Ghanaian entrepreneurship

First-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs in the Netherlands

Yeboah, D.A.

4. Spatial and Sectorial Concentration of Ghanaian Entrepreneurs in the Netherlands

4.1 Introduction

James migrated to the Netherlands at the age of 24 in 1986. He studied Political Science at the University of Ghana in Accra, and graduated with a Bachelor's degree in 1982. Prior to his migration, he worked as the personnel manager at his father's timber contracting firm in Kumasi, Ghana. He also acted occasionally as the Chief Executive Officer of the company in the absence of his father. After his migration to the Netherlands, he lived in Amsterdam for three months. However, he had to move to The Hague, the administrative capital of the Netherlands where one of his college friends had settled. To him life was initially tough but, with the timely help of his friend and a few Ghanaians who had already settled in The Hague, he was able to secure an informal job at an abattoir located in the Transvaal neighbourhood of the city. He worked there for three years and after he had legally obtained his resident permit he quit the job. In the same year, 1993, he met a Ghanaian woman in one of the Ghanaian churches in the city, and they dated and a year later they married. After he had obtained his legal residence in 1994, he applied for many white collar jobs using his Bachelor's degree from Ghana. However, all his applications were rejected. Desperately, he took up menial jobs in the cleaning and production sector with the aim of saving money to study for a Master's degree which he thought would help him get a better job in the Netherlands or help him start his own business. To further promote his vision, he left the Netherlands for the United States of America in 1995 to pursue a two-year master degree in Business Management at the University of Washington. He returned to the Netherlands at the end of 1997 and decided to start his own business. In 1998, he started a money-remittance business in The Hague, using his family savings. This business involves James helping primarily Ghanaian immigrants in the Netherlands to send money to their relations in Ghana. In 2002, James expanded his business activity into real estate. He entered into partnerships with some real estate companies in Accra to procure plots of land for Ghanaian immigrants for house construction and also to sell already constructed houses in Accra to some Ghanaians in the Netherlands. According to James, the work experience he acquired while managing his father's business in Ghana has endowed him with the skills and qualities to manage effectively the challenges and risks associated with running his own business. This real estate business activity boomed and increased the company's profit margin. Since 2006 the company has extended its money transfer activity to England.

James' story exemplifies how young Ghanaians migrate from Ghana to the Netherlands and to other developed Western countries in search for better economic lives despite the fact that some of them might be gainfully employed back in Ghana. It also shows that migrants usually prefer to settle in one of the larger cities of the country of destination where they easily find co-ethnics who assist them to adjust to the new life and culture of that city and the country as a whole. The already settled migrants inform new migrants, for example, about how to use the city's transport facilities, help them find cheap accommodation by renting a room from a co-ethnic or other immigrant groups and, above all, assist them with finding an informal job. Finally, all this help is given to the new migrant in order to acquire a permanent residence in the Netherlands, which also enables the newcomer to take steps to realise his or her socio-economic goals of migrating to the Netherlands. Some migrants decide to set up their own businesses. The type of businesses they establish will determine on whether it is oriented around their own ethnic community or is (potentially) mainstream and externally-oriented.

This chapter discusses the spatial concentration of Ghanaians in the Netherlands and gives reasons for this concentration (section 4.2). The chapter also examines the market participation of the first-generation Ghanaian immigrants in the Netherlands (section 4.3). In this section, brief information is given about non-Western immigrants such as the Moroccans and the Turks. In the next section 4.4, I briefly discuss the self-employment activities of non-Western immigrants. In subsection 4.4.1, I discuss, more generally, the non-Western immigrant businesses in the four major cities of the Netherlands and the first-generation non-Western immigrant entrepreneurs and the sectors in which they have set up their businesses (4.4.2). In subsection 4.4.3, I specifically examine the first-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs and their business sectors. Section 4.5 covers the profile of the Ghanaian entrepreneurs, depicted mainly in data tables. After this section, I present their personal characteristics, motivation and driving force for self-employment, business characteristics , and their transnational activities. Finally the chapter is summarised and concluded in 4.6.

4.2 Spatial Concentration of Ghanaians in the four Major Cities of the Netherlands and Almere.

The majority of non-Western migrants reside in the largest cities of Amsterdam, The Hague, and Rotterdam and Utrecht. It is estimated that Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans are four to six times over-concentrated in the largest cities of the Netherlands (Musterd and Ostendorf 2007). Table 4.2.1 shows that a sizable majority of all the major immigrant groups, with the exception of Antilleans/Arubans, is concentrated in Amsterdam. This table also illustrates how non-Western immigrants in the Netherlands are moving to Almere, a relatively smaller city in the Amsterdam area with modern housing structures and facilities.

Table 4.2.1: The total population of the 4 major non-Western immigrant groups plus Ghanaians in the 4 major cities of the Netherlands + Almere in 2012.

	City				
Country of origin	**Amsterdam**	**The Hague**	**Rotterdam**	**Utrecht**	**Almere**
Ghana	11,470	2,181	947	325	1,248
Morocco	71,501	28,378	40,621	28,139	7121
Turkey	41,527	37,440	47,838	13,583	3,338
Suriname	68,588	47,046	53,157	7,678	21,559
Antilles/Aruba	11,916	12,204	22,778	2,578	4,780

Source: CBS (Statistics Netherlands [Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek] 2012) The Hague/Heerlen.

Most of the Ghanaian immigrants in the Netherlands are also known to reside in the western part of the country. Of a total registered Ghanaian population of 21,900 in the Netherlands in 2012, 72 per cent reside in the western part of the country (see CBS 2012). Amsterdam, the capital and the largest city in the Netherlands, is home to 52 per cent of the total registered Ghanaian population in the country. That is approximately 11,500 persons (ibid.). It is also stated that, in 2012, over 3,000 undocumented Ghanaian migrants were living Amsterdam (O and S 2012). It is also estimated that two-thirds of the Ghanaian migrants live in Amsterdam 'Bijlmermeer' and this makes them a recognisable and fourth largest non-Western ethnic group in this neighbourhood (ibid.). The concentration of the Ghanaian immigrants in Amsterdam might have historical causes. Ghanaian sea merchants, and a few others, who came to the Netherlands in the early 1960s settled in Amsterdam because it is strategic seaport and a cosmopolitan city.

Socially, Amsterdam became popular due to, among other things, the fame of football club Ajax, which became European and world champions in I995 (www.ajax.nl). Migrant footballers such as Finidi George and Kanu, who both came from Nigeria, were hired to play with Ajax. By virtue of the victories of its local club Ajax, Amsterdam (ibid.) became a popular name and place in the minds of potential West African migrants. Most Ghanaians back home had, in the past, equated Amsterdam with the Netherlands and felt that any Ghanaian immigrant in the Netherlands lived in Amsterdam, hence the nickname 'Amsterdammer'. The city of Amsterdam, therefore, became a very popular city in Ghana and, as a result, any potential migrant in Ghana who had to travel to the Netherlands only had Amsterdam in mind. More than anywhere else in the country, Amsterdam 'Bijlmermeer' has also seen the most rapid proliferation and concentration of Ghanaian churches. It is estimated that there are about 80 to 100 churches in the

Amsterdam South-East alone where most foreigners reside (see www.kerkhuis.nl) and, of this estimate, Ghanaian immigrants have founded about 50 per cent of these churches.

In terms of economic importance in the European Union, Amsterdam is ranked fifth after London, Paris, Frankfurt and Barcelona (European Cities Monitor 2007). It is the home of large businesses and banks such as Akzo Nobel, Heineken International, Tomtom, KPMG, Philips and ING Group. In addition, it is also a city where small businesses, including those of immigrants, are on the rise and this is evident especially in neighbourhoods with high concentrations of immigrants, such as the nineteenth-century neighbourhood De Pijp in which the Ferdinand Bolstraat is located, and increasingly in the city centre and post-war high-rise neighbourhoods (Kloosterman et al. 1999). In 2014 Amsterdam has an estimated population of over 800 thousand (www.ois.amsterdam.nl), ranks relatively high in global city networks (Sassen 1991, 2001), and also has a cosmopolitan outlook, being home to peoples of different colour and race and from different parts of the world.

By virtue of their diverse economic activities as well as the large Ghanaian immigrant population, more particularly in the Bijlmermeer, individual Ghanaians in this neighbourhood have established different kinds of retail businesses which, among other things, import Ghanaian exotic food and groceries, African music and movie dvds and cds and alcoholic beverages. There are also producer and personal service businesses, which include shipping, air travel ticketing agencies, employment agencies, barber shops, day-care centres and beauty salons.

Eddy, who has been a resident of the Amsterdam 'Bijlmermeer' for more than 17 years and a civil servant on one of the local councils in Amsterdam, gave the following explanation for the rapid increase in the Ghanaian immigrant population of Amsterdam: "*Amsterdam is the capital city and also the most densely populated city of the Netherlands. There are more job opportunities for immigrants in Amsterdam than any other city. The Amsterdam South-East Area council, for example, is said to have more immigrant employees than any other council in the Netherlands.*" Eddy says that, besides him, he knows: *"a few Ghanaians who are working at banks, lecturers, nurses, ICT companies and consultancy firms."* Eddy also claims that Amsterdam is now more tolerant with coloured people than some years before. Eddy's last remark could be an explanation to the stemming of the tide of Ghanaian immigration movement from Amsterdam. Immigrants who migrate to the Netherlands and decide to reside in Amsterdam have better chances of finding jobs which are commensurate with their human capital.

Like Amsterdam, The Hague is another city that has a large concentration of Ghanaian immigrants. In 2012, there were about 2,181 officially registered Ghanaian immigrants living in The Hague with 1,361 of them being first-generation immigrants (see Table 4.2.1. of CBS 2012). Just like many other immigrants, the Ghanaians in The Hague are concentrated in the 'Schilderswijk' and Transvaal neighbourhoods. Similarly, The Hague has high numbers of Ghanaian businesses and churches as well. The Ghanaian immigrant population in The Hague has substantially increased and now surpassed that of Rotterdam, the biggest seaport city of the Netherlands due to internal migration. Some of the early migrants moved from Amsterdam to stay in The Hague, the administrative capital of the Netherlands.

The main reason cited for their movement was security (see Choenni 2002:16). The Hague is a 'diplomat' city because that is where most of the embassies are located and it was thought that the immigration police in The Hague felt reluctant to control any-well dressed person because he or she might be a diplomat (ibid.) and therefore entitled to diplomatic immunity. The comment below is made by Dan who was an illegal Ghanaian immigrant living in Amsterdam who moved from Amsterdam to stay in The Hague. According to Dan, he moved to The Hague to escape arrest and possible repatriation to Ghana by Amsterdam's immigration police who were used to doing regular and unexpected immigration controls, which he heard these were not happening in The Hague. As stated above, Dan felt, as an illegal immigrant, that The Hague was by then a safe haven for illegal residents in the Netherlands and therefore he could not continue to the risk of staying in Amsterdam.

Between 2005 and 2008, the number of first-generation Ghanaian immigrants in The Hague decreased (see Table 4.2.2) due, possibly, to the following reasons. Internal migration from Amsterdam and elsewhere to The Hague might have ceased due to the relaxation of regular immigration controls in Amsterdam. Furthermore, Ghanaians who had initially settled in The Hague might also have moved to Amsterdam and other cities due perhaps to relatively better job prospects. Some other first-generation Ghanaians might have migrated from The Hague to other European countries because of greater opportunities. Though there is no official record, informal sources confirm that some registered Ghanaian immigrants in The Hague have moved to Great Britain. The number of Ghanaian population has risen again slightly since 2009, possibly due to family reunification and formation (see CBS 2007).

It is estimated that a little under a thousand Ghanaian immigrants live in Rotterdam and a little over 300 live in Utrecht, though these two cities are among the four largest cities in the Netherlands. Although the reasons for the small numbers of Ghanaian immigrants living in these two major cities are hard to pinpoint, it could be down to internal migration due to fewer job opportunities for Ghanaians in these cities.

Surprisingly, and as shown in the table, the total population of Ghanaians, Surinamese, and Antilleans/Arubans in Almere[4] exceeds that of Utrecht[5], which is one of the four largest cities of the Netherlands. What is more, the Ghanaian immigrant population in a small city of Almere (1,248) also exceeds that of Rotterdam (see CBS 2012). Almere was primarily intended to house the rapidly growing population of Amsterdam. In addition, quite a few urban dwellers in cities such as Amsterdam preferred to live rather in suburban settings. Almere's proximity to Amsterdam, as well as it being more modern and less densely populated, has made the city more attractive to Ghanaian immigrants and other inhabitants who want to leave congested cities such as Amsterdam. It has an elaborate network of road and rail transport which facilitates movement to other cities in the Netherlands It takes, for example, just twenty-five minutes to travel from Amsterdam to Almere by public transport. What is more, it is the most modern and youngest city of the Netherlands established only in 1976. Almere is also a new town in one of the more recent IJsselmeer Polders, but the sixth largest city in the Netherlands (Wikipedia.org/wiki/Almere). All the above-mentioned factors might have contributed to the surge in the spatial concentration of natives as well as immigrants in Almere. In 2014, Almere was estimated to have a total population of a little over 196 thousand (ibid.) Florence, a Ghanaian public servant who moved from Amsterdam to Almere, made the following remark. Florence is Ghanaian nurse working in one of the hospitals in Amsterdam. She lived in Amsterdam for six years before she finally moved to Almere about four years ago. She wanted to buy a house because she had a permanent job and her income was sufficient to do so. She could not find the type of house she wanted to buy in Amsterdam, but friends who had moved to Almere told her that there were more affordable new houses and neighbourhoods where she could find a house of her preference. Furthermore, with the availability of public transport, it would be easy for her to stay in Almere and work in Amsterdam. Florence's reasons for living in Almere may support other reasons that Ghanaians living in Amsterdam and possibly in other cities give for moving to Almere. More recently, Ghanaian immigrants are moving to smaller cities and commute daily to their work in the larger cities. Many of the houses are more modern, more spacious and semi-detached and are mainly patronised by good income earners.

Other Ghanaian immigrants have also preferred to stay in smaller cities for some personal reasons and comfort. Edward is a Ghanaian immigrant who lives in Haarlem. When he came to the Netherlands, he first lived in Amsterdam 'Bijlmermeer' for five years before he moved to Haarlem. According to him, wherever there is a concentration of Ghanaians, there are a lot of problems such as backbiting, jealousy and gossip. 'Bijlmermeer' is also a very dangerous place with a relatively high level of drug-related crime, rape, and other criminal activities: *"Such unwanted social vices do not exist in a smaller city like Haarlem"*. This respondent's remark shows that there are critical differences in social-urban features between the big cities such as Amsterdam, The Hague, and Rotterdam and, for example, smaller cities of Haarlem, Dordrecht and Leiden. Several hundreds of Ghanaian immigrants can be found in Eindhoven, Breda, Leiden, Haarlem, Nijmegen and many smaller cities (see Choenni 2002:16).

Regardless of the above information, a lot of Ghanaian immigrants in the Netherlands still prefer to live in big cities, a feature which characterises all immigrant groups. Evidently, immigrants in the Netherlands, as in most countries, tend to cluster geographically (Tesser et al. 1995). Moroccans, Turks, Surinamese and Ghanaians are concentrated in the four big municipalities of the Netherlands, Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht as shown in Table 4.2.1, with a few others spread out in the smaller cities of the Netherlands. Spatial concentrations of non-Western immigrants seem to be rising all over the country, though it is relatively larger in the three big cities of Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam. This trend can partly be explained by residential cluster preferences of non-Western immigrants as well as the residential flight of the 'white' population coupled with the low fertility rates of the latter compared with the relatively high fertility rates of the non-Western immigrants (CBS Statline, SCP Jaarrapport 2007; Beckers 2010).

Immigrant clustering occurs when ethnic minorities begin to concentrate themselves spatially in a specific neighbourhood of a city. Chain migration to a city leads to the creation of ethnic neighbourhoods. For example, newly arrived migrants may come from the same place of origin, may even share kinship ties, or may be bound by a common language. The pioneer migrants use their residences as a kind of transit camps for the new migrants from which they can take their place in the larger society as the opening story of this chapter illustrates. As this pattern and process continue, the size of the population grows. This concentration of immigrants in a specific neighbourhood was facilitated by multicultural model of cohabitation. Immigrants from diverse cultural backgrounds could live together and also were allowed and often even stimulated to develop their own sub-cultural norms, values and interest as far as they were seen as compatible with the Dutch constitution and fundamental values of Dutch society (Van Praag 1981).

Prior to migrants settling in these neighbourhoods, the homes there were usually occupied by natives of the host country who had also set up their small businesses there to cater for the needs of the residents in the neighbourhood. This phenomenon of earlier residents moving out of a neighbourhood, while being replaced by members of minorities is termed 'white flight' (Grodzins 1958; Coleman et al. 2010; Ong 2014). Spatial concentration can therefore be considered an outcome of the initial settlement patterns of immigrants in urban, poorer neighbourhoods followed by chain migration, high fertility levels, and few opportunities for upward mobility (Massey 1985).

In Amsterdam, for example, the Turkish and the Moroccan population is concentrated in the western part of the city (Bos en Lommer). Their share of the 40.7 per cent of the Kolenkit neighbourhood in the larger Bos en Lommer neighbourhood is without doubt higher than the urban average of 10.8 per cent. The Ghanaian immigrants in Amsterdam are also clustered, in their case mainly in the Amsterdam South-East, in the 'Bijlmermeer' neighbourhood. Spatial concentration of the economic underprivileged and immigrants in certain neighbourhoods in urban cities has led to social segregation and social polarisation in the USA. In the Netherlands, however, social segregation and social polarisation is relatively low due its elaborate welfare system (Ostendorf 1998; Domburg-De Rooij and Musterd 2002; Sainsbury 2005). These patterns are not just shaped by economic restructuring but also by the specific historical and institutional factors which characterise Dutch society. Housing and healthcare are, for instance, much less linked to job status in the Dutch welfare state than in the USA. This also holds for the financial requirements for obtaining a good education in the Netherlands which tend to be lower than in the USA. As a result, social contrasts have been less pronounced and opportunities for social mobility have been consequently larger.

Socio-spatial contrasts, in addition, though recently growing, still turn out to be rather moderate. Research on spatial concentrations of Turks and Surinamese has shown that these areas have become less inclined to become exclusively Turkish or Surinamese while concentrations of Moroccans in Amsterdam have become more distinctively Moroccan, even though the share of Moroccans is not increasing substantially (Musterd and De Vos 2007). Furthermore, state intervention in the form of social mixing as well as social integration programmes in the neighbourhoods, with a focus on ethnic minorities, also slows down any social segregation and social polarisation.

The concentration of immigrants in specific zones of the cities is a mixed blessing. Living in an ethnic enclave hampers the economic development of recent immigrants by decreasing the rate of acquisition of host-country specific human capital (Chiswick 1991; Lazear 1999). According to theories which emphasise social networks effects, living in an ethnic enclave may hinder or promote earnings of immigrants depending on the nature of the spill-over of information (e.g. Portes 1998; Bertrand et al. 2000) and social norms in the ethnic community (Borjas 1995). Some scholars argue, for example, that the concentration of immigrant businesses in a specific neighbourhood provides employees from the immigrant group (Portes 1995; Kloosterman and Rath 2003; Musterd 2011). In addition, immigrant businesses provide informal job-training and apprenticeships (Portes and Zhou 1992; see Musterd 2011). The spatial concentration of these immigrant groups in specific neighbourhoods of cities such as in Amsterdam enables them to establish hometown associations and religious bodies to cater for some urgent socio-economic needs of their co-ethnics such as housing and employment. In other words, the concentration of these immigrants in these neighbourhoods helps and unites them so that they can create support structures, based on them being in close mutual proximity to each other, so that they can tackle some of their socio-economic problems which cannot be supported by the State.

The spatial concentration of immigrants in a neighbourhood,however, segregates these people from the native population. Most of the first-generation immigrants from Ghana, Morocco and Turkey, for example, usually communicate in their own native languages with their co-ethnics, thus hindering socio-cultural integration of these immigrant groups. Even though levels of concentration and segregation are comparatively low in the Netherlands, people still appear to have serious concerns about the lack of integration among migrants in the Netherlands mainstream society (Musterd 2005; Musterd, Murie and Kesteloot 2006).

Socio-cultural integration reflects interpersonal relations with the native Dutch population and it involves the extent of cultural, attitudinal and behaviour changes of these groups with the host society (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000; Dagevos 2001; Veenman 1995; see Rusinovic 2006; Beckers and Blumberg 2013). These mainly first-generation immigrants tend to distance themselves from mainstream Dutch culture and also have poor knowledge and command of the Dutch language. This trend leads to the concentration of disadvantaged individuals and poverty (see Beckers 2010), rising tension between the various population groups, little evidence of social cohesion, social network and social support to searching for employment opportunities. Hence, in specific urban neighbourhoods, there is a combination of high levels of unemployment and criminality, low levels of educational attainment and sometimes also a somewhat derelict physical environment (see Tesser et al. 1995; Musterd and Ostendorf 2000; see Musterd 2011).

In his analysis and comparison of the different average sizes of apartments and room spaces of 'white' and immigrant neighbourhoods respectively built before and after 1996 Beckers (see 2010: 27) concludes that those in the 'white' neighbourhoods are much larger than those in the immigrant neighbourhoods. This leaves them with less space considering the fact that most of the non-Western immigrants tend to have larger households and this can lead to overcrowding. Beckers (ibid.) also concludes that there is low patronage as regards home purchases in the immigrant neighbourhoods. This can most likely be explained by lower mean income levels of non-Western groups, especially the first generation and this, in turn, is the most likely explanation why most members of this group reside in flats rather than other forms of housing (detached/semi-detached housing).

In addition to the benefits which accrue from the spatial concentration of immigrants in a specific neighbourhood and which are generated by the immigrants themselves, municipal governments in the Netherlands are able to make policies that facilitate both socio-cultural and structural integration (Vermeulen and Penninx 1994, 2000). In a newspaper article published in *NRC Handelsblad* more than a decade ago, the Dutch economist Van der Zwan was quite pessimistic with regard to the socio-cultural integration of Turks and Moroccans. He claimed that two-thirds of them were not well integrated socially or culturally and were quite distant from the Dutch culture, despite the fact these immigrants had settled in the Netherlands for more than half a century and almost all their offspring were/are born there. Van der Zwan also added that many of these people were exposed to the 'temptations of Western society (such as alcohol and drugs) without possessing the behavioural control mechanisms of that society' (Musterd 2003: 634).

This deviant behaviour is relatively higher among young Moroccans as reflected in higher crime rates (Engbersen et al. 2007). The gap in socio-cultural integration of immigrants from non-Western countries such as Morocco, Turkey and Ghana among others could be explained by the lack of Dutch language skills of most first-generation immigrants. To deal with this, the Dutch government introduced a targeted integration policyin 2006. The implementation of this integration policy has been delegated to the municipalities which have launched integration projects, mainly focused on learning the Dutch language, run by local centres. In the Hague, , for example, the running of such a social integration project (*inburgeringstraject*) is housed in a building on Calandstraat which adjoins both the Transvaal and ‘Schilderwijk’ neighbourhoods where the highest concentrations of non-Western immigrants in the city can be found. In September 2011, some eight hundred migrants, who were living on welfare benefits had to enrol in this integration project or otherwise would have lost the right to these benefits (www.nu.nl).

Table 4.2.2: Ghanaian population (first-generation male and female) in some selected cities of the Netherlands, 2005-2011

Year	Total	City									
		The Netherlands		Amsterdam		The Hague		Almere		Rotterdam	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
2005	11,977	6,195	5,782	3,287	3,245	789	725	292	248	332	294
2006	12,223	6,168	6,055	3,253	3,409	775	726	307	268	304	292
2007	12,102	6,015	6,087	3,154	3,398	710	687	299	290	292	275
2008	11,907	5,905	6,002	3,061	3,351	660	638	308	298	297	264
2009	12,159	5,991	6,168	3,115	3,436	659	646	316	320	302	270
2010	12,988	6,453	6,535	3,452	3,720	685	673	338	339	299	281
2011	13,254	6,525	6,729	3,523	3,842	674	687	354	343	305	283

Source: Extract from CBS/ Statline, The Hague/Heerlen: 31-07-2012.

4.3 Labour Market Participation of the First-generation Ghanaian Immigrants

This section provides a brief overview of employment levels of non-Western migrants. Employment levels mean the numbers and the rate of participation in the job market. This definition includes any form of gainful employment both ‘blue’ collar and ‘white’ collar jobs and self-employment as well but excludes any informal economic activity. The self-employment activities of the first-generation Ghanaians are discussed later in the chapter.

We firstly describe the wage employment levels of the non-Western immigrants in the Netherlands including Ghanaians. Non-Western immigrants including Ghanaians are the worst positioned in the labour market of the Netherlands. In other words, the rate of unemployment among non-Western migrants in the Netherlands is higher than the natives and much higher in times of economic recession (CBS 2012).

Since 2008, the Netherlands has undergone a new wave of recession and non-Western migrants have their labour market position adversely affected. This development is characterised by ups and downs, suggesting that the labour market position of the non-Western immigrants is highly sensitive to swings in the economic cycle (see Beckers 2010; see CBS 2012; Kloosterman 2013). In 2012, the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics investigated the wage employment situation among the four major non-Western migrants in the Netherlands (Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese, and Antilleans). The unemployment rate among the Moroccans turned out to be the highest at 20 per cent, followed by Turks and Antilleans each at 15 per cent (CBS 2012).

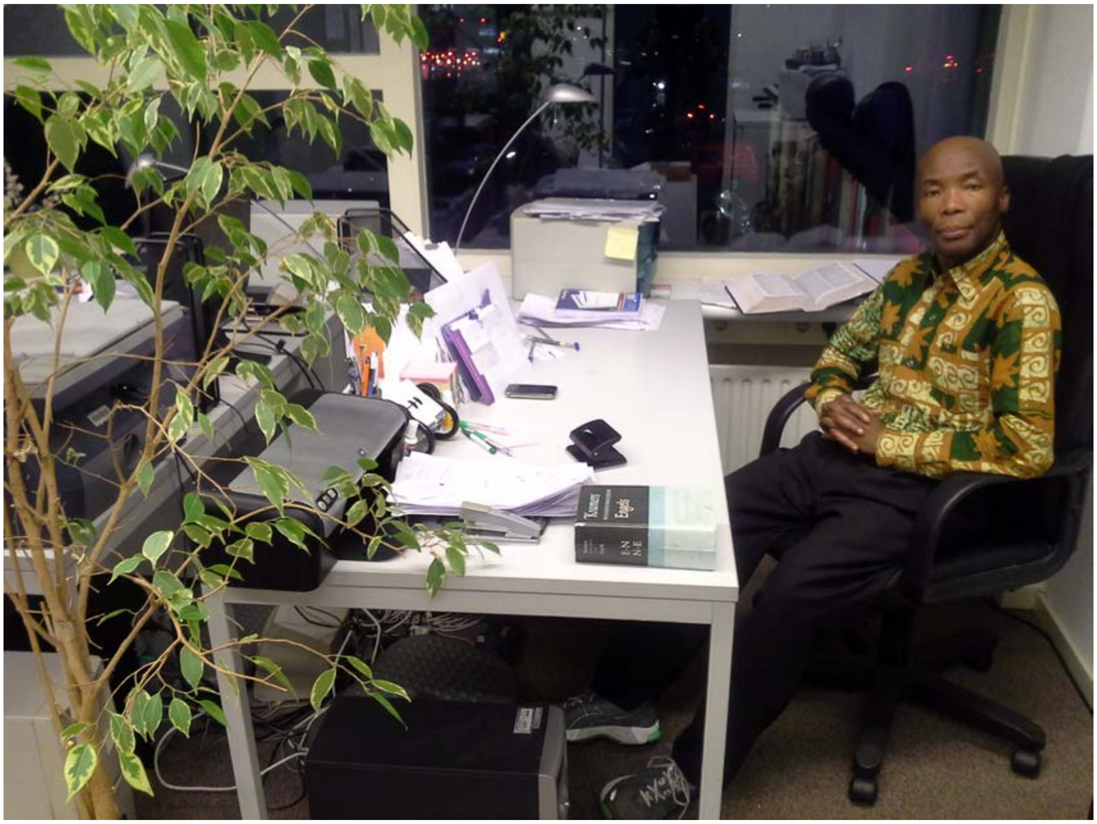
Apart from the four major non-Western migrants in the Netherlands, all other migrants from less-developed countries are grouped under 'other non-Western' and this category includes Ghanaians. The unemployment rate of the non-Western migrants in 2012 is about 14 per cent (see CBS 2012). This is a higher labour participation rate than that of the 'guest' workers (see ibid.);). The Ghanaian immigrants' insertion into the Dutch economy came after 1990 when the service industry was booming. Most of them have been employed in the cleaning, hotel and catering and horticultural services (see Choenni 2002:20), where working conditions were, arguably, a bit better than in the heavy manufacturing industries in the 1960s and 1970s where guest workers were recruited to work. In relation to other immigrant groups, Ghanaian immigrants in the Netherlands are known to have a relatively better labour market position (ACB Kenniscentrum 2011; CBS 2012). A Ghanaian immigrant in Amsterdam, for example, might be formally unemployed but the same person might be gainfully employed in the informal taxi service (known as '*kabo kabo'*) and house cleaning. It is estimated that about 11 per cent of Ghanaian immigrants between the ages of 15 and 65 live on benefits (see ACB Kenniscentrum 2011), with more than half of these people on welfare benefit (WWB uitkering) and the rest on unemployment benefit (WW-uitkering). These figures seem quite high considering the fact that, eleven years ago, experts on Ghanaian migrants concluded that Ghanaians were rarely jobless in the Netherlands. In addition, the size of the total Ghanaian population in the Netherlands and the fact that most of first-generation Ghanaian immigrants are said to be in their prime working years make the joblessness among Ghanaian immigrants in the Netherlands quite noticeable (see Choenni 2002: 23).

More recent information about the unemployment levels in the Netherlands indicates that, nationally, the number of people on welfare benefits aged 55+ increased by 20 per cent from 68,000 in October 2011 to 81,000 in November 2012. The same information shows that 70 per cent of the 55+ years had not been re-employed after a year on unemployment benefit. Half of the 30 per cent who were re-employed had temporary jobs (de Telegraaf 2012). I have included this information as a reminder because it is more likely that, in an economic downturn, that, non-Western immigrants will be more affected by unemployment than Western immigrants and the native population (Kloosterman 2013). Evidently, in

2012, the rate of unemployment among non-Western immigrants was 15.5 per cent, while it was 5 per cent for the native Dutch (see CBS 2012). It is more probable that a portion of first-generation Ghanaian immigrants were aged over 55 (see Choenni 2002) considering their ages of migration and the number of years that they have lived in the Netherlands.

Generally, many first-generation Ghanaian immigrants in this context are not dissimilar from the ‘guest’ workers because most of them are employed in low-skilled jobs and are consequently found in the lower stratum of the Dutch labour market, despite the fact that most of first-generation Ghanaians are better educated. Dagevos (1998) concludes in his dissertation that ethnic minority workers are generally restricted in their mobility because they have unfavourable labour market characteristics and because they work in less favourable segments of labour organisations.

Although most first-generation Ghanaian immigrants are found in unskilled jobs despite being better educated, my own observation was that some of them had upgraded their qualifications since they arrived in the Netherlands and are now employed at banks, hospitals, government institutions and consultancy firms. Besides that, in 2007, 30 Ghanaian skilled workers *(kennismigrants)* from Ghana were also given temporary visas to work in the Netherlands (see CBS 2007). The examples set by the few Ghanaians are clear indications that Ghanaians have a better chance to diversify into other sectors of the Dutch economy provided they improve their Dutch language proficiency and upgrade their educational qualifications here in the Netherlands. The overall contention, however, is that non-Western migrant minorities are specifically subjected to long-term unemployment due to declining opportunities in the regular labour market and in sectors where the production is less labour intensive.

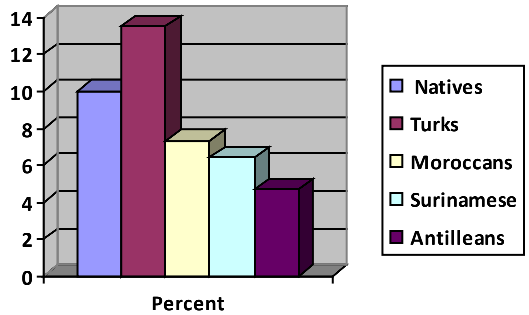


The office of a cleaning company run by a Ghanaian entrepreneur

4.4 Self-Employment among non-Western First-generation Immigrants in the Netherlands

According to Kloosterman (see 2000), migrants may be pushed towards entrepreneurship as they face difficulties of getting a (proper) job which may be due to lack of overall demand, lack of acknowledged educational qualifications, lack of access to relevant social networks, and, in cases, due to discrimination. Some first-generation Moroccan and Turkish immigrants started their own businesses as early as 1986 (see van den Tillaart 2001:117). Most of the first-generation immigrants started their businesses in wholesale, retail and hotel and catering industry. Although the hotel and catering industry is still popular, the percentage has declined considerably from 23 per cent to 17 per cent in 2000 and 2007 respectively (see EIM 2011). Over a period of twenty years the number of non-Western first-generation entrepreneurs quadrupled from 14,860 to 57,105 (see van den Tillaart 2007). Since a significant number of non-Western first-generation immigrants became self-employed, the rate of self-employment also rose within the same period. The rate of self-employment, which is defined as the share of self-employed of the total labour force, is higher for Turks, for example, compared to native Dutch (see figure 4.4 below). Evidently, however, the share is considerably lower for other major ethnic non-Western immigrant groups.

Figure 4.4: Share of self-employment as part of the Dutch total labour force (2007)



Source: Van den Tillaart 2007/ SCP Rapport 2007.

Besides the four major immigrant groups that are shown in figure 4.4 to be entrepreneurial, Ghanaians, Egyptians and Pakistanis, Iraqis and Afghans are also quite entrepreneurial (see Choenni 1997; see van den Tillaart 2007). In 2003, for example, 3 per cent of first-generation Ghanaian immigrants were known to be entrepreneurs (WODC/CBS 2005). Although there is no recent information about the number of Ghanaian immigrant entrepreneurs in the Netherlands, Van den Tillaart (see 2007) mentioned that first-generation Ghanaians own more than 500 businesses and, surprisingly, over 300 Ghanaian businesses for second-generation Ghanaians. These numbers for both generations are relatively small compared to ether the Turks or the Moroccans. Totalling about 4 per cent of the entire Ghanaian immigrant population in the Netherlands, this shows that the Ghanaian immigrants have also become part of the self-employed population in the Netherlands. The different percentage figures shown for the major non-Western immigrant groups obviously indicate that the rate of participation in entrepreneurship differs greatly between the various immigrant populations (see Kloosterman 2000), as the sizes of immigrant populations of different groups also differ. Despite the high self-employment rate among non-Western immigrants in recent years, the failure rate is also high relative to the native entrepreneurs in the Netherlands. A comparison of the survival rates of businesses among all entrepreneurs who started their businesses in 2002 indicate that 62 per cent of the native entrepreneurs' businesses, 44 per cent of Western entrepreneurs and 38 per cent of those for non-Western immigrants still existed in 2006 (see Jacobs 2012; see Kourtit and Nijkamp 2012).

4.4.1 Non-Western immigrant businesses in the four major cities of the Netherlands

The section on the clustering of non-Western migrants in the Netherlands shows that most of them are found in the four major cities, namely Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht[5]. Research in the

Netherlands also shows that these four major cities have the largest share of all non-Western immigrant businesses (43 per cent) with Amsterdam (19 per cent), Rotterdam (11 per cent), The Hague (10 per cent) and Utrecht (3 per cent) (see EIM 2004; see Van den Tillaaart 2007). According to the concept of mixed embeddedness, the size of the market (demand for a product or service) and residential distribution of the immigrant population affect the opportunity structure (see Kloosterman et al. 1999; see Kloosterman and Rath 2001).

In other words, the geographic concentration of non-Western immigrants in large urban centres and their response to specific demands for ethnic products and services by their own ethnic or socio-cultural groups have enabled several immigrant businesses to spring up, especially in urban areas. It shows that an immigrant population density is crucial for the emergence and development of immigrant businesses. A concentration neighbourhood is, therefore, advantageous to the development and establishment of ethnic entrepreneurship and the establishment of ethnic labour niches as Waldinger (see1996) and Kloosterman & Van der Leun (see 1999) assert. It seems then that cities with a large immigrant population are more likely to create favourable opportunity structures, at least for immigrants for both wage and self-employment.

To promote immigrant entrepreneurship in a high concentration neighbourhood and to try to reduce unemployment and to fight poverty, the local governments of the major cities in the Randstad embarked on city renewal projects in these neighbourhoods. For example Dutch newspaper 'Het Parool' (2004) called this policy 'the ethnic neighbourhood attraction'. Poverty-affected neighbourhoods disappear by themselves. A few examples of such concentration neighbourhoods in Amsterdam are the nineteenth-century neighbourhood De Pijp in which the Ferdinand Bolstraat is located, the city centre, post-war high-rise neighbourhoods (see Kloosterman et al. 1999) and the neighbourhood in Amsterdam South-East, popularly known as 'Bijlmermeer'. The 'Schilderwijk' and Transvaal neighbourhoods of The Hague have also been renovated.

In addition, municipal authorities in these cities have provided extra stimulus in the form of 'BBZ regeling' (Besluit bijstandverlening Zelfstandigen'35). This incentive scheme states that if someone who receives welfare benefit (WWB uitkering) decides to start a business, he or she can qualify for a special subsidy to finance the start-up. In general, only a small number of entrepreneurs use this incentive to finance their businesses. Most entrepreneurs do not use it at all (see Wolff and Rath 2000; REWIN 2004; see Rusinovic 2006). The local governments' involvement in renewing immigrant concentrated neighbourhoods in the various cities which are derelict for immigrant entrepreneurship reflects the attention and the importance the state and local institutions attach to promoting immigrant entrepreneurship (see Kloosterman et al. 1999; see Kloosterman and Rath 2001;see Kloosterman 2010).

In the next section, I examine the sectors in which first-generation non-Western immigrants in the Netherlands set up businesses.

4.4.2 First-generation immigrant entrepreneurs and business sectors

First-generation non-Western immigrant groups are known to have set up their own businesses in different sectors of the Dutch economy. Table 4.4.2 shows that, in 2007, 49 per cent of all the businesses of first-generation non-Western immigrant entrepreneurs were clustered in the trade and catering sector. Other research findings have confirmed the dominance of this business sector among first-generation non-Western immigrant entrepreneurs (Wolff and Rath 2000; ING Bank 2005; Rusinovic 2006). Researchers have, however, drawn different conclusions regarding the choice of this sector.

The first conclusion is that the ethnic market orientation states that these entrepreneurs are only focused on their ethnic market which enables them to satisfy the needs of their community (Wolff and Rath 2000). The other conclusion is that the choice for the ethnic market sector somehow has to do with business convenience orientation which states that an immigrant's choice for entrepreneurship is heavily influenced by convenience and business-like character. New businesses could be relatively less formal and require no big investment (ibid). Hence, an immigrant's decision to establish a business for the ethnic market offers implicit satisfaction possibly beyond an economic motive.

It could, however, be deduced from the same table and other research findings that first-generation non-Western immigrant entrepreneurs are gradually leaving this sector and are establishing businesses in other sectors, especially into producer services which, according to Esping-Andersen (1999: 5 *in* Rusinovic 2006: 23), include 'finance, insurance, real estate and business related professional services such as marketing, accounting, consulting, engineering or design, most of which require a high quotient of technical professional and managerial jobs' (see Kloosterman and Rath 2003; Dagevos and Gesthuizen 2005; Rusinovic 2006; Nijkamp et al. 2009; Sahin 2012).

Table 4.4.2: Sectoral distribution among the first-generation non-Western migrants in 2007 (in %)

Sectors	**2007**
Building Industry	7
Trade/ reparation	24
Catering Industry	25

Logistics/ communication	6
Financial services	2
Business services	16
Other services	21
Total	**100**

Source: Schutjens 2013:10

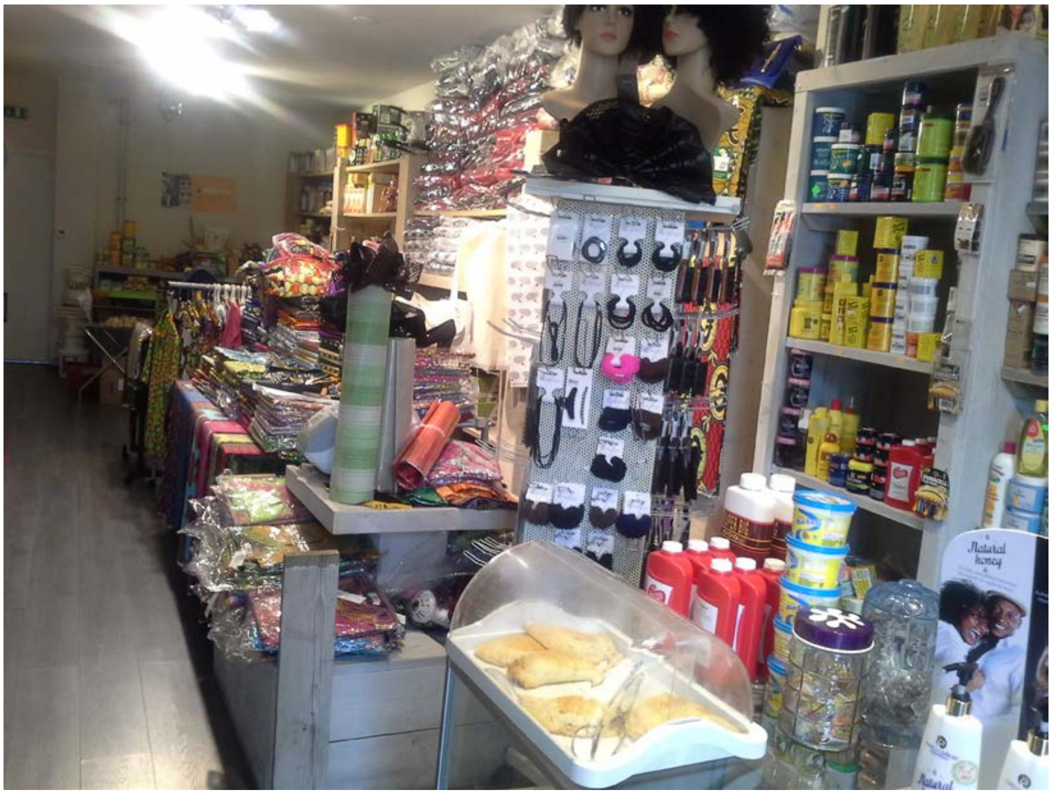
The following section specifically discusses first-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs and the sectors in which they have inserted their businesses.

4.4.3 First-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurship and business sectors.

As described in Chapter 3, Ghanaian migration to the Netherlands dates back to the 1960s. However, the visible wave of Ghanaians to the Netherlands took place after the 1980s when Ghana's domestic socio-economic problems were compounded by expulsion of about one million Ghanaian migrants from Nigeria. This forced many young Ghanaians to search for greener pastures in far-off countries (see Nimako 2000). Many young Ghanaians in the 1990s in particular decided to migrate to the Netherlands because the country was then experiencing economic prosperity (see Kloosterman and Rath 2003). There were plenty of low-skilled and high-skilled jobs in the service sector of the Dutch economy which benefitted most of the Ghanaian immigrants. However, many of them are known to possess pre-migration high human capital and they had to accept jobs in the lower stratum of the Dutch labour market because of their Dutch language deficiency as well as the low value perception associated with their pre-migration educational qualifications, skills and job experiences (see Choenni 2002).

Neither should it be forgotten that Ghanaian migration to the Netherlands is a rather recent phenomenon, quite distinct from the traditional immigrants such as the Turkish and the Moroccans and hence, might have been exposed to a different opportunity structure. Apart from the fact that most of them were gainfully employed as cleaners and factory hands, it became evident that a few of these Ghanaian immigrants became self-employed (see Choenni 1997). It is estimated that there were more than 800 first-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs and businesses involving both first and second generation Ghanaian immigrants in the Netherlands by 2005 (see Tillaart 2007).

Some of first-generation Ghanaian immigrants also established businesses in the same traditional sectors as the 'guest' workers predominantly serving the Ghanaian ethnic niche market (see Choenni 2002: 21). Since most first-generation Ghanaians in the 1990s faced a different opportunity structure upon their arrival in the Netherlands, given the abundance of opportunities for businesses in the service sector, it is highly probable that the first-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs set up more businesses in other sectors than in the traditional sector. The likelihood of this is substantiated by the empirical data and findings in the next section and subsequent chapters. The next section describes the profile of the first-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs in the Netherlands.



A small shop run by a Ghanaian entrepreneur selling African products

4.5 The Profile of First-generation Ghanaian Entrepreneurs in the Netherlands

This study seeks to analyse the characteristics of first-generation Ghanaian immigrant entrepreneurs from various cities in the Netherlands and these include age, gender marital status, education (both formal and informal), skills and competencies and work experience. These are concrete attributes which facilitate self-employment (Sanders and Nee 1996; see Unger et al. 2011; see Jacobs 2012). An examination of first-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs in Table 4.5.1 shows that 83 per cent are aged between 40 and 59. This result can be explained by the need to accumulate enough social and physical capital as well as experience before being able to start a business. With respect to gender 67 per cent are male and 33 per cent female. More than 58 per cent of Ghanaian entrepreneurs are married. With respect to formal education, about 30 per cent had basic education. Furthermore, more than 40 per cent continued on to high school, while about 4 per cent had lower vocational education. Of the first-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs 13 per cent had trained to higher vocational education level and almost 12 per cent had university education. Something else I wanted to know was whether first-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs had reached their highest level of education in Ghana or in the Netherlands. Table 4.5.1 also shows that 86 per cent of these entrepreneurs received their formal education in Ghana, with 11 per cent doing so in the Netherlands and 'other', which means they gained their highest education qualification outside Ghana but not in the Netherlands (3 per cent).The table also shows that 1 per cent of the respondents had 'other' education which means teaching and nursing.

The first generation definition (see CBS 1999) means that all the Ghanaian immigrant entrepreneurs were born and raised in Ghana. Taking into consideration the year of arrival in the Netherlands, more than half of the entrepreneurs (52 per cent) came to the Netherlands between 1981 and 1989, followed by over 40 per cent between 1990 and 1999. The table further shows that only 6 per cent migrated to the Netherlands between 2000 and 2009 and a negligible 1 per cent came to the Netherlands before 1980.

More than 90 per cent of the first-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs migrated to the Netherlands over a period of two decades. As I wrote in chapter three, this period witnessed the intensification of Ghanaian migration to the Netherlands due to push factors such as expulsion of many Ghanaians migrants from Nigeria, severe drought and grave mismanagement of the Ghanaian economy in the 1980s. Ghanaians were also pulled to the attractive and booming Dutch economy in the 1990s which made the Netherlands one of the most lucrative destinations for migrants from less-developed nations (see Kloosterman and Rath 2003). As a result, the Ghanaian population in the Netherlands increased from 9,385 in 1993 to 21,922 in 2012 (see CBS 1993, 2012). Hence, in a period of twenty years, the number of both first and second-generation Ghanaian immigrants in the Netherlands has increased by more than 233 per cent.

With regard to Dutch language proficiency 32 per cent speak Dutch fluently, 52 per cent have a good 'spoken' level, while about 16 per cent has poor Dutch language skills, that is, they cannot speak Dutch at all. The good level of 'spoken' Dutch implies that they are able to understand and speak Dutch to a certain level but find it difficult to write. Although it is difficult to measure the levels of Dutch proficiency among these respondents, the level of spoken Dutch and the grammar they use are variables in the determination of their level of Dutch proficiency.

It can be said that most of the Ghanaian immigrants are able to speak Dutch through informal contacts, such as learning from their colleagues at their work places, from the streets of the cities in which they live and most probably due to the length of their residence in the Netherlands. As the table also shows, 51 per cent of the respondents have acquired computer skill training that is necessary for their business, whereas 39 per cent are illiterate as far as computer skills are concerned. Less than a quarter (23 per cent) has almost no knowledge about the use of computers.

Table 4.5.1: Personal characteristics of first–generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs

	N (Total=84)	**Percentage**
Age		
30-39	9	11
40-49	22	26
50-59	48	57
60-69	5	6
Gender		
Male	56	67
Female	28	33
Marital status		
Single	22	26
Married	49	58
Partner	13	16
Time of arrival		
Before 1980	1	1
1980-1989	44	52
1990-1999	34	41
2000-2009	5	6
Level of education		
Elementary school	25	30
High school	34	40
Lower vocational education	3	4
Higher vocational education	11	13
University	10	12
Other	1	1
Place of highest education		
Ghana	72	86
The Netherlands	9	11
Other	3	3
Proficiency Dutch		

Poor	13	16
Good spoken level	44	52
Fluent	27	32
Computer skills		
Yes	51	61
No	33	39

Source: Research data

Motivation and driving force for entrepreneurship

In order to assess the motivation for first-generation Ghanaians to undertake entrepreneurship, I examine their economic position prior to self-employment. With respect to pre-migration business experience, Table 4.5.2 shows that 44 per cent of the research population were engaged in some form of business-related activities in Ghana. Hence, it could be adduced that more than 44 per cent of the sample population chose to be self-employed after migration, either because they were unemployed or saw the opportunity of the enabling economic environment in the Netherlands in the 1990s. As shown in Table 4.5.2, the majority of them (74 per cent) were employed as wage earners while 26 per cent was unemployed. The general observation is that unemployment is the main cause of self-employment among many immigrants (see Kloosterman 2000).

The reasons first-generation Ghanaian immigrants in the sample gave for becoming entrepreneurs include unemployment and independence. Although 33 per cent of first-generation Ghanaian immigrants that became entrepreneurs were unemployed, they also mentioned that self-employment enabled them to become their own bosses. The difference between the post-migration labour position and the motivation for self-employment figures is attributed to the desire of some of these Ghanaian immigrants to take their economic life into their own hands. In other words, although some of first-generation Ghanaian immigrants who became unemployed had opportunities to be re-employed as wage earners, they nevertheless decided to become self-employed instead because of the desire to be independent. In addition, more than 50 per cent said they decided to start their own business because they saw the opportunity to succeed and to become their own bosses as well, which enables them to have the latitude and flexibility in making decisions which affect their lives. It appears that the motivation of extra income alone is not an important reason to become an entrepreneur (14 per cent).

Regarding other factors such as capital sources it is clear that first-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs received a considerable amount of funding from their family and friends (44 per cent), though 45 per cent used their own savings (private means) to set up their businesses. Fewer than 10 per cent received financial capital from the banks. It can also be seen from the Table that 67 per cent of the Ghanaian entrepreneurs were aware of the existence of municipal and local agencies which have been established to help nascent entrepreneurs with business advice and training, access to formal financing from banks and other financial institutions and hiring of qualified personnel. Although, (N=56) respondents knew about the existence of formal institutions and their services, only (N= 34) of these respondents were assisted by these formal institutions.

First-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs have relied heavily on their informal social networks in many ways to start their businesses. These social networks consist of family members, friends and ethnic organisations (hometown associations and churches) and these are grouped under ‘others’. With respect to business creation, 33 per cent were assisted by the members in their social networks. The table also shows that the respondents relied on 88 per cent of their social networks to find workers for their businesses.

Table 4.5.2: Motivation and driving forces of first-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs

	N (Total=84)	**Percentage**
Pre-migration business experience		
Yes	37	44
No	47	56
Post-migration labour		
Employed	62	74
Unemployed	22	26
Motivation/Driving force		
Pushed	22	26
Pulled	62	74

	N (Total=84)	**Percentage**
Non-financial (formal) Institutional Awareness		
Yes	56	67
No	28	33
Non-financial (formal) Formal contributions (N=56)		

Yes	34	61
No	22	39
Non-financial (informal) Business idea		
Other sources	28	33
Own idea	56	67
Non-financial (informal) Finding personnel		
Other sources	74	88
None	10	12
Financial assistance		
Formal institution(bank)	6	7
Friend&Family->Informal assistance	37	44
Both	3	4
Own capital	38	45

Source: Research data

Business Characteristics

Ghanaian businesses in this research are grouped into three sectors of activity. First, the traditional sector which consists of retail and wholesale of exotic food and meat products from Ghana, locally made tie and dye wax prints and sandals, art and handicraft items. Second, the personal sector which includes the barber shops, hairdressing salons, crèche, travel agencies, catering services, cleaning services, folder and flyer distribution services, removal of household goods, and money remittance services and third, the producer sector businesses involve, casual employment agencies ('uitzendbureaus'), shipping services, flyer and folder financial services, consultancies and ICT services. These three sectors are grouped under three types of business opportunity namely: low-skilled stagnating activities, servile activities and cognitive-cultural activities respectively (see Scott 2008, 2012; Kloosterman et al. forthcoming) which correspond with the vacancy-chain openings, post-industrial low-skilled openings and post-industrial high-skilled openings of the mixed embeddedness model (see Kloosterman et al. 1999, see Kloosterman 2000; see Kloosterman 2010).

The next table (4.5.3) shows that, of the 84 businesses that were sampled, 33 per cent run a business in the retail services, 54 per cent run a business in the personal services and 13 per cent set up a business in the producer services. The ownership of Ghanaian businesses is classified under sole proprietorship (74 per cent), family owned (19 per cent) and partnership (7 per cent). It is also read that 19 per cent of the Ghanaian businesses are experiencing growth. Businesses which are stagnant and decreasing (64 per cent) and 17 per cent are inserted in sector(s) with high competition. With respect to the target market, 58 per cent of the businesses have their goods or services oriented towards the African community, 37 per cent is focused on the mainstream market, whereas 5 per cent has ethnic as well as mainstream markets as their target. Finally, it can be read from Table 4.5.3 as well that only 19 per cent of the Ghanaian entrepreneurs are members of formal enterprise-support associations.

Table 4.5.3: Business characteristics of first-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs

Type of opportunity	Sectors of activity	N	Percentage
Low-skilled stagnating			
	Retail African (food) products	19	23
	Other Retail	6	7
	Other	3	4
	Total	28	33
Servile activities			
	Hair/beauty salon	7	8
	Travel services	8	10
	Catering	3	4
	Distribution of flyers	11	13
	Cleaning	4	5
	Day care	1	1
	Money transfer	2	2
	Removal household goods	2	2
	Other	7	8
	Total	45	54
C.-C. (Cognitive-Cultural) activities			
	B2B: among which IT, financial, shipping services	10	12
	Other	1	1
	Total	11	13

	N (Total=84)	Percentage
Sector prospects		
Growing	16	19
Stagnant/decreasing	54	64
High competition	14	17
Proprietorship		

Sole proprietorship	62	74
Family owned	16	19
Partnership	6	7
Market orientation		
Mainly ethnic	24	29
Middleman	3	4
Mainstream	28	33
Niche	29	34
Membership of Dutch Business Association		
Yes	16	19
No	68	81

Source: Research data

Evaluation of the Ghanaian Business Characteristics

Surprisingly, between 2001 and 2012, first-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs set up more businesses in the personal and producer services than retail services. The first-generation immigrants in the Netherlands have generally become active in other sectors, among which the business-to-business sector or producer services (Van den Tillaart and Poutsma 1998; see Kloosterman and Rath 2003; see Dagevos and Gesthuizen 2005; see Rusinovic 2006; see Nijkamp, Sahin and Baycan-Levent 2009 see Sahin 2012). First-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs are also shifting away from the traditional retail services into other sectors as shown in the research data. This can be explained by the emergence of new activities in the post-industrial era where services provision has become predominant (see Kloosterman 2000; 2010).

It is important to know why first-generation Ghanaian immigrants started businesses in the Netherlands from the early 1990s onwards. First, the Ghanaian population in the Netherlands has increased quite rapidly in two decades (see CBS1993 & 2012). This increase in the Ghanaian population in the Netherlands resulted in Ghanaians starting businesses mainly in the retail of Ghanaian imported food products and also businesses in shipping because it became clear that there was at least an ethnic market for some cultural products such as exotic food items and music and movie products imported from Ghana as well as for the shipment of used automobiles from the Netherlands to Ghana. This market, which Ward (1987a) describes as an ethnic market, becomes a sort of protected space in which ethnic entrepreneurs from a specific community seem to enjoy immunity from all other competitors outside that community. This finding can be corroborated with a whole host of studies of immigrant entrepreneurship (Light 1972;

Aldrich et al. 1985; see Waldinger et al. 1990; see Jones et al. 2000; Kloosterman 2001; see Rusinovic 2006; see Jacobs 2012, see Sahin 2012).

Although the ethnic market can have its advantages and give immigrants the latitude to become entrepreneurs with a variety of products and services for their own communities, it is often stated that the growth potential is limited as the number of customers is relatively small. More particularly, when similar businesses are located in the same street, it usually leads to fierce competition from new and similar business entrants, resulting in dwindling or almost no profits (see Kloosterman et al. 1999; see Jones et al. 2000 see Rusinovic 2006; see Kloosterman 2010). A few years later, first-generation Ghanaian immigrants started travel agencies, money remittance agencies, cleaning companies, crèches, temping agencies (uitzendbureaus) and many other services to cater for the needs of both the ethnic and the mainstream markets.

A few of these first-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs saw that there were/are potential clients for their services or products far larger than and beyond their ethnic market. These entrepreneurs sell their ethnic products or services to both ethnic and mainstream customers/clients and these entrepreneurs are mostly inserted in the 'middleman' markets (see Engelen 2001; see Rusinovic 2006). A few of these Ghanaian entrepreneurs serve the mainstream market with non-ethnic products or services. According to Jones, Barrett and McEvoy (see 2000:42) immigrants that are active in mainstream market mainly serve non-ethnic clientele with non-ethnic products, such as cigarettes or general household goods or offer services to a non-ethnic clientele. These entrepreneurs cater for the needs of the broader market (ibid*.;* Morokvasic 1999). Examples of Ghanaian businesses in this case, which cater for the mainstream clientele are the retail trade in alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, the sale of mobile phones and cards and internet services, ICT services (software installations, internet connections, computer programming and hardware repairs), employment agencies, cleaning services and crèches. It is evident from the table that the Ghanaian self-employment activities have become evident in the Netherlands with the increase in the Ghanaian immigrant population.

The ownership structure of the Ghanaian businesses has shown that the majority of the businesses are sole proprietorships. This finding concurs with earlier research findings which indicate that a one-person business is the most legal form of business formation among immigrants in the Netherlands (see EIM 2004; see Rusinovic 2006). The high concentration of Ghanaian businesses in sole-proprietorship illustrates that Ghanaian business owners have decided not to pool financial resources together for partnership, probably to avoid potential future misunderstandings. It could also mean that Ghanaian entrepreneurs prefer to establish small businesses which they can manage effectively.

Our data on Ghanaian entrepreneurs has shown that almost none of these entrepreneurs join any business associations. Interestingly, it is stated that immigrant entrepreneurs are generally less inclined than native entrepreneurs to become members of storekeepers' associations, trade or other professional organisations (see EIM 2004; Ministerie van Economische Zaken 2005; see Rusinovic 2006). Immigrant entrepreneurs are usually embedded in their own groups because of the critical role these groups play in the setting up and the running of their businesses.

Transnational activities

In this final section, I focus on the transnational activities of the entrepreneurs. This part of the business characteristics of the Ghanaian entrepreneurs illustrates their transnational involvement with Ghana, their country of origin. It is deduced from Table 4.5.4. that 49 per cent of the respondents have transnational business links with Ghana. This finding is in line with Nkrumah's (2016) study on Ghanaian entreoreneurs in Canada. As the table further indicates, the nature of transnational activities in which the entrepreneurs are involved differs. For the forty-one respondents who have transnational business ties with Ghana, 34 per cent are involved with business investments, another 34 per cent procure their business products from Ghana and 32 per cent have Ghana as the destination market for their goods. The table also shows that 51 per cent Ghanaian entrepreneurs in the Netherlands are not transnationally involved with Ghana. Reasons for the entrepreneurs to become transnationally involved with Ghana are, first and foremost, economic: products from Ghana are bought at relatively cheaper prices and generate profit when sold in the Netherlands (Cf. Nkrumah 2016). The goods which are bought from the Netherlands to be sold on the Ghanaian market are of a higher quality than those imported from China and therefore attract better prices. The second reason is a remigration strategy. A sizable number of these entrepreneurs want to migrate back to Ghana when they enter middle or old age. Hence, they have made business investments in Ghana which would enable them to remain in business after remigration.

Table 4.5.4: Ghanaian entrepreneurs' transnational business links with Ghana

	N	**Percentage**
Source of supply	14	17
Market	13	15
Business investments	14	17
None	43	51
Total	84	100

Source: Research data

4.6 Conclusion

Based on the information in this chapter it is clear that Ghanaians, as well as other non-Western immigrants in the Netherlands, such as the Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans are spatially concentrated in the large cities of the Randstad, namely Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht. Surprisingly, it is also evident that Almere, though a smaller city, has attracted more Ghanaian, Surinamese and Antillean/Aruban immigrants than Utrecht, partly due to its proximity to Amsterdam and its modernity and elaborate transportation network. An examination of the labour market position of the first-generation Ghanaians and the ‘guest’ workers from Turkey and Morocco reveals that Ghanaians have a relatively higher labour market position. However, both Ghanaians and the ‘guest’ workers are employed in the lower stratum of the Dutch labour market where blue collar jobs of construction, cleaning and other unskilled jobs are predominant. Notwithstanding this, a few first-generation Ghanaian immigrants are known to be employed as professionals and civil servants in certain sectors of the Dutch labour market due to their high level of education.

Quite a few non-Western immigrants from Turkey, Morocco, China, Ghana and many other countries of origin settled in the Netherlands are known to be self-employed. First-generation immigrant entrepreneurs are, typically, clustered in the traditional sectors of retail trading, wholesaling and catering. Many researchers, however, have concluded that the number of first-generation non-Western immigrant entrepreneurs in the traditional sectors is fast decreasing, since some of them are gradually shifting to the personal and business services. This shift to new sectors of the Dutch economy has been facilitated by the shifts in the opportunity structure that emerged in the 1990s when the Dutch economy boomed. The post-industrial low-skilled and high-skilled markets which emerged, promoted opportunities for non-Western immigrants to start businesses which demanded low or high levels of skills and know-how to start and operate.

Most of the first-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs possessed a high level of human capital. They became self-employed because they identified opportunities in the sectors in which their businesses are inserted. With this background information regarding the Dutch economic boom and concomitant opportunity structures which emerged, it is yet to be discovered in the subsequent chapters whether first-generation Ghanaian entrepreneurs utilised the opportunity structure in the post-industrial era to set up their own businesses. Besides this, the Ghanaian entrepreneurs have been engaged with their motherland Ghana in diverse ways, namely as a source of supply for the products they sell in the Netherlands, as a market for some businesses and also as a place for business investments. In the next chapter, chapter 5, I describe the supply side of the concept of mixed embeddedness in terms of the human capital, financial capital and social capital resources which first-generation Ghanaian immigrants have to possess to enable them to set up businesses in the Netherlands. The same chapter includes an assessment of the contribution of the transnational opportunity structure on the Ghanaian businesses set up in the Netherlands.