

Black Africans in Great Britain: Spatial Concentration and Segregation

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Summary Research on Britain's African population has been rather limited, which is partly due to the lack of data. The 1991 Census gave official recognition to the increasing permanency of the African population through the introduction of the ethnic category Black African, which enumerated the group's population at 212 362 and resulted in a vast amount of illuminating demographic and socioeconomic data. This paper draws heavily on this database. It is clear that the Black-African group tends to have similar spatial patterns to the Black-Caribbean, but a high degree of segregation from whites and other ethnic groups. This can be explained through discrimination, economic marginalisation and poor social housing, although cultural factors do contribute to the pattern. It is suggested that Black-African concentrations may begin to disperse to replicate the current suburbanisation experience of the Black Caribbean.

Introduction

The UK's Black-African population is relatively understudied compared to other groups among Britain's visible ethnic communities. The first official recognition of their significance in British society was the introduction of the ethnic category Black African in the 1991 Census. Those who identified their ethnic group as Black African numbered 212 362 or 0.4 per cent of the total population and 7 per cent of the ethnic minority population. Over one-third (36 per cent) of this group was British-born. This reflects the more recent history of migration and settlement. The 1991 Census provides hitherto unknown data, which form a useful basis for this study. The recent categorisation of Black African does, however, make longi-

tudinal analysis problematic. Because of the nature of colonisation in most African countries, it is difficult to separate Black African from whites or Asians in earlier birthplace statistics. Furthermore, the literature on Africans in Britain tends to be sparse and historically specific (Little, 1948; Goody and Muir Groothues, 1977, 1979; Killingray, 1994). Because of their racial and cultural similarities, studies of the Black-Caribbean communities are often generalised to apply to them. This paper therefore represents a seminal study of the contemporary situation of the African population in Great Britain.

The term Black African is a census rather than a social category, because the Black-African population is characterised by diver-

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sity, both internally and in comparison with other ethnic groups. They come potentially from 53 different countries of origin, and from varied social and economic backgrounds. This paper discusses how this heterogeneity is revealed in the processes of migration and in the dynamics of spatial concentration and segregation. Black-African migration to Britain has been more responsive to political, economic and educational changes in the source countries than at their destination (Adepoju, 1995). Once settled in Britain, economic restructuring and discriminatory practices have placed them in precarious livelihood situations and in poor housing. These form the principal explanatory variables for their pattern of spatial concentration and segregation. Even with their different migration history, their social, economic and spatial trajectories seem to mirror that of the Black-Caribbean group.

Historical Background

Africans have resided in Great Britain since antiquity. They were, however, few in number and it was not until the 20th century that their numbers showed a substantial increase. The history of their migration differs significantly from that of those immigrants who were recruited directly for the purposes of employment. In contrast, Africans came either as seafarers who settled unofficially in British ports or as students seeking to further their education with the prospect of improved circumstances on the return home. Colonisation fuelled a desire to investigate the source of the colonisers' power and offered the prospects of employment as seamen to many Africans from coastal communities. West Africans, particularly from Sierra Leone, Nigeria and the Gold Coast, and east Africans from British Somaliland, settled in the docklands of Cardiff, Liverpool, London and other ports (Banton, 1955; Killingray, 1994). In the late 1940s they began to form well-established African communities, but before the 1950s their numbers did not rise above 10 000 (Banton, 1955).

Migration for Education

The most prominent feature of the Black-African migration to Britain was the highly selective nature of the migratory process where education was the primary purpose for migration. Students from Africa have been a feature of Britain's educational institutions since the 18th century (Carey, 1956). Many were sons of chiefs or were sponsored by missionaries or traders of African companies. Data for the early 20th century show that until 1940 there were less than 100 African students in British universities in any year. The figure rose rapidly in the post-war years and west Africans rose from being 14 per cent of the total colonial student population in 1939 to 2009 or 43 per cent in 1950. By this time the West African Students Union, which was formed in 1925, was already the focus of students campaigning against colonial rule and discrimination in Britain (Adi, 1994). The city of Manchester, in the north of England, was the venue for the Fourth Pan-African Congress in 1945.

This migration for education took on a greater momentum in the run up to independence in the 1950s and in the immediate post-independence period of the 1960s. After the Second World War, the Colonial Office, under pressure from aspiring Africans for social and economic development and self-government, recognised that "it was essential that the people of these territories be given the opportunity to train for posts in the professional and technical fields" (Little, 1948, p. 32). British universities established external colleges in Africa: Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone, Legon in the Gold Coast, Ibadan in Nigeria and Makerere in east Africa. The earliest cohort of students sought professional qualifications, but later, once African universities were established and travel easier, many students came to acquire a variety of higher degrees or technical qualifications. A survey carried out in London in the 1950s shows law, engineering, medicine, education and nursing to be the most popular subjects among Africans (Carey, 1956).

In west Africa, the absence of a settled white population during the colonial era meant that western-educated Africans were assured high-status positions in the civil service and in the professions. As independent governments attempted to improve local educational institutions, the importance of foreign qualifications declined. On returning to some African countries, doctors and lawyers had to take local examinations before they could practise (Goody and Muir Groothues, 1977). There was another migration for education which started in the 1970s and ended in the 1980s, fuelled primarily by the oil boom in Nigeria which led to an increase in the number of students who could pay foreign students' fees in Britain. It is understood that a significant proportion of the student population settled in the UK where their newly acquired skills were in demand.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the student migrant was accompanied by a group of wealthy, often young men and women, mainly from the west African states of Ghana and Nigeria whose principal purpose in the UK was to shop or to 'sport'. Atampugre (1992, p. 4) refers to Ghanaian women known as '*Golf girls*' (the Golf car being their status symbol) who engaged mainly in the importation of consumer items having acquired import licences through personal links with military officers. Young Nigerians also embarked on extravagant lifestyles which for many petered out with the declining economic fortunes of the 1980s. A high proportion of this category of migrants then opted to stay abroad. Marriages, family reunification, the births of offspring and ensuing economic crises in their countries of origin have all assisted in creating a settled population. Wealthy Africans invested in the London property market in middle-class neighbourhoods in London and the home counties.

Refugees

Political instability in the 1970s and 1980s generated successive refugee in-migration. In-migration of refugees occurred before the

last intercensal period. At various times since the last century, members of the African élite, such as Seretse Khama of Botswana, sought refuge in Britain (Parsons, 1994). Mass refugee movements from Africa began with the Ugandan Asians in 1968. Since the 1970s, political instability and human rights abuses have led to an increase in the number of Africans seeking refuge in the UK from countries such as Eritrea, Ghana, Uganda, Somalia and Ethiopia and more recently from Angola, Congo and Nigeria. According to Oguibe (1994, p. xv), this group of Africans consisted of:

fallen politicians and their families, opposition and pressure group leaders, political misfits, disgruntled and disappointed idealists, deviants for whom the new dispensations had no place, and in a great number of cases, dispossessed populations fleeing from war and deprivation.

Although the number of people seeking asylum rose dramatically in the 1980s, the actual number granted refugee status or exceptional leave to remain has been too small to be significant. Between 1980 and 1991, there were some 53 262 applications for asylum but only 8500 were granted refugee status and exceptional leave to remain. Of these, the Somalis, Ethiopians and Ugandans were the major beneficiaries, with Somalis forming 25 per cent of successful applicants.

There were successive waves of refugees from the various African countries. What is clear is that the first arrivals fared better, often being granted full refugee status, and were better equipped educationally and economically. The more recent arrivals form a stratum of the most deprived sections of the community. Many were allocated social housing in undesirable locations. Those seeking asylum in the 1990s have been affected by changes in the immigration and asylum laws which aimed to restrict or deny welfare benefits to them, leaving many homeless and housed by charitable organisations.

Table 1. Birthplace of the Africa-born population in Great Britain

Country of birth	1971	1981	1991
Kenya	59 500	102 144	112 422
Malawi	2 545	9 407	10 697
Tanzania	14 375	27 151	29 825
Uganda	12 590	45 937	50 903
Zambia	5 740	12 558	16 758
Zimbabwe (Rhodesia)	7 905	16 330	21 252
Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland		1 069	2 001
Gambia		619	1 388
Ghana	11 215	16 887	32 672
Nigeria	28 565	31 310	47 085
Sierra Leone	3 175	3 840	6 310
Algeria		2 417	3 672
Egypt		23 463	22 849
Libya		6 004	6 604
Morocco		5 818	9 073
Tunisia		2 037	2 417
South Africa (Republic of)	45 825	54 207	68 059
Other Africa	18 590	17 040	34 194
Africa	200 025	378 238	478 181

Source: OPCS: 1971, 1981 and 1991 Census (Crown copyright).

Black Africans: Demographic and Educational Features

Consideration of the demographic characteristics of the Black-African population is important in highlighting the nature of migration and the process of settlement in London. Although previous censuses contained data on birthplace, it was not always possible to distinguish between Whites, Asians or Africans, especially for countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia) and South Africa. In the 1960s, many African countries with settler colonies saw a mass exodus following independence, mainly by whites who retained their British citizenship and educated their children in the UK. The 1971 Census recorded a population of 200 025 whose birthplace was on the continent of Africa (Table 1). This figure increased to 378 238 in the 1981 Census and 478 181 in the 1991 Census, in which 19 per cent were White, 49 per cent Asians and 29 per cent Black African. The Asian figure reflects the migration of refugees from east Africa in the 1960s.

In 1991, the bulk of those whose birth-

place was Nigeria or Ghana would have belonged to the ethnic group Black African: 84 and 89 per cent respectively. Table 1 shows a 33 per cent increase in the Nigeria-born population residing in Great Britain in the intercensal period 1981–91 (from 31 310 to 47 085) and a 100 per cent increase in the Ghanaian population from 16 887 in 1981 to 32 672 in 1991. This cannot be attributed purely to natural increase. Those of Nigerian and Ghanaian origin stand out as the largest Black-African groups. The growth in the number of Nigerians may be the indirect consequence of the availability of surplus capital derived from the post-1973 oil boom. This caused a proliferation of higher education institutions in Nigeria and a growth in higher qualification scholarships from central and state governments. The increase in Ghanaians has to be related to political upheavals in that country following the two ‘revolutionary’ coups of 4 June 1979 and 31 December 1980 and the subsequent outflow of students, refugees and exiles. The latter coup was marked by the flight of progressive elements after 1983 (Yeebo, 1991; Atampu-

Table 2. Main countries of birth of Africa-born population living in London, 1971–91

Country	1971	1981	1991	
			Number	Percentage of total population of GB
Ghana	6 840	11 995	26 925	82
Nigeria	18 540	19 296	36 047	77
South Africa (Republic of)	15 680	15 645	18 496	27
Uganda	5 560	21 632	28 244	36
Tanzania	5 905	13 949	15 452	52
Kenya	24 535	50 646	56 993	50
Zambia	910	2 660	4 675	30
Other Africa	10 465	6 942	23 949	70

Source: OPCS: 1971, 1981 and 1991 Census (Crown copyright).

gre, 1992). The national pattern is replicated in the figures for Greater London (Table 2).

Age and Household Structure

The age-structure of the Black-African population is what one would expect from a recent immigrant community. The Black-African group is very youthful with 29 per cent of the population below the age of 16 (62 290) and 64 per cent between the ages of 20 and 44, with a sharp reduction after 40 years; resulting in fewer people of retirement age than among the Black-Caribbean and Indian ethnic groups. This may be the consequence of return migration. One can assume that up until the economic crisis of the 1980s a significant proportion of Black-African students would return to their country of origin on the completion of their studies. Although this did not necessarily result in total decamping from Britain. The birth of offspring in the UK and their acquisition of British passports, until quite recently, provided some households with an insurance system which could be drawn upon in times of crisis, as in the 1980s.

The age-structure of the group shows marked differences if the population is divided according to country of birth. The bulk (89 per cent) of the British-born population is below the age of 30 with 26 per cent below

4 years. These figures reflect the increase in immigration during the 1960s and the very young children of second- or third-generation settlers. Black Africans tend to have higher fertility rates than other black groups, and larger households. Over 16 per cent live in households of 5 or more persons.

Women

Due to the gendered nature of early Western education in Africa the majority of the student population were men. Most women attempted to join their husbands or boyfriends in the UK. Many migrated on their own for training, but it was infinitely easier if they were joining a spouse. Historically, studies of the African student population often failed to distinguish between men and women. The main activists in the student movements were men, even though Adi (1994) notes the formation of a West African Women's Association founded in Britain in the 1940s, and in the early 1950s the Nigerian Women's League. Many of these women migrated for professional training as in the field of nursing. However, recognition of the value of female education among the growing African bourgeoisie meant that later female migrants were, like their male counterparts, encouraged to follow professional careers as lawyers, doctors and teachers.

Table 3. Black Africans: qualified and level of qualifications, 1991 (10 per cent sample)

	Black Africans		Whites	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total persons age 18 and over	13 233		3 991 291	
Proportion qualified	3 512	26	561 488	14
Higher degrees	457	3	35 915	9
First degree and equivalent qualifications	1 425	11	244 958	6
A level or equivalent	1 630	12	252 146	6

Source: OPCS, 1991 Census: 10% sample (Ethnic group and country of birth topic report) (Crown copyright).

Female migration from Africa whether on own account or to join spouses has in recent years kept pace with male migration. By the 1991 Census, the historical difference in the sex ratios had disappeared with the Black-African population then split 51 per cent males to 49 per cent females. This numerical balancing of the sexes furthered the establishment of marital unions and the consequent emergence of a settled community among migrants from the same ethnic group. The youthfulness of the Black-African population is reflected in their marital status and household structure. Thirty-three per cent of the Black-African population is married. This compares with 47 per cent of Whites and 30 per cent of Black Caribbeans.

As in African societies generally, there are considerable social pressures on couples to marry rather than co-habit. In the 1 per cent household Sample of Anonymised Records (SAR), there were 694 households headed by Black-Africans, but only 12 per cent contained a spouse; much less than half of those who reported to be married. The pattern of migration may be responsible for this anomaly. It is not peculiar for a spouse (either husband or wife) to reside permanently in Great Britain with the children, leaving the other spouse in their country of origin. Migration can lead to stress in marriage as documented by Goody and Muir Groothues (1979), but can also facilitate the generation of independent sources of income for women. In the UK, husbands and wives seek to improve their income and status through

work and further education. The satisfaction of these two goals is in some way influential in determining the geographical location of the population.

Education

From the highly selective nature of early African migration to Great Britain, it is not surprising that in 1991 Black Africans were the most qualified ethnic group in Britain with 26 per cent of the population over 18 years possessing higher qualifications (Table 3). Students comprised some 18 per cent of the population compared to 3 per cent for Whites, while 27 per cent of Nigerians in the 2 per cent Sample of Anonymised Records (SAR) have student status. If one considers levels of qualifications, the majority of qualified Africans have qualifications of above A level or equivalent. The most qualified age-groups are the 30–44 years and 45–59 years. This is not surprising judging from the student origins of the first generation of Black-African migrants. Among Africans there continues to be a strong emphasis on professional qualifications as the main route to higher social status. For many, education is pursued for far longer into adulthood than for most other ethnic groups. Clearly, the location of educational institutions will have had a strong influence on settlement patterns.

When the country of birth by level of qualification is considered, evidence suggests that the younger generation may yet achieve

equivalent levels of qualifications. Black Africans who were born on the continent of Africa tend to be better qualified than those born in the UK. Of those qualified, 31 per cent were born in Nigeria and 16 per cent in England; Other Commonwealth Africa 33 per cent, but Other Africa only 8 per cent. Again, this is not unusual for a population in which a substantial proportion migrated for educational purposes. If we consider level of qualifications among recent migrants, 29 per cent of those who moved to the UK last year had post A level or equivalent qualifications; 29 per cent first degree and 37 per cent higher degrees. The poor showing of non-Commonwealth Africans can be partially attributed to the presence of the refugee populations from Somalia and Ethiopia; yet the prevalence of higher degrees among recent migrants indicates the more recent influx of qualified professional refugees.

The Spatial Pattern of Black Africans

The demographic features of the Black-African population suggest two spatial outcomes. First, the recent migratory history may, as with other migrants, lend itself to patterns of concentration. Secondly, the strong educational background of the group should be reflected in higher socioeconomic status and be translated into residency in middle-class neighbourhoods.

Black Africans are perhaps more spatially concentrated than other ethnic groups in the metropolitan areas of Great Britain. Eighty-three per cent live in the cities of Greater London, Leeds, Sheffield, Liverpool and Cardiff—the historical centres of early African communities (see also the paper by Peach in this issue). The capital city of London, with its diverse educational institutions and cosmopolitan population, provided a focal point for early African settlement in Britain. Eighty per cent of the total population live in Greater London and of this group 66 per cent live in Inner London. (See Figure 1 showing their distribution in London.) Outside London, the Black African population in the seaports, such as Cardiff

and Liverpool amounts to just over 1 per cent of the total population.

Rees and Philips (1996), using estimated data for the Black-African population in 1981, point to a higher than average growth in the concentration of Black Africans over the decade 1981–91, especially in the Inner London boroughs of Southwark, Newham and Lewisham, showing percentage changes of 102.5, 89.0 and 73.6 respectively (Table 4). The only anomaly was the London borough of Barnet with a percentage change of 79.2. According to Rees and Phillips (1996), some suburbanisation is taking place but the process is not as advanced as that of the Caribbean group.

Birthplace data suggest even higher concentrations for specific countries of origin. Eighty per cent of the Ghanaian-born population (27 000) live in London and 77 per cent of those born in Nigeria (36 000) (Table 2) (Rees and Phillips, 1996). Twenty-four per cent of London's Black-African population were born in non-Commonwealth countries such as Somalia, Sudan and Ethiopia. A significant proportion of these groups came as refugees in the 1980s and 1990s.

Within Greater London, it is possible to identify clusters of Black-Africans, mainly in the Inner London boroughs of Southwark, Lambeth and Haringey. The highest concentrations are in Lambeth where almost 10 per cent of the population live and where they constitute 7 per cent of the borough's population. A survey of the top 10 Black-African wards shows those wards in the London borough of Southwark as having some of the highest concentrations of Black-Africans in Britain. Topping the list is Liddle with 26.6 per cent (Table 5). Wards such as Angell, Larkhall and Ferndale, in the London borough of Lambeth, also have Black Africans constituting over 10 per cent of their population. Other concentrations are located in the north of the city, in the boroughs of Hackney and Haringey.

A similar survey of the top 10 enumeration districts (EDs) in Great Britain, where Black Africans constitute over 30 per cent of the

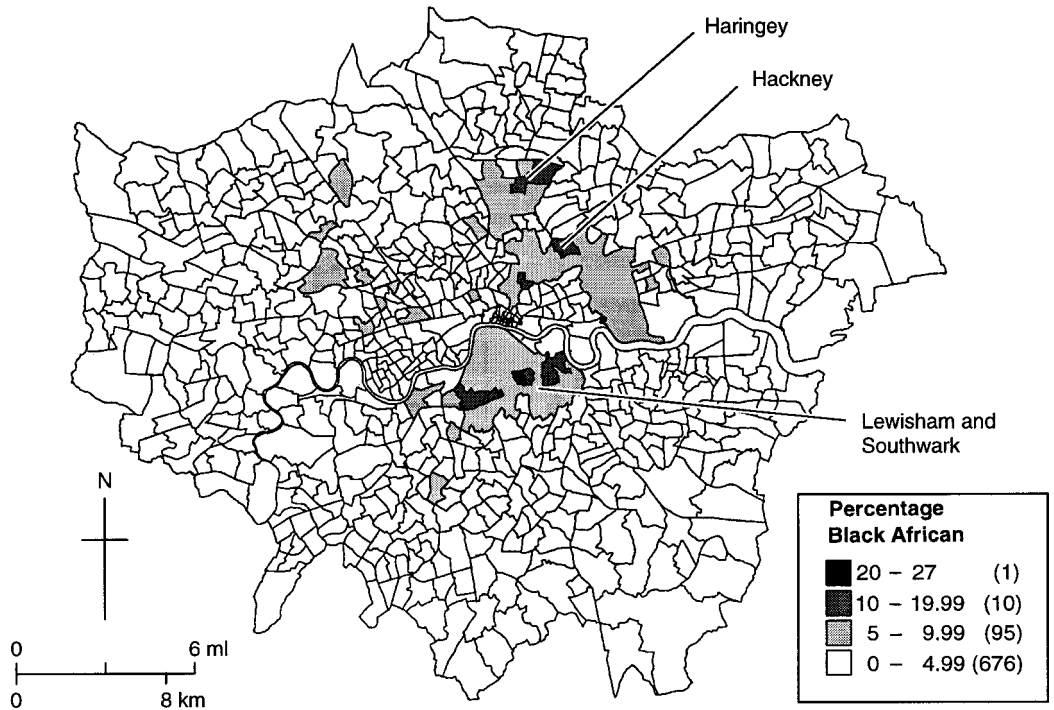


Figure 1. Black Africans as a percentage of the population, 1991, by ward. *Source:* 1991 Census, LBS, Table 6.

population, shows high concentrations in Southwark, Barking and Dagenham with over 40 per cent in some EDs. The Outer London anomaly in the north-west London borough of Barnet (37 per cent) reflects the

traditional residential area of diplomats and wealthy Africans. Outside London, one would have to go down to concentrations of between 20 and 30 per cent to include one ED in Leeds, one in Cardiff and two in

Table 4. Black Africans in London 1981-91

District	1991	1981 (estimates)	Change (number)	Percentage in 1991	Percentage change 1981-91
Lambeth	17 018	10 883	6 135	6.63	56.4
Southwark	16 783	8 289	8 494	7.39	102.5
Hackney	12 886	7 701	5 185	6.86	67.3
Newham	12 639	6 686	5 953	5.71	89.0
Haringey	11 864	7 802	4 062	5.60	52.1
Brent	10 305	5 888	4 417	4.15	75.0
Lewisham	9 087	5 233	3 854	3.77	73.6
Wandsworth	7 823	6 248	1 575	2.95	25.2
Barnet	6 317	3 525	2 792	2.11	79.2
Islington	6 308	4 356	1 952	3.64	44.8
Waltham Forest	6 269	3 588	2 681	2.88	74.7
Croydon	5 099	2 933	2 166	1.60	73.8

Source: Rees and Phillips (1996).

Table 5. Black Africans: top ten London Wards, 1991

Area	Ward	Total population	Black Africans	
			Number	Percentage
Southwark	Liddle	10 984	2 920	26
Lewisham	Evelyn	9 765	1 299	13
Hackney	King's Park	6 700	830	12
Southwark	Friary	8 470	1 034	12
Lambeth	Angell	10 739	1 272	12
Lambeth	Larkhall	13 227	1 533	11
Lewisham	Marlowe	9 948	1 071	11
Haringey	Bruce Grove	10 488	1 093	10
Hackney	Haggerston	6 241	644	10
Lambeth	Ferndale	12 479	1 254	10

Source: 1991 Census SAS (ESRC/JISC purchase) (Crown copyright).

Liverpool. Most other concentrations may be highly localised, as in Birmingham, but small in percentage terms. Peach and Rossiter (1996, p. 113) argue that

underlying the concept of segregation is the belief that unevenness of residential distri-

bution within an urban area reflect social differences: the greater the degree of spatial difference, the greater the social difference.

As Black Africans live in ethnically diverse residential areas, other factors may more usefully highlight issues of social difference.

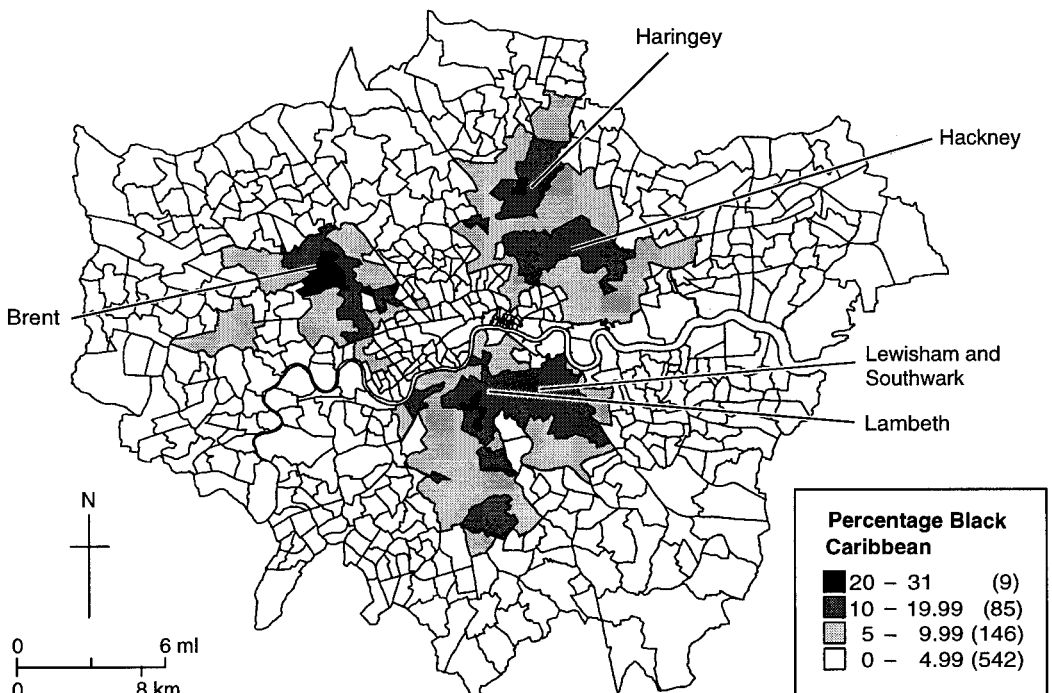


Figure 2. Black Caribbeans as a percentage of the population, 1991, by ward. Source: 1991 Census, LBS, Table 6.

Table 6. Greater London Indices of Dissimilarity, by birthplace, 1991, (ward level above the diagonal, enumeration district level below)

Birthplace	Ireland		Old Commonwealth		East Africa		Other Africa		Caribbean		Bangladesh		India		Pakistan		South-east Asia		Europe		China		ID	IS	N
Ireland	0		30		38		36		36		60		39		44		23		25		31		21		253 011
Old Commonwealth	47	0	0		53		46		50		66		54		56		26		20		32		36		52 586
East Africa	48	48	65	0	0		52		49		67		21		36		38		48		49		40		107 755
Other Africa	49	49	65	63	0		0		25		59		54		51		41		42		41		40		74 142
Caribbean	43	43	63	57	41		41		0		61		51		48		44		44		46		41		150 010
Bangladesh	74	74	82	79	74		74		74		0		65		63		60		61		61		61		56 321
India	48	48	65	33	64		64		58		78		0		29		39		50		50		41		151 194
Pakistan	59	59	71	53	67		67		61		77		46		0		44		54		53		46		44 331
South-east Asia	46	46	51	56	61		61		60		77		56		63		0		23		26		23		41 214
Europe	35	35	40	56	55		55		53		76		56		66		45		0		28		30		241 319
China	76	76	76	79	78		78		79		86		81		82		70		74		0		33		6 888
ID	26	48	48	47	50		50		45		74		46		59		43		35		77		77		
IS	27	48	48	48	51		51		46		74		47		59		44		36		77		77		

Source: Calculated from Local Base statistics, ESRC 1991 census holding, University of Manchester Computer Centre.

Table 7. ED/ward-level Indices of Dissimilarity, by birthplace for Greater London, 1981

Birthplace	Ireland	Old Commonwealth	East Africa	Other Africa	Caribbean	Bangladesh	India	Pakistan	South-east			IS	N
									Europe	Asia	Europe		
Ireland	0	32	43	31	39	58	40	44	24	24	23	23	23 534
Old Commonwealth	53	0	55	47	57	65	52	56	30	26	35	36	36 369
East Africa	55	71	0	50	51	68	21	34	40	49	43	44	91 080
Other Africa	50	67	64	0	22	57	49	46	36	35	38	39	51 464
Caribbean	47	71	61	41	0	62	51	48	46	46	45	46	166 096
Bangladeshi	82	88	85	80	81	0	66	65	57	58	59	60	21 988
India	50	67	35	62	58	84	0	30	38	47	40	41	138 309
Pakistan	63	75	55	66	63	84	50	0	42	53	46	46	35 401
South-east Asia	52	59	61	61	64	83	58	66	0	23	29	24	35 945
Europe	36	46	60	52	56	82	56	68	50	0	32	33	248 703
Index of Dissimilarity	28	50	54	53	52	83	47	63	52	37			
Index of Segregation	29	51	55	53	53	83	48	63	53	38			1 060 889

Source: Peach (1996).

Table 8. Ghettoisation of ethnic groups at ED level in Greater London: 30 per cent cut-off

Group	Group's city population	Group's 'ghetto' population	Total 'ghetto' population	Percentage of group 'ghettoised'	Group's percentage of 'ghetto' population
Black Caribbean	290 968	7 755	22 545	2.6	34.4
Black African	163 635	3 176	8 899	2.0	35.6
Black Other	80 613	nil	nil	nil	nil
Indian	347 091	88 887	202 135	25.6	44.0
Pakistani	87 816	1 182	3 359	1.4	35.2
Bangladeshi	85 738	28 280	55 500	33.0	51.0
Chinese	56 579	38	111	0.0	34.2
Other Asian	112 807	176	572	0.2	30.8
Other Other	120 872	209	530	0.2	39.4
Irish-born	256 470	1 023	2 574	0.4	39.8
Non-white	1 346 119	721 873	1 589 476	53.6	45.4

Source: Special tabulations prepared from ESRC 1991 Census archive at Manchester University.

Peach and Rossiter (1996) use the Index of Dissimilarity (ID) to estimate levels of segregation between Black Africans and other groups in enumeration districts and wards in Greater London. According to them, ID

measures the degree of unevenness between the residential distribution of two populations in terms of a symmetrical relationship. The index tells the observer what percentage of either group would have to change its area of residence in order to replicate exactly the distribution of the group with which it is being compared. Zero represents no segregation and 100 total segregation with no areal overlap between the group (Peach and Rossiter, 1996, p. 113).

The spatial distribution of Black Africans in Greater London exhibits close affinity with that of the Black-Caribbean community (see Figures 1 and 2). This is reinforced by Peach (1996) whose indices of dissimilarities for Black Africans are closest to those of the Black Caribbeans and other black groups (see his article in this issue). Together, these groups form a segregation cluster and have moderately high segregation levels from whites with indices in the mid 50s at the ED level and in the 40s at ward level. At the ED level, about 56 per cent of the Black-African population would need to move to replicate the pattern of distribution of whites. These indices are low compared to those of blacks in the US where figures in the 80s are more common. Black Africans are more segregated from the Pakistanis and Bangladeshis than from whites. Using birthplace data to obtain a dynamic picture of the population, Peach (1996), assuming that the Other Africa birthplace category constituted the ethnic African category, notes similarities with the Black-Caribbean population and very little change in their levels of segregation between 1981 and 1991 (Tables 6 and 7) in London. Therefore there has been some stability of pattern and relationships over time.

To determine the importance of economic factors in the pattern of spatial segregation, it is possible to compare the observed and ex-

pected levels of segregation according to social class based on occupational criteria. Using ward-level data for the economically active aged 16 and over, Peach (1996 and in this issue) contends that, for Greater London, there are clear disparities between observed and expected levels of segregation. All ethnic groups would have a lower level of segregation if economic factors alone controlled their distribution. Social status explains only 6 per cent of the observed level of segregation of the Black-African population from the whites. Ethnicity emerges as a strong determining factor.

Taking the analysis a step further, Peach (1996) tries to determine whether American-type ghettos existed in London. From an analysis of EDs where ethnic minorities constituted over 30 per cent of the population (Table 8), he found that, with the exception of the Bangladeshi, the population of ethnic groups as a percentage of the most concentrated minority population was generally under 50 per cent. Only 2 per cent of the Black-African population lived in areas where they formed over 30 per cent of the population. These figures are low. Peach concluded that

ghettos on the American model do not exist and, despite an unfavourable economic position and substantial evidence of continuing discrimination, the segregation trend among Black-Caribbean population in London is downwards (Peach, 1996, p. 234).

Structural constraints play a major role in the patterning of Black-African communities across London. Concentrations are in traditional working-class areas of Inner London characterised by poor housing, industrial decline and high rates of unemployment (Figure 1).

Housing Tenure and Segregation

Unlike other ethnic groups, Black-African households appear to be disproportionately concentrated in social housing: 42 per cent

Table 9. Tenure of Black-Africans households in the 1991 Census

	Great Britain	Greater London	Nigerians
Owner-occupied—own outright	3	2.9	28.5
Owner-occupied—buying	25	21.3	38.8
Rented privately	18	16.5	9.8
Rented from housing association	11	11.7	3.3
Rented from a local authority or new town	42	46	19.6
Total	100	100	100

Source: 1991 Census, 1 and 2 per cent SARs (ESRC/JISC purchase) (Crown copyright).

rent from local authorities, 11 per cent from housing associations and 18 per cent privately; with only 28 per cent owner-occupied (Table 9). Sixty-six per cent of all households in Great Britain are owner-occupiers and 48 per cent of the Black-Caribbean. Black Africans also have high levels of overcrowding: 6 per cent of the population are living in households with over 1.5 persons per room, the third-highest ethnic group behind the Bangladeshi and Pakistani (Table 10). The latter is strikingly lower than that of the general population and the lowest of all ethnic groups.

Racism was a major factor affecting the residential choices and housing tenure adopted by early migrants, as private landlords and public housing allocation restricted non-white groups to areas of low-quality housing (Henderson and Karn, 1987; Peach and Byron, 1994).

The price seemed reasonable, location Indifferent. The landlady swore she lived Off premises. Nothing remained But self-confession. 'Madam', I warned, 'I hate a wasted journey—I am an African.'

Silence. Silence transmission of Pressurized good-breeding. Voice, when it came Lipstick coated, long gold-rolled Cigarette-holder pipped. Caught I was, foully.

'HOW DARK?' ... I had not misheard....

'ARE YOU LIGHT OR VERY DARK?' (extract from Wole Soyinka's, *Telephone Conversation*, 1984).

For most Africans, living in close proximity to one's countrymen was a necessity if accommodation was to be found. Africans congregated in areas where landlords were known to rent houses to non-whites and where countrymen who purchased homes let rooms in order to meet mortgage repayments. Such houses were often in slum areas with overcrowded and poor facilities. Even though the upsurge in Black-African migration was co-terminous with the expansion in slum clearance and housing development, studies have shown that local authorities were reluctant to initiate redevelopment programmes in areas with a high concentration of immigrants (Carter *et al.*, 1994). Henderson and Karn (1987) document the discriminatory practice in contemporary local authority housing allocation schemes. They write:

it emerges that no matter what the allocation schemes or the type of housing stock, West Indians and Asians in all the local authorities studied have been found to receive the oldest housing with the poorest amenities, and the smallest proportion of houses as compared to flats (Henderson and Karn, 1987, p. 9).

This quote refers equally to Black Africans. Those wards in London with high concentra-

tions of Black Africans, especially in boroughs such as Southwark and Lambeth, also contain a high percentage of low-quality social housing. Peach and Byron (1993, p. 421) note the concentration of the Caribbean population in the 'least desirable, hard-to-let properties in the worst estates'. Black Africans are allocated housing on some of the worst estates in the London boroughs of Southwark and Lambeth. This situation has been aggravated by the policy of council house sales in the 1980s which has caused a considerable reduction in desirable properties as they are more likely to be bought by tenants (Peach and Byron, 1994).

The increasing cost of housing in Greater London may account for the higher proportion of Africans renting their accommodation in the city. Concentrations of Africans in the boroughs of Lambeth, Southwark and Hackney is a reflection of the availability of local authority housing rather than the lower cost of private housing stock. Escalating house prices in the 1980s have put most inner-city houses beyond the reach of most residents. Social housing is therefore the only option for people in low-paid employment who need to live in city-centre locations. In Southwark and Lambeth respectively, 71 and 62 per cent of all households live in rented

accommodation, with the majority in public housing.

The high representation in rented housing may also be attributed to the migrants' perception of the temporal nature of their settlement in Britain and related economic objectives. Rented accommodation can become a cultural strategy allowing resources to be transferred to home countries to assist relatives or for the construction of a future home. This does mean that the expected pattern of social class and tenure does not hold true for Black Africans.

There are representatives from all social classes living in housing rented from local authority (Table 11). These include high-status refugees who on arrival are first housed by local authority and who chose to remain tenants in order to take advantage of lower rents. Some may opt to adopt under-class positions in Britain to secure a higher-status lifestyle on their return home. However, because of their recent history of settlement, the refugee segment of the Black-African group often had access only to the worst quality social housing.

Economic Factors as Spatial Constraints

Economic participation is a major structural factor affecting residential choices. The settlement of Black Africans took place during major economic restructuring within Britain's cities (Robinson, 1989) and in Africa. The deepening economic crises of the 1980s forced many Africans, often poor and uneducated, to take on itinerant lifestyles as economic migrants, moving between North American, European and Middle Eastern countries.

In Britain, inner-city areas lost manufacturing jobs in the 1970s and this was a major blow for the immigrant population. During the 1980s, employment restructuring saw the expansion of financial services with its accompanied professional and managerial positions linked to a rise in low and unskilled service-sector employment (Hamnett, 1991). Residualisation in the traditional sectors of

Table 10. Proportion of ethnic groups living at over 1.5 persons per room, Great Britain, 1991

Ethnic group	Percentage living at over 1.5 per room
White	0.4
All household heads	0.5
House head born	
in Ireland	0.9
Black Caribbean	1.3
Black Other	1.9
Other Other	2.5
Indian	2.7
Other Asian	3.6
Black African	6.0
Pakistani	7.9
Bangladeshi	19.1

Source: OPCS, 1993, Vol. 2, Table 11, p. 769.

Table 11. Black Africans: tenure by social class, 1991 (percentage)

	Professional	Managerial	Non-manual skilled	Manual skilled	Part-skilled	Unskilled	Armed forces	Inadequately described	Not stated	Percentage of sample
Owner-occupied, outright	1.8	7.2	5.4	2.4	3.1	1.3	0	0.37	0.5	22
Owner-occupied, buying	3.5	9	14	4.2	8.7	2.4	0.4	0.2	2.2	45
Rented private furnished	1	0.9	2.4	0.7	1.1	0.2	0	0	0.2	5.7
Rented private	0	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.2	0	0.2	0.5	2.4
Rented job/business	0	0.4	0.7	0	0.7	0	0.2	0	0.2	2.2
Rented housing association	0	0	0.7	0	0.5	0.2	0	0	0.5	2
Rented local authority	2	5.4	4.8	3.1	2.6	0.9	0.2	0	1.5	21
Percentage in each social class	7.6	23.3	28.5	10.9	17.2	5.4	0.7	0.7	5.7	100

Source: 1991 Census, 1 Per cent Sample of Anonymised Records (ESRC/IJSC purchase) (Crown copyright).

Table 12. Black Africans: social class based on occupation, 1991 (percentage)

	Whites (10 per cent sample)	Black Africans (10 per cent sample)	Black Africans (2 per cent SAR)	Nigerians (1 per cent SAR)
I Professional	5	8	8	14
II Managerial and technical	28	27	26	26
III Skilled non-manual	23	22	22	18
III Skilled manual	21	12	11	8
IV Partly skilled	15	16	16	18
V Unskilled	6	9	10	11
Armed forces	1	1	1	
Inadequately described			10	1
Not stated	1	4	4	4
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: 1991 Census, 10 per cent sample (Ethnic Group and Country of Birth Topic Report) and 2 and 1 per cent Sample of Anonymised Records (ESRC/JISC purchase) (Crown copyright).

black employment, such as transport, health and local government, increased the ranks of the unemployed among the ethnic minority population.

Historically, there was no direct labour recruitment of Africans. Unlike other ethnic groups, there are few traditional industrial sectors of Black-African employment, with the exception of the National Health Service where many occupied low-status positions as ancillary staff: domestics (auxiliary) and caterers. Institutionalised discrimination made the acquisition of State-Enrolled Nurse status difficult and confined most blacks within low-status positions (Lewis, 1994).

Another distinctive feature of the Black-African group is their distribution across the social classes. If one accepts the occupational definition of social class, then 8 per cent of the Black-African group are in Social Class One compared to 5 per cent of Whites and 2 per cent of Black-Caribbeans. Nigerians are over represented with 14 per cent (Table 12). The 1970s expansion of institutions of higher education in Nigeria can explain partially this difference between Nigerians and other black groups. Furthermore, Nigerians tended to account for a higher proportion of the

African student population in Britain from the 1960s onwards.

The economically active Black Africans have higher than expected representation in the top three socioeconomic groups (Table 12). Their pattern of distribution is comparable with, if not better than, that of Whites. This has to be attributed to the higher level of qualifications within the Black-African group. Hypothetically, with their higher levels of qualification, Africans could be more selective of their occupational choices than Caribbean migrants. However, apart from the professional minority, they seem to have similar occupational trajectories to those of other immigrant groups. The employment profile of the Black-African group shows 65 per cent of the over 16 years to be economically active (Table 13). As is expected the proportion economically active is lower among the 16–24 age-groups, but only 66 per cent of the 30–34 are economically active compared to 81 per cent of the 50–54. The Black Caribbean group has percentages of 73 and 76 respectively.

In the 2 per cent SAR, 32 per cent of those employed are working in professional occupations as managers and administrators; local

Table 13. Economic position of the Black-African population in Great Britain, 1991, age 16 and over (percentages are for each highlighted category)

	All			Males			Females		
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
<i>Population age 16 and over</i>	150 072		75 405		74 667				
<i>Economically active</i>	96 919	65	52 026	69	44 893	60			
Economically active (age under 25)	21 150	22	10 797	20	8 763	19			
Employees (full-time)	49 952	51	27 017	52	22 935	51			
Employees (part-time)	11 289	12	3 611	7	7 678	17			
Self-employed (with employees)	1 521	2	1 143	2	378	1			
Self-employed (no employees)	3 891	4	3 003	6	888	2			
On a government scheme	4 140	4	2 217	4	1 923	4			
Economically active student	1 775	2	989	2	786	2			
<i>Unemployed</i>	26 126	27	15 035	20	11 091	15			
<i>Economically inactive</i>	53 153	36	23 379	16	29 774	20			
Students	27 014	51	15 992	68	11 022	37			
Permanently sick	3 337	6	1 741	7	1 596	5			
Retired	3 579	7	2 033	9	1 546	5			
Other inactive	19 233	36	3 613	15	15 610	52			

Source: 1991 Census (Ethnic Group and Country of Birth Topic Report) (Crown copyright).

Table 14. Principal occupations of Black Africans, 1991 (2 per cent individual SAR)

Occupation	Number	Percentage of total sample
Occupation in sales and services	212	12.0
Sales assistants and check-out operators	92	7.0
Numerical clerks and cashiers	86	5.2
Secretaries, typists, word processor operators and personal assistants	62	3.5
Managers and proprietors in service industries	59	3.3
Teaching professionals	57	3.2
Catering occupations	50	2.8
Administration, clerical officers in civil service and local goods	49	2.8
Health professionals	42	2.4
Clerks	42	2.4
Security and protective services	34	1.9
Road transport operators	33	1.9
Health and related occupation auxiliaries	3.2	1.8
Textiles, garments and related trades	29	1.6
Specialist managers	29	1.6
Business and financial professionals	28	1.6
Librarians and related professionals	25	1.4
Scientific technicians	23	1.3
Stores and despatch clerks and book-keepers	23	1.3

Source: OPCS 1991 Census, 2 per cent SARs (ESRC/JISC purchase) (Crown copyright).

government is a particular favourite, as is science and engineering, teaching and health (Table 14). However, Black Africans proliferate in manual and non-manual service-sector occupations as clerical assistants, cleaners, sales assistants, cashiers, kitchen porters and security guards. Expected gender differences are apparent and, as is common to all ethnic groups, more women (17 per cent) work part time than men (7 per cent). One has to take into account the student-worker: full-time students who work part-time and full-time workers who study part-time or at evening classes. Africans with student permits may work illegally to substitute grants that ended prematurely after the 1980s collapse of African economies. Only 2.5 per cent of the economically active claim to be studying. Qualitative assessment suggests that the figure should be higher. To which socioeconomic category the student-worker assigns him or herself is important because a significant number of Africans straddle the boundary between work and

study. The recent changes in the London labour market provided the space for Black Africans to find temporary unskilled service-sector employment as cleaners, night watchmen and waiters while they pursue their education.

Many of those who were not enumerated may be working illegally. It is well known among black Londoners that the first tube train of the morning carries an army of African cleaners to the office blocks of the City, the department stores of the West End and various educational institutions. Many such workers run the gamut of immigration officers who often operate in dawn swoops on suspected premises.

Africans employed in many of these occupational categories often do shift work or work unsociable hours. Even senior medical doctors find employment within an agency system as peripatetic doctors, working long hours in a variety of locations. The 1991 Census is unable to illuminate clearly the complexity of the known work patterns

among Africans, especially the presence of multiple occupations: for example, the combination of part-time early morning and evening cleaning, and day-time job. Black Africans work in industries that were more vulnerable to subtle changes in the economy; and fared worse than other groups in the 1980s decline in inner-city service-sector employment.

Clearly, the nature of employment of Black Africans necessitates inner-city residential locations, while peripatetic, multiple and low-paid service-sector jobs mitigate against owner-occupation where monthly wages might barely meet mortgage repayments, and job security is precarious.

Unemployment

In Great Britain, Black Africans have the third-highest rate of unemployment, 27 per cent—behind the Bangladeshis and Pakistanis—and almost a rate of 30 per cent in London. This compares to a national unemployment rate of 10 per cent and a Greater London regional rate of 7 per cent for men and 6 per cent for women. Fifty-eight per cent of the Black African unemployed are men. The unemployment rate among men is higher than for women in absolute numbers and for almost all age-groups and is alarmingly high among men in the 16–19 age-group. In the 2 per cent SAR, over one-third of all households had no residents in employment.

Among Black Africans, qualifications do not necessarily guarantee access to the labour market. Fourteen per cent of those with qualifications are unemployed (48 per cent of those unemployed have A levels, 39 per cent with first degree or equivalent, and 13 per cent have higher degrees). The average for Whites was 4 per cent and for Black Caribbeans 5.4 per cent. Clearly, the potential for Africans to fulfil their career choices is more limited than for other ethnic groups. Even among those employed, it is possible to find a high degree of underemployment with professionals working as taxi drivers, cleaners or security guards. This situation is

reflected across continents with Amissah (1996) arguing that discrimination prevents sub-Saharan blacks in the US from attaining socioeconomic outcomes commensurate with their qualifications. Blacks (Africans) in the US “do not have the higher earnings one would expect because of their higher educational level” (Amissah, 1996, p. 69). For the more recent migrants, job status often becomes irrelevant so long as the wages surpass those earned as a professional in the home country. This is increasingly the case since currency devaluation and wage freezes under structural adjustment programmes have had deleterious effects on the purchasing power of the professional salary.

As employment is closely linked to housing choices, the marginal position of the Black-African worker is more likely severely to constrain his or her ability to move out of social housing into private ownership. It is predictable that the housing and employment pattern of the Black African is likely to become well-entrenched in the social fabric of Inner London.

Cultural Factors in Black-African Segregation

Even though Black Africans may not live in ghettos, the high level of residential concentration appears to be beneficial and can be partly explained to some degree by the cultural strategies that are utilised during the process of migration and for sustainable settlement. Social networks are essential to migrants' survival strategies. And among Africans, these occur along ethnic, national or regional lines. For instance, Yoruba may congregate in the same areas, but may also depend on links with other Nigerian and west African ethnic groups. Within London, it is possible to identify residential areas associated with specific national groups: Ugandans, Ghanaians and Nigerians in south London, and Somalis in Poplar in east London. Regional and national associations are closely linked with the settlement process (Atampugre, 1992). Many perform social welfare functions providing mutual and financial sup-

port in times of bereavement or other crises, and fund raising for activities in their home areas. Among Ghanaians, Atampugre (1992) identifies some 19 village and town, 8 ethnic and clan, 24 district and regional, and 7 old boys' associations with representation in the major urban centres of the UK. African churches, such as the Celestial in Southwark and Kingsway in Hackney, combine spiritual, social and welfare services in their activities.

Social networks also provide opportunities for child care, particularly in situations where both parents are employed, and more importantly for housing. Unauthorised transfer of tenancy is another cultural strategy adopted by Black Africans. As households move between Africa and Great Britain, local authority tenancies can pass between kin relations, people from the same region, or close friends. Among Africans, local authority housing does not hold the same social stigma as for the indigenous population. Council housing close to central London was sought after, as such locations allow groups to maintain frequent contact with countrymen, both residents and visitors.

The availability of national foodstuffs is a major contributor to the concentration of Black Africans in certain areas of London. Brixton market, in the London borough of Lambeth, acts as both a shopping and a meeting place. It has the largest variety of Caribbean and African foodstuffs sold in London, with Peckham in Southwark, Dalston in Hackney and Finsbury Park in Haringey acting as subsidiary centres. Black Africans tend to stick more rigidly to their traditional diet than the Caribbean population who have incorporated some of the dietary preferences of the indigenous population. Increasingly, London is seeing the rise of the Black-African shopkeeper as entrepreneur, purveying the two most lucrative goods: food and hair care products.

Conclusion

In the UK, Africans seek to improve their

income and status through work and further education. The satisfaction of these two goals is in some way influential in determining the geographical location of the population. Hence their disproportionate concentration in the larger metropolitan centres. Even with government crack down, London continues to offer the best opportunities for education as well as legal or illegal low-paid employment. It seems that many qualified Africans are unemployed or underemployed as their qualifications are given less weight in Britain. There used to be a high degree of inter-continental commuting among Africans with permanent residence in the UK; the more successful of whom may retain a second home and possibly a business venture in their country of origin. The deteriorating political and economic conditions on the continent are leading to a resigned form of settlement by Black Africans, with many having to contemplate for the first time the prospect of retirement in the UK.

While highlighting the differing migration history and educational achievements, the paper notes the increasing convergence between the settlement experience of Black Africans and other black groups, reflecting the continued importance of discrimination in British society. Structural racism has forced the black ethnic groups into similar locations. In some areas, the presence of the Black-Caribbean population provided a secure residential base for the Black-African newcomers. However, with the settlement of the Black-African population occurring at the same time as economic restructuring and inner-city manufacturing decline, there is less chance of them being easily absorbed into the labour market. It appears that what may have been temporary survival strategies have become salient features of the community. Although widely represented across the social classes, there is an underclass which is virtually unemployable and unskilled, comprising mainly refugees whose command of English is poor and whose job prospects are virtually non-existent. As to levels of segregation, at an optimistic level we can argue that a pattern of suburbanisation may begin

to occur in the manner in which is now evident for the Caribbean community. Clearly, the educational profile of the group does indicate the possibility of better economic opportunities for a significant proportion, with the least-qualified sections becoming entrenched in socially undesirable city-centre locations.

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