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Migration, marriage and employment amongst Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi residents in the UK

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Discussion over marriage migration in the UK has largely focussed on the South Asian groups, identified in survey data as Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi. This paper uses qualitative interviews and survey data to gain some insights into how UK-born Pakistani and Bangladeshi women view marriage and, in particular, marriage to a partner from their country of origin; the extent to which UK-born Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women and men marry partners from overseas and the key factors that influence this and the effect on the level of economic activity for Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women of a UK-born versus an or overseas born spouse.

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Discussion over marriage migration in the UK has largely focussed on the South Asian groups, identified in survey data as Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi. Research on the practice of marriage migration and its consequences needs to be informed by an understanding of how ‘the family’ is constructed, the significance of family status and honour, the role of the individual within the family, as well as gender divisions within the family. The legal context concerning spouse migration also impinges on and shapes migration practices. In addition, there may be different norms and ideologies in the UK and in the Indian sub-continent concerning expectations about marriage and gender roles but these are likely to be changing over time. Overlaying all this is the role of socio-economic status and educational attainment which may be expected to influence marriage patterns in both the Indian Subcontinent and the UK.

This paper uses qualitative interviews and survey data to gain some insights into:

- how UK-born Pakistani and Bangladeshi women view marriage and, in particular, marriage to a partner from their country of origin;
- the extent to which UK-born Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women and men marry partners from overseas and the key factors that influence this and
- the effect on the level of economic activity for Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women of a UK-born versus an or overseas born spouse.

We begin by providing some background on migration from the Indian subcontinent.

Background and settlement history

South Asians are relatively recent settlers in the UK but with significant differences in timing of migration between the key groups. There is a long association between India and Britain, going back to the East India Company in the 17th century, and with India forming part of the British Empire until Independence in 1947. Despite the many negative aspects of British colonialism, one consequence is that English is widely spoken in India – it is often the teaching medium in schools and universities – and the Indian education system has close parallels with the British. The British Nationality Act of 1948 gave British citizenship to all residents of India and Pakistani (as to other members of the then British Empire and Commonwealth) (Peach, 2006.)

Whilst Indian doctors played a very important role in running the British National Health Service in the post-war years, the rate of immigration was at its highest during the 1960s, with a further boost in the early 1970s by East African Indians who had been expelled from Uganda. Migration from Pakistani increased rapidly in the 1970s whilst immigration from Bangladesh (which was not formed until 1971) has been rather later and at a lower level (Peach, 2006). Migration from Pakistan and Bangladesh was male-led with many migrants coming from poor rural areas – for example Mirpur and Syllhet – who settled in areas of declining industry (for example the industrial areas of north west England as well as parts of London) taking jobs that were not attractive to working-class white men. Women tended to come to Britain as dependents, from a culture where they were responsible for domestic life and men

were expected to be the bread-winners. The 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act imposed very severe restrictions on entry to Britain from the Asian sub-continent and thus transformed temporary migrants into permanent settlers (Ansari, 2004). A common response was for men temporarily working in Britain was to bring over their wives and families and form permanent homes, so that, after 1962 the dominant flow of migrants was dependents (wives and children) rather than the economically active (Ansari, 2004). However, between 1962 and 1967 primary workers were allowed into the UK on a voucher system, particularly if they were recruited to specific jobs (Ansari, 2004). Amongst people of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian origin, therefore, the vast majority of adults were born overseas, although a growing generation of young people are UK-born (over 70% of 19-25 year old Indian people are UK born; over 60% of 19-25 year old Pakistani and nearly 30% of 19-25 year old Bangladeshi people) (Lindley et al, 2004).

Marriage patterns

The 2001 UK Census showed that people from South Asian backgrounds were the least likely of the minority ethnic groups to be married to someone from a different ethnic group. Only 6 per cent of Indians, 4 per cent of Pakistanis, and 3 per cent of Bangladeshis had married someone outside the Asian group (ONS web-site, 2005). Many South Asian communities have high marriage rates and, for women in particular, marriage is at an early age. Berthoud (2005:240) found that about three-quarters of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women were married by the age of 25, compared with 67% for Indians and 55% for white women.

This reflects the fact that marriage tends to be seen as a family, rather than an individual, affair and is directly related to the status and honour of the family and is therefore typically arranged by parents. Thus parents may arrange a marriage for their son or daughter that takes into consideration family interests, both social and economic, as well as the interests of the child. Shaw (2001) explains, in the context of research with Pakistani families, that an ideology of putting one's family's interests before one's own individual interest underpins the concept of an arranged marriage. Parents may want to strengthen family ties by arranging a marriage between their own child and the child of their brother or sister. This may also be seen as a 'safe' choice for their child, or as a good business allegiance. Reflecting the patriarchal nature of the society, marriage with the father's relatives usually takes precedence over the mother's side of the family (Shaw, 2001). Additionally, if parents are concerned that their daughter's behaviour may jeopardize the family honour, then one solution is an early marriage. For all these reasons cohabiting partnerships are very unusual.

It might be assumed that, for younger generations growing up in the UK, 'arranged' marriages will decline and, reflecting western ideology and norms, 'love' marriages will become more common. Berthoud (2005) found that a majority of South Asian women who came to Britain aged 11 or over had an arranged marriage. This was much higher for Muslims and Sikhs than for Hindus. Where the respondent was born in Britain or had had come to Britain before the age of 10, just over a third of Muslim and Sikh marriages had been arranged but, for Hindus this was only 9%. Beishon et al (1998) in a small qualitative study of Pakistani and Bangladeshi households, found that all married respondents had had an arranged marriage and most respondents had not met their partner beforehand. In four of the 20 cases the respondent had married a

cousin. Arranged marriages were less common amongst the Indian and East-African Indians for whom a non-negotiated marriage was mainly restricted to older people.

Arranged marriages where the marriage partner comes from the country of origin has been the subject of much political debate and controversy in the UK. This has two dimensions. Firstly, there has been concern that trans-national marriage is primarily used as a route by which men from the Indian sub-continent can migrate to Britain for work purposes. Second, there has been concern, voiced through an organisation called 'Migration Watch', that such marriages have been responsible for a continued flow of migrants from the ISC. Migration Watch argues that this has an additional effect on numbers of residents from the Indian Subcontinent because of higher than average total fertility rates amongst Pakistani and Bangladeshi-born mothers in particular. They claim that this increase in numbers of foreign-born spouses and parents will lead to a lack of integration and to increased racial segregation (Migration Watch, Briefing Paper 10.8)

Analysis of official statistics from Bradford by Simpson (1997) estimated that 57.6% of Pakistani marriages during 1992-4 were to spouses from Pakistan. Shaw (2001), researching Pakistani families in Oxford, found that 50 out of 70 marriages were with a spouse from Pakistan, usually a relative and most often a first cousin. However, she also points out that marriages within the extended family are usual in much of the Middle East and cannot be explained as a strategy to facilitate economic migration to the UK. She argues the importance of marriage within the family, caste or *biridani* in order to ensure a spouse of equivalent status.

The legal situation

Despite being Commonwealth citizens, immigration to the UK from the Indian sub-continent is very restricted. From the early 1970s primary migration from the Indian Subcontinent came to an end, and migration was limited to family re-union and migration through marriage - with the exception of specific categories of highly qualified personnel such as doctors. Concerns about using marriage as a route to economic migration informed the UK immigration legislation which, until 1997, required that applicants who wished to join a spouse in the UK had to demonstrate that the primary purpose of their marriage was NOT for migration reasons. The current legislation requires that spouses must demonstrate an intention to live together permanently as man and wife and that they have 'adequate maintenance without recourse to public funds' and also adequate accommodation. Both the UK sponsor and the spouse must be 18 or over at the time of entry to the UK.

Pressure groups such as Migration Watch are calling for this legislation to be changed to become nearer that currently operating in Denmark, and to include the requirement that both potential spouses should be at least 24 years old and that there is clear evidence that the marriage is not forced.

Families, marriage and women's employment

In this section we review some of the evidence of employment patterns of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in the UK and then relate this to the specific question of how marriage to a spouse from overseas affects women's employment patterns.

It is well established that Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in the UK have very low rates of economic activity¹ - much lower than Indian women (Dale et al 2002; 2006). It is also well established that, within the Indian group, women of Muslim religion have lower levels of economic activity than either Hindus or Sikhs (Modood et al, 1997; Brown, 2000). Whilst some of these differences in levels of economic activity can be explained by differences in education and family responsibilities, this cannot entirely explain the differences.

There are two main sets of explanatory factors: one related to labour market demand and the other to supply. On the demand side there is clear evidence that minority ethnic groups face discrimination in accessing jobs in the UK labour market (Heath and Cheung, 2006; Modood et al, 1997). Interview evidence also suggests that women who wear religious dress (eg a hijab) or traditional clothes (eg shalwaar kameez) face an additional barrier to employment (Dale et al, 2002) and that this has increased since 9/11. Linked to this are employment-based issues such as work-place cultures that ignore Muslim's requirements for prayer breaks or for holidays at Eid. The second set of factors relate to the characteristics and preferences of women themselves. Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in the UK have lower levels of educational qualifications than other ethnic groups, with a sharp distinction between those who are UK-born and those born overseas. Amongst women born overseas, fluency in English tends to be low (Modood et al, 1997). Whilst it is generally accepted that women in the UK still retain primary care for children, this gender-based division of child-care is much more apparent for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women than for either Indian or white women.

Table 1 (Dale et al, 2006), based on data from the UK Labour Force Survey shows predicted levels of economic activity for minority groups in the UK by life-stage and level of qualification. This table and related work shows that both qualifications and life-stage (partnership and children) have a very big influence on levels of economic activity for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. Whilst levels of economic activity of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women are generally lower in all categories than for other ethnic groups, single well-qualified young P and B women in the UK are as likely to be economically active as their counterparts in other ethnic groups.

Table 1 about here

However, this table does not reveal the role played by whether a woman is born or brought up in the UK or whether she comes to the UK as an adult – usually as a marriage migrant. Conversely, it does not reveal whether a UK-born woman will differ in her patterns of economic activity if her husband is UK born or if he is born overseas – probably coming to the UK as her husband. In the rest of this paper we use evidence from the analysis of a small number of qualitative interviews and analysis of large scale survey data to ask:

- how do UK-born Pakistani and Bangladeshi women view marriage to a partner from their country of origin.

¹ The economic activity rate is the percentage of people of working age who are either in employment or unemployed.

- to what extent do UK-born Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women and men have spouses from overseas; how is this changing over time and how does it relate to level of qualification.
- are differences in the level of economic activity for women depending on whether their partner is born in the UK or overseas

The qualitative evidence

We use evidence from 18 in-depth interviews with Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in Rochdale and Manchester (14 Pakistanis, 3 Bangladeshis and one Kashmiri), conducted by Sameera Ahmed and reported more fully in Ahmed and Dale (2007). Respondents were primarily recruited through voluntary organisations in Rochdale and Manchester and through the employment services. The interviews covered questions on educational attainment, decisions about careers, seeking employment, actual employment experiences, family and community and general attitudes towards work. Questions about mothers' and fathers' education and work experience were also asked to help understand inter-generational differences. All interviews were taped and fully transcribed.

The women selected for the study were either born in the UK or had spent most of their lives here. They had thus obtained the majority of their schooling here and were all fluent in English. The respondents were at different stages of their family and working lives. It is well established that 'life-stage' has a considerable impact on the labour market position of women, most obviously through childbearing and subsequent caring responsibilities. The women interviewed are not a representative sample of Bangladeshi or Pakistani women, either locally or nationally.

Qualitative analysis

Of the 18 women interviewed, all had been born in the UK and most had parents who had migrated to the UK in the 1960s. Nine women were married, of whom six had had an arranged marriage to a spouse from their country of origin. Two women were married to UK-born husbands and a third was married to a Bangladeshi-born man who had lived in the UK for several years before their marriage.

Women expressed a general view that life in the UK was more forward looking and less traditional than life in Pakistan or Bangladesh. They characterised those from 'back home' as being more traditional which usually meant an assumption that women should be responsible for home and child-care, should not go out to work and should be subservient to the wishes of their husband.

Thus one respondent, herself married to a man from Pakistan, felt that her sister's employment was restricted by her Pakistani-born husband :

'Well, my younger sister, she...she actually doesn't work – her husband's like a bit strict – he doesn't really want her to work or...I think maybe it depends on the husband as well – because they're from back home, they think differently....'
(interview 2)

She went on to explain that her brothers were resisting marriage to a girl from Pakistan and that, even though marriage to a cousin may seem a safe bet, such marriages did not always work out.

Similarly, another woman emphasised the traditional values of men from Pakistan: *I think a lot of the girls that get married from back home, their husbands would like them to sit at home and have the family – the children* (interview 7)

She went on to explain:

They work until they (spouse from Pakistan) come over and then the man wants to work. They have a village mentality, where the man works and the woman sits at home. They want a wife that wears a hijab and not step foot out the house (interview 7).

One respondent had been taken back to Pakistan to be married at 16 to a cousin and had had her first child one-year later. She was concerned that her mother-in-law wanted the same for her 13-year old daughter.

‘and my mother-in-law’s like “Oh, what’s the point in taking her to school?” She wanted to take her back home; I go “No!” They did they same to me, I don’t want her to go through that. I want her have a life, that’s why I think education is very important.. (interview 11)

Similar resistance to children marrying ‘back home’ was voiced by a Bangladeshi woman who explained that she and her sister and brother had all married from ‘back home’. She insisted, however, that she would want her son and daughter to marry someone from the UK. It was particularly important for her daughter to marry a man from the UK because:

‘they (men from back home) just don’t understand, the guys refuse to understand, I think if my son married a girl from over there, she would... She would try to adjust, whereas men won’t. They’re just stay in their own ways, and they just won’t, so I think she should marry someone from here’ (interview 13)

Although this is a small number of interviews the women interviewed held strong views about the traditional values of men from ‘back home’, including, for example, a desire for their wives to stay at home and not take paid work. This was juxtaposed against their own wish for more choice and independence and, in particular, a wish to be free to take paid work. Similar views are reported by Dale et al, (2002) in interviews with a larger sample of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in north-west England.

However, six of the nine married women had, themselves, married a man from ‘back home’ who had come to the UK after a marriage in Pakistan or Bangladesh. Did their husbands hold these traditional values? The answer is that our respondents, almost uniformly, characterised their husbands as supportive of them working and different from most men from Pakistan and Bangladesh. The quotes, below, are from the same respondents who are quoted above:

'My husband, he's alright – he's quite good. I mean, he's my best friend as well – I can talk to him about anything and I can tell him I want to work and he won't mind if I study ...' (interview 2)

I've always had loads encouragement from my family. My husband, too, he's been brilliant, he has never stopped me doing anything. (interview 7)

I've always wanted to be a teacher since I was small, so I'm hoping to go for it now. My husband's supporting me, he goes "Go for it!" (interview 11)

The complexity of the situation, and the danger of making simplistic assumptions about the dynamics of a trans-national marriage is brought home by another respondent who had got married at 17 in Pakistan and then returned to the UK with her husband. However, she had continued her education after marriage and was now a fully-qualified teacher working full-time. She had one child and she and her husband shared the domestic work and child care:

'We decided to have equal gender roles, rather than saying; "Ok you bring all the money home and I'll cook and clean and stuff." We said; "Ok, we'll both bring the money home and we'll both have an equal share in the house. We'll both have an equal role, we'll make decisions together..."' (interview 15)

In this case her three siblings all had professional jobs and, although the marriage was arranged, her parents and her husbands' parents had a shared understanding about the value of education.

A second example further exemplifies the danger in making assumptions about attitudes of those born in the UK. The UK-born respondent explained that her family were very traditional. She has worn a veil since the age of 13, left school at age 14 (her parents did not want her to continue) and then stayed at home until she got married at 19 to a husband whose family was also 'very traditional'. However, after marriage her husband (also UK-born) encouraged her to continue her education and, at the time of the interview, was doing a course as a teaching assistant and also looking for a job. She explained that, although her family would not let her work, or drive a car, her husband encouraged her to do both. However, both she and her husband agreed that she should wear a veil when men were present. Thus the respondent and her husband were able to adopt those aspects of behaviour that they subscribed to whilst resisting family pressures for others.

From this interview evidence it is clearly important to avoid any simplistic assumptions about the relationship between traditional attitudes and being born overseas. It is also evident that there is no direct relationship between wearing Islamic dress (scarf or veil) and whether or not a woman is keen to work and encouraged to work. Therefore there is an important distinction to make between traditional norms and expectations and Islamic dress and behaviour codes.

We now move on to examine our survey data and, among other things, will test whether UK-born women married to a spouse from the Indian sub-continent are less likely to be economically active than their counterparts married to a UK-born man.

If trans-national marriages are being used as a way to overcome immigration restrictions for male workers then we might expect more such marriages for UK-born women than UK-born men. However, the more limited power of daughters within the family structure may make it harder for women than men to resist family wishes for a trans-national marriage.

Consistent with Shaw's (2001) observation that parents of higher socio-economic status were more likely to agree to a marriage outside the family than families of lower socio-economic status, we might expect that UK-raised women with higher qualifications would find it easier to delay marriage and to negotiate a marriage-partner of choice than less educated women.

The survey data

We use nationally representative data from the Quarterly Labour Force Survey, conducted by the Office for National Statistics to address these questions. Since 1992 the Quarterly LFS (QLFS) has conducted repeat interviews at each sampled address at three monthly intervals with the fifth interview taking place a year after the first. Each quarter, interviews are achieved at about 59,000 addresses with about 138,000 respondents. A response rate of about 77 percent was achieved for the first wave of the survey in 2002. All first interviews (with the exception of a very small sample located north of the Caledonian Canal) are carried out by face-to-face interview. Subsequent interviews are carried out by telephone. We use data for England, Wales and Scotland for sweep 1 of each quarter, for all years from 1992-2005. Results are weighted to produce population estimates in line with the latest census. The QLFS collects family and demographic information on each member of the household. This allows us to identify information about a woman's partner and her children. The QLFS also asks extensive information on employment and qualifications that are consistent each year. In addition, questions on ethnicity, country of birth and year of arrival in the UK are asked. Whilst changes in question-wording have caused difficulty in comparisons over time for some ethnic groups, this has been minimal for people of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic origin. Although the QLFS asks questions about timing of entry to the UK it does not ask about the reasons for migration, nor the date of marriage. We cannot, therefore, directly identify whether immigration was associated with marriage.

However, as explained earlier, we know that since the early 1970s most migration from the Indian Subcontinent has been for family re-union, including marriage. However, entry may also be on the basis of a work-permit, although these are only issued where the post cannot be filled by someone with right of residence in the UK or Europe.

In the analysis here we have constructed a variable to identify whether a respondent came to the UK at the age of 18 or older. The age of 18 has been used because, before 18, children may join their family as a dependent; and spouse immigration laws require the migrant spouse to be at least 18 on entry to the UK. Where a UK-born respondent is married to a spouse who came to the UK at age 18 or older it is likely that this migration was for marriage. Although our qualitative work has only interviewed women, the QLFS analysis allows men to be included and we have

therefore done so where appropriate. This adds to the depth and understanding of trans-national marriage migration.

Therefore for married men and women who are UK born and who identify themselves as Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi we can distinguish whether their partner was:

- born or brought up in the UK (ie came to the UK before the age of 18)
- a migrant who entered the UK at age 18 or older and therefore likely to be a marriage migrant

We have pooled data between 1998 and 2005 in order to obtain a sufficiently large sample size. Analysis is based on those aged 19-50. Appendix table 1 provides information on sample sizes for men and women from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh for various analysis categories.

Background analyses

Before conducting this analysis we begin with some descriptive background tables to establish: What are the differences in terms of country, age, qualifications, and employment status between men and women born in the UK; those who came to the UK before the age of 18; and those who came to the UK at 18 or older? These are reported in the Appendix and briefly described below.

Overall, about a third of men and women aged 19-50 were born in the UK, but this was much lower for Bangladeshis (15%) than for Pakistanis or for Indians (Table A2). Of the two thirds who were born overseas, about half entered the UK before the age of 18 and half entered at 18 or over. It is this latter category which has been identified as likely to be marriage-migrants and, amongst women, nearly 90% are married and a further 8% are separated, divorced or widowed².

Both men and women who were UK born were more likely to have higher qualifications than those who were born overseas but who came to the UK before the age of 18 and this group, in turn, were more likely to have higher qualifications than those who came to the UK at 18 or older (Table A3). Those who came to the UK at 18 or older were most likely to have 'other' qualifications which includes qualifications obtained overseas. As expected, levels of economic activity for women were highest for those UK born and lowest for women who came to the UK at 18 or over and, within the categories, highest for Indian women and lowest for Bangladeshi women. Differences were much more limited for men and are not reported here. However, for both men and women, those UK born were much more likely to be full-time students. These figures therefore provide some background information on the socio-demographic differences of these three groups of South Asians.

² The term married is used here to include all those with a partner. Of the South Asian women who came to the UK at 18 or over and are so categories, 99% are 'married' and 1% with a 'partner'.

Who married back-home?

We now move on to look at differences between UK-born men and women in terms of whether their marriage partner came to the UK at 18 or over and may be assumed to be a marriage-migrant.

Table 2 is based on married women and men who were born in the UK and aged 19-50 and asks what percentage married a partner who came to the UK at age 18 or older. We find that around one-third of men and women married a partner from overseas, although it was rather higher (38%) for women than for men (31%). However, for women in particular there was considerable variation by ethnic group with only a quarter of Indian women making a trans-national marriage by comparison with over 50% for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. For Indian men, figures are the same as for women (24%), although for Pakistani and Bangladeshi men about 40% of UK-born men married a partner who came to the UK at 18 or later.

Tables 2 and 3 about here

Thus marriage to a spouse from 'back home' is much more likely for men and women from Pakistan and Bangladesh than for Indians. A comparison of the period 1998-2000 with 2001-2005 showed no change in these figures.

Differences between ethnic groups may be explained by differences in levels of education if, as the literature suggests, better educated women are more likely to marry a UK-born partner. Table 3 shows that for both Indian and Pakistani and Bangladeshi women those with degree-level qualifications are much less likely to marry back home than women with lower qualifications (14% of UK-born Indian women and 45% for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women.) Comparable figures for men show a similar, although less marked relationship with qualifications.

How do age, education and ethnic group interact to predict whether a UK-born/brought up women will marry a UK-born man or a man from 'back home'? Is this changing over time?

In order to answer these questions we have used a logistic regression model where the outcome variable is whether or not the respondent married a partner who arrived in the UK at age 18 or later. Respondents included in the model therefore have to be married and to have arrived in the UK before the age of 18. Models have been run separately for men and for women. The full model is reported in the Appendix whilst table 4 contains the marginal effects. These represent the percentage change in the probability of marrying from 'back-home' by moving from the base category into the specified category. For women, table 4 shows that effects of age are small and not significant except for the oldest group, those aged 46-50 for whom there is an increase of 18% in the probability of having married a man from overseas. Having a degree has a negative effect and reduces the probability by 8% whilst lower qualifications increase the probability. Being Bangladeshi or Pakistani also increases the probability of marrying back-home by 26% and 20% respectively, by comparison with the base category of Indian. There is no evidence of a decrease in likelihood of marrying 'back-home' across years (from 1998-2005) or for younger age-groups. This analysis

largely confirms the descriptive tables discussed earlier and shows that both ethnic group and qualifications play a role in whether a woman marries ‘back home’.

For men, there is a positive effect on marrying back-home for the oldest age-group (46-50) which contrasts with the negative effect for women in this age-group. For men, as for women, a degree level qualification reduces marriage back-home by 10% and, as for women, being Bangladeshi and Pakistani increases the probability of marriage back-home by 22% and 18% respectively. For men, there is a negative effect of year suggesting a reduction of about 1% for each year from 1998-2005.

How does marriage back-home affect women’s employment?

Our qualitative work suggested that women who marry men from ‘back home’ may be more constrained in terms of employment than women who marry men from the UK³. For example, women said that men from ‘back home’ were more traditional and would not allow them to work, although all evidence cited referred to other family or friends rather than the respondents themselves. Table 5 categorises married women by whether they and their partner came to the UK at age 18 and over or not. It shows that, for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women, the real difference lies with whether or not a woman is UK born/brought up, not whether her partner is. For Indian women, levels of economic activity are much higher and, again, vary more with whether women are UK born/brought up than whether their husband came from ‘back home’.

Again, we use logistic regression to ask whether a partner from overseas has a negative effect on a woman’s probability of being economically active, after taking into account all the other possible factors. Table 6 reports the marginal effects for Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women and, again, further model detail is give in the appendix. To test the effect of marriage to a partner from ‘back-home’ we have set up a variable that combines information on where a woman is born, partnership, and whether a partner is UK born or not. This takes the following categories:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| (1) Single UK-born; | |
| (2) Single overseas born; | (-10%) |
| (3) Married, both UK born or came before 18; | (-4%) |
| (4) Married UK born/came before 18, husband came to UK 18+ | (-3%) |
| (5) Married, came to UK 18+, husband UK born or brought up | (-9%) |
| (6) Married, both came to UK at 18+. | (-10%) |

As expected, table 6 shows that qualifications have a very big positive effect on economic activity for women whilst the presence of children has big negative effects, particularly if they are under 5. However, by comparison with the base category – single UK-born, all other categories combining either partnership or overseas birth or arrival at 18+ have negative effects on the probability of being economically active. These have been inserted into the categorisation, above. Both marriage and timing of arrival in the UK have an impact on economic activity. However, there is no **additional** negative effect of having a husband who came to the UK at 18+. Thus, comparing categories 3 and 4 which differ only by whether or not the husband came to the UK at 18+ and is assumed to be a marriage-migrant, there is no difference in

³ In all discussion of marriage women assumed they would marry and would marry a man of their own ethnic group.

the effect on a woman's probability of being economically active. Similarly, comparing categories 5 and 6, effects are the same irrespective of whether the husband is UK born/brought up or not. It is therefore clear that, controlling on other factors, whether the woman has a partner who is UK born/brought up or who came to the UK at 18+ has no difference on her probability of being in the labour market. The survey evidence does not, therefore, support the commonly held view that marriage to a man from 'back-home' has a negative effect on a woman's likelihood of being economically active – after controlling for other factors.

Discussion and conclusions

We have seen that about a third of UK-born men and women from the Indian Sub-continent marry a partner from 'back home'. As this figure is slightly higher for women than men it lends no support to concerns that marriage migration provides a back-door route for the economic migration of men to the UK. However, the fact that those women with degree-level qualifications are less likely to marry a man from 'back home' is consistent with suggestions that such women have greater power to negotiate their own marriage partner and may also have parents who are more willing for them to do so. After controlling on these factors it remains that marriage 'back-home' is much more likely for Pakistani and Bangladeshi men and women than for Indian men and women.

Whilst our qualitative interviews suggested that UK-born women who married men from 'back home' might face constraints in their ability to take paid work, the survey evidence does not support this. It shows that whether or not the woman herself was UK born or brought up is the key factor and that, whilst marriage itself has a small negative effect, this is the same irrespective of whether a husband is from the UK or overseas. However, the biggest impact on a woman's likelihood of being economically active is whether she has qualifications, whether she has young children and whether she is Pakistani or Bangladeshi rather than Indian. After all these factors are included in the model then the whether or not husband comes from 'back home' makes no difference.

The results have also shown that women who come to the UK at 18 or over (probably for marriage) are heavily disadvantaged with respect to labour market participation by comparison with UK-born women or women who came to the UK before 18 (many of whom will have gone to school in the UK). They may speak little if any English, they are less likely to have educational qualifications and, where they do have qualifications, these are unlikely to be recognised in the UK.

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Tables: Migration, marriage and employment amongst Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi residents in the UK

Table 1: Predicted probabilities of being economically active from models in table 4.

	White					Black Caribbean/Other					Indian					Pakistani/ Bangladeshi				
	Level of qualification																			
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Single 19<35,no partner, no child	96	94	94	92	83	94	92	91	86	75	96	95	94	90	79	94	91	87	74	45
Partner, 19<35, no children	97	96	96	94	87	97	95	94	91		91	89	87	78	61	87	82	73	53	24
Partner, youngest child under 5	76	64	63	58	36	83	76	74	65	45	77	71	67	53	32	53	44	31	16	5
Partner, youngest child 5-15	90	83	83	79	61	91	87	85	79	64	89	86	84	74	54	70	61	51	29	11
Single, child under 5	58	44	43	37	20	69	59	56	45	28								34	20	6
Single, child 15-15	80	70	69	64	42	86	79	78	69	51	84			66					27	9
35-60, partner, no children <16	89	83	82	78	60	92	88	87	81	67	87	83	80	70	49	68	59	48	28	10
35-60,no partner, no children <16	87	79	79	75	55	89	83	81	74	56	81	76	72	60	38	67			26	10

Shaded cells containing numbers are based on 20-29 respondents; Shaded cells which are blank had less than 20 respondents.

Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey, England, Wales and Scotland, QLFS, 1992-2003, unweighted, excludes FT students

Key:

1 Degree and higher qualifications – NVQ and key skills 4&5

2 A level – NVQ and key skills 3

3 O level – NVQ and key skills level 2

4 Other qualification – NVQ and key skills level 1

5 No qualifications

Source: Dale et al, 2006, table 5

Table 2 Percentage of married UK-born men and women with a partner who came to the UK at 18+

	Men	Woman
Indian	24 (516)	24 (598)
Pakistani	43 (309)	57 (406)
Bangladeshi	39 (25)	55 (48)
All	31 (850)	38 (1052)

Table 3a Percentage with each qualification level by whether or not their partner came to UK at 18+ : married UK born men and women

	Men – Pakistani & Bangladeshi		Woman - Pakistani & Bangladeshi	
	Partner came to UK 18 +	Partner UK born /came before 18	Partner came to UK 18 +	Partner UK born /came before 18
Degree	33	67	45	55
A level	39	61	60	40
O level	51	49	60	40
Other	52	48	67	33
None	49	51	57	43

Table 3b Percentage with each qualification level by whether or not their partner came to UK at 18+ : married UK born men and women

	Men – Indian		Woman – Indian	
	Partner came to UK 18 +	Partner UK born/came before 18	Partner came to UK 18 +	Partner UK born/came before 18
Degree	20	80	14	86
A level	22	78	23	77
O level	32	68	31	69
Other	41	59	30	70
None	20	80	36	64

Table 4 Marginal effects (%) from logistic regression to predict whether a partner came to the UK at age 18+:

Population: married women and men who were born in the UK or came before age 18

Dependent variable: spouse came to UK at age 18 / spouse born in UK or came before 18

Calculated at the mean; significant effects in bold

	Women		Men	
	%Marg. effect	St error	Marg. Effect	St error
Age 26 -30	-.115	3.06	-.292	4.35
Age 31 -35	-.591	3.11	-4.01	4.19
Age 36 - 40	-1.9	3.32	1.84	4.32
Age 41 - 45	2.26	3.82	8.69	4.38
Age 46 - 50	-17.8	3.63	11.09	4.53
Degree or equivalent	-8.26	2.82	-10.4	2.66
A level	4.74	3.14	-7.16	2.98
O level	7.66	2.72	5.75	3.15
Other qualification	9.86	3.29	6.55	3.35
Year	-.056	.432	-1.17	.408
Bangladeshi	25.6	3.26	22.1	3.06
Pakistani	20.3	2.02	17.7	2.02
N cases	2418		2530	
Loglikelihood	-1479.5		-1616.5	

Base = age 19-25, no qualifications, Indian

QLFS, unweighted, women aged 19-50

Table 5 level of economic activity for married women by whether their spouse arrived in the UK at 18 or over

% economically active	Indian	Pakistani/Bangladeshi
Both partners UK born or arrived before 18	76.8	32.9
Woman UK-born/arrived before 18, husband arrived 18+	71.4	35.3
Woman arrived 18+, husband UK born/arrived before 18	65.1	13.6
Both partners arrived in UK at 18+	60.9	16.8

Table 6 Marginal effects (%) from logistic regression to predict economic activity

Calculated at the mean; significant effects in bold

	Women	
	%Marg. effect	St error
Age 26 -30	.189	1.79
Age 31 -35	2.63	1.85
Age 36 – 40	-1.54	2.00
Age 41 – 45	-3.80	2.10
Age 46 – 50	-8.17	2.05
Degree or equivalent	33.3	1.33
A level	27.0	1.52
O level	21.6	1.40
Other qualification	13.3	1.26
Year	.246	.225
Child under 5	-27.0	1.34
Child 5-15	-8.41	1.39
Single born overseas	-10.2	2.30
Married, both Uk born	-4.29	2.13
UK born, husband not	-3.02	2.26
Born overseas, husband Uk born	-9.10	2.26
Neither partner UK	-10.5	2.41
Bangladeshi	-27.4	1.58
Pakistani	-23.8	1.09
N cases	6262	
Loglikelihood	-2961.7	

Base = age 19-25, no qualifications, no child, single UK-born, Indian QLFS, unweighted, women aged 19-50

Appendix: Migration, marriage and employment amongst Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi residents in the UK

Table A1 base numbers for analyses: aged 19-50, 1998-2005

Women	UK born	Overseas-born, came before 18	Came to UK 18+	
Indian (married)	992 (582)*	2,110 (884)	1,223 (1,067)	3,325 (2,533)
Pakistani (married)	684 (558)	661 (502)	831 (707)	2,176 (1,605)
Bangladeshi (married)	95 (47)	324 (261)	341 (287)	760 (595)
Total (married)	1,771 (1,025)	2,095 (1,647)	2,395 (2,061)	6,261 (4,733)

* numbers in parentheses refer to those who are married/have a partner

Men	UK born	Overseas-born, came before 18	Came to UK 18+	
Indian (married)	988 (506)	1,087 (926)	981 (840)	3,056 (2,272)
Pakistani (married)	558 (301)	710 (591)	668 (595)	1,936 (1,487)
Bangladeshi (married)	79 (25)	375 (285)	238 (218)	692 (528)
Total (married)	1,625 (832)	2,172 (1,802)	1,887 (1,653)	5,684 (4,287)

Table A2 Distribution of women by where born and when came to UK

Women	UK born	Overseas-born, came before 18	Came to UK 18+	Total
Row %				
Indian	35	31	34	100
Pakistani	36	29	35	100
Bangladeshi	15	43	42	100
Total	33	32	35	

Distribution of men by where born and when came to UK

Men	UK born	Overseas-born, came before 18	Came to UK 18+	
Indian	38	32	29	100
Pakistani	34	34	32	100
Bangladeshi	16	51	33	100
Total	34	35	31	100

Table A3 Percentage of women aged 19-25 who are married/partnered

	UK born	Overseas-born, came before 18	Came to UK 18+
Indian	26.7 (288)	45.3 (53)	89.3 (84)
Pakistani	44.1 (279)	68.6 (121)	88.2 (76)
Bangladeshi	31.4 (51)	70.5 (105)	92 (50)

Table A4 Education level for Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi men and women

Men	UK born	Overseas-born, came before 18	Came to UK 18+
Degree	34	27	20
A level	29	18	7
O level	17	13	2
Other	8	15	46
None	11	26	25
Total	100	100	100

aged 19-50, incl. FT students

Women	UK born	Overseas-born, came before 18	Came to UK 18+
Degree	31	17	12
A level	29	13	3
O level	23	18	4
Other	8	17	42
None	10	35	39
Total	100	100	100

aged 19-50, incl. FT students

Table A5 Level of economic activity for women age 19-50

% Economically active	UK born	Overseas-born, came before 18	Came to UK 18+
Indian	82	74	64
Pakistani	54	31	17
Bangladeshi	59	25	8

Table A6 Logistic regression to predict whether a partner came to the UK at age 18+:

Dependent variable: spouse came to UK at age 18 / spouse born in UK or came before 18.

Population: married women and men who were born in the UK or came before age 18

	Women		Men	
	Coefficient	Z	Coefficient	Z
Age 26 -30	-.00543	-0.04	-.01304	-0.07
Age 31 -35	-.02794	-0.19	-.18044	-0.95
Age 36 - 40	-.09175	-0.58	.08197	0.43
Age 41 - 45	.10587	0.59	.38457	2.00
Age 46 - 50	-.94271	-4.19	.4904	2.47
Degree or equivalent	-.40103	-2.86	-.47007	-3.90
A level	.22071	1.53	-.32526	-2.36
O level	.3560	2.85	.25475	1.84
Other qualification	.45335	3.05	.28998	1.98
Year	-.00264	-0.13	-.05195	-2.76
Bangladeshi	1.1654	7.61	.98821	6.91
Pakistani	.9600	9.37	.79107	8.32
constant	-.98071	-3.86	-.13217	-0.48
N cases	2418		2530	
Loglikelihood	-1479.5		-1616.5	

Base = age 19-25, no qualifications, Indian
 QLFS, unweighted, women aged 19-50

Table A7 Logistic regression to predict economic activity

Population: women aged 19-50

Dependent variable: whether economically active or not

	Women	
	Coefficient	Z
Age 26 -30	.0122	0.11
Age 31 -35	.17089	1.42
Age 36 - 40	-.09992	-0.77
Age 41 - 45	-.24583	-1.81
Age 46 - 50	-.52892	-3.97
Degree or equivalent	2.3296	21.48
A level	1.8760	15.34
O level	1.4602	14.21
Other qualification	.87832	10.02
Year	.01591	1.10
Child under 5	-1.7529	-18.31
Child 5-15	-.54484	-6.00
Single born overseas	-.65890	-4.37
Married, both UK born	-.27790	-1.99
UK born, husband not	-.19549	-1.34
Born overseas, husband UK born	-.58966	-4.10
Neither partner UK	-.68243	-4.33
Bangladeshi	-1.8383	-15.88
Pakistani	-1.5597	-21.38
Constant	.9911	4.62
N cases	6262	
Loglikelihood	-2961.7	

Base = age 19-25, no qualifications, no child, single UK-born, Indian QLFS, unweighted, women aged 19-50