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# Experiences of Socio-Spatial Exclusion Among Ghanaian Immigrant Youth in Toronto: A Case Study of the Jane-Finch Neighbourhood

Mariama Zaami
*The University of Western Ontario*

Supervisor
Godwin Arku
*The University of Western Ontario* Joint Supervisor
Joseph Mensah
*The University of Western Ontario*

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EXPERIENCES OF SOCIO-SPATIAL EXCLUSION AMONG GHANAIAN
IMMIGRANT YOUTH IN TORONTO: A CASE STUDY OF THE JANE andFINCH
NEIGHBOURHOOD


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by


Mariama Zaami


Graduate Program in Geography


A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
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Master of Arts


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Western University
London, Ontario, Canada

WESTERN UNIVERSITY

School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

CERTIFICATE OF EXAMINATION

Joint-Supervisor

_____

Dr. Joseph Mensah

Joint-Supervisor

_____

Dr. Godwin Arku

Examiners

_____

Dr. Chantelle Richmond

_____

Dr. Isaac N. Luginaah

_____

Dr. Teresa Abada

The thesis by

**Mariama Zaami**

entitled:

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requirements for the degree of
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Date_____June 28, 2012_____          Dr. Jeff Hopkins
                                                          Chair of the Thesis Examination Board

**Abstract**

Social and spatial exclusion of immigrants is an emerging phenomenon in Canadian cities. While many of the existing studies have looked at the deprivation of visible minority immigrants in education, labour market and housing patterns, little attention has so far been given to the broader issue of their socio-spatial exclusion in Canadian cities. To help fill this gap in the literature, this study assesses the nature and characteristics of socio-spatial exclusion experienced by Blacks in Canada, using Ghanaian immigrant youth in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood as a case study. The study uses a qualitative methodological approach consisting of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The study examines the causes and possible solutions of social and spatial exclusion among Ghanaian immigrant youth. It incorporates meaningful insights from their own perspective on the drivers of exclusion in diverse situations and locations in Toronto, including: schools, churches, sports and entertainment arenas, neighbourhoods and shopping malls. Overall, the findings suggest that Ghanaian immigrant youth experiences of socio-spatial exclusion are intertwined in a dialectical process involving the Jane and Finch neighbourhood and the general public. In particular, the youth negotiate access to employment opportunities, shopping malls and adapt to exclusion through reformulation of "dress codes", resumes, and masking of their actual neighbourhoods.


**Keywords:** Youth, Socio-spatial exclusion, Ghanaians, Immigrants, Toronto.

Throughout the writing of this thesis I have had the support of many of my friends. Some supported me with their prayers, time and constant encouragement. God bless you all. Finally, to my family, thank you for the prayers and support, I really appreciate it. Mum, your constant phone calls to check on me on weekends gave me the strength to come this far. God bless you Mum.

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**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION AND CHAPTER OUTLINE**

**1.1 Background**

This study examines the forms and characteristics of socio-spatial exclusion experienced by Ghanaian immigrant youth in the Jane–Finch neighbourhood of Toronto. It seeks to understand the mechanism and causes of those social and spatial exclusions, with meaningful insights by the youth on the drivers of exclusion in Toronto. Additionally, the study assesses the extent to which social and spatial processes and patterns feed into each other to exacerbate the socio-spatial exclusions faced by these immigrant youth in diverse situations and locations (for example, in their schools, churches, sports and entertainment arenas, neighbourhoods, streets, shopping malls, and so on).

The concept of social exclusion arose in France in the 1960s (Bossert, D'Ambrosio & Peragine, 2007; Edgren-Schori, 2000), where it was used to describe the condition of certain groups of people who were on the margins of society, and cut off from regular sources of employment and the income safety nets of the welfare state (Atkinson & Hills, 1998). Literature on social exclusion continues to grow, especially in Europe, with the UK, France, and Germany taking the lead (Atkinson, 1998; Madanipour, Caro & Allen, 1998). While literature on social exclusion has made some advances in North America, it is relatively limited to discussions on poverty and deprivation in the United States (Silver, 2007; Silver & Miller, 2003) and Canada (Burstein, 2005; Eyles,

Wilson, Keller-Olaman & Elliot, 2006; Galabuzi, 2006; Wilson, Eyles, Keller-Olaman & Devcic, 2007). Social exclusion is a dialectical concept, and one that focuses on causes, processes and their attendant agencies (Bradshaw & Bennet, 2004; Gordon et al., 2000; Silver, 2007). Additionally, the concept is imbued with dynamism and multidimensionality that facilitate its use as an umbrella term for a host of social disadvantages, including social isolation, marginalization, poverty, deprivation, discrimination, powerlessness and, even, socio-cultural othering. The notion of social exclusion is, therefore, a bridge to discussions of equality and citizenship, and helps bring segregation and other issues of spatial marginalization to the fore of policy debates (Dobrowolsky & Lister, 2005; Pierson, 2009; Saunders, 2003).

Although large and growing, the issue of everyday experiences of social and spatial exclusion particularly among minorities has received limited attention from researchers. The rationale for the use of Ghanaians in this study stems from the fact that they are among the largest Black African groups in Canada. They have, however, received scant research attention in the burgeoning literature on immigrant integration in Canada (Mensah, 2010, 2009; Opoku-Dapaah, 2006; Owusu, 1999, 1998; Wong, 2000). Second, like many other Black African immigrant groups in Canada, Ghanaians continue to experience racial discrimination (for example, Mensah 2010; Opoku-Dapaah, 2006; Wong, 2000), making them amenable to such a study. My personal background as a Ghanaian international student has prompted me to study people from Ghana for reasons of intense personal curiosity, not to mention the fact that my cultural competence would help me to better understand the subtleties of the field data procured for this study.

Notwithstanding the enormous diversity within the visible minority population in Canada (Mensah, 2010; Opoku-Dapaah, 2006), some of the existing studies have lumped all varieties into one category (for example, Kazemipur, 2000; Kazemipur & Halli, 1999). For instance, although African and Caribbean immigrants may share physical traits, the assumption that their experiences, and the nature of their adaptation and of their social exclusion, are similar is unwarranted (Opoku-Dapaah, 2006; Owusu, 1999). Hence, little useful insight can be gained by broad categorization and generalizations regarding the social and spatial exclusion of immigrants. Immigrants of African origin are not a homogeneous group, but diverse in terms of culture, language, education, and length of residence in Canada. There is, therefore, a need for research that disaggregates immigrants into separate national and ethnic categories for analytical purposes, and that recognize that immigrants from different backgrounds may have different life paths and expectations in the host society. This rationale has provided the basis for this case study of Ghanaian immigrant youth in the Jane and Finch neigbourhood.

This study contributes to continuing debates about race, social exclusion, discrimination, assimilation, integration and segregation of immigrants in Canada. It builds on studies that have found experiences of social integration, assimilation and alienation or exclusion among visible minorities in Canada (for example, Block & Galabuzi, 2011; Creese, 2011; Mensah, 2010).

Existing literature indicates that visible minorities in Canada experience discrimination and exclusion, making integration into Canadian society very difficult despite the multicultural policies that were introduced in the early 1970s (Creese, 2011; Galabuzi, 2006; Goonewardena & Kipfer, 2005; Preston & Murnaghan, 2005; Smith & Ley, 2008). These policies allow ethnic groups to retain their cultural heritage while

participating fully in Canadian society (Preston & Murnaghan, 2005; Reitz, 2007). Despite its emphasis on the importance and acceptance of diversity, multiculturalism has also come to mean exclusion for some social groups, because they have become more detached and alienated from mainstream society, thereby reducing minorities' incentives to acquire their host country's language and gain access to the labour market and educational qualifications (Hou & Picot, 2004).

Indeed, the experiences of visible minorities have attracted considerable academic attention in recent years. Among other issues, scholars have examined their residential patterns (Balakrishnan & Gyimah, 2003; Owusu, 1999; Qadeer, 2005; Ray & Preston, 2009), their housing problems (Balakrishnan & Wu, 1992; Peach, 2005; Qadeer, 2005), their labour market constraints (Alba & Nee, 2003; Block & Galabuzi, 2011; Creese, 2011; Galabuzi, 2006; Wong, 2000), and the educational attainments of immigrant children (Abada & Tenkorang, 2009; Opoku-Dapaah, 2006). Housing experiences of immigrants in Canada have received particular attention (see, for example, Balakrishnan, Maxim & Jurdi, 2005; Hou & Balakrishnan, 1996; Murdie, 2003; Murdie & Teixeira, 2003; Owusu, 1999), which is understandable given the crucial role housing plays in the integration process of immigrants in the host society (Carter, Polveychok & Osborne, 2009; Edmonston, 2004; Murdie, 2008).

There are indications that many Blacks in major Canadian cities, such as Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal, live in racially segregated housing in inner city and inner suburban census tracts with extreme poverty rates (Balakrishnan, et al., 2005; Kazemipur & Halli, 1999; Konadu-Agyemang, 1999; Mensah, 2010). This circumstance has prompted some concerns about the socio-spatial exclusion of Blacks in Canada (Balakrishnan & Gyimah, 2003). The "discrimination" versus "preference" question is

one with which most policy makers and researchers have grappled. The "preference" side of the debate maintains that immigrants want to live close to members of their ethnic group in order to maintain access to ethnic amenities and services; the "discrimination" side holds that the choice of place of residence is attributable to discrimination, or the fact that there are forces that prevent immigrants from moving to neighbourhoods and places to which their incomes and preferences may otherwise allow or lead them to move. Farley (1995) believes that residential segregation among immigrants is involuntary, and contends that those impeding factors comprise a host of discriminatory practices on the parts of realtors, landlords, and financial institutions. Other, converse, arguments that have been advanced suggest that immigrants who are racial minorities are typically not excluded from the mainstream society; instead, they tend to pool resources together by living in the same neighbourhoods to enable them defray costs of living, thereby producing ethnic enclaves (Balakrishnan, et al., 2005; Murdie & Teixeira, 2003; Owusu, 1999; Qadeer, 2005).

In the research just outlined, little attention has been paid to the socio-spatial exclusion of African immigrant youth. In particular, a limited number of studies have examined the day to day experiences of exclusion among immigrant youth. There is, therefore, limited knowledge of *how* neighbourhood exclusions feed into the process of everyday lived experiences, *what* forms these everyday exclusions take, and *why* they occur. This study addresses these issues by focusing on the social and spatial exclusion of Ghanaian immigrant youth in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood.

**1.2 Research Objectives**

The broad aim of this study is to understand the experiences of social and spatial exclusion among Ghanaian immigrant youth in Toronto. In order to achieve this, the study proposed the following objectives:

1. To describe the *forms* and characteristics of socio-spatial exclusion experienced by Ghanaian immigrant youth in Toronto.

2. To gain new insights into the *causes* of social and spatial exclusions experienced among Ghanaian youth.

3. To assess the *extent* to which social and spatial processes and patterns feed into each other to exacerbate, or otherwise alleviate, the socio-spatial exclusions faced by Ghanaian immigrant youth.

This study sought to address the following questions: What are the various *ways* in which Ghanaian immigrant youth experience socio-spatial exclusion in their everyday living? To what *extent* are spatial factors affecting how Ghanaians access social services?

The theoretical framework of socio-spatial dialectics will be used to help accomplish the stated objectives. It is premised on the idea that social processes and patterns are inseparable from spatial processes and patterns (Soja, 1989, 2011). They thus feed into each other in such a way that they tend to be, at the same time, both the cause and effect of a phenomenon like social exclusion. The basic argument is that the extent to which immigrants are spatially segregated into neighborhoods and enclaves feeds into

their social exclusions from mainstream employment and housing. This theoretical context will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two.

## 1.3. Ghanaians in Canada

Ghanaian immigration to Canada can be divided into two broad waves. The first wave lasted from the early 1970s to 1986, while the second started in the early 1990s, and continues at present, with the four-year period from 1987 to 1990 as a transition phase (Mensah, 2002, 2010). Mensah (2010) notes that the migration of Ghanaians to Canada was fuelled by the economic and political instability in Ghana and favourable immigration policies in Canada. In the 1970s Ghanaian immigration to Canada comprised government-sponsored students who came to study, professionals in the education sector, health workers and a few political dissidents escaping persecution (Mensah, 2002, 2010). Most of the first wave of Ghanaians settled in Ontario, specifically in Toronto, which has continued to be home for most Ghanaians in Canada (Mensah, 2010).

Following the introduction of the *Immigration Act* of 1976, which incorporated the U.N. Convention's definition of a refugee into Canadian law, the majority of Ghanaian political refugees went to Canada (Mensah, 2010). Ghanaian immigration to Canada increased in the 1980s when Ghana's economy was plunged into crisis. The implementation of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in Ghana also led to the retrenchment of civil servants, and severe cutbacks in health care and other social services (Mensah, 2010; Konadu-Agyemang, 2006). With the economic crisis and political instability, many Ghanaians sought refuge in other countries, such as Canada (Mensah 2002, 2010; Owusu, 1999).

At the beginnings of the 1970s and the 1980s, Canada was hit by economic recession, which led to restrictions on immigration. The second of those recessions was over by the mid-1980s, and the government of Canada increased the permitted number of refugees and family class immigrants, paving the way for more Ghanaians to emigrate (Mensah, 2010; Opoku-Dapaah, 2006).

The second wave of Ghanaian immigration to Canada began after the recession in early 1991. The category of migrants comprised students, political dissidents, and both skilled and unskilled workers, which increased the annual number of Ghanaian immigrants beyond one thousand (Opoku-Dapaah, 2006). Studies have shown that the second wave of immigrants were less educated than the first wave; the former were of the refugee and family unification classes, in which educational background was not a key determinant of entry (Mensah, 2002, 2010; Opoku-Dapaah, 2006). This trend led to the upsurge of unemployment and English proficiency problems in the Ghanaian immigrant community. The number of Ghanaians entering Canada has been decreasing, albeit slowly, as a result of the introduction of Bill C-86, which has tightened the requirements of immigration, with more stringent medical examinations and increased immigration processing and landing fees. Additionally, Bill C-86 has introduced the fingerprinting of asylum seekers, and has empowered immigration officials to refuse a refugee claim if the applicant traveled to Canada through a safe country or through any country in which the applicant could have applied for a refugee claim (Donkor, 2005; Mensah, 2002, 2010).

A total of 23,200 Ghanaians were living in Canada by the time of the 2006 national census with the vast majority of the Ghanaian immigrant population in Canada - 17,470 – live in Ontario (Statistics Canada, 2006). Other Canadian cities with sizeable Ghanaian immigrant populations are Montreal, Vancouver, Ottawa-Gatineau, and

Edmonton. Most Ghanaians in Toronto reside in older and newer suburban districts such as North York, Etobicoke, Mississauga and, increasingly, Brampton (Mensah, 2010; Owusu, 1999; Wong, 2002). This spatial distribution stems from their desire to live closer to other Ghanaians, and the fact that they usually seek affordable public and private rental accommodations that are, most often, in the suburbs (Mensah, 2002; Opoku-Dapaah, 1993, 2006; Owusu, 1999).

## 1.4 Neighbourhood Effects

Bauder (2002) observes that the notion of "neighbourhood effects" implies that individuals who live in so-called ghettos, barrios and slums are responsible for their own social and economic situation. Public discourse has embraced this assumption, and certain policies and social conventions have been put in place to enforce cultural exclusion and to facilitate acculturation (Bauder, 2002). Bauder (2002) argues that underprivileged communities do not actively isolate themselves from society and economic opportunities; rather, they are marginalized because of their cultural differences. Bauder's research demonstrates how neigbourhood effects are caused by a combination of local processes of identity formation and the perception by outsiders of a marginalized community (Bauder, 2001, 2002). Bauder notes that the neighbourhood is influenced by both internal and external factors that are embedded in institutions such as schools, community centres and places of worship. Similarly, other scholars, including Ellen and Turner (1997) and Waldinger (1997), note that imposing a cultural identity on neighbourhoods with derogatory labels such as "ghetto" suggests that individuals living in these neighbourhoods have low skill levels, poor work ethics, and occupational incompetence, which usually deter employers from offering them jobs.

England (1993) notes that recruitment of workers by employers into certain jobs is based on the neighbourhood in which the workers live. Some employers deliberately search in immigrant reception areas to recruit workers who are ready to do menial jobs in unsafe conditions; others look for middle-class housewives, who are employed into part-time jobs (England, 1993). Once groups of people are residentially isolated, their neighbourhood acquires a stigma that further disadvantages them in the labour market (Bauder, 2002; Waldinger, 1997). This was confirmed by Bauder (2002) in a study of urban neighbourhoods and the cultural exclusion of youths in San Antonio, Texas, suggesting that young people's career aspirations would vary depending on their neighbourhood. Bauder (2002) concludes that cultural differentiation, residential segregation, and economic segmentation are interlocking processes in the production and reproduction of inequality (Bauder, 2002). Steinberg (1981) maintains that cultural traits and behaviour are not essentially good or bad. Social marginality is not a product of cultural inferiority but, rather, the result of the denial of opportunities to people who are labelled culturally different.

Figure 1: The Study Area – The Jane and Finch Neighbourhood
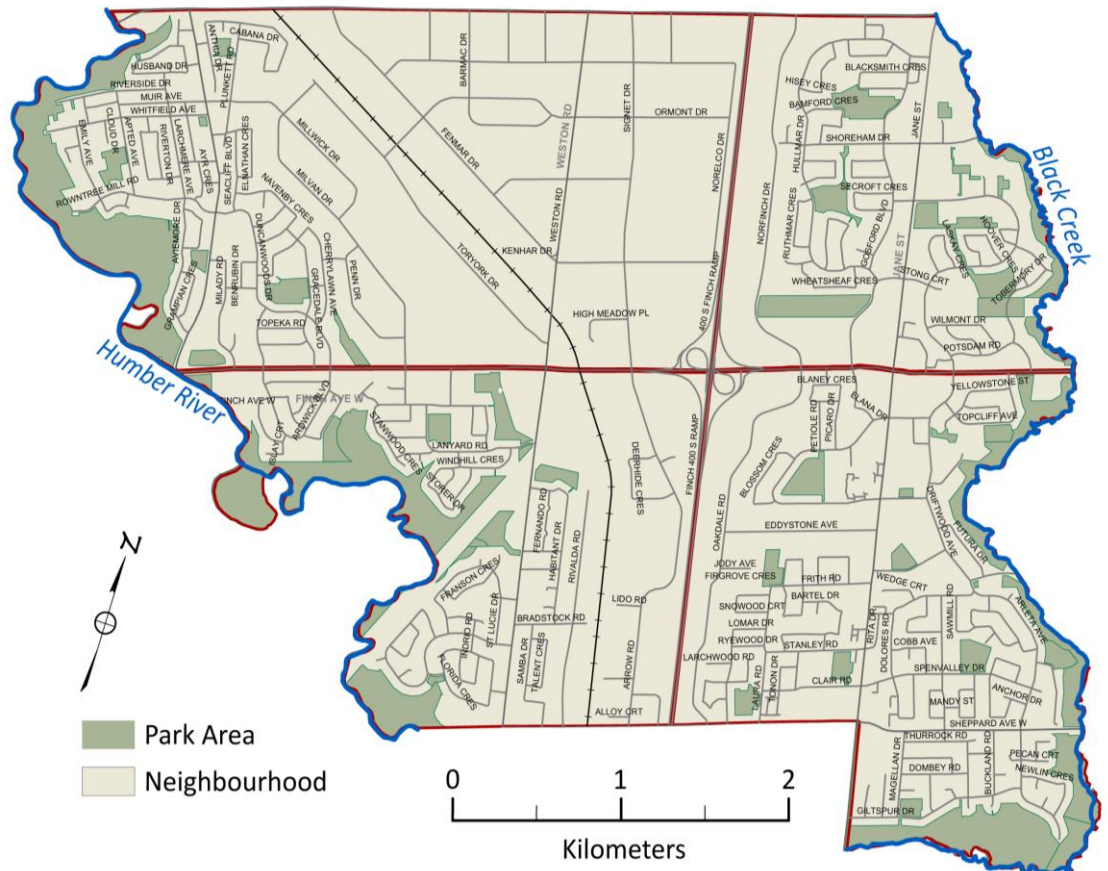


The Jane and Finch neighbourhood is situated at the intersection of two arterial roads -- that is, Jane Street and Finch Avenue -- in the northwest part of the city of Toronto. The physical characteristics of the area include many gas stations, shopping malls, and high-rise apartment buildings (Carey, 2001). Jane and Finch comprises the land on either side of Jane Street from Highway 400 on the west side to Black Creek on the east, and from Highway 401 to the south as far north as Steeles Avenue, which is the boundary between the City of Toronto and the City of Vaughan. The Jane and Finch neighbourhood is home to more than 60,000 people, and in size about six kilometres from north to south, and two kilometres from east to west (Boudreau et al., 2009). The intersection is only some 16 kilometres northwest of downtown Toronto, but it is often

perceived by many Toronto residents as on the distant margins of Toronto society. In the imagination of many Toronto residents and Canadians, the Jane and Finch neighbourhood is an unattractive and unsafe part of the city; a place of violence and gang warfare (Boudreau et al., 2009).

The origin of "Jane and Finch" was in the 1950s; it was and is the product of a combination of the Fordist social welfare state's vision of modern urbanism and the methods of modernization utilized as part of an overall model of governance (Boudreau et al., 2009). The combination of a modern vision and methods of modernization marked Jane and Finch from its inception as different from other districts in Toronto. It is a district that looks different, with its high-rise apartment buildings and experimental site plan layouts. The people who lived in Jane and Finch during the 1960s and 1970s were recent immigrants from non-European countries. Most had low incomes, and lived in public housing and different from the majority of people in other Toronto neighbourhoods. Jane and Finch became a target of the social, cultural, and racial biases of mainstream Toronto society.

Very early in the process of its development Jane and Finch was branded as a poorly planned, ugly, dangerous and undesirable place in the city — in other words, a suburban ghetto (Boudreau et al., 2009). This branding has been continually renewed over the past several decades by repeated representations of the district in the mass media as troubled and dangerous. It is almost impossible to find references to it other than as the "crime ridden and impoverished Jane and Finch corridor" (Boudreau et al., 2009, p. 122).

The Jane and Finch area is home to a high proportion of racialized and Canadian-born citizens. It manifests the processes of racialization through the spatial segregation of immigrants (Boudreau et al., 2009). The stereotypical portrayal of the neighbourhood is

cast in racialized terms, and constructs the area as a "black ghetto". The neighbourhood is characterized by the following demographics: incomes are substantially lower, as are post-secondary education levels; and the population is generally younger, with many lone-parent families, immigrants, and recent immigrants, and people of colour, including many new African immigrants, such as Ghanaians.

### *1.4.1 Perception of Crime in the Jane and Finch Neighbourhood*

During the summer of 2005 a spate of shootings in Toronto led to a renewed focus on, and portrayal of, Jane and Finch as a high crime area. In one incident in early August 2005 a four-year-old and three adults were shot on Driftwood Avenue in what was referred to as "the Jane and Finch corridor" (Edwards & Siddiqui 2005 cited in Boudreau et al., 2009, p. 122). Inspired by the incident, unorthodox crime fighting strategies were adopted by municipal politicians, and led the police service to launch a special task force to address crime in selected areas of Toronto. The main purpose was to reduce crime by increasing the number of officers patrolling at night. In July 2007 the Ontario Government pledged $10 million to extend the Toronto community policing program, which was meant to battle gang violence in the city, with special attention to the Jane and Finch area (Boudreau et al., 2009).

On November 4, 2011 the Globe and Mail newspaper reported a gunman shooting two teenagers outside a school in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. This incident occurred outside Oakdale Park Middle School, not long after the school day had begun. The suspect was described as 17 or 18 years old, with a light black complexion and a height of about five feet eight to five feet 10 inches. The conclusion of the report stated that although the school had no record of violence, the Jane and Finch neighbourhood was one noted for persistent crime (Globe & Mail, November 04, 2011).

The area is home to many Ghanaian immigrants and, indeed, immigrants from African countries. It is economically depressed, and has received bad publicity. Danso & Grant (2000) argue that housing and location play crucial roles not only in the initial and more permanent establishment of immigrants, but also in providing access to other indispensable resources and opportunities in the host country. New Ghanaian immigrants choose to live near their previously established immigrant friends and relatives (Danso & Grant, 2000; Owusu, 1999). The Jane and Finch neighbourhood was selected for this study because of the high proportion of Ghanaians who live there. This study seeks to understand how socio-spatial exclusion and racial discrimination play out in the lives of Ghanaian immigrant youth living in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood.

## 1.5 Study Outline

The study consists of five chapters. Chapter Two is in three sections: section one reviews related literature on social exclusion, while section two addresses concepts of residential segregation, and section three deals with the theoretical grounding of the study — that is, socio-spatial dialectics − and offers a conclusion. The research design used in the study is presented in Chapter Three, which also outlines the methods used in the study: namely, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, the recruitment process, fieldwork and positionality. It concludes with a description of the process of data analysis. Chapter Four presents results of data based on emerging themes related to the research objectives. Chapter Five presents the discussion of the thesis, situating it within current research examining social exclusion, residential segregation and social inclusion. It acknowledges the limitation of the research, and offers suggestions for future research and policy recommendations to help improve the lives of minorities living in spatially segregated neighbourhoods.

**CHAPTER TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

## 2.1  Introduction

Section one of this chapter reviews the literature on social exclusion, while section two introduces the concepts of residential segregation and of integration to establish the conceptual apparatus for thinking critically about social disadvantage or exclusion of Ghanaian immigrant youth in North York, Toronto**.** Section three examines the theoretical grounding of the study -- socio-spatial dialectics -- and reaches a conclusion. The theoretical grounding will help address the gap in the literature with respect to how residential segregation (neighbourhood) could engender social and spatial exclusion among Ghanaian immigrant youth. The study emphasizes space related dynamics as propounded by Soja (1989; 2011), and examines how social processes and patterns reinforce spatial ones. This research will enhance our basic understanding of the dialectics of social exclusion in Canadian society. These theoretical discussions will be used to shed more light on the findings of this study.

### *2.1.1. Origins and definition of "social exclusion"*

The concept of social exclusion arose in France in the 1960s (Bossert, D'Ambrosio & Peragine, 2007; Edgren-Schori, 2000), where it was used to describe the condition of certain groups of people who were on the margins of society, and cut off from regular sources of employment and from the income safety nets of the welfare state (Atkinson & Hills, 1998). The French bureaucrat René Lenoir is credited with coining the term in his *Les Exclus*, first published in 1974 (Beland, 2007; Beland & Hansen, 2000). To some extent "the socially excluded" has replaced what Americans call "the

underclass" in discussions about the poor (Byrne, 1999). Also, in some European policy circles social exclusion is equated with "poverty", which in its narrow sense is seen to be a radical term (Munck, 2005; Saunders, 2003; Spicker, 1997).

The term "social exclusion" has occupied a central place in the discussion of social policy and inequality in Europe, and has acquired recognition by emphasizing structural and cultural processes that have made its meaning ambiguous (Atkinson, 1998). As a result, there is a propensity to use poverty as a measure for social exclusion (Atkinson, 1998; Dobrowolsky & Lister, 2005).

Chakravarty and D'Ambrosio (2002) explain that an individual experiences social exclusion when he or she is not able to take part in the basic economic and social activities of the society in which he or she lives. Similarly, Atkinson and Davoudi (2000) have conceptualized the term "social exclusion" from two perspectives: first as income poverty, and second as social cohesion. Income poverty connotes people who are not attached to the paid labour market (exclusion from the paid workforce), or those people in low-wage work, while social cohesion refers to a cohesive society in which (political, social and economic) stability is maintained and controlled by participation in the paid workforce.

Furthermore, the process of exclusion is seen in multiple deprivations, including the breaking of family ties and social relationships and the loss of identity and purpose (Peace, 2001). Peace notes that the concept of social exclusion has some noteworthy advantages in creating a different and complex understanding of factors and influences that lead to well-being and differences, inequalities and relative disadvantage among members of a community (Peace, 2001).

Pierson writes that the phenomenon of social exclusion occurs when individuals alienate themselves from mainstream society through their own actions and aberrant moral values (Pierson, 2009). Some scholars (for example, Atkinson, 1998; Atkinson, Cantillon, Marlier & Nolan, 2002; Burchardt, Le Grand & Piachaud, 1999 and Room, 1999) have argued that social exclusion should be understood in the context of poverty, using income as the basis for a high quality of life. Social inclusion focuses on social relations, and how people are able to participate in social affairs and attain adequate power to influence decisions that affect them (Bradshaw et al., 2002; Burchandt et al., 1999; Tsakloglou & Papadopoulos, 2002). Similarly, Peace (2001) defines social exclusion in terms of poverty, hardship, deprivation and marginalization. He acknowledges that the concept is sometimes contradictory (Peace, 2001). Furthermore, Atkinson and Davoudi (2000) note that social exclusion is a combination of processes by which individuals, households, communities, and social groups are marginalized. It encompasses not only material deprivation, but also, more broadly, the denial of opportunities to participate fully in social and civil life (Atkinson & Davoudi, 2000). Byrne (1999, p.1) points out that the "two words 'social' and 'exclusion' when put together conjoin society as a whole, as opposed to the discrete individuals within society, with ongoing processes, as opposed to a timeless state." Thus, "social exclusion" is a dialectical concept, one that focuses on causes, processes, and their attendant agencies (Bossert, D'Ambrosio & Peragine, 2007; Bradshaw, 2004; Bradshaw & Bennett, 2004; Sen, 2000; Silver, 2007).

Some scholars suggest that social exclusion is primarily concerned with relational issues and the dynamic processes that lead to the breaking of social ties and the marginalization of groups (Arthurson, 2002; Atkinson, 1998; Atkinson & Davoudi, 2000;

Sen, 2000). Conversely, Giddens (1998) writes that the term exclusion does not involve different types of inequality but, rather, the mechanisms that act to remove groups of people from the entire society or mainstream society. Similarly, others have argued that social exclusion is linked to the incidence of poverty and deprivation among some groups and in specific locations, which to a large extent leads to a process of restructuring of economies and welfare states (Atkinson, 1998; Atkinson et al., 2002; Room, 1999). Although Cameron and Davoudi (1998) suggest that social exclusion could relate to the incidence of poverty, they have, however, the notion that social exclusion implies multiple forms of deprivation, and looks beyond issues of income inequality to incorporate the social and cultural aspects of deprivation, as well as the notion of citizenship rights. The debate on social exclusion has shifted to include the social and cultural dimensions of the processes of exclusion, instead of limiting it to income inequality and material exclusion (Atkinson, 2000). Additionally, the notion of social exclusion constitutes a bridge to discussions of equality and citizenship, and helps bring segregation and other issues of spatial marginalization to the fore of policy debates (Barnes, 2005; Bossert, D'Ambrosio & Peragine, 2007; Geddes & Urry, 2000; Pierson, 2002; Saunders, 2003).

Social exclusion also signals a lack of belonging, acceptance, and recognition (Geddes & Urry, 2000). It has been observed that socially excluded people are likely to be socially and economically vulnerable, and have reduced life experiences (Barnes, 2005; Burchardt et al., 1999; Room, 1999). An individual is socially excluded if (a) he or she is geographically resident in a society, (b) he or she cannot participate in the normal activities of citizens in that society, and (c) he or she would like to participate, but is prevented from doing so by factors beyond his or her control (Richardson & LeGrand,

2002, p.3). Pierson (2009), however, places more emphasis on poverty, poor housing and the impact of disadvantaged neighbourhoods that help to shape human behaviour than on individual motivation, moral capacity and characteristics of personality. He explains that social exclusion reduces the range of choices that individuals and families have at their disposal (Pierson, 2009). Pierson writes that choices that appear to be acceptable to the mainstream society, and that it sees as reasonable and responsible actions, are not available to the excluded (Pierson, 2009, 2010). Social exclusion is a process that eventually deprives individuals and families, groups and neighbourhoods of the resources required for a holistic participation in the social, economic and political activity of society as a whole (Pierson, 2009, 2010). This process is a result of poverty and low income, which encompass other factors, such as discrimination, low educational attainment and depleted environments (Pierson, 2009). Some scholars assert that the process of social exclusion will, in the long run, deprive people, for a significant period of their lives, of the institutions and services, social networks and developmental opportunities that the majority in a society need to survive (Atkinson, 1998; Atkinson et al., 2002; Room, 1999).

Other scholars assert that social exclusion is associated with economic and social changes in free market economies and with weaknesses in government policies and services (Social Exclusion Unit, 2001). Other causal indicators of exclusion include the social (for example, family; labour market; neighbourhood; society and global participation); the territorial (demographic-migration, accessibility in terms of transport, communications, and so on; and deprived areas in the society); the extent of overcrowded housing; the extent to which people feel safe; a high percentage of residents without a bank or a building society account; and high levels of burglaries, among others (Atkinson

& Davoudi, 2000). Atkinson and Davoudi (2000) contend that although these causal indicators may overlap, the central issue is the attempt to locate the causes of exclusion in the institutional, social, and material structures of the society. For instance, Kristensen (1995) explains that the territorial aspect of exclusion addresses occasions where the socially excluded are located in particular areas -- for example, social housing estates separate from the rest of society – that are termed "excluded spaces". Similarly, Berghman (1995) explains that in such a situation, the focus should be not only on the individuals and groups, but the whole neighbourhood or community.

According to Peace (1999), there are 15 kinds of exclusion named in the European social policy texts; they are: social marginalization; new poverty; democratic legal/political exclusion; non material disadvantage; exclusion from the "minimal acceptable way of life"; cultural exclusion (including race and gender); exclusion from family and the community; exclusion from the welfare state; long-term poverty; exclusion from mainstream political and economic life; poverty; the state of deprivation; detachment from work relations; economic exclusion; and exclusion from the labour market. In the same context, Percy-Smith (2000, p.9) suggests that there are "economic, social, political, neighbourhood, individual, spatial and group" dimensions to social exclusion. Pierson (2009) includes "cultural exclusion", which Atkinson and Davoudi (2000) and Percy-Smith (2000) did not include in the kinds of exclusion. Some of these scholars (see for example, Peace, 1999; Percy-Smith, 2000 and Pierson 2010), however, do agree that lack of access includes factors such as social mobility, means of communication, vital social systems, housing, public amenities, social security, health services, education services and social citizenship.

Peace (2001) explains that the lack of fair recognition includes negative images of groups of the poor, social discrimination, cultural inequalities, and prejudices in the wider society, hostility, stigmatism, segregation, ethnic discrimination and low participation rates of women in the said society. Peace (2001, p.3) notes that personal intensifiers encompass factors such as bad lifestyle, negative family circumstances, low living standards, poor health, indebtedness, drug trafficking, unsatisfactory quality of life, lack of knowledge and information, and low levels of education and qualification. Spatial intensifiers include, but are not limited to, social isolation; geographical isolation; loneliness and separation from family and community; the sense of being forgotten; and the resort to out-migration (Peace, 2001).

Levitas (2005) argues that there are three different discourses within the discussions on social exclusion in the UK social policy: the redistributionist discourse, the moral underclass discourse (MUD) and the social integrationist discourse (SID). The three discourses address both those living in poverty and the social forces that make this happen.

The redistributionist discourse offers the explanation that it is only through the redistribution of wealth across society as a whole, through taxation, benefits and services, that poverty and inequality will be eradicated in Britain (Levitas, 2005). According to this position, it is individual attitudes to work, and moral and cultural ascriptions that are responsible for social exclusion (Levitas, 2005). The Moral Underclass Discourse (MUD) focuses on individual misbehaviour and lapses in attitudes and morality. Scholars who adhere to this explanation extend it to whole neighbourhoods or social groups (Levitas, 2005). For example, it is argued that low income neighbourhoods are potential places for criminalized behaviour or lack of work ethics (Levitas, 2005). The MUD is also viewed

in the contexts of gender, focusing on the behaviour of absentee fathers who evade child support responsibilities, and on young male offenders and young teenage women who have children outside a stable relationship (Levitas, 2005). On the other hand, some proponents have argued that the excluded, in effect, exclude themselves by engaging in certain behaviours, such as drug addiction, crime and having children out of wedlock (Levitas, 2005, Pierson, 2009). This standpoint is associated with people who argue that the underclass in society has become detached from conventional social institutions, and have anti-social behaviour and group values that account for their behaviours (Levitas, 2005). The main focus of the Social Integrationist Discourse (SID), however, is on the paid work individuals perform, and their access to the labour market to achieve a unified society (Levitas, 2005; Pierson, 2009).

Evidently "social exclusion" means different things to different people. Generally, those who argue that it is a consequence of individuals' habits and personality maintain that exclusion is the individual's responsibility (Atkinson & Davoudi, 2000). For those whom structural impediments are the main issue, though, the explanation of social exclusion lies outside the individual's capacity to act (Peace, 1999; Pierson, 2010).

"Social exclusion" is thus, at the very least, a multidimensional concept, and connotes a phenomenon by which an individual or a group in a particular society is marginalized or excluded, either fully or partially, from participating in activities that determine the social integration of people in that particular society. Therefore, social exclusion is contextual, relational, and agent driven, suggesting that it entails an active relationship between opposing agents: namely, "the excluder" and "the excluded". In this study I will examine the concept of social exclusion within the Canadian urban context of

the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, where the some of the aforementioned definitions of social exclusion will be explored in the context of the Ghanaian community.

### 2.1.2. Residential Segregation and Immigrant Integration

A theoretical analysis of residential segregation and immigrant integration is crucial for this study for a number of reasons. First, the extent to which immigrants are able to integrate into any host society depends on the nature of the social and spatial exclusion in operation. Second, residential segregation could feed into the formation of ethnic enclaves, thereby strengthening the forces of socio-spatial exclusion. Third, some researchers have argued that residential segregation creates differences in the organization of society; this promotes unique working-class subcultures – which are structured along the lines of ethnicity, stage in the life cycle and levels of skill – which in turn reinforces social and spatial exclusion of one form or another (Bauder, 2001; Qadeer & Kumar, 2003). Neighbourhood of residence itself functions as a symbolic marker that signifies a worker's value in the labour market (Bauder, 2002; Ellen & Turner, 1997).

Immigrant assimilation occurs when the attitudes and practices of immigrants, which include their residential location behaviour, eventually become similar to those of the receiving society (Alba & Nee, 1997; Hiebert & Ley, 2003a; Mendez, 2009). The use of the assimilation perspective in North America goes back to the 1930s and 1940s. Scholars of the Chicago School of Urban Sociology used the concept to explore the social and spatial patterns of immigrant settlement and adaptation to their new cultural and economic environment (Alba & Nee, 1997). Their studies suggest that new European immigrants were likely to be clustered in particular neighbourhoods, and to subsequently relocate to wealthy suburbs (Alba & Nee, 1997).

The spatial assimilation model is based on the assumption that residential segregation reflects group differences in socioeconomic status, such as education, income and occupational standing (Agrawal, 2010; Darden & Kamel, 2000). According to this model, immigrants enter the host society at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder, and are, therefore, restricted to poor neighbourhoods, where cheap housing, kinship ties and community bonds unite them with other new immigrants of the same origin (Alba & Nee, 1997). It is argued that the acquisition of greater economic resources by immigrants – coupled with the likelihood of them changing the available resources into better housing, and neighbourhoods with more sophisticated social amenities – promotes their eventual assimilation into the host society (Myles, 2002). The term assimilation is multidimensional, and associated with various functional, cultural and spatial aspects of the process of immigrant adaptation in their new country (Alba & Nee, 1997; Balakrishnan, et al., 2005; Fong & Wilkes, 1999; Hou, 2006). The Chicago school studies suggest a strong association between the social and physical distances separating new and established groups in American cities (Alba & Nee, 1997). The literature on the residential geographies of immigrant settlement assumes that "spatial assimilation" is to be expected among first generation immigrants; but most often, researchers lump immigrants and their offspring together (Alba, 2005).

Canadian researchers and policy makers have long avoided the term assimilation; using concepts such as integration and spatial concentration (see Balakrishnan & Gyimah, 2003; Ley & Hiebert, 2003b; Murdie & Teixeira, 2003; Qadeer, 2005). Most integrationist researchers are concerned with whether immigrants and members of visible minority groups experiencing ethnic group residential segregation will relocate to new neighbourhoods as their socioeconomic condition begins to rise to that of the host society

(Mendez, 2009; Murdie & Teixeira, 2003). In other words, the debate centres on whether the increase in immigrants' income is accompanied by their moving away from ethnic group neighbourhoods to places of greater convenience (see for example, Balakrishnan & Gyimah, 2003; Murdie & Teixera, 2003).

Some researchers note that residential concentration could also be a result of choice (Bolt, Özüekren & Philips, 2010; Mendez, 2009; Owusu, 1999), with minorities choosing to stay close to each other, and some dominant group avoiding contact with minority members to protect and maintain their cultural identity (Agarwal, 2010). Many studies in the Canadian context have concentrated on spatial assimilation, residential segregation and integration, mainly because of multiculturalism policies (Balakrishnan, & Gyimah, 2003; Balakrishnan & Hou 1999; Murdie & Teixeira, 2003; Qadeer, 2005). One area of interest to Canadian researchers has been the spatial concentration of immigrants, with an emphasis on minority immigrants' preferred location of settlement. Many researchers contend that immigrants will choose to live in Canadian cities and, preferably, closer to their ethnic group members, to enable them to pool resources together, thereby developing these areas into ethnic enclaves (Alba, Logan, Stults, Marzan & Zhang, 1999; Mensah, 2010; Owusu, 1999; Teixeira, 2007). For instance, Owusu (1999), in his study of Ghanaian immigrant residential patterns and housing choices, found that most Ghanaian immigrants live in suburban districts of the Toronto Census Metropolitan area (CMA). Interestingly, Owusu (1999) found a relatively low incidence of reported housing discrimination among Ghanaians, and attributed it to the housing strategies they adopt. The findings from these studies confirmed that residential segregation along ethnic lines persists in Canada (Owusu, 1999).

Although some scholars have argued that residential segregation could dwindle with a rise in the social class of some immigrant minorities, it seems to persist among certain ethnic minority groups after controlling for social class (Murdie & Teixeira 2003; Myles & Hou, 2004). Other studies suggest that residential segregation may take place because of social distance, as seen among recent arrivals of visible minorities in Canada, including Chinese, Blacks and South Asians (Balakrishnan & Gyimah 2003).

Most researchers have argued that residential segregation is taking place because of Canada's "multiculturalism" policy (Mendez, 2009; Myles, 2002; Qadeer, 2005). The policy recognizes the interplay of forces (ethnic ancestry, ethnic network, and social capital), which is premised on the idea that the best way to integrate recent immigrants into Canada's social system is to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians, while working to achieve equality for all Canadians, in the country's economic, social, cultural and political spheres (Balakrishnan & Gyimah, 2003; Myles & Hou, 2004; Qadeer, 2005). Some studies revealed that ethnic clusters are primarily a consequence of systematic discrimination or poor socioeconomic resources (Balakrishnan, et al., 2005; Mensah, 2010).

Furthermore, the study of Balakrishnan et al. (2005), of residential segregation and socioeconomic integration of visible minorities in Canada, examined whether the existence of ethnic neighbourhoods could help promote the retention of ethnic identity and culture, or hinder participation in the labour markets of the wider community. Additionally, the study examined the relationship between spatial residential patterns and socioeconomic achievement over time. It was concluded that there exists no systematic relationship between segregation and socioeconomic achievement when measured by variables such as education, occupation and income. Comparing visible minorities,

however, Blacks and Filipinos had lower levels of education. Despite the limited scope, these studies have been very useful in demonstrating the difference between segregation and socioeconomic achievement of visible minorities.

According to Peach's (1996) study, good and bad segregation have both positive and negative effects. In terms of positive impacts, segregation promotes ethnic values and solidarity. On the other hand, it prevents dispersal of ethnic minorities, and keeps the underprivileged ethnic populations out of the residential areas of the dominant group. For example, neighbourhoods such as Harlem and Bronx in New York, Brixton in London, Kreuzberg in Berlin, Goutte d'Or in Paris, and Shankill and the Falls in Belfast have negative images among the general public. Peach (1996) contends that ethnic segregation is divisive, as it reduces social interaction between groups and individuals.

Bolt, Burgers and Kempen (1998) explain that neighbourhoods play an important role in the everyday lives of the inhabitants. The assumption is that living in a specific local setting, or being located on a specific spot, affects the life choices and opportunities of people and institutions (Bolt et al., 1998). They argue that neighbourhoods can create the conditions that produce social exclusion. Segregation and concentration limit the opportunities people have to participate in civil society, and reduce the likelihood of having even limited contacts with relevant individuals and institutions. It is also argued that the residents of segregated districts may have a negative image among the urban populace that could lead to exclusion from other social services (Bolt et al., 1998). Wilson (1987) writes that neighbourhoods that are heavily populated by minorities are usually perceived as poor. Additionally, residents of such neighbourhoods are more likely to experience isolation from community resources, such as libraries, parks, clinics, schools, and community and business organizations.

Similarly, Qadeer (2005), in a study of ethnic segregation in Toronto, described the advantages and disadvantages of ethnic enclaves. As he points out, ethnic enclaves promote the cultural and physical diversity of city neighbourhoods, and create centres of interest and entertainment for the city as a whole. In his view, such enclaves are helpful to women; children and seniors who are not fluent in English, and who are accustomed to the supportive presence of friends and relatives; yet ethnic enclaves have the disadvantage of isolating immigrants' children from mainstream society, and thus inhibiting their social integration (Qadeer, 2005). Similarly, Browning and Cagney (2002) state that, neighbourhoods act as a collective resource to support new immigrants' settlement and integration into the host country. Likewise, Haan's (2005) study on the influence of ethnic enclaves on residential behaviour concluded that only a quarter of all the ethnic groups studied considered proximity to same-group members as part of their housing decision. Among them, Chinese and Italians have above-average levels of ethnic capital, and sought homes close to other group members in their home ownership decision. Contrary to the general belief that ethnic enclaves are associated with low incomes, isolated and alienated from the host society, other scholars (Murdie & Teixeira, 2000; Qadeer, 2005) have found that immigrants who reside in ethnic enclaves in Toronto's housing districts are generally of high quality when compared to "ghettos" in the US. Qadeer (2005) maintains that immigrants reside in ethnic enclaves because of their preferences and social networks, and the cultural and religious needs that they provide to each other.     Myles and Hou (2003) studied the residential settlement patterns of visible minorities, and found that Blacks initially reside in a disadvantaged immigrant enclave and relocate to affluent neighbourhoods when they are successful. They noted that Toronto's Black neighbourhoods are decidedly poorer than other minority

neighbourhoods. It was also found that Chinese immigrants are quick to purchase homes to reside in affluent and enduring communities.

The health implications of ethnic enclaves have also been studied. Some studies have drawn links between poor neighbourhoods and their health implications for immigrants who live in them (Abada, Hou and Ram, 2007; Glazier, Creatone, Cortinois & Agha, 2004; Hou & Chen, 2003). Hou and Chen's (2003) study on neighbourhood income inequality and health in Toronto found that there was a significant relationship between poor perceived health and income inequality at the neighbourhood level. Similarly, a study by Myles and Hou (2003, 2004) found that individuals were able to gain positive health benefits from sharing neighbourhoods with higher incomes and better-educated neighbours, irrespective of their personal income levels. These studies suggest a relationship in the immigrant population between living in a low income neighbourhood and having poor health. A study by Abada, Hou and Ram (2007) examined the effects of neighbourhood concentration of racial minorities on general health status and depressive symptoms of Canadian adolescents. They also examined the role of perceived neighbourhood cohesion on adolescent health. It was discovered that the racial concentration of ethnic minorities represents a health disadvantage for visible minority youth, while perceived neighbourhood cohesion was found to be a protective factor for health outcomes.

According to Creese, Kambere and Masinda's (2011) study of how adolescent immigrants and refugees from countries in sub-Saharan Africa negotiate settlement in Metro Vancouver, adolescent immigrants and refugees from that area face significant challenges relating to a cultural clash between African and Canadian norms and values and structural conditions affecting integration. They explain that the teens navigate

through these challenges by standing up for themselves in relation to peers and teachers. Additionally, they rely on parental support and African cultural values to develop gendered strategies to overcome such difficulties.

Further, on the labour market and its outcomes for immigrants, Hou and Picot's (2004) study on visible minority neighborhood enclaves and labour market outcomes of immigrants notes that ethnic concentrations can be places of social isolation. Hou and Picot (2004) argue that such neighbourhoods can reduce minorities' incentives to acquire the host-country language and to gain work experience and educational qualifications. The authors assert that neighbourhoods with large concentrations of visible minorities tend to be characterized by economic struggles, such as high unemployment rates and low income levels (Hou & Picot, 2004).

Kazemipur (2000) studied the ecology of deprivation and spatial concentration of poverty in Canada, using the relative deprivation theory. He observed that the concentration of the poor in certain neighbourhoods implies that their contacts or social networks are confined mostly to other poor people, and this increases the likelihood of exposure to a lifestyle similar to their own.

Similarly, Ley and Smith (1997), in their study of the immigrant "underclass" in Canadian cities, argue that the very concept of an underclass refers to multiple deprivations with a spatial dimension. Neighbourhoods with high rates of welfare recipients, unemployment, mother-led families, and deficient work or education skills are the elements that define it (Ley & Smith, 1997). After measuring the incidence of these indicators at the census tract (CT) level in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, Ley and Smith (1997) conclude that while immigration plays a role in their membership of

multiply-deprived tracts, it was found that deprivation displays far greater heterogeneity, and a majority of the members in these tracts are native born (Ley & Smith 1997).

The United Way of Greater Toronto examined the geography of neighbourhood poverty in the city of Toronto for the period 1981-2001, and found that the number of poor neighbourhoods had increased over time. The study also found that visible minority and immigrant families made up a large percentage of the total number of poor families in these neighbourhoods (United Way of Greater Toronto, 2004). This does not mean that all immigrant neighbourhoods are poor; but, given the fact that immigrants typically start at the socioeconomic bottom, many of the poor are likely to be immigrants.

Most research in Canada has focused on ethnic concentration in the Canadian labour market and its implication for ethnic inequalities (Alba & Nee, 2003; Mensah, 2010; Wong, 2000). Labour market concentrations in this country are diverse in nature, especially across ethnic groups. In Toronto the concentration is low for groups such as the British, Germans and Ukrainians, but high for Portuguese, Chinese and Blacks (Balakrishnan et al., 2005). Balakrishnan et al. (2005) indicate that it is reasonable to expect that there will be a decrease in their overall labour market concentrations as immigrants obtain higher levels of education and diverse occupational skills, which will give them greater flexibility.

Nadeau and Seckin's (2010) study of the immigrant wage gap in Canada, using Quebec and the rest of the country as a case study, found that the wage gap between Canadian born and immigrant workers is attributable to factors such as language and culture. Nadeau and Seckin (2010) also explain that keeping the francophone identity and knowing French are necessary for the success of immigrants in Quebec. Other related reasons for the wage gap are the extent to which immigrants in Quebec have a lower level

of observed skills, the difference in immigrants' countries of origin and the extent of wage discrimination against immigrants in the province.

Block and Galabuzi (2011) report on Canada's colour coded labour market and the gap for racialized workers, using the 2006 long form Census data to compare work and income trends among racialized and non-racialized Canadians during the economic boom. The major findings of this report are that even during the best economic times, the wage gap between racialized and non-racialized Canadians was large; racialized Canadians earn 81.4 cents for every dollar paid to non-racialized Canadians. The reason given for this income gap is disparities in the distribution of good paying and more secure jobs. The data shows that racialized Canadians have slightly higher levels of unemployment than, and earn less income than, non-racialized Canadians. Racialized Canadians are likely to obtain insecure, temporary and low paying jobs. It also shows that racialized Canadians are over-represented in a range of traditional low paid business services, ranging from call centre jobs to security services to janitorial services (Block and Galabuzi, 2011). Likewise, Wong's (2000) study of Ghanaian women in Toronto's labour market found that Ghanaian women are employed in part-time or informal jobs that lack important social benefits, and are often unstable and poorly paid. Wong (2000) argues that despite Canada's policy of multiculturalism, which allows for the existence of diverse cultures, and provides equal opportunities for all, many immigrant women experience social exclusion and economic marginalization in Canadian society.

The bulk of these empirical studies fall short of offering a comprehensive view of the severity, or the magnitude of the problem of residential segregation and the impact on the social and spatial exclusion of visible minorities in Canada. Despite the literature on visible minorities' residential segregation and integration in Canadian society, most

scholars have lumped certain groups of visible minorities together, especially Blacks in Canada, comprising Caribbeans and Africans. These particular groups are likely to have varying experiences of integration and residential challenges (Mensah, 2010; Owusu, 1999; Murdie & Teixeira, 2003; Myles & Hou, 2003). There are limited studies on how residential segregation can feed into the process of exclusion of visible minority youth. Although some of the studies indicate how "bad neighbourhoods" can have an impact on visible minorities, social contacts and access to jobs, it is not quite clear how social processes feed into the spatial processes that can then lead to social exclusion. Given the gaps identified in the literature, the theoretical approach that will be adopted for this study will add a new perspective on neighbourhood effects on the integration of Ghanaian immigrant youth in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood.

## 2.2. Theoretical Framework: Socio-Spatial Dialectics

The socio-spatial dialectics framework will be used to examine lived experiences of research participants that relate to social and spatial exclusion. The causes and mechanisms that drive these experiences and their impacts on participants' access to social services, such as jobs, shopping malls, schools and surrounding neighbourhoods, will be examined in detail. To date most researchers who have explored visible minorities' residential segregation, integration and assimilation in Canada have approached it through the lenses of the assimilation model and integrationist perspectives. In other words, they have added variables to existing models, and sometimes compared the US and Canada cases. Such studies are often focused on experiences in the housing market (Carter, Polveychok & Osborne, 2009; Edmonston, 2004) and the labour markets (Block & Galabuzi, 2011; Wong, 2000). In an attempt to understand the experiences of social and spatial exclusion among Ghanaian immigrant youth, it is imperative to

approach this study using the socio-spatial dialectic. In reviewing the existing theoretical literature it is necessary to identify key mechanisms that influence the social and spatial exclusion: space as a social production, and socio-spatial dialectics. The theoretical underpinnings for this study build upon theories of social space generated by scholars such as Harvey (1973, 1996); Lefebvre, (1976); Massey (1985) and Soja (1989, 2011).

According to Soja (2011), socio-spatial dialectics theory is better suited for studying the relations of production: relations that are simultaneously social and spatial (Soja, 2011). Soja (2011) argues that the socio-spatial dialectic is where the spatial shapes the social, and vice versa. He continues to argue that socio-spatial dialectics help to assess, or to recognize, that the geographies in which we live can have negative as well as positive consequences on practically everything we do (Soja, 1989; 2011). As a framework that focuses on the dialectical nature of the social and the spatial, however, the theory can help to explain the extent to which Ghanaian immigrant youth are spatially excluded into Black neighborhoods and enclaves that feed into their social exclusions from mainstream locations such as clubs, employment, and churches in the Greater Toronto Area.

### 2.2.1. Space as a social production

Scholars have argued that the organization of space as a social product is contextual (Harvey 1973, 1996; Lefebvre, 1976; Soja, 1989; 2011). According to Soja (2011), the materialistic interpretation of spatiality is to recognize that spatiality is socially produced, and that society exists in two forms: first as substantial forms (concrete spatialities) and, second, as a set of relations between individuals and groups. Soja (2011) explains that both the physical space of nature and the mental space of cognition and representation are incorporated into the social construction of space, but cannot be

generalized as being equal. Soja (2011) indicates that the physical view of space has deeply influenced all forms of spatial analysis, whether philosophical and theoretical or practical and empirical, whether applied to the movement of heavenly bodies or to the history and landscape of human society.

Soja (1980, p. 209) contends that "space in its generalized and existential form has been conceptually incorporated into the materialist analysis of history and society in such a way that it interferes with interpretation of human spatial organization as a social product." Leading spatial theorists, including Harvey (1973), Lefebvre (1976) and Soja (1989, 2011), note that space has always been in existence, but its organization, use, and meaning are products of social translation, transformation and experience. Furthermore, Harvey (1973) writes that socially produced space is a created structure comparable to other social constructions that result from the transformation of given conditions inherent in life on earth. Similarly, Lefebvre (1976) distinguishes between natures as given contexts and what he terms "second nature", or the transformed and socially defined space arising from the application of human labour. It is the second nature that becomes the subject and object of historical materialist analysis, according to Harvey (1973).

According to Massey (1985), understanding the spatial organization of society is important to understanding how social processes work, and the way they are conceptualized and acted upon politically. Sayer (1985) makes the point that space can only be understood in terms of the objects and processes that constitute it, with the implication that the study of space must be rooted in social theory. Dialecticians will argue that space, in the sense of territory, is not just something existing outside and prior to society, but something produced by society (Sayer, 1985). The spatial is, therefore, social (Massey, 1985). We thus find Soja (1985: 90) observing that "to be alive is to

participate in the social production of space, to shape and be shaped by a constantly evolving spatiality which constitutes and concretizes social action and relationship". He explains that spatiality is portrayed as a social product and an integral part of the material constitution and structuration of social life (Soja, 1985). The implication is that spatiality cannot be appropriately understood and theorized separately from society and, therefore, social theory must contain a central and encompassing spatial dimension (Soja, 1985).

The multidimensionality of the term social space implies that whether it is in the form, content and distributional pattern of the built environment, the relative location of centres of production and consumption, the political organization of space into territorial jurisdictions, the uneven geographical distribution of income and employment, or the ideological attachments to locational symbols and spatial images, all organized space will be seen as rooted in a social origin, and filled with social meaning (Soja, 1989, 2011).

Further, it is argued that if space has an air of neutrality and indifference with regard to its contents, it will be seen as purely formal, and an example of rational abstraction. Lefebvre (1976) suggests that space is not an example of rational abstraction, but that it has been occupied and used, evidence of which might not always be seen on the landscape (Lefebvre, 1976). Lefebvre has described space as shaped and molded from historical and natural elements; but through a political process (Lefebvre, 1976). He concludes that space is, then, political and ideological (Lefebvre, 1976). From a materialistic perspective what is important is the relationship between created, organized space and other structures within a given mode of production (Soja, 1989).

### *2.2.2 Socio-spatial dialectics*

Space and the political organization of space express social relationships, but also impact them (Massey, 1985). The fundamental premise of the socio-spatial dialectics is that they are dialectically interactive and inseparable; thus, social relations of production are both space forming and space contingent (Soja, 1989; 2011). Organized space is socially constructed (Soja, 1989; 2011).

Dialectics is a philosophy or a method of discovering the truth of ideas by discussion of logical argument, and considering ideas that are opposed to each other (Gregory, Johnston, Pratt, Watts & Whatmore, 2009). Dialectic is the way in which two aspects of a situation affect each other (Gregory et al., 2009). Dialectics emphasize processes, flows and relations, with particular attention to contradictions in these processes and flows (Gregory et al., 2009). Harvey (1973) writes that if something is dialectical it emphasizes processes, flows and relations, and the formation and duration of systems and structures. Thus, processes, flows, and relations constitute the form and shape that give rise to systems and structures (Harvey, 1973).

Clearly, dialectics function as both a mode of explanation and a mode of representation (Edgar, 1999; Harvey, 1996). Soja (1980) has argued, "The structure of organized space is not a separate structure with its own independent laws of construction and transformation, nor is it simply an expression of the class structure emerging from the social relations of production. It represents, instead, a dialectically defined component of the general relations of production, relations which are simultaneously social and spatial" (Soja, 2011, p.78). Soja (2011) additionally states that social and spatial relations arise from the same mode of production, and are also dialectically inseparable. Soja (2011) argues that the main source of misunderstanding stems from the fact that the relationship

between social and spatial structures lies in the failure of Marxist analysts to appreciate the essentially dialectical character of this relationship and that of other relationships that are structurally linked to it, such as that between production and consumption (Soja, 2011). This misunderstanding has led to probing the mix of opposition, unity and contradiction that defines the socio-spatial dialectic. The questions that arise here are: which factor is the causative one; and, what is the importance of the concept?

As defined here, socio-spatial dialectics would enhance our understanding of how social and spatial exclusion are mutually reinforcing, if not inseparable. Any one experience of social exclusion is very likely caught up in the dynamics of spatial exclusion at the same time, and vice versa. Put differently, low-income residents of the Jane and Finch neighbourhood are just as socially excluded as they are spatially excluded from the rest of the GTA and its services.

The basic argument is that immigrants' spatial exclusion into neighborhoods and enclaves feeds into their social exclusions from mainstream employment and housing. Basically, a dialectician would argue that one is socially excluded from employment because the same person is spatially secluded from where the jobs are. The two processes reinforce each other dialectically; thus, unemployment can be the cause of the person's spatial seclusion, and it can also, at the same time, be the consequence. In relation to this study on Ghanaian immigrant youths' lived experiences of socio-spatial exclusion, socio-spatial dialectics will help us to understand how social processes feed into the spatial processes in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood.

## 2.3 Summary

This chapter reviewed literature on social exclusion: origins of the concept and its multidimensionality. Social exclusion is associated with a vast array of social disadvantages among many individuals and groups. From the literature review it is clear that 'social exclusion' is a phenomenon by which an individual or a group in a particular society is marginalized or excluded (either fully or partially) from participating in activities which determine the social integration of people in the society in question. Literature on residential segregation and immigrant integration was also reviewed to have a critical insight into the advantages and disadvantages of segregated neighbourhoods and its effects on visible minorities integration into the mainstream society. The gaps in literature were identified and the theoretical grounding that will help address this gap – socio-spatial dialectics would be used in this study.

**CHAPTER THREE**


**STUDY DESIGN, METHODS AND RATIONALE**


**3.1     Introduction**

This chapter discusses the methodological approach used for the study. It describes the processes and challenges of the fieldwork. The study uses qualitative approaches, including in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and field observations to answer the research questions. The participants for the study were youths aged 18 to 30 years and church elders from the Ghanaian community in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. Purposive sampling was used to identify participants of the study.

**3.2 Qualitative Methods**

A qualitative research approach was adopted for diverse reasons. As suggested by Hay (2005), qualitative research focuses on explaining human environments and human experiences in diverse conceptual contexts. He explains that research is a process of defining a question to analyse and interpret, and argues that the experiences of different individuals of the same events and places are different (Hay, 2005). This presupposes that giving voice to individuals allows viewpoints to be heard that otherwise would have been silenced or excluded. Three reasons influence the choice of this methodology: first, to give voice to Ghanaian immigrant youth, and enable them to describe their lived experiences of socio-spatial exclusion. Second, the qualitative approach enables the researcher to have an in-depth understanding of the research topic through the observation of individuals' social interactions (Hesse-Bieber & Leavy, 2004; Padgett, 1998). Third, social and spatial exclusion of Ghanaian immigrant youth in the Jane and Finch

neighbourhood relates to their lived experience, one that is amenable to the use of qualitative method.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), qualitative data has its major strengths in assessing how humankind act in their natural settings, so that a researcher can have a strong grasp of what constitutes "real life". They explain that qualitative data have a local groundedness in the sense that the data are collected in close proximity within a specific context (Miles & Humberman, 1994). Qualitative researchers focus on the specific cases that are bounded phenomena embedded within a context (Flowerdew & Martin, 2005; Miles & Humberman, 1994; Padgett, 1998). The qualitative approach yields datasets that are rich and holistic, capable of providing thick descriptions, which are vivid and woven in realities that are trustworthy, and have a strong impact on the reader (Padgett, 1998).

Some researchers have argued that the long periods of collecting data render qualitative approaches powerful for studying processes (Barbour, 2008; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Dunn, 2005). These authors further argue that qualitative data gathering is a very flexible process, and that it allows for variations as researchers progress with their research. According to Barbour (2008), qualitative research enables a researcher to unpack mechanisms by focusing on the explanations, or accounts provided by the interviewee, while quantitative methods help the researcher to identify statistically significant relationships between variables and produce diagrams showing patterns. Qualitative research also allows the researcher to study people in naturally occurring settings, in contrast to quantitative research, which is established for the purpose of research in which variables are controlled, as it is done in a natural science experiment (Seale, 1999).

Despite the advantages of qualitative research, it possesses some limitations, which are worth noting here. Critiques of qualitative research contend that qualitative data are narratives of individuals that are often anecdoctal, subjective, unscientific or lacking scientific rigour because they are often based on small, unrandomized samples, with no basis for statistical "representativeness" (Miles & Huberman, 1994). It is also stated that qualitative data seeks answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning and, as such, they are seen as story tellers, instead of emphasizing the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables and making logical arguments to support their findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994)

### 3.2.1 Sources of Data and Sampling Techniques

The study is based on primary data obtained mainly through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The interviews were conducted in both English and Twi, a local Ghanaian language spoken by the majority of Ghanaians living in Toronto. The interviews lasted an average of 60 minutes, and were conducted from June to August 2011.

The purposive sampling method was used, as this allows a researcher to choose participants based on research specific relevance (Silverman, 2005). In this study, participants were purposely selected based on their age (18-30 years) and, also, on their being Ghanaian immigrant youth who had lived in the neighbourhood for at least approximately six (6) months. This is because within six months most of the participants would have moved; the most difficult adjustments normally occur during the few months after arrival. Most of the participants were recruited from the Seventh Day Adventist and Presbyterian Churches in the Jane and Finch area. Some of the participants who were interviewed did not go to church. These categories of people were recruited from the Jane

and Finch mall and McDonald's restaurants in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood and the surrounding neighbourhoods.

### 3.2.2 In-Depth Interviews

Interviews are widely used for learning about the subjective experiences and attitudes of individuals, households or groups (Creswell, 2009; Roulston, 2010; Silverman, 2005). The interview's flexibility makes it amenable for purposes of procuring data useful in this study. Interviews can be structured or unstructured, and can be administered face to face, over the telephone or by email (Creswell, 2009; Roulston, 2010). Unstructured interviews are more conversational than a questionnaire, and allow interviewees to express the details and meanings of their experiences in their own terms and at their own pace (Barbour, 2008; Hay, 2005). Such relatively unstructured interviews can be conducted with households and individuals, or as focus group discussions, and are an appropriate qualitative method for understanding complex and contradictory social processes and experiences, and when respondents need the opportunity to explain and qualify their accounts (Barbour, 2008).

To procure primary data for this study, in-depth interviews were conducted among 25 key informants (Ghanaian immigrant youth). The recruitment process began when the Ghana Seventh Day Adventist Church in Toronto had an African Day celebration. Ghanaians and other people of African descent living in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) attended this program. The researcher took the opportunity to interact with some of the youth during the lunch break. Potential participants in this study agreed to take part after the interaction. Isaac Darko, a former student at the University of Ghana, and currently a student at the University of Toronto, became the main channel through which the youth were recruited. Field observations and interactions were carried out among members of

the Ghanaian community by attending other, related church programs and other social activities, such as barbecues, as well as a gathering of former students of tertiary institutions in Ghana residing in Canada.

Table 1: Background Characteristics of Participants

| Participant's Pseudonym | Age | Place of Birth | Immigrant Status | Length of Stay | Level of Education | Employed |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yvonne | 20 | Montreal | Citizen | 20yrs | College | Yes (work & school) |
| Abena | 18 | Brampton | Citizen | 18yrs | High school | Yes (work & school) |
| Christie | 20 | Ghana | Citizen | 13yrs | University (3rd yr. undergraduate) | No |
| Marlyn | 26 | Ghana | Permanent migrant | 3yrs | Undergraduate degree (Ghana) | Yes |
| Sylvia | 30 | Ghana | Citizen | 10yrs | Nurse | Yes |
| Portia | 27 | Ghana | Citizen | 14yrs | Nurse | Yes |
| Fady | 25 | Ghana | Citizen | 12yrs | Nurse | Yes |
| Michelle | 30 | Ghana | Permanent resident | 4yrs | Undergraduate degree (Ghana) | Yes |
| Sarah | 23 | Toronto | Citizen | 23yrs | University (undergraduate) | Yes (summer holidays) |
| Gifty | 30 | Ghana | Citizen | 12yrs | College | Yes |
| Marie | 28 | Ghana | Landed immigrant | 3yrs | College | Yes |
| Serwaa | 28 | Ghana | Permanent resident | 5yrs | High school | Yes |
| Robert | 30 | Ghana | Permanent resident | 3yrs | College | Yes |
| John | 24 | Ghana | Citizen | 16yrs | University (undergraduate) | Yes (work & school |
| Kwabena | 23 | Ghana | Citizen | 13yrs | College | Yes (work & school |
| Hanson | 27 | Ghana | Citizen | 13yrs | College | Yes |
| Emmanuel | 22 | Toronto | Citizen | 20yrs | University (undergraduate) | Yes (work & school |
| Frederick | 30 | Ghana | Citizen | 14yrs | College | Yes |
| Austin | 25 | Ghana | Citizen | 21yrs | University (undergraduate) | No |
| Vincent | 28 | Ghana | Citizen | 16yrs | University degree | Yes |
| Yaw | 26 | Etiobocoke | Citizen | 23yrs | University (undergraduate) | Yes (work & school |
| George | 29 | Ghana | Permanent immigrant | 8months | Master's degree (Ghana) | Yes |
| Kwame | 26 | Ghana | Citizen | 16yrs | University (undergraduate) | Yes (work & school |
| Nathan | 29 | Ghana | Permanent immigrant | 12yrs | University (Master's degree) | Yes (work & school |
| Joshua | 26 | Ghana | Permanent immigrant | 7yrs | High school | Yes |

Source: Fieldwork, 2011.

In order to achieve my first objective I used a list of interview questions (see appendix A); the format of the interviews was flexible enough to allow for the exploration of various themes that came up in the interviews. Given that males and females experience exclusion differently, males (n=13) and females (n=12) were interviewed (see Table 1). The themes that guided the interviews included participants' perceptions of social and spatial exclusion, and their access to social services, such as education, employment, use of sports and recreational facilities. The venues for the face-to-face in-depth interviews were church premises and individual homes (16 out of 25). Also, some of the interviews were conducted by email and telephone (9 out of 25). The average interview lasted for about 60 minutes.

### 3.2.3 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

There are several reasons for the use of the focus group discussion (FGD) as a data collection tool. First, it allows for more discussion and probing of the issue at hand (Hay, 2005; Kitzinger, 1995). Second, it allows a researcher to obtain the opinions of more people within a shorter time than face to face interviews. This enables one to obtain a tremendous amount of information from diverse people (Cameron, 2005; Morgan & Kreuger, 1993).

Despite the usefulness of FGDs in research, it also has some limitations. Some scholars contend that the researcher usually has less control over a group than when the researcher is having a face-to-face interview with an individual, and this often leads to wasting time on irrelevant issues (Cameron, 2005). Also, in certain cases a comment could encourage another line of thought in a different direction from the topic under discussion. This may cause participants to develop new ideas and ways of connecting personal stories to specific situations, which sometimes make the participant the

moderator of the discussion in terms of the flow (Cameron, 2005). To prevent this during the FGDs, attention was constantly drawn back to the key issues under discussion.

For this study, two FGDs were conducted. One consisted of church leaders at the Ghana Seventh Day Adventist Church (see Table 2). Church leaders were included in the FGD because the leaders deal with the youth and youth organization in many situations, and at times provide counselling for the youth, or mentor them.

While recruiting participants for the focus groups the researcher attended church services at the Ghanaian Seventh Day Adventist Church in Toronto. This was to familiarize myself with the elders of the church, and to get access to the Ghanaian immigrant youth for the FGDs. The second FGD with the youth (both males and females) was organized after a church service. It was an opportunity to discuss the research work extensively with participants. This process was facilitated by the fact that the researcher had prior interaction with participants during the African Day Celebration.

The FGDs with the youth lasted for approximately one hour. The consent of participants was sought before the audio recording device was used. Hand written notes were used to capture information, such as group dynamics, and body language of participants that the recorder could not capture. The FGDs for the youth and church elders were organized in July, 2011 and August, 2011, respectively. They took place at the church (youth at the Heritage S.D.A. and church elders at the Atwell S.D.A. churches). The discussions were conducted in both English and Twi. Two participants in the youth group had finished college, and were now working. Another had an undergraduate degree, and was employed, while the remaining participants were students in colleges and universities. One participant was employed as a part time teacher at the Jane and Finch primary school during his summer vacation, but otherwise was a student

at York University. The remaining participants combined school and work, and mostly worked part time when school was in session and full time during the summer holidays. After the discussion, the participants in the group were debriefed, and member checking was done to ensure that the researcher (me) captured the exact wording of participants. This was done by mentioning the key themes that were discussed.

Table 2: FGD 1- List of participants (Church Elders: focus group discussions at Atwell S.D.A. Church)

| Participant's Pseudonym | Gender | Age | Place of Birth | Immigrant Status | Length of Stay | Level of Education | Employed |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gabriel | Male | 44 | Ghana | Citizen | 16yrs | University degree | Yes |
| James | Male | 40 | Ghana | Citizen | 14yrs | University degree | Yes |
| William | Male | 38 | Ghana | Citizen | 12yrs | College | Yes |
| Festus | Male | 42 | Ghana | Citizen | 14yrs | College | Yes |
| Pius | Male | 30 | Ghana | Permanent Resident | 6yrs | University (PhD) | Yes (Graduate Teaching Assistant) |

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

The second focus group consisted of only the youth (males and females), some of whom had participated in the in-depth interviews (see Table 3). A number of themes were discussed, including: the forms and characteristics of socio-spatial exclusion experienced by Ghanaian immigrant youth; the language and cultural barriers they faced in Toronto; their interaction with society, such as their churches, which then limit their access to mainstream Canada; and the different forms of social exclusion experienced by males and females. The FGD with the youth lasted for about two hours and 15 minutes.

Table 3: FGD 2: Background Characteristics of Participants in Focus Group Discussion

| Participant's Pseudonym | Gender | Age | Place of Birth | Immigrant Status | Length of Stay | Level of Education | Employed |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Marie | Female | 28 | Ghana | Permanent Resident | 5yrs | High school | Yes |
| Marylyn | Female | 26 | Ghana | Citizen | 20yrs | University (undergraduate) | Yes (partime) |
| Niama | Female | 24 | Toronto | Citizen | 24yrs | University (undergraduate) | Yes (partime) |
| Euphemia | Female | 20 | Montreal | Citizen | 20yrs | College | Yes |
| Hannah | Female | 30 | Ghana | Permanent Resident | 6yrs | Nurse (University undergraduate) | Yes |
| Austin | Male | 25 | Ghana | Citizen | 21yrs | (University undergraduate) | Yes (partime) |
| Vitus | Male | 23 | Brampton | Citizen | 23yrs | (University undergraduate) | No |
| Isaac | Male | 25 | Ghana | Permanent Resident | 5yrs | High school | Yes |

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

Both FGDs started with an explanation of the rules and guiding principles, with specific reference to the ethical issues involved, such as the fact that respondents could opt out if they felt uncomfortable with the questions, the need to address each other with respect, and ensuring that everything discussed should remain among the group members, and not be shared with any person who was not part of the group discussion; they were also assured that each individual's anonymity is protected, with pseudonyms being used in the thesis write up. In addition, recorded discussions would be transcribed by the researcher, then destroyed and never used publicly. The questions of the FGDs dealt extensively with the participants' perceptions of social exclusion in the labour market,

schools, shopping malls, and recreational centres in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, and their relations with other neighbourhoods in the GTA.

### 3.2.4 Data Analysis

In-depth interviews and FGDs were all transcribed from Twi (a local language in Ghana) to English. The in-depth interviews' data was obtained in the form of notes, a summary of the individual's interview. The process of analysis began with re-reading the text from the transcripts and listening to the audio tapes several times to capture the meaning given to the participants' experiences of social and spatial exclusion in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. While re-reading the text, the research objectives helped in formulating the themes that were used in the data analysis. For instance, recurring themes in the answers to a particular question were used to identify consistencies and differences. The responses were grouped together, and different shades of colours were used to tag key themes in the text. The connections and relationships between questions and responses given were exploited for meaningful outcomes. The next step was to categorize the information; this was done thematically. Themes were identified using research objectives. In order to find coherence, the text was re-read several times to get the meaning of the communication. Within major themes, sub themes were identified to help sort out the responses of participants. To determine which response was important, the number of times such responses were given to particular questions and the number of times certain themes were mentioned in the text were counted; this helped to bring out the general pattern in the data. According to Dunn (2005), this process is referred to as manifest content analysis. For instance, respondents were asked to describe their experiences of exclusion in and outside the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. The responses to this question were diverse, and themes emerging from them confirmed the existence of

the negative label of the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. Under this theme, subthemes emerged in relation to the negative label. The sub-themes that emerged included their limited access to employment, restricted access to public spaces, difficulties in acquiring a driver's license, and other matters. This process of identifying sub-themes was important for locating key themes, patterns, ideas, and concepts within the data. Dunn (2005) refers to it as latent content analysis, which involves searching the text for themes. Codes were closely examined in relation to other texts until analytical concepts emerged. Issues emerging from the discussions were collated into the "memos", and incorporated into these thematic categories, until no new ideas arose, a process known as thematic saturation (Baxter & Eyles, 1997). The last stage was to use the themes and connections to explain the findings and their significance for the analysis.

### 3.3 The Fieldwork and Positionality

This subsection describes the potential impacts of the positionality on the outcome of the research, and how they were negotiated. According to Linton (1936), status means the position an individual occupies in relation to the entire society. Undoubtedly, the status occupied by an individual comes with rights and duties. The status I occupied during the study was that of a graduate student and a researcher. My position during the fieldwork was that of both "insider" and "outsider". Both positions were occupied, depending on *who*, *where*, *when*, *what* and *how* I was interacting with my participants. As a Ghanaian with an identity common to that of my participants and the Ghanaian community, I was an insider. This made me readily accepted by my participants. My position as an insider was consolidated by my ability to speak the predominant Ghanaian language Twi. Communication skill in Twi was an asset in interacting with participants, as well as in building trust. An additional advantage I had in building trust was that as an

international student from Ghana, I shared most of their experiences of exclusion; that made FGDs very interesting. The in-depth interviews also gave me the opportunity to get to know most participants' backgrounds before and after they immigrated to Canada.

Despite the advantages associated with being an insider, it also has its disadvantages. For example, with some of the questions, ones the participants should have answered, probing was necessary to get in-depth knowledge of their lived experiences. Again, some of the questions were not answered, because some of the participants expected me to already know the answers. As an example, when a question was asked concerning the language barrier – "What are some of the problems you encounter in accessing the labour market?" -- The answer most of the participants gave was, "You should know that! We have an accent, and it will surely affect our access to the jobs". When this happens, it is difficult to probe further.

The outsider perspective came into play at certain times, when the participants were reluctant to talk about the kind of jobs they did. Some felt uncomfortable discussing them, and also their hourly wage. In such cases the position assigned was that of an outsider, because the participants assumed that a researcher would not understand their experiences of exclusion. The fact that I was not part of their church also made me an outsider; this made it difficult for me to get access to the church elders, unless I used my access person.

With participants who did not attend church, I was perceived as an outsider. Some of them had a preconceived notion of me as an undercover police officer who needed information from them, and would later use it against them. In some of the interviews with participants, I was asked: "Why are you asking me all these questions; why am I important to you?" Participants sometimes ignored the questions and, rather, answered,

"It was personal"; and even if they told me, I would not understand their experiences of exclusion, because I will never be like them, and experience the exclusion they face from living in a neighbourhood noted for high crime rates. They said, "You will never be stopped to be profiled, and you are just not the kind of person to understand us". In this context, I was a total outsider to the participants, and information sharing was quite limited.

The question that arises is: how, then, did I navigate through the challenges of being perceived as an outsider? A student ID card was shown to participants, and they read the letter of consent. The former of these was the most important, though. It worked to a greater degree in gaining the trust of the participants to be able to interview them.

Clearly, the insider and outsider perspective was not static; it kept changing, depending on where and when the interviews occurred. When they took place in the churches, trust was easily built; outside the church, it was quite difficult.

## 3.4 Summary

In conclusion, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were selected for this study because of the ability of the two methods to yield a deeper understanding of possible social exclusion experienced by Ghanaian immigrant youth living in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. The methods allowed the participants to express their own opinions on issues affecting them. Such open-ended responses broaden our knowledge base on the topic, allowing room for responses that are unpredicted or not captured in the reviewed literature. An additional advantage of the FGD used as a data gathering instrument was that it included an element of activism, and gave a voice to those otherwise excluded from knowledge construction; hence, it was appropriate for understanding the experiences of social and spatial exclusion of Ghanaian immigrant youth in Toronto.

CHAPTER FOUR


**FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

## 4.1    Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the in-depth interviews and the two separate Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with: *(i)* Ghanaian immigrant youth; and *(ii)* church elders in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. The presentation addresses issues regarding: the processes that engender social and spatial exclusion among Ghanaian immigrant youth; the forms and characteristics of socio-spatial exclusion experienced by this group; and the ways in which these dynamics shape the everyday experiences of members of this group.

The results from the in-depth interviews and FGDs are organised into themes and sub-themes with quotations from participants used to contextualise the findings. Pseudonyms are used in order to protect the participants' identities. Moreover, direct quotations from participants are indented throughout the presented. While some of the socio-spatial exclusion issues that emerged from the interviews are context-specific to the Jane and Finch neighbourhood and its residents, others are general in nature and could relate to the experiences of other minorities who live in other neighbourhoods.

## 4.2. Social and Spatial Processes and Patterns of Exclusion

During the interviews, the participants discussed a range of issues pertaining to the question of social-spatial exclusion in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. While most of their experiences revolve around the negative public perception of the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, others relate their Canadian educational experience and academic credentials; length of stay and acculturation in Canada; linguistic practices (accent) and

Ghanaian ethnic names; and the acquisition of a driving license.

Table 4: Summary of Forms, Causes and Characteristics of Social Exclusion
_____

- Negative label "Jane and Finch" neighbourhood
- Working environment and dealing with agencies
- Language ("heavy accent") as barriers to employment
- Ghanaian ethnic names as barrier to employment opportunities
- Lack of Canadian working experiences in employment and education
- Limited knowledge of Africans
- Spatial knowledge of the city/neighbourhood
- Access to restaurants, shopping malls and recreational centres (in and outside Jane and Finch)
- Availability and access to resources
- Difficulty in acquiring a driver's license
- The label "Black"
- Inappropriate "dress code" by males
- Racial profiling (being stopped by the Police)

_____


*4.2.1. Negative Label "Jane and Finch" Neighbourhood—"You fit the description"*

Nearly all the participants expressed profound concern about the negative public perception of the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. They especially said that Jane and Finch is "an off-limit neighbourhood," in the minds of many non-residents, characterised by a range of social ills, including a high concentration of criminal activities, youth deviant behaviour, low-income and unattached individuals, and drug and alcohol dependence with specific reference to the Ghanaian immigrant youth. As one informant reported, "it is seen as the bad part of town." This stigma was reported to have far reaching implications for the social and economic wellbeing of youth in the area, particularly the ethnic minorities, as captured in the quote below:

I've got to be totally honest with you…when people hear the name Jane and Finch it's like a dump—there are druggies everywhere in the neighbourhood. We're all druggies. It's like we're all trouble makers. It's like it has all the bad housing and people …Simply put, this is an area of Toronto, where nothing good exist (Austin, 25, M).

Another respondent echoed similar view:

Jane and Finch area has a big hurdle to cross, which is the image out there that it's a troubled neighbourhood. Indeed, we've a real image problem. Okay the perception could be true to some extent…But I don't think it's true for everyone. Certainly, I don't think we're the worse neighbourhood in the GTA (John, 24, M).

Such negative perception seems to run deep with several respondents speaking of how this stereotype affects their everyday lives. To quote one youth respondent:

I think it's because Jane and Finch has some bad reputation for a while with the perceived violence, crime, drug, and snobbery, it affects our entire lives…it impacts our self-esteem. So Jane and Finch image has not been a very good one (Robert, 30, M).

According to the informants, the negative public perception about the area is, in part, due to sensational media reporting, especially in the event of a crime. The sensational media reporting, the informants argued, has contributed to the neighbourhood's status as the "problematic neighbourhood of the GTA." A female respondent argued that it is not the case that there is always crime in this area; when it occurs the media reports tend to feed into preconceived notions about the Jane and Finch neighbourhood:

I think there are troublesome people, but it's not everyone here. It's just that it's in people's minds already that this area is a troubled spot. An ordinary conflict or police arrest from this area gets too much unnecessary attention (Serwaa, 28, F).

Indeed, nearly all the informants maintained that the stereotypical labelling of the Jane and Finch as a notorious and high crime neighbourhood has a significant adverse

impact on their economic, social and overall access to resources. A major concern among Ghanaian immigrant youth living in this neighbourhood is their poor employment prospects. Participants indicated that accessing a job in Toronto with a Jane and Finch postal code on the résumé was problematic as two participants agonized below:

> As soon as you inform potential employers of your postal code that's enough…you start to feel that your chance of landing that job is next to nothing. In fact, you could see from their face that they're thinking- my goodness, he is one of the trouble makers. I definitely believe that we're perceived and treated differently because of where we live (Hanson, 27, M).

> Yes, I think the neighbourhood is the biggest part. I see people from other areas given the jobs. Some of my friends live in Brampton, and they change jobs but I don't even have one. It's unfortunate that I find myself in this area (Kwame, 26, M).

Along the same theme, another male participant observed:

> You just have to mention the two letters 'J & F' and people go like what! They are stunned. Thereafter you're treated like a rug. You're treated with no respect or decency. They think those who live there are not normal people. Whether you're a gang or not, they don't care, we're all tagged with same label—gangs and criminals (Austin, 25, M).

They particularly argued that such image signifies the public perception about people living in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood—that is, "nothing good comes out of this neighbourhood." As another youth shared his experience within a focus group discussion:

> I've been to a number of job interviews and when potential employers look at your resume and you see their facial expression you automatically know what they are thinking... It's like 'why are you living in that neighbourhood'? (FGDs- Youth).

Echoing the youth, the church elders also indicated that the neighbourhood has a significant influence on minority youth's access to employment services. They agreed that

the youth might have the qualifications for various jobs, but because they have Jane and

Finch postal code on their resume, employers might not even bother to select the

candidate during the screening process. A quote from the FGDs:

> I've lived in this neighbourhood. I think the neighbourhood affects the youth access to the labour market. Some of the jobs are factory jobs etc. Admittedly, there are success stories but overall such stories are limited in number (FGDs- church elders).

To overcome this negative label in their job search, some of the informants

mentioned that they sometimes try to use a different mailing address on their job

applications:

> In terms of getting a job, I know some people who use different addresses. I kept Jane and Finch on my resume I was not called for a job. This is because the neighbourhood is stigmatised as a place where all the bad people are, all the gangs and all the bad things happen in this neighbourhood (FGDs- Youth).

The participants repeatedly highlighted the level of stigma associated with the

neighbourhood when discussing the barrier it poses to their employment. One informant

rhetorically asked: "Why is it that when we change our neighbourhood address, we get

the job? Are we not the same people?" The participants were firmly convinced that the

neighbourhood in which they live affects their access to certain jobs and social services

both in and outside of the Jane and Finch area.

Respondents generally agreed that the applicant's education influences the

employer's perceptions of a potential employee. When a potential employee is from a

dangerous neighbourhood and has attained a higher level of education, the applicant

makes a positive impression and is offered the job. On the other hand, when an individual

from the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, presents a resume at an interview with poor

grades and a low educational level, negative perceptions of the neighbourhood are confirmed. Clearly the neighbourhood effect is not that straightforward, it all depends on the situation—i.e., the employer, the type of position, and the grades of the job seeker, among other things. Yet, there is no denying that geography or the neighbourhood of resident has some impact of the employment chances of these youth.

To circumvent the barrier created by the Jane and Finch stigma, some of the participants mentioned that they wished they could relocate to other residential areas. A female participant of the in-depth interview who had lived in the area for eight years explained her understanding of the neighbourhood effect on her chances of securing employment in the following words:

> I wished I relocated to other areas in the city because there is certainly a huge price that I pay simply by living in this area. But we are kind of locked up in a vicious cycle because you need a good job to be able to afford rent in these other places but you can't seem to get one because no one would employ you because you live here in the first place. It's as if you are stuck between a pair of scissors (Michelle, 30, F).

Indeed, it was clear throughout the interviews that some participants would like to relocate; however, their choice of alternative neighbourhood is limited. Their residential mobility is constrained by income and access to capital, and so they feel trapped. Many spoke of how they hope the next generation will not have to endure such life experiences.

The stigmatization felt by the Ghanaian immigrant youth goes well beyond employment issues as both male and female participants explained that living in the neighbourhood affects their integration into Canadian society. The reasons given for the lack of integration were twofold. First, because employment is a crucial element in immigrant settlement and integration into a host society, its absence produces negative effects. Second, the informants generally feel "like second class citizens" because of the

stigmatization of the neighbourhood. Phrases such as: "I don't belong", "I feel like an outsider", "this is not my home", "I am a visitor", and "I am not immersed here…" characterized their responses.

In addition, one of the implications of this negative perception of the neighbourhood is widespread profiling by the police. Participants generally expressed a strong concern about this tendency and such worries were highlighted by one informant who lamented that "this practice is unfair and unacceptable." Many youth from the area are arbitrarily stopped for police checks when driving around the neighbourhood as is encapsulated below:

> I have been pulled over several times, sometimes more than once within a day by the same police officer. Usually they ask you all sorts of questions… license or if you've ever been charged before ...they typically follow with the phrase **'you fit the description'** (Vincent, 28, M).

Others similarly blamed the neighbourhood in which they lived while describing their experiences with the police. One of the study participants shared his experience in these words:

> I remember an occasion when I drove at night with my friends. We were stopped by the police and we were interrogated. At a point they told us to go but one asked for our ID cards and when they saw the name of the neighbourhood they started asking us questions upon questions… 'whether we have been arrested before for a crime'…Personally I think the neighbourhood led them to ask us these questions (John, 24, M).

In the FGD, both the youth and church elders similarly linked the reputation of the neighbourhood and the frequency with which police stop them while driving. Many of them believe that they are frequently stopped for police interrogation not because they exceeded the speed limit, but because of the physical appearance or design of the car they drive. As one puts it: "the notion is that people who live here are 'no hopers', 'rough',

'hoons', druggies', and 'crazies'…how they could they afford such an expensive car?"

Another respondent said:

> I have been stopped, and I think this is because of how the car looked. It was a small car with tinted windows. I was coming from work, I was still in uniform and my friends came to pick me up. So the guy in front took out his license and they asked us all to get down and started the search. Another time I was standing in front of our building and a cop walked up to me and said you fit the description of someone who had committed murder in the neighbourhood (Joshua, 26, M).

It is worth acknowledging that the informants are aware of the lifestyle of some Ghanaian immigrant youth and how it reinforces the stigmatization of the neighbourhood and its residents. Specifically, participants admitted that the way some of the males dress is disheartening. In fact, the female participants and church elders explained that the "dress code" of most Black males encourages people to stereotype them. The males wear "baggy jeans" and large "T-shirts" and pull their trousers below their buttocks allowing the trousers to drag on the ground, with a "bandana" tied on their heads and another in jeans pocket. According to many female respondents and church elders, the indecent "dress code" exacerbates the existing reputation of the neighbourhood and contributes to stereotyping. Some female participants admitted that they are often scared to be in the same elevator with some of the males who appeared with such clothing:

> Dressing also affects the way people perceive us in the society. Anything that brings an awkward look that's different from the normal will cause people to look at you differently, even in our own culture (Marie, 28, F).

> Personally I think it is the way boys dress, which will attract racial looks or extra police scrutiny. For instance wearing a trouser pulled down and some part on the floor will let people look at you in a strange way (Frederick, 30, M).

The males' "dress code" feeds into the view that Black youth are notorious and unkempt. Some of the church elders maintained that while youth from other visible

minority groups may also dress indecently, Black youth face more discrimination when they do so. The church elders noted that it is their duty to have a positive influence on their children, but cultural differences sometimes make this extremely difficult, especially when dealing with somebody who is above 18 years: This is how one elder describes the situation:

> The youth face a lot of discrimination; I think part of it is because of the way they dress. Because of that they have limited chances of obtaining jobs. One thing I know is because of their dressing they face extra scrutiny with the police (FGDs-Church elders).

### 4.2.2 Working Environment and Dealings with Employment Agencies

In addition to stigmatization of the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, participants described at length their experiences in the working environment and with employment agencies. Most of the respondents indicated that although an individual may experience some form of discrimination in the job application process, another form of marginalisation unfolds in the working environment. One of the participants stated: "When you are employed what next, discrimination begins." Most of the participants recalled witnessing a fellow Black being dismissed from the job because something was stolen from the shop and they suspected it was the Black person who stole it. Similarly, both female and male participants lamented over the services of employment agencies which offer them employment, specifically citing working conditions and the paucity of benefits from the job (no health coverage). A recurring statement from study participants was, that "There are lots of problems associated with working for the agency. There is no security." Within this context, study participants refer to not being paid well and to agency managers taking a greater percentage of their earnings. In addition, they reported that payment was also not timely and job insecurity is prevalent. Other participants

mentioned that some of the jobs visible minorities—and Blacks specifically—performed

are mostly menial jobs. Two participants made the following statements in that regard:

> The agency experienced was not good. If you are paid 20 dollars an hour the agency takes half of the money because they helped you to get the job. And when you are conversant with your place of work, the agency relocates you. Besides there is no job security, the employers can just lay you off. This is because you are not their employee; you are just a temporary one sent to them by the agency. This can be very… very annoying because there is no job security...relocating to new jobs becomes problematic because I was not driving and also more importantly the stigma associated with my postcode makes it difficult for me to get another job (Portia, 27, F).

> I work at the meat factory and the employers' human relation towards me is very bad. The agency people do not pay me very well. It is not all that good, the agency typically take part of the money I am paid (Robert, 30, M).

The participants explained that they avail themselves of employment agencies,

because of the virtual impossibility of securing employment due to the stigma associated

with their postal code. An illustrative sentiment was, "Employment agency is my only

avenue for getting a job. Period!"

Other participants lamented over their experiences of factory work. Below is a

quote from a participant:

> I experienced some form of discrimination at the place I worked especially the supervisor, always differentiates between Black(s) and other groups. The employers were not courteous to Blacks when compared to the others. Issues were always addressed in a confrontational manner (George, 29, M).

Several of the participants also indicated that Blacks are at a high risk of being

dismissed from a job when something goes wrong or when an item is stolen. Most of

them argue that there is no job security when it comes to visible minorities especially

Blacks, as captured below:

> I was fired from a job because I was accused of stealing something from the shop even though I did not know anything about it. The employers assume Blacks from the Jane and Finch neighbourhood are thieves and druggies, so they are always on the lookout for us (Joshua, 26, M).

Some of the participants complained about the racial discrimination they experienced in the working environment. The assumption is that the Black person has little to offer and employers do not acknowledge contributions from Blacks. Below is a quote from a male participant:

> I work at Canadian Tire (warehouse) we do all the manual jobs. Recently, I have been promoted to take inventory of stock. The elderly White folks think that, a Black person should not be promoted to such a position to the neglect of them. They feel proud to take instructions from a Black person. Racism is quite high, the facial expressions. They are not well mannered towards Blacks (Frederick, 30, M).

Throughout the interviews there were other general issues raised to explain social and spatial exclusion among Ghanaian immigrant youth. Many participants were of the view that they were excluded because of factors such as their lack of Canadian experiences, Ghanaian ethnic names, neighbourhood of residence and language ("heavy accent").

### 4.2.3 Language ("heavy Accent") and Ghanaian Ethnic Names

Ghanaian accents and Ghanaian ethnic names posed another challenge to Ghanaian youth as reported in both the in-depth interviews and FGDs. Most of the youth who are permanent residents felt they were penalized due to their accents in their quest for jobs, making them feel excluded from mainstream society. Most participants received their education in Ghana before migrating to Canada. This category of respondents identified their Ghanaian accent as a major barrier in accessing the labour market and contributed to their marginalization in formal English speaking settings. Both male and

female participants had not anticipated that English language would be a barrier in their access to jobs and integrating into the Canadian society as they were fluent in English and had been educated in British modelled primary, secondary and post-secondary institutions. Respondents recounted how they were denied jobs because of "heavy accent" and constantly being asked "which country are you coming from, you have such a heavy accent." One interviewee described his experience with accent discrimination, saying employers often asked:

> Your accent! Why are you speaking with such a heavy accent? You do not have good accent and if you don't have a good accent how can you get the job? Can't you do anything about it? (Robert, 30, M).

Along the same lines, a female participant described her experience: "I'm sorry because of your accent...where… are you from? Africa? Yeah is because of your accent…" (Serwaa, 28, F). This particular informant wandered why potential employers are unable to make an effort to understand her and other minorities with different accents: "I try as much as possible to listen and communicate with them, why can't they do same to me?" In fact, every participant mentioned feeling social exclusion in their daily activities in and out of the Jane- Finch neighbourhood due to accent.

Similarly, the FGD respondents also correlated the high drop-out rates among Black kids with their accents. According to the youth, anytime they spoke in class they were ridiculed, as demonstrated in the quote below:

> Sometimes those in high schools or colleges drop out of school because of the accent. But when you interrogate them, the response is 'no specific reason'. But when you probe further he or she will speak the truth. Most of the responses are, 'when I speak in class, my friends pass derogatory comments. 'So I dropped out of school because 'I don't fit in' (FGDs-youth president with church elders).

One of the church elders described his personal experience when he was an

undergraduate student:

> My own experience of being in Canada and schooling here. It is very difficult; immediately you open your mouth they say you have an accent. So if you are not focused you turn to drop out. Sometimes the Blacks are not that dumb as other people think we are. Sometimes they can write well but when it comes to presentations it becomes very difficult. When I was at the university I was very reluctant to do presentations. I remember one lecturer invited me to her office and asked 'what the problem was' and I replied English was my problem but she encouraged me to participate in presentations (FGDs- church elders).

The issue of accent also emerged in the FGDs with the church elders, who indicated that the local accents affect their access to the labour market and integration into the Canadian society, as noted by one respondent:

> I think encouragement is what we need to give to the youth, to be courageous. Be a man or a woman for yourself. Sometimes they ask you 'why don't you speak like us' and I told this person because I'm not like you' and can't speak like you. So be proud of your identity (FGDs- church elders).

Some of the participants who arrived in Canada at an age of 15 years and older and attended colleges in Canada were encouraged by college teachers to enrol in English as a Second Language (ESL) class to strengthen their command of the English language. However, the participants indicated that they objected to the suggestions because most of them argued that with English being a major medium of communication in Ghana in both public and private schools, they have sufficient command in it. Below are quotes from two participants:

> In school I was very focused… but there was something called ESL that is English as a Second Language. I felt I was very competent because English is a language from Ghana which I was taught how to speak from childhood but for some reason or the other, they never let me really progress to the normal classes that everyone was taking (Yaw, 26, M).

> I got frustrated because I kept on comparing myself to the other minorities who cannot even speak or communicate in English were kept at the same level with me. I was really upset and my friends made fun of me (Fady, 25, F)

As indicated in the comments above, respondents described their experiences of attending colleges in the Canadian system and their experiences of exclusion in the high schools and colleges.

Participants of the study identified individual identity as a component which also affects their integration in the Canadian society. Ghanaian ethnic names given to participants by their parents 'betrayed' them as Ghanaians; they reported that when they put their surnames on the resume, they are not called for interviews. Participants mentioned that when their names are written on their resumes, the likelihood of them being called for interviews was less. This was attributed to the fact that to some, Ghanaian ethnic names suggest that one lived in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, has an accent and is just not good for the job. Some of the informants commented as follows:

> I was applying for jobs at grocery shops, future shops etc, and I did not get in but some Blacks are working there because they have their last names as 'James' 'Smith' and with these kind of names they will not be able to decipher whether they are Black or live at Jane and Finch neighbourhood. But with the last name such as 'Boateng' they already know where you are coming from and will not even shortlist you for an interview. I feel strongly because of my last name (Austin, 25, M).

From the above quote, it was evident that the participants perceived that being denied employment was also linked to the Ghanaian ethnic names, forcing some to switch to non-Ghanaian ethnic names or English sounding names. Thus although the second

generation Ghanaian youth did not have a problem with accent, they had to contend with

their Ghanaian ethnic names.

One focus group discussant reiterated that because Ghanaian ethnic names have

an effect on the youth access to the job market, many people are beginning to use multiple

names. The church elder described his personal experience as follows:

> Another thing I want to raise people's awareness is the Ghanaian ethnic names that we have. I have 3 names and I use them interchangeable, sometimes I take some of them off and they shortlist me for interview but if I add all I'm not call for the interview. The typical local Ghanaian names affect our youth in their access to jobs. Sometimes before employers shortlist you for an interview they screen to take out the typical African names from the list (FGDs- church elder).

Within this context one interviewee rhetorically questioned the basis of

multiculturalism in Canada: "Where lies the multiculturalism when our Ghanaian ethnic

names are not getting us the jobs that we want to do?" The participants noted that these

practices in the job market often created frustration and a feeling of helplessness among

the youth:

> Sometimes it becomes hard for those who have come here to make a living and stay in Canada afterwards and they are not able to get jobs, then they become so frustrated that they sometimes even plan committing suicide or returning home (FGDs- church elders).

### 4.2.4 Canadian Experiences in Employment and Education

Other forms of exclusion experienced by Ghanaian immigrant youth were the

Canadian experience in employment and education. Most of the participants mentioned

that they sent out countless resumes to jobs and agencies but they were seldom called for

interviews; those who were called were denied positions because they lacked Canadian

experience. The general sentiment about Canadian experience was: "If you have never

worked here, where will you get the experience and who should employ us to get the

experience for you." These youths encounter barriers in their everyday job seeking endeavour which were a major source of frustration, as exemplified in the following account:

> I had this experience of employers always saying the Canadian experience, Canadian experience….In fact, this gives me the impression that there're two types of Canadians: "real" and "fake". Personally, to refuse me a job because of my lack of so-called 'Canadian experience' does suggests to me that I don't belong here in Canada (Nathan, 29, M).

Key to obtaining employment in Canada is being schooled in Canada, receiving Canadian working experience, and obtaining Canadian immigration status (landed immigrant status or citizenship). However, the participants noted that a Canadian degree and immigrant status did not guarantee entry into the labour market. In the quote below, a participant described how her friend struggled to get job in her field even after receiving a Canadian education:

> A friend of mine from Ghana has a lot of experience and had a master's degree in economics from the University of Ottawa and for 6 months she has not gotten a job in her field of study. In Canada for 6 months if you can't get a job in your field then it becomes a problem. Especially when they keep telling you that you don't have a Canadian experience. Even though she has a job now, this   job does not that require a master's degree. I think she's underemployed (Gifty, 30, F).

Another informant who schooled in Canada made a similar comment, drawing a link to the effect of the neighbourhood on employment prospects:

> When I finished high school I went to Niagara College to do engineering for one year. I could not get a job despite attaining my education in Canada. For me, you can get all the degree but your neighbourhood can work against you (George, 29, M).

Other participants echoed similar sentiments talking at length about how they felt frustrated about their situation. Yet some also discussed the strategies frequently

employed to overcome such predicaments.   Strategies such as volunteering at multiple places to gain relevant Canadian experience and undertaking further education to improve skills and knowledge about core industry related issues were mentioned. One study participant shared his experience of volunteering at a hospital to enable him get a job:

> The reason why I got a job was through volunteering at the hospital. My duties at the hospital was to give newspapers to patients, welcome patients to the hospital attend and to their general needs etc. That is the only way you can make contacts, get to know people and gain the Canadian experience (George, 29, M).

Overall, it was clear throughout the interviews that most of the participants face tremendous uncertainty regarding the tertiary education required to gain access to the labour market.

> When my dad came to Canada he had to go through all the schools here McMaster, University of Toronto, and UBC to get a PhD but yet it was still difficult for my dad to get a job. I see full integration as how minorities get access to the available jobs when they arrive with their qualifications. Majority of the Blacks are not able to integrate well because of these experiences (Emmanuel, 22, M).

Emmanuel's quote above indicates that earning a Canadian degree does not automatically guarantee you employment. Emmanuel's father's experience was echoed by some of the participants who migrated to Canada as landed immigrants and earned a Canadian degree but still experienced difficulties in accessing the labour market.

### 4.2.5 Limited Knowledge of Africans and the Label "Black"

Beyond neighbourhood stigmatisation, participants perceived that the stereotypical image of Africans in general affect their access to the labour market and their experiences of discrimination in the city. Respondents explained that the limited

knowledge most Canadians have about Africa negatively affect the way they are perceived and that this undermined their integration into the mainstream society. Specifically, the perception was that it also affected their access to public places such shopping malls, restaurants and others. Below are some of the experiences shared by respondents:

> People already had a preconceived notion of who an African is. People question what you did in Africa, were you those people who rode on zebras, rams etc.  People laugh at you… But I felt like the only way to include myself was to use my talent which was sports (Emmanuel, 22, M).

> Yes, actually I remember the first day at school (the elementary school). I walked into the class and everyone stared at me. And I remember that at lunch time, I did not have any friends and one person came to me and said something very rude to me and said 'you are from Ghana…right?' I said yes, and he was like, you guys run around hunting lions. He was like he sees it on TV and other places. So I was like ….is it Ghana you saw or it was some other country? They have this preconceived notion that Africa is based in a jungle where, uneducated people are...  (Kwabena, 23, M).

As can be seen from the above quotes, some interviewees noted that comments passed by some Canadians point to their limited knowledge of Africa, with some of them even thinking that Africa is one big country. Most participants concluded that an increased knowledge about Africa would help to improve the discriminatory practices experienced by African youth at elementary and college schools.

Similarly, some of the participants stated that in applying for certain jobs, if they indicated that they were Black, they were not called for interviews.  Participants also reported such experiences when they happened to have direct contact with the employers and were turned down because they were Black. Two of the respondents said:

I applied for a job, when I got there; they thought it was a White person because of my two English names. One woman walked up to me when I entered the office and she asked me who I was looking for and I said I was called for an interview. And she was surprised and asked again are you so and so…and I said yes and from the facial expression you realized that I was not welcomed but yet they interviewed me and I did not get the job (George, 29, M).

Employers will not indicate to you that you were not hired because you are Black. Generally when you are filling an application, the questions they ask. I remember applying online for a job and I was asked if I was Black and I did not answer it. I was shortlisted for the interview. After the interview, they did not hire me (Yvonne, 20, F).

The second generation Ghanaian immigrant youth explained that they were less affected by the above criteria but maintained that being Black and living in a stigmatised neighbourhood disqualified them from certain positions. The second generation Ghanaian youth asked "Where is the integration when by birth they are Canadians and cannot access the labour market" and reported experiencing discrimination from certain spheres of the Canadian society.

I think is a little bit of ignorance to accept people from different places and neighbourhoods. Anything out of the box is seen not to be true; they want it to be the Canadian way (Vincent, 28, M).

During high school days they stereotype a lot of the Black students in the public schools because we come from neighbourhoods with a bad name. The teachers thought there is nothing good that comes from kids in bad neighbourhoods so we were always sidelined (Kwame, 26, M).

Other participants echoed similar sentiments with many of them expressing deep frustration about the difficulty in accessing the labour market. The interviewees also intimated that although Black is not a heterogeneous group of people, society tends to lump them into one category, which creates problems for some specific group of Blacks

from different countries. To quote one participant:

> Because when they talk about Blacks doing something, most of the time it is not the Africans who are doing it but the Jamaicans but we are lumped into one. Even within Africa, we have the Ghanaians, the Nigerians etc. We come here for better opportunities, so why will we come here to misbehave. Our parents work hard to get us into school, because to me I think the Caribbean's or the Jamaicans who paint all Blacks to be evil. It is a multicultural society; we do agree with them but when you get into the system, that is when you feel the discrimination (Emmanuel, 22, M).

In the youth FGDs, a participant reported an experience of perceived discrimination. She worked at a day-care centre and one of the White Canadian kids would not allow her to assist her because the child claimed "She was Black and Black is dirty":

> I was a tutor at a day care center, I was about to take the kids to the gym and there was this White girl and she was like….I don't want you to touch me because I don't want to get dirty… I reported to the supervisor and she said they will 'talk to her' (FGD-youth).

The experiences of the church elders confirm what the youth had indicated during the in-depth interviews and FGDs. According to the church elders, they had faced a similar situation when they arrived in Canada and started schooling. One of the church elders recounted his experience:

> I think the colour itself puts the youth off. This is because based on my personal experience in my schooling days, anytime a teacher gave an assignment; he wants all the Blacks together because they think the Blacks don't know anything and they cannot perform. I have gone through this, and I speak from experience (FGDs- church elders).

> Sometimes the youth also think even if you go to school and complete because you are Black you will not get a job to do and most of them drop out of school because of this perception (FGDs- church elders).

The study respondents were asked, 'What was done to integrate or include them in the GTA.' Although some of the respondents argued that they did not see any form of

inclusion, others were of the view that they achieved inclusion through activities such as sports. The explanation given to this inclusion was that the Ghanaians enjoyed opportunity of being chosen first above other students. Most of the male respondents engaged in soccer, basketball or swimming. Some of the participants think being Black is associated with being gifted at sports. They believed that if you were Black and you did not participate in any sporting activities, then you were excluded from school. In the FGDs for the youth and church elders, participants reported that participating in sports had both positive and negative impacts. Participating in sports was a form of inclusion from the perspective that it made the individual feel as if they were part of the society (inclusion), because Blacks are selected to play in schools at the provincial levels. This contributes to their fame and also earns scholarships for those who excel. However, Black youth tend to concentrate so much on the sporting activities to the neglect of their studies because they thought that was the only way to prove their worth to the school. Eventually, this affects their studies in the school and when they graduate from the high school without good grades it limits their access to good colleges and universities. This negative impact of sports has led to the high rate of Black youth drop-out from schools. Below are quotes from participants:

> I was good in sports ...I mean soccer and through that other students enjoyed being with me and my team mates are always happy to have me in the team. It is the best thing to do, if you have something that you are good at. In a team I was always chosen first (Joshua, 26, M).

> Sporting activities makes you included. Is that genuine? Are we going to say that, this people are not going to accept us so let's do what we can? I mean we can say that but when we do that, going out of our way to do sport is very wrong because the media and society think if you are Black and you don't take part in sports then there is something wrong with you. Is an inferiority complex…yeah basketball can give me a lot of money but I can also become a medical doctor to safe lives (FGDs, - youth group).

### *4.2.6. Spatial Knowledge of the City/Neighbourhood*

Similar experiences of barriers were reported to have been linked to poor knowledge about the city in general, although discrepancy existed about the specific nature of these barriers. Participants in this study were asked how well they knew the neighbourhoods of the GTA. In general, most respondents were very familiar with their neighbourhood, but not the GTA because informants relied on public transport, which restrained their mobility and ability to benefit from job opportunities outside the neighbourhood.

Other participants also explained that they encountered problems when accessing facilities outside their neighbourhoods, which did not encourage them to go beyond the vicinity of their neighbourhood of Jane and Finch. Two participants responded as follows:

> I do not go out most often but I know some few places. I go to school, church and Jane and Finch Mall and another one in Toronto…and drive my mum to work (Christie, 20, F).

> I know some few places in the GTA but my knowledge is quite limited because I do not have my own means of transport so I rely on friends and public transport to go to work (Frederick, 30, M).

Although Christie drives her mother to work because they work at the same factory, she has very limited spatial knowledge of the GTA. These concerns about knowing the GTA reflected the view that mobility outside the Jane and Finch neighbourhood is limited because participants' rely on public transport. Other participants made similar comments, including making observations about how the Jane and Finch neighbourhood also affects their access to transportation and job opportunities due to their reliance on public transport.

> I work at a factory in Mississauga, which is quite far from Jane and Finch neighbourhood. I have to set off early to get the public transport. As such the transportation cost is high when compared to my monthly income (Robert, 30, M).

> When employers shortlist you for an interview, and the job is far from Jane and Finch neighbourhood. The question asked is 'do you drive? And when the answer is 'No', then you don't get the job (Michelle, 30, F).

FGDs with church leaders confirmed that the youth are limited in their spatial knowledge because many parents instruct their children to stay at home at night to avoid driving in affluent neighbourhoods lest they be mistaken for a criminal, and to avoid driving expensive cars lest they be accused of theft. As one church leader reported: "I don't encourage my children or any youth of the church to go to neighbourhoods in which they will be discriminated against or easily mistaken for a thief". As explained by the church leaders in the FGDs, the youth spatial knowledge mainly limited to the Jane and Finch neighbourhood because of their fear of encountering discrimination outside of this area. It appears many use Jane and Finch as a buffer against racial discrimination from the mainstream society.

## 4.3 The Forms, Causes, and Characteristics of Socio-Spatial Exclusion

### 4.3.1 Access to Restaurants, Shopping Malls and Recreational Centres

Both male and female participants described their experiences of discrimination when they accessed public spaces such as shopping malls, restaurants and recreational centres in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood and the GTA as a whole. Some participants indicated that such experiences were not always verbal; some related to the participants` perceptions of body language—especially facial expressions—that seemed to indicate perhaps, they do not belong there. It was apparent from accounts of both male and female participants that whenever they accessed specific public spaces such as shopping malls,

the security guards tend to pay closer attention to them: "When I step into a shop the owner automatically thinks I'm going to shoplift…. so they are constantly staring at you." Throughout the interviews and focus group discussions, participants indicated that they felt uncomfortable when they encountered such situations. Many of the participants' talked at length about these experiences in their daily lives in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood and the GTA as a whole. The quotes below illustrate the participants view on the issue:

> Sometimes when you walk into a restaurant you are seated to the far corner of the room…you could see from the faces and actions that you're not wanted here. It's like 'what do you want over here'. You're treated as if you don't matter and you don't belong here (Yvonne, 20, F)

> In the shopping malls, sometimes they stare at you in a funny way. You certainly feel you don't belong here. I think they feel you might shop lift and before you become conscious of yourself, the security people begin to trail you around (George, 29, M).

Some of the female participants explained that, while the desire to buy quality items makes them spend a lot of time in order to make careful choices, this often resulted in their sending the wrong signal to security officers. The study participants indicated that when this happened, they felt insulted and sometimes left the shops without making any purchases. In the comment below, a participant describes her experience:

> I usually take my time when I visit the shopping mall because I need to see more carefully, compare prices, you know. The other day, I went out of this shop to buy some few things across the shopping mall…  while contemplating on what to buy, when I came back to the shop I realized that they had spoken to the security and the guy kept trailing me down the aisles... So I went like...excuse Sir, I think you are following me ….it was then he said ohhhhh nooo… I was just patrolling… and when I got to the front door I realised that they were all staring at me (Serwaa, 28, F).

Similar comments were made within the focus group discussion:

> There have been a number of times when we have gone out to a shopping mall, and the security man was trailing us everywhere... Every corner that we took the guy followed us as if we were going shoplift. We bought some shoes and he thought the shoes were not paid for, so he inquired from the sales person whether we had paid for it and she said yes (FGDs-youth).

Another respondent stated that she had witnessed a similar event at a certain shop. The respondent claimed that a White woman selected an item from the shop and walked out of the shop without paying for it. According to this respondent, the shop owner just called her back and retrieved the item without alerting the security guards or the police. The respondent therefore wondered at the apparent double standard:

> There was this wig shop and a White girl came in and picked a hair piece or a wig and was walking out of the shop. The lady was called back and the wig was taken from her… But I heard one Black lady yelling, it is not fair… A Jane and Finch neighbourhood resident would be arrested (Serwaa, 28, F).

Other participants made comments of a similar nature, including reports of instances where people stopped talking when the Blacks stepped into restaurants and shops. Some recalled their experiences of being given tables in restaurants that were far from the other attendees. Most participants argue that even though restaurant attendants did not explicitly state that it was policy to isolate Blacks, their conduct invited such an interpretation.

Many participants also noted that they experience social exclusion when they boarded public buses. For instance, an interviewee stated that some White person would rather stand in the bus than sit next to a Black person. The same informant also reported instances where people abandoned their seats in order to avoid any close contact.  Most

participants indicated that they felt uncomfortable in those moments. Several respondents narrated similar experiences, with some asking rhetorical questions about multiculturalist policies in Canada: "How do you talk about multiculturalism when some people cannot even sit next to you in a public transport?" Other participants commented along the same lines including facial expressions: "They do not actually pass any racial comments but their body language indicates that you are inferior."

For many participants, even working with other visible minorities was sometimes problematic in the sense that some of the co-workers who were Asians (Indians and Chinese) equally tended to discriminate against them. Both male and female respondents explained that Indians and Chinese worked as a group, which made it difficult for Blacks to work with them. Study informants discussed instances of job losses because a Chinese person had reported that they were not qualified for the job. Some of the participants mentioned that, even though people who discriminate do not necessarily give voice to their discrimination, it could easily be observed through their actions. Two interviewees who had experienced this at the work place are quoted below:

> It is very common with the Indians. They want to work more with their own people than any other... When you are working with them they speak their language, they do not care whether you understand or not (Sylvia, 30, F).

> I have experienced this at work, and they don't voice it out … people look at you scornfully as if you have done something to them and they wouldn't voice it out loud because it was against company's policy. For me, racial discrimination it is not a myth but it does happen (Hanson, 27, M).

### 4.3.2 Availability and Access to Resources

When participants were asked about the available resources in the Jane and Finch

neighbourhood, many of them mentioned schools, gymnasium, swimming pools, basketball courts, the Jane and Finch mall, the Jane and Finch library and community health care (inside the Jane and Finch mall), the viewpoint of participants were that the above resources were inadequate for the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. Throughout the interviews, it was clear that the youth in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood use these resources to become engaged, and this enabled them to live a productive life. Most participants mentioned that they did not experience any marginalization when accessing resources in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood but felt marginalized when they moved outside their immediate space to access other resources in privileged neighbourhoods. What this suggests is that exclusion is felt more strongly when accessing resources outside the Jane and Finch neighbourhood.

A gender difference in patterns of accessing neighbourhood emerged. The female participants interviewed explained that they preferred to visit the Jane and Finch shopping malls rather than using the gymnasium or playing basketball; however, some of the female participants indicated that they do attend major events at the youth centre. Both males and females readily accessed the Jane and Finch mall and Ghanaian ethnic shops (selling groceries and clothes etc.) in the neighbourhood, as illustrated below:

> The Jane and Finch neighbourhood has the following: swimming pool, gym, basketball court and community centre. I don't experience any form of discrimination in accessing these resources because the neighbourhood is an immigrant neighbourhood…Black people get along with Blacks… Somalians and Ghanaians I think (Yvonne, 20, F).

> The Downsview Park is accessible to all. I pick up free movies. Sometimes they showcase cultural activities for us to attend. They don't request for any ID … Additionally, I go to the library once a while to pick books and you need an ID card to do that (Marie, 28, F).

As indicated in the comments above, some of the participants had access to the

resources without perceiving any form of exclusion, because Jane and Finch is an immigrant neighbourhood and "Black people get along with Blacks." As another female participant stated, the community centre in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood serves as a place for relaxation: "When my niece and nephew come to stay with me during summer holidays, we go to the community centre to hang out."

The sentiment that "Black people get along with Blacks" was not unanimous. A view expressed by a male participant was that the establishment of the youth centre at the Jane and Finch neighbourhood bred conflicts among youths. For instance, Jamaicans could easily get into a fight with Nigerians if a team lost a match. As another participant states: "It serves as social space to breed crime, because most of the youth use these places to exchange drugs." Below is a comment from a male participant:

> I witnessed some guys getting arrested at the basketball court. But it's because of their lifestyle…they deal in drugs…their behaviour and dressing. We used to play the basketball with them but when we are done we leave ...we do not hang out with them (Emmanuel, 22, M).

Despite the lack of unanimous opinion regarding the centre many participants cherished the presence of the centre and described it as a youth space for social integration, and maintained that it greatly helped them identify and support their career goals in sports:

> Jane and Finch neighbourhood has a community centre, swimming pool etc. I use some of the resources at the neighbourhood. You don't need any membership card to access these resources. No discrimination felt with the use of these resources. I play basketball in my neighbourhood. And it is a place for integration because you get to meet other people and hang around (Austin, 25, M).

Conversely, one of the male participants who worked at the Jane and Finch

primary school indicated that comparing the Jane and Finch neighbourhood's resources to other neighbourhoods, such as those in Brampton, shows the need for the government to improve and increase the number of resources for youth in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. Below is a comment from one interviewee:

> Jane and Finch community centre is something most ethnic minorities use. The neighbourhood has a public library and a shopping mall. The resources are not really enough; comparing the resources in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood to other neighbourhoods such as Brampton, there is a great disparity. Jane and Finch has two high schools the Westview and the Emery high school. These schools are not well equipped with computers; school library (limited number of textbooks). Resources are not really there but the community itself tries to provide these resources (Emmanuel, 22, M).

Participants unanimously agreed that resources—especially those in the schools and libraries—are insufficient in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood due to the tax base of the neighbourhood, and therefore poor neighbourhoods tend to get poor resources.

### 4.3.3 Religion, Language and Cultural Barriers

The Ghanaian immigrant churches used for the study are the Heritage S.D.A., Atwell S.D.A and the Ghana Presbyterian Church. The Ghanaian language was used as the main form of communication, even though translations were done from Twi to English for children and visitors (non-Ghanaians). Church elders explained that translating from Twi to English indicates that the church welcomes others.

Participants were asked for their view about the Ghanaian immigrant churches and whether they were good for the inclusion of Ghanaians or whether they reinforced ethnic separation and enclave formation. Participants generally opined that the church served as a place for the inclusion of Ghanaians and did not contribute to discrimination. Some

participants described their experiences of the Ghanaian churches as places for socialisation and social networking (supportive mechanisms for the youth).

> It has been great, I learn a lot from the church and most of my experience comes from the church because I get to interact with people. I got access to a job through a church member (John, 24, M- Heritage - SDA church).

According to another participant, the Ghanaian church serves as a place for inclusion into the Ghanaian community but not exclusion:

> I don't feel like we are excluding people. Everyone is welcomed to our church. This is because arrangements are made for people who do not understand Twi. I have extended an invitation to my friends (non-Ghanaians) to worship with me and they enjoyed it (Gifty, 30, F).

Unanimous agreement existed among male and female participants regarding the view that the church provides a social environment for inclusion into the Ghanaian immigrant community and welcomes diversity by having Twi translated into English. This suggests that participants felt a sense of belonging when they worshipped together on Saturdays and Sundays. Participants explained that "One gets to meet Ghanaian folks once a week to share ideas and build networks; 'during weekdays everyone is busy." Below is a comment from a female participant:

> It's a great place for socialisation. During the week we have busy schedules you do not have time to call friends. But on Saturday we get to see each other again and discuss issues that took place in the week and sometimes you do not want to leave the church (Serwaa, 28, F).

> Ghanaian church does everything Ghanaian in order for everyone to feel comfortable. They do actually incorporate things that will allow people to understand their way of worship. I will also argue that, it is not the case of exclusion, for instance, if you go to a Jamaican church, I believe they will do the same (Hanson, 27, M).

When the youth were asked to describe their experience with the church,

some described the activities the church organized to include them and ensure they stay away from trouble within the neighbourhood and with the police:

> The students in the church organize extra tutor hours to help the young ones with their school assignments….no fee is charged … Over the years they have gotten the youth involved in programmes to take leadership roles… I have been an usher for the church before,… taking part in the AY group where students are gathered together to join a marching band of the church... outreaches where we go out to do missionary work...students are involved in church activities in certain areas around the church so that we don't get apart and not feel like only the adults are able to take control of the church (Kwabena, 23, M).

In general, study participants identified the church as a place for belonging and the church elders and parents offered the youth advice about their integration into Canadian society and their civic and citizenship obligations:

> I think the adults give us solutions to lead a better life style in this environment because they came from an environment where everything was strict, you have to work hard before you earn it ...and now they are giving us the tool to be able to stand firm and a learning ground to build ourselves in the future with the right tools (Frederick, 30, M).

Contrasted against the opinion that the church was helpful in terms of integration into Canadian society, some of the informants suggested that the church has segregationist tendencies. These respondents attributed this to the fact that the churches tend to be dominated by ethnic minorities. Participants argued that Ghanaian churches in the GTA create ethnic enclaves, and with church services conducted in Ghanaian dialects, it promotes the feeling of being in your home country. While this, in itself, is not necessarily a setback, participants argued that it has the effect of reducing an individual's motivation to engage with people from other backgrounds and appreciate other cultures, thereby promoting social and physical distance between people . Others disputed this

claim and argued that the foregoing statement was an extreme interpretation of the issue in question. An informant argues that belonging to a different church was a reflection of cultural diversity rather than ethnic segregation:

> It is true it can be interpreted as wanting not to be part of the general community here but we should not forget that we are all not from the same country. We have different values, traditions, cultures that differentiate us. With the church, Ghanaians have a way of worship and dance. People go to church to be part of the society at the same time to worship God even though it might be seen as segregation (Robert, 30, M).

Although Robert agreed with the fact that the Ghanaian immigrant churches in some ways contribute to exclusion, he explained that it is a way to include Ghanaians into the Ghanaian community because of the way Ghanaians worship and dance to their local songs, which reminds them of their identity and togetherness when they meet. The general perception of the Ghanaian immigrant church is that it is a place for group identity because it exposes Ghanaian culture to their youth. However, some participants saw it as a form of social exclusion from Canadian society because the Ghanaian churches do not entertain any other views outside the Ghanaian culture. Below is a quote from a female participant:

> I think if I was in a multicultural church, it will have been better and if there is diversity, you could learn from other people other than it just being only Ghanaians. When you are all Ghanaians we have more problems. Because if it is a Ghanaian church people know people but if it was a multicultural church, it will be better for all of us, because we will be able to accept others (Yvonne, 20, F).

In general, participants in the FGDs discussed the activities that the Ghanaian churches undertake to integrate the youth into the church and GTA at large. Some of the activities included youth retreats, camps and conferences (debates and quizzes) for youth to interact with other Ghanaian youth in North America. Throughout the in-depth

interviews and FGDs, it was clear that the church was a place for the spiritual and physical growth of the youth. According to the elders of the church, youth activities organised in the church help to keep the youth from social vices, such as dealing with drugs and joining gangs:

> I have been in the church for 13yrs now. Over the years, the youth are involved in programmes to take leadership roles…. We organise outreaches, youth debates.   The youth are occupied with church activities so that the youth don't feel excluded (FGDs- youth group).

> Yes, the education and activities in the church, we try to include them in the church by keeping them busy and advising them always through the youth programmes we organize. There has been a tremendous change in the youth when we compare the current youth to the past. (FGDs- church elders).

One of the key issues that arose from the in-depth interviews and FGDs was how the church served as a place for social networking and other supportive networks for the youth to access certain jobs in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood and the GTA. In the quote below, a participant who benefitted from such a social network reports his experience:

> I got the job through my church. And the reason why I was chosen was because of my experience with the Ghanaian community. When I was in high school I used to volunteer in this school (Frederick, 30, M).

### 4.4 Summary

The forms, causes and characteristics of socio-spatial exclusion experienced by Ghanaian immigrant youth in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood are what this study investigated and outlined in this chapter. Themes of socio-spatial dialectics that emerged in this study were the negative label of Jane and Finch ("You fit the description"); restricted access to public space; racial profiling; challenges with "dress codes"; the

perception about Ghanaian ethnic names and challenges in access to the labour market. Social inclusion themes included: the Ghanaian immigrant churches and sporting activities in schools. It was noted that experiences of socio-spatial exclusion were similar across genders. The difference between genders stemmed from the fact that, while females in this study did not experience any form of discrimination in the acquisition of a driver's license and being profiled by police officers because they "fit the description", males experienced these forms of discrimination.

Participants were of the opinion that the public's perception of the Jane and Finch neighbourhood contributed to their experiences of social and spatial exclusion. As noted in the findings, participants continuously associated their experiences of access to the labour market, access to shopping malls and others to the negative label attached to the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. Participants were of the view that the neighbourhood in which you live adversely influences your socialisation process outside the neighbourhood. Key quotes from respondents were used to support the themes that emerged from the study.

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

**5.1 Introduction**

This chapter is presented in three sections. The first section discusses key findings regarding the forms and characteristics of socio-spatial exclusion experienced by Ghanaian immigrant youths in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, while the second addresses the social spaces of inclusion that Ghanaian immigrant youths experience in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood in particular, and in the GTA at large. The third section concludes the study, outlines its limitations, and draws out the implications for policy and future research.

**5.2 Social and Spatial Exclusion of Ghanaian Immigrant Youth in the Jane and Finch Neighbourhood**

Themes surrounding social and spatial processes in this study include: (a) the negative label attached to the Jane and Finch neighbourhood ("You fit the description"); (b) restricted access to public spaces, such as restaurants, shopping malls, and recreational centres (for example, basketball courts, swimming pools, gymnasiums); (c) racial profiling; (d) difficulties in acquiring a driver's license; (e) challenges in accessing the labour market; (f) challenges with "dress codes"; (g) perceptions of Ghanaian ethnic names; and (h) the label "Black". The themes identified with social inclusion include: (a) Ghanaian immigrant churches, and (b) sporting activities. The foregoing themes capture the diverse ways in which discrimination and prejudice are practised in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood and in the GTA. Even though informants demarcated their socio-

spatial exclusion and inclusion in numerous ways, there were some commonalities in their experiences within that neighbourhood and the GTA. According to Soja (2011), social and spatial processes are inseparable, and could be the cause of phenomena such as social exclusion. For instance, minorities residing in enclaves such as the Jane and Finch neighbourhood will try to escape racism based on their proximity to people of the same race. By being in the Jane and Finch area, however, such minorities tend to experience greater discrimination, because the neighbourhood is stigmatized as bad (Boudreau et al., 2009). Such a scenario represents a clear case in dialectics, where a phenomenon can be "good" and "bad" at the same time (Soja, 2011). Thus, the Jane and Finch neighbourhood can be viewed as both the cause and consequence of exclusion. The findings in this study revealed that Ghanaian immigrant youths' encounter with the boundaries of exclusion and inclusion have ultimately shaped their overall sense of belonging and integration within the GTA.

**Negative Label "Jane and Finch" Neighbourhood**: The stigmatization associated with the neighbourhood significantly influences the integration of the Ghanaian immigrant youth within and outside the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. For instance, the findings of the study indicate that they experience socio-spatial exclusion because of the negative label associated with the neighbourhood. Ghanaian immigrant youth maintained that having the Jane and Finch neighbourhood postal code on their resume as a mailing address limits their chances of being shortlisted for an interview by an employer. Many participants reported sending out countless resumes in search of jobs, yet not being shortlisted, despite having the job qualifications. Respondents observed that their Black colleagues who resided in Brampton and other neighbourhoods were more likely to be shortlisted for the interviews and, consequently, employed. The leaders of the

churches involved in this study confirmed this assertion that the Jane and Finch neighbourhood does have an impact on Ghanaian immigrant youths' access to jobs within and outside their neighbourhood. It was an important finding with some dialectical implications: some employers saw youths from that neighbourhood in only a negative light, prompting some of them to use different addresses on their job application. This is consistent with the findings of Bauder's (2002) study of youth in San Antonio; he found that employers and educators rejected applications from the Lanier area because of the perception that its residents are unreliable and incompetent. It is also similar to Bertrand and Mullainathan's (2003) study on racial discrimination in the labour market, where it was found that applicants living in better neighbourhoods receive more call backs for job interviews than those who live in poorer neighbourhoods. This was not related to race but, rather, the neighbourhood. At the same time, other employers saw these youths as people who have endured much, and have had valuable life experiences, and are, therefore, worthy of their support. Put differently, contrary to the general belief that residing in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood acts as a barrier in finding employment, some participants reported that they were employed even though they resided in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. According to these participants, some employers and employment agencies were astonished by their achievements in spite of their neighbourhood of residence. The dialectical nature of the experience of discrimination among Ghanaian immigrant youths is thus explained. As some youths accessed certain jobs because they lived in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, others experienced exclusion. Also, while some Ghanaian immigrant youth saw the Jane and Finch neighbourhood as the cause of their inability to access employment opportunities, others recognized it as a positive factor.

**Working Environments and Dealings with Employment Agencies**: Many participants believed that some employers deliberately assign certain jobs to Black immigrants. This complaint was especially evident among participants who worked in factories. According to them, employers purposely assigned menial jobs to Blacks who lived in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, irrespective of their educational attainment. Other participants, who indicated that they received unfair treatment at their job sites, did not associate their experiences with their neighbourhood but, rather, with their employers, as being racist. This finding is consistent with Calliste's (1987) study on the formation of a split labour market on Canadian railways in the early and mid-twentieth century. Calliste (1987) found that Black men were relegated to lower-paying jobs (such as a sleeping car porter), while the better paying jobs (such as a sleeping car conductor) were reserved for White men. This finding also corroborates past studies that found that Black bodies remain identity markers that shape perceptions of being competent for the labour market (Creese, 2011; Creese, Kambere & Masinda, 2011; Mensah, 2010; Wong, 2000, 2006). Ellen and Turner (1997), in their studies, also indicated that employers are capable of discriminating against inner-city residents, irrespective of their credentials. Likewise Satzewich (2011), in one of his studies on domestic servants and migrant workers, about employers' preferences, found a mix of positive and negative attitudes toward Filipinos from some employers because most people in Canadian society believe that certain groups of people are only suitable for certain types of work.

**Language ("heavy accent") and Canadian Work Experience:** Other factors that appear to influence access to the labour market for Ghanaian immigrant youths include language (accent) and Canadian work experience. Many of these young people believed they experience exclusion from job access because their potential employers

have difficulty understanding their "heavy accent". Others expressed dismay that their university qualification and work experience from Ghana were not considered valid by employers. Employers thus value experience obtained in Canada over that in Ghana. It is worth noting that some participants were also able to negotiate these experiences of exclusion by volunteering to gain Canadian job experiences. These responses by the Ghanaian immigrant youth concerning their labour market prospects corroborate earlier findings about visible minorities' experiences in accessing the labour market (Creese, 2011; Creese, & Kambere, 2003; Murdie & Teixeira, 2003; Smith & Ley, 2008; Wong, 2000), suggesting that visible minorities may experience racism in their search for jobs because of their accent, which employers may believe could threaten the quality of communication on the job.

Further, participants indicated that their Ghanaian educational qualification and work experience from Ghana was not valued in Canada. Ghanaian immigrant youth navigated through these challenges by schooling in Canada to help them gain access to the labour market; yet this acted contrary to their expectation. Despite Ghanaian immigrant youth having attained a Canadian education, there were still perceived obstacles preventing them from accessing the labour market. This finding is in line with Aydemir and Skuterud's (2005) study on Canadian immigrants' entry earnings for the years 1966-2000; they found that employers generally tend to value foreign work experience less (Aydemir & Skuterud 2005). Hum and Simpson (2003) alluded to the fact that the duration of their stay in Canada, or the time of their arrival in Canada, could influence the visible minority's access to the labour market. Although these earlier studies are consistent with the findings of this study, it is worth noting that some participants had lived and schooled in Canada for 21 years, yet still met with discrimination in accessing

the labour market. It contradicts the findings by Hum and Simpson (2003), which suggest that longer lengths of stay break various barriers or discriminations experienced by visible minorities in terms of their access to the labour market. It is then difficult to decipher how long a person needs to live in Canada to break these barriers. As most of the study participants observed, getting a Canadian education did not diminish the persistence of other racialized employment practices, where names, accents, and being Black still shape employers' perceptions.

**Ghanaian Ethnic Names and "Dress Codes"**: Interestingly, the Ghanaian immigrant youths in this study were of the view that their Ghanaian ethnic names had an impact on their experiences of exclusion in the labour market and schools. There were indications that with names such as "Kwadwo Mensah" on their resumes, the chances of being called for a job interview were low. It can thus be suggested that possessing a non-Ghanaian name such as "John Brownson" may increase the likelihood of finding a job. This finding may imply that Ghanaian ethnic names became an identity marker that leads to Ghanaian immigrant youths being discriminated against in the labour market. Second generation Ghanaian youths in this study argued that the fact that they have Ghanaian ethnic names does not mean they were not born in Canada, since they do not have an accent distinguishable from that of White Canadians. As one informant stated: "The fact that I have a Ghanaian ethnic name does not mean I was not born in Canada and will have an accent". Although the neighbourhood is a barrier to accessing the labour market, respondents believed that Ghanaian ethnic names contributed to social exclusion. This finding confirms conclusions reached by Bertrand and Mullainathan (2003) in their study on racial discrimination in the labour market in Boston and Chicago. From fabricated resumes to "Help Wanted" advertisements, these researchers found that the resumes that

were randomly assigned White sounding names (Emily Walsh) received 50% more call-backs than resumes with African American sounding names (Jamal Jones). Likewise, Oreopoulos' (2009) study on racial discrimination in the Toronto labour market found that resumes with White sounding names are 40% more likely to receive call-backs than "resumes" with Indian, Chinese, or Pakistani names. Also, Reitz (2007) found that children of immigrants – especially visible minorities – experience discrimination and feelings of exclusion even when they were born in Canada, and are educated and highly qualified.

In addition to the aforementioned findings, Ghanaian immigrant youths also indicated that their way of dressing had an impact on their experiences of discrimination in and outside the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. There were clear gender differences in this form of discrimination. Female informants indicated that the way the boys dress feeds into the system of social and spatial exclusion. Female respondents explained that the males wear "baggy jeans" and "large t-shirts", and they pull their trousers below their buttocks, allowing the trousers to drag on the ground, with a bandana tied on their heads and another in the pocket of their jeans. Most male participants responded to "dress code" issues by dressing appropriately so as to avoid any racism-laced "looks". Studies on exclusion in the Canadian context often focus on how factors such as gender, language, immigration status, ethnicity, religious affiliation and socio-economic status contribute to exclusion (Block & Galabuzi, 2011; Creese, 2011; Hou & Picot, 2004; Hum & Simpson, 2003; Kazemipur, 2000; Mensah, 2010). Although the aforementioned factors were perceived by the youth in this study as "necessary" for their integration into Canadian society, our findings are that "dress code" contributes to the incidence of exclusion from the labour market and the broader GTA.

**Limited Access to Public Resources:** Another form of social and spatial exclusion experienced by Ghanaian immigrant youths relates to their access to public spaces, such as restaurants and shopping malls. Most participants indicated that they encountered a racism-laced "look", and the likelihood of security guards monitoring their movements within these spaces. Though these places could be described as public spaces, these youths felt that they did not belong in them. Participants described discriminatory treatment when they were accessing restaurants, noting that attendants often assigned them to seats at the back of the restaurants, or locations that are not directly visible to incoming customers. Additionally, some of the youth indicated that in accessing recreational settings such as basketball courts, swimming pools and tennis courts in neighbourhoods outside the Jane and Finch, they encountered discrimination because they did not live in such neighbourhoods. It appears that when this type of discrimination happens, the youth are left with no option but to confine themselves to their Jane and Finch neighbourhood. Studies by Bolts, Burgers, and Kempen (1998) and Peach (1996) indicate that the more segregated neighbourhoods are, the less their immigrant population can assimilate. They opined that this establishes breeding grounds for misery owing to the chances of the individual becoming limited to his or her immediate neighbourhood (Bolts et al., 1998; Peach, 1996). Some of the youth also talked about the lack of resources in the Jane and Finch high schools. According to them the school libraries are not well equipped with the books and computers necessary for learning. An informant asked a rhetorical question: "How much can a low income neighbourhood contribute to sustain these resources?" This finding is consistent with those of Wilson (1987) that neighbourhoods that are heavily populated by minorities are seen as poor neighbourhoods and, as such, the

probability of residents experiencing isolation from community resources, such as libraries, parks, clinics, schools and community centers is high.

**Racial Profiling and Acquisition of Driver's License:** Racial profiling was discussed at length with participants. They indicated that racial profiling within and outside the Jane and Finch neighbourhood delays them, because when the police officers asked for their identification cards, and found that they lived in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, they are subjected to much interrogation. The social construct of the Jane and Finch neighbourhood is negative, as such; it has an adverse influence on Ghanaian immigrant youth mobility within and outside the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. As one respondent reported, "The policemen delayed my friends and I [sic] because when they requested for [sic] our identification cards and Jane and Finch neighbourhood was written on it, they concluded that 'we fit the description''". Similar findings have been reported by Levitas (2005), who studied low-income neighbourhoods as potential places for criminalized behaviour. He found that individual misbehaviour and lapses in attitude of certain categories of people might be extended to whole neighbourhoods or social groups (Levitas, 2005). Similar findings from the work of Satzewich (2011) show that groups such as Black people, Aboriginal peoples, and women are "under policed" when they are victims of crime, and "over-policed" when they are seen as perpetrators. This finding also corroborates Wortley's (2005) study on bias-free policing (the Kingston data collection project), which found that Black people are four times more likely to be pulled over by the police, and Aboriginal peoples are 1.4 times more likely than White Canadians. Wortley explains that the age category of Black youth likely to be stopped for racial profiling by the police is between 15 and 24 years (Wortley, 2005).

The acquisition of a driver's license was another area where these youth experience discrimination that yielded some useful insights in relation to the socio-spatial exclusion experienced by Ghanaian immigrant youths in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. They pertain to differences among genders. While most female participants indicated that acquiring a driver's license was not problematic, male participants encountered some significant obstacles beyond the legal guiding principles for license acquisition in Canada. This gendered difference, perhaps, stemmed from the fact that the belief that Ghanaian immigrant males who acquire licenses are likely to become easily mobile and, hence, prone to engage in crimes, such as drug exchanges. They adopted negotiating strategies to minimize these obstacles, such as persisting until they acquired the driver's license. Thus, the Jane and Finch neighbourhood acted as a major contributing factor to Ghanaian males not getting their driver's license. Peach (2005) noted that ethnic enclaves that are stigmatized affect the social interaction of individuals in the larger society, and limit their access to social services. Atkinson and Kintrea (2001) noted that, the implication of this is that where people live affects their chances to participate in an inclusive society over and above non-spatial explanatory social categories such as gender and class, and specific disadvantages such as unemployment.

**Limited Knowledge of the GTA and the Label "Black":** The study also noted that Ghanaian immigrant youth have limited knowledge of the city. This was associated with their lack of private automobiles and experiences of discrimination from the public in visiting other neighbourhoods. As an informant stated, "I made some friends outside the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, but as soon as the parents of my friends knew where I lived. I was not invited to their homes again".

Some noted that they are being discriminated against because they are Blacks, and not only because they reside in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. The findings of this study are consistent with studies of Massey and Denton (1987) in the United States on residential segregation of Blacks, Hispanics and Asians. They found that Black neighbourhoods are often described as "ghettos" and "barrios", and are highly stigmatized, and assumed to be conduits for youth engagement in gangster and ghetto activities (Massey & Denton, 1987).

## 5.3 Social Spaces of Inclusion

This section examines issues surrounding participants' experiences and perceptions of social inclusion in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The findings indicate that activities such as church services and youth organizations in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood act as social spaces of inclusion for the Ghanaian immigrant youths. The youths indicated that they are able to access resources such as the library, basketball court, gymnasium, and other sporting activities. Further, these centres provided inclusive activities for the youths in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. For many of the Ghanaian immigrant youths in this study, a flexible and diverse community was seen to promote a greater sense of belonging. Accordingly, churches and various church activities, such as youth debates, conferences, and African Day celebrations, played a vital role in creating a sense of home. Participants also emphasized the value of cultural exchange among Ghanaian immigrants, and discussed their participation in forums, debates, retreats, conferences and outreaches through their respective churches. Other measures of inclusion among Ghanaian immigrant youth include the building of friendship networks with church youth and other youth in the neighbourhood. As one participant stated, "The church acts as my bigger family of

Ghanaians, so I feel I'm part of a bigger Ghanaian community". Most of the participants found that the church support they received was critical to their negotiation of discrimination and alienation in the broader GTA community. There were, however, suggestions that organizational structures to support a genuinely diverse community were lacking, though normative activities described as "necessary" for a full socially inclusive life were identified. Some of these normative activities include religious celebrations, such as Christmas, as well as weddings, funerals, and African Day.

A study by Mensah (2009) on the characteristics and functions of Ghanaian immigrant churches in Toronto found that racial minority immigrants use religious associations and practices to counteract the cultural shock, alienation and discrimination they encounter in their adopted countries. Some participants in this study used the Ghanaian community and churches as points of contacts to get access to jobs in either the Jane and Finch neighbourhood or outside the GTA. Religion plays a central part in the daily lives of migrants, in the development of communities and in defining how the state should respond to new migration--it is plausible that religious organizations such as churches can have a significant impact on migrant integration. Churches as religious institutions serve as places for the integration of new immigrants. It can function as critical access routes to the host society or as protective cultural communities. Churches provide stability in unfamiliar territory through the creation of a sense of community, a sense of place and an extended family of support. Migrants need to express and to live their religious creed. This creed can be a tool for stabilization, allowing them to avoid marginalization.

Meanwhile, the loss of religious identity may lead to the loss of ethical values, which can cause migrants to feel even more disoriented and uprooted in the host society.

Therefore religious communities serve as bridges for integration of new migrants as found in this study in the activities the church organized to engage the youth and to keep them away from criminal activities. The Ghanaian immigrant churches also made the youth to keep their sense of identity as illustrated by one of the participant "the church is a place not only for religious activities but for socialization and also a sense of belonging to a community. This is consistent with the notion that social interaction increases within groups when they live close to each other, while interaction with members outside the group is reduced (Balakrishnan & Hou, 1999). The findings of this study regarding social inclusion confirm earlier studies' findings that neighbourhoods with high concentrations of immigrants or ethnic groups facilitate the delivery of some linguistically and culturally sensitive services through the presence of a large group of people with similar backgrounds (Agrawal, 2010; Balakrishnan et al., 2005; Bauder, 2002; Murdie & Teixeira, 2000; Qadeer, 2006; Qadeer & Kumar, 2003). Findings from this study also support Sen's (2000) conception of an inclusive society, where members participate meaningfully and actively, enjoy equality, share social experiences, and attain fundamental well-being. In this study, churches acted as an inclusive society for Ghanaian immigrant youth in encouraging and providing them with opportunities for successful integration into both the Jane and Finch and GTA neighbourhoods.

In a neighbourhood social capital serves as a collective resource for immigrants' integration into society (Browning & Cagney, 2002; Mendez, 2009; Owusu, 1999). Findings from this study support notions of social capital inasmuch as most Ghanaian immigrant youth relied on the church and, to a large extent, on fellow Ghanaians living in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood for access to jobs and other available information concerning their well-being in the community and GTA.

This section has discussed the key findings and how they relate to previous research findings. It has also highlighted the social and spatial patterns and processes that feed into each other in such a way that they tend to be the cause and effect of a phenomenon like social exclusion. The section described the forms and characteristics of socio-spatial exclusion experienced by Ghanaian immigrant youth in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. It is clear that Ghanaian immigrant youth are spatially excluded in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, and this, in turn, contributes to their limited access to employment opportunities, restricted access to shopping malls and limited knowledge of the GTA.

## 5.4 Conclusion, Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This section concludes the study by presenting implications for policies and future research. Additionally, limitations of the study are acknowledged in this section.

Despite ongoing research on the lives of visible minorities in Canadian cities, there is still limited knowledge of how the social and spatial processes are intertwined to produce a phenomenon like social exclusion, and of how these are dialectically related to the neighbourhood in which visible minorities live. This study examined the social and spatial exclusion experienced by Ghanaian immigrant youth living in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, giving critical insights into various ways in which social and spatial processes feed into each other to exacerbate a phenomenon like social exclusion. Although there are earlier studies on visible minorities' experiences of social exclusion, the emphasis on socio-spatial dialectics in this study certainly brings a different dimension to the topic. The dialectical nature of social and spatial processes offers initial evidence that exclusion of Ghanaian immigrant youth does exist in the Jane and Finch

neighbourhood and, potentially, in the GTA. It has recently been observed that much of the literature on social exclusion and inclusion ignores the "spatial" or "mobility" dimensions. Social exclusion has a spatial dimension, and how this is expressed in space has not received much research attention. As people negotiating new social environments, and as common targets for racial discrimination, Ghanaian immigrant youths experience difficulties in constructing a sense of belonging and identity. On the basis of the foregoing findings, one can conclude that social exclusion is not only about unemployment; it is also about one's access to social services outside the neighbourhood (for example, the negative label of the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, limited access to resources, Ghanaian ethnic names). People may also be excluded from participation in society because of the operations of the society. For example, the Ghanaian immigrant youth in this study experienced exclusion while accessing shopping malls and restaurants, both inside and outside the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. As we saw, even their ethnic names and the way they dress led to experiences of racism and discrimination, and these experiences were described by participants as alienating processes that inhibit their sense of inclusion. Social regulation and stigmatized realities within constructions of private and public spheres and labour market disadvantages further restrict their efforts toward inclusion (Creese, 2011; Galabuzi, 2006; Mensah, 2002, 2010). Despite these challenges, the young immigrants were active in resisting forces of marginalization, using creative and varied strategies (such as volunteering to gain Canadian experience, dressing appropriately and hiding their true neighbourhoods) to negotiate public spaces.

The perception of Ghanaian immigrant youths that employers decide to stigmatize certain neighbourhoods and, consequently, not employ individuals from such neighbourhoods also contributed to the social and spatial processes of exclusion. While

some research (e.g., Block & Galabuzi, 2011; Creese, 2011; Mensah, 2010; Wong, 2000) suggests that the Canadian labour market is shaped by relationships of domination based on gender, race, ethnicity, educational attainment and sexual orientation, further research is required to explore the micro-level processes that maintain or create shifts in these relations. This study contributes to this body of knowledge because it explores the gendered experiences of social and spatial exclusion, with specific attention to Ghanaian immigrant youths' access to the labour market as it directly relates to their Jane and Finch neighbourhood.

This study has furthered existing geographical studies about neighbourhood effects on Ghanaian immigrant youth's experiences of social and spatial exclusion in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. It has reinforced the concept of space and place. As people live and work, they increasingly adapt to their environment, changing it to suit their needs and to convey their cultural values (Massey, 1985; Soja, 1985). At the same time, they gradually adapt both to their physical environment and to the values, attitudes and comportment of people around them; this is what Soja (1980) has termed "socio-spatial dialectic". People are constantly modifying and reshaping places, and places are constantly coping with change, and influencing their inhabitants (Soja, 2011). Understanding the spatial organization of society is important in understanding how social processes work out, the way they are conceptualized by society and acted upon politically (Massey, 1985).

Despite the growing body of evidence that residential segregation play a significant role in shaping visible minorities' belonging and identity formation in Canada (Browning & Cagney, 2002; Mendez, 2009; Owusu, 1999; Qadeer & Kumar, 2003), the existing literature offers scant guidance for policy makers. The key findings of this study

– relating to (a) a negative label of the Jane and Finch neighbourhood; (b) identity markers such as the Ghanaian ethnic names, the "dress code"; and (c) limited access public spaces such as shopping malls, recreational centres – have defined Ghanaian immigrant youths' sense of belonging and identity in the local society. These findings have implications for housing planning, in the sense that low-income neighbourhoods have limited resources and few employment opportunities.

The Ghanaian immigrant youth in this study indicated that their churches acted as inclusive social spaces. Studies on recent immigrants and their integration have shown that residential segregation and ethnic enclaves provide support networks for long-term immigrant integration and inclusion in the host society (Owusu, 1999; Qadeer & Kumar, 2003). Kunz (2005) explains that the more institutionally complete a community is, in terms of businesses, churches, banks, and social services, the more it can offer newcomers and established members in terms of resources that increase ethnic attachment and bonding. This will help provide the opportunities and resources that would be easily accessible, and thereby help limit their experiences of discrimination in accessing resources outside their neighbourhoods. Many communities, however, do not have the resources or infrastructure to provide such services without government support; and the provision of these resources are tax-based of the neighbourhood. Poor neighbourhoods, therefore, tend to get poor resources. That being the case, it is necessary to strengthen multiculturalism policies and to focus on wider social inclusionary processes at all levels of government and in all sectors of the society to redress inequities and enhance nation building as a whole.

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of the study before progressing to a discussion of policies and areas for future research. Issues of gender, race and social class

present potential advantages and disadvantages for the qualitative researcher seeking acceptance in the field (Padgett, 1998). Though race (I am from Ghana) was an advantage to me as a researcher researching people from Ghana, it was also a limitation in terms of gaining access to available information (as indicated in Chapter Three, section 3.4. on the fieldwork and positionality) from an outsider's perspective. In terms of gender, being a female researcher helped me contact participants easily, but it also created some tensions, as well. Many of the males who were interviewed, and potential participants, made sexual advances, and sought to move a step further for a sexual relationship. In such cases, some participants opted out when their desires were not met.

This study contributes to policy by drawing attention to how integration and inclusion of newcomers and minorities across Canada is important in welcoming diversity and valuing the identity of immigrants, as stipulated in the multiculturalism policy. Public policy assumes that the spatial segregation of an ethnic group will result in multiculturalism and integration of immigrants; but this may not always be valid. It is evident from this study that the Jane and Finch neighbourhood has an adverse effect on Ghanaian immigrant youth's access to social services (such as employment and access to shopping malls and restaurants). It is therefore imperative that government and other agencies take steps to lessen the level of discrimination that exists in the occupational structure and broader social settings.

A key finding in this study was the negative label of the Jane and Finch, and the effect it has on their employment opportunities. Policies such as employment and pay equity have important implications for the economic integration and inclusion of immigrants (Hibbert & Garcea, 2011). The stipulated objectives of this framework are to protect the human rights of all workers in the workplace (Garcea & Hibbert, 2011). This

policy framework also prohibits discrimination in the workplace against citizens, permanent residents and persons on special visas. There is a need to strengthen these policies to enable the successful integration of Ghanaian immigrant youth in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood in their access to employment, and not to be discriminated against based on the neighbourhood in which they live.

In this study respondents indicated that their ethnic names were barriers to their being shortlisted for jobs. In view of this, the multiculturalism policies need to be strengthened not just to recognize diversity and welcome differences, but for the valued recognition of the individual, despite the ethnic names of visible minorities. Despite higher levels of education, racialized groups in Canada are more likely to be unemployed, or employed in precarious work, than non-racialized Canadians (Galabuzi, 2006). It has been argued that one of the major barriers to full inclusion is institutional systemic racism (Galabuzi, 2006; Reitz, 2007). Laws and policies that aim to eliminate institutional racism in all sectors (public, non-profit, private) may be more effective than other types of anti-racism initiatives or programs that attempt to change public attitudes or to foster relationships across various ethnic, religious and racialized communities. Anti-racist action programs should be strengthened to address racist behaviour and practices that act as obstacles to the full participation of individuals and groups in civil society.

Despite the social inclusion initiatives that have been undertaken by the Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement, policies to recognize newcomers' needs, such as for language training, labour market integration and social services are required. An initiative is also necessary that welcomes immigrants' educational achievements, and gives them jobs that befit their educational backgrounds. This requires greater commitments from the province of Ontario towards the development and implementation of a comprehensive

multicultural policy that welcomes not just diversity but the identity, capabilities and experiences that immigrants possess upon immigrating to Canada.

Additionally, it is not clear what impact Canada's multicultural policies have made on segregation levels in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. These policies emphasize preservation of cultural heritage, yet they seem not to work well for immigrant integration into the mainstream of Canadian society or their acceptance of Canadian values. Knowing the influence of neighbourhoods on individuals' employment outcomes might be important for a number of policy reasons. For instance, a poor neighbourhood is associated with individual disadvantages, such as poor community services and facilities, poor housing and environment, and high crime. The combination of these types of disadvantages creates low aspiration and underachievement in the neighbourhood's population. It is necessary to strengthen policies and programs that prevent the media and general public from stigmatizing neighbourhoods dominated by visible minorities.

Religious communities of the host society and of immigrant communities could promote exchange and sharing, thereby serving as a bridge for integration. These links can help avoid marginalization and frustration of migrant faith communities, which furthermore can help prevent racialization. The religious communities of the host society may be enriched by the contributions of migrant religious activities. Intercultural experiences can be fostered and eventually transferred into other sectors of social life. Social capital, thought to be of basic importance for social cohesion, will be increased if the religious experience of migration movements is addressed appropriately. All stakeholders in the society and governments must work together to pursue this aim.

As the interest among researchers in studying neighbourhoods and immigrants' integration continues to grow, the ability to move the field forward in a meaningful way is

dependent on theories that are developed to explain neighbourhood effects, as well as the accuracy with which researchers and policy makers model these theories. Past studies have examined residential segregation and the positive and negative effects it has on immigrants' integration and assimilation. Future studies should focus on policies that can curb stigmatization and discrimination against any group in Canada. Future research may focus on utilizing other research designs, such as statistical methodologies, to accurately capture the complexities of the contexts in which people live and how these complexities may affect their access to social services and the general well-being of individuals living in ethnic enclaves. It is also suggested that researchers and policy-makers must recognize wider forces of cultural differentiation and exclusion.

In addition to the above mentioned initiatives, a practical solution to the youth experiences of social exclusion is to get the youth involved in social activities that will enable them to explore issues of relevance to them and their communities. To achieve this, educational institutions will have to partner with communities to provide the available resources. This is necessary to address systemic barriers to equitable social participation specifically in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, and in the GTA, at large. This will eventually help to transform the life chances of a generation of young people so that they become the community's future leaders.

In conclusion, it is reasonably fair to say that the association between social and spatial is dialectical. The dialectical issue that came out as a major finding is that the Jane and Finch neighbourhood has its physical and social advantages and disadvantages. In its physical sense, it has many public housing complexes that have been stigmatized as a low-income immigrant neighbourhood. Socially, inhabitants are discriminated against in their access to jobs. Existing policies need to be strengthened to reduce the level of

discrimination that immigrant youth experience from employers and in accessing other social services. Employers and employment agencies should assess individuals objectively, based on their credentials, and not by their ethnic names or by their neighbourhood.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Interview Guide

**Background Questions**

 Where you were born?

How old are you?

How long have you been living in Toronto?

Do you have family members that live here in Toronto? Or live outside Toronto?

What do you do for a living? What do your family members do for a living?

How often do you participate in community activities?


**Experiences of Social Exclusion**
What forms of social exclusion do you normally face? Can you describe them in details for me?


**Availability and Access to Resources**
What kinds of resources are available in North York (specifically Jane and Finch neighbourhood?)

What have been your experiences with joining (youth) social, sports or recreational clubs? If you are a member of any, please identify them for me; if you are not a member tell please tell me why?



**Access to Work**
Are you currently working? If yes, tell me about your experience at your workplace, in particular about your experience with discrimination or social exclusion.

Have you ever been turned down for a job because of where you live? If yes elaborate.


**Religion, Language and Cultural Barriers**

Do you go to church regularly?

Describe your experience with your church?

Is it mainly Ghanaian people who attend this church?

Is the service done in a Ghanaian language? And do you understand the language?

What is your view about the Ghanaian immigrant churches? Would you say they are good for the integration of Ghanaians or they reinforce ethnic separation and enclave formation?

Outside your church and neighbourhood, do you face any problem with your communication due to your accent and cultural barriers?

**Knowledge of the City/Neighbourhood Effects**

Would you say you know your neighborhood very well?

Would you say you know the Greater Toronto Area very well?

Which areas of Toronto do you know well outside of your neighbourhood?

Are there parts of the GTA that you don't really know at all? Which parts and why?

**Appendix B: Focus Group Discussion Guide**

**Focus Group Questions**

- Let us discuss the common social exclusions faced by our youth. Does anybody have a specific story on social exclusion to share with the group?

- What are some of the problems our youth are facing in integrating into Canadian society?

- Are our immigrant churches helping our youth to integrate, or they are helping to further segregate them? Share your views about this.

- What are some of the initiatives that Ghanaian community (in North York area) is taking to help the youth integrate that you know of, tell us more about these initiatives.

- If yes, can you describe the form of social exclusion you have experienced?

- Can you describe the kind of resources available in your neighbourhood? e.g., access to sports, recreational and entertainment facilities etc.

- How do you relate to the youth of your church, neighbourhood, and at school?

- What is your level of participation in clubs outside of your Ghanaian ethnic association?

- In your opinion, what do you think the North York community will need that you do not have right now, that will help support your adaptation as an immigrant? e.g., Access to sports and recreational activities.

- As an immigrant, are there some language and cultural barriers that contribute to your exclusion? e.g. communication problems with friends at school, in your neighbourhood, at church, at sports and entertainment centres, etc.

- Since arriving in Canada, have you encountered any problem with the law enforcements bodies because of the community (Jane–Finch) in which you live? If yes, can you describe the form of encounter you had and how it was resolved?

- As immigrants what do you see as the main challenges to integrating in Toronto?

- What are some of the things that you think could be done to help improve Ghanaian immigrants' integration in Toronto?

- Does anyone have any additional comments or suggestions?

Thank you.

**Appendix C: Western University Ethics Approval**

Use of Human Participants - Ethics Approval Notice

*Research*

# Western

Principal Investigator: Dr. Godwin Arku
Review Number: 17990S
Review Level: Full Board
Approved Local Adult Participants: 0
Approved Local Minor Participants: 0
Protocol Title: Gender and Socio-Spatial Exclusion among Ghanaian Immigrant Youth in North York, Toronto
Department & Institution: Geography, University of Western Ontario
Sponsor:
Ethics Approval Date: July 07, 2011          Expiry Date: August 31, 2012

Documents Reviewed & Approved & Documents Received for Information:

| Document Name | Comments | Version Date |
|---|---|---|
| UWO Protocol | | |
| Letter of Information & Consent | | |
| Letter of Information & Consent | | |

This is to notify you that The University of Western Ontario Research Ethics Board for Non-Medical Research Involving Human Subjects (NMREB) which is organized and operates according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario has granted approval to the above named research study on the approval date noted above.

This approval shall remain valid until the expiry date noted above assuming timely and acceptable responses to the NMREB's periodic requests for surveillance and monitoring information. If you require an updated approval notice prior to that time you must request it using the UWO Updated Approval Request Form.

Members of the NMREB who are named as investigators in research studies, or declare a conflict of interest, do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on, such studies when they are presented to the NMREB.

The Chair of the NMREB is Dr. Riley Hinson. The UWO NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.

**Ethics Officer to Contact for Further Information**

*This is an official document. Please retain the original in your files.*

The University of Western Ontario
Office of Research Ethics
Support Services Building Room 5150 • London, Ontario • CANADA - N6A 3K7
PH: 519-661-3036 • F: 519-850-2466 • ethics@uwo.ca • www.uwo.ca/research/ethics

## Appendix D: Curriculum Vitae

| Name | Mariama Zaami | |
|---|---|---|
| **Education** | Western University<br> London, Ontario,Canada<br> 2010-2012<br><br>University of Bergen<br>Bergen, Norway,<br>2008-2010<br><br>University of Ghana<br>Legon-Accra, Ghana,<br>2002-2006 | |
| **Awards** | Western Graduate Research Scholarship (WGRS), University of Western Ontario<br>2010 – 2012<br><br>Geography Graduate Travel Award, Western University<br>2011<br><br>The Edward G. Pleva Fellowship<br>2011<br><br>Norwegian Government Quota Scheme<br>2008-2010<br><br>Nordic African Institute: Study Grants Spring<br>2009 | |
| **Teaching Experience** | **Teaching Assistant – to Professor Kim Holland in "Fundamentals of Geography"**<br>Moderating online discussion<br>Marking exams | **2011** |
| | **Teaching Assistant – to Tekleab Gala in "The Natural Environment"**<br>Grading of students essays, quizzes, midterm and final exams | **2012** |

| **Conference Presentations** | *"Gender and Socio-spatial Exclusion of Ghanaian Youth in Toronto"*<br>Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Geographers<br>New York, NY, USA | **2012** |
|---|---|---|
| | *"Variations in Social Networks among Northern Migrants in Accra. A Case Study of Madina"*<br><br>Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association of African Studies<br>Toronto, ON, Canada | **2011** |
| | *"Social Networking and Gendered Ethnic Spaces by Northern Migrants in the Informal Economy in Accra, Ghana"*<br><br>Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of Association of American Geographers<br>Seattle, WA, USA | **2011** |
| | *"Gendered Strategies among Northern Migrants in Accra: A Case Study of Madina"*<br>Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association of Geographers<br><br>Calgary, AB, Canada | **2011** |
| **Membership** | Canadian Association of Geographers<br><br>Association of American Geographers<br><br>Canadian Association of African Studies | |