

Addressing Ethnic Inequalities in Social Mobility

Research findings from the CoDE and Cumberland Lodge Policy Workshop

KEY FINDINGS

- Ethnic minorities in Britain are experiencing growth in clerical, professional and managerial employment (absolute mobility), however they still face significant barriers to enjoying the levels of social mobility of their white British peers (relative mobility)
- Immigrant minorities have lower rates of social mobility than does the rest of British society. Their children experience rates of upwards mobility that are similar to their white British peers. Despite this mobility, the second generation still faces significant ethnic penalties in the labour market.
- Levels of educational attainment have improved significantly for ethnic minorities, but these have not translated into improved outcomes in the labour market. The success of policy interventions and third sector projects targeted at ethnic inequalities in early childhood and education, contrasts to the continuing employment barriers faced by young black men and Muslim women.

THE EDUCATION / EMPLOYMENT DISCONNECT

Longitudinal studies show ethnic minorities making greater investment in education than their white British peers. In secondary education, Chinese, Indian, Irish, Bangladeshi and Black African students are now outperforming their White British peers in obtaining 5 or more GCSEs at grade A* to C.

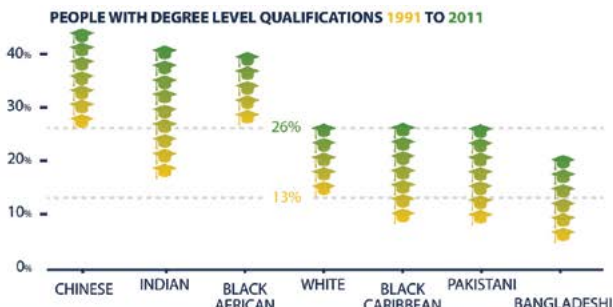
All BME groups have significantly improved their access to universities, with the most disadvantaged groups (Pakistani and Bangladeshi) quadrupling their rates of degree level qualifications over the past twenty years to draw closer to that of the White population.

Very few of these gains in education have translated into employment outcomes. Black male unemployment has remained persistently double that of Whites, and Black rates of unemployment reached 22% in the most deprived areas. Self-employment is often celebrated as a route for ethnic economic advancement, however for Pakistani men its marked by disproportionate clustering in the transport sector.¹ Images of Indian and Chinese entrepreneurship contrasts to their decreasing rates of self-employment.

The impact of the recession has meant that Black women and men are particularly likely to experience downwards mobility, with full-time employment rates for Black women falling across the decade. Surveys of British Muslim women have highlighted how employer discrimination rather than "traditional values" are significant barriers to employment for those who wear the hijab and niqab.²

Despite improving educational qualifications, ethnic minorities remain amongst the most vulnerable groups in the British labour market. During the recession Black and Asian groups have been the most exposed to unemployment and downward mobility.

Improving educational qualifications but fewer employment opportunities



Black African and Black Caribbean women have experienced a **15-20% fall in full time employment rates** over the past decade while those for White women have remained stable.



Unemployment rates for Black Caribbean and Black African men have consistently remained **triple those of White men** over the past twenty years.

Self-employment rates for the Chinese and Indian groups have decreased by between **a third and a quarter** between 1991-2011.

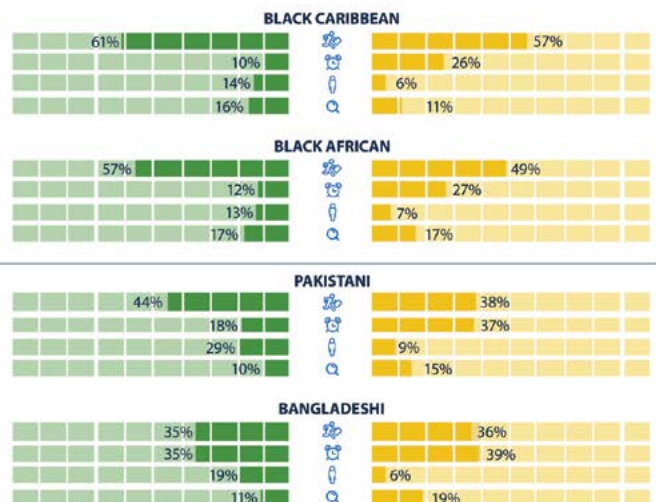
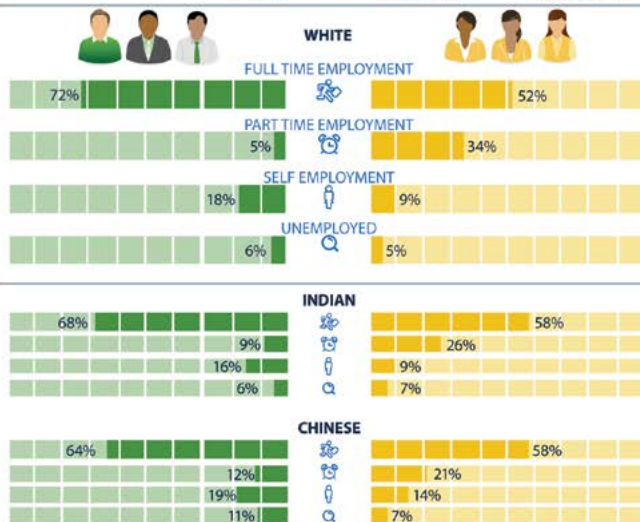


53% of self-employed Pakistani men are in the **transport industry** compared to 8% for the rest of the population.

39% of Bangladeshi women and 35% of men work part-time, **double the levels of twenty years ago**.



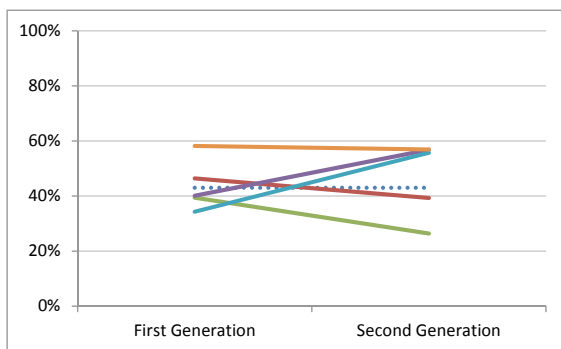
The rates of part-time employment for Chinese and Indian men have **doubled in the last ten years** and are now double that of White men.



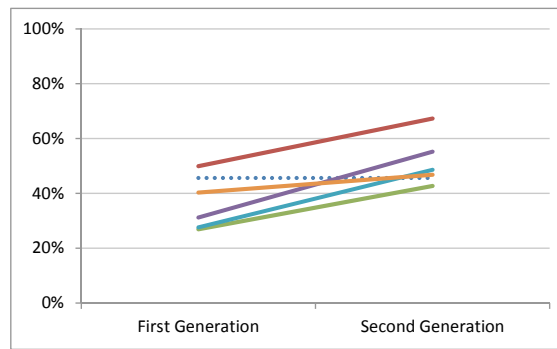
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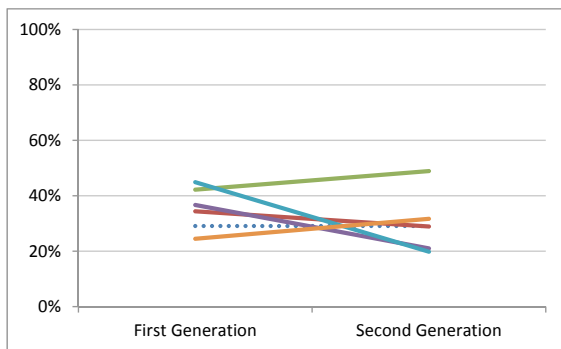
**Movement to higher occupational class than father
Male**



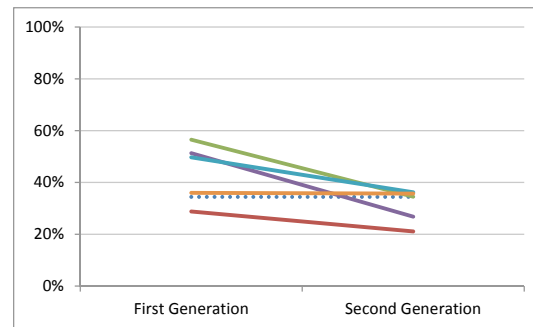
**Movement to higher occupational class than father
Female**



**Movement to lower occupational class than father
Male**



**Movement to lower occupational class than father
Female**



..... White
——— Black African
——— Black Caribbean
——— Indian
——— Pakistani/Bangladeshi
——— Chinese

GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN UPWARD AND DOWNWARD MOBILITY

New research on Britain's largest longitudinal studies highlights how rates of social mobility vary within ethnic groups by gender, immigrant generation and class. Drawing on forty years of data, Li and Heath defined rates of social mobility through identifying the percentage who moved from the occupational class in which they were born. For the White population, 43% of men and 45.6% of women moved up to a higher socio-economic class than their father, while 29.1% of men and 34.4% of women moved down to a lower socio-economic class.³

The first generation of black African, Indian and Pakistani/Bangladeshi groups had significantly lower upward and higher downward mobility rates than their white peers. For second generation South Asian groups, men have benefitted more from upward occupational mobility than women. Gender differences in social mobility are clearly marked for Black Caribbean and Chinese groups, with Black Caribbean men and Chinese women experiencing lower rates of upward mobility and higher rate of downward mobility than Black Caribbean women or Chinese men. These differences within ethnic groups emphasize the variegated routes to and barriers on social mobility.

THE NEED FOR NEW ROUTES TO MOBILITY

Over the past decade there has been a significant narrowing of routes to social mobility for ethnic minorities, with the contraction of "traditional" routes such as further education and public sector employment, paralleled by limited access to expanding areas such as apprenticeships.

The need for new routes to mobility is crucial given the over-exposure of ethnic minorities to deprivation and poverty in Britain. A third of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in England and a fifth of its Black African, Black Caribbean, and Arab populations live in the country's most deprived neighbourhoods compared to 8% of the white British population. Similar ethnic disparities mark statistics on working families in poverty and low income earnings.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The above is based on discussions at the "Addressing Ethnic Inequalities in Social Mobility" residential conference at Cumberland Lodge in Windsor Great Park held on 13 - 15 November 2013 in partnership with the Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity (CoDE).

The results presented here are from analyses conducted on data from the 1991, 2001 and 2011 censuses; the General Household Survey (GHS) from 1982 to 2005, the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) for 2005, the UK Longitudinal Household Study (also called Understanding Society, USoc) for 2009/10 and 2010/11, and the 1999 and 2004 Health Survey for England.

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For research on ethnic inequalities in education, employment, health and residence see

www.ethnicity.ac.uk

¹ Ken Clark, 'Is the picture of Pakistani self-employment really so rosy?' (2014), <http://blog.policy.manchester.ac.uk/featured/2014/04/pakistani-self-employment-in-the-recession>

² Zamilia Bunglawala, Valuing Family, Valuing Work: British Muslim Women and the Labour Market, Young Foundation, 2008.

³ Yaojun Li and Anthony Heath, 'Class matters: a study of minority and majority social mobility in Britain (1982-2011)' BSA Conference, Leeds (2014)