



Understanding  
Society



# *UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY:* FINDINGS 2012

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## *Understanding Society*

To find out more about the survey, its design, the data that's available and research that's making use of it, please visit the *Understanding Society* website at [www.understandingsociety.org.uk](http://www.understandingsociety.org.uk).

You can also email us at [info@understandingsociety.org.uk](mailto:info@understandingsociety.org.uk).



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# PREFACE

| Patricia Broadfoot, Chair of Governing Board



## NEW INSIGHTS FROM THE 'LIVING LABORATORY OF BRITISH LIFE'

The United Kingdom today is a society in transition. The impact of the economic recession, changing lifestyles, an increasingly heterogeneous population and evolving family structures are just some of the elements that are contributing to significant social change. The choices people make about their lifestyles – where they live, how they bring up their children, their leisure activities, even what they choose to eat – are in turn affected by these major currents of economic and social change.

Such issues are the lifeblood of society. They affect the happiness and perceived well-being of every member of the population, whether they are still at school or well into retirement. They are the lived reality of daily life for us all. This is why this next set of findings from the *Understanding Society* longitudinal household survey is so fascinating. Although the fourteen individual analyses presented in this collection only deal with a tiny fraction of the data that the survey has already collected, they provide a rich set of insights into how people are experiencing life in Britain today.

Several contributions report novel analyses of how people are feeling in our society. There is an exploration, for example, of where people turn for emotional support and it seems this is rather different for men and for women. Another contribution looks at the causes of job-related stress. Among young people in particular, the special Youth Panel data reveal an important relationship between adolescent lifestyles and an individual's sense of happiness and well-being. There is a positive correlation, for example, between healthy eating, active sports participation, low alcohol consumption and higher happiness scores.


Snapshots like these of aspects of contemporary British life are in many ways unprecedented. Because of the size of the *Understanding Society* sample – approximately 100,000 individuals in 40,000 households – it is possible to delve into such topics in unprecedented detail.

*Understanding Society* also contains novel ways of collecting information from respondents. Through its Innovation Panel the study challenges social researchers from around the world to compete in suggesting new methods that will be even more effective in collecting reliable data. An example included in this collection explores different ways of measuring well-being and demonstrates how the way in which data is collected can affect the results obtained.

A third, unique, feature of *Understanding Society* is its ability to collect robust data on minority groups which in most social surveys do not normally constitute a large sample. The ethnic minority boost sample in the *Understanding Society* study provides unique insights into particular aspects of life in a range of ethnic minority communities. In this collection, for example, this aspect of the study provides data on migration histories and the diversity of the United Kingdom population. It also begins to raise what may prove to be important insights into perceived racial discrimination in the UK. Is it significant, for example, that about 15% of Chinese and Caribbean respondents cited racial discrimination as the reason they felt they had been turned down for a job but that the Bangladeshi sub-sample did not? The answer may come from the accumulating insights that *Understanding Society* will provide over time.

Fascinating as these insights are, they are just an initial taste of what will be possible once the findings from *Understanding Society* span a number of years. It is important to know in detail how people in this country are living – how they manage their families, their money, the demands of work, what it feels like to live in a particular community or with a disability, how difficult it is to get a job

*Understanding Society* will be the site of many important new discoveries helping to address pressing social issues



and the factors that influence happiness. But information that is collected at only one point in time – as is the case with most social surveys – has only a very limited capacity to explain the picture it presents. It will be the regular collection year on year from the same households, coupled

The results obtained have been explicitly designed to inform Government thinking in key policy areas

with the size and make-up of the sample, which will make *Understanding Society* an invaluable resource. Because the study is still in its early stages, the findings presented in this collection are still largely descriptive but they do provide a powerful foretaste of the range and depth of analyses that will be possible in the future.

*Understanding Society's* close connection to the world of policymaking is also unique. The survey is not a conventional academic exercise as many of the questions asked and the results obtained have been explicitly designed to inform Government thinking in key policy areas. Understanding why, for example, unemployment rates among 16 to 24 year olds nearly doubled between 2008 and 2010 to almost 20% and were even higher among those with low educational achievement is of central importance to informing the strategic priorities of education and employment policy. With time, our capacity to understand the factors that lie behind such statistics will increase considerably and with it, the ability to make informed judgements about suitable interventions.

Social science's focus on people's experiences in their day-to-day lives has tended to rob it of the romance of scientific discovery. It is also a field in which the collection of information which is dependable and unambiguous is necessarily difficult given the focus on people, rather than the natural world. *Understanding Society* heralds a change in this respect by providing a scientific resource on a scale hitherto more familiar to the natural sciences. Coupled with the use of the most sophisticated methods for collecting and analysing information and its accumulation year on year, *Understanding Society* will for the first time make it possible to provide a comprehensive picture of life in Britain today both for individuals and for households. *Understanding Society* will provide the first ever 'living laboratory of British life' – a laboratory that like the natural sciences, will be the site of many important new discoveries helping to address pressing social issues.

# INTRODUCTION

| Nick Buck, Principal Investigator



**This is our second annual publication of findings from *Understanding Society*, the UK Household Longitudinal Study. *Understanding Society* is a major social science investment in longitudinal studies with potentially huge long term implications for social science and other research and for the understanding of the UK in the early twenty-first century.**

It will provide valuable new evidence about the people of the UK, their lives, experiences, behaviours and beliefs, and will enable an unprecedented understanding of diversity within the population. Its longitudinal design, in which the study aims to collect data at annual intervals from all adult members of around 40,000 households, as well as young people aged 10-15, will give a particular insight into how their lives change, how past events affect future outcomes and how far people are able to realise their aspirations.

Since the first report of early findings (<http://research.understandingsociety.org.uk/findings/early-findings>) was published in February 2011, three important new sets of data have been released, all of which are reflected in this report.

Firstly, the whole of the first wave of the survey, which took place in 2009 and 2010 has now been released. This contains just over 30,000 households, including a substantial ethnic minority boost sample. The capacity *Understanding Society* brings to support investigation of the situation and experiences of ethnic minorities in the UK is a particularly important feature of the study, and is reflected in a number of articles here.

Secondly, data from the first year of Wave 2 of the study has also been released. This includes not only the second interview with members of households who were first interviewed as part of Wave 1, but also the first interviews within *Understanding Society* of members of the former British Household Panel Survey, who have been interviewed for up to 18 waves previously. They will add a very important long term dimension to the study in its early stage. The Wave 2 data contains information about a number of new topics, including health related behaviours, social support, conditions people experience at work and participation in sports and cultural activities. Most importantly, the Wave 2 data allows us a first opportunity to look at changes in individuals' lives between 2009 and 2010, for example in terms of employment transition.

Finally, data from the first two waves of the Innovation Panel has also been released. This sample of 1,500 households provides an opportunity to explore ways of improving the collection of longitudinal data. Some results of experimental work in this panel are reported here.

Although these are early findings, they cover a wide range of domains of people's lives and experiences. The purpose of the volume is not only to present and share these findings, but more importantly to give future users of *Understanding Society* a sense of the potential of the study. We expect and hope that these early findings will be rapidly superseded by further analyses by a much wider range of researchers.

The data used in this publication are available to the wider community of researchers through the Economic and Social Data Service. More detail about the design of the study can be found in Chapter one and the appendix to our first early findings report.

Wave 2 data allows us the first opportunity to look at changes in individuals' lives between 2009 and 2010



# INTRODUCTION TO ETHNICITY ARTICLES

| Lucinda Platt



***Understanding Society* is important for ethnicity research for three reasons. As a general purpose survey, it includes a wide range of content that increase the potential for such research. In addition, there is also content that is specifically relevant to the analysis of ethnicity and ethnic minority experiences. Finally, because it has a substantial ethnic minority boost, it provides the numbers to render that potential a reality and, because of the range of groups included, it has the potential to highlight the different patterns of experience across groups in this sample: there is not just one minority story any more than there is one migrant story.**

Examples of the sorts of questions that can be analysed on the basis of the general content include differences in employment, education, income, housing, partnership histories, health, relationships, well-being, children's aspirations and how these are different or similar across ethnic groups – and whether the relationships between some of them (e.g. life satisfaction and housing, employment and income) are the same across groups or are different for some groups than others.

There are also questions that can be answered, using the 'ethnicity-relevant' content. These include the topics addressed in this volume: about parents' and grandparents' countries of birth and identification with parents' ethnicity; about internal (within UK) migration histories as well as international migration; about perceptions of discrimination; and about remittances.

The internal migration histories can help tell us how settlement patterns change and how far individuals move following migration or – for UK born – from the migrant generation's area of settlement. This feeds into the ongoing debates about ethnic segregation and whether it is chosen or constrained or in fact a myth.

The extent to which people do or do not perceive processes of discrimination at work is in itself interesting as is the extent of harassment experienced or how fear of it constrains people from minority groups. This also ties in with questions of ethnic segregation discussed above. It has been proposed that areas of relative minority group concentration are protective from or give support in the face of harassment and intimidation.

A key issue for remittances is the extent to which they decline among those who have been in the country longer and across generations. We would expect much fewer remittances to be paid by the second generation, but the extent to which they do persist is of great interest. Remittances also restrict immediate spending power, and so can result in 'hidden' deprivation (as they are rarely measured) since available income is lower than actual income.

There are many questions relating to 'cause and effect' that require longitudinal data and where our understanding will be enhanced when we have multiple years of data. For example, do people move to or out of areas where there are other minorities? How does that relate to experiences of or perceptions of harassment, or to changes in income? The relationship between language and employment can be addressed more fully, for example does getting a job improve your language skills or are those who become fluent in English more likely to get jobs? Analysts will also be able to explore whether low incomes are particularly persistent for some minorities. Other questions include whether people's strength of identity change with marriage / children / and where they live.

The ethnicity strand of *Understanding Society* will help provide a proper evidence base around these important and highly salient issues. This volume indicates just some of that future potential through exploring the findings deriving from just one wave of data.

There is not just  
one minority  
story any more  
than there is one  
migrant story

# SOCIAL SUPPORT FROM FAMILY AND FRIENDS

| Heather Laurie

**There is evidence from other studies of a 'buffering' effect of having positive social support in the face of shocks such as divorce, ill-health, bereavement, or losing your job. Having positive and strong social support has also been associated with better psychological and physical health as well as positive health and other behaviours.**

The second wave (collected in 2010) of *Understanding Society* included questions on the perceived levels of personal and emotional support people felt they had from their partner, other family members and friends. A total of 15,940 respondents (6,936 men and 9,007 women) answered these questions using a self-completion questionnaire. The data in the analysis are weighted to reflect the UK population. The questions included positive aspects of social support and questions about negative social interaction or lack of social support. The study also asked whether people have someone they can confide in and if so, who they are. *Understanding Society* provides an opportunity to examine the distribution of perceived social support across the population and how this varies by individual and household characteristics. As the longitudinal data are gathered over the coming years of the study, this will provide evidence on the role social support networks play in coping with stressful situations throughout the life-course, potentially increasing people's resilience in the face of adverse life events.

In the self-completion questionnaire respondents were asked to rate the following statements for their spouse/partner, other family members, and friends. Respondents were asked to say how they felt about each statement with the answers being 'A lot', 'Somewhat', 'A little', or 'Not at all'.

*How much do they really understand the way you feel about things?*

*How much can you rely on them if you have a serious problem?*

*How much can you open up to them if you need to talk about your worries?*

*How much do they criticise you?*

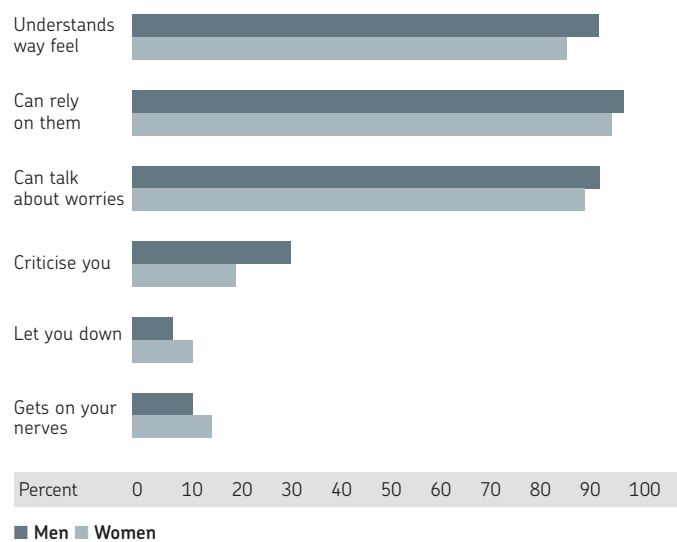
*How much do they let you down when you are counting on them?*

*How much do they get on your nerves?*

When asked to rate their spouse or partner, the majority of people reported having positive support from their partner and a minority reported a lack of support: 88% of respondents said their partner understood the way they feel, 95% said they could rely on their partner if they had a problem, and 90% said they could talk to their partner about their worries 'a lot' or 'somewhat'. There were some differences between men and women. Men were more likely than women to say their partner understands the way they feel, can be relied upon if they had a problem, and is someone they can talk to about their worries. These

differences remained significant when a range of other characteristics were taken into account. On the other hand, men were significantly more likely than women to say their partner criticises them 'a lot' or 'somewhat', 32% of men compared with 20% of women. In contrast, women were more likely than men to say their partner lets them down (11% of women vs. 8% of men) or gets on their nerves (15% of women vs. 11% of men).

**Figure 1** Partner's positive support and lack of support rated 'a lot'/'somewhat'



Source: *Understanding Society: Wave 2*

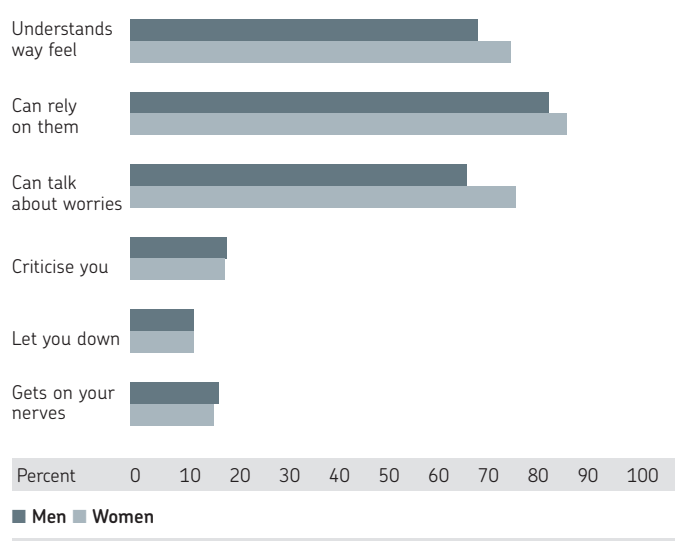
Looking at other family members including extended family, the majority of people report having positive support from their family and a minority report a lack of support. Women were significantly more likely to report having positive support from other family members than men: 74% of women said family members understood the way they feel 'a lot' or 'somewhat' compared with 68% of men, 86% of women said they could rely on family members compared with 82% of men, and 76% of women said they could talk to family members about their worries compared with 66% of men, differences which again hold after other factors were taken into account. These gender differences in perception of support are in the opposite direction than for support from partners. There were no differences between men and women in the extent to which they reported a lack of support from family members.

**Men who have a spouse or partner rely heavily on their partner for positive social support**





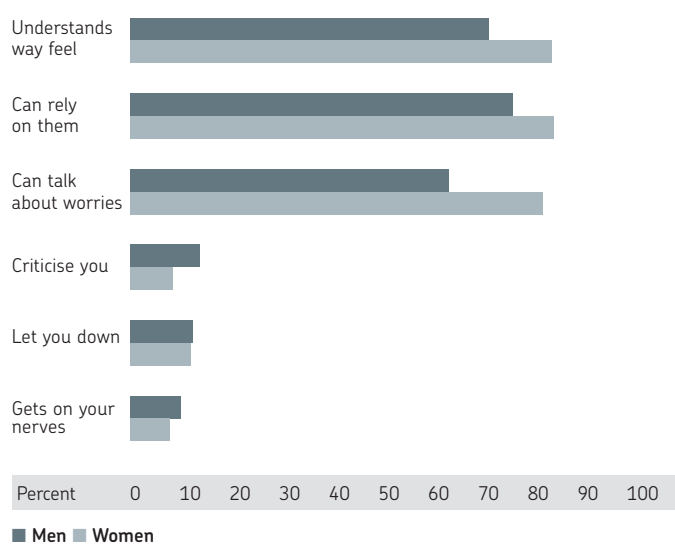
**Figure 2** Family's positive support and lack of support rated 'a lot'/'somewhat'



Source: *Understanding Society*: Wave 2

When asked about their friends, women were more likely than men to report positive social support. Of women, 83% said their friends understood the way they felt 'a lot' or 'somewhat' compared with 71% of men, 83% of women compared with 75% of men said they could rely on their friends and 81% of women compared with 64% of men said they could talk about their worries with their friends. Overall, it seems that men are more inclined to rely primarily on their partner (if they have one) for positive social support rather than looking to family members and friends. Women seem to look not only to their partner if they have one but also to family and friends to a greater extent than men.

**Figure 3** Friend's positive support and lack of support rated 'a lot'/'somewhat'



Source: *Understanding Society*: Wave 2

Having a confidant or a person to share private feelings with is an important component of social support. People were asked to think of the person they can best share their private feelings and concerns with and to say whether they were male or female. Men were far more likely than women to say they

shared their feelings with a woman with 75% of men compared to 54% of women giving this response. In contrast just 25% of men said they shared their feelings with a man compared with 46% of women. Just 4% of men and 2% of women had no-one at all in whom they could confide.

Among men with a female confidant, 75% gave their wife/partner as this person with a further 3% saying they confided in their daughter, 5% to their mother, 2.5% to a sister, and 13% to a female friend. Of men saying they confided in a male person the majority, 67%, said this was a male friend rather than a partner or other family member, 7% confided in a son, 6% to their father, and 9% to a brother.

Women with a male confidant were also most likely to say this was their husband/partner (82%), 4% confided to a son and 12% to a male friend. However, women who said they confided in a female person were far more likely than men to say they confided in their daughter (18%) or in their mother (11%) or a sister (13%) while 50% said they confided in a female friend.

In this initial analysis, the gender differences in perceptions of social support from spouse, family and friends are quite marked and remain significant after allowing for other characteristics. Men who have a spouse or partner rely heavily on their partner for positive social support while women tend to look more widely to other family members and friends. This suggests that men and women differ in their approach to their relationships with family and friends and as the longitudinal data come on stream we will be able to assess how these differences relate to measures of well-being and life satisfaction over time and an ability to withstand unforeseen shocks.

The social support questions carried on *Understanding Society* can therefore tell us not only the extent to which people feel they have positive social support or a lack of support from their partner, family and friends but can also help us understand something of the nature of the social networks in which people live their lives and the importance of those networks in providing personal and emotional support throughout the life-course. In this initial analysis, other factors such as differences by country of residence and the impact of living in an urban or rural environment were not examined but remain interesting questions for the future once the full 2010 and 2011 data become available.

### Key Findings

- Couple members are highly supportive of each other, with 95% saying they could rely on their partner if they had a problem.
- Men who have a partner tend to rely on their partner for social support. Women are more likely to view the wider family and friends as supportive.
- The marked gender differences in social support remain significant after allowing for other characteristics.

# REVISITING THE 'DOING GENDER' HYPOTHESIS – HOUSEWORK HOURS OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES IN THE UK

| Man Yee Kan

## This article reviews a debate on the domestic division of labour: Do husbands and wives try to fulfil their gender identity when undertaking housework?

A resource bargaining perspective suggests that one's housework time and the share of housework in the home decreases with increases in one's relative contribution to family income.<sup>1</sup> An exception to this pattern is that when the husband's income is too low compared to his wife's, both partners will 'do gender' in order to prevent a further deviation from the male breadwinner gender norm. That is, the husband's housework time and his share of housework will decrease rather than increase. This has been found in research based on data from the US, Australia and Sweden.<sup>2-3</sup> In a 2008 study of UK data from the British Household Panel Study, Kan<sup>4</sup> found only limited support for the 'doing gender' hypothesis.

When might gender trump money in the hours of housework? Theoretically, it occurs when men earn much lower income than their partners. In practice, the number of cases of economically dependent husbands is very small, even in a large scale dataset. Therefore a common problem in past studies is that the empirical statistical testing of the hypothesis is based on a small number of cases. The new UK household panel survey, *Understanding Society*, with its large sample provides good data for evaluating the hypothesis. In this paper, we use the first wave of data to revisit the hypothesis. There are two research questions:

- 1) *Are husbands' and wives' housework hours negatively associated with their relative contribution to family income?*
- 2) *Do husbands and wives 'do gender' by reducing/increasing their housework time respectively when the male relative economic contribution is very low? That is, is there a curvilinear relationship between relative economic contribution and housework hours?*

The data used comes from *Understanding Society*, Wave 1, 2009-2010. In Wave 1, one quarter of the total sampled households were asked about their weekly housework hours. We selected married couples where both partners are at working age, that is, the wife is younger than 60 and the husband is younger than 65. The sample contains 1,547 couples. We do not investigate differences among the four countries of the UK in the present study because of the limitation in the sample size. All results in this study are weighted.

First, wives on average undertake about three quarters of the housework. Their mean housework hours are 15.4 (s.d. 10.6) per week, compared to 5.8 hours (s.d. 6.6) for men. The outcomes are husbands' weekly housework hours, wives' hours and husbands' share of housework (defined as husbands' housework hours divided by the sum of both partners' housework hours). Analyses controlling for additional variables provide detail as to how housework hours of men and women might change with characteristics of the household. The first research question asks about the relationship of the relative economic independency (or simply put, one's income relative to his/her partner) and other demographic variables with hours of housework. Relative income is defined as the difference between the respondent's income and the partner's divided by their sum. The squared term of relative income is added to address the second research question.

Focusing on the first question, we see that following the resource bargaining perspective, when one's income relative to his/her partner increases, his/her housework hours decrease, after controlling for both partners' total income and other characteristics of the household (coefficients are -2.417 and -2.256 respectively). Accordingly, the husband's share of the housework is less with increases in his relative income.

Other variables are also related to housework hours. The number of dependent children is positively associated with both men's and women's housework hours, but the effect on women is considerably stronger. Both men and women do more housework when their spouses are employed but they themselves are not, even when controlling for other characteristics. Women who have attained a university level of education do less housework than less educated women, but educational level is not associated with men's housework hours.

To answer the second research question, a squared term of economic independency (relative income) is added to test whether the relationship between housework hours and economic independency is curvilinear. The squared term has a significant negative association with both men's and women's housework hours. That is, when a woman earns much more than her

If wives earn more money do they undertake less housework?



**Gender ideology still poses a barrier to gender equality to the domestic division of labour**

husband, she does more housework instead of less. And when a man earns too little, he does less rather than more. Figure 1 presents the predicted housework hours against economic independency for men. We see that housework hours has a slightly curvilinear relationship with economic

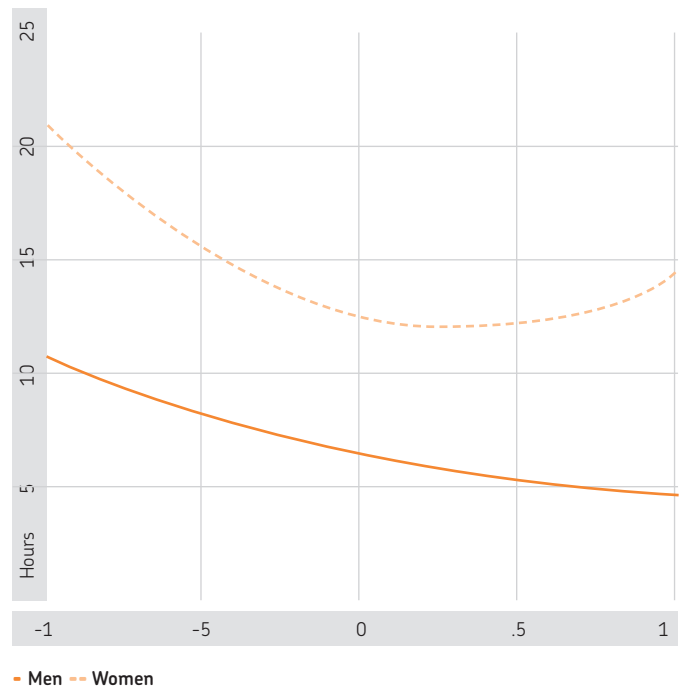
independency, mainly because men who earn much more than their wives undertake even less housework than predicted by the resource bargaining perspective. It is not the case that men who earn less than their partners do little housework. Rather it is those who earn much more than their wives do not contribute much to housework.

For women, there is a strong curvilinear relationship between housework hours and economic independency as shown in Figure 1. The negative linear relationship starts to reverse when the relative independency equals 0.3, i.e. when women earn about 65% of both partners' total income. This supports the hypothesis that women might 'do gender' by taking on more housework when they earn much higher income than their spouses.

These findings are different from Kan's<sup>4</sup> study. It may be because there are real changes in the gender norms and how economic resources affect housework contributions in 2009-2010 compared to 1991-1998. Second, the present study has restricted the sample to working age married couples, while Kan's (2008) study included married and cohabiting couples in all age groups.

While married women at working age still undertake three quarters of housework at home, their housework hours and share of housework were reduced when contributing a larger share of family income. Findings of this article, however, suggest that gender ideology still poses a barrier to gender equality in the domestic division of labour. When women earn more than 65% of the family income, their housework time tends to increase rather than decrease. There is also evidence to show that men who earn much higher income than their wives tend to undertake less housework than predicted by the resource bargaining perspective.

**Figure 1** Predicted weekly housework hours against relative economic independency



**Key findings**

- Married women of working age do three quarters of housework.
- Housework hours of married women are less when contributing a larger share of family income.
- When women earn more than 65% of family income, their housework hours increase rather than decrease. Men who earn more than their wives do little housework.

**Further reading**

<sup>1</sup>Manser, M. & Brown, M. (1980). Marriage and household decision-making: A bargaining analysis. *International Economic Review*, 21, 31-44.

<sup>2</sup>Bittman, M., England, P., Folbre, N., Sayer, L. & Matheson, G. (2003). When does gender trump money? Bargaining and time in household work. *American Journal of Sociology*, 109, 186-214.

<sup>3</sup>Brines, J. (1994). Economic dependency, gender and the division of domestic labour at home. *American Journal of Sociology*, 100, 652-688.

<sup>4</sup>Kan, M. Y. (2008). Does gender trump money? Housework hours of husbands and wives in Britain. *Work, Employment and Society*, 22, 45-66.

# DOES YOUR MOTHER KNOW? STAYING OUT LATE AND RISKY BEHAVIOURS AMONG 10-15 YEAR-OLDS

| Maria Iacovou

**Throughout the ages, parents have fretted about how much control they should be exercising over the whereabouts of their teenage children. This issue has become particularly relevant in contemporary Britain, against the backdrop of the riots of 2011, with 'poor parenting' being blamed in some quarters for the disturbances, and with pronouncements by Parliament and regional police forces that parents should make sure they 'know where their children are' at night.**

This article uses data from the youth questionnaire of *Understanding Society*, which asks children aged 10 to 15 how frequently they have stayed out past 9pm without their parents knowing their whereabouts, over the past month. We also explore whether this is a 'bad thing', and examine whether there are differences between boys and girls, or between different age groups. In what follows, we sometimes abbreviate 'staying out past 9pm without your parents knowing where you are' as 'staying out late' – but all the analysis relates to the same question.

A substantial minority report having done this even once in the past month (21% of boys and 15% of girls), with a much smaller proportion (4% of boys and 2% of girls) who report having done it frequently (10 or more times in the past month). Figure 1 shows the percentages of young people who report having stayed out after 9pm in the previous month without their parents knowing where they were. As one would expect, this is much more common among older children; it is also more common among boys. But even among 15 year-olds, only a minority (36% of boys and 24% of girls) say they have been out after 9pm without their parents knowing where they are.

The question is whether staying out late without parents knowing is a 'problem behaviour' or simply a manifestation of the fact that children become more independent, and their parents trust them more to

make their own decisions, as they reach their mid-teens.

We can say that staying out late is associated with other behaviours and characteristics which our society is inclined to define as problematic in young people. Table 1 demonstrates this for 15 year-olds: staying out late without your parents knowing is associated with visiting pubs or bars more often; with frequency of alcohol consumption; with smoking, and with cannabis use. These associations are visible for both boys and girls, though they are more pronounced for girls in relation to smoking and drinking.

Staying out late without your parents knowing is also related to emotional problems: boys are more at risk of conduct problems, whereas the relationship between staying out at night and both hyperactivity and poor self-esteem is much more pronounced for girls.

Clearly, these findings do not mean that staying out late without telling your parents where you are necessarily 'causes' a young person to start smoking or using recreational drugs, any more than smoking would 'cause' a young person to stay out at night. In order to examine why some groups of young people are more likely than others to stay out at night, it is more informative to look at other factors, such as where they live, what sorts of families they grew up in, and the quality of relationships within the family.

Analyses which examine or control for all these factors together reveal that (as we saw from earlier results) young men are more likely than young women to stay out late without telling their parents where they are; and the likelihood of doing this increases over the age range. Living in social housing or with a single mother also increases the probability, but living in a stepfamily does not, and the number of siblings, grandparents or other people present in the household does not seem to have an effect. There are differences by nationality, with Scottish teenagers more likely than those living in England, Wales or Northern Ireland, to stay out late, and by ethnicity, with youngsters from Asian backgrounds less likely to stay out late than their white and African or Caribbean counterparts. There are also differences by the size of the community in which young people live: those living in hamlets and villages are less likely than those in towns and cities to go out at night without their parents knowing where they are. Young people who travel to school by independent means (on foot, bicycle, bus or train) are

Staying out late  
without your  
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problems



more likely than those who are taken to school by car to stay out at night. And finally, while family income has little effect on this particular aspect of youngsters' behaviour, family relationships are important: those who hardly ever talk about important matters with their mothers are more likely, and those who hardly ever quarrel with their mothers are less likely, to stay out late.

This analysis has shown that staying out late without telling your parents is associated with a number of risky or problem behaviours, and that the factors associated with staying out late are complex: some (such as geographical location) may relate to local entertainment opportunities; some (such as the mode of travel to school) probably relate to independence on the part of young people and trust on the part of parents; while others (most notably family relationships) demonstrate that social and emotional deprivation also play a role. Interestingly, while these sets of factors are all significantly related to staying out late, they are not all related to the problem behaviours discussed in Table 1. While poor family relationships are related to both staying out late and to problem behaviours, other factors such as independent travel to school are related to staying out late, but not to problem behaviours.

This analysis is very much a first look at the issue of staying out late, and as such, leaves many questions unanswered. In particular, we have not addressed the distinction between staying out late without your parents knowing where you are, and staying out late at all. In addition, for young people who stay out late without their parents knowing where they are, there may be a distinction between those who do this with

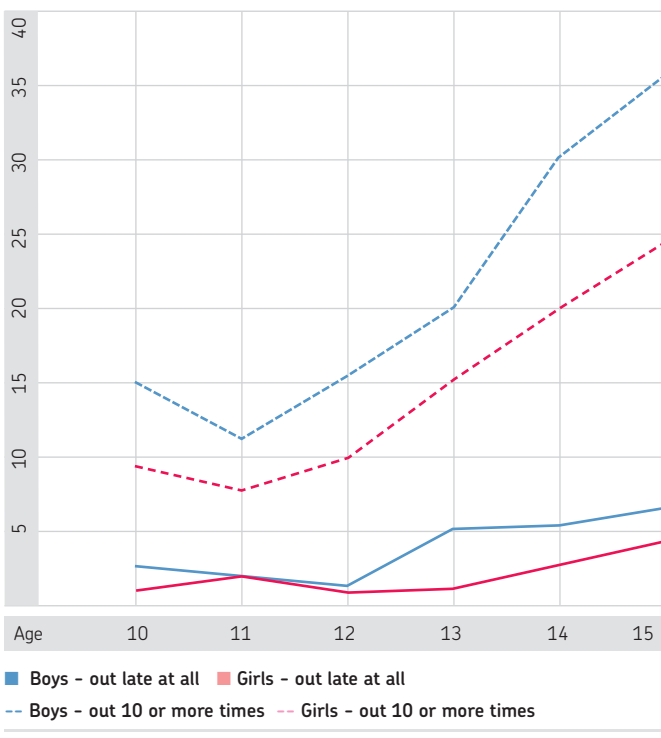
and without their parents' consent. At present, these questions cannot be answered using data from *Understanding Society*, but as the sample matures, there may be scope for refining questions in this way.

**Table 1** Frequency of staying out late without parents' knowledge by gender: 15 year olds

		Stayed out past 9pm without their parents' knowledge...		
		Never in past month	1 or more times in past month	3 or more times in past month
		%	%	%
Go to a pub or bar once per week or more	Boys	5	7	14 *
	Girls	4	6	11
Had alcohol more than once in past month	Boys	24	44 ***	56 ***
	Girls	25	51 ***	64 ***
Smoke	Boys	10	30 ***	33 ***
	Girls	18	41 ***	51 ***
Ever used cannabis	Boys	7	19 ***	38 ***
	Girls	5	15 **	37 ***
Score of 6 or more on conduct problems scale	Boys	6	10	19 ***
	Girls	2	6 **	7 *
Score of 7 or more on hyperactivity scale	Boys	13	15	15
	Girls	12	24 ***	26 **
Poor self-esteem	Boys	18	21	23
	Girls	25	37 *	32

**Notes:** Based on a sample of 651 boys and 662 girls aged 15, from Waves 1 and 2 of the *Understanding Society* youth sample. Asterisks denote figures where those staying out one or more, or three or more, times in the past month are statistically different from those not staying out. \* significant at 10% level; \*\* significant at 5% level; \*\*\* significant at 1% level.

**Figure 1** Percent out late without parents knowing where they are by gender



### Key findings

- Staying out late without parents' knowledge was reported by 21% of boys and 15% of girls aged 10 to 15. It was more common in boys and older children.
- For 15 year-olds, staying out late is associated with risky behaviours: going to pubs, drinking alcohol and ever using cannabis.
- For 15 year-olds, staying out late is associated with conduct problems for boys and, for girls, poor self-esteem and hyperactivity.

# HAPPINESS AND HEALTH-RELATED BEHAVIOURS IN ADOLESCENCE

| Cara L. Booker | Alexandra J. Skew | Amanda Sacker | Yvonne J. Kelly |

**Recent reports by UNICEF and WHO have provided a bleak, but improving world ranking of United Kingdom (UK) youth with respect to risk behaviours and subjective well-being.<sup>1-3</sup> Adolescence is potentially a prime period for interventions aimed to improve population health because of the continuities in subjective well-being and health-related behaviours throughout the lifecourse and adolescent subjective well-being and health-related behaviours predict adult health outcomes. With the UK's low standing in youth subjective well-being, we need to better understand the relationship between health-related behaviours and youth subjective well-being.**

Using data from the *Understanding Society* Youth Panel, we examine whether a range of health-related behaviours is linked to youth happiness, one of the key components of subjective well-being. The data used in this study come from the young people aged 10-15 who completed the Youth self-completion questionnaire in the first wave of *Understanding Society* (N = 4,899 living in 3,656 households).

A composite measure of happiness was derived from the six happiness questions, which asked about happiness with schoolwork, appearance, family, friends, school and life as a whole. The top 10% were considered to have high happiness. The health-related behaviours were smoking, drinking alcohol, consumption of fruit/vegetables, crisps/sweets/fizzy drinks and fast food, and participation in sport.

Percentages are weighted to represent their distribution in the overall UK population, and regression analysis controls for socio-demographic characteristics of the household.

Overall, less than 10% of youth reported having smoked cigarettes and 21% had an alcoholic drink in the last 4 weeks (Table 1). Two percent of 10-12 year-olds had smoked whereas 11% of 13-15 year-olds reported that they had smoked. Similarly, 93% of the younger age group said that they had not had an alcoholic drink in the last month compared with 65% in the older age group. Consumption of fruit and vegetables was low and appeared to drop with age: 17% of those aged

**Young people who smoked were about three times less likely to have high happiness scores**

10-12 years reported consuming 5 or more portions a day compared with 12% of those aged 13-15 years. Additionally, young people aged 13-15 were more likely to consume fast food meals and crisps, sweets and fizzy drinks compared to the younger age group. Participation in sport was less common among the older age group. Around 34% of young people aged 10-12 participated in sport every day compared to 26% of those aged 13-15. Conversely, 7% of the younger age group participated in the least amount of sport, less than one day per week, compared to 9% of the older age group. Similar percentages, 27%, of both age groups participated in 3-4 days of sport per week.

About 15% of 10-12 year-olds had high happiness scores compared to 6% of 13-15 year-olds.

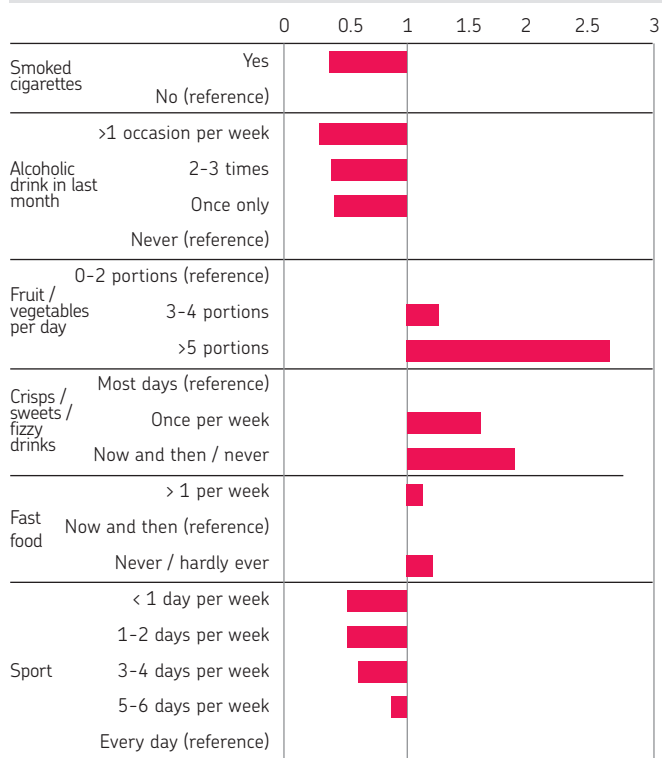
Figure 1 shows the association of health-related behaviours with high happiness scores. These results take into account age, gender, highest parental education qualification and household income. Young people who had smoked were

**Table 1** Youth happiness and health-related behaviours by age group among 4899 youth in *Understanding Society*

	Overall (n = 4899)	10-12 years (n = 2472)	13-15 years (n = 2427)
	%	%	%
<b>Sex</b>			
Male	52	52	51
Female	48	48	49
<b>Happiness scale</b>			
Deciles 1-9	88	85	94
Decile 10	12	15	6
<b>Smoked cigarettes</b>			
Yes	6.6	1.5	12.4
No	93	98.5	87.6
<b>Alcoholic drink in last month</b>			
1 occasion per week	2.8	0.4	5.7
2-3 times	7.6	1.6	16
Once only	11	6	19
Never	79	92	59
<b>Fruit/vegetables per day</b>			
0-2 portions	46	40	49
3-4 portions	40	43	39
5 portions	14	17	12
<b>Crisps/ sweets/ fizzy drinks</b>			
Most days	44	41	49
Once per week	26	27	25
Now and then/never	30	32	27
<b>Fast food</b>			
1 per week	21	17	19
Now and then	49	52	47
Never/hardly ever	30	31	34
<b>Sport</b>			
< 1 day per week	6.6	4.2	8.5
1-2 days per week	19	15	22
3-4 days per week	27	27	28
5-6 days per week	18	21	16
Every day	29	34	26

Source: *Understanding Society*, Wave 1 Youth self-completion, weighted percentages

**Figure 1** Odds ratios of youth high happiness on health-related behaviours



Source: *Understanding Society*, Wave 1 Youth self-completion, weighted analysis  
 Notes: Top 10 percentile of the happiness with life scale. Adjusted for youth age, gender, highest parental education qualifications and household income.

about three times less likely to have high happiness scores compared to those who had never smoked. Young people who drank alcohol at least once per week were four times less likely to have high happiness than those who reported no alcohol consumption. Young people who drank between one and three occasions per week were more than 2.5 times less likely to report high happiness.

Higher consumption of fruit and vegetables and lower consumption of crisps, sweets and fizzy drinks were both associated with high happiness and adjustment for socio-demographic factors had little effect on the size of these associations. There was a mixed pattern for fast food where young people who reported eating fast food more than once per week and those who reported never or hardly ever eating fast food were less likely to have high happiness compared to young people who ate fast food now and then.

There was a linear relationship between greater frequency of sports participation and high levels of happiness. Young people who reported sport participation two or fewer days per week were two times less likely to have high happiness than those who participated in sport every day.

Less than 5% of youth who had smoked or drank alcohol on a weekly basis had high happiness scores. Individually, smoking and alcohol use were strongly negatively associated with youth happiness. Positive health-related behaviours such as increased fruit and vegetable consumption, lower intake of crisps, sweets, fizzy drinks and fast food, and greater frequency of sport participation were linked to high happiness.

We know that health-related behaviours and some aspects of subjective well-being can be traced from adolescence to adulthood. Therefore, patterning of these can be set in youth. For these reasons, generating a picture of a range of health-related behaviours, activities and subjective well-being in a contemporary UK sample of young people is of great value. We found similar patterns of fruit and vegetable intake, drinking and smoking as reported in the 2007 Health Survey for England.<sup>4</sup> There is extensive literature that has documented the benefits of a healthy diet and physical activity on health.<sup>5</sup> In this article, we find that health-related behaviours, such as diet and physical exercise, are related to high happiness in young people.

Early youth appears to be a time of relatively good health. It is also a period when individuals develop their sense of autonomy in their choices. There are clear continuities in health-related behaviours and subjective well-being into later life. In light of the recent reports, interventions aimed at reducing risky health-related behaviours in adolescence may have an added benefit of increasing subjective well-being in adults of the UK.

### Key findings

- Smoking and drinking were negatively associated with of high happiness.
- Increased participation in sport was associated with high happiness.
- Increased consumption of unhealthy food and decreased consumption of fruits and vegetables were negatively associated with high happiness.

### Further reading

<sup>1</sup>UNICEF. (2007). *Child poverty in perspective: An overview of child well-being in rich countries*. Florence, Italy: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

<sup>2</sup>World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe. (2008). *Inequalities in young people's health: HBSC international report from the 2005/2006 survey: Health Behaviour in School-aged Children*. Copenhagen, Denmark: WHO.

<sup>3</sup>Bradshaw, J. & Keung, A. (2011). *Trends in child subjective well-being in the UK*. *Journal of Children's Services*, 6(1), 4-17.

<sup>4</sup>Craig, R., & Shelton, N. (2008). *Health Survey for England 2007. Healthy lifestyles: Knowledge, attitudes and behaviour*. London: Health and Social Care Information Centre.

<sup>5</sup>Strong W. B., Malina, R. M., Blimkie, C. J., Daniels, S. R., Dishman, R. K., Gutin, B., et al. (2005). Evidence based physical activity for school-age youth. *Journal of Pediatrics*, 146(6), 732-737.

# HOW DIVERSE IS THE UK?

| Alita Nandi | Lucinda Platt

**Immigration into the UK is a hotly debated and electorally salient topic. In popular and political discourse immigrants are perceived as a threat not only to labour market or housing prospects of those settled for longer, but also to cultural continuity. Immigrants are frequently represented in popular politics and media as being additional or extraneous to the population rather than core to its make-up. This contrasts with some other countries where immigration is regarded as part of the national story even if immigration controls are nonetheless relatively stringent.**

The UK has also been characterised throughout its history as a country of multiple populations: more distantly Celts, Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Jutes, Norse, Normans, French, Dutch and those fleeing religious persecution in Europe; more recently, those from other European countries, those who arrived through the extensive trading networks of the British Isles, and those with colonial links with the UK. The largest immigrant flows in recent years have been from the A8 countries, from Anglophone countries such as US, New Zealand and Australia and from the pre-2004 EU countries. Running throughout the history of the UK are substantial population flows to and from (the Republic of) Ireland.

Moreover, the UK itself is a multiple nation, made up of four countries with populations who identify themselves, and are recognised, as distinct.

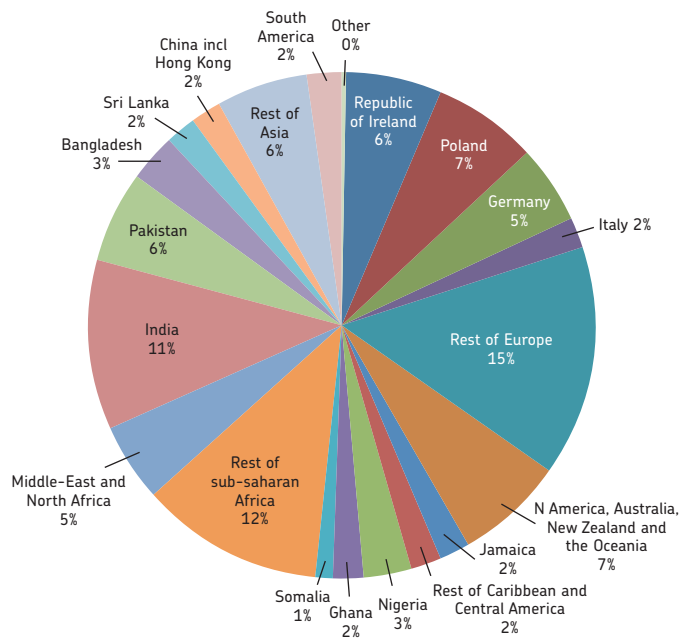
This paper therefore sets out to consider two questions. First: how diverse is the UK in terms of ancestry and heredity, self-perception and identification with being British? Second: is self-categorisation as ethnic majority or as minority ethnic linked to feelings of 'Britishness'?

Here we can exploit the fact that *Understanding Society* has questions on own, parental and grandparental country of birth, on own and parents' ethnic group, as well as questions on Britishness. Questions on parental and grandparental country of birth were asked of 47,710 adults (16+ years) living in the sampled households who participated in the interviews conducted between 2009 and 2010. The question on Britishness was asked of a smaller group of 17,680 adults. Weights were used to adjust results for sample design and non-response.

Within the UK population, 72% was born in England, 9% in Scotland, 5% in Wales and 3% in Northern Ireland. We find that 11% of the UK population was born outside the UK, but

29% of the UK population has some connection with a country outside the UK (that is, either own, parents' or grandparents' birth country is outside UK). Thus the composition of the UK looks substantially more diverse if we take into account the parentage of the UK population going back just two generations. On the other hand, claims to the UK being a diverse nation should not be overemphasised: 48% of the UK population are only associated with England. That is, nearly half of the UK population does not even have

**Figure 1** Distribution of UK population by country of birth for those born outside of the UK



Data source: *Understanding Society*, Wave 1

connections to the smaller countries of the UK in the last two generations and have family links only within England.

Looking together at ethnic identification and countries respondents are associated with suggests that there is substantial level of 'assimilation' to majority (White British) identification over even a relatively small number of generations. This is found among a proportion of those born outside the UK,

There are far more people in the UK with non-British origins than those who say their ethnic group is not White British





as well as among those with connections to other countries but born within the UK. While 29% are associated with a country outside UK, only 14% of UK population define themselves as of minority ethnicity (3.6% of which are White Other). In fact, 52% of those who have some connection outside the UK define themselves as White British, while 17% of those who were not born in the UK call themselves White British. Among those with parents from different ethnic groups, 30% call themselves 'mixed' but 35% of them call themselves White British. How should we view this? On the one hand this might be regarded as a positive 'melting pot' story. On the other, there might be regret at relative absence of 'hyphenated' or multiple identities which allow the maintenance of cultural claims.

Second, more people are associated with a country outside the UK than were born there or define their ethnicity in terms of it. For example, among UK residents 3.4% were associated with India, while 1% were born in India and 2% chose the category 'Indian' as their ethnic group. Again, 7% have parents or grandparents from the Republic of Ireland while 1% define themselves as Irish, though even fewer, 0.7% were born there.

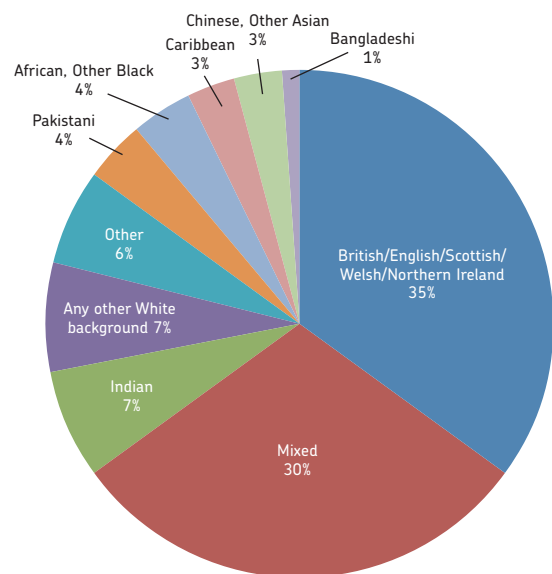
Finally, we explored what, if any, was the relationship of the expressed ethnic identity and claims to Britishness. It might be a reasonable expectation that those who maintain – or are ascribed – a minority ethnicity might feel less connected to notions of Britishness.

We next investigated whether ethnic category and subjective assessments of identity intersect. We found that, after adjusting for sex, age and education (because younger and more highly educated people express a lower sense of Britishness), those of minority ethnicity typically express a stronger British identity than the White British majority. This is true of UK and non-UK born minorities (though the non-UK born across all groups express a lower sense of British identity). It is not, though, true of those affiliating to a 'mixed' identity. Unsurprisingly, we found that those living in Scotland and Northern Ireland had lower British identification (on average) than those living in England and Wales.

On the other hand, for those describing themselves as White British, being born outside the UK has a negative effect on British identity. That is, those who 'assimilate' to White Britishness, have a lower sense of British identity than those who maintain a minority identity. Both these patterns are opposite to what might be assumed if the expectation was that expressed identity was meaningful for national connections.

In conclusion, there are far more people in the UK with non-British origins than those who say their ethnic group is not White British. In other words, many of the people whose parents or grandparents were born outside the UK define themselves as White British. Thus the apparently homogenous majority is more diverse than is typically represented. On the other hand, there is a substantial English core of the UK population: half of the UK population were born in England as were their parents and grandparents.

**Figure 2** Self-reported ethnic group of UK residents whose parents were of different ethnic groups



Data source: *Understanding Society*

Finally, it is clear that expression of minority identity does not imply alienation from national identity ('Britishness'), and nor does majority ethnic affiliation bring with it a stronger endorsement of national identity.

### Key findings

- Around 14% of the UK population define themselves as of minority ethnicity but twice this proportion (around 29%) were born in or have parents or grandparents born in a country outside the UK.
- Those who were born in England and for whom both their parents and all four of their grandparents were also born in the England make up nearly half of the total UK population.
- Ethnic minorities have a stronger sense of Britishness than the majority.

### Further reading

Manning, A. & Roy, S. (2010). Culture clash or culture club? National identity in Britain. *The Economic Journal*, 120 (542), F72-F100.

Runnymede Trust. (2000). *Commission on the future of multi-ethnic Britain. The Parekh Report*. London: Profile Books.

# EMPLOYMENT AND PERCEIVED RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

| Shamit Saggar | Alita Nandi

**Employment, wages and job quality all matter for life chances, well-being and for the outcomes of the next generation. We know from a range of sources that there are substantial differences in employment rates and in wages across ethnic groups.**

While debate continues about the extent to which these can be attributed to differences in skills or job availability, there is evidence that discrimination in employment plays a part in these differential outcomes. It may also be that awareness and perceptions of inequalities (whether well founded or not) in the job market shape job choices and outcomes, even in the absence of direct experience of discrimination from an employer or potential employer. So, perceptions of employment discrimination matter.

The task of identifying and measuring racial and other kinds of discrimination in employment is a challenge for contemporary social research. Traditionally, surveys have been used to shed light on this, starting most successfully with the 1970 Colour and Citizenship<sup>1</sup> study. This was pioneering in its ambition and findings and showed that reported discrimination had been understated by previous researchers and policymakers.

*Understanding Society* makes important contributions to the agenda for ethnicity research both by additional questions relevant to ethnicity and by the over-sampling of ethnic minority groups. The questions about discrimination are part of the additional content and are also asked of a comparison sample from the general population sample component.

How prevalent is perceived racial discrimination in employment? The initial results from *Understanding Society* offer new insights into perceptions of employment and racial discrimination. First, people can only be turned down for a job if they apply for one. The rates of those who have applied for a job and been turned down after an interview or assessment in the past year, are shown in Table 1. Over a third of certain black and minority ethnic (BME) groups – such as Caribbeans and Africans – reported that they fell into this category. Meanwhile, less than 30 per cent of their white counterparts said that they had had a similar experience, much the same as for Indian, Bangladeshi and Pakistanis. Receiving ‘We regret to inform you’ letters varies considerably across ethnic groups.

**Table 1** Refusal for jobs in past 12 months among different ethnic groups

	Turned down for a job of those who applied?	Number of those who applied for a job
	Percentage	Number
White: British, English, Scottish, Northern Irish	28	356
Indian	29	311
Pakistani	29	224
Bangladeshi	28	272
Chinese	38	174
Caribbean	35	235
African, other Black	42	357
Other	34	209

**Notes:** Weighted percentage; unweighted n. Source: *Understanding Society*, Wave 1

The bar chart (Figure 1) above describes the share of those turned down who regarded their rejection as being consequent on one of the following reasons: sex, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, health or disability, nationality, religion, language or accent, dress or appearance. The majority of respondents did not consider their rejection as discriminatory in one of these ways. However, around a fifth of the total population perceived discrimination of some form as shaping their rejection, and this highlights a widespread pattern. The ethnic group reporting the highest percentage of some form of discrimination was Caribbean (31%). The other minority ethnic groups reported rates ranging from 17% to 24%.

Figure 1 also shows the percentage of those turned down for a job who gave race or ethnicity as a reason. The range among the minority groups studied was 1 to 16 percent, and we must be cautious because of the small absolute numbers in some cases. As we might expect, the rate was zero among the White majority, but rose to around 16 per cent among Caribbeans. Another way of looking at these figures is that about half of Chinese, Caribbean who felt discriminated against at all, gave race or ethnicity as a reason. About a third of Indian, Africans, and Chinese who reported discrimination in applying for a job gave race/ethnicity as a reason. Bangladeshi were unlikely to report discrimination for race/ethnicity. This may be a reflection of occupational

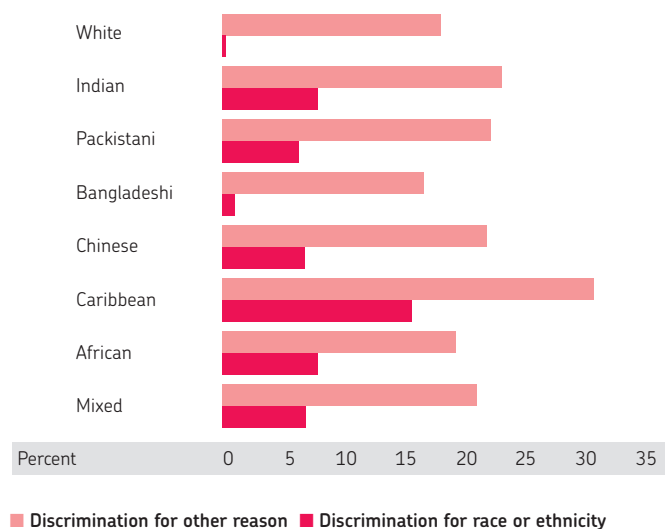
segregation or specialisation. Paradoxically, as has been noted, it may be that greater equality can also reveal the limits to that equality much more clearly. It may suggest that for the jobs they are applying for Bangladeshi applicants do not face the same sort of discrimination faced by Chinese and Caribbean respondents. That is, perceptions of inequality may shape the array of jobs to which some people apply if they believe they won't get jobs because of discrimination. This would be consistent with a discouraged worker line of argument that has been widely researched.

While a large share of all groups have the experience of being rejected for a job, about 20 to 30 per cent attribute the rejection to some form of discrimination. Between half and a third of discrimination in most minority ethnic groups was reported related to race or ethnicity. We must weigh these results against the possibility that people may not always know whether they have been discriminated against or be willing to report it as such. It would be interesting to know whether respondents who do not perceive racial or ethnic discrimination think that they were rejected or another hired because the selected applicant was more deserving (meritorious or for some other reason entirely).

*Understanding Society* also tried to capture within-workplace perceived discrimination by asking about being turned down for promotion in the past 12 months and whether it was for one of the reasons described above. However, despite the overall size of the ethnic minority boost, samples sizes are simply too small to draw meaningful conclusions. Thus such a significant and salient question must be devolved to workplace or more specialized studies.

The findings from *Understanding Society* can contribute to policy approaches for addressing discrimination. The examination of discrimination via large scale surveys should also be supplemented with other methods. This may include studies of what members of the public think should be done to address discrimination, experimental tests in actual job selection situations, and the analysis of administrative systems and processes. Such varied approaches will be combined to obtain understanding of institutional practices in addition to individual behaviour.

**Figure 1** Perceived discrimination for being turned down for a job by reason among different ethnic groups



Notes: Weighted percentage. Source: *Understanding Society*, Wave 1

### Key findings

- Race or ethnicity was seen as a reason for being turned down for a job in the last year by 6–16% of most minority ethnic groups.
- There is ethnic variation in the percentage being turned down for a job and in perceptions of discrimination.

### Further reading

<sup>1</sup>Deakin, Nicholas. (1970). *Colour, Citizenship And British Society*. London: Panther books.

# UNDERSTANDING REMITTANCES IN *UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY*: QUANTIFYING TIES OVERSEAS AND TIES TO BRITAIN

| Omar Khan | Alita Nandi

**Sending money overseas is seen as a key feature of immigrant behaviour. Globally, the World Bank has estimated \$440 billion were remitted in 2010, compared to \$132bn in 2000 and \$69bn in 1990.<sup>1</sup> Results from *Understanding Society* allow us to appreciate in greater detail how and why people in the UK remit money overseas. In summarising and analysing these findings, we also discuss their relevance to policy related to migration, integration, international development and financial inclusion.**

In the *Understanding Society* questionnaire, the question on remittances was asked of respondents in the ethnic minority boost sample and a comparison general population sample. The first question was: 'Many people make gifts or send money to people in another country. Did you send or give money to anyone in a country outside the UK in the past 12 months for any of the following reasons?' Former data has captured formal remittances or simply personal capital flows between countries.

Overall, 21% of migrants sent money outside the UK in the past year. Nearly 9 out of 10 (88%) of those making such a payment sent funds to family members or friends, 12% sent money to support a local community, and payments for debt or for personal investments were rare.

The UK Department for International Development notes that remittances equal or surpass aid budgets. That is, the contribution of remittances to human development could be as great as official aid from developed countries. However, since most people remit to family members or friends, remittances may not flow straightforwardly to development. Unlike aid for a water sanitation project or for female education, money sent to family and friends is less likely to benefit everyone in a community.

Remittances varied by ethnicity. Black Africans were the most likely to remit money (37%); 19-24% of Bangladeshis, Chinese, Pakistanis, Arabs, Indians and Caribbeans sent money overseas. Of mixed and other ethnic groups 11-14% made remittances. However, only 4.1% of White British ethnicity remitted money.

These findings reflect the link between place of birth and remitting money; 21% of first generation respondents reported remitting compared to 12% of second generation respondents. Within the ethnic group comparisons shown in Figure 1, those of African ethnicity are the most likely to be born outside the UK and Caribbeans and Mixed ethnicity

least likely. There is a personal connection underlying these patterns. First generation persons are more likely to know persons in the country. Even if they don't directly know someone living overseas, say in the case of a British-born person of Pakistani background, they may still feel an obligation or commitment to support extended members of their community.

The length of time people have lived in the UK is also associated with the likelihood of payments. The proportion making a payment drops with each additional decade living in the UK, but exceeds 25% for the first 20 years of living in the UK and is nearly 20% for those who have lived 30 years in the UK. We speculate that this is because people are less likely to still have close family or friends living overseas – the main target of remittances – after living in the UK for so long.

In some ways, then, remittances are an indicator of how far people have maintained ties to the countries where they were born. And although it's clear that people are more likely to remit if they were born overseas – and if they were more recent migrants – the data still suggest that this is a minority practice (20%). This may mean that fewer migrants intend to 'return' to their country of birth than policymakers expect, or even that they intend to settle in the UK. Two alternative explanations are that migrants send money through 'informal' channels they are unwilling to report, or that they simply have too little money to remit.

Those on low incomes find it more difficult to save, with the richest quintile of respondents to *Understanding Society* twice more likely to remit than the poorest. However, where the poorest respondents did report remitting money, they claimed to remit a much larger proportion of their overall income. Taking the sample as a whole, roughly half of those who remitted sent less than 10% of their income overseas. Among wealthier respondents, only around 4% remitted more than 30% of their income. Among the poorest respondents, however, one quarter remitted more than 30% of their income, and one in twenty remitted more than 70% of their income.

This is further evidence that low income people can save, as remittances are a kind of saving. *Understanding Society* data on remittances thereby suggests that policymakers could do

Many low-income immigrants are remitting a significant portion of their income

**Table 1** Proportion of income remitted among those making payments, by income quintiles

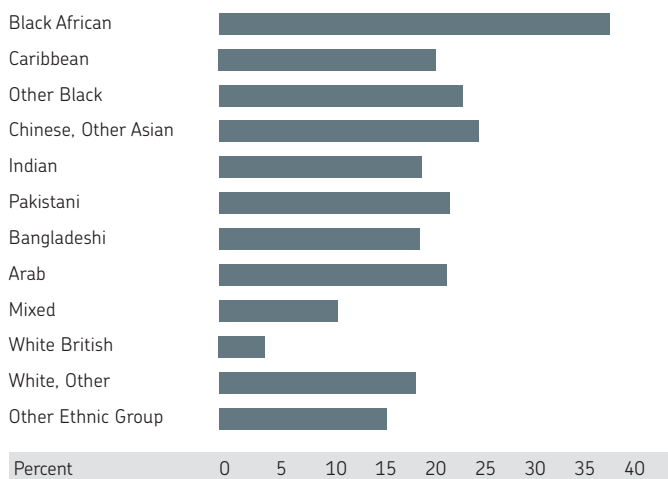
Income Quintile	Proportion of income remitted										% remitting
	1-9%	10-19%	20-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-79%	80-89%	90-100%	
Poorest quintile	10.4	55.1	11.0	7.1	7.7	3.1	1.0	1.7	1.2	1.6	4
Quintile 2	73.3	10.1	7.5	1.8	4.3	0.9	0.5	0.5	1.0	0.2	4
Middle quintile	49.1	13.5	5.2	29.2	0.4	0.2	1.1	0.5	0.5	0.2	4
Quintile 4	38.1	44.9	2.0	1.4	2.0	11.2	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	7
Wealthiest quintile	56.4	28.8	11.1	1.3	1.1	0.1	1.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>50.2</b>	<b>29.4</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>6</b>

Source: *Understanding Society*, Wave 1

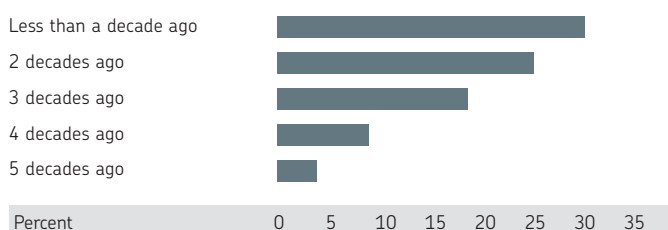
more to incentivise savings among low-income Britons more generally. We conclude on this note because it points to the relevance of remittances as an indicator of ties to Britain as well as ties to countries overseas. Given that only one in five migrants is currently remitting, and only 1 in 10 of the children of migrants, it appears that sustaining financial ties to a country overseas is somewhat less common than we might have suspected. Conversely, we could conclude that most migrants and their children who do not remit (80%) have stronger ties to the UK. This, then, could be a sign of their integration into British society.

At the same time, however, remittances are clearly an important phenomenon in modern Britain. Using *Understanding Society* data on country of birth and the Office of National Statistics mid-year population estimates, we estimate that there are 6.3 million adult UK residents who were born overseas and around 4.6 million second generation migrant adults. We estimate that in the UK each year there are remittances from at least 2 million people with an average amount of around £1,100, or approximately £2.2 billion. The data on remittances from *Understanding Society* has allowed us to understand better how and why migrants and their children in the UK send funds overseas.

**Figure 1** Proportion remitting among different ethnic groups



**Figure 2** Proportion remitting by years since arrival to UK



### Key findings

- Remittances are more common among migrants, and more common among second-generation than among third generation.
- However, even among migrants to the UK, only 21%, or one in five, reported remitting money.
- Black Africans were most likely to remit money, with 37% or more than one in three doing so. Very few White British respondents remitted money.
- Many low-income people are remitting a significant portion of their income, with a quarter of the poorest remitting more than 30% of their income, and one in twenty remitting more than 70%.

### Further reading

<sup>1</sup>Migration Policy Institute. (2012). *The global remittances guide*. Retrieved from <http://www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/remittances.cfm>.

# HOW MOBILE ARE IMMIGRANTS, AFTER ARRIVING IN THE UK?

| Ludi Simpson | Nissa Finney

**Where in the UK were you living when you were 14? How far from that place is your current home address? Readers of *Understanding Society* publications, as professionals who have moved during their higher education and early career, are likely to be tens or hundreds of miles from their childhood residence. But most people don't move so far: 42% of UK-born residents live within 5 miles of where they were when they were 14; only 20% moved more than 100 miles. See Table 1.**

These figures from *Understanding Society* reveal how we migrate over our life time. The census and most administrative records provide a record only of our most recent move.

Immigrants – all those born outside the UK – have a different experience of migration by virtue of having already made at least one major move. Is it a consequence that immigrants also have a different pattern of movement within the UK? On the face of it, that is not the case. Table 2 shows that 41% of immigrants live within 5 miles of where they first lived in the UK and only 25% live more than 100 miles away.

For a few years after arriving in the UK, housing and employment are likely to be temporary or insecure as the immigrant gets to know where he or she can fit in. This is especially so as most immigrants are young adults who have fewer ties to keep them in the same place. But again, this seems to overestimate the mobility of immigrants.

*Understanding Society* tells us that of those who migrated to the UK less than five years prior to their interview, 67% have not moved further than 5 miles from their first address. If there are moves due to instability of housing and employment, these are usually within local housing and labour markets.

Greater mobility is probably not a simple product of greater economic and educational resources

*Understanding Society* has a wealth of intelligence about migration which will take some careful preparation to yield robust interpretations. Respondents have not finished their life migration history, so what each reports about their past migration will be

influenced by their age and their stage of life.

We find for example that South Asian ethnic groups taken as a whole – whether born in the UK, recent immigrants or longer-residing immigrants with longer stay in the UK – are less likely to have moved long distances than Black groups taken as a whole. Such differences between groups may be due to compositional effects – of age and class in particular – but may also be a result of a balance of priorities between local family and personal advancement that may motivate a move, or demotivate it.

It is particularly hard to interpret the number of changes of address a person has made so far in their life, without taking into account the number of years that person has been able to move. One can begin to make an appropriate analysis by dividing the number of moves since age 14 (or since arrival in Britain at a later age) by the number of years in which the moves may have been taken.

Those born in the UK have had on average 0.21 moves per year of exposure, or approximately one move each five years. This varies from 0.34 moves per year for young adults aged 16–29, to 0.11 moves per year during all their life since age 14 for those aged 60+. These patterns for UK-born are similar for immigrants, although again the South Asian groups as a whole have lower mobility on average than the Black groups taken as whole.

The tabulations for individual groups are not shown because they involve small samples. However, they suggest a richer analysis is possible. For example, greater mobility is probably not a simple product of greater economic and educational resources. The Indian group which has greater incomes and higher levels of education on average than the Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups in Britain, also have lower mobility, but all three groups move less far from their home at age 14 than the average. In contrast, the African group is on average noticeably more mobile. Among Africans arriving within the previous five years, only 33% had stayed within 5 miles compared to the 67% of all recent migrants, and 26% had moved fifty miles or more, compared to the 14% of all recent migrants. Migrants from countries with shorter history of migration to the UK will have fewer relatives and acquaintances on from whom to draw useful experiences, and for this reason perhaps be willing to take greater risks in moving between cities. It could be particularly fruitful to combine these indicative results with more powerful statistical analysis, and with insights from qualitative data.

Just as the census and most surveys do not record individual migration histories within the UK, they also do not ask about moves outside the UK. *Understanding Society* has begun

that task by asking about other countries in which respondents lived. Every immigrant to the UK has lived in at least two countries, the UK and the country of their birth, but *Understanding Society* records that the average number of countries lived in by immigrants is 2.4. This doesn't quite mean that forty percent have lived in a further country other than the one from which they came to the UK, because some will have lived in more than three countries, but it indicates the scale of immigrants' international experience.

*Understanding Society*, unusually among UK surveys, captures some information about emigration, by recording the number of countries lived in by those born in the UK. The UK is counted as one country in this case. The average is 1.2, which suggests that up to 20% have lived outside the UK in their lifetime. The figure is not greater for Black or Asian ethnic group residents born in the UK than for the White British born in the UK.

These first tastes from the migration histories of *Understanding Society* suggest that there is a rich meal of unique information to be reported on in future. Countries of the UK have not been treated separately in these analyses, but may provide insights into the relationship between identity, birthplace and mobility.

### Key findings

- 42% of UK-born residents live within 5 miles of where they were when they were 14; only 20% moved more than 100 miles.
- After arrival in the UK, immigrants are not noticeably more mobile than the UK-born.
- African immigrants have been more mobile than average and South Asians, whether immigrants or UK-born, have been less mobile than the average.

### Further reading

Finney, N. (forthcoming, 2011). Understanding ethnic differences in migration of young adults within Britain from a lifecourse perspective. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*.

Catney, G., Finney, N., Taylor, J. & Twigg, L. (editors). (forthcoming 2011). Special Issue: New migrations and the complexities of ethnic integration. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*.

Simpson, L. & Finney, N. (2009). Spatial patterns of internal migration: Evidence for ethnic groups in Britain. *Population, Space and Place*, 15, 37-56 .

**Table 1** Distance moved in the UK since age 14 for UK born

	Less than 2 miles	2-5 miles	5-20 miles	20-50 miles	50-100 miles	More than 100 miles	Unweighted N
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
White British	24	18	18	12	8	19	1074
Other white groups	0	0	0	31	0	69	20
Mixed groups	17	21	18	9	11	25	289
South Asian groups	31	23	17	7	4	17	604
Black groups	16	26	26	9	4	18	454
Other ethnic groups	24	18	24	9	8	17	159
All born in UK	23	18	18	12	8	20	2600

**Notes:**

White British are White Scottish/Welsh/English/Irish. Other White includes Gypsy/Roma. Mixed are four groups. South Asian are Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi. Black are Caribbean, African and Other Black. Other groups are Chinese, Other Asian, Arab and Any other group.

Source *Understanding Society*, Wave 1 weighted analysis

**Table 2** Distance moved from first UK residence for immigrants (not UK born)

	Less than 2 miles	2-5 miles	5-20 miles	20-50 miles	50-100 miles	More than 100 miles	Unweighted N
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
White British	0	39	0	0	21	40	68
Other white groups	17	18	21	13	3	27	139
Mixed groups	26	17	21	9	5	20	148
South Asian groups	30	22	17	8	6	17	1826
Black groups	16	22	27	10	6	18	1158
Other ethnic groups	25	16	22	8	6	22	835
All immigrants	18	23	18	9	8	25	4174

**Notes:**

White British are White Scottish/Welsh/English/Irish. Other White includes Gypsy/Roma. Mixed are four groups. South Asian are

Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi. Black are Caribbean, African and Other Black. Other groups are Chinese, Other Asian, Arab and Any other group. The first UK residence is the residence at age 14 if immigrated when younger.

Source *Understanding Society*, Wave 1 weighted analysis

# MOVING HOME: WISHES, EXPECTATIONS, AND REASONS

| Birgitta Rabe

Moving home is often associated with life events such as forming or dissolving a partnership which may alter housing preferences and needs. Moreover, the neighbourhood as well as the unsuitability of the dwelling can be a source of dissatisfaction with the current location. In the context of a recession and constrained mortgage markets, the ability of households to realise desired changes in location may be reduced. This article uses data from Waves 1 and 2 of *Understanding Society* to investigate moving desires and expectations, as well as actual moves and their reasons.

The analysis focuses on those adult 16,014 individuals from the general population sample that have been interviewed at both Waves 1 and 2 of *Understanding Society* to date, and for whom information is available on the main variables of interest. To assess moving desires and expectations, we make use of answers to the questions 'If you could choose, would you stay here in your present home or would you prefer to move somewhere else?', and 'Do you expect you will move in the coming year?' We also assess the reasons for any move. Moreover, we use information on the urbanicity of households' neighbourhoods by using urban and rural classifications. We define urban as living in a settlement of at least 10,000 people. Finally, we merge to *Understanding Society* external information on deprivation in the local area using the Carstairs score, which is based on Census data and is available for Britain only. This is a summary measure of material deprivation for geographic localities.

Looking first at moving desires and expectations, Table 1 shows the relationship between neighbourhood characteristics and wanting to move, expecting to move and actually moving in the time-period 2009-2010. It shows that individuals living in urban areas have a higher preference for moving than those living in rural areas, and they are also more likely to expect to move within the next year. Likewise, individuals living in the most deprived Lower Level Super Output Areas of Britain as measured by the Carstairs score have a high preference for moving (45% state that they wish to move). In contrast, among those living in the least deprived areas, 29% wish to move, and they are also least likely to actually expect to move within the next year.

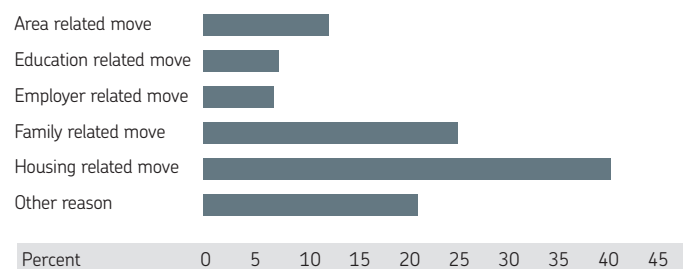
Focusing now on the extent to which individuals actually move when they wish or expect to do so, Table 1 shows that among individuals wishing to move only 10-14% do so. Even among individuals expecting to move within the next year, this only happens to 23-36% of them. People in urban and in less deprived areas are more likely to see their moving preferences satisfied and their moving expectations fulfilled than individuals living in rural and more deprived areas. Overall, 6.4% of individuals moved between 2009 and 2010.

Among those individuals who would like to move but were unable to do so, there are a high proportion of pensioners, whereas employed individuals are more successful in moving if they want to. This may suggest that pensioners lack the means to improve their housing situation. Moreover home owners - owning their houses outright or on a mortgage - are less likely to see their moving desires satisfied. This may be a result of the housing markets that saw falling house prices and of drops in mortgage approvals in the time period covered by the data.

Figure 1 shows the reasons for moving home given by movers in *Understanding Society*. Of all individuals who have moved between 2009 and 2010, moving for housing related reasons was the single most important reason given, mentioned by 40% of movers. Family related reasons also ranked highly and were mentioned by 25% of respondents.

The desire to move and moving expectations are lowest in the least deprived areas

**Figure 1** Reasons for moving house 2009-2010



Source: *Understanding Society*, Waves 1 and 2, weighted analysis.





Apart from the residual ‘other’ category, area related reasons came third with mentions from 12% of movers.

A number of life changes underlie these responses among movers. In the area of housing, for example, 17% of movers who were previously renting bought a house at their new location. 33% of social renters moved into other tenure types such as private renting, and 10% of individuals moved from other tenure types into social renting. Looking at family transitions, 27% of movers not previously cohabiting moved in with a partner and 9% of movers separated from a

	Like to move		of which move:		Expect to move		of which move:	
	Percentage	number	Percentage	number	Percentage	number	Percentage	number
Urban	39	4,759	13	629	14	1,668	34	568
Rural	28	1,030	10	99	10	359	23	84
Deprivation 1 (least deprived)	29	1,111	14	157	10	381	36	137
Deprivation 2	34	1,396	13	180	12	497	36	177
Deprivation 3	41	1,453	11	165	14	480	30	145
Deprivation 4 (most deprived)	45	1,329	12	166	17	500	28	140
N: 16,014								

Notes: Deprivation quartiles based on Carstairs score exclude Northern Ireland.

Source: *Understanding Society* wave 1 and 2, weighted analysis.

partner. Finally, 31% of movers from rural areas moved into urban areas, whereas only 11% of movers from urban areas moved to rural ones.

In summary, the analysis shows stark contrasts between individuals wanting and expecting to move and their actual moving behaviour. Individuals living in urban and in less deprived areas are more likely to see their moving preferences satisfied and their moving expectations fulfilled than individuals living in rural or more deprived areas. Moving home is mainly motivated by housing, family and area related reasons and is accompanied by important transitions in people’s lives. Future research may want to look into how these diverse circumstances translate into people’s well-being.

### Key findings

- Forty-five percent of persons living in the most deprived areas want to move home, compared to 29% in the least deprived areas.
- Individuals living in urban areas have a higher preference for moving than those living in rural areas, and are also more likely to expect to move within the next year.
- Moving home is mainly motivated by housing, family and area related reasons and is accompanied by important transitions in people’s lives.

### Further reading

Ferreira, P. & Taylor, M. P. (2009). Residential mobility, mobility preferences, and psychological health. In M. Brynin & J. Ermisch (eds), *Changing Relationships* (pp. 157–175). London: Taylor & Francis.

Morgan, O. & Baker, A. (2006). Measuring deprivation in England and Wales using 2001 Carstairs scores. *Health Statistics Quarterly*, 31, 28–33.

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# HIGHER EDUCATION AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND

| Peter Elias | Kate Purcell

**Prior to the period of expansion commencing in the late 1980s, participation in higher education in the UK was very much the preserve of the higher social groups. In 1962 almost three quarters of first degree students were from non-manual backgrounds, a proportion that had changed little over the preceding 30 years. Given the remarkable increase in the participation of young people in higher education that has taken place over the last 20 years, we investigate whether or not this expansion has broadened access to less privileged groups.**

Policy makers stress that access to higher education can be used as an instrument of social justice, particularly via its potential to promote inter- and intra-generational mobility. There is contradictory evidence about trends in inter-generational mobility over this period even in studies using the same data source. Improvements in data resources are needed to inform this debate. Problems relating to the operationalisation of the concepts of social class or by the use of poor quality proxy indicators for measures of social class also make evidence about fair access to higher education difficult to interpret. As examples, recent policy documents,<sup>1-2</sup> derive measures of the social background of applicants to higher education from information about parental occupations recorded on their application forms. There are, however, weaknesses in these measures. Social class information could not be determined for nearly one quarter of applicants and accurate coding was not possible for a large share of those giving such information. Indicators of trends in participation by socio-economic groups have also categorised 'Small employers and own account workers' with 'Lower supervisory and technical, routine and semi-routine occupations', a decision at odds with work we have undertaken on the classification of graduate occupations.<sup>3</sup>

Here we draw on new information from the first wave of data from *Understanding Society*. Like its predecessor, the British Household Panel Study, the survey collects information on the occupations held by the respondent's parents when he/she was 14 years old, but from a much larger sample of households across the UK. Two age cohorts are defined: respondents aged 22 to 34 years and those aged 37 to 49. The younger age group can be termed the 'post-expansion' age cohort. Respondents within this age range who have a first degree will have obtained this between 1996 and 2009. On the whole graduates within the

older age group will have obtained their degrees prior to 1992, though there may also be a number of degree holders who graduated as mature students. For the younger age group the proportion stating that they have a first degree or higher in *Understanding Society* is 34.3%. This compares well with 34.9% recorded in the UK Labour Force Surveys for 2009-2010. For the older cohort these proportions are 25.7% in *Understanding Society* and 25.4% in the Labour Force Surveys.

The bar chart below shows the socio-economic backgrounds of degree and non-degree holders for the two age groups. Socio-economic background is determined via reference to the occupation held by the respondent's father when he/she was 14 years old as recalled by the respondent. If no paternal occupation was given, reference is made to the mother's occupation. This information is mapped into the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) based on the latest version of the UK Standard Occupational Classification (SOC2010).<sup>4</sup> Parents who held occupations as small employers or own account workers are placed in the 'Intermediate occupations' in the three-category version of this classification.

The first point to note from this comparison is the extent of the shift in parental social class that is in evidence. This reflects the restructuring of the UK economy from the 1970s to the turn of the century. The proportion of the younger cohort with 'Managerial and professional' social backgrounds expands from 23.5% of the older age group to 27% in the younger group, with a corresponding decline in the proportions with 'Routine and manual' social backgrounds from 39.8% to 33% in the younger age group. There is an increase of just over 3% of the younger age cohort for whom social background information could not be determined.

Within each of the bars in this chart we show the proportion of respondents who hold a first degree or higher. Here we observe that the 8.6% increase in the proportion of respondents in the younger cohort who have a degree is not uniformly experienced across the three social groups defined in this analysis. For those with parents who held 'Managerial and professional' jobs when the respondent was 14, the rise is 10%. For those with parents who had 'Intermediate

The proportion with a first degree or higher was 34% for the post-expansion cohort and 26% for the older group.

occupations' (typically clerical and sales jobs or those running small businesses) the increase in the proportion with a degree shown between the two age groups is over 11% whereas for those whose parents with 'Routine and manual occupations' the growth in the proportion with a degree is only 5%. In other words, the major increase in participation in higher education that took place in recent years has arisen primarily because of the increased participation in higher education from children whose parents held white collar occupations.

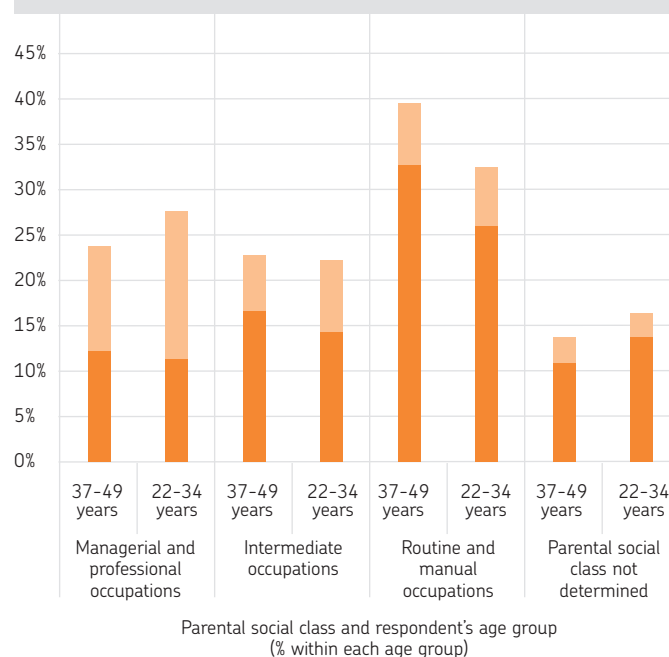
A more detailed investigation of these trends in higher education participation and social background (not illustrated here) reveals that, for respondents with 'Managerial and professional' social backgrounds, the major increase in participation in higher education has come not from those whose parents held high level managerial jobs or were in the established professions, but from respondents whose parents held 'Lower managerial, administrative and professional occupations'. This includes respondents who reported that, when they were aged 14, their parents held jobs such as school teachers, nurses, administrative grade civil service occupations and high level technicians – jobs which did not require a degree 20 to 30 years ago but which are now regarded as graduate jobs.

Further investigation of these trends is continuing, looking particularly at the relationship between parental educational qualifications, the respondent's schooling and the respondent's participation in higher education. Variations by gender will be explored given that the growth in women's participation in higher education has been progressively higher than for men throughout the period of expansion. With the different system of higher education that exists in Scotland, country variations in these findings will also be investigated. We will seek to check the robustness of the findings reported here, to examine whether or not the proportion of respondents for whom we cannot measure their social background affects the results.

To conclude, the brief and preliminary analysis presented here reveals little evidence that the much vaunted policy ambition, to provide better access to higher education to those from less advantaged social backgrounds, has been apparent through the period in which there has been a major expansion of participation in higher education by young people.

Little evidence that the much vaunted policy ambition, to provide better access to higher education to those from less advantaged social backgrounds, has been apparent

**Figure 1** A comparison of parental social background and higher education, respondents aged 37-49 years and 22-34 years



■ Respondent has a first or higher degree ■ Respondent does not have a degree  
Source: *Understanding Society, Wave 1*, weighted analysis.

### Key findings

- Parental social class of the post education expansion cohort (aged 22-34) has a greater representation in managerial and professional occupations and less in routine/manual than those aged 37-49.
- The proportion with a first degree or higher was 34% for those aged 22-34 and 26% for those aged 37-49.
- The increase in participation in higher education has come from people with white collar parents.

### Further reading

<sup>1</sup>Cabinet Office. (2009). *Unleashing aspiration: The final report of the panel on fair access to the professions*. London: Cabinet Office.

<sup>2</sup>Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. (2009). *Higher ambitions. The future of universities in a knowledge economy*. London: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

<sup>3</sup>Elias, P. & Purcell, K. (2004). Is mass higher education working? Evidence from the labour market experiences of recent graduates. *National Institute Economic Review*, 90, 60-74.

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# JOB-RELATED STRESS, WORKING TIME AND WORK SCHEDULES

| Mark L Bryan

**Work can be a source of both meaning and fulfilment, but excessive job demands can also cause anxiety and stress. Work-related stress is of interest in the UK following evidence of significant work intensification during the 1990s and persistence of high job strain into the 2000s.**

The second wave of *Understanding Society* carries a module of questions about work conditions including two measures of 'affective well-being' developed by work psychologists. The two measures – job-related anxiety and depression – are both negative states, but they differ in their associated levels of arousal. Anxiety is a state associated with high arousal, sometimes triggered by feeling threatened, while depression is characterised by low arousal, often triggered by loss. Different job characteristics are expected to have different effects on the two states. For example, excessive demands may lead to anxiety rather than depression, while a lack of opportunity to use skills may be more strongly associated with depression. This article focuses on anxiety (as an indicator of stress) and documents its relationship with two aspects of the demands of a job, the number of hours it requires and the timing of the work.

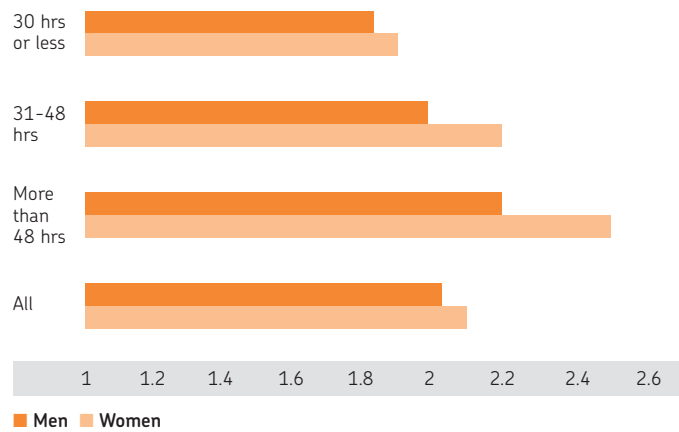
Respondents to the anxiety questions were asked to say how much of the time over the last few weeks their job had made them feel 'tense', 'uneasy' or 'worried' (respondents answered on a five-point scale ranging from 'never' to 'all of the time'). The individual answers (from 3,637 men and 4,330 women) suggest significant levels of anxiety among employees: 46% felt tense, 27% felt uneasy and 24% were worried at least some of the time. However, not everyone was stressed. Indeed a fifth of employees reported that they never felt tense, while nearly half were never uneasy or worried by their job. Extreme anxiety was also relatively uncommon – only 7% felt uneasy or worried and 16% felt tense most or all the time.

The answers to the feeling tense, worried, or uneasy questions were averaged to create an overall anxiety score, where 1 corresponded to never feeling tense, worried or uneasy, and 5 indicated feeling tense, worried and uneasy all the time. Usual weekly working hours were classified as part-time work (30 hours or less), standard full-time work (31-48 hours per week) or long-hour jobs (more than 48 hours). Men and women are considered separately because their employment and well-being patterns are different.

Women reported feeling more stressed than men, but only slightly so (their average score was 2.1, compared with 2.0

for men). However, as shown in Figure 1, more hours were associated with greater job-related anxiety for both men and women. Women in standard full-time jobs reported an anxiety score of 2.2, compared with 1.9 for part-timers. Meanwhile women working long hours reported substantially higher anxiety scores, 2.5 on average. The pattern for men is similar, but with a smaller gap between standard full-time men, reporting a score of 2.0, and men working long hours, who reported an anxiety score of 2.2. Thus it appears that women working long hours are more stressed than their male counterparts. There are many fewer women who work long hours than men, only 7% of female employees compared with 21% of male employees. The finding that longer hours are associated with more anxiety is consistent with previous studies which have examined the relationship between working hours and affective well-being.

**Figure 1** Job-related anxiety by hours worked and gender



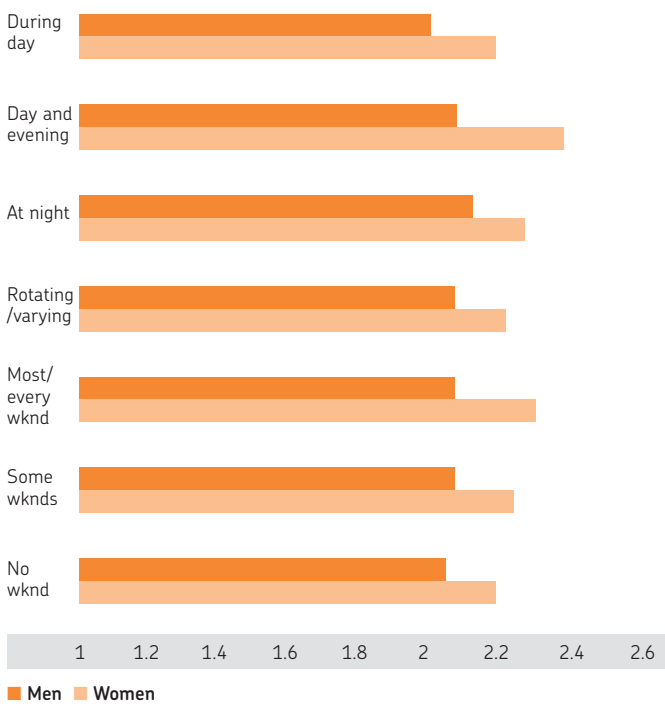
Source *Understanding Society*, Wave 2 weighted analysis

These patterns also emerge looking within occupations (for example, clerical workers only), therefore the association of longer hours with more anxiety is not explained by the fact that jobs with longer hours tend to involve more responsibility and pressure (although jobs with more responsibility are also associated with more anxiety, independently of hours). Furthermore long hours also appear to be a source of anxiety even for those reporting a lot of influence over their start and finish times.

Figure 2 focuses on job-related anxiety and the timing rather than the amount of work for full-time workers. It shows the level of anxiety across different daily schedules (day work only, days and evenings, night work, and rotating shifts or

varying times) and, separately, across weekly schedules (working most or every weekend, working some weekends and never working weekends). Compared with women working days only, women working both days and evenings reported higher anxiety levels (2.2 for days only versus 2.4 for days and evenings), while men working days reported slightly lower anxiety than other men. Otherwise, there appears to be little variation in anxiety across daily work schedules.

**Figure 2** Job-related anxiety by work schedule and gender



Source *Understanding Society*, Wave 2 weighted analysis

Turning to weekly schedules, we see that weekend work was somewhat more stressful than working weekdays only (women working every weekend reported an anxiety score of nearly 2.3 compared with 2.2 for women working weekdays only). As for daily schedules, however, the range in anxiety levels is more limited than in Figure 1, suggesting that the amount of work has a bigger influence on anxiety than when work is done.

Long hours are associated with more anxiety, especially for women

From additional analyses, job-related depression is less affected by total working hours than is anxiety, but somewhat more closely linked to work schedules. In particular evening and especially night work are associated with higher levels of depression. A complete picture of work-related well-being would also include the job and life satisfaction indicators collected in *Understanding Society*, and would consider the activities of other household members and possible conflicts between home life and work. As a household-based survey, *Understanding Society* is ideally suited to teasing out these links.

The job-related anxiety and depression questions are scheduled to be repeated in *Understanding Society* every two years. As most previous research into affective well-being has used data at a single time point only, this will offer an unprecedented opportunity to track changes in well-being as individuals move across jobs and experience changes in their household arrangements.

### Key findings

- Longer working hours are linked to higher anxiety levels, among both men and women.
- The timing of work has a smaller impact on anxiety levels than the number of hours worked, but weekend working is associated with slightly higher anxiety among both men and women.

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# EMPLOYMENT TRANSITIONS AND THE RECESSION

| Karon Gush | Mark Taylor

**As the British economy struggles to emerge from its first recession in almost twenty years, and the worst recession since the Second World War in terms of loss of output, data from the UK Labour Force Survey suggest that the unemployment rate has remained lower than at the same stage in previous recessions.**

Based on the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition, it has so far peaked at less than 9%, compared with 10% at the same stage in the recessions of the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>1</sup> Falls in the employment rate have also been modest compared with previous recessions.<sup>2</sup> Taken at face value, these facts suggest that the labour market has remained relatively strong. However, the employment prospects of particular population subgroups have been affected more than others. Those of young people, in particular, have been hit hard. For example unemployment rates among 16–24 year olds doubled between 2008 and 2010 to almost 20%, and were even higher among those with low educational achievement.<sup>1</sup> In contrast, unemployment rates among 25–49 year olds remained below 7%. While these mask the impacts of the recession on older people through, for example, reductions in working hours and moves into part-time employment, young people are always more adversely affected by economic downturns. However they have been affected much more by the recent recession than previous recessions, relative to older workers.

We exploit newly released data from *Understanding Society*, together with data from its predecessor the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS), to examine how transitions into and out of employment among people of different ages were affected by the recent recession. We summarise employment rates in the period immediately prior to the recession (2006–2008) and in the recessionary period itself (2009–2010) and identify and compare annual transition rates into and out of work among various age groups. All analysis focuses on individuals of working age (16–59 for women/16–64 for men) who are not in full-time education or on a government training scheme.

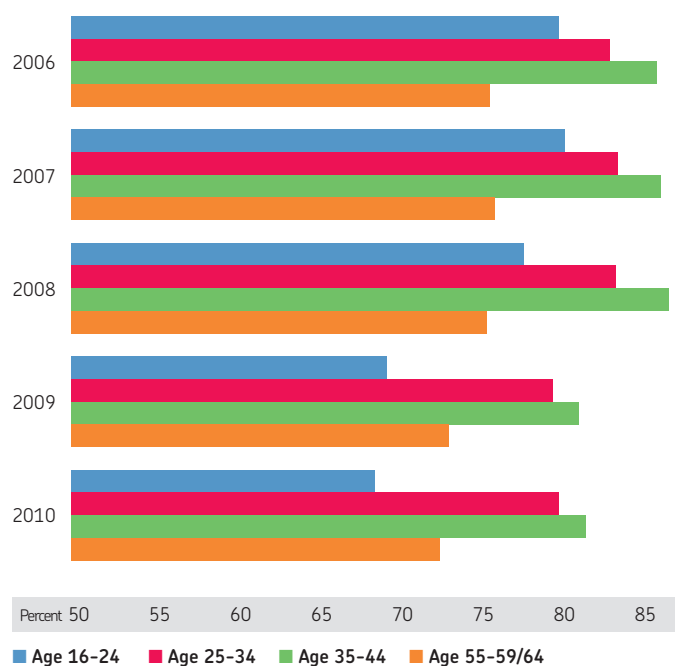
Figure 1 summarises employment rates by age over the period. This reveals a number of interesting patterns. First, employment rates were consistently higher for those between the ages of 25 and 44 than for younger workers and workers over the age of 44. Before the recession, employment rates of 25–44 year olds were around 85%, compared with 80% among those younger than 25 and 75% among those older than 44 years. Employment rates among young people are relatively high because those in full-time education are excluded from the analysis, although 20% of young people not in full-time education or government training were also not in work. Employment rates for those aged over 44 are relatively low because people of this age are more likely than those of

younger ages to be in retirement or long-term sick. Second, patterns in the employment rates of 25–34 and 35–44 year olds followed similar paths over the period, rising marginally up to 2008 (to about 85%) and then falling by five percentage points in 2009 (to 80%). Employment rates among people aged 45 and above fell by three percentage points, from 76% in 2007 to 73% in 2010. However, the employment rate among younger workers fell by eleven percentage points, from 80% in 2007 to 69% in 2010. The recession had the largest impact on the employment rates of young people, and resulted in a considerable increase in the proportion of 16–24 year olds that were not in work, in full-time education or on a government training scheme. (Note that some of these will, however, be in part-time education, apprenticeships, or other training schemes.) To investigate these changes in employment rates in more detail, we exploit panel data from the BHPS and *Understanding Society* to identify changes in the labour market status of people at dates of interviews in the relevant years.

Figures 2 and 3 summarise the proportion of people who were not working in one year who were working in the subsequent year, and the proportion of employed people who had left work in the previous year.

Figure 2 reveals that the onset of recession had a large impact on the inflows into employment among young people, but a

**Figure 1** Employment rates by age: BHPS (2006–2008) and *Understanding Society* (2009–2010)



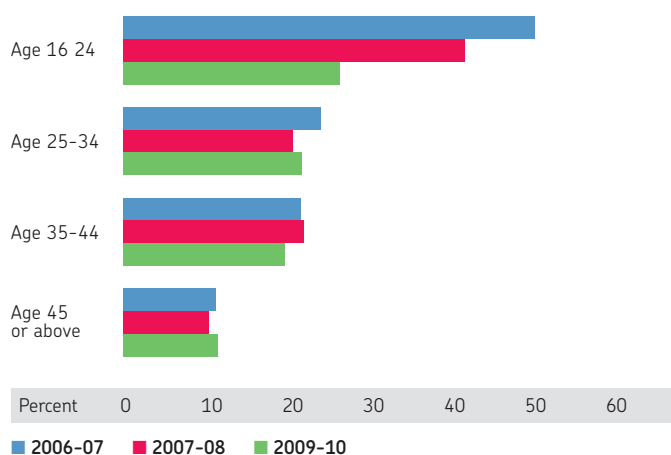
Source *Understanding Society*, Wave 1; BHPS, Waves 16–18

much smaller impact on the inflows into employment among people aged above 24. For example, about 50% of 16–24 year olds not working in 2006 were in work in 2007. However this almost halved during the recession; 27% of those not working in 2009 had a job in 2010. The employment inflow rate among those aged 25–44 fell by only three percentage points, while that among people aged 45 or above actually increased. That is, part of the explanation for the fall in employment rates during the recession among younger people was the large fall in transitions into work.

Figure 3 highlights the impact of the recession on outflows from employment. Again young people were particularly affected. About 7% of employed 16–24 year olds in 2006 were not in employment, full-time education or training in 2007, and this outflow rate was similar for 2007 to 2008. More than 11% of employed young people in 2009 were not in employment, full-time education or training in 2010. In contrast, the increase in outflows from employment were much smaller among people aged 25 and above – from about 3% to 4.5% among those aged between 25 and 44, and from 4.5% to 5.5% for those aged 45 and above. Hence we also find that the recession had a larger impact on employment exits among young people than among those aged over 24.

Panel data from the BHPS and *Understanding Society* illustrates that the recession affected the employment prospects of young people more than those of older workers. The large fall in employment rates was caused by a combination of a large fall in flows into work and increases in the exit from work rates in this age group. This has a number of implications. For example, previous research has shown a strong causal relationship between being out of work at one point in time and being out of work in the future.<sup>3-4</sup> This suggests that the relatively large proportion of young people who have been adversely affected by the recent recession will experience lower employment rates in later life, and so face the higher risks of low income, poverty and deprivation that are associated with non-employment. The challenge for policy makers is to ensure that mechanisms are in place to maintain young people's attachment to the labour market on leaving education, and that stable jobs become available as the economy emerges from recession. This analysis paints an initial look at the impact of the recession on employment transitions. Clearer patterns will

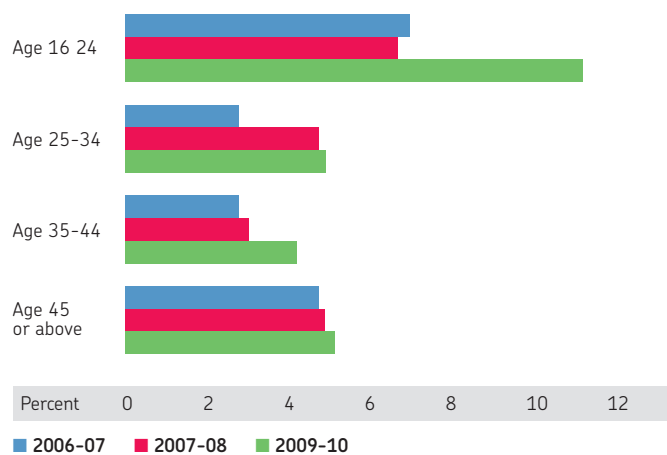
**Figure 2** Employment inflow rates by age: BHPS (2006–2008) and *Understanding Society* (2009–2010)



Source *Understanding Society*, Wave 1; BHPS, Waves 16–18

emerge as more *Understanding Society* data covering the post-recessionary period become available.

**Figure 3** Employment outflow rates by age: BHPS (2006–2008) and *Understanding Society* (2009–2010)



Source *Understanding Society*, Wave 1; BHPS, Waves 16–18

### Key findings

- Employment of young people affected more by the recession than that of older workers.
- The large fall in employment rates among young people was caused by a combination of a large fall in flows into work and increases in the exit from work.
- The challenge for policy makers is to ensure that mechanisms are in place to maintain young people's attachment to the labour market on leaving education, and that stable jobs become available as the economy emerges from recession.

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- <sup>1</sup>Gregg, P. & Wadsworth, J. (2010). Unemployment and inactivity in the 2008–2009 recession. *Employment and Labour Market Review*, 4, 44–50.
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# SPORTS PARTICIPATION OF ADULTS

| Jon Burton

The year 2012 sees the Olympics and Paralympics come to the UK. At Wave 2 we asked about participation in sports and the frequency with which sporting activities are undertaken. One of the strengths of a longitudinal study such as *Understanding Society* is that individual-level change in behaviours can be measured with this second wave used as a benchmark of sporting activity in 2010-2011.

These questions are scheduled to be asked every three waves, so at Wave 5 (2013-2014) we will be able to see whether the London 2012, and the increased media focus on sport during that time, have been associated with sporting endeavours in the United Kingdom. Some of the questions carried on *Understanding Society* are also carried on the continuous household survey 'Taking Part', which is managed by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Whilst *Understanding Society* cannot go into the depth of 'Taking Part' in this topic area, it can complement research into engagement with sport and culture with an important longitudinal element.

We also ask people how easy it is for them to get to a sports centre or leisure centre and, for those who find it difficult, what is stopping them from using sports facilities. Once again, we will be able to use these data to see whether the building of sports facilities around the country is associated with regular participation in sport.

This analysis is weighted to represent the distribution in the overall UK population. Only continuing respondents from Wave 1 Year 1 are analysed – new entrants to the sample at Wave 2 are excluded, as are the British Household Panel Study sample.

Over half of those who responded said that they had participated in one or more moderately intense sports during the previous 12 months. The most common moderate intensity sports were swimming or diving (34%); health, fitness, gym or other conditioning activities (28%). The most common mild intensity activity was rambling or walking for pleasure and recreation (38%) and cycling (18%).

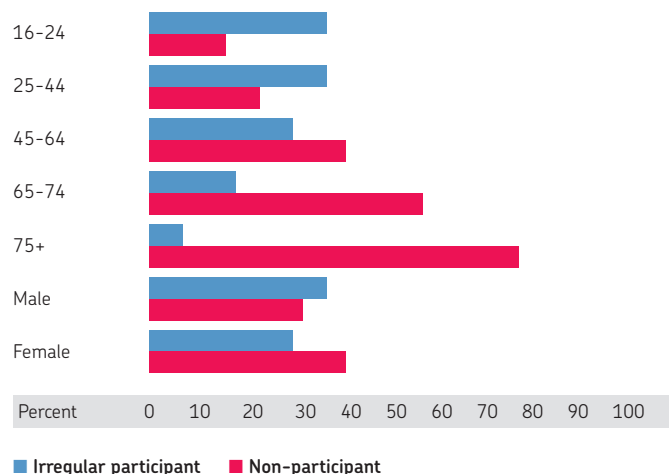
Of those who took part in moderate intensity sport, over half participated at least once a week (22% three or more times a week, 30% at least once a week but fewer than three times a week). A further 21% participated at least once a month but less often than once a week. The remainder took part at least three or four times a year (17%), twice a year (6%) or just once a year (4%). More than one-quarter (27%) of those who participate in a moderate sport are a member of a sports club.

We divide the sample into those who take part in sport frequently (at least once a week), those who participate less frequently and those who do not participate at all. Just over three in ten are frequent participants (31%), with just over four in ten as non-participants (41%) and the remainder (28%) as irregular participants. Figure 1 shows participation by age and by sex; the category of non-participant is not displayed. Men are more likely to be frequent participants than women (37% compared to 30%) and less likely to do no sport (32% compared to 41%). There is almost no difference in the proportions of men and women who are irregular participants. Sports participation declines with age; from 48% of 16-24 year olds being frequent participants down to 16% of those aged 75 and over. Those in England and Scotland are more likely to be irregular and frequent participants at sport than those in Northern Ireland and Wales. Almost half of those in Northern Ireland (49%) did no sport, with a slightly lower proportion in Wales (46%). In Scotland and England, four in ten (41%) did no sport.

There is a relationship between education level and sports participation; with 44.5% of those with a degree or higher frequently participating in sport compared to one-third of those with an A-level or equivalent (33.4%), three in ten of those with GCSEs or equivalent (30.1%) and 15.6% of those with no qualifications. Figure 2 shows the level of irregular and frequent participation in moderate sport by selected socio-demographic characteristics.

Those aged over 16 who are still at school or are full-time students are the most likely to frequently participate in moderate intensity sports (47%), whilst those who are long-term sick or disabled are the least likely (9%). Those who are

**Figure 1** Participation in moderate sport over the last 12 months, by age and sex



Source *Understanding Society*, Wave 2



working are more likely to frequently participate (35% of the employed, 34% of the self-employed) than those who are unemployed (29%). Adults living in a household which did not have access to a car were the most likely to do no sport (63%). This proportion falls considerably for adults in households with access to one car (44% do no sport) and again for households with two cars (30%). Individuals who live in households with a higher level of net income are more likely to participate in sports, than those with a lower net income. Almost four in ten of individuals from households in the highest quartile of income participate in sport frequently (39%) compared to just over two in ten individuals from the lowest quartile of household net income (21%).

One reason for not participating in sport would be the access to leisure facilities. Of those who did no sport, 14% said that they found it difficult (7.6%) or very difficult (6.8%) to access a sport or leisure facility. This proportion was lower among those who did some moderate sport (4.2% found it difficult, 1.4%

very difficult) and the lowest among those who participated in sport frequently, with 2.8% finding it difficult and 1.1% finding it very difficult to access sports facilities.

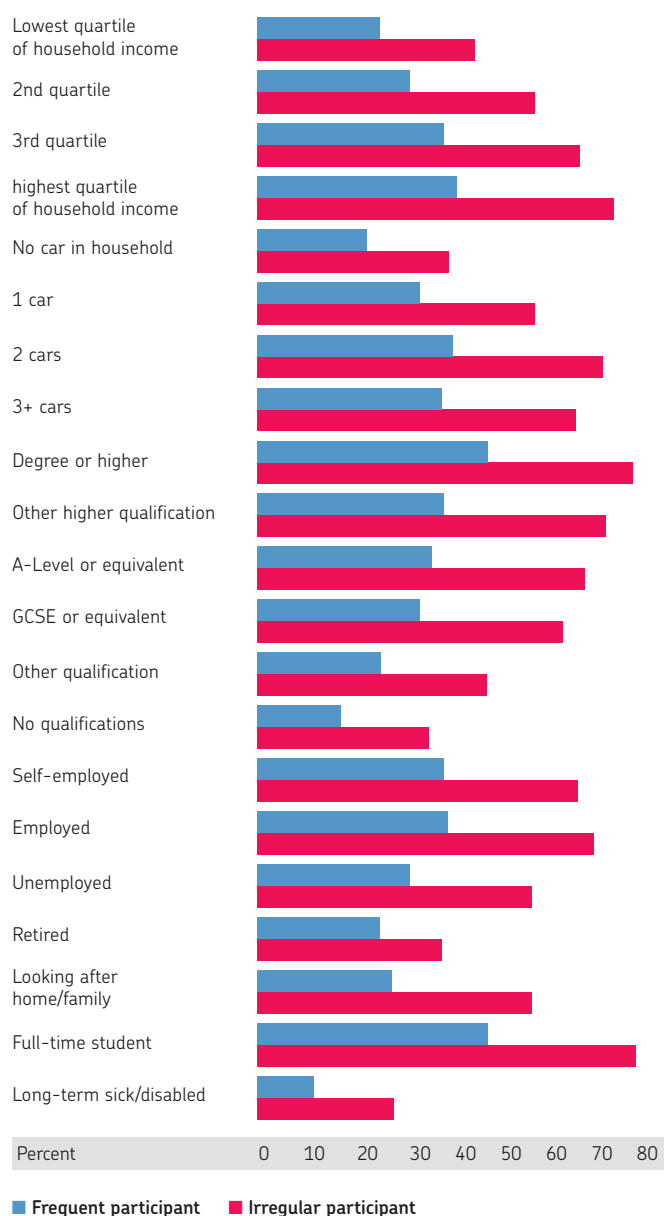
For those who said that they find it difficult to get to a sports or leisure facility, we asked what made it difficult for them

to get to a sports or leisure facility. The barriers for those who did no sport seem to be mainly poor health and motivation, followed by the expense. For those who did no sport, almost half (50%) said that their health or a disability made it difficult. Over a quarter of those who did no sport said that they just did not want to participate in sport or leisure activities. Other common reasons among those who did no sport was that they could not afford the costs (18%) or they had no access to a car (16%). For those who participated in sport, but found it difficult to get to a sports/leisure facility, the main barriers are lack of time (mentioned by 43% of irregular and 34% of frequent participants), cost (27% of irregular and 23% of frequent participants) and the lack of facilities (20% of irregular and 29% of frequent participants).

We have found that the likelihood of participating in sport is associated with some basic demographic characteristics; men and those in younger age groups are more likely to participate in sport. However, there is also a strong socio-economic relationship with sport participation. In general, those who are better educated and those who have a job which has a higher social standing are more likely to participate regularly in sport. We await Wave 5 data to see whether the London 2012 have made sports activities open to the wider population.

Those who are better educated and those who have a job which has a higher social standing are more likely to participate regularly in sport

**Figure 2** Participation in moderate sport by socio-demographic characteristics



Source *Understanding Society*, Wave 2

### Key findings

- Over half of respondents participated in a moderately intense sport; more than half of that group participated at least weekly.
- Frequent participation was more likely for men, younger persons, and those with higher qualifications.
- For those who did no sport, things that made it difficult to get to a sports or leisure facility were poor health, costs, or lack of access to a car.

### Further reading

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# MEASURING WELL-BEING: WHAT YOU ASK IS WHAT YOU GET – OR IS IT?

| Steve Pudney | Annette Jäckle

**In policy circles, well-being is in the air. In November 2010, the British Prime Minister announced plans for the Office for National Statistics to develop official measures of well-being, observing that ‘prosperity alone can’t deliver a better life’. Other national governments and international organisations are making similar extensions to the range of welfare indicators they produce and monitor.**

Much of the discussion about well-being measurement has focused on alternative concepts of well-being, but more practical questions about survey design for subjective questions may be equally important. Everyone knows that the way you ask a question may influence the answer that you get. There is no reason to expect survey questions on subjective well-being to be an exception to this. Survey methodologists have typically examined the impact of question design and interview mode on simple statistics like means and sample proportions. The well-being data, however, need to be robust for complex comparisons and statistical modelling. These aspects are addressed by the following questions: (1) Which aspects of the survey and questionnaire design affect the measurement of satisfaction and the quality of research findings? and (2) Which design should *Understanding Society* use to measure satisfaction?

A set of experiments related to the measurement of satisfaction was implemented in the *Understanding Society* Innovation Panel. Wave 1 (surveyed in 2008) carried an experiment for measuring job satisfaction:

- A random half of employees were asked a question with 7 possible answer categories (7-point scale): ‘On a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means ‘completely dissatisfied’ and 7 means ‘completely satisfied’, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your present job overall?’
- The other half were asked a question with 11 possible answer categories (11-point scale): ‘On a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means ‘completely dissatisfied’ and 10 means ‘completely satisfied’, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your present job overall?’

Wave 2 (surveyed in 2009) carried several experiments with five different questions measuring how satisfied respondents were with their health, family income, leisure, life overall and job:

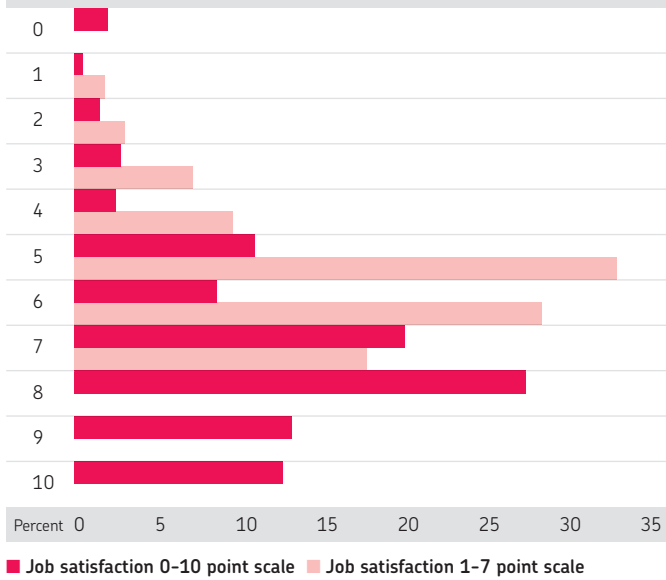
- Two-thirds of the sample were randomly allocated to be interviewed by telephone, the remaining third to be interviewed face-to-face.

- Among face-to-face respondents, a random half were allocated to answer the satisfaction questions privately, using the interviewer’s laptop but without the interviewer being involved (self-completion). For the other half the interviewer administered the satisfaction questions.
- For the face-to-face groups, a random half received questions where only the end points were labelled (as in the examples above). For the other half all scale points were labelled: ‘Completely Satisfied, Mostly Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied, Somewhat Dissatisfied, Mostly Dissatisfied, Completely Dissatisfied’.
- For a random half of all respondents the question was split in two, asking first about the direction of the respondent’s satisfaction (whether satisfied, neither nor, or dissatisfied), followed by a question about the strength of (dis)satisfaction (somewhat, mostly or completely (dis)satisfied).

In the Wave 1 experiment, the 11-point scale answers were less concentrated in the top values, but only few respondents used the 5 lowest categories (see Figure 1). Contrary to expectations, the 11-point format did not produce a more fine-grained distribution of responses. In addition, the 11-point scale seemed to encourage ‘blips’ at the extreme 0 value and at the mid-point 5, which are absent from the 7-point scale (Figure 1). Further analyses showed that responses from the 7-point scale were more highly correlated with relevant characteristics: gender, age, education and earnings. Responses from the 11-point scale only correlated with education. We concluded that the 7-point scale is likely to provide better quality data. This is the format now used on *Understanding Society*.

The results from the wave 2 experiments also suggest that the survey design matters. Since analysts often combine the top two response categories (‘completely’ or ‘mostly’ satisfied) as an indication of ‘high satisfaction’, we examined the percentage of respondents in different experimental treatment groups who chose one of those two categories. More people reported high job satisfaction when they were asked over the telephone than face-to-face, when the interviewer administered the question than when they completed it themselves, when the scale points were fully labelled than when only end points were labelled, and when the question was broken into two questions instead of the single question (Figure 2). These results were similar for satisfaction with health, family income, leisure and life overall. Also women’s responses were more strongly affected by the survey design than men’s responses. Survey design therefore

**Figure 1** Impact of the response scale categories on reported job satisfaction



Source: Innovation Panel wave 1.

does affect responses, especially for women.

To test the effect on research findings, we looked at the effect of several respondent characteristics on satisfaction. Women reported higher levels of job satisfaction than men with similar characteristics. This gender difference was greater with telephone interviewing than in face-to-face interviews. Women also reported lower satisfaction when working more hours. Again, this difference was greater in the telephone interviews. Survey design therefore affects research findings, especially for differences between men and women.

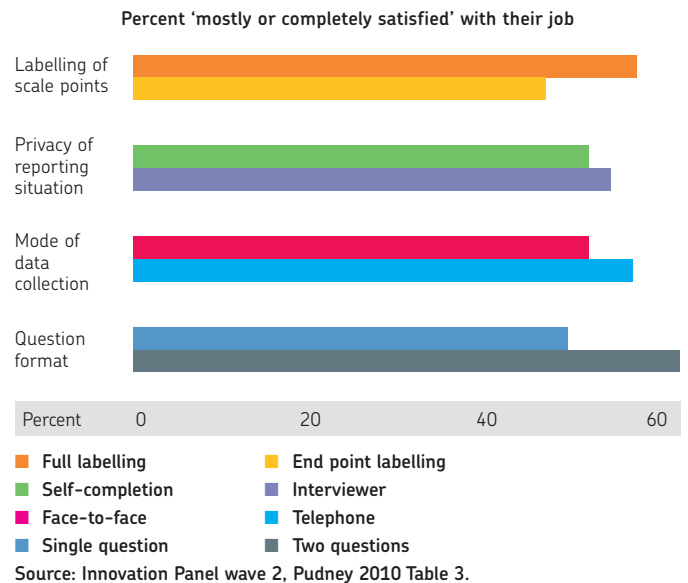
*Understanding Society* now uses fully labelled response scales and self-completion questions to measure satisfaction.

In sum, the way we ask questions about satisfaction seems to matter. Our conclusions are that:

- giving verbal labels to each point on the response scale (which is infeasible for 11-point scales) improves data quality;
- the greater confidentiality of paper- or computer-based self-completion questionnaires improves data quality;
- interviewer visits to the home are preferable to telephone interviewing;
- women seem to be more strongly influenced by question design and interview mode than men;
- the 1-7 response scale is preferable to the widely-used 0-10 scale and gives continuity with the forerunner of *Understanding Society*, the British Household Panel Survey.

The Innovation Panel is an internationally unique research resource. It is a platform for developing and testing methodologies for longitudinal survey research. The Innovation Panel is a sample of 1,500 households that is a constituent part of *Understanding Society*, although it is surveyed independently. It is modelled on the main *Understanding Society* survey and the results are therefore applicable to it and other international household studies

**Figure 2** Impact of survey and question design on reported job satisfaction



Source: Innovation Panel wave 2, Pudney 2010 Table 3.

with similar designs. Unlike the main survey, the Innovation Panel is not designed to give geographical detail below the UK level. Since 2010 there has been an annual open competition for content on the Innovation Panel. Researchers from around the world are invited to submit proposals for methodological research.

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