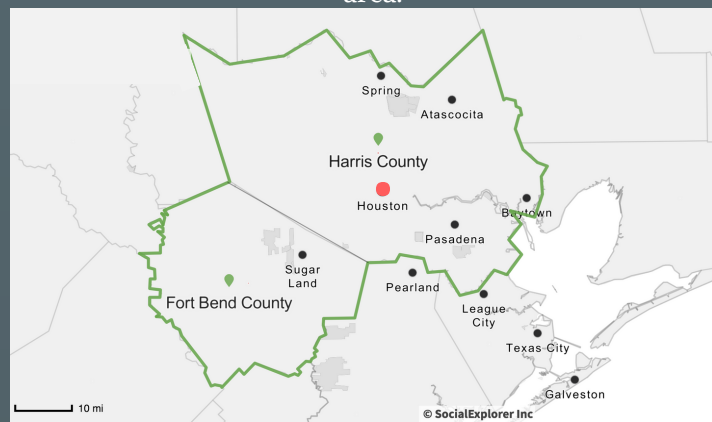


# Making Their Mark: Community Formation and Socioeconomic Mobility in Nigerian Immigrant Communities

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*How does community formation combat the challenges of the black immigrant identity/experience to promote socioeconomic mobility amongst Nigerians in the United States?*

Figure 1. Fort Bend County and Harris County, both located in southeastern Texas, geographically contain the Houston metropolitan area.



## Methods

Phase I: Secondary data and census data used to provide a snapshot of the current Nigerian/Nigerian-American population, their socioeconomic attainment and other trends.

Phase II: Subject interviews used to gain insight into the immigration, community and mobility experiences of Nigerian immigrants and Nigerian-Americans in the Houston metro area, varied by ethnic group and other social group indicators.

## Findings

The data gathered shows:

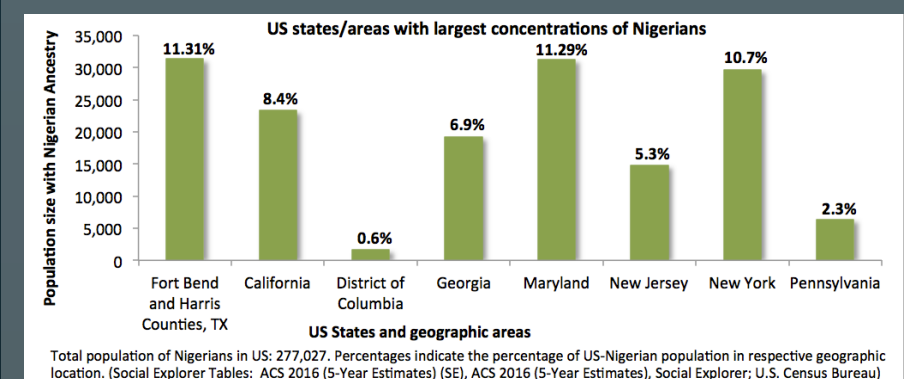


Figure 2. A concentration of Nigerians and their descendants in the Houston metropolitan area

Indicator	Native-born population	Foreign-born population	Nigerian nationality
Total Native-born population (N)	267,410,918		
Total Foreign-born population (N)		39,327,516	
<b>Labor force participation</b>			
In the labor force (%)	64.5	68.4	80.8
Professional specialty occupations (%)	33.1	27	49.4
<b>Unemployment</b>			
Unemployed (looking for work) (%)	9	8.5	8.8
<b>Self-employment</b>			
Number of self-employed (age 16+)	14,475,529	3,188,111	15,659
Rate of self-employment per 1,000 population employed	94.37	113.97	94.59

Table 2. More labor force participation rather than instances of business ownership and entrepreneurship .

Note: For Table 1, educational attainment, home ownership rates, household income and poverty rates were used as socioeconomic attainment indicators because they traditionally demonstrate an ability to generate wealth and acquire assets. For Figure 3, many community structures are informal, lacking physical location. Religious structures usually have physical locations and are very culturally significant to many Nigerians, which is why they were chosen to be plotted.

Indicator	Native-born population	Foreign-born population	Nigerian nationality
Total Native-born population (N)	267,410,918		
Total Foreign-born population (N)		39,327,516	
<b>Educational attainment</b>			
College graduate (%)	28.2	27.3	61.1
High school graduate (%)	88.7	68.1	95.7
<b>Median household incomes &amp; poverty rates</b>			
Median household incomes (USD)	50,541	46,224	61,120
Poverty rate (%)	14.8	18.9	12.5
<b>Occupied housing units (N)</b>			
Owner-occupied (%)	98,664,660	15,571,336	81,222
Renter-occupied (%)	66.6	53.5	49.5
	33.4	46.5	50.5

Table 1. Significant socioeconomic attainment within the population

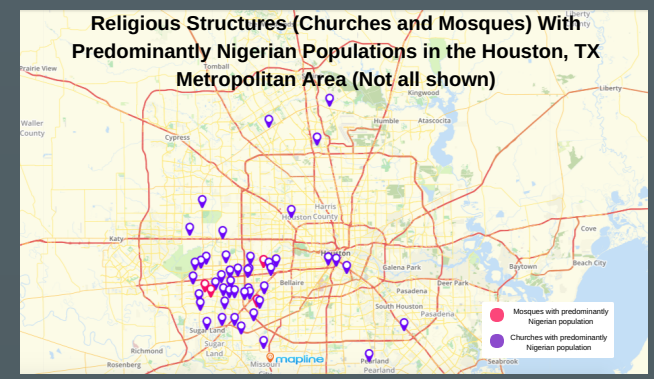


Figure 3. Tangible community formation in the form of religious structures (plotted), cultural organizations, after school programs, informal businesses, political structures, etc.

## Phase II: Subject Interviews

Goal: To examine whether support through these community structures combat integration challenges, affect individual development and provide an avenue for socioeconomic development, growth and mobility. Some sample questions:

- Who advised/influenced you to change/keep your occupation after your arrival?
- What have been some barriers to accumulating your wealth and assets (home, car, etc.)? Do you think you would have been further along if something had been different?
- Has the church/mosque/other organization helped in your adjustment, building assets, etc.? How? Did you find family/camaraderie there?

## Citations

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These findings indicate a phenomenon unique from ethnic enclaves in that these structures are intentionally for community development rather than economic development. A significant characteristic of the ethnic enclave is ethnic businesses and other economic structures erected for economic development, not for psychosocial development and support. Further examining these differences and their effects can provide a different perspective into community formation amongst immigrant groups and how this shapes identity and integration processes.