

AIR POLLUTION

Literature review 2020

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Introduction

‘What they say about us, without us’

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KEY FOCUS AREAS



**Air Pollution and Exposure in
Minority Communities**

**Minorities and Environmental Issues
and Why BAME Communities Are Not
Involved**

**Class and Environmental Issues in
the Urban Locale and Inner Cities**

LITERATURE REVIEW

WHAT DID WE ASK?

- What initiatives have there been in Southwark and Lambeth?
- What is missing from the current literature available?
- Where does air pollution fit into the Covid-19 discourse?
- Which areas have been highlighted when thinking about BAME exclusion?
- What is the relationship between minority groups and environmental groups

KEY INSIGHT 1: WHAT'S MISSING FROM THE CURRENT LITERATURE


- Lacking authentic urban voices
- Interdisciplinary approach
- Prevalence of white middle class voices, further enabled through the process of gentrification



KEY INSIGHT 2: WHERE DOES AIR POLLUTION FIT INTO THE COVID-19 DISCOURSE?

- Links between deprivation, COVID 19 and minority communities






Minority
groups are
more likely to
live in deprived
areas

Crowded housing conditions and risky working conditions have been linked to increased infection and death rates for Covid 19...

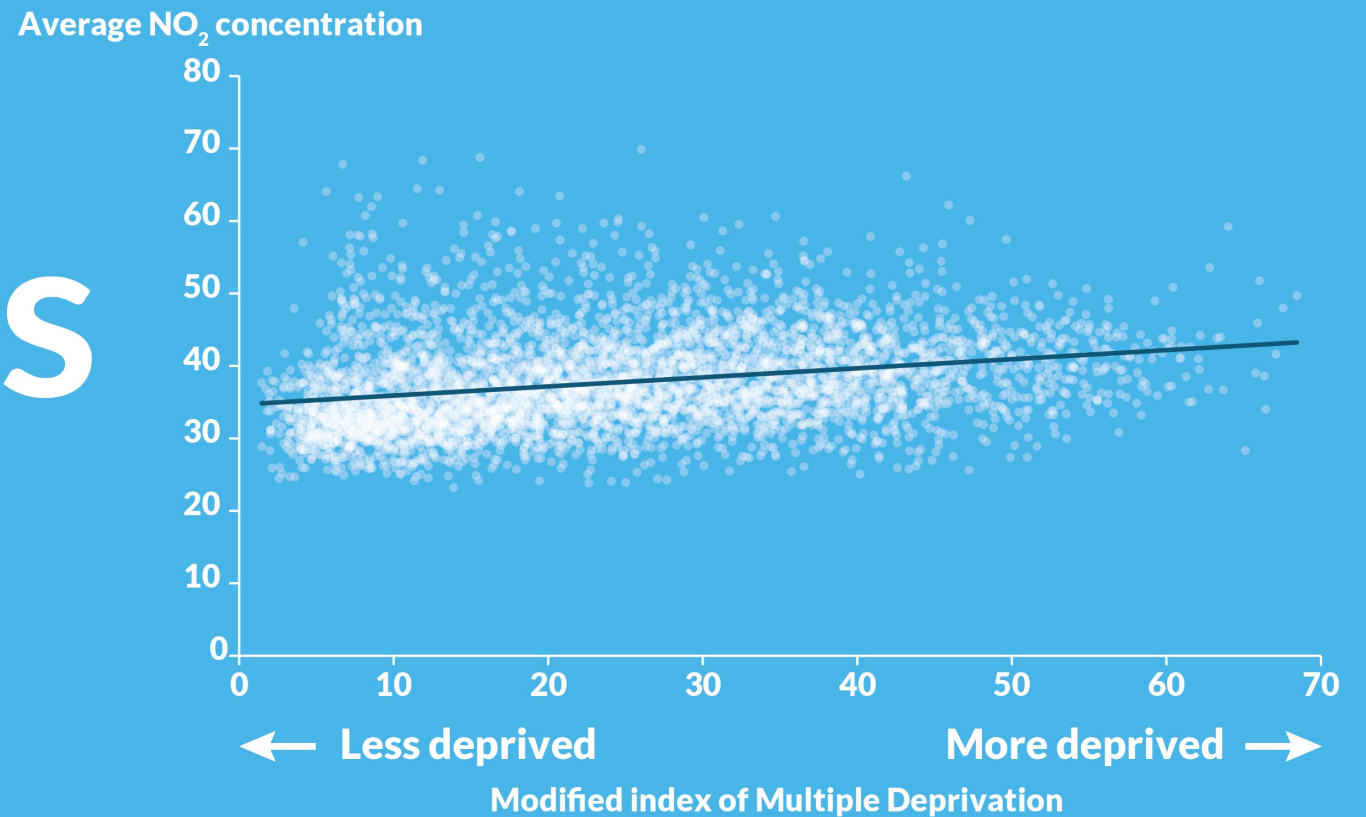
‘Only 2% of white Britons live in crowded conditions while 30% of Bangladeshis, 16% of Pakistanis and 15% of black Africans reside in crowded conditions in the UK (Washington, 2020). BAME communities are more likely to live in deprived areas which have higher rates of air pollution.’



Tackling air pollution in London

The Fairness Case

More deprived areas have higher levels of NO₂ air pollution



KEY INSIGHT 3: CURRENT INITIATIVES IN LAMBETH/SOUTHWARK

- History of air pollution/environmentalism
- Evidence of increasing initiatives in these boroughs to tackle air pollution
- BAME headed environmental groups existing in this area



Even when BAME groups do speak and have an opinion on issues which affect them, why do their voices not stick?

Why are they not listened to?

KEY INSIGHT 4: REASONS FOR A LACK OF MINORITY REPRESENTATION IN AIR POLLUTION

- Language/accessibility
- Minority groups have more pressing issues
- Fear of speaking out
- Environmental racism



THE LANGUAGE AROUND THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEBATE IS INACCESSIBLE

‘Gentrification has therefore led to a middle-class control of acceptable expression and a dictation as to how this should play out in the urban locale and how to articulate expression...’

The dominance of the white middle class within urban debate has entrenched a language which acts to exclude others.


SOME MINORITY GROUPS HAVE MORE PRESSING ISSUES

‘The residents of these locales are focused on daily survival and this reality is not understood by environmental organisations from outside of the communities in which they parachute into for protests, demonstrations, marches and ‘die-ins’.’

Long term health impacts like air pollution may come second priority compared to more immediate problems.

MINORITY GROUPS MAY FEEL AFRAID TO SPEAK OUT

There is evidence around minority groups trying to address urban problems but being ignored or told not to do so. For example, when residents in the Grenfell tower building raised concerns...



'Several residents were even threatened with legal action if they were to make their claims and concerns public.'

Environmental Racism

The combination of these factors produces a system of environmental racism...

‘Minority communities have had an increased exposure to environmental pollutants reflecting legacies of environmental racism wherein systems have produced and perpetuated inequalities.’

How do we study environmental racism?

KEY INSIGHT 5: TENSIONS BETWEEN MINORITY COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS

- Lack of understanding between these two groups
- Association with the police/language used by environmental groups
- Lack of representation for minority groups



How do we create a collaborative approach
around shared equity?

RECOMMENDATIONS

- New 'Cooltan Collective'
- Designing greener urban spaces

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AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- Urban cleansing and regeneration
- Equitable environmentalism and the black youth
- Invisible and lost contribution to the urban locale

WHAT'S NEXT?

DEFINING OUR RESEARCH QUESTIONS...

- What are the most effective ways to educate communities on the impacts of air pollution?
- How can each of the identified barriers to minority representation in air pollution be addressed?
- How do these solutions differ for different minority communities? (*Namely, exploring language, prioritisation, fear and environmental racism*)
- What does a community-led environmental group/campaign look like in the 21st century? What does practical protesting look like for these groups?

NEXT STEPS...

- Air Pollution forum launching Friday 13th November
- Key stakeholders to interview from the literature review
- Survey

THANK YOU!

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