We all Black innit? Analysing intra-ethnic relations between Black African and African Caribbean groups in Britain.

In a speech made in New York shortly after his release from prison, Nelson Mandela emphasised that despite geographical dispersal through slavery, Black people are all 'sons and daughters of Africa' (cited in Mwakigale 2007:1). Peter Tosh, a member of Bob Marley's 'The Wailers' band echoed this in 'African', (a track from his Equal Rights Album), writing, 'no matter where Blacks come from they are all Africans'. These views indicate the importance of recognising and being proud of shared origins.

The diverse Black groups in Britain have frequently united, especially in difficult times. In the early twentieth century, for instance their settlement was regarded by politicians and members of the public as threatening social cohesion, leading to increased surveillance and social control. This resulted in the formation of Black resistance movements. Amongst the earliest examples were political organisations, including The Union of Students of African Descent (USAD); latterly known as the West African Students Union (WASU). Formed in 1925, this was an amalgamation of students from Caribbean and West African countries. WASU also lobbied against colour bars preventing Black people from engaging in many aspects of public life in Britain (Adi 1998).

Despite these movements, tensions have existed historically between African and African Caribbean groups. These became increasingly evident following their arrival in Britain from the 1960s onwards (Mwakigale 2009) and are highlighted within the media through television debates, plays and novels. Some academic research (e.g. Benson 1981; Mwakigale 2009) reflects on these tensions, but such work is limited and focuses specifically on the views and experiences of elder generations. Questions therefore arise as to whether tensions remain amongst younger British African and African Caribbean people. This paper aims to address this issue, and also seeks to assess whether the causes are the same as for previous generations. Conversely have younger generations been able to reconcile, and focus on similarities, rather than differences? I consider these issues here by examining the views of second and third generation British African and British African Caribbean people. 'Black British (African/African Caribbean)' are hyphenated terms, often used to define second and third generation people, who have spent all, if not most of their lives in Britain, but seek to maintain a sense of their African /Caribbean origins. These terms are used in relation to the respondents in this paper, not least because this is how they referred to themselves.

By way of background, I explore the prevalence of intra ethnic tensions between Black groups in Britain. These issues are considered with reference to personal experience relating to my work in the local community and forums arising from this, examples highlighted in the spheres of the media, including the news, fictional literature, films, plays and also political debates. I also discuss existing academic literature on intra ethnic relations.

Introducing intra-ethnic tensions in Britain

Between 2000 and 2002, I worked as a community development officer in a Southern city. My role partly involved attending local community forums aimed at addressing residents' concerns. Following this, issues were discussed at council meetings. At one meeting on educational inequalities, young people were invited to discuss their experiences. Several issues were raised, including sexism, class prejudice, and disability discrimination. Additionally, a British African

presenter, spoke of tensions existing between African Caribbean and African students at his college. He recalled being taunted, even physically attacked, by his African Caribbean counterparts because of his origins and surname. Yet, he acknowledged that many of his African friends had negative views about African Caribbean students, especially concerning differential educational achievement levels and their supposed lack of cultural 'roots', resulting from separation from Africa through slavery. These issues often culminated in fights in the college corridors and beyond.

This man complained that when attempting to raise these issues with White lecturers, he was often dismissed because 'racism can't be possible between *you lot* because you're all the same colour'. This suggests that racism is perceived as an issue existing between minority and majority groups, and/or a 'White' on 'Black' issue (Mac an Ghaill 1999). Yet members of the same ethnic group *can* be racist towards each other. Clark (2004: 506) describes this as 'intragroup racism'. Racism between Black groups is often, however, considered as an 'oxymoron' or a contradiction, since as James Jones (1997 in Clark 2004: 507) explains, Black groups do not have enough power to prevent access to valuable social resources, or more specifically to 'create an oppressor/oppressed dyad'

Tensions between African and African Caribbean groups have, at times, been quite pronounced in Britain. In late 2001, *Black Britain*, a Channel 4 documentary indicated that in areas with populous African and African Caribbean communities, levels of conflict were notably high. This was evident in some areas of South East London, and it was suggested that tensions worsened in the aftermath of Damilola Taylor's tragic murder in 2000[i]. In 2006, simmering rifts between the communities were again highlighted in the media, when a public spat took place between Dianne Abbott and Lola Ayorinde, two Black politicians from Jamaican and Nigerian backgrounds, respectively. An article written by Abbott, entitled '*Think Jamaica is bad, Try Nigeria*' (2006) contained inflammatory comments regarding 'pervasive' financial corruption and fraud amongst Nigerians. Abbott received much criticism from Ayorinde and other senior members of the Nigerian community in her London constituency and beyond. Soon after, *The Politics Show* aired a televised debate around tensions between African and African Caribbean groups in Britain. Once again, there were suggestions that poor relationships between the groups have been longstanding, and in some cases, deepening.

Similar issues have been articulated within other media. *Torn,* a play by Femi Oguns (2008), focuses on issues and familial problems emerging from a romantic relationship between a British Nigerian male and an African Caribbean female and examines negative stereotypes that each group has of the other. The film *Gone Too Far* (2013), based on Bola Agbaje's play, highlights similar issues, centring on the relationship between two long lost brothers, Yemi who was born and raised in Britain and Ikudaisy, who spent most of his life in Nigeria. African Caribbean and African tensions erupt during a day on their estate, and Yemi and Ikudaisy are faced with decisions about where their loyalties lie.

Intra ethnic tensions between African and Caribbean groups within the spheres of politics and the media, has been a notable feature of late, although there has been recognition of longstanding issues including negative stereotyping and impacts on current relationships. Academic research, highlights tensions over a longer time span (e.g from the 1950s to date) and acknowledges other factors, such as competition for limited socio-economic resources affecting relations between

them. Having said this, there remains a dearth of literature exploring intra ethnic relations between Black African and African Caribbean groups in Britain. Instead, there is a continuing tendency to focus on other issues such as their integration into British society and experiences of racism. I consider these issues below and discuss existing case studies focusing on several causes of intra-ethnic tensions between Black groups in Britain.

Blacked out? Exploring intra-ethnic relationships within academic research

Academic research, as noted above, tends to focus on experiences of migration and settlement and racism of the dominant groups towards minorities. For generations born and raised in Britain, the emphasis has been on approaches to 'assimilating' into British society and/or navigating between British culture and that of their parents' (e.g. Lent 2001; Lam and Smith 2009). Studies often fail to make distinctions between African and African Caribbean groups (Daley 1998, Lam and Smith 2009), as the assumption is that they are culturally homogenous (Daley 1998). One possible explanation is that the influx of Black people into the UK in the 1940s was mainly from Caribbean countries. Thus, they became the predominant Black community in Britain, whose experiences were considered representative of other Black populations.

Regarding Black populations as homogenous is problematic, however, because this denies cultural differences. Moreover, oftentimes, they do not see themselves as being the same. In *Ambiguous Ethnicities* (1981), which explores inter-ethnic marriages in Brixton, Susan Benson reiterates this view. She suggests that although both groups appear to be 'indistinguishable to many English [White] eyes' (Benson 1981:31) and may reside in similar areas, they regard themselves as 'very different people' (ibid). In a chapter entitled 'West Indians and Africans' in *Towards the African Revolution* which focuses specifically on relations between these groups, Frantz Fanon (1952:17) cautions against treating Black people as a homogenous entity:

> . . . to lump all Black people together deprives them of all individuality of expression. It puts them under the obligation of matching the idea that people have of them. By doing this people would assume that all Blacks agree on certain things although there is a source of conflicts between groups.

The 'sources of conflict' between Black groups are partly historical, often dating back to the slave trade. For instance, there is belief amongst some African Caribbean (and African American) people, that although Europeans instigated the slave trade, continental Africans were also responsible for 'selling their own people' to European slave traders for financial profits. In response to this, Africans maintain that it is untrue, and that many fought against enslavement (Darboe 2013) More recent issues, such the battle for limited socio-economic resources, stereotyping and perceived differences in terms of socio-economic success have also been highlighted and are addressed below.

Resource allocation, stereotyping and intra-ethnic tensions –

Studies (e.g. Malik 2012; Mwakigale 2009; Sian 2013) highlights how competition between ethnic groups for limited resources can 'translate to conflicts between cultural groupings' (Sian

2013:44). Although multicultural policies sought to ensure greater access to these resources for Black and minority ethnic groups, they have not always been successful. When, for example, resource allocation is based along 'ethno-religious' lines, this can be problematic, as it may appear that some groups have greater access to then than others. (Malik 2012, Sian 2013).

Distribution of resources on the basis of colour/ethnicity/religion may also mean failure to acknowledge the diversity existing *within* these groups, thus downplaying differing needs and rights. For instance, Tariq Modood observed in the late 1980s that under the cover of 'Black', jobs and resources were given primarily to African Caribbean communities 'at the expense of the less visible and numerous Africans' (Modood 1994:5) hence the push for an 'African' category in equality monitoring exercises. Here, then, the implementation of multicultural policies has done more damage than good, as it reinforced borders between groups by promoting further competition for limited resources. Recent (and ongoing) cuts in public sector provisions also compounds the issue and generates a set of 'destructive and less resolvable conflicts' between ethnic groups (Malik 2012:unpaginated). Nevertheless, in spite of these issues, as Humphrey Mwakigale (2009:83) notes, the fierce competition for limited socio-economic resources continues between African and African Caribbean communities, and in so doing, both 'invoke [negative] stereotypes to describe each other', which in turn, influences the extent to which they can co-exist within particular contexts (Mwakigale 2009; Darboe 2013) These stereotypes, as alluded to previously, are longstanding and often based on negative perceptions of their respective cultures.

Historically (and to an extent currently), Africans have been regarded as 'primitive', 'uncivilized', in addition to the notion that they emerge from a 'dark continent' (Darboe 2013:16). Although these views are Eurocentric in origin, some African Caribbean people have internalised them. Fanon (1952:20) example describes how 'West Indians' regarded Africans as a 'nation of sorcerers, makers of fetishes, tom toms, guilelessness, faithfulness and respect for the White man'. It is partly for this reason, and a perceived sense of superiority over Africans that Fanon suggests that 'West Indians' preferred to disassociate themselves from Africans and culturally align themselves to Europeans. However, over time and as a result of racism from the French/ Europeans towards them, the 'West Indians' were forced to re-evaluate ideas about their ethnic identity. As Fanon notes:

> …..Whereas before 1939 he (sic) (the West Indian) had his eyes riveted on White Europe, whereas what seemed good to him was escape from his color, in 1945 he discovered himself to be not only black but a Negro, and it was in the direction of distant Africa that he was hence-forth to put out his feelers. The West Indian in France was continually recalling that he was not a Negro: from 1945 on, the West Indian in France was continually to recall that he *was* a negro…..(ibid)

Recognition of their Blackness also made the 'West Indians' attempt to re-identify with Africans. However, Africans refused to engage with West Indians, as a result of the latter's denigration of them.

Benson (1981) also provides examples of how members of both groups articulate stereotyped ideas about each other. During her fieldwork, she overheard a conversation between three African Caribbean landlords regarding their African tenants, who they described as being

'secretive and funny people' and as 'dirty and lazy' (Benson 1981:40). In later conversations with African respondents, revealed that they regarded their African Caribbean landlords as 'untrustworthy and immoral' (ibid)

Stereotypes pertaining to associations with criminality are also a key source of tension between African Caribbean and African groups. It is often assumed that African Caribbean youth are more likely to be embroiled in crime, a view that has also been perpetuated in the media (Hall, 1978, Law *et al* 2007). To this end, Mwakigale(2009) suggests that African Caribbean groups are more likely to be involved in violent and drug related crimes. However, a Home Office Policy report entitled *Young Black people and the Criminal Justice System* (2007) highlights the involvement of an increasing number of people of African parentage in similar criminal activities, including drug peddling. Thus arguably, criminality is not specific to any ethnic group.

Differential educational and socio-economic progress also form the basis for tensions/ stereotypes between groups. In some instances, groups who regard themselves as 'high achievers' may make a conscious effort to disassociate themselves from those who are regarded as 'underachieving'. For instance, Black children, especially those from African Caribbean backgrounds have historically been stereotyped as 'underachievers', which is a view that has been perpetuated within the media, and widely accepted in the education system and beyond (Mwakigale 2009). Thus, as Mwakigale observes, some African groups seek to differentiate themselves, so as to avoid being regarded in the same way as African Caribbean people: 'Africans are higher achievers in employment and do not see themselves as being on the same level as African Caribbeans whom they have surpassed in many areas of education' (Mwakigale 2009:11). Moreover, he goes on to suggest that the hostility of African Caribbean groups towards Africans 'can be attributed to the upward mobility of a disproportionately large number of Africans'. (ibid). Representations of African Caribbean people as 'underachievers' however, downplays their academic progress, and the fact that a large number are to be found in professional positions and/or have established successful businesses (Rhamie 2003). This is especially true of later generations born and raised in Britain.

As shown, issues including the battle for limited socio economic resources and negative cultural connotations provide some understanding of how African Caribbean and African groups in Britain have related to each other. Separately, these issues are problematic, but when they intersect, this further intensifies the problem. The significant role of racism from majority ethnic groups must also be acknowledged, as it often contributes to the reinforcement of narratives which undermine particular ethnic groups. In turn, this shapes the way that they are viewed by society (including others who are also of an ethnic minority background), and perpetuates their marginalisation in society. This issue is explored below.

Inter-ethnic racism as a cause of intra-ethnic tensions

Britain is becoming 'super diverse' in terms of 'ethnicity' (Singh 2010). Yet failure to accept this has created problems in that racism towards non-White people is increasing. Again access to socio-economic resources is a key issue here. Though this has been limited due to government cuts, this issue is often presented by the media in a manner that blames certain ethnic minorities and migrants, especially those from non-Western countries. In addition to other negative

representations of ethnic minority groups, these issues exacerbate tensions between ethnic minority groups and White people.

Problems such as these should *ideally* encourage minority groups to come together in support of each other. Yet this does not always happen currently, although similar issues contributed to the formation of strong coalitions between minority groups in the late 1970s and 1980s. This era saw the use of the ideological identification as 'politically Black' as a collective term to represent those whose origins are located in the 'Old Empire' (e.g. the Caribbean and parts of South East Asia), and their 'common interests'. These included highlighting shared experiences of oppression and discrimination, forming alliances in the struggle against inequality, lobbying for improved socio-economic and political opportunities, and the promotion of anti-racism within institutions (Modood 1994; Hall 1988). It was also a way of challenging the marginalisation, stereotyping and objectification of Black people (Hall 1988).

The concept of 'political Blackness' has, however, been criticised by Black and Asian academics alike. Tariq Modood (1994) suggests that it was 'harmful' to Asian groups, since it downplayed the specific type of cultural and religious of discrimination that particular Asian groups (e.g. Bangladeshi and Pakistani Muslims) experienced. While this type of discrimination has always been an issue for these groups, arguably, it is far worse currently with the rise of Islamophobia. Focusing predominantly on colour as a way of mobilising people who experience racism also 'falsely equates' racial and colour discrimination, which, Modood (1994) argues, does not work. While colour *does* play a role, for instance in terms of face-to face discrimination, when seeking access to housing and other resources, it is important to recognise impacts of other factors such as class. Coming from a deprived socio-economic background, together with being from an ethnic minority group may further disadvantage individuals. Moreover, while the intersection of class and race certainly impacts on an individual's opportunities and experiences, other cultural differences (e.g.diet, clothing etc.) can also contribute to discrimination, though this is sometimes ignored. Thus, focusing mainly on colour undermines other discriminatory experiences.

Stuart Hall (1988) also expressed concerns about the 'essentialised' way in which Blackness was regarded by this ideology. In doing so, he refers to postmodernist criticisms of any form of essentialism, and like Modood (1994), emphasised the importance of recognising cultural differences existing between groups. Hall (1988:5) thus suggests the use of the term 'ethnicity', which recognises 'histories, language and culture in the construction of subjectivity' and also acknowledges difference, instead of suppressing it.

Methodology

The aim of the research reported here, was to explore the nature of relationships between second and third generation Black people born and raised in Britain, who are of African and Caribbean heritage. The following questions were addressed:

- What perceptions do British African Caribbean and British African people have of each other?
- Does stereotyping have a role in forming these opinions? If so, how and where do these stereotypes come from?

- To what extent do the perceptions that second and third generation people of British African and British African Caribbean descent have of each other, mirror/differ from those of older generations - especially migrants from Africa and the Caribbean?
- What impacts do these perceptions (and/or stereotypes) have on the relationships between people from these two groups?
- Are there factors which facilitate the bonding of British African Caribbean and British African individuals? If so, what are these and how do they operate?

Nine participants were interviewed. These included three second and third generation Black British Africans (BA) The other four were British African Caribbean (BAC) and one was British African and British African Caribbean (BA and BAC - one parent was Ghanaian and the other Jamaican). See below for a list of participants (with pseudonyms)

Name of participant	Location	Ethnicity	Age
Asiya	London	British African (BA)	50
Bilal	London	British African Caribbean (BAC)	51
Junior	London	British African Caribbean (BAC)	51
Salamatou	London	British African (BA)	44
Charles	Regional city	British African (BA)	27
Jamelle	London	British African Caribbean (BAC)	23
Lucas	London	British African Caribbean (BAC)	24
Talia	London	British African Caribbean (BAC)	30
Rhahim	Regional city	British African **and** Caribbean (BA AND BAC)	18

In all cases, their parents or grandparents had migrated from African and/or Caribbean countries, and settled in London or the Midlands from the 1960s, onwards. The age variation enabled some assessment as to whether there are links between generations, perceptions and experiences of intra-ethnic relations between Black groups.

Participants were recruited through snowballing, which involves selection of a 'small number of subjects, who in turn identify others within a population' (Gray 2004:88). This is also a form of purposive sampling, as a deliberate attempt was made to obtain a sample of particular people, that is, second and third generation people of African and African Caribbean descent, given the research area. Samples were obtained using personal contacts within Black religious and professional organisations that I had access to. Some are located in London, where I currently live and another was based in a city in the Midlands, where I lived previously, but have retained connections with. Admittedly, obtaining participants from a limited type and number of networks presented issues, as the sample largely consisted of certain types of people (e.g. Black professionals/representatives of religious groups). Not drawing from a wider range of networks

may mean less variation in terms of the characteristics/perspectives of research participants (Gray 2004).

In-depth interviews were undertaken which were recorded and transcribed. Participants were initially asked to give biographical information. Then followed discussion about their experiences and perceptions of the relationships between British African and African Caribbean groups, and more specifically issues contributing to unity and/or tension between them. Several key issues emerged which were identified as impacting on intra-ethnic relations, which were converted into themes for data analysis, which echoes the grounded theory approach (Strauss and Corbin 1990). Themes included a comparison of past and present relationships between the groups; impacts of socio-economic factors on relations between them and representations of both groups in popular culture (e.g. music and football). I drew on a mixture of relevant existing literature and my prior knowledge of these issues, in order to inform the data analysis process (Dey 1999). I also consciously sought to avoid 'shoehorning' the categories data to fit the literature. Instead, the literature was used as part of the data and compared with the analytical categories.

As Gayle Letherby *et al* (2013) note, our personhood, life experiences, and identities can be a significant feature of our research choices and experiences. As a Black British African/Ghanaian woman, born to African/Ghanaian student migrants, and an academic, with prior experience in community development, I have directly observed and experienced intra-ethnic tensions between Black groups, both at work and socially. This contributes to my understanding of these issues and underpins my decision to undertake this research.

During the interviews, I was aware that my ethnicity, appeared to have a notable bearing on relations with my participants. This experience can be understood through the concept of being a research insider/outsider. A research 'outsider' has few commonalities in terms of personal characteristics, or prior, intimate knowledge about the group that they are researching, until they have accessed it and begun to work with them (Merton 1972). In contrast, an 'insider' may research their own group/society, partly because they share similar characteristics to their participants, and thus may have in-depth knowledge of the community and members, which facilitates this kind of research (Merton 1972). Essentially, elements of the insider's identity/biography may engender a 'shared familiarity' with those being researched.

I claimed 'insider' status with many of my participants in light of our phenotypical Blackness and a shared understanding of issues affecting Black communities, through personal experiences and observations. These factors were also 'instrumental in providing access to research participants' (Bekou-Betts 1994:420). My 'insider' position was also 'intertwined with other factors' (Naggy Hesse-Bieber and Leavy 2008:118), such as 'the precise topic under discussion' (Mercer 2007:6). Participants were encouraged to speak frankly about positive and negative experiences of intra-ethnic relations. To facilitate this, when necessary, I revealed personal experiences to respondents, which enabled me to 'move away from the preconceived role of the academic researcher' (Bhopal 2010:27) and increased openness between us.

At times, however, I noted a slight 'shift in rapport' (Mercer 2007:7), and minor tensions between myself and some of the older British African Caribbean participants in relation to particular areas. One example was the discussion about conflicts occurring in the early 1980s. This was, perhaps because of my ethnicity, and my supposed 'direct links' to the older generation of African migrants who were perceived as not contributing to the struggles against racism in the late 1970s and early

1980s. This illustrates how shared ascribed statuses (e.g. ethnicity), do not necessarily mean that people have the same views and/or life experiences. (Griffin and Phoenix 1994). Some discussion topics, however, allowed for greater levels of 'insiderness', and an enhanced rapport with many of the participants from both groups. For instance, there was a shared appreciation of Afrobeats between myself and participants.

The research met the approval of the University of Greenwich Ethics Committee. This entailed providing written and verbal information on the research, and assurance about confidentiality and anonymity. Participants were also advised of measures taken to safeguard data provided in interviews, and signed a consent form.

Differential aspirations and achievement as a cause of intra-ethnic tensions between British African and African Caribbean groups

As noted previously, at various stages of their settlement in Britain, African and Caribbean groups formed what Reuel Rogers (2004) refers to as 'race based coalitions', which recognised commonalities such as skin colour, a shared African heritage, and experiences of racism. Essentially, these aspects acted as unifying sources. However, in such circumstances shared ideologies and beliefs are also necessary. These may include positive recognition of a common heritage, collective goals for socio-economic mobility and political activism including the resistance against racist oppression (Rogers 2004).

Most participants spoke of how their parents and grandparents experienced overt racism on their arrival in Britain from the 1950s onwards. Jamelle (23, BAC), recalled his grandfather's experiences of racist name calling in pubs, and how he was expected to 'laugh along with it'. Asiya (50 BA) speaks of similar issues experienced by her parents in the work place. However, some participants indicate that though they expected the older generation to, as Asiya puts it 'pull together due to their colour and racist experiences', this did not always happen. 'Colour' was not always a source of unity for Black migrants, neither was a shared ideology always evident, as Jamelle notes:

> My granddad came here in the late 1960s to be with my nan. Like a lot of the other Black people he got factory work, 'cos it was hard to get anything else. Granddad was always saying that there were bare [a large number of] Africans there – especially Nigerians. One thing he couldn't stick [hated] was the way that they were always boasting about how they were going to be hot shots, like doctors and stuff, and be living it large when they go home. But he knew they had been there in that factory for donkeys' years, yet they still thought that they were somehow better than the rest of the people and even dissed some of the West Indian crew, because they thought that they weren't ambitious enough.

The aim of many migrants coming to Britain and other Western countries is often to improve socio-economic status. This may include undertaking manual and/or professional work, or obtaining additional academic and professional qualifications. Both approaches to achieving socio-economic mobility are valid, and should reflect the choices and needs of the individual. However, it would seem that the Nigerians Jamelle refers to, regarded their approaches as

superior to others, and anyone not pursuing similar goals appeared to be lacking in ambition. In some ways, this also resonates with Mwakigale's (2009) suggestion that Africans seem to have higher educational and professional aspirations and outcomes than African Caribbean groups. As Sandra Smith and Mignon Moore (2000) note, situations like this mean that some migrant groups may label others as 'lazy', which is problematic, in that it may further fuel existing tensions between them. These views, however, are not specific to migrant generations. For instance:

> You cannot compare Africans with Caribbeans – especially Jamaicans when it comes to things like education. They [Jamaicans] are not doing anything to progress themselves. They want fast finance instead. I know some of them who don't want to further their education. They'll say it is because of the cost, but you have to take a gamble to further yourself…An African parent will do whatever to make sure that their kids are educated, especially if they didn't have it themselves… Africans do not want to be 'lumped together' with Caribbean people, because of things like this (Charles, 27 BA)

Charles' points are based on his direct interactions with members of British African Caribbean communities, through his work and as a post graduate student. He latterly commented that in his experience, very few African Caribbean migrants, or their children born in Britain went beyond a certain level in their education, whereas educational and professional progress was an 'expectation' in African families. This echoes Mwakigale's (2009) arguments regarding the perceived 'differences' in attitudes between African and African Caribbean groups in terms of academic and career pursuits.

However, while it is true that many African migrants and their children are highly educated and become professionals in their chosen fields, it is important to recognise the positive achievements of African Caribbean groups, and to avoid focusing predominantly on negative stereotypes. Many people of African Caribbean heritage are successful in several areas including politics and academia (Rhamie 2003), which is often downplayed. Instead, the view that they have a higher propensity towards criminality is often propagated, which is then internalised by society members (including other Black groups).

Bilal (51, BAC), provides an alternative reason for problems between the two groups. Growing up in South East London in the 1970s, he recalls the implementation of the SUS (Suspected Person) law, which enabled police officers to stop, search and possibly arrest individuals suspected of involvement in criminal activity. As a result, many Black males were stopped by the police. He also remembers the Brixton riots of April 1981, which were partly due to the continual stop and searches, and rumours of police brutality towards a Black male. Bilal suggests that it was felt that 'everyone with a Black skin should have been involved in the uprising, and fight for their rights, but some people – who I think were mainly Africans chose not to'. He continued:

> There weren't as many Africans in South [London] back then, as there are now, but there was quite a few in all the places where things were blowing up. I think people felt that they [Africans] were trying to avoid trouble. But there was no real point to that. The police and others saw you as Black regardless and there was and still is no equality for Blacks in the shitstem [system], so some people thought that they should have

been on the front line. They should have confronted things head on with the rest of us.

Bilal's point regarding the police's failure to differentiate between Black groups corresponds with Benson's (1981:31) observation that they 'remain indistinguishable to many English [White] eyes'. Evidently, Black and minority ethnic people clearly had a heightened awareness of the racial prejudice prevalent in society at the time. Rather than to become engaged in violent confrontations with the police, however, many adopted alternative approaches to resistance. Vince Hines (1998), for instance, discusses the use of education amongst Black African and African Caribbean communities as a mechanism of resistance against racism. This led to a surge in the number of educational support networks that were developed for and by Black and minority people. Many Africans who arrived in Britain back then were students (Stapleton 1978). This was also a time when there were calls from the government and the public for immigrants to return 'home' (Brown 1995) so the students recognised their precarious position. Thus, if they did not 'confront things head on' perhaps this was because they sought to avoid jeopardising their stay in Britain.

Economic trouble and strife

Junior (51 BAC) regards competition for scarce resources as a factor contributing to tensions between African and Caribbean communities. He explains how these issues arose in the 1980s:

I guess this has got something to do with how it was at the time because like now, there was a serious economic problem in the 1980s, and there were no jobs for us, hardly anything for the kids to do. But I always remember how some of the elders complained that it seemed that the Africans moving into the area got everything, the houses, access to community centres etc., even though we'd been there much longer. So it felt like we were fighting for a share of what should have been ours, because we were getting a worse deal.

Mwakigale (2009:79) makes a similar point, but from the perspective of Africans:

Afro Caribbeans feel that because they have been in the UK longer than a disproportionately large number of Africans especially newer arrivals, they are entitled to a privileged status and should be the first in line to get jobs, housing and social services.

It is evident then that there is an inherent perception that one group benefits more from resources than the other. Moreover, these are examples of how competition for resources can contribute to conflicts between cultural groups (Sian 2013). This intensifies in less affluent neighbourhoods such as that which Junior resided, where residents already have less access to power and economic resources. These problems are further compounded by economic recession, when resources become even less available, as Junior observed. They also illustrate some of the issues that Kenan Malik (2012) suggest arise with multicultural policies which allocate resources on the basis of ethnicity and/or colour and invariably force people to identify themselves along those lines.

Asiya (50 BA) also acknowledges the negative impacts of limited economic resources on community relations. Consequently, she observes that 'recently, things have taken a darker turn', in her neighbourhood (Woolwich) and more widely:

> Well it's getting worse, isn't it Louise? The Black people who have been here for a bit – you know, like the West Africans and West Indians are all against the Somalis. The kids and even some of the older people just….. I don't know… really bully them. No one seems to like them, and you've got to pity them. They get blamed for everything- taking up all the housing and health, for not integrating, then they can't always fight back, especially if their English isn't that good and there's no one to represent or defend them. In a way, if they are being terrorised like this, you can't blame them for not mixing with other people can you?

Similar issues are highlighted in Darcus Howe's documentary entitled '*Who you callin a nigga?*' (Channel 4, 2004):

> I journeyed through Woolwich and Plumstead, where thousands of Somali refugees are settling. The Caribbean community is mostly unwelcoming. Some visit on Somalis the same kind of racial abuse we suffered in the period of early migration. Dissenters to this reactionary view are few and far between. "They are taking our houses. They are getting social benefits which are denied to us. Their children are overcrowding our schools." And more…. One middle-aged West Indian woman capped her experiences at the hand of a group of young Somalis with uninhibited outburst: "I hate Somalis. They should go back to where they came from." She did not bat an eyelid….'

A significant relationship exists between national political debates and government policies on issues such as race and immigration. These can be 'paramount in focussing and amplifying tensions in local areas' (Law 2010:136). When such debates are targeted towards certain groups, such as those from Muslim backgrounds (which includes many Somalis), this exacerbates racial prejudice towards them.

Sadly, as Asiya's vignette shows, some other Black and minority ethnic people have 'bought into' some of the prejudices against certain ethnic and religious groups, despite the fact that previously, similar forms of racism were directed at them. Worryingly, as Asiya also indicated, they are sometimes the instigators of attacks against new migrant groups. Such attitudes may stem from the view that they regard themselves as fully integrated in Britain and that the racist gaze has shifted from them towards newcomers. An alternative explanation is that while they are undoubtedly aware that the influx of new migrants has reignited racial prejudices in society, they may seek to separate themselves from the newcomers and identify with the majority population as a way of avoiding repercussions on themselves.

The current state of affairs: Popular culture, personal attitudes and shifts in relations between British African Caribbean and African people.

Salamatou (44, BA), remembers her experiences of growing up during the 1980s, and how differences in the contribution of British African and British African Caribbean groups to popular culture, shaped perceptions of Africans:

> Back in the day, being 'cool Black' meant being African Caribbean – or American. I think it was what they did for the music scene with things like lovers' rock, reggae, rap and hip hop which all the kids were into. Then you got African Caribbean films like '*Burning an Illusion*,' and '*Babylon'*. You didn't really see any Africans doing stuff like this, though, so we were a bit invisible, I suppose.

> I think that other Blacks also still had that view of us as being a bit 'bush' or backwards with no style. Because of this, a lot of African kids at my school tried to copy what the Jamaican kids were doing … their clothes, speech and that. Some even lied and said they were Jamaican or from Barbados!

Similarly, in his memoir, *Black Gold of the Sun,* Ekow Eshun (2003:93) recalls how 'a generation of young Caribbean-originated Britons made themselves heard' through the media, sport and other forms of popular culture during the 1980s. Effectively, they were 'garnering a level of popular respect in Britain they'd never before held'. Kobena Mercer (1994:3) attributes these developments to the fact that they were 'seizing opportunities in gaps and fissures arising from the chaos of the coincidence between the post-colonial and post-modern' and as a result 'came to voice'. Thus, they 'contributed to the creativity and creation of Black Britain as a cultural space', (ibid), which also played a central role in defining what it meant to be 'Black British' at the time.

With regards to Africans, Eshun also remembers how the situation was different, since they 'were still [seen as] nobody' partly because of their demeaning and simplistic representations the media. Unfortunately, this was further perpetuated by other Black people. Take for instance: 'Lenny Henry on Tiswas with his leopard skin fez and his catchphrase Katanga' (Eshun 2003:98). Such things might, to an extent, have reinforced the perceptions that British Africans were indeed, 'nobodies', who could not achieve the same level of respect as their British African Caribbean peers. This may also partly explain why, as Salamatou observed, some British African youths downplayed their heritage, and took on forms of British African Caribbean identity and style, to minimise their sense of marginalisation.

While stereotypical ideas of Africans are still evident, compared to the 1980s, there is a 'greater African orientation in Black Britain' (Stratton and Zuberi 2014:76) and they are now cutting far more 'sway' in style and parts of popular culture, including sports and music. In football, for example, excellent players have been recruited directly from African countries. For instance, Kolo and Yaya Toure, brothers from the Ivory Coast, have been hugely influential in Liverpool and Manchester City football teams respectively. There are also several examples of good British African players. Examples include Danny Welbeck (Arsenal), whose parents are Ghanaian and Ryan Giggs (ex-Manchester United player), whose roots are Sierra Leonean.

Afrobeats, a genre of music, rooted in Ghanaian and Nigerian jazz and highlife, 'didn't used to be cool', according to DJ Abrantie - one of Britain's leading DJs (*The Guardian* 2012). More recently, it has evolved significantly, and incorporates house, R&B and hip hop, yet the influence of traditional highlife music is still very evident. It is now popular amongst young people of all ethnic backgrounds across Britain. Lucas, (24, BAC), describes how he became 'a massive fan':

> I've got to admit that if you'd asked me maybe 10 years ago what I thought of Afrobeats, I would have laughed in your face. I was into hip hop like it was nobody's business, and that was it. But a couple of years ago, one of my mates from college….he's Senegalese/Nigerian hassled me into going to a party. I went and they were playing all this music which I later found out was Afrobeats, and I really got into it, just as it was starting to kick off. I started to go to a lot of club nights, and to the Hip life festival a few years ago. It has come to the point where a lot of the people that are big on that scene in my area know me and I know almost as many Afrobeat tunes as hip hop ones!

Lucas and I discussed the extent to which the perceptions of Africans in Britain had changed, in view of their recent influence in popular culture:

> I think that it is because there are loads of people who have come from Africa and here as well, that have made it mainstream, and there are a lot more people into it. From when you are hearing Fuse ODG [Afrobeats artist] on the radio….you know they've made it. But it is not just there, though because they are rocking it in education and other areas as well…like work. You're seeing more in the City now….. Nah…people still laugh at Africans – just as they do other people, and they even laugh at themselves. I mean, I've seen this funny page on Facebook….'You know your parents are African when…' and it's an African dude laughing at things that you guys [Africans] face. But compared to maybe when you or my parents were younger….I don't think it's the same level.

Lucas raises an interesting point about the shift in relations between people of African and African Caribbean origin. More specifically that the rifts appear to have reduced amongst younger generations.   Arguably, the fact that diverse Black groups in Britain have become more appreciative of each other's contributions to the Black British music scene has helped to build positive relations. These may also be attributable to an increasing importance of 'pan-ethnicity' in friendship formations, as observed by Raya Muttarak (2013 in Platt 2013) in her research on generations, ethnicity, religion and friendships. While younger generations of ethnic minorities are more likely than their parents to mix with people from a variety of ethnic groups, she found that 'pan-ethnicity' played a role in who they chose to be friends with. For instance Black groups (Black Caribbean, Black African, mixed White and Black African and Mixed White and Black Caribbean) were more likely to forge intra ethnic ties with each other, than with other groups, which might be suggestive of a 'pan-ethnic associational identity' Britain (Muttarak in Platt 2013:21).

Rhahim, (18, BAC and BA) also acknowledges the growing status of Afrobeats in the regional city, where the ethnic population is predominantly Asian and African Caribbean. However, Rhahim

suggests that there should be greater recognition of African influences in other types of music, otherwise it would seem that they produce only certain genres. He has actively attempted to convey this information in a range of different arenas, but it was not always well received:

> I was asked to do a presentation in Black History month. It had to be about the relationship between music and Black history. This Jamaican woman was the facilitator. I thought that I would try and do something different and present stuff on Country and Western. I know a lot about this already, but I just did a bit more research, and included some useful examples. But do you know what the response was? The facilitator said that I should have stuck to reggae, R&B, jazz and all that stuff. I was fuming, but tried to explain that this is something different, and that there are many country and western musicians of African origins, but it wasn't accepted. So annoying!

Rhahim is very much involved in the Country and Western and Bluegrass scene in his local area, and continues to present on the links between these genres, and traditional African music. He advocates the importance of this kind of knowledge in educational curriculums, especially in areas such as music and history. He believes that this type of 're-education' is a useful strategy to challenge stereotypes, and breaking down barriers between Black groups.

There was further reflection on present relations between African and African Caribbean groups, and what emerged corresponded with what the young British African presenter, mentioned previously, said to me: 'both sides [African and Caribbean are] to blame [for tensions], and if we don't stop this, how are we going to come together and get other people [from different ethnic backgrounds] to respect us?' Jamelle, reiterates this view, although he does acknowledge that there has been improvement in relations, especially compared to his grandfather's era:

> I think it has got better. I mean when you look at what my granddad was saying, you don't really see that kind of violence now. Well I haven't anyway. I get on with anyone, and some of my friends come from Africa. The bottom line is that my friends are my friends. But I think there are still rumbles, and you still hear Africans and Caribbeans saying what not about each other and it is never good. One of the things that hasn't helped here is that Woolwich incident [Lee Rigby's murder]. Now, because those guys were of African descent, I've heard Caribbean people say stuff like 'well they're African what do you expect?'

Lee Rigby's murder by Michael Adebolajo and Michael Adebowale was a horrific event, which not only shocked residents of Woolwich but the whole country. Crimes like this understandably elicit a negative response from the public. However, when an individual from an ethnic minority or particular religious group commits these crimes, the issue is further amplified, and generates a great deal of racist sentiment towards the ethnic group of the person committing the crime.

Asiya, also acknowledges the impact of Lee Rigby's murder on community relations in her part of Woolwich. She spoke of a 'general unease' towards strangers who may not live in the area. While

she concedes that overall, the relations between some African and African Caribbean groups are better than they were previously, it largely stems from a common dislike and victimisation of Somalis. Asiya fears that lack of attention to these issues will soon escalate the situation.

Bilal admits to an initial resentment of Africans, given the situation during the early 1980s when the riots took place. However, his view shifted due to interactions with what he refers to as 'conscious Afro-centric' people:

> In the very early 1990s, I was working for the council and I met some people who were very 'conscious', and they made me sort of revise the way I thought about a lot of things and people. I suppose before that, I was quite narrow-minded. Anyway, there was a point when everyone started to look back and find their African roots. I didn't go into it hardcore like some of my mates did, but I was interested. I did try to find out more about African cultures. It made me realise that it was not a country, and that it wasn't the way I thought it was.

Bilal's point is indicative of the mutual respect which has grown between later generations of British African and British African Caribbean people and how this partly stems from a greater appreciation of their cultural differences and similarities, rather than stereotypes. Social alliances and friendships with 'pan-ethnic' peers has enabled him to enhance his knowledge about Africa and challenge ignorant ideas, including the commonly espoused myth that it is a country, rather than a continent with diverse cultures and people.

Conclusion:
The research reported here explored 'intra ethnic' relationships between second and third generation members of British African and British African Caribbean groups, located in two key urban settings. In doing so, it revealed a number of issues in terms of the ways that these groups connect with each other, and may, to an extent, provide further insight into intra-ethnic relationships and how they work.

First, the findings suggest that positive intra ethnic relationships are more prevalent between second and third generation British African Caribbean and British African people, than for their forebears who migrated in the 1960s. Improved relations between these two communities result from several factors, one being the establishment of informal/formal 'race based coalitions' (Rogers 2004), through supporting and celebrating each other's contributions to professionality (e.g education and work), and popular culture (e.g music and sports). This exemplifies Hall's (1988) argument that within Black cultural production, it is important to recognise and engage difference, and not suppress it. This enables the understanding that people speak from a particular place (e.g. being Black British African or Caribbean) and begins to challenge the and homogenisation of 'Black' people.

It is also evident that these generations *have* embraced difference and commonalities particularly in terms of histories and cultures (Hall 1988), which again contrasts with earlier generations, who often regarded these things terms of negative stereotypes (Fanon 1952; Benson 1981; Mwakigale 2009). Taken together, these factors have contributed to improved relations and arguably facilitated 'close friendship ties among themselves than with other groups' (Muttarak

2014:87). As noted above, Muttarak refers to these friendships as 'pan ethnic'. (see also research exploring the growth of pan ethnic coalitions amongst second and third generation groups in the UK; Muttarak 2014, Berrington 1996).

On the other hand, 'intra ethnic' tensions between African and Caribbean groups, have not completely died away. Minor conflicts were highlighted in relation to discussions around professionality. Among some second generation British Africans, there were resonances of negative attitudes which existed amongst the African migrant generation towards their African Caribbean counterparts. This included assumptions that African Caribbean groups are less concerned about educational and professional development. While such views undermine the positive relations between the groups to an extent, they were very much in the minority. Rather, it was clear that within latter generations, both groups are more likely to celebrate each other's successes in this area.

A further source of contention results from competition for scarce socio-economic resources, which worsen when they are allocated along colour or ethnic lines (Malik 2012). Although this appears to have been a greater issue for migrant generations who arrived in Britain, especially between the post war era and the 1980s, to an extent, it continues in later generations. Older second generation research participants, such as Junior, and Asiya discussed how these issues affected community relations in their respective areas. However, although the battle for public funding remains an issue amongst Black groups, it is also evident in other ethnic/religious communities. As the literature highlights, similar conflicts exist between Sikhs and Muslims in Britain. Thus my findings are consistent with other studies (see for example Sian 2013; Singh 2010) in that competition for limited socio-economic resources is a key factor affecting intra ethnic relations.

To this end, further research could explore these issues at both local and national levels with particular emphasis on impacts of external/structural issues (e.g. socio-economic problems, racism from non-ethnic groups) on intra-ethnic relations in these areas. This could also involve the identification of common issues faced by both groups, ways to work together, and the potential formation of grassroots coalitions to bring about positive change (e.g. shields against the worst impacts of economic austerity and racism). The findings could be influential in terms of informing local and national policies around resource allocation and community cohesion.

Additionally, an analysis of intergenerational attitudes regarding intra ethnic relations would be useful. Since previous research has focused on older generations, and the research reported here considers the views of younger generations, there is a gap in the knowledge from an intergenerational perspective. Comparing and contrasting views/experiences of participants of different age groups could enable greater insight into intergenerational attitudes around this issue. Generally, such a study could provide a greater understanding of the political and social implications of intra-ethnic relations, and how these change according to situations and contexts.

Effectively, while this paper contributes analysis of intra-ethnic relations between British African and Caribbean groups, it is acknowledged that further discussion of these issues are required, especially given that these relationships will further evolve amongst later generations, time and space.
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[i] Damilola Taylor was a 10 year old Nigerian schoolboy, who was murdered by Ricky and Danny Preddie in Peckham, London in November 2000.