“Residential concentration, ethnic social capital and political participation of Black Africans in Britain: a mixed-methods approach”

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Abstract

In recent years, the political and scholarly debate about how to integrate more recent and long-established ethnic minority groups in the country’s political mainstream has significantly intensified. This paper aims to investigate the marginalising and mobilising effects of co-ethnic concentration on political participation and to shed light on the underpinning processes. In particular, the paper concentrates on the role played by ethnic social capital, here defined as formal networks generated within the ethnic group. Due to the notable internal heterogeneity that characterises the Black African community, the paper addresses the effects of immigration-related factors on the relationship between concentration, ethnic social capital and political engagement.

This paper combines evidence from the 2010 Ethnic Minority British Electoral Survey with qualitative data collected amongst the Ghanaian and Somali communities in London through interviews and observation. The preliminary findings suggest that the relationship between residential concentration, ethnic social capital and political participation of Black Africans considerably varies on the basis of the type of political engagement addressed (i.e. electoral, non-electoral), as well as the immigration-related factors that characterise the national communities making up the wider African group.


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Introduction

The recent increase in international migration flows has inevitably contributed to the creation of more diverse societies across Europe. The changes produced by this growing heterogeneity have led to an intense scholarly and political debate about not only the approach European democracies should be adopting to integrate ethnic minority groups in the socio-political, cultural and economic mainstream but also the results achieved by the integration models developed and supported so far.

In Britain, this debate has been given new vigour after the 2001 riots occurred in Oldham, Bradford, Leeds and Burnley and the terrorist attacks that took place in London in July 2005. In this framework, ethnic residential concentration has become an increasingly relevant subject of research as it has been linked to the marginalisation of ethnic communities from the societal mainstream and the consequent loss of community cohesion (Phillips, 2005). Drawing from the scholarly American tradition which sees ethnic concentration as a proxy for the degree of integration of immigrant and ethnic communities (Park and Burgess, 1921; Wirth and Reiss, 1964; Gordon, 1964), British scholars have primarily attempted to define the extent to which Britain is becoming more ‘segregated’ by identifying the presence of so called ‘America-style ghettos’ (Johnston et al., 2002a; Johnston et al., 2002b; Johnston et al., 2004; Johnston et al., 2007; Poulsen et al., 2001; Peach, 2007; Peach, 1996; Finney and Simpson, 2009). A more recent, and hence less developed, body of literature has focused on the beneficial or detrimental effects of ethnic enclaves on various aspects of the process of integration, such as health and well-being (Stafford et al., 2010), employment and economic inclusion (Clark and Drinkwater, 2002; Fieldhouse, 1999). So far, little empirical research has been conducted about the relationship between residential concentration and political participation in Britain (Cutts et al., 2007; Fieldhouse and Cutts, 2008a; Fieldhouse and Cutts, 2008b) and only speculative suggestions have been made about the processes that lies beneath this relationship (Bilodeau, 2009; Fieldhouse and Cutts, 2008b). This paper tests, firstly, the two competing hypotheses about the mobilising and marginalising effect of ethnic residential concentration on political engagement and, secondly, the role played by ethnic-based formal social connections, both secular and religious, in linking spatial proximity between co-ethnics and political participation (Tillie, 2004; Berger et al., 2004; Fennema and Tillie, 2001; Jacobs et al., 2004; Londén et al., 2007; Morales and Pilati, 2011).

The Black African community represent an extremely interesting case to investigate. Not only its presence in the UK has been remarkably growing since the 1990s and is expected to further increase in future decades, particularly in London, but the community also presents an extraordinary internal diversity stemming from the numerous national groups composing it and, specifically, by their divergent immigration histories, integration experiences and socio-cultural backgrounds. Little attention
has been paid to Black Africans so far, and this study aims to fill this gap and shed new light on the effect that this diversity exerts on the relationship between residential concentration, ethnic social resources and political participation. The paper adopts a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data.

**Theoretical background**

The paper focuses on three main processes, as illustrated in figure 1. First of all, it investigates the effect of residential concentration on political participation. Secondly, it explores the process underpinning this relationship by separately analysing the impact of residential concentration on ethnic social resources and the effect of ethnic social resources on political participation.

Figure 1: Residential concentration, ethnic social resources and political participation: the path model

The following section presents a review of the literature published as well as the related hypotheses to be tested for each of the three relationships.

**Residential concentration and political participation**

The existing literature presents contrasting findings about the impact of co-ethnic residential concentration on political participation. Two competing hypotheses have been developed. The marginalising hypothesis argues that geographical concentration disproportionately increases socio-economic inequalities and hence leads to what Massey and Denton define as an ‘endemic hyper-segregation’, as in the case of Black ghettos in the US (Massey and Denton, 1993; 1989). Living in ethnic enclaves that are located in the most impoverished urban areas is deemed to deprive ethnic minority groups of material (e.g. income and education) as well as psychological (e.g. political trust and efficacy) means that are deemed to be essential for the development of political participation (Tate, 1991; Danigelis, 1978; Orum, 1966; Cohen and Dawson, 1993). Besides the socio-economic standpoint, high ethnic concentration areas are expected to restrict the opportunities of interaction with the socio-cultural, political and economic mainstream and thus drastically reduce the likelihood of ethnic
minorities to be included in this domain. Robert Putnam (2000) devised the notion of ‘bonding social capital’ to describe the development of these strong ties within the group in contrast to ‘bridging’ social networks amongst ethnically or socially heterogeneous groups. The latter form of social capital is considered to be more desirable for political engagement and more generally for the quality and strength of democracy. Indeed, cross-cutting networks facilitate the creation of wider and more generalised trust that in turn nourishes the sense of civic-ness and social cohesion in which democratic systems are rooted (Putnam et al., 1993). According to this perspective, the close-knit social networks promoted by ethnic residential concentration are expected to reduce social cohesion in the wider society and to facilitate the reproduction of group-based values, norms and sanctions that might encourage the withdrawal from political participation, on one side, or significantly restrict the target of political actions by community members to issues affecting the specific community or the country of origin rather than the wider society in the host country (Schonwalder, 2007; Morales and Pilati, 2011). The marginalising hypothesis would then be applied to our case of study as follows:

**H1 - Black Africans living in areas characterised by high concentration of co-ethnics are less likely to be involved in political activities than those living outside those areas.**

Opposing these claims, various theories have argued the advantage of co-ethnic. First of all, residential proximity with co-ethnics is expected to reinforce group consciousness (Schlichting et al., 1998)\(^1\), which positively influences political participation by nourishing political efficacy and political mistrust that in turn favour “high-initiative, conventional policy behaviour for otherwise unmotivated citizens” (Shingles, 1981: 81)\(^2\). Furthermore, residential concentration has been linked to two phenomena that are generally described as strong predictors of ethnic political participation: the emergence of ethnic leaders and candidates, and the process of political mobilisation activated by mainstream parties and

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\(^1\) Group consciousness is defined by Miller et al. (1981: 495) as a form of identification implying “a political awareness or ideology regarding the group’s relative position in society along with a commitment to collective action aimed at realizing the group’s interests” (see also Jackman and Jackman, 1973; Conover, 1984; McClain et al., 2009; Gurin et al., 1980; Campbell et al., 1954; Brown, 1931; Olsen, 1970).

\(^2\) Richard Shingles referred to Gamson’s (1968) claim that mistrust represents the rationale for political action, while a strong sense of efficacy provides the optimal confidence to actually take action. In this perspective, the combination of low political trust and high political efficacy is the most effective in order to support participation. Shingles argued that the system-blame process implied by group consciousness allows individuals within the Black community to “acquire a healthier, improved self-image along with a more critical, cynical view of the system” (Shingles, 1981: 78). The approach proposed by Shingles was also adopted by Klohus-Edwards et al. (1978) and Guterbock and London (1983). Whereas, some studies have confirmed the tendency of individuals expressing high group consciousness to be more engaged in political activities (Stokes, 2003; Wilcox and Gomez, 1990; Guterbock and London, 1983; Quintelier, 2009), further research has highlighted the limitations of this hypothesis in particular with regard to the remarkable variations in its efficacy observed across ethnic groups (Leighley and Vedlitz, 1999; Klohus-Edwards et al., 1978; Antunes and Gaitz, 1975; Marschall, 2001; Lien, 1994; Jackson, 1987; Verba et al., 1993; Tate, 1991; Tate, 1993; Cohen and Kapsis, 1978).
community leaders (Uhlaner et al., 1989; Leighley, 2001; Bobo and Gilliam, 1990; Prendelli, 2008). Ethnic candidates and ethnic leaders actively mobilise community members and strengthen their internal and external political efficacy (Bobo and Gilliam, 1990; Tate, 1991; Tate, 1993). The intense interplay between voters, political candidates and community leaders is also considered to be crucial for political inclusion (Uhlaner, 1986; 1989a; 1989b). Leaders are interested in obtaining favourable policies from candidates, who in turn aim to win electoral competitions, and these interests are channelled into a mutually supportive relationship between the two actors, which are both interested in increasing the level of political activism of community members (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993). Geographical proximity facilitates these mobilisation processes in two main ways. Firstly, it reduces the costs sustained by parties and candidates to target larger and thus more visible communities (Leighley, 2001). Secondly, it favours social connections between co-ethnics, hence strengthens group cohesion and finally creates incentives for candidates and leaders to cooperate. A further explanation of the positive link between concentration and political participation is provided by the social capital theory. The bonding social connections between co-ethnics are expected to be reinforced by physical proximity. In contrast with the marginalising hypothesis, these close-knit relationships and formal social structures are seen as resources that support and channel political (Fennema and Tillie, 2001; Fennema and Tillie, 1999; Seo, 2011) and civic participation (Alesina and Ferrara, 2000; Costa and Kahn, 2003). The mobilising hypothesis has been supported by empirical studies about voter turnout and electoral registration of Asians in Britain (Cutts et al., 2007; Fieldhouse and Cutts, 2008a; Fieldhouse and Cutts, 2008b). The following alternative hypothesis is therefore suggested:

H2 - Black Africans living in areas characterised by high concentration of co-ethnics are more likely to be involved in political activities than those living outside those areas.

Bobo and Gilliam refers to the concept of ‘political empowerment’, which is defined as “the extent to which a group has achieved significant representation and influence in political decision making” (Bobo and Gilliam, 1990). Their study of the African-Americans’ socio-political involvement in 1987 shed light on the positive impact of black political empowerment. Individuals living in high-black-empowerment areas were indeed found to be more likely to be socially and politically engaged than Blacks living in low-empowerment areas and. Moreover, Bobo and Gilliam empirically proved that political empowerment indirectly affects Blacks’ political participation by enhancing political trust and efficacy as well as improving political attentiveness.

Uhlaner argued that the mobilising strategies actuated by community leaders are primarily rooted in the idea of ‘relation goods’. In order to galvanise group members into voting and hence enable the trade with candidates, leaders can appeal to people’s desire for inclusion and the idea that, within the group, political action represent an ‘entry tickets’ for those who want to be included. The success of the mobilising action depends on the leaders’ ability to persuade community members that everybody in the group will act in the same way and by underlying the importance of group solidarity and unity to make this action beneficial. In Uhlaner’s words: “Leaders can increase participation to the extent that can convey the message that their group’s identity is politically important, that the group’s action is crucial for achieving an important outcome” (Uhlaner, 1989b: 279).
This paper attempts not only to test these competing hypotheses but also, and more importantly, to investigate the ‘missing link’, namely the process linking co-ethnic spatial proximity and political participation. The social capital theory’s focus on ethnic-based social resources provides a valuable starting point for this investigation. Firstly, these ethnic-based social structures are the primary source of both marginalisation (e.g. alienation) and mobilisation (e.g. group consciousness and mobilisation) processes rooted in social relationships. Secondly, residential concentration is deemed to be a fertile environments for these close-knit connections and strong ties to develop and strengthen (Cinalli and Giugni, 2011). Hence, the third hypothesis is stated as follows:

H3 - Co-ethnic residential concentration strengthens ethnic-based social resources.

Ethnic Social Resources and Political Participation

The relevance of social connectedness as a means to nourish individual political involvement has been pointed out by numerous studies, which have investigated the role of voluntary associational membership (Verba et al., 1995; Cassel, 1999; Olsen, 1972; Verba et al., 1993; Newton, 1997; Leighton, 1996; Teorell, 2003; Verba and Nie, 1972; Ayala, 2000; Salway et al.) as well as church attendance and religious affiliation (Peterson, 1992). These formal ties, which are generally referred to as essential behavioural components of social capital, have been addressed as regards the more specific case of ethnic minorities. In particular, scholars have focused on the political effect of voluntary organisations and places of worship that are developed between co-ethnics. As for the direct relationship between residential concentration and political participation, two competing hypotheses can be tested. On one side, the traditional assimilationist paradigm sees these close-knit relationships as obstacles to integration due to their ability to strengthen in-group cohesion and hinder contacts with the mainstream society.

H4 – Ethnic-based social resources negatively affect the level of political participation amongst Black Africans

On the other side, a growing amount of literature has attempted to shed light on the benefits that members of ethnic minorities can derive from their own communities and use these strong ties to face

5 The expression ‘ethnic-based’ refers to social networks, both formal and informal, created between co-ethnics and within the close circle of ethnic communities.

6 This paper adopts Putnam’s definition of social capital as “features of social life – networks, norms and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives” (Putnam, 1995: 664-665)
the difficulties brought by migrations and facilitate the integration into the mainstream society (Zhou and Bankston, 1994).

**H5 – Ethnic-based social resources positively affect the level of political participation amongst Black Africans**

The competing hypotheses are tested for each of the two ethnic-based social resources identified: ethnic voluntary organisations and ethnic religious institutions.

**Ethnic Voluntary Associations**

The political impact of organisational membership has long been researched. According to this literature, associational engagement brings three main benefits: the creation of civic skills, that is to say communicational and organisational abilities, which individuals can utilise in the political domain (Verba et al., 1993; Ayala, 2000; Verba et al., 1995); the exposure to political stimuli, such as discussions about political issues, contacts with political actors and acquisitions of political information and knowledge (Olsen, 1972; Verba and Nie, 1972; Verba et al., 1993; Leighley, 1990; Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993); and political recruitment and mobilisation (Leighley, 1996; Teorell, 2003; Verba et al., 1995; Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993). In addition, Putnam linked association and political participation through the capacity of the former to encourage “habits of cooperation, solidarity, and public-spiritedness” (1993: 89-90), that is to say ‘civic community’ or ‘civicness’, which in turn spills over into political participation.

In more recent years, a growing amount of literature has been published as regards the extent to which these arguments apply to ethnic voluntary organisations. Some scholarly findings indicated a positive relationship between the latter and political participation of community members (Jacobs et al., 2004; Tillie, 2004; Heelsum, 2005; Morales and Pilati, 2011). Ethnic organisations were found to be valuable channels for the acquisition of civic skills, although no effect was found with regard to political mobilisation (Myrberg, 2011; Stromblad and Adam, 2010). Fennema and Tillie’s (2001; 1999) suggested that dense networks of ethnic organisations horizontally connected through ‘interlocking directorates’, that is to say common board members, and multiple memberships, also referred to as ‘ethnic civic community’, are associate with higher levels of political participation. By drawing on Putnam’s civicness argument, these scholars claimed that this positive relationship is rooted in the ability of ethnic

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7 The concept of ethnic civic community was measured on the basis of a civic community index based on the following indicators: the number of organisations in the community (this information was found in the files of the Chamber of Commerce), the quantity of isolated associations (i.e. without interlocking directorates) and the number of interlocking directorates in the network. The scholars also included the use of ethnic TV channels and newspapers as examples of mass communication tools that reinforce ethnic civic community (Fennema and Tillie, 2001).
civic community to create social trust and cohesion, which encourage community members to act together to achieve common goals in the political arena. Togeby (2004), however, rejected Fennema and Tillie’s suggestion by showing that, in Denmark, associational engagement has no effect on social trust and the latter is not a significant predictor of political participation (see also Londen et al., 2007). In support of the hypothesised disadvantage of ethnic organisations, scholars argued that the sole membership in this type of voluntary groups do not significantly influence political participation. The beneficial effect is obtained only through engagement in both ethnic and cross-ethnic associations, (Stromblad and Adam, 2010 ;Stromblad et al., 2011 ;Londen et al., 2007), as the latter represents a bridging form of social capital which links ethnic and mainstream communities, fosters more generalised trust and cohesion within society and is hence deemed to be more desirable for political inclusion.

Besides these findings, empirical research points out the difficulty of making bold statements about the impact of ethnic organisations on the process of political integration as the latter greatly varies when investigated across countries and ethnic groups under the influence of various factors. Firstly, the openness of the national as well as local political opportunity structure, which is generally defined as the set of individual and collective rights recognised to ethnic minorities (Cinalli and Giugni, 2011 ;Koopmans, 2004 ;Prendelli, 2008 ;Morales and Pilati, 2011 ;Heelsum, 2005). Secondly, the immigration-related characteristics of ethnic groups, which determine the structure, function and thus impact of their organisational networks (Jacobs et al., 2004 ;Berger et al., 2004 ;Togeby, 2004). Thirdly, the modes of political participation considered, which include national and local elections, political behaviours and attitudes, electoral or non-electoral activities (Togeby, 2004 ;Berger et al., 2004).

**Religious Institutions**

Ethnic religious institutions⁸ have been traditionally depicted as essential resources not only for the civic and political mobilisation of ethnic communities, but also for the provision of a wide range of social and educational services to community members. As Myrdal stated with regard to political engagement of the African American community: “(…) the Negro church means more to the Negro community than the white church means to the white community – in its function as a giver of hope, as an emotional cathartic, as a centre of community activity, as a source of leadership, and as a provider of respectability” (Myrdal, 1944: 942). Black churches in the US represented supportive environments for

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⁸ Ethnic religious institutions are here defined as places of worship where the majority of the members are either from the same ethnic group or from various ethnic minority groups.
both the Civil Rights movement and the Black candidates, such as Jesse Jackson in the 1980s. Tate (1993 ;1991) argued: “The church provides a structured setting where Black gain important political skills and where political information can be shared” (Tate, 1993: 96). The mobilising power of African-American churches has also been attributed to its transversal and heterogeneous composition including individuals form a wide range of socio-economic strata (Tate, 1993 ;Verba et al., 1995). Black-led churches in Britain have also been described as vital domains where community members can find refuge from discrimination and deprivation; discover and reinforce a strong sense of group belonging and identity (Wilcox and Gomez, 1990); acquire civic skills, political efficacy and political knowledge (Verba and Nie, 1972 ;Harris, 1994); practice civic behaviours (Verba et al., 1995); and support new forms of leadership (Johnson, 1991). Only formal and active attendance at religious services, and not simply religious faith, proved to significantly increase voter turnout.

Jamal (2005) investigated the political impact of American mosques and found that, despite variations in this effect across the African, South Asian and Arab Muslim communities, mosques can be compared to churches in their ability to generate both civic and political participation by enhancing psychological resources, such as group consciousness. Eggert and Giugni (2011) concentrated on the differences in the impact of church attendance and religious activism amongst Christian and Muslim immigrants across Europe and found that membership in religious groups, but not church attendance, has a positive effect on electoral and non-electoral participation only for Muslims. As suggested by the scholars, this dissimilarity might be the result of the willingness of Christian organisations to concentrate more on the private rather than public sphere, which is on the contrary the main domain that Muslim associations operate in. So far, as highlighted by the literature reviewed, the impact of ethnic religious institutions on political participation has been mainly researched in the American context.

**The Black African community in Britain**

The British African community has its roots in the extraordinary development of slave trade as well as the success of colonialism between the 17th and 19th Century (Walvin, 2000 ;Daley, 1998). The bulk of international migration flows began after the II World War when an increasing number of affluent young immigrants arrived from Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone with the main purpose of pursuing higher education and professional training (Daley, 1998). Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, men and women mainly from Ghana and Nigeria started populating the middle-class neighbourhoods of London, on one side, and an increasing number of asylum seekers and refugees escaping from the socio-political instability of countries like Uganda, Somalia, Eritrea, Ghana, Congo, Angola and
Ethiopia sought protection in the UK, on the other side (Daley, 1998). In contemporary Britain, the Black African community is a tessera in the mosaic of ethnicities that populate the country, as illustrated in table 1. Despite the relatively limited attention dedicated to this minority group by the scholarly literature, its presence is becoming increasingly visible. The number of Black Africans in Great Britain has increased by 128% between 1991 and 2001 (see also Rees and Butt, 2004).

Table 1: Ethnic groups in England, Scotland and Wales - Census 1991 and 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>51,873,794</td>
<td>52,481,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>840,255</td>
<td>1,051,844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>476,555</td>
<td>746,619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>162,835</td>
<td>282,811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Caribbean</td>
<td>499,964</td>
<td>565,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>212,362</td>
<td>484,783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>156,938</td>
<td>243,258</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The overwhelming majority (78%) of Black Africans concentrates in London (378,933 members in 2001), where the group represents the 5.3% of the total population and is the second largest ethnic community following Indians (6.1%) and just above Black Caribbean (4.8%). The statistical relevance of British Africans in London has risen from just above 172,000 in 1991 to about 379,000 individuals in 2001, hence determining an exceptional increase of 120% (Mackintosh, 2005). It has also been estimated that this growth will continue, particularly in the Greater London area (Rees and Butt, 2004). The lack of research focusing on the Black African community is surprising due to not only its size but also the internal diversity stemming from the numerous national groups that compose it. This diversity has been underestimated and disregarded in favour of a more general view of the group as a homogeneous entity. New immigrants and well-established African communities have migrated from more than fifty different countries through multiple channels and for different reasons and present a strikingly wide range of demographic profiles and religious, linguistic and cultural backgrounds that could significantly influence and differentiate the integration process (Mitton and Aspinall, 2010).
By focusing on the Black African community this paper attempts not only to improve the knowledge of such a complex ethnic group but also to shed new light on how the relationship between residential concentration, ethnic social resources and political participation vary on the basis of immigration-related factors, as often underlined by previous literature. As the internal diversity of the Black African community is not effectively captured by the quantitative analysis, the qualitative fieldwork concentrates on Ghanaians and Somalis, two very different national groups. The next section highlights the main between-group differences.

**Ghanaians and Somalis**

Recent studies have underlined the salience of the Ghanaian and Somali communities in representing the internal heterogeneity characterising the Black African group (Mitton and Aspinall, 2011).

**Length of residence:** Ghanaians and Somalis portray the distinction between well-established ethnic minorities and ‘new immigrant’ communities. The Ghanaian community represents one of the largest established minority groups within the African community, along with Nigerians. The first immigrants from Ghana arrived in the country in the 1940s, and the number of Ghanaians climbed from just above 11,000 in 1971 to 56,112 in 2001 (Hear et al., 2004), with just over 46,500 Ghanaians who concentrate in the London region (Mackintosh, 2005; Vasta and Kandilige, 2007). Recent estimates of the UK population by country of birth raised the figure to 83,000 members in 2010. Contrary to Ghanaians, the overwhelming majority of Somalis arrived in the country during the 1980s and 1990s primarily as asylum seekers or through the channel of family reunions. The official statistics registered 43,532 Somalis in 2001, of which 33,000 in London (Mackintosh, 2005). These figures have however been contested by recent estimates that established that there are between 90,000 and 95,000 Somalis in Britain and from 60,000 to 70,000 in the London region (Hopkins, 2006; Icar, 2007).

**Reasons for migrating:** The immigration history of Ghanaians and Somalis is characterised by different push factors. Immigrants from Ghana who arrived in the UK during the 1940s had as a primary purpose the acquisition of higher education and professional training (Arthur, 2008; Peil, 1995). Even after the independence in 1957, Ghanaians continued to migrate for training and education, also driven

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9 The information about country of birth can be used to generalise immigration-related characteristics and patterns of integration. Nonetheless, it is important to point out that a great deal of diversity also characterises national groups, within which numerous ethnicities, languages and migration experiences coexist. African countries are often internally fragmented, and the patterns of migration of specific nationalities have changed overtime.

by the economic crisis that heavily hit the country during the 1970s (Arthur, 2008; Daley, 1998). The political instability that characterised the country particularly throughout the 1980s and the early 1990s represented a significant boost for the increase in the number of Ghanaian asylum seekers in the UK, which however remained remarkably below the rates of other communities, with the most common reasons for migration being still represented by education, specialist training and employment (Aspinall and Chinouya, 2008; Elam and Chinouya, 2000). The Somali community has a different immigration history. The very first migrants from Somalia arrived in Britain during the late 19th Century, leaving the British Somaliland protectorate as seamen (Hopkins, 2006; Harris, 2004; Icar, 2007). Despite these early settlements, the bulk of the Somali community migrated in 1990s. According to a report published by the Institute for Public Policy (Ippr, 2007), 72% of Somalis arrived in Britain after 1996, against only 40% of Ghanaians. The migration influxes from Somalia are primarily rooted in the internal political instability since the end of Siad Barre’s dictatorship in 1991.

Religion: Religious affiliation is extremely relevant when considering not only the differences between Ghanaians and Somalis, but also the extent to which they diverge from the host society. The great majority of Ghanaians in the homeland (70%) are Christian, with a prevalence of Pentecostals (24%), 16% are Muslim and 8.5% follow traditional beliefs (Cia, 2011). Similarly, the British Ghanaians belong to Christian denominations, in particular Anglican, Roman Catholic and Pentecostal (Elam and Chinouya, 2000). On the contrary, Somalis are predominantly Sunni Muslim.

Integration experience: Language proficiency is often used as a proxy for the level of integration of ethnic minorities within the host society. Mitton and Aspinall (2010: 194) argued that: “Somalis are particularly linguistically isolated”. The large majority (63%) of Ghanaians speak English at home, whereas a remarkable 85% of Somalis uses languages other than English. This difference primarily derives from the fact that the official language of Ghana is English, while Arabic and Somali are the official idioms in Somalia. Scholars have also underlined the between-groups differences in the level of employment and educational achievements (Mitton and Aspinall, 2011). Somalis present extremely high levels of unemployment and inactivity which add to remarkably low level of educational achievements (Harris, 2004; Mitton and Aspinall, 2010). Ghanaians, in contrast, achieve higher levels of education (i.e. tertiary education achieved in the UK or Ghana) and better occupational outcomes, despite their presence in the low-paid jobs having increased notably in the past decade, especially in London (Herbert et al., 2006).
Methods

In order to achieve an in-depth and complete understanding of the influence exerted by residential concentration on political participation, a mixed methods approach compounding both quantitative and qualitative methods is adopted to achieve two main aims. First of all, the quantitative enquiry exclusively focuses on the Black African community as a whole\(^{11}\), whereas by concentrating on Ghanaians and Somalis, the qualitative enquiry investigates the extent to which the internal heterogeneity that characterises the Black African community influences the relationship between residential concentration, political participation and ethnic social resources. Secondly, the qualitative case study sheds light on elements that are not effectively measured by the existing quantitative data, such as: the nature and function of ethnic social resources at the aggregate level; the attitudes towards political participation; the ways in which community members engage in ethnic social resources; the processes that link ethnic social resources to political participation. In this instance, the quantitative analysis provides a valuable framework and context for the qualitative findings.

**The quantitative enquiry**

The data for the quantitative analysis is drawn from the 2010 Ethnic Minority British Election Study (EMBES) which entails an ethnic boosted sample. The EMBES sample includes 524 Black Africans over a total sample of 2,787. The survey adopted a clustered, stratified sampling strategy based on the Postcode Address File. Areas with high minority density were over-sampled, and the lowest density areas with less than 2% of the ethnic population were excluded. The primary sampling unit is represented by the Lower Layer Super Output Area in England and Wales. A face-to-face questionnaire including a self-completion session was administered along with a mail-back questionnaire (Heath et al., 2011). The quantitative analysis entails logistic regression models for the Black African community as whole. The design weight included in the EMBES dataset is applied to the models in order to obtain robust standard errors and account for clustering.

**The qualitative enquiry**

The case study design has been identified as the most appropriate and advantageous approach insofar as it allows an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of interest within the context where it naturally occurs (Yin, 2009). The Ghanian and Somali communities in London are the two cases of

\(^{11}\) The 2010 EMBES dataset does not allow the separate analysis of Ghanaians and Somalis (or other national groups) as the sample size varies between 50 and 65 respondents.
interest on the basis of their contrasting immigration history, integration experience, as well as religious, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. London was identified as fieldwork setting in virtue of the exceptional concentration (80%) of Black Africans, and specifically Ghanaians and Somalis, in this urban area. In particular, the data collection focused on four London boroughs: Tower Hamlets for Somalis; Haringey and Hackney for Ghanaians; Newham for both communities. The selection of these boroughs is primarily justified by the fact that, according to the 2001 Census statistics, these are high-concentration areas for either Somalis or Ghanaians. This choice was also guided by advice received from researchers who had experience in working with Somalis and Ghanaians in London, the knowledge gathered through previous studies as well as the information emerged during the fieldwork. Overall, despite trying to clearly define the fieldwork boundaries, a flexible approach was adopted to recruit participants. This flexibility was deemed to be necessary in order to capture the ways in which social networks are developed across formal boundaries, such as those defined by boroughs. This approach helped shed light on the different social networks created by the two communities and the different role played by ‘place’.

The fieldwork was conducted between November 2011 and April 2012 and the data were gathered through face-to-face, semi-structured interviews and participant observation of group meetings and organisational activities. The sample included community members (men and women aged 18 and

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12 The research conducted amongst Somalis remained concentrated in one borough where it was possible to observe and have access to very dense connections between co-ethnics who tended to live and socialise in the same place. On the contrary, the difficulties in finding visible and easily accessible Ghanaian organisations in a specific area hindered the recruitment and observation process. Some respondents socialised in high-concentration areas, where they were recruited, but lived in low-concentration or distant areas.

13 The counter-case of low-concentration areas were not sampled as the present study aims to understand the extent to which residential concentration affects political participation of Black Africans through the development of ethnic-based social resources. Consequently, the objective to be achieved through a multi-case study approach is to highlight processes that happen within areas of high residential concentration. Providing evidence of how low residential concentration impacts on ethnic social capital and political participation is beyond the study’s scope. In addition, more practical considerations about the inclusion of low-concentration areas were taken into account. Firstly, the identification of a sample of Somalis and Ghanaians in low-concentration areas could have been significantly challenging, or even unfeasible, due to the extremely low numbers of community members in those neighbourhoods. Secondly, time and resource constraints limited the ability of the researcher to further expand the fieldwork setting. Having said that, the snowball sample generated within high concentration areas involved a large variety of individuals coming from different urban areas, including low-concentration neighbourhoods due to the different settings in which people reside, work and socialise.

14 The borough of Tower Hamlets, for instance, is not the area of highest concentration for Somalis, as in 2001 only 1,300 Somalis were registered in this borough compared to 3,381 in Brent and 3,330 in Ealing. However, more recent estimates established that the community size has remarkably grown and there might be between 12,000 and 15,000 Somalis in Tower Hamlets. Moreover, researchers and previous literature pointed out the importance of the borough for the community, particularly in terms of social resources, such as community organisations. Haringey, where 3,184 Ghanaians were recorded in 2001, was similarly described as a ‘neuralgic centre’ for the community. Hackney was included due to its proximity to both Tower Hamlets and Haringey as well as high concentration of Ghanaians (3,209 in 2001). Finally, Newham represented the borough where both communities concentrate (3,700 Ghanaians and 3,100 Somalis).
above) and community leaders. Participants were recruited through a snowball sampling strategy. For Somalis, the snowball sample began from community organisations, namely voluntary groups that specifically cater for the Somali community. For Ghanaians, religious institutions (i.e. churches) where members were mainly Ghanaians represented a much more effective channel to access the community, whereas community groups proved to be less visible and less accessible than amongst Somalis. Recruitment of participants through the initial intervention of such formal social networks was crucial to facilitate the process of acceptance and trust gaining and also enabled the researcher to reach community leaders and gain a valuable insight into the structure and action of these networks, which in this study represent both recruitment channels and objects of investigation. The sample achieved for the two communities is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of Ghanaians and Somalis in the qualitative sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Somalis</th>
<th>Ghanaians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong>¹</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generation²</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total sample</strong></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹One value is missing for Ghanaians.
²1 generation=people who were born abroad and came to the country aged 16 and above; 1.5 generation=people who were born abroad and came to the country before 16 years of age; 2 generation=people who were born in the UK but whose parents (both or at least of parent) were born abroad.

The term ‘ethnic leader’, in this study, refers to chairs or directors of community organisations, religious leaders, and activists from the community who are particularly active in tackling issues affecting the community (i.e. advocates).

The voluntary groups were identified primarily through internet websites: the Charity Commission for England and Wales, GuideStar UK and the Newham Voluntary Sector Consortium. Conversations with researchers who had worked with Somalis and Ghanaians as well as information received from participants during the fieldwork were a valuable methods used to identify voluntary groups and religious institutions.
Results

This section is organised as follows. First, descriptive statistics of participation of Black Africans in ethnic social resources and political activities are presented. Then, the quantitative results for the direct relationship between concentration and participation are illustrated. Finally, the impact of concentration on ethnic social resources and of the latter on political participation is analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Political participation and ethnic social resources: some descriptives

Prior to presenting the results of the regression analysis, some descriptive statistics are reported so as to provide a brief account of the levels of political participation and engagement in ethnic organisations, ethnic places of worship and ethnic informal networks amongst Black Africans. The group is also compared to other four ethnic communities. Table 3 shows the frequencies for political participation. The latter is addressed as a multidimensional concept entailing both electoral and non-electoral activities and is measured through three binary variables: voting in general elections; voting in local elections; participation in non-electoral activities, which is defined as involvement in at least one activity including protests, petitions, giving money to political causes, boycotting (information on variable coding can be found in appendix). Black Africans are less engaged in electoral activities than other ethnic groups, in particular Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, with the latter being the most active community. In 2010, about 60% of Black African respondents voted in general and local elections. Participation in non-electoral engagement is remarkably low for all ethnic groups.

Table 3: Political participation by ethnic group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Black African</th>
<th>Black Caribbean</th>
<th>Indian</th>
<th>Pakistani</th>
<th>Bangladeshi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voted in general elections</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>74.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ns (valid)</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voted in local elections</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>79.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ns (valid)</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-electoral participation</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ns (valid)</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>653</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted percentages. Respondents who were not eligible to vote were excluded. Source: 2010 EMBES.
Table 4 describes the participation in ethnic formal social resources by ethnic group. Black Africans are the second most active group, after Indians, as regards ethnic and cultural organisations, with 34% of community members who actively contributed to voluntary activities in the past 12 months. They participate slightly more than Black Carribeans (30%) and remarkably more than Pakistanis (23%) and Bangladeshis (26%).

Table 4: Involvement in ethnic social resources by ethnic group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Black African</th>
<th>Black Caribbean</th>
<th>Indian</th>
<th>Pakistani</th>
<th>Bangladeshi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic organisations</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ns (valid)</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>662</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic places of worship</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>85.0</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>84.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ns (valid)</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic informal networks</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>84.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ns (valid)</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted percentages. Respondents who were not eligible to vote were excluded. Source: 2010 EMBES.

Attendance of places of worship where the majority of members are co-ethnics is strikingly high amongst the three Asian groups, whereas Africans (59%) and Caribbeans (58.5%) are the least engaged in ethnic churches and mosques. The results for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, who are mainly Muslim, could be linked to the large proportion of Pakistani and Bangladeshi mosques that are available across the country. The number of mosques or churches that are exclusively African is perhaps limited, and in most cases Africans worship with either Asian (particularly in mosques) or Caribbean and white British members (particularly for churches).

**Residential concentration on political participation**

The first research question that this paper aims to answer focuses on the relationship between residential concentration and political participation. The two competing hypotheses (H1 and H2) about this relationship are tested through quantitative analysis only. Residential concentration is measured by
Table 5: Political participation regressed on residential concentration - Logistic regression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Vote general elections</th>
<th>Vote local elections</th>
<th>Non-electoral participation (binary)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M1</td>
<td>M2</td>
<td>M3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black Africans</td>
<td>.03** (.01)</td>
<td>.02* (.01)</td>
<td>.02 (.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration-related factors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion (ref: Muslim)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>.22 (.27)</td>
<td>.17 (.29)</td>
<td>.19 (.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No/other religion</td>
<td>-.22 (.49)</td>
<td>-.62 (.55)</td>
<td>-.53 (.54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Citizenship (ref: no)</td>
<td>.57** (.26)</td>
<td>.26 (.28)</td>
<td>.75*** (.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as main language spoken at home (ref: no)</td>
<td>.42 (.26)</td>
<td>.11 (.27)</td>
<td>.94*** (.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation (ref: 1st)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>-.54 (.33)</td>
<td>.30 (.41)</td>
<td>-.75** (.34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 and 3 plus</td>
<td>-.63* (.37)</td>
<td>.06 (.45)</td>
<td>-.99*** (.38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>-.17 (.49)</td>
<td>.10 (.50)</td>
<td>-.02 (.49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic/Socio-economic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.16*** (.05)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.14*** (.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age-square</td>
<td>-.01*** (.00)</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.00** (.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (ref: male)</td>
<td>-.34 (.25)</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.18 (.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class (ref: working)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salariat</td>
<td>.09 (.34)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.07 (.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>.49 (.32)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.49 (.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never worked</td>
<td>.04 (.46)</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.17 (.48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>-.88 (.55)</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.77 (.58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification (ref: no qualification)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>-.14 (.42)</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.05 (.42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>-.53 (.40)</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.16 (.38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>-.34 (.59)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.56 (.68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>.22 (.15)</td>
<td>-.32 (.31)</td>
<td>-.31*** (.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square (df)</td>
<td>5.23 (1)</td>
<td>15.95 (8)</td>
<td>37.68 (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>470</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unstandardised parameter estimates (robust standard errors). Design weight applied to account for clustering. Statistical significance level: ***p≤.01, **p≤.05, *p≤.10. Source: 2010 EMBES.
a continuous variable\(^{17}\) describing the percentage of Black Africans at the Lower Layer Super Output Area\(^{18}\), based on the 2001 Census data. The results of the regression models are reported in table 5.

The analysis of immigration-related factors shows that the effect of citizenship on voting is positive but interestingly does not hold when controlling for socio-economic status. English proficiency remains a positive and significant predictor of voting in local, but not general, elections. Those who were born in the UK (i.e. 2 and 3plus generation) or migrated before the age of 16 (i.e. generation 1.5) are significantly more likely to participate in non-electoral political activities than those who belong to the first generation of immigrants. This finding may be linked to the fact that being raised in the UK and attending school and university in the country could make individuals more likely to reproduce the autochthonous political behaviours, which tend to express political views through less ‘conventional’ channels than voting. Although the effect of generational status is not significant for voting in general elections, generations 1.5, 2 and 3plus are less likely to vote in local elections than generation 1. This effect disappears when controlling for socio-economic status. Amongst the socio-economic factors considered, the curvilinear relationship between age and voting that is traditionally applied to mainstream theories of electoral participation is confirmed for Black Africans. Furthermore, higher levels of qualification and social class are significant in predicting higher levels of non-electoral engagement, while no effect is found for electoral participation.

As regards the main variable of interest, table 5 shows that higher levels of co-ethnic concentration predict higher levels of voting in general and local elections in model 1. The significance of this relationship, however, disappears in model 2 and 3, when immigration-related and socio-economic factors respectively are controlled for. In contrast, the effect of residential concentration on non-electoral participation is always significant and negative across the models. The analysis lends support to the marginalising hypothesis (H1) for non-electoral participation, as the increase in the percentage of Black Africans in the neighbourhood appears to hinder the participation of Black Africans in non-electoral activities. As for electoral participation, no relationship is detected.

The latter finding, however, does not compromise the further investigation of the political impact of residential concentration as this paper seeks to go beyond the quantitative analysis and its potential weaknesses, in particular with regard to the internal diversity characterising the African community. Could it be possible to detect a connection between co-ethnic spatial proximity and political

\(^{17}\) The continuous variable is positively skewed (skewness=1.83/Kurtosis=6.94). Models were run in order to test the potential differences between the original variable and all the possible transformation (log, square, square root). No major dissimilarities were found and the original variable was kept.

\(^{18}\) Lower Layer SOAs (LSOAs) have a minimum population of 1,000 and an average population of 1,500.
engagement which holds only for certain African groups but not others? Are there pathways leading from ethnic enclaves to political inclusion or exclusion that cannot be observed through the quantitative data available? These are some of the questions that the following sections attempt to answer.

Residential concentration on ethnic-based social resources

The second step of the analysis concentrates on the effect of residential concentration on ethnic social resources, which is expected to be positive (H3). The results of both the quantitative and qualitative enquiries are presented. As regards the quantitative study, two ethnic social resources are measured by two dummy variables: active participation in ethnic or cultural organisations and attendance in places of worship where the majority of members are co-ethnics. Table 6 presents the results of the regression analysis.

Looking at the models related including immigration-related and socio-economic factors, generation appear to be relevant for participation in ethnic and cultural organisations, as individuals who migrated before the age of 16 (1.5 generation) participate more than 1st generations. Citizenship is a significant predictor for attendance in ethnic places of worship, with British citizens being less likely to engage in ethnic religious institutions. No remarkable effect is shown with regard to socio-demographic characteristics, with the exception of tertiary education predicting a lower likelihood of participation in ethnic places of worship than no qualification.

As regards residential concentration, model 3 reports a negative impact on involvement in ethnic organisations and a positive effect on ethnic places of worship. Surprisingly, both effects are not significant in model 1, but become significant in model 3. This anomalous change should not derive from multicollinearity as the collinearity diagnostics did not highlight relevant issues. Further investigation of the interactions between socio-economic and immigration-related factors is needed to disentangle this matter. Nonetheless, according to the results in table 6 the hypothesis that residential concentration is a strong predictor of a higher involvement in ethnic social networks (H3) is to be rejected for ethnic organisations, but can be supported for ethnic places of worship. The qualitative enquiry enriches and also challenges these conclusions as it investigates in more depth the ways in which ‘place’ shapes ethnic social resources both at the individual and community level amongst Somalis and Ghanaians.

At the individual level, participation in ethnic organisations emerged as a complex phenomenon that goes beyond the survey question focusing on active engagement. During the research conducted
Table 6: Ethnic social resources regressed on residential concentration - Logistic regression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ethnic organisations</th>
<th>Ethnic place of worship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M1</td>
<td>M2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black Africans</td>
<td>-.02 (.01)</td>
<td>-.02* (.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration-related factors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion (ref: Muslim)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>.25 (.27)</td>
<td>.28 (.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No/other religion</td>
<td>-.117* (.62)</td>
<td>-.125* (.66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Citizenship (ref: no)</td>
<td>.41 (.26)</td>
<td>.29 (.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as main language spoken at home (ref: no)</td>
<td>-.12 (.26)</td>
<td>-.12 (.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation (ref: 1st)</td>
<td>.67** (.33)</td>
<td>.85** (.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 and 3plus</td>
<td>-.02 (.37)</td>
<td>.14 (.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>-.32 (.47)</td>
<td>-.15 (.51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic/Socio-economic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.01 (.01)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (ref: male)</td>
<td>-.29 (.24)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class (ref: working)</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.14 (.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salariat</td>
<td></td>
<td>.23 (.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td></td>
<td>.29 (.43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never worked</td>
<td></td>
<td>.33 (.53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification (ref: no qualification)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>.32 (.42)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>.31 (.42)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>.69 (.58)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-.52***(.15)</td>
<td>-.93***(.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square (df)</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>15.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parameter estimates (robust standard errors). Design weight applied to account for clustering. Ethnic places of worship: religion is treated as a binary variable as people white no religion are missing. Age-square was removed as it did not present significant results. Statistical significance level: ***p≤.01, **p≤.05, *p≤.10. Source: 2010 EMBES
amongst Somalis it was observed that community members are often involved in ethnic voluntary
groups through more informal and indirect forms of participation. Attending the association’s premises
on a daily or weekly basis as ‘users’ of its services (e.g. translation, assistance to deal with health,
immigration, housing issues) often represents an occasion to become involved in the group’s activities.
This participation is not necessarily perceived by individuals as ‘active’ and it rarely leads to formal
volunteering as such. Consequently, there is a chance that the quantitative analysis may not be capturing
what the study is really interested in, that is the engagement in groups offering services to the
community.

Furthermore, the qualitative enquiry investigated the extent to which residential concentration affects
ethnic organisations at the aggregate, rather than only individual, level. It is mostly at this level of
analysis that the rejection of H3 is questioned. Amongst Somalis, residential concentration was found
to be a fertile environment for the creation of strong networks of well-established community
organisations. The presence of large communities provides organisations not only with potential users
but also with the opportunity to operate in the local area to tackle specific community issues, which in
most cases are at the basis of funding received to develop specific projects. Nonetheless, the empirical
research highlighted that this beneficial effect of residential concentration could be influenced by two
main factors: the support given by local authorities to specific ethnic and religious groups (i.e. local
institutional support); and the level of ethnic diversity in the area. The higher the level of institutional
support, the stronger and larger formal networks can become. This process was observed in particular
by comparing the boroughs of Tower Hamlets and Newham. In both cases there is a large and growing
Somali community. However the presence of long-term community groups is more evident in the
former than in the latter. Previous literature argued that this lack of a well-established Somali
organisations in Newham mainly derives from the borough’s commitment to promote social cohesion
and avoid funding charities targeting specific ethnic and religious groups (Options, 2010). Similar
suggestions emerged during interviews:

“Newham is different from Tower Hamlets. Newham is also an ethnic minority borough
but the majority doesn’t have the support (...). The Somali community in there is very
scattered in terms of services, there’s no community centre...I think it is the borough, the
borough is different, it is not supportive” (Somali male)

The level of ethnic diversity in the area also appears to boost the creation of ethnic organizations. The
presence of few dominant communities seems to foster a mobilization process through which these
groups ‘compete’ to acquire local resources, primarily funding and physical spaces. Whereas Newham is
a remarkably diverse borough, Tower Hamlets is characterised by the long-standing presence of a large
Bengali community. The number of Somalis in the borough has been increasing notably in the past decade and they now represent the second largest group in the area. This factor was often mentioned in interviews to describe the role that the community aims to assume locally, the willingness to achieve the same successful outcomes of recognition that Bengalis achieved as a community:

“[The Bengali community] is a role model here [in Tower Hamlets]. And we use that role model to empower ourselves”

Residential concentration also proved to facilitate individual involvement in ethnic organisations, once again amongst Somalis. First of all, proximity makes these services more accessible for those, like women and elderly people, who are less mobile and cannot travel long distances. Despite encountering a few examples of users residing in different, although neighbouring, boroughs, the great majority of members of Somali groups live locally. Secondly, the daily contacts with co-ethnics were described as a crucial element in the decision to become a more active part of community organisations targeting Somalis and assisting the most vulnerable individuals. In particular, younger community members who migrated to the country during their childhood felt that the physical proximity improved their knowledge of the social issues afflicting the community and convinced them of the need to become even more active in the community:

“When I finished my studies I volunteered for other organisations, just translating, then I realised there is a large [Somali] community: they don’t speak the language and need assistance, so it started as a voluntary thing. It just moved up from there and then I realised that there’s a need in the community. This encourages you to do more training, more courses and move to help members of the community” (Somali woman)

“Once you working here and you’re volunteering, day in and day out, you are doing stuff for the Somali community, sooner or later you do become involved.” (Somali woman)

In many cases this involvement becomes a career to be developed either in community organisations or in social services and other local authorities dealing with Somalis. Thirdly, living in areas with high concentration of Somalis increases the chances of getting involved in informal voluntary activities, especially for youngsters who are generally recognised as those who are more integrated in the host society due to their proficient knowledge of English, which still represents a remarkable barrier for other community members:

“When we see other Somalis, we say hello to each other, and if you see that somebody can help you, you will go and say “oh hello! Can you come and help me?”...so from a very young age, this is what I’ve done myself, I was taken to interviews to interpret for people who I didn’t even know” (Somali woman)
“I helped them [Somalis], I took individuals to offices and interpret for them. I haven’t been into one office and do some work, but I have helped the community” (Somali woman)

Some support to the quantitative results, and specifically to the negative or non-significant relationship between residential concentration and ethnic organisations, is however lent by the research conducted amongst Ghanaians. This national group has developed very different formal networks than those observed for Somalis. Due to the longer stay in the country and the dissimilar circumstances of migration, Ghanaian organizations’ primary aim is to maintain connections between community members across London and the entire country as well as contribute to the development of Ghana. Many groups have been created by individuals that come from the same region or village or attended the same school in Ghana. One of the interviewees describes her organisation as follows:

“[The group was created] to socialise, to help each other, if people have got problems, a family member in Ghana who is unwell, then you help them (…). We have fundraising to help the people in the area [in Ghana]. In the past we have given scholarships to children to help them go through secondary school and then we sent support to the hospital” (Ghanaian woman)

An umbrella organisation gathers these numerous charities and makes sure that they are well-connected and informed about each others’ activities. As a consequence of their different function, Ghanaians organisations are less visible and less accessible than the Somali ones. They often operate from small premises and rent larger venues for monthly or annual gatherings. In this context, residential concentration did not seem to be a fundamental condition for the individual participation in ethnic organisations. Perhaps, only the initial group of migrants from which the organisation originated, informally and privately, might have benefited from high concentration areas, such as Hackney and Haringey, due to the immediate contacts between co-ethnics. However, once the group is formed, new immigrants get acquainted with ethnic groups through friends and family already settled in the country and old members travel long distances to reach the gatherings.

Ghanaians and Somalis also differ in their ways they perceive the urgency to develop specific organisations to tackle community issues. Somalis iterated this necessity to create community groups that can cater for their specific needs. On the contrary, Ghanaians generally described themselves as a more well-established community with less barriers to face in order to reach integration:

“There’s not much special about Ghanaians to be catered for. We come here, we blend in, a lot of Somalians have language problems as well, but we come in and straight English, we blend in and we get on with our life” (Ghanaian woman)
Despite an apparently straightforward process of adaptation and integration, the Ghanaian community is affected by socio-economic issues, such as the increasing incidence gang-related crimes amongst youngsters and illegal immigration, which are undoubtedly different to those faced by Somalis but that remarkably affect community members. In contrast to Somalis, ethnic organisations are substituted in their assistive function by churches, which are numerous within the Ghanaian and Black African community. The church is a place that offers opportunities to socialise, maintain connections with co-ethnics and receive support and advice. Face-to-face interviews and direct observation revealed the powerful social function played by Ghanaian churches. While worshipping, members share not only their religious faith but also, and primarily, their cultural roots and language with the services being carried out in both English and Twi, the national idiom. The experience of attending a Ghanaian church was described as crucial especially with regard to the very first period after migrating to the country:

“We went to church, which was to me my first taste of “home away from home”, if you like…seeing so many Ghanaians together, like it was in Ghana, and that was…I loved it! I loved the fact that I felt so many people were experiencing what I was experiencing then, which was that sudden alienation from home” (Ghanaian man)

In terms of location, Black churches are more obviously widespread in areas where the African community concentrates. Nonetheless, the availability of churches across London and the country makes it easy for Ghanaians who are Protestant, Anglican or Catholic, for instance, to worship wherever they prefer or live. The additional benefit brought by Ghanaian churches is primarily represented by that feeling of community and cohesion just described but is also encouraged for those who adhere to denominations that are less or not widespread in the UK, such as the Seven-Day Adventist or Pentecostal churches. As for ethnic organisations, churches generally begin as informal groups that gather in private houses or halls and as the group enlarges and more members join in, they acquire the status of formal church and locate themselves where venues are available. Only in the early stage of its creation, the religious institution really benefits from residential concentration, as proximity makes the place of worship more accessible even for recent immigrants. Nonetheless, once the church is formed, members would reach the place regardless of its location, mainly to maintain the close social connections established with other members. It often happens to be invited to weddings, funerals, and other religious ceremonies in other churches. These gatherings are extremely important for Ghanaians and distance is not a barrier to individual participation. Numerous accounts were given about the exceptional mobility of community members when it comes to participate in religious events:
“Yes, [we travel] a lot. We know of other places, and we go to different places, it doesn’t really matter where, once you are invited you go” (Ghanian man)

As regards the mosque, Somalis did not express the same sense of attachment to a specific place of worship or to its ethnic composition. The latter is not as surprising since the majority of mosques in the UK are led by ethnic groups other than Black Africans (e.g. Pakistanis). This makes more difficult for Somalis to create or join Somali or African mosques. The qualitative fieldwork also pointed out that the creation of influential and well-established mosques is primarily linked to the presence of a large Muslim rather than co-ethnic community, as in Tower Hamlets and Newham, for instance. Having said that, it is important to underline that at the aggregate level residential concentration appears to play a positive role in the creation of Somali places of worship as the majority of these mosques is located in East London, where Muslims as well as Somalis are highly concentrated.

To sum up, the qualitative findings point out the great variations in the role played by co-ethnic residential concentration on ethnic-based resources across the two national groups. When focusing on Somalis, the fieldwork challenges the negative relationship established by the regression analysis between concentration and individual participation in ethnic organisations. Evidence was found of a positive effect of co-ethnic spatial proximity on participation in voluntary group as well as the creation of ethnic organisations at the aggregate level. Nonetheless, this beneficial impact might be hindered by institutional support and ethnic diversity and it is not observed amongst Ghanaians. As regards ethnic places of worship, the quantitative findings seem to point towards supporting the positive effect hypothesised by H3. The qualitative enquiry did not find the attendance in Ghanaian churches or Somali mosques to be influenced by co-ethnic concentration, although co-ethnic religious institutions are more widespread in high concentration areas. These mixed results cast a shadow on the possibility to make bold statements about the positive effect of residential concentration on ethnic-based resources and, more importantly, underline the relevance of between-group variations not only in the type of formal networks developed but also in the ways residential concentration affects these networks.

**Ethnic-based social resources on political participation**

The final step of this research investigates the impact of ethnic social resources on political participation. The quantitative analysis in table 7 reports a significant and positive relationship between active involvement in ethnic organisations and non-electoral engagement, hence pointing towards
Hypothesis 5. The qualitative enquiry supports but also questions the absence of a connection with electoral participation.

During the fieldwork amongst Somalis it was observed that non-electoral activities are linked to ethnic organisations as the latter become channels to spread information and mobilise community members. The qualitative data add more details about what are the issues that Somalis primarily mobilise about through non-electoral actions. From face-to-face interviews as well as research conducted on websites and online social networks it emerged that non-electoral activities mainly focus on international matters (e.g. the Iraq war and the question of Palestine) as well as issues directly related to the Somali community, e.g. *khat* consumption. In addition, numerous respondents reported their participation in public demonstrations to support the independence and international recognition of the Northern region of Somalia, i.e. Somaliland. It could therefore be argued that, for Somalis, H5 can be supported in particular when the target of political participation is represented by ethnic-related or home country issues.

The relationship between ethnic organisations and non-electoral participation was not observed amongst Ghanaians. This could be explained by various factors. Firstly, non-electoral engagement seemed to be less relevant to the participants interviewed, who expressed a much stronger interest in a more traditional form of participation such as voting. The latter is perceived as a duty to be respected as part of the British citizenship, which may have received through naturalisation. Secondly, no political engagement emerged from ethnic organisations, perhaps due the different function that, as previously seen, they serve in the community. Finally, Ghanaians appear to be less prone to mobilise as a community to tackle and advocate for community issues either because they see themselves as a small community that is not affected by specific issues or because they do not want to openly express political views. In the interviewees’ words, when asked about participating in politics to advocate for the community and about the lack of direct involvement of Ghanaians in the political arena (i.e. through elected representatives):

“*The Ghanaian community is so small, and there aren’t any particular issues affecting the Ghanaian community, so you don’t vote on that principle.”* (Ghanaian man)

“I know a lot of Ghanaians, they have [political] connections but maybe they don’t want to come out openly to say we want to become councillors or things like that...” (Ghanaian woman)
### Table 7: Political participation regressed on ethnic social resources - Logistic regression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Vote general elections</th>
<th></th>
<th>Vote local elections</th>
<th></th>
<th>Non-electoral participation (binary)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M1</td>
<td>M2</td>
<td>M3</td>
<td>M1</td>
<td>M2</td>
<td>M3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic organisations</td>
<td>.12 (.24)</td>
<td>.15 (.24)</td>
<td>.19 (.25)</td>
<td>.18 (.25)</td>
<td>.19 (.25)</td>
<td>.22 (.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>.45*** (.13)</td>
<td>-.26 (.32)</td>
<td>-3.1*** (.11)</td>
<td>.4*** (.14)</td>
<td>-.64* (.33)</td>
<td>-3.5*** (.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square (df)</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>15.66</td>
<td>37.86</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>40.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic place of worship</td>
<td>.26 (.25)</td>
<td>.28 (.25)</td>
<td>.46* (.26)</td>
<td>.23 (.25)</td>
<td>.34 (.26)</td>
<td>.49* (.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>.45** (.19)</td>
<td>-.20 (.37)</td>
<td>-2.8** (.13)</td>
<td>.45** (.21)</td>
<td>-.72* (.38)</td>
<td>-3.4** (.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square (df)</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>11.81</td>
<td>31.24</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>22.92</td>
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<td>413</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parameter estimates (robust standard errors). Design weight applied to account for clustering. Model 2 and Model 3 control for immigration-related and socio-economic factors respectively. Statistical significance level: ***p≤.01, **p≤.05, *p≤.10. Source: 2010 EMBES.
In contrast with this absence of community mobilisation and political influence by ethnic organisation, Somali voluntary groups were found to exert a potentially positive influence on voting, particularly in local elections, through three main processes. First of all, individual participation in ethnic groups as volunteer or member of staff reinforces group consciousness by increasing the awareness of specific issues afflicting the community:

“Previously, I was not that much connected to the Somali community, it’s only when I joined [a community organisation] that I became more aware that in terms of the Somali community there’s more of a need than other communities” (Somali woman)

Secondly, ethnic organisations are an effective channel through which members and users are informed about their right and duty to vote. This action is particularly important in a community where the majority of members are illiterate or do not speak English proficiently. Some community workers described how users utilise the advice sessions offered by ethnic organisations to translate the leaflets received by candidates during election campaign, for instance. Thirdly, being involved in voluntary formal networks gives Somalis who are already active in politics the opportunity to acquire further support by community members that might constitute their primary source of votes in case of a candidacy:

“Politically people would see a good figure, you work in the community and they see what you’re doing. If you are not active in your own community, obviously you won’t be active politically.” (Somali woman)

Involvement in the formal political arena through the increase in the number of Somali voters and representatives as well as a closer relationship with mainstream political parties is seen, particularly by community leaders, as a crucial chance to give voice to the community’s needs and to promote its advancement. In sharp contrast with Ghanaians, relationships with parties, particularly at the local level, and the presence of Somali elected representatives and active voters are described as channels to advocate for the community, raise its profile, and make sure that it can access the resources needed to deal with its issues. Participation at the community level seems to guide individual involvement in politics.

Table 7 also presents the results for the political impact of attendance in ethnic places of worship, which is a significantly positive predictor of electoral participation, although only in model 3. In this regard, the qualitative contribution does not point towards a clear evidence of a direct political involvement of churches and mosques, in sharp contrast with the findings of previous literature about
American Black churches. In general, the religious institutions observed or described by interviewees do not involve directly in political issues. However, somehow in support of the quantitative finding, it could be argued that they represent settings of social interactions where political knowledge can be exchange and political discussion carried out.

This indirect role played by formal ethnic recourse as spaces of regular intense interaction between co-ethnics can be highlighted in connection to their involvement in homeland’s politics. The latter was found to be strong for both communities in terms of interest but also active participation in the political issues of Ghana and Somalia. In particular through direct observation, it was possible to note how spatial proximity and the availability of frequent occasions of formal contact, i.e. through community organisations or religious institutions, gives community members an opportunity to discuss informally about politics. The focus of this discussion is primarily the home country. Besides discussion, formal connections allow community members to spread information about community gatherings organised in the occasion of national events or meetings with political leaders travelling from Ghana or Somalia. For Somalis, involvement in the homeland politics often becomes a channel to be involved in non-electoral participation in the UK, as annual demonstrations are organised in London to support the international recognition of Somaliland as an independent country. As regards Ghanaians, home country politics is widely debated and ethnic organisations often express the willingness to be neutral institutions, although they play a major part in organising social events in the occasion of national celebrations or events, such as the Independence Day of Ghana. In contrast with Somalis, Ghanaians do not seem to translate their passion for Ghanaian politics into some form of non-electoral participation in the host country.

To conclude, the quantitative evidence supports the hypothesised mobilising effect of ethnic organisations (H5) only as regards non-electoral participation. This result is supported by the qualitative enquiry for Somalis but not for Ghanaians, whose community organisations seem not to take on a political role. Amongst Somalis, the mobilising effect of ethnic organisations on non-electoral activities appears to primarily focus on home country (e.g. independence of Somaliland) or ethnic-related issues. When considering electoral participation, the quantitative analysis does not find any significant impact of ethnic organisations. In contrast, the qualitative fieldwork presents some evidence of how, for Somalis only, community associations influence the involvement of community members in the electoral process. The political role played by ethnic places of worship emerges, in the quantitative data, exclusively when socio-economic and immigration-related factors are controlled for. This puzzling finding nonetheless lands support to the mobilising hypothesis (H5) but it is somewhat challenged by the qualitative results, which suggests that places of worship may exert an indirect influence on political
engagement by representing occasions of social interaction. However, no clear evidence was found of a direct political role. The observation of a potential indirect effect of ethnic social resources on informal social contacts between co-ethnics emerged as an interesting element in particular with regard to interest and involvement in homeland politics. This might point towards the theories that see ethnic social resources as a limit to political engagement in the host country in favour of stronger participation in the home country (Morales and Morariu, 2011). However, the latter was found to be a potential way amongst Somalis to become involved in non-electoral activities in the UK.

Once again, the dissimilarities between Somalis and Ghanaians are striking not only in the ways in which formal social resources impact on political participation but also in the perception of the importance and nature of political engagement itself.

Conclusions

This paper has attempted to contribute to the debate about the effect of co-ethnic residential concentration on political participation of Black Africans in Britain by focusing on two main elements: the role played by ethnic-based social resources, namely ethnic organisations and religious institutions, in linking residential concentration to political participation; and the relevance of immigration-related factors in shaping these relationships.

When investigating the direct effect of residential concentration on political participation, the quantitative analysis provided support to the marginalising hypothesis (H1) exclusively for non-electoral engagement, whereas no significant impact was observed for voting in general and local elections. The further two steps of the analysis however provided a more nuanced description of this relationship by teasing out its potential underpinning processes and focusing on the variations across two dissimilar national groups. The differences between these groups are remarkable.

As regards the effect of co-ethnic concentration on ethnic social resources, the quantitative analysis rejects the hypothesised positive effect (H3) for participation in ethnic organisations but confirms it for attendance in ethnic places of worship, although only when controlling for socio-economic and immigration-related factors. The qualitative evidence shows how these results could be supported for ethnic organisations amongst Ghanaians but not Somalis. Spatial proximity, indeed, is important to facilitate the creation of well-established Somali community associations at the aggregate level as well as access to these resources at the individual level. This is deemed to be primarily a consequence of the dissimilar needs and issues to be tackled by two communities with very different immigration histories. With regard to ethnic places of worship, the qualitative study suggested that for both communities
residential concentration facilitates the creation of ethnic places of worship (aggregate level), but individual attendance in ethnic churches and mosques does not seem to depend on physical proximity. The investigation of the political impact of ethnic social resources once again pointed out great between-group variations. The mobilising effect of ethnic organisations (H5) was supported by the quantitative analysis exclusively for non-electoral participation. However, the qualitative enquiry found evidence of mobilising effects for both non-electoral and electoral engagement amongst Somalis but not Ghanaians. This result is particularly interesting as it sheds new light on the different ways in which the two communities perceive the importance of being politically active in the host country. Whereas Somalis, and particularly community leaders, express the need to be engaged as a community in the political arena in order to voice and tackle their needs in a formal platform, Ghanaians generally see political, and specifically electoral, participation as an individual choice. As a consequence, the ways in which formal community groups can influence political engagement differs for the two communities. Somali organisations seem to stimulate and facilitate processes of group consciousness, political mobilisation and recruitment. In contrast, Ghanaian associations tend to describe themselves as a-political and to focus on social functions. The evidence of the political role of ethnic churches and mosques is more ambiguous in both enquiries. In general, there is no strong proof of the political activism described by the literature about Black churches in the US.

In light of these findings, this study suggests that the impact of residential concentration on political participation may not be so straightforwardly captured by simply looking at direct effects through quantitative data referring to the Black African community as a whole. This relationship varies significantly across communities that present dissimilar immigration-related characteristics. Moreover, different modes of political engagement are affected by residential concentration and ethnic resources in different ways. Further research should be carried out about Black Africans, their internal diversity and how this affects not only their ethnic-based social resources but also their perception of and engagement in political activities. The latter should also be measured as involvement in ethnic-related or home country issues, which, as in the case of Somalis are linked to non-electoral participation in the host country. Especially in light of the estimated increase in the African population size in the UK, the group should be addressed in its complexity, perhaps suggesting a classification of national groups to be studied separately, as for the Asian community. In addition, more refined ways to measure ethnic-based social resources, not only at the individual but also at the aggregate level, should be developed so as to allow a more detailed quantitative investigation of this phenomenon that is so closely linked to political participation. Amongst ethnic social resources, the role played by religious institutions should
also be investigated in more detail to shed light on differences not only across religious denominations but also between American and British Black churches, more specifically.
References


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Appendix: Coding of variables

Voting in general elections: Whether voted in general elections on 6th May 2010 (the self-reported vote was checked against the validated turnout) (0) no, (1) yes. Respondents who were not eligible to vote were excluded.

Voting in local elections: Whether voted in local elections on 6th May 2010 (0) no, (1) yes.

Non-electoral participation: Participated in at least one of the four non-electoral activities listed (participating in protests, signing petitions, boycotting, giving money to political cause or advocacy organisation in the last 12 months).

Ethnic Organisations: Taken part in any ethnic or cultural organisations in the past 12 months (0) no, (1) yes.

Ethnic place of worship: Proportion of co-ethnics in respondents’ place of worship (0) a few and none of them, (1) all, most of and about half of them. Missing values include those without religion and those who do not go to church or place of worship.

Immigration-related factors

Religious affiliation: (1) Christian, (2) Muslim, (3) no or other religion.

English proficiency: English is the first language spoken at home (1) yes, (2) no.

Generation: (1) first generation – those who were born abroad and migrated aged 16 and above, (2) generation 1.5 – those who were born abroad migrated before age 15, (3) generation 2 – those who were born in the UK and whose parents were born abroad – and generation 3plus – those who were born in the UK with one or both parents born in the UK.

Citizenship: (0) another country, (1) British or dual citizenship,

Socio-economic status

Gender: (0) males, (1) females.

Class/occupation: (1) Salariat - including professional, managerial occupations, (2) Intermediate – including clerical jobs, sales and services, supervisors, and small business owners, (3) Working – including skilled, semi-skilled and non-skilled manual, (4) never worked, (5) missing – other, don’t know and refused.

Qualification: (0) no qualifications – neither British nor overseas (1) other qualifications – British and/or overseas, (2) secondary – British and/or overseas, (3) tertiary – British and/or overseas.