

**Deagriculturalization, Industrialization, Deindustrialization, Postindustrialization,
and Black Academic Underachievement in the United States and United Kingdom**

In this article we focus on how the capitalist relational processes of deagriculturalization, industrialization, deindustrialization, and postindustrialization in the Caribbean, United States (US), and the United Kingdom (UK) contributes to and perpetuates the academic underachievement of black American and black British Caribbean youths in the US and UK, respectively. We conclude that, contemporarily, the academic achievement gap between black Americans and whites in the US and black British Caribbean youths and whites in the UK is a result of what Paul C. Mocombe (2005, 2008, 2009, 2010) refers to as “a mismatch of linguistic structure and social class function,” grounded in the relational processes of the capitalist social structure of class inequality of the two societies. In other words, the reason that blacks 1) have more limited skills in processing information from articles, books, tables, charts, and graphs compared with their white counterparts; 2) and the students who lose the most ground are the higher-achieving black children is due to the linguistic structure and social class functions of the black underclasses in the US and UK , which, with the help of corporate finance capital in postindustrial economies, have become the bearers of ideological and linguistic domination for young black folks around the world. The article offers Mocombe’s “mismatch of linguistic structure and social class function” as an hermeneutical framework for guiding future research on the black/white achievement gap in the US, UK, and globally against postmodern/poststructural theories of intersectionality and John Ogbu’s burden of acting white hypothesis.

Background of the Problem

The academic underachievement of Black pupils vis-à-vis their white counterparts in the US and British education systems is well known and extensively documented

(Coard 1971; Rampton 1981; Swann 1985; Gillborn & Gipps 1996; Gillborn & Mirza 2000; Battacharyya et al. 2003; Carter, 2003; Mocombe, 2005; Mocombe and Tomlin, 2010, 2012; DfES 2006). In the British context, the exclusion rate for Black boys in particular is nearly three times that of the average for all other pupils nationally (DfES, 2006). In fact the 2007 GCSE results, based on pupils gaining 5+A*-C GCSEs, the criteria for high school achievement in the UK, show that Black Caribbean in particular, and African children in general remain behind other ethnic groups. Pupils of Chinese and Indian origin respectively gained 83.3% and 74.4%, Whites 59.5%, Bangladeshi 58.4%, Black African 55.6%, Pakistani 53.0% and Black Caribbean 41.7% (National Statistics/DCSF 2007). Although they still remain academically at the bottom as a group, Black Africans in 2007 for the first time have scored higher than children of Pakistani origin. Yet they still remain academically behind their white and Asian British counterparts. These scores have remained relatively stable since 2007, changing only by a few percentage points since (Mocombe and Tomlin, 2012).

Similarly in the US, black American students, whether native or immigrants from Africa and the Caribbean, on average score disproportionately poorly on standardized tests compared to their white and Asian counterparts. Nationally, just 12% of African-American 4th graders have reached proficient or advanced reading levels, while 61% have yet to reach the basic level. In a national assessment of student reading ability, black children scored 16% below white children. Forty-six percent of black adults, compared with 14% of white adults, scored in the lowest category of the National Adult Literacy survey. The results indicate that blacks have more limited skills in processing information from articles, books, tables, charts, and graphs compared with their white

counterparts (Gordon, 2006, p. 32). More perplexing, the students who lose the most ground are the higher-achieving black children. “As black students move through elementary and middle school...the test-score gaps that separate them from their better-performing white counterparts grow fastest among the most able students and the most slowly for those who start out with below-average academic skills” (Viadero, 2008, p. 1).

A plethora of studies and theories explain this underperformance of black pupils, particularly black boys in both the US and UK contexts. These range from institutional racism (Rampton 1981; Macpherson 1999) and peer group pressure (Ogbu, 1986; Sewell 1997; 2000), to more sophisticated models of the wider inequalities in society, practiced in schools by teachers who exclude pupils on the basis of their race, class and gender and the intersection of these components (Wright et al. 2000; Majors 2001; Archer & Francis 2007). Within the last 40 years, postmodern/poststructural theories of intersectionality and John Ogbu’s (1986) burden of acting white hypothesis have dominated both the US and UK contexts not only in the scholarly journals, but also public policy initiatives, mentoring programs, standardization of curriculum, parent involvement, and after-school programmings, adopted to avoid the stigma of acting white high attaining black students perceive among their black peers. Yet, in spite of these efforts, the achievement gap persists and widens among adolescents in both the US and UK contexts. Indicating that blacks 1) have more limited skills in processing information from articles, books, tables, charts, and graphs compared with their white counterparts; 2) and the students who lose the most ground are the higher-achieving black children (Gordon, 2006; Tyson et al, 2005; Ainsworth-Darnell and Downey, 1998, 2002; Cook and Ludwig 1998; Wilson, 1998; Farkas et al, 2002; Steele, 1997; Ogbu, 1991). In the present article, the authors

offer an alternative structural explanation and framework, based on the shift of production in the two capitalist societies, within which researchers ought to begin to frame and study the black-white achievement gap that persists in the US and UK in spite of efforts in place to resolve the issue. This is a structural argument which seeks to demonstrate the impact that racial identity construction, racism and racial segregation within capitalist structural processes or relations of production, deagriculturalization, industrialization, deindustrialization, globalization, and the US postindustrial (consumer) mode of production and its media control have on influencing black youth in the US and UK to academically underachieve vis-à-vis their white and Asian counterparts.

Theory and Method

The black-white test score gap is an empirical problematic that dates back to the 1940s. On many standardized tests the mean scores of black students on average are typically at least 1 standard deviation below the mean scores of white students. The test scores indicate that on average black American students have more limited skills in comprehending, processing, and analyzing information from articles, books, tables, charts, and graphs compared to their white and Asian counterparts. As Roland G. Fryer Jr. and Steven D. Levitt (2004) point out, “a wide variety of possible explanations for the test-score gap have been put forth. These explanations include differences in genetic make-up, differences in family structure and poverty, differences in school quality, racial bias in testing or teachers’ perceptions, and differences in culture, socialization, or behavior. The appropriate public policy choice (if any) to address the test score gap depends critically on the underlying source of the gap” (447). Contemporarily, the public policy choices of multicultural education, multiple modes of teaching/intelligences,

standardization of curriculum, mentoring, and after-school programs of school boards throughout the nation have been implemented in light of the predominance and influence of post-structural and postmodern theories on education, and John Ogbu's cultural, socialization, or behavior explanation, "burden of acting white" (Wilson, 1998; Erevelles, 2000; Fryer and Levitt, 2004; Tyson et al, 2005; Mocombe and Tomlin, 2010, 2012; Wright, 2013).

Postmodern and post-structural theories on education highlight education as a "discursive space that involves asymmetrical relations of power where both dominant and subordinate groups are engaged in struggles over the production, legitimation, and circulation of particular forms of meaning and experience (Erevelles, 2000: 30). As such, postmodern and post-structural theorists "examine the discursive practices by which student subjectivity (as intersectionally constructed by race, class, gender, and sexuality) is produced, regulated, and even resisted within the social context of schooling in postindustrial times" (Erevelles, 2000: 25). Academic underachievement from this perspective is viewed as the by-product of marginalization, domination, and alienation based on identity and learning styles/multiple intelligences. The notion is that different groups, ethnic, racial, and gender, have different learning styles, and the rational/logical basis of the schooling systems in postindustrial economies marginalize and discriminate against different groups and their learning styles, i.e., tactile, emotive, etc., learners in favor of white middle class standards and auditory and visual learners. Be that as it may, pedagogically, the public policy choice of postmodern and post-structural theorists are for the most part multicultural education and multiple modes of learning and teaching, which addresses the intersection and diversity of subjective positions and multiple intelligences

found among students in schools (Mocombe and Tomlin, 2012; Wright, 2013).

John Ogbu's burden of acting white hypothesis suggests that African American students academically underachieve for fear of being labeled "acting white" by their black peers. Academic success is viewed as the status marker of whites. Therefore, many African American students conceal their academic prowess for fear of marginalization and alienation from their black peers. To offset this burden of acting white, educators and school administrators throughout the nation devise mentoring programs that pair African American students with educated black professionals (Gordon, 2006; Tyson et al, 2005; Ainsworth-Darnell and Downey, 1998, 2002; Cook and Ludwig 1998; Wilson, 1998; Farkas et al, 2002; Steele, 1997; Ogbu, 1991).

Contemporarily, postmodern and post-structural logic of marginalization and alienation in school based on ability and subjective positions coupled with John Ogbu's hypothesis which suggests that black Americans intentionally academically underachieve vis-à-vis their white and Asian counterparts for fear of being labeled "acting white" by their black peers who view academic achievement as the status marker of whites dominate how teachers, educators, and school administrators address the black/white academic achievement gap. Teachers, educators, and school administrators throughout the nation prescribe multicultural education, multiple learning and teaching styles, standardization of curriculum, mentoring, and after-school programs to combat the marginalization, alienation, and affects of the burden of acting white on black adolescents. The notion behind these policy prescriptions is based on the assumption that the representation of educated blacks in school curriculums through mentoring programs and multicultural curriculum materials coupled with kinesthetic pedagogical approaches

to teaching black American students, the standardization of curricula, and added assistances, head-start and after-school programs, offered to blacks will increase their academic achievement vis-à-vis their white and Asian counterparts.

More than 40 years have passed since postmodernism and post-structuralism made identity politics fashionable, and Fordham and Ogbu initially gave credence to the “burden of Acting white” and the “oppositional peer culture” hypothesis in their essay “Black Students’ School Success: Coping with the “Burden of Acting White” (1986). Although social scientists have produced very little empirical evidence to substantiate either the correlation between identity politics and academic achievement on standardized tests or the validity for a “burden of acting white,” there is still strong public support and belief in their assertions for explaining the academic underachievement of black students and the black/white achievement gap. In fact, as Tyson et al further observed in their assessment of eight North Carolina secondary public schools, “the acting white theory significantly influences how schools address problems related to black underachievement, which, in turn, helps to determine whether these solutions ultimately can be effective” (2005, p. 582). Schools and school boards have introduced multicultural education, head start programs, mentoring and counseling programs, and black achievement in education has been stressed above all things else in the school curriculum in order to combat the affects of the burden-of-acting-white. Yet in spite of these efforts, blacks in the United States and United Kingdom on average score disproportionately poorly on standardized tests compared to their white counterparts. blacks have more limited skills in processing information from articles, books, tables, charts, and graphs compared with their white counterparts (Gordon, 2006; Mocombe and

Tomlin, 2010, 2012; Wright, 2013).

Given this continual reliance on either identity politics or a burden of acting white hypothesis to explain the academic underachievement of black students and the black-white achievement gap in the face of persistent black academic underachievement on standardized tests, further assessment of this hypothesis is critical to understanding and addressing the problem. Neither approach can adequately account for the comprehension problems many blacks encounter on standardized tests demonstrated by test score data (Mocombe, 2005, Wilson, 1998). Furthermore, although acting white can explain why black adolescent youth are placing less effort to succeed academically, it does not explain why blacks score poorly on the vocabulary section of a standardized test, for example. Just the same, multicultural education, which was adopted to overcome sexual, racial, and gender oppression in schools also fail to explain why blacks persistently academically underachieve vis-à-vis their white and Asian counterparts in spite of the infusion of multicultural education and multiple modalities in school pedagogies and curricula (Gordon, 2006; Tyson et al, 2005; Ainsworth-Darnell and Downey, 1998, 2002; Cook and Ludwig 1998; Wilson, 1998; Farkas et al, 2002; Steele, 1997; Ogbu, 1991). Given the failure of the aforementioned outlooks and Ogbu's theory to account for how and why it is that test score data indicate blacks have problems comprehending, processing, and analyzing items on standardized tests vis-à-vis their white counterparts, a more appropriate framework is required to understanding the black/white academic achievement gap.

Against contemporary reliance on either postmodern theories that focus on how student subjectivities as constructed by race, sexual identity, age, etc., challenge the class basis of contemporary schooling, or Ogbu's burden of acting white hypothesis as

explanatory frameworks for understanding the black/white academic achievement gap in the United States (US) and United Kingdom (UK), we offer Paul C. Mocombe's structural thesis, a mismatch of linguistic structure and social class function. This is a structural framework which seeks to highlight the relational class framework within which black racial-class identity developed, and how and why this class structure is the phenomenal basis for the epiphenomenon, the black/white academic achievement gap. According to Paul C. Mocombe (2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2012), the black/white academic achievement gap in the US and UK is grounded in "a mismatch of linguistic structure and social class function," which is an epiphenomenon of the historical development of racial identity construction, racism, and racial segregation within the power dynamics and processes of capitalist social structure of class and racial inequality. For Mocombe, what identity politics and oppositional culture theorists do is to culturalize the practices which he sees as emerging out of capitalist structural reproduction and differentiation. In their culturalization of structural differentiation, however, they under analyze how the totality of poor material conditions and practices give rise to the black/white academic achievement gap. For example, contemporarily, Mocombe posits that America's corporate transition from an industrial base to a postindustrial, financialized service economy beginning in the 1970s positioned black American underclass ideology and language, constituted as hip-hop culture, as a viable means for black American youth to achieve economic gain, status, and upward economic mobility in the society over education. That is, as a result of the outsourcing (deindustrialization) of industrial work to semi-periphery nations, finance corporate capital in the US beginning in the 1970s converted the American economy to a predominantly service-

oriented postindustrial economy (Bell, 1976; Harvey, 1989; Giddens, 1990; Jameson, 1991; Arrighi, 1994; Sklair, 2001; Kellner, 2001). Corporate capital began investing in entertainment and other service industries where the language, inner-city street, entertainment, and athletic culture of black America, which are the product of previous modes of production, i.e., agricultural and industrial, became both a commodity for sale in the global social relations of production and the means to economic gain for the black poor in the US's new service-oriented postindustrial economy. Be that as it may, efforts to succeed academically among black American students paled in comparison to their efforts to succeed as hustlers, athletes, and entertainers who became agents of socialization or the bearers of ideological and linguistic domination for black youth in the US and around the world given the predominance of the US media as a global industrial complex.

Globally, Mocombe (2012) further suggests, this action plays out in the United Kingdom (UK), for example, via globalizing forces under American hegemony. Given the rise of globalization under American hegemony and the rise of America's postindustrial economy, which focuses on entertainment and service industries, black American athletes and entertainers given their visibility in the media and wealth have become the bearers of ideological and linguistic domination for black youth cultures around the globe. Thus, in postindustrial economies like the UK black youth attempt to achieve economic status and upward economic mobility in the society by emulating the hip-hop ideologies and language of black American hustlers, athletes, and entertainers who have become global stars in the global social relations of production. Hence, just as in the case of black America, many blacks in the UK, especially those from the

Caribbean islands, are underachieving vis-à-vis whites and Asians due to what Paul C. Mocombe (2005, 2007, 2009, 2010) refers to as “a mismatch of linguistic structure and social class function” among blacks in the UK whose identification with and celebration of their creole patois, black British Talk (BBT) (Carol Tomlin’s term), and underclass hip hop culture of black Americans are perpetually underachieving vis-à-vis their white and Asian counterparts. That is, early on in their academic careers the linguistic structure (BBT) of black Caribbean pupils in the UK lead to their underachievement because of the syntactical and grammatical differences between their linguistic structure, black British Talk, and that of Standard British English utilized in the schools. Later on as they are immersed in the school linguistic structure and acquire the ability to code switch, the identification of black Caribbean pupils with the street, entertainment, and athletic culture of the black British and American underclasses lead to underachievement, as their focus is on achieving economic gain not via an education, but through the street, entertainment, and athletic industries of the UK and US’s postindustrial economies, which positions black underclass language patterns, ideology, and practices as viable means to status and upward mobility in the two societies and globally.

Discussion

Paul C. Mocombe’s (2005, 2007, 2009, 2010) “mismatch of linguistic structure and social (class) function” hypothesis posits that black American and Black British Caribbean youths, contemporarily, 1) have more limited skills in processing information from articles, books, tables, charts, and graphs compared with their white counterparts; 2) and the students who lose the most ground vis-à-vis their white and Asian counterparts are the higher-achieving black children because early on in their academic careers the

dominant poor status group, “black American underclass,” who have become the bearers of ideological and linguistic domination for black youth the world over, created by the social relations of capitalism in the US, produces and perpetuates a sociolinguistic status group that reinforces a linguistic structure (Black/African American English Vernacular—BEV or AAEV), which linguistically and functionally renders its young social actors impotent in classrooms where the structure of Standard English is taught. Thus early on (k-5th grade) in their academic careers, many black American inner city youth struggle in the classroom and on standardize test because individually they are linguistically and grammatically having a problem with comprehension, i.e., “a mismatch in linguistic structure,” grounded in their (Black or African American English Vernacular) speech patterns (Mocombe, 2007, 2009, 2010). In other words, there is a phonological, morphosyntactical, and semantical mismatch between BEV/AAEV and the Standard English (SE) utilized in schools (Kamhi, 1996; Johnson, 2005; Mocombe, 2010). Given the segregation and poverty of blacks growing up in the inner-cities of America, they acquire the systemicity of Black English and early on in their academic careers lack the linguistic flexibility to switch between BEV/AAEV and SE when they take standardize tests. As a result, many black youth have a problem decoding and understanding phrases and sentences on standardize tests (Mocombe and Tomlin, 2010, 2012).

Later on in their academic careers as these youth become adolescents and acquire the linguistic flexibility to code switch between BEV/AAEV and SE, they are further disadvantaged by the social class functions (a mismatch of function of the language) this status group, black American underclass, reinforces against those of middle class black

and white America. That is, success or economic gain and upward mobility amongst this “black underclass,” who speak BEV/AAEV, is not measured by status obtained through education as in the case of black and white American bourgeois middle class standards; on the contrary, athletics, music, and other activities not “associated” with educational attainment serve as the means to success, economic gain, and upward economic mobility in the US’s postindustrial society. Thus effort in school in general suffers, and as a result test scores and grades progressively get lower. Grades and test scores are not only low for those who grow-up in poor-inner cities, it appears to have also increased as academic achievement and/ or social-economic status (SES) rises. “In other words, higher academic achievement and higher social class status are not associated with smaller but rather greater differences in academic achievement” (Gordon, 2006: 25).

It is this epiphenomenon, “mismatch of linguistic social class function,” of the “mismatch of linguistic structure” many scholars (Ogbu, 1974, 1990, 1991; Coleman, 1988) inappropriately label “the burden of acting white” amongst black adolescents, who as they get older turn away from, or place less effort on education, not because they feel it is for whites, but due to the fact that they have rationalized other racialized (i.e., sports, music, pimping, selling drugs, etc.) means, financed by the upper-class of owners and high-level executives, to economic gain for its own sake other than status obtained through education (Mocombe, 2005, 2007, 2011; Mocombe and Tomlin, 2010, 2012). In America’s postindustrial economy, black American youth look to athletes, entertainers, players, gangsters, etc., many of whom are from the black underclass, as role models over professionals in fields that require an education. Historically, this is a result of their racial relations to the mode of production in America Mocombe concludes.

In agricultural slavery beginning in the early eighteenth century, black America was constituted as a racial caste in class dominated by the social class language game of the black bourgeoisie (E. Franklin Frazier's term), the best of the house servants, artisans, and free blacks from the North, which discriminated against the practical consciousness and linguistic system (social class language games) of field slaves and newly arrived Africans who constituted the black underclass. The deagriculturalization of the American South and industrialization of the northern states coupled with black American migration to the north from the mid-1800s to about the mid-1950s, gave rise to the continual racial-class separation between this urban, educated, and professional class of house slaves and blacks from the north whose practical consciousness and linguistic system mirrored that of middle class whites, and a black underclass of former agricultural workers seeking, like their black bourgeois counterparts, to be bourgeois, i.e., economic gain, status, and upward economic mobility, through education and industrial work in Northern cities. However, racial discrimination coupled with suburbanization and the deindustrialization, or outsourcing of industrial work to Third World countries, of northern cities left the majority of blacks as part of the poor black underclass with limited occupational and educational opportunities. Consequently, contemporarily, America's transition from an industrial base to a postindustrial, financialized service, economy beginning in the 1970s positioned black American underclass ideology and language, hip-hop culture, as a viable means for black American youth to achieve economic gain, status, and upward economic mobility in the society over education. That is, finance capital in the US beginning in the 1970s began investing in entertainment and other service industries where the segregated inner-city language, entertainment, and athletic culture of black America became both a

commodity and the means to economic gain for the black poor in America's postindustrial economy, which subsequently outsourced its industrial work to semi-periphery nations thereby blighting the inner-city communities.

Blacks, many of whom migrated to the northern cities from the agricultural south looking for industrial work in the north, became concentrated in blighted communities where work began to disappear, schools were underfunded, and poverty and crime increased due to deindustrialization and suburbanization of northern cities (Wilson, 1993). The black migrants, which migrated North with their BEV/AAEV from the agricultural South following the Civil War and later, became segregated sociolinguistic underclass communities, ghettos, of unemployed laborers looking to illegal, athletic, and entertainment activities (running numbers, pimping, prostitution, drug dealing, robbing, participating in sports, music, etc.) for economic success, status, and upward mobility. Educated in the poorly funded schools of the urban ghettos, given the process of deindustrialization and the flight of capital to the suburbs and overseas, with no work prospects, many black Americans became part of a permanent *social class language game*, AAEV speaking and poorly educated underclass looking to other activities for economic gain, status, and upward economic mobility. Those who were educated became a part of the Standard-English-speaking black middle class of professionals, i.e., teachers, doctors, lawyers, etc. (the black bourgeoisie), living in the suburbs, while the uneducated or poorly educated constituted the black underclass of the urban ghettos. Beginning in the late 1980s, finance capital, in order to avoid the oppositional culture to poverty, racism, and classism found among the black underclass, began commodifying and distributing (via the media industrial complex) the underclass black practices for

entertainment in the emerging postindustrial service economy of the US over the ideology and language of the black bourgeoisie. Be that as it may, efforts to succeed academically among black Americans, which constituted the ideology and language of the black bourgeoisie, paled in comparison to their efforts to succeed as speakers of Black English, athletes, “gangstas”, “playas”, and entertainers, which became the ideology and language of the black underclass living in the inner-cities of America. Authentic black American identity became synonymous with black underclass hip-hop ideology and language as financed by the upper-class of owners and high-level executives of the entertainment industry over the social class language game of the black educated middle class.

Hence, contemporarily, in America’s postindustrial service economy where multiculturalism, language, and communication skills, pedagogically taught through process approaches to learning, multicultural education, and cooperative group works in school, are keys to succeeding in the postindustrial service labor market, blacks, paradoxically, have an advantage and disadvantage. On the one hand, their linguistic structure growing up in inner-cities are influenced by the black American underclass who in conjunction with the upper-class of owners and high-level executives have positioned athletics and the entertainment industries as the social functions (professions) best served by their linguistic structure in the service economy of the US, which subsequently leads to economic gain, status, and upward social mobility for blacks in the society. This is advantageous because it becomes an authentic black identity by which black American youth can participate in the fabric of the postindustrial social structure. On the other hand, their linguistic structure inhibits them from succeeding academically given the

mismatch between their linguistic structure and the function it serves in the postindustrial labor market of the US, and that of Standard English and the function of school as a medium to economic gain, status, and upward social mobility for blacks in the society.

School for many black Americans, in other words, is simply a place for honing their athletic and entertainment skills and hip-hop culture, which they can subsequently profit from in the American postindustrial service economy. Many blacks in America enter school speaking Black or African American English Vernacular. Their linguistic structure in schooling in postindustrial education, which values the exchange of cultural facts as commodities for the postindustrial economy, is celebrated along with their music and athletics under the umbrella of multicultural education. Therefore, no, or very few, remedial courses are offered to teach them Standard English, which initially leads to poor test scores on standardized tests because the phonology, morphology, and syntax, or the way its expressions are put together to form sentences, of BEV/AAEV juxtaposed against that of Standard English (SE) prevents many black Americans early on in their academic careers from grasping the meaning or semantics of phrases and contents of standardized tests, which are written in Standard English. As blacks matriculate through the school system, with their emphasis of professionally succeeding in music and athletics, those who acquire the systemicity of Standard English and succeed academically become part of the black professional class celebrating the underclass culture, from whence they came, of those who do not make it and therefore dropout of school constituting the black underclass of poorly educated and unemployed social actors looking to the entertainment industry (which celebrates their conditions as a commodity for the labor market) and the

streets as their only viable means to economic gain, status, and upward social mobility in blighted inner-city communities.

Globally this action plays out in the UK, for example, via globalizing forces and the media industrial complex under American hegemony. Given the rise of globalization under American hegemony and the rise of America's postindustrial economy, which focuses on entertainment and service industries, black American athletes and entertainers have become the bearers of ideological and linguistic domination for black youth culture around the globe. Thus, in postindustrial economies like the UK black British youth attempt to achieve economic status and upward economic mobility in the society by emulating the language and behavioral patterns of black American athletes and entertainers who, paradoxically, have become global stars and pariahs in the global social relations of production. So it is in the historical and structural evolution of the social relations of production of the capitalist world-system under American hegemony that the black/white achievement gap in America, the United Kingdom, and globally for that matter must be understood. Black American underclass practices have been commodified by the upper-class of owners and high-level executives in the US for capital accumulation in their post-industrial economies (entertainment and athletics). In doing so, they have positioned black underclass ideology and language as the basis for social integration in their society and the world, thereby perpetuating the underachievement of blacks, which began in slavery in the Americas.

Thus, in postindustrial economies like the UK and other countries around the globe black youth attempt to achieve economic status and upward economic mobility in the society by emulating the language and social actions of black American athletes and

entertainers who have become global stars in the global social relations of production. Be that as it may, the social division of labor in globalization is dominated around images of whites as your upper-class of owners and high-level executives, Asians as doctors and engineers, and blacks as hustlers, athletes, and entertainers, which is ever-increasingly leading to the global academic underachievement of black youth seeking to achieve economic gain, status, and upward mobility as hustlers, entertainers, and athletes via the entertainment industry of postindustrial economies in the likes of the US and the UK.

Thus like the black Americans in the US, the underachievement of black British Caribbean youth in the UK is tied to “a mismatch of linguistic structure and social class function,” which is an epiphenomenon of the intersection between race and racism in relation to the global capitalist social structure of class inequality. Following slavery in the Caribbean, most ex-slaves participated in local affairs only marginally more than East Indians. In the French and British Caribbean, for instance, whites controlled the local legislature with a handful of men of color who were ideologically and linguistically interpellated and embourgeoised as middle class administrators of the colonial system. The twentieth and twenty-first centuries witnessed a shift in the power in the Caribbean following slavery and decolonization, however. Black and other people of color increased their influence in government and other institutions under the middle class or European influences (embourgeoisement) of the handful of men of color who once ruled with whites. Although, the relationship between blacks and whites changed, the continued separation of the black majority from the white and brown minorities meant the poor, who were mainly blacks, developed their own underclass patterns of behavior and beliefs, ideologies and linguistic structures, which became juxtaposed against the middle class

and European identities, acquired through formal schooling, of those in power, the handful of men of color who once ruled with whites, following slavery, decolonization, and deagriculturalization.

Education in the Caribbean, for the most part continued to be an elite privilege for the handful of men of color who once ruled with whites. The poor constituted a poorly educated underclass living either in the overcrowded Caribbean capital cities or small farm towns, looking to immigrate to the homeland of their former colonial masters for work and better economic opportunities. The well-to-do, for the most part, paid for private, parochial education; upon completion, they subsequently sent their children abroad for secondary schooling. In many instances, these privilege elites returned back to the islands where they assumed administrative and bureaucratic roles (they became an administrative bourgeoisie) in government or the private sector. Hence Caribbean society, as well as its immigration pattern overseas, would become juxtaposed between, or against, the poorly educated underclass speakers of Creole or Caribbean patois and an embourgeoisied middle class of non-white administrators who, contemporarily, served the same purpose as the handful of colored persons who administered the islands with whites during the colonial period.

Be that as it may, upon immigration to places like the UK beginning in the 1940s, racism in the labor, housing, and educational markets, which paralleled what happened to the black American in the US, segregated the majority of the black Caribbean immigrants seeking to achieve the embourgeoisement of their former colonial masters in urban ghettos in places like Brixton, South London, and Shepard's Bush. What developed then was a caste, color, and class system in places like the UK in which the black

immigrants sought the embourgeoisement of their former colonial masters through education in segregated poor black Caribbean communities where work was beginning to disappear to the suburbs or overseas, suburbanization and deindustrialization respectively, while simultaneously reproducing a class system in which those who did not attain the middle class ideology and language of the former colonial masters constituted an underclass of poorly educated, unemployed, and patois speaking blacks looking to hustling, the entertainment industry, and sports (Football, i.e., soccer in particular) as viable means to status and upward economic mobility in the UK's emerging postindustrial economy.

Subsequently, influenced by the success of the black American underclass, who positioned, with the help of corporate finance capital, their underclass culture as viable means to economic gain, status, and upward mobility in America and the global marketplaces' postindustrial economies, black British Caribbean youth beginning around the 1980s sought to do the same as they positioned black British Talk and underclass practices, hustling, participating in sports and the entertainment industry, dance hall culture, as means to status in Britain and the global marketplace over and against the educational orientation of the black British and American middle classes of earlier generations who did not perceive their embourgeoisement as the status markers of whites. This has led to the academic underachievement of black British youth due to two factors: 1) a mismatch of linguistic structure (phonological, morphosyntactical, and semantical mismatch between black British Talk and Standard British English) when they initially enter school; 2) and later on due to a mismatch of linguistic social class function as they do not apply themselves to academically achieve because of the disconnect between their

linguistic structure (black British Talk) and economic success for blacks in the UK and global marketplaces' postindustrial economies where black (British and American) underclass language structures and ideological practices have been commodified by corporate capital for capital accumulation and as a means to economic gain, status, and social mobility for the black poor.

In other words, black British Caribbean youth when they initially enter school underachieve due to a phonological, morphosyntactical, and semantical mismatch between black British talk and Standard British English, which leads to comprehension problems on standardize tests such as the GCSE (Tomlin and Bryan, 2010). Later on as they matriculate through school and acquire the Standard British English of the school system, which allows them the linguistic flexibility to code switch and better grasp the meaning of texts on standardize tests, their underachievement can be attributed to the social function of their initial linguistic structure. Globally, more blacks, of any nationality, have achieved status and upward economic mobility speaking their patois, hustling, playing sports, and entertaining than achieving academically and speaking the *lingua franca* of the power elites. As a result, blacks, especially black boys given the opportunities for girls are not widespread in hustling, sports, etc., in their adolescent years are less likely to place much effort into education as a viable means to economic gain, status, and upward mobility in a global marketplace under US hegemony, dominated by images of successful blacks as hustlers, athletes, and entertainers. Thus, blacks are paradoxically at both an advantage and disadvantage in the global marketplace which has come to define their social roles as hustlers, athletes, and entertainers. On the one hand, their linguistic structure growing up in economically segregated inner-cities are

influenced by the black American and British underclasses who in conjunction with the upper-class of owners and high-level executives have positioned athletics and the entertainment industries as the social functions best served by their linguistic structure in the service economy of the US, UK, and globally which subsequently leads to economic gain, status, and upward social mobility for blacks. On the other hand, their linguistic structure inhibits them from succeeding academically given the initial phonological, morphosyntactical, and semantical mismatch between their linguistic structure and the function it serves in the postindustrial labor market of the US, UK, etc., and that of Standard (American and British) English and the function they serve in school as a medium to economic gain, status, and upward social mobility for blacks in the society.

As in the case of black Americans, school for many black British Caribbean pupils, that is to say, is simply a place for honing their athletic and entertainment skills and hip-hop culture, which they can subsequently profit from in the postindustrial economies of the US and UK. Many blacks in America and Britain enter school speaking Black/African American English Vernacular and Black British Talk, respectively. Their linguistic structure in schooling in postindustrial education, which values the exchange of cultural facts as commodities for the postindustrial economy, is celebrated along with their music and athletic abilities under the umbrella of multicultural education. Therefore, no remedial courses are offered to teach them Standard American or British English, which initially leads to poor test scores on standardized tests because the phonology, semantics, and syntax, or the way its expressions are put together to form sentences, of BEV/AAEV and BBT juxtaposed against that of Standard English (SE) and Standard British English (SBE) prevents many blacks early on in their academic careers

from decoding and grasping the meaning or semantics of phrases and contents of standardized tests, which are written in the English curriculum of schools (Mocombe, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011). As blacks matriculate through the school system, with their emphasis of succeeding in music and athletics, and acquire the Standard English of the society which offers them linguistic flexibility and the ability to code switch between the two linguistic systems, those who make it become part of the black professional class celebrating the underclass culture, from whence they came, of those who do not make it and therefore dropout of school constituting the black underclass of poorly educated and unemployed social actors looking to the entertainment industry (which celebrates their conditions as a commodity for the labor market) and the streets as their only viable means to economic gain, status, and upward social mobility in blighted inner-city communities.

Conclusions

In sum, our argument here is that racial-class segregation vis-à-vis the structural processes, deagriculturalization, immigration, industrialization, urbanization, suburbanization, deindustrialization, and postindustrialization, involved in global capitalist relations of production of the last four-hundred years constitute the theoretical framework for understanding the emergence and persistence of the black/white academic achievement gap, which is becoming a global phenomenon as blacks lag behind many racial and ethnic groups academically. That is, the reason that blacks 1) have more limited skills in processing information from articles, books, tables, charts, and graphs compared with their white counterparts; 2) and the students who lose the most ground are the higher-achieving black children is due to two epiphenomenon of class division and social relations of production, i.e, their linguistic structure and social class functions of

the black underclasses in the US and UK , which, with the help of corporate finance capital in postindustrial economies, have become the bearers of ideological and linguistic domination for young black folks around the world. Future research must continue to focus on the relationship between the racial-class distinctions, middle and underclass identities, in black communities created by their historical relations in the capitalist mode of production, their linguistic structure, and subsequent academic achievement. In the current postindustrial economies of the US and UK, where black underclass identity has been commodified by corporate capital for capital accumulation and the means to economic gain for blacks, it would appear that the achievement gap will persist and widen as blacks place less effort in achieving academically in favor of markets, athletics, entertainment, and hustling, where they are overrepresented and more likely to achieve status, economic gain, and upward mobility in societies. As such, blacks will continue to achieve upward mobility and status in postindustrial societies like the US and UK via the aforementioned markets and business investments that they will procure as a result of their status as athletes and entertainers; however, blacks, black boys in particular, will ever-so slowly be underrepresented in professions that require an education. Future research must continue to explore this relationship between the processes associated with the global capitalist social structure of class inequality, black racial-class linguistic distinctions, and academic underachievement.

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