

WAGES : ADULT MALE BANTU.

The Research Section of the Department has investigated local wage rates paid to Bantu employees in Johannesburg in order to determine, among other things, the extent of wage increases which are being paid in this labour area. The investigation, which was completed in October 1963, has taken into account the recent "Income and Expenditure Patterns of Urban Bantu Households in Johannesburg", conducted by the Bureau of Market Research of the University of South Africa, but is mainly based on the official records of the Department's Registration Branch and Employment Bureau. These Branches have since June of this year analysed the numbers placed in employment in all the specified sectors of employment as required by the Government in official returns the Department is obliged to submit. Some 24,000 records of employment for the period June/August 1963 forms the main basis of the study.

A. MOVEMENTS IN REAL WAGES : REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Available data is restricted to private manufacturing and construction industries in the Republic and as statistics maintained do not differentiate between unskilled and semi-skilled labour, it is not possible to distinguish between these groups.

TABLE I.

AVERAGE MONTHLY EARNINGS : BANTU EMPLOYED IN
PRIVATE MANUFACTURING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES
1947/48 - 1960/61 : REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA.*

Year	Average Monthly Earnings at Current Prices	Average Monthly Earnings at 1959/60 Prices.	Average Monthly Earnings at 1959/60 Prices & Increase over previous year.
1947 - 48	17.5	27.4	-
1948 - 49	18.3	27.0	(-) 1.4
1949 - 50	18.5	26.6	(-) 1.5
1950 - 51	19.5	26.4	(-) 0.7
1951 - 52	21.0	26.3	(-) 0.3
1952 - 53	22.2	26.1	(-) 0.7
1953 - 54	23.1	26.7	2.2
1954 - 55	24.0	27.3	2.2
1955 - 56	25.0	27.3	-
1956 - 57	25.7	27.6	1.0
1957 - 58	26.3	27.2	(-) 1.4
1958 - 59	27.1	27.8	2.2
1959 - 60	29.2	29.0	4.6
1960 - 61	30.8	30.4	4.8

* See Note (A) Overleaf.

- (A) Figures are based on the Industrial Census of the Bureau of Statistics (figures for 1956/57 - 1960/61 are preliminary).
- (B) Average monthly earnings include ordinary incentive and overtime wages, holiday and other occasional bonuses and payments in kind, as well as employers' contributions to holiday, pension, provident and medical funds.
- (C) Excluded are employers' contributions to Unemployment Insurance, Workmen's Compensation and Native Services Levy Funds.
- (D) Working proprietors are excluded.

Table I reveals that practically no increase in the real average wages of the Bantu worker took place between 1948/49 - 1957/58 (real wages actually declined between the years 1948/49 - 1952/53).

However, during the last two years analysed i.e. 1959/60, 1960/61 a rapid annual rise in real wages occurred amounting to 4.6% in 1959/60 and 4.8% in 1960/61. Despite these increases in real wages, the average remuneration of a Bantu employee was only R30 per month in 1960/61, a figure well below the most conservative estimate of a living wage. If this annual rate of increase (4.7%) could be maintained, which is doubtful, the average monthly real wages of the Bantu worker in the Manufacturing and Construction Industries, and no doubt Commerce too, will only attain R48.00 per month (estimated minimum income for basic necessities of an average Bantu family of five persons) in 1970/71.

The survey indicates* that 46% of all Bantu households are dependent on the wages of one earner and this would mean that 46% of all Bantu households will still be living below the "Poverty Datum line" for the next 10 years and probably longer.

* Based on the findings of Income and Expenditure Patterns of Urban Bantu Townships - Johannesburg Survey 1962. Bureau of Market Research - University of South Africa.

B. AVERAGE STARTING CASH WAGES : JOHANNESBURG URBAN AREA 1963.

The following data is based on information supplied by the Registration Section. As there are no comparable figures for previous years it is not possible to calculate real wages. The Department proposes making every effort to making this study an annual one.

During the three months of June, July, August 1963, 24,242 adult male Bantu were placed in employment in the urban area of Johannesburg. Of this number 18,828 or 77.7% were weekly paid and 5,414 or 22.3% were paid monthly.

TABLE II.

MONTHLY CASH WAGES : ADULT BANTU MALES PLACED IN
EMPLOYMENT : JOHANNESBURG URBAN AREA : JUNE, JULY,
AUGUST 1963.

Wages per Month. Rands	Number	Percentage	Accumulative Percentage
2.00 - 6.00	24	0.43	0.43
6.01 - 10.00	101	1.87	2.30
10.01 - 14.00	615	11.36	13.66
14.01 - 18.00	1,138	21.02	34.68
18.01 - 22.00	569	10.51	45.19
22.01 - 26.00	49	0.91	46.10
26.01 - 30.00	2,376	43.89	89.99
30.01 - 34.00	320	5.91	95.90
34.01 - 38.00	15	0.28	96.18
38.01 - 42.00	55.	1.02	97.20
42.01 - 46.00	28	0.52	97.72
46.01 - 50.00	21	0.39	98.11
50.01 - 54.00	10	0.18	98.29
54.01 - 58.00	4	0.07	98.36
58.01 - 70.00	18	0.33	98.69
70.01 - 80.00	5	0.09	98.78
80.01 - 90.00	15	0.28	99.06
90.01 & Over	51	0.94	100.00
TOTAL	5,414	100.00	

Table II above shows that of the 5,414 Bantu placed in monthly paid jobs during the period under review, 96.18% received a starting cash wage of less than R40 per month and 89.99% received less than R30 per month. 89 Bantu (approximately 1.64%) were employed with wages exceeding approximately R65 per month.

TABLE III.

WEEKLY CASH WAGES : ADULT BANTU MALES :
 PLACED IN EMPLOYMENT: JOHANNESBURG URBAN
 AREA : JUNE, JULY, AUGUST 1963.

Wages Per Week. Rand	Number	Percentage	Accumulative Percentage	Equivalent Wage per Month. Rand
1.00 - 2.00	11	0.06	0.06	4.33 - 8.67
2.01 - 3.00	63	0.33	0.39	8.67 - 13.00
3.01 - 4.00	18	0.10	0.49	13.00 - 17.33
4.01 - 5.00	88	0.47	0.96	17.33 - 21.67
5.01 - 6.00	2,874	15.26	16.22	21.67 - 26.00
6.01 - 7.00	4,241	22.52	38.74	26.00 - 30.33
7.01 - 8.00	6,433	34.17	72.91	30.33 - 34.67
8.01 - 9.00	3,372	17.91	90.82	34.67 - 39.00
9.01 - 10.00	680	3.61	94.43	39.00 - 43.33
10.01 - 11.00	423	2.25	96.68	43.33 - 47.67
11.01 - 12.00	9	0.05	96.73	47.67 - 52.00
12.01 - 13.00	392	2.08	98.81	52.00 - 56.33
13.01 - 14.00	135	0.72	99.53	56.33 - 60.88
14.01 - 15.00	55	0.29	99.82	60.88 - 65.00
15.01 and Over	34	0.18	100.00	65.00 and over
TOTAL:	18,828	100.00		

Bantu placed in weekly paid jobs (Table III above) appear to be better paid than those placed in monthly paid jobs. In this category 90.82% received a starting wage of less than R40 per month (R9.00 per week) and only 38.74% received less than R30 per month (R7.00 per week). However, only 0.18% received wages in excess of R65 per month (R15.01 per week).

It is well to remember that in both analyses no account has been taken of payments in kind. It is possible that there is a higher proportion of jobs rated in terms of cash, food and quarters among those paid on a monthly basis than among those paid on a weekly basis. This supposition is supported by the results of the following Table (Table IV) which shows that the majority of monthly paid employees are employed in flats (38.69%), Personal Domestic Services (20.13%) and Commerce (21.65%). In two of these employment sectors, jobs are commonly rated in terms of cash and quarters. On the other hand, weekly paid Bantu employees are employed largely by Commerce (58.31%), in Factories (24.79%) and in the Building Industry (10.06%) which are jobs usually rated in terms of cash only.

N.B. It will be noted that there are weekly and monthly paid groups in "Commerce".

TABLE IV.

NUMBER OF ADULT BANTU MALES PLACED IN EMPLOYMENT BY EMPLOYMENT SECTION : JOHANNESBURG URBAN AREA: JUNE, JULY, AUGUST 1963.

Employment Sector:	Weekly Paid		Monthly Paid		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Agriculture	6	0.03	1	0.02	7	0.04
Building	1,895	10.06	33	0.61	1,928	7.95
Commerce	10,978	58.31	1,172	21.65	12,150	50.12
Personal Services	69	0.37	1,090	20.13	1,159	4.78
Hotels	23	0.12	469	8.66	492	2.03
Flats	32	0.17	2,095	38.69	2,127	8.77
Boarding Houses	7	0.04	42	0.78	49	0.20
Government Departments	103	0.55	133	2.46	236	0.97
Factories	4,667	24.79	124	2.29	4,791	19.76
Clay Pits	29	0.15	-	-	29	0.12
Municipality	971	5.16	2	0.04	973	4.01
Prov. Admin.	14	0.07	242	4.47	256	1.06
S.A.R. and H.	34	0.18	11	0.20	45	0.19
TOTAL:	18,828	100.00	5,414	100.00	24,242	100.00

The average starting cash wages of Adult Bantu Males is given in Table V:

TABLE V.

AVERAGE STARTING CASH WAGES: ADULT BANTU MALES PLACED IN EMPLOYMENT: JOHANNESBURG URBAN AREA: JUNE, JULY, AUGUST 1963.

Employment Sector:	Average Weekly Starting Wages		Average Monthly Starting Wages
	Rand Per Week	Rand per Week converted to Rand per Month.	
Agriculture	3.83	17.60	28.00
Building	7.28	31.55	28.36
Commerce	7.55	32.72	25.20
Personal Services	7.75	33.58	15.91
Hotels	8.63	37.39	20.60
Flats	8.06	34.93	28.05
Boarding Houses	6.84	29.64	19.52
Government Depts.	6.39	27.69	19.28
Factories	7.31	31.68	31.24
Clay Pits	5.60	24.26	-
Municipality	7.23	31.33	-
Prov. Admin.	6.07	26.30	16.20
S.A.R. & H.	7.03	30.46	23.60
TOTAL ALL SECTIONS	7.43	32.20	23.60

The above figures show that average starting cash wages vary considerably by source of income (i.e. sector of employment). Average monthly wages ranged from R15.91 per month (Personal Domestic Services) to R31.24 per month (Factories) while average weekly wages (converted to monthly) ranged from R17.60 per month (Agriculture) to R37.39 per month (Hotels).

Averages are only a measure of "central tendency", but tend to ignore the overall "spread" of incomes, which can vary widely between maxima and minima. When all items in a distribution are widely dispersed and there is little or no tendency to concentrate around any one value, then clearly the average cannot adequately summarize the distribution. It is, therefore, important to know how typical of the distribution the average is.

The average weekly cash wage for all employment sectors was R32.20 with a standard deviation of 1.60. With these values it can be assumed that 95% of the weekly wages (converted to monthly) paid to Bantu employees, will fall within the range R29.00 - R35.40 per month. Weekly wages therefore cluster closely around the average and there is very little deviation.

The average monthly cash wage for all employment sectors was found to be R23.00 per month with a standard deviation of 9.54 indicating that 95% of all monthly paid wages lie between the values R4.52 and R42.68 per month. Monthly wages, therefore, do not tend to cluster around the average, indicating that the range of wages paid in this category is very wide.

SUMMARY:

1. 77.7% of jobs undertaken by adult Bantu males in Johannesburg during June, July, August 1963 were rated on a weekly wage basis and 22.3% on a monthly wage basis.
2. Of the Bantu placed in monthly paid jobs, 96.18% received less than R40 per month and 89.99% less than R30 per month.
Of the Bantu placed in weekly paid jobs 90.82% received less than R40 per month and 38.74% less than R30 per month.
3. Of all the monthly paid jobs undertaken during the period under review, the highest proportions were placed in Flats (38.69%), Personal Domestic Services (20.13%) and Commerce (21.65%). Of all the weekly paid jobs undertaken

the highest proportions were placed in Factories (24.79%), Building (10.06%) and again Commerce (58.31%).

4. During the period under review, average monthly cash starting wages were highest in Factories (R31.24 per month) and lowest in Personal Domestic Services (R15.91 per month).
Highest average weekly cash starting wages were paid by Hotels (R37.39 per month) and lowest wages were paid by agriculture (R17.60 per month).
5. The average weekly cash wage for all employment sectors was R32.20 per month and 95% of all wages fell within the range R29.00 - R35.40 per month.
6. The average monthly cash wage for all employment sectors was R23.60 per month and 95% of all wages in this category fell between the values R4.52 - R42.68 per month.

CONCLUSIONS:

The analysis indicates that the average cash starting wage of adult Bantu placed in employment in Johannesburg during the months of June, July, August 1963 was R32.20 per month. A number of studies* have placed the minimum monthly requirements of a Bantu family of 5 at not more than R48 per month. If it is considered that 46%* of all Bantu families living in Soweto are entirely dependent on the wages of one earner, the conclusion must be reached that a very high proportion of Bantu living in Johannesburg are in receipt of wages insufficient to sustain urban family life.

- * C. de Coning - Income and Expenditure Patterns of Urban Bantu Households - Pretoria Survey 1961.
- * City of Johannesburg - Non-European Affairs Department - Minimum Family Budget - Bantu Family.

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