Abstract

Since the early 1990s, the town of Mandeville has become a haven for returning residents (henceforth returnees), particularly Jamaicans who migrated to England in the 1950s and 1960s and subsequently returned to Jamaica in the 1990s to retire (See Nettleford 1998). As Harry Goulbourne (1999, 164) observes, “…The hill town of Mandeville has acquired the reputation of being a desirous destination for returnees who create a prosperous ghetto characterised by some English pastimes: tea in the afternoon,
the cultivation and display of well manicured lawns and gardens ordered for more aesthetic pleasure than practical use, which stand in sharp contrast to the utilitarian kitchen and fruit gardens of rural Jamaica. Some would see an irony here because the town of Mandeville in the parish of Manchester, like Simla in the Himalayan foothills, used to be the retreat for British Administrators in the colonial past during the hottest months.” Referring to returnees as “the English”, many Jamaicans and others attribute returnees’ choice to move to Mandeville as a deep internalization of English values and aesthetics as well as a sense of superiority over the “local” Jamaican population.