



BlackEconomics.org®

“Employment in Shabazzland”

We finally heard our BlackEconomics.org co-contributor, Lindsey “Rob” Robinson, who voiced repeatedly, “Black Americans move mainly for one reason: Jobs! Therefore, unless there are jobs, do not expect Black Americans to move to ‘Shabazzland’ for nation formation.”¹

This Analysis Brief features a hypothetical analysis. We asked the question: If life in Shabazzland paralleled somewhat US economic life, then how many jobs would be generated? This question flows from the logic that demand engenders supply. Therefore, our question can be answered by estimating the employment per capita for the US economy at the industry level, and then applying that per capita employment to the Black American population that could inhabit Shabazzland.

For simplicity, we perform our analysis using 13 industries that are assembled from the 20 NAICS 2017 (North American Industrial Classification System) two-digit industries. After estimating employment per capita by

industry and computing the required employment for those industries in Shabazzland, we compare those employment requirements with the current level of Black employment in the US economy. The differences between Shabazzland employment requirements and actual employment reveal employment gaps and over supply.²

The employment by industry data for the analysis are from the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).³ We employ 2019 statistics to avoid recent COVID-19 Pandemic effects, which first struck the US in 2020. The per capita estimates are based on a US 2019 population of 328.2 million from the US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. The related Black American Alone population for 2019, which is also from the Census Bureau, is 41.1 million.⁴

Table 1 (next page) presents the simplified hypothetical statistical analysis.

¹ Shabazzland is the name we assign to the long-awaited nation state for Black Americans in North America.

² These differences also serve as clear evidence of how Black Americans have been herded into low-paying and low-productivity industries.

³ The BLS data are for “Employed persons by detailed industry, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino

ethnicity” and are available at https://www.bls.gov/cps/cps_aa2019.htm (Ret. 071122).

⁴ These population estimates are available at <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2020/population-estimates-detailed.html> (Ret. 071122).

Table 1.—Estimated Black American Employment in Shabazzland by Industry, 2019
(Estimates in thousands, except where noted)

Industries	(1) 2019 Total US Employment	(2) Employment Per Capita Ratios	(3) 2019 Black American Estimated Employment	(4) Estimated Employment in Shabazzland	(5) Differences (3-4)
Total, 16 years and over	157,538		19,377	19,749	-371
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	2,425	0.007	53	304	-251
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	750	0.002	38	94	-56
Construction	11,373	0.035	728	1,426	-698
Manufacturing	15,741	0.048	1,637	1,973	-336
Wholesale and retail trade	19,742	0.060	2,310	2,475	-165
Transportation and utilities	8,991	0.027	1,807	1,127	680
Information	2,766	0.008	313	347	-34
Financial activities	10,765	0.033	1,130	1,349	-219
Professional and business services	19,606	0.060	1,961	2,458	-497
Education and health services	35,894	0.109	5,420	4,500	920
Leisure and hospitality	14,643	0.045	1,918	1,836	83
Other services	7,617	0.023	807	955	-147
Public administration	7,225	0.022	1,264	906	359

Sources: BLS and the Census Bureau with BlackEconomics.org computations.

Table 1 reveals that Black American estimated employment for 2019 would fall nearly 400 thousand jobs short of employment in Shabazzland. We believe that Shabazzland employment would be even higher than the 19,749 thousand estimated because the Shabazzland economy would not embody fully the labor-saving technology and efficiency of the US economy. At the same time, all of this overlooks the fact that a tremendous amount of retraining and reassignment of labor would be required to shift workers out of the industries where there is an over-supply (orange shaded cells in the rightmost column) to industries where more workers are required (green shaded cells).

For 2019, BLS reported that the Black American unemployment rate was 6.1 percent, with 1.3 million Black Americans out of work.⁵ Given the nearly 400 thousand

employment gap that is estimated for Shabazzland in Table 1, and the likelihood that even more jobs would be created due to technological shortfalls and inefficiencies, the Shabazzland economy should be expected to reflect a very tight labor market with prospects for achieving more than “full employment.”

This cursory and hypothetical analysis, therefore, should quiet certain concerns about employment in Shabazzland. It should motivate Black Americans to consider Black American nation state formation more favorably. Although the analysis proceeds from an assumption (i.e., that a Shabazzland economy would reflect a similar structure as the US economy) that is not likely to hold precisely, the assumption remains a good starting point for considering employment in a land for liberated Black Americans.

⁵ See <https://www.bls.gov/opub/reports/race-and-ethnicity/2019/home.htm> (Table 1) (Ret. 071122).

B Robinson
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