2-tailed for qualifications and salary. Zimbabweans had a weak correlation for qualifications and salary ($r = 0.296$, $p = 0.304$ Pearson 2-tailed sig, $n = 14$). For other foreign nationals, there was a negative relationship with $r = -0.295$ on Pearson's 2-tailed, $p = 0.379$, $n = 11$. So for other foreign nationals their qualifications did not influence their salaries, whereas for South Africans the influence of qualifications was the strongest for the sample. For males, the correlations for salary and qualifications was $r = 0.287$, $p = 0.164$, $n = 25$ and for females it was $r = 0.300$, $p = 0.277$, $n = 15$. Thus, there was not difference in terms of gender.

Table 3 Table of comparison: Employment conditions by nationality ($N = 42$)

	South African	Zimbabwean	Other foreign born	Male	Female
Salary <i>M</i>	R7,066.67	R8,142.86	R5,772.73	R6,580.00	R7,933.33
Salary mode	R5,000.00	R5,000.00 and R6,500.00	R5,000.00	R5,000.00	R5,000.00
Salary <i>Mdn</i>	R5,000.00	R6,500.00	R5,000.00	R5,000.00	R6,500.00
Salary <i>SD</i>	R3,017.06	R3,134.35	R1,272.08	R2,515.29	R3,127.41
Length of service mode	3 years	10 years	3 years	3 years	10 years
Percentage full time teachers	71%	100%	73%	80%	82%
Percentage part time teachers	29%	0%	27%	20%	18%

The analysis then turned to explore salaries and years of work experience. In terms of years of teaching experience, some teachers (19%) were very new to the profession, reporting one or less years of working experience. Nonetheless, some (31%) had over 10 years' experience and another 21% had eight years of experience. Women were more likely than men to have 10 years or more of teaching experience. Other foreign nationals in general have the least number of years' experience in teaching. Zimbabweans (especially female Zimbabweans) were more likely to have 10 or more years teaching experience. It was found that there was a positive and statistically significant (at the 0.01 level) between income and years of experience with $r = 0.570$ [$p = 0.000$ on the Pearson 2-tailed t -test, $n = 40$]. This moderately strong correlation was true for both males and females,^{vi} but differed by nationality. For South African teachers, there was a strong positive (and statistically significant at the 0.01 level) correlation of $r = 0.748$ ($p = 0.001$, $n = 15$) for years of experience and income. For Zimbabweans there was a moderate relationship between years of experience and income ($r = 0.492$, $p = 0.074$, $n = 14$). For other foreign nationals there was no relationship with $r = 0.105$, $p = 0.758$, $n = 11$). Linked to this was age, with a positive (and statistically significant at the 0.01 level) relationship between age and years of experience of $r = 0.469$, $p = 0.002$, $n = 42$), an indication that

older teachers with more years of experience earn the most. So for other foreign nationals their years of experience did not influence their salaries, whereas for South Africans, the influence of experience was the strongest for the sample.

Results and Emergent Themes of the Qualitative Survey

The survey also made use of open-ended questions to investigate the qualitative aspects of the study. From these responses, five major themes emerged and were ranked in terms of their frequency of occurrence. These themes are now presented in decreasing order of importance. For example, the strongest theme, i.e. the word that the respondents used or referred to quite extensively, is "subsidise." Respondents referred to this term or similar ones such as "sponsorship," "funding" or "financial support" most frequently.

Theme 1: Better Financial Remuneration, Subsidization of the Schools

Most respondents requested State subsidisation. Most of the teachers believed that increased State financial support would lead to salary increases. For example, they asked for "sponsoring the school so that educators will be paid" [Respondent 45]; and "subsidising them and also the salary of teachers" [Respondent 38]. Many called for the government to publish pre-determined minimum salaries for private school teachers. In particular,

they wanted pay parity with public schools [Respondents 7 and 25]. Thus, either teachers are unaware that their schools qualify for government subsidies, or they felt the funding was insufficient. This suggestion is very important in that it is likely that they recognise that better salaries cannot be achieved by increasing school fees.

Theme 2: Provision of Infrastructure and Educational Material

There was a strong call for the provision of learning materials and teaching infrastructure. Teachers wanted State sponsored books, textbooks, reading materials, learning materials, overhead projectors, laptops, computers and learning infrastructure (desks, libraries, laboratories and sports facilities [Respondent 36]) for the learners, e.g. *“by helping with furniture and learner/study guides”* [Respondent 39], and [Respondent 22] *“providing teaching materials,”* and *“giving learners text books, laboratories, libraries”* [Respondent 29].

Theme 3: Work Load and Working Hours

Workload and working hours was a major grievance. Respondents complained that they were working far too many hours; that they had high workloads; and that they were allocated far too many subjects and/or classes to teach. They noted that it was necessary to *“lessen the subject allocation per educator”*; and averred, *“more teachers must be hired since there is a lot of work to be done”* [Respondent 18].

Theme 4: Supervision and Management

A few wanted the State to take a more active role in supervising the schools, provide training workshops for teachers, bursaries for teachers to upgrade their qualifications, and regulation of the private schooling sector in general. This was well reflected by Respondent 30: *“Provision of bursaries to study”* and [Respondent 12] *“Giving further education and training to help them to be fully qualified teachers.”* Thus, although the quality of registered low-fee schools is controlled through extensive and strict regulatory requirements, it seems these teachers do not think it is sufficient.

Theme 5: Learner Discipline

Another issue for teachers was that of learner self-discipline and motivation. Teachers described some learners as having low or no desire to learn: *“Students who have no purpose [...] why they are at school”* [Respondent 9]. This they found to be demotivating.

Future Prospects

In terms of their own personal futures, teachers were asked to share what future that envisaged for themselves. To that end, many (42%) indicated they really wanted to work in a public school. This

was captured by *“I wish to join the government schools,”* [Respondent 1]. But, an almost equal number (40%) said they did not intend to remain in teaching at all: *“I can only attain a better life out of teaching service or teach elsewhere.”* [Respondent 35]; *“I am a holder of a Bachelor Degree in Pharmacy and willing to do my Masters and intend to get my Doctorate in this field, so that I can be able to conduct a project of research and teaching in a South African University”* [Respondent 12]; *“I want to be a chartered accountant”* [Respondent 9] and *“I aim to become a qualified economist with a Masters in Economics”* [Respondent 18].

Summary

In summation, teachers in Johannesburg’s low-fee inner city private schools consist of several national groupings: South African citizens, Zimbabwean and those who are foreign born, but not Zimbabwean. Non-South African citizens were the majority, while the profile of men and women teachers differed. Generally, salaries are low, especially for younger, less experienced teachers and foreigners who are not Zimbabwean. The more qualified and more experienced teachers, particularly Zimbabweans, earned the most. Many are still studying towards their degree (especially the female South Africans), or have degrees that are not teaching degrees (especially the non-Zimbabwean foreign born teachers). Many seem to be working in these schools because they were unable to find employment elsewhere. In the case of low-fee private schools in India and Kenya, teachers are paid very low salaries and many wanted to see an increase in government subsidises in the hope that this would directly impact their salaries. Staff turnover appears to be high and poor working conditions (lack of teaching and learning materials and infrastructure) along with low salaries are likely to be driving this.

Recommendations

Based on the findings it would seem that a more active, hands-on and compassionate State is required to help reduce the precarious existence of these inner city private schools and their teachers. Firstly, the State ought to consider a more active role in monitoring these schools, both in terms of where they are operating, the conditions under which teaching and learning is taking place, and the salaries teachers are paid. Secondly, issues around subsidy need to be addressed. It is clear that learners in these (usually not for profit) low-fee private schools do not hail from wealthy homes. Thus, subsidisation of their education is justifiable. To that end, subsidies need to be financially appropriate, paid on time, and paid to all registered schools who qualify. Thirdly, it may be necessary to engage the management of these schools in order to determine and prescribe a maximum number of

working hours, as well as what the salaries should be. In that regard, unionisation of these teachers is strongly recommended. Lastly, the possibility of awarding infrastructural grants to the schools to upgrade them in terms of libraries and laboratories (for example), or to assist them to find corporate sponsorship for such upgrades, could significantly improve the teaching and learning environment.

Conclusion

Although it is difficult to operate a school on a tight budget, enforcing minimum standards with regards to teaching and learning resources may be required to ensure these schools invest in the requisite infrastructure. However, an active, hands-on government is required towards this end. Although South Africa has moved from an autocratic and domineering apartheid state to a more liberal, democratic and open one, one of the unintended consequences may be that the private sector is taking advantage of the lack of State oversight. As such, there are correlations between these schools and the no-fee public schools that these Black African parents have abandoned. That is, Black African children are still suffering from resource neglect, even if they elect to enrol in a low fee private school. While such private schools may have better matriculation results, be safer and are not overcrowded, their learners still endure inadequate learning opportunities and infrastructure. As such, this study confirms the findings of Ramulongo (2016) that the embedded apartheid resource backlog of poor infrastructure and under-qualified teachers cuts across the public and (at least some of) the private education sector.

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Notes

- i. Number of schools in SA drops – survey 2012. *News24*, 29 February. Available at <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Number-of-schools-in-SA-drops-survey-20120229>. Accessed 31 May 2017.
- ii. Number of schools in SA drops – survey 2012. *News24*, 29 February. Available at <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Number-of-schools-in-SA-drops-survey-20120229>. Accessed 31 May 2017.
- iii. Data obtained from the Gauteng Department of Education in 2015. This included teacher profiles and the matric results of schools in the Gauteng Province of South Africa. The data are the official statistics and included teachers' age, gender, race and years of teaching (experience), and information on schools: name, unique number, status (public or private), location by Global Positioning System (GPS), address and matric results.
- iv. It is highly possible that these teachers are underreporting their income. It is also possible that the design of the questionnaire (with categories for income) and a top category of 'above R15,000' may have distorted the results.
- v. Barry H 2014. *Teacher salaries: Who earns more?* Available at <https://www.moneyweb.co.za/archive/teacher-salaries-who-earns-more/>. Accessed 31 May 2017.
- vi. Males was $r = 0.540$, $p = 0.005$, $n = 25$, significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) and females was $r = 0.536$, $p = 0.39$, $n = 15$, significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
- vii. Published under a Creative Commons Attribution Licence.

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