Ethnic/racial inequalities in later life. What can we learn from the UK?

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Ethnicity, race and growing older in the UK: Context

- Migration in a post-war, but also post-colonial, context (shaping who migrated, when and why, and post-migration reception).
- Post-migration circumstances in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s.
- Establishing and building communities, the importance of neighbourhood and belonging – segregation, integration and community cohesion.
- Cross-national connections and return migration.
- Changing significance of ethnic identities and how they structure social relations – prejudice, racism and discrimination, and their material consequences.
- Generation and period: contexts and change.
Outline of the paper

1. Migration, ethnicity and race in the UK.
2. Ethnicity and health inequalities across the life course (critical period and accumulation).
3. Generation and period (selection, migration effects and environment).
4. Prejudice, discrimination and racism.
5. Ethnicity, identity and social connections.
6. Place, community and social cohesion.
7. Concluding comments.
### Classifying ethnicity: The 2011 English Census

**Q16: What is your ethnic group?**

Choose one section from A to E, then tick one box to best describe your ethnic group or background.

**A  White**
- Welsh/English/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Any other White background, write in

**B  Mixed/multiple ethnic groups**
- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any other Mixed/multiple ethnic background, write in

**C  Asian/Asian British**
- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background, write in

**D  Black/African/Caribbean/Black British**
- African
- Caribbean
- Any other Black/African/Caribbean background, write in

**E  Other ethnic group**
- Arab
- Any other ethnic group, write in
The ethnic minority population of England & Wales (19.5% of the total population)

- Indian (incl mixed) 3.1%
- Pakistani 2.0%
- Bangladeshi 0.8%
- Chinese 0.7%
- Other 3.6%
- White Irish 0.9%
- White Other 4.4%
- African (incl mixed) 2.1%
- Caribbean (incl mixed) 1.8%

(Census 2011)
Proportion born outside the UK

- Chinese
- Bangladeshi
- Pakistani
- Indian
- Caribbean
- White Irish
Age profile of ethnic groups in England and Wales

(Simpson 2015 (Census 2011))
The ethnic minority population of England & Wales (19.5% of the total population)

- Indian (incl mixed): 3.1%
- Pakistani: 2.0%
- Bangladeshi: 0.8%
- Chinese: 0.7%
- Other: 3.6%
- White Irish: 0.9%
- White Other: 4.4%
- African (incl mixed): 2.1%
- Caribbean (incl mixed): 1.8%

Census 2011

www.ethnicity.ac.uk
The ethnic minority population of England & Wales, those aged 65 or older (8% of all aged 65 or older)

- Indian (incl mixed) 1.3%
- Pakistani 0.5%
- Bangladeshi 0.1%
- Chinese 0.2%
- Other 0.1%
- Caribbean (incl mixed) 1.0%
- African (incl mixed) 0.3%
- White Other 1.8%
- White Irish 1.8%
Equivalised income (aged 50 and older)

(Bottom tertile) (Middle tertile) (Top tertile)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Bottom Tertile</th>
<th>Middle Tertile</th>
<th>Top Tertile</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White English</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, not English</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Nazroo 2006)
Employment rates: men aged 50 to 65

(Nazroo 2006)
Ethnicity and health inequalities across the life course
Reported fair or bad health by ethnicity and age

(Nazroo 2004)
Reported fair or bad health by ethnicity and age

Difference in Percent Compared with White English

Caribbean
Indian
Bangladeshi
Pakistani
White, not English

(Nazroo 2006)
Generation and period
Reported fair or bad health by migration

Pakistani

Born in England
Born outside England

(Nazroo 2006)
Generation effects: odds of self reported fair or bad health compared with white English

First generation
Second generation

Age and gender standardised

(Smith et al. 2009)
Ethnicity, generation and educational level

Degree equivalent | A level equivalent to degree | NVQ1/2 | No recognised qualification

1st Bangladeshi | 1.5/2nd | 1st Pakistani | 1.5/2nd | 1st Indian | 1.5/2nd | 1st Black Caribbean | 1.5/2nd | 1st Irish

(Smith et al. 2009)
Changing ethnic inequalities in education
1991-2001-2011

(Lymperopoulou and Parameshwaran 2015)
Ethnicity, generation and occupational class

(Smith et al. 2009)
Period and cohort effects: odds of manual occupational class compared with white British (men)

(Karlsen et al. unpublished)
Male employment rates: old compared with young

Per cent of white English rate

- Aged 30-49
- Aged 50-65

Bangladeshi
Pakistani
Indian
Caribbean
White minority

(Nazroo 2006)
Persisting ethnic inequalities in unemployment
1991-2001-2011

Percent unemployed

- Bangladeshi
- Black Caribbean
- Indian
- White
- Pakistani

(Kapadia et al, 2015)
Growing ethnic inequalities in part-time employment
1991-2001-2011

(Kapadia et al, 2015)
Odds of moving between employed and unemployed compared with white British (men 1971-2011 Census)

Unemployed to Employed

Employed to Unemployed

(Karlsen et al. unpublished)
Odds of moving between employed and unemployed compared with white British (men 1971-2011 Census)

Unemployed to Employed

Employed to Unemployed

(Karlsen et al. unpublished)
Income, ethnicity and reported fair or bad health

(Nazroo 2003)
Attitudes, prejudice, discrimination and racism
Experiences of racism and discrimination

- One in eight ethnic minority people report experiencing racial harassment over the last year.
- Repeated racial harassment is a common experience.
- 25% of ethnic minority people say they are fearful of racial harassment.
- 20% of ethnic minority people report being refused a job for racial reasons, and almost three-quarters of them say it has happened more than once.
- 20% of ethnic minority people believe that most employers would refuse somebody a job for racial reasons, only 12% thought no employers would do this.
- White people freely report their own prejudice:
  - One in four say they are prejudiced against Asian people;
  - One in five say they are prejudiced against Caribbean people.

Modood et al. (1997)
Changes in levels of racism

Karlsen and Nazroo, (2014)
Changes in levels of racism

Experienced racism - Black Caribbean
Experienced racism - Pakistani
Experienced racism - Irish
Fear of racism - Black Caribbean
Fear of Racism - Pakistani

Karlsen and Nazroo, (2014)
Changes in levels of racial prejudice

(A little or very prejudiced)

Mind relative marrying Asian

Mind having an Asian boss

(Storm et al, 2016)
Persisting prevalence of racial prejudice

- A little or very prejudiced
- Mind relative marrying Asian
- Mind having an Asian boss

(Storm et al, 2016)
Racism, discrimination and health

Predicted per cent reporting fair or poor health

Racial harassment
- None
- Verbal
- Physical/property

Do employers discriminate?
- No or a few
- Some or most

Fear or racism
- No
- Yes

Karlsen and Nazroo 2002, 2004
Experiences of racism and decline in mental health

Change in score relative to no experience

Number and periodicity of experiences

(Wallace et al, 2016)
Ethnicity, identity and social connections
Influences on quality of life: what older people say

- Income and wealth.
- Health: mental and physical, coping.
- Relative independence and dealing with dependency.
- Support networks.
- Having time.
- Having a meaningful role:
  - Grandparenting, caring for parents and partners;
  - Closeness to family, multigenerational households;
  - Opportunities related to the local community/neighbourhood, often channelled through ethnicity and/or religion;
  - Paid and unpaid work (significance of employment history and route into retirement).

(Grewal et al, 2004)
I: So you go to the Mosque at three in the morning?

R: 3.30am ... I go and open the doors, I get there first ... At every prayer ... [the Mosque] is very close down there (inaudible) it is about five minutes. I open the doors for all five prayers.

[Later in the interview]

R: We bought [the Mosque] as a factory, there were small rooms we knocked them down and made a big hall. These others have been newly built, the land was bought and they were made but the Sufi Abdullah one (inaudible), there is one on Belgrave Road, Jammia Masjid, the one that was built first. There are many Mosques, there are many facilities the children go to read there.

I: You have started Madrasas (schools for religious education)?

R: Yes Madrasas. We have Allah’s blessing every thing is very nice.
I know so many people in Birmingham and there is no week without having to attend 2 or 3 weddings because they call me and if you don’t go then there is no respect and they think he didn’t come because of the money but they don’t know your financial position, the government doesn’t give you money for the weddings.
R: My role … I’m the head of the family and decision-maker and I advise my children …

I: … So decisions, are those family decisions for the whole family or just the family that lives in this house?

R: No the whole thing.

I: The whole family … In your household then what kind of decisions do you make for everybody?

R: About marriages. Or um … (pause) Any problem if they have got.

I: Give me an example.

R: Row between husband and wife and which slowly gradually growing up and coming to the end point where there is going to be a breakdown and then the matter comes to me. And then I sort that matter out and keep going like that.
Jamaican man, late 60s, informal work and social networks

R: And weekends I go up to the family and muck about in the garden there, help bits and pieces. I'm a handy person in that way.

I: When you say help bits and pieces do you mean...?

R: I'm a handy person, what they call a handyman. I'm quite handy really, as I say I'm a carpenter and do a bit of electrical work. Fix the washing machine and things like that. I got quite a (words indistinct) my friends have anything broken down.

I: So you go round to family and to friends and so on and do things ...

R: If they have anything wrong I'll go and fix it, keep me occupied.

(Grewal et al, 2004)
White man, late 60s, formal work and human/social capital

R: I now work three days a month for them. For a while ... But my knowledge becomes out of date ... yeah it will fade away, I’ve no illusions about that. But at the moment it’s great and they’re paying well for it, so that’s it.

I: Was that an idea you had that you wanted to stay working for a little bit of time or ...

R: Yeah. And you know also there are other people there that have done it. It’s the kind of job that you can do that ... [Employers] rely on experts in part and therefore for them it’s quite interesting to have someone on a retainer ... they can call in a known expert. So it’s something that the company is used to doing, having people that they bring in, as opposed to having them working there full time and doing all the hard slog ...

I: And was that important to you or not to be able to do that?

R: Yeah I think it was, yeah ’cos it just took the edge off complete isolation.

(Grewal et al, 2004)
Place, community and social cohesion
What people say about the benefits of ethnic concentration

- Helps generate longstanding local social connections, because of the stability of the population in the local area and because of knowing other local residents with similar ethnic backgrounds.

- Local community centres make an important contribution to the positive character of the area.

- Having a place of worship within easy reach enables people to maintain connections with their community and also provides friendship networks that last over long periods of time.

- Such areas provide opportunities for volunteering and other forms of civic engagement.

(Bécares and Nazroo 2013)
Measured and perceived quality of local area (those aged 45 and older)

Score relative to white people

Better

Worse

Overall deprivation score  Amenities score  Reported quality of amenities  Reported good area for crime etc

Caribbean  Indian  Pakistani

Better

Worse

(Bajekal et al. 2004)
Measured and perceived quality of local area (those aged 45 and older)

Score relative to white people

Better

Overall deprivation score
Amenities score
Reported quality of amenities
Reported good area for crime etc

Worse

Caribbean
Indian
Pakistani

(Bajekal et al. 2004)
Experiences of area deprivation and concentration

There are a lot of our people around here. No one fights, everyone is nice and friendly … everyone is nice to me. They always say hello to me … Yes it is all right. It is safe. There are many of our people here so it feels safe.

(Indian man in his late 60s/early 70s)

Oh yeah, we had a stabbing. And they had a shooting. Yeah. Drug related thing … Otherwise it’s not too bad … I didn’t know about the stabbing until I saw it on the telly and it was two houses from me. And the shooting thing … I saw [friend] in the yard and I asked him what happened. And then he told me that somebody shot somebody... I thought ‘Oh’ … you sort of feel scared really in’it, to see something like that happen so close to home, you know.

(Caribbean women in her mid 60s)
Impact of deprivation and ethnic concentration on social cohesion

Deprivation increase by 10%
Ethnic concentration increase by 10%

Indian and Bangladeshi results are statistically significant

All results are statistically significant

(Bécares et al. 2011)
Benefits of ethnic concentration for health

- There is evidence that the concentration of ethnic minority people in areas with those of similar ethnicity is beneficial, particularly for mental health.

- What might lie behind this:
  - Increased security – lower exposure to racial harassment and discrimination;
  - Maybe increased support when exposed to racism;
  - Increased practical and emotional support more generally;
  - More traditional and protective health behaviours;
  - Increased social cohesion, political mobilisation and civic involvement;
  - Stronger and more legitimised membership of the neighbourhood, characterised by the social and material fabric of the neighbourhood.

(Bécares and Nazroo 2013)
R: Well, we go on holiday 5, 6 times a year … we went away for a week to Northumberland and Edinburgh, and when I’m there I can afford to buy a ticket for the Royal Tattoo, you know it’s just money isn’t it you know … Then at the end of September I’m going walking in Switzerland for a couple of weeks and then … well this year it’s a bit different. My daughter’s getting married at New Year, then February I’m going to Ecuador, so yeah I travel a lot.

I: And money makes that possible …

R: Makes it possible yeah of course. I mean that’s what I spend my money on. And certain other things, but I spend it on holidays ’cos that’s what I like to do.
White man, mid 70s, interviewed with his wife

R: I enjoy driving that’s all there’s to it … Like as I say it’s a bit rough at the moment with the cost of petrol and all that but we like to … that’s our pleasure getting around.

W: We only can go out say once fortnight or a month now, can’t we?

R: If we can keep the car moving we’re quite happy … we bomb off to a different town nearly every week. When it’s good weather we’ll do over the mountain way to Aberystwyth and up round the dams (Laughs) some people think we’re a bit crazy … In the winter and that we’re just the same, we go off out and … the car’s warm.

W: It’s warmer in the car than in here because we can’t afford to have our central heating on all the time, can we … ?

R: It don’t matter who you vote for or what you vote for but anybody who votes for this lot who’s got a car must be mentally deficient because that’s out of all sense and reason what they’ve done to it. If you work out what you’re paying … for blooming petrol.

(Grewal et al, 2004)
Conclusions

- Marked ethnic inequalities in later life across a number of dimensions: health, income, economic activity, etc.
- Evidence of accumulation of disadvantage across the life course: inequalities grow as people get older.
- Evidence of intergenerational continuities of disadvantage: UK born and more recent generations face similar levels of inequality in relation to health and employment.
- But some evidence of educational and class mobility.
- Importance of meaningful social roles to provide valued identities.
- Importance of place and belonging, being a member of and shaping communities.
- But, at a micro level, issues of identity, belonging, lack of connection, isolation, or loneliness, are not the issues driving ethnic inequalities.
- The persisting climate of prejudice and racism, alongside poverty and area deprivation are key.
Reflecting on policy

- There has been no development of policy to specifically address ethnic inequalities in later life.
- But not a policy vacuum, there are clear policies that are restrictive in relation to identity, culture, community, segregation and migration.
- Such an emphasis is contrary to the evidence base and lends support to prejudice, discrimination and racism, all of which are likely to impact negatively on older ethnic minority people.
- And it is likely that ethnic minority people are being disproportionately impacted on by public sector retrenchment (austerity measures).
- In fact, evidence strongly suggests that policy development should focus on the social and economic inequalities faced by older ethnic minority people, rather than aggravate them.
- We need policies that promote equitable life chances, address racism and marginalisation and support opportunities for positive identity affirmation for older people with ethnic minority backgrounds.
Visit our website for analysis of the latest data on ethnic inequalities in the UK

Topics covered include

- Ethnic diversity
- Neighbourhood segregation
- National identity
- Education
- Employment
- Health
- Housing
- Deprivation
- Language
- Ethnic population growth
- Changes in ethnic identities
- Counting immigrant populations

Cartogram of Local Authorities, with Inner London and other principal cities marked:
Manchester (M), Liverpool (L), Sheffield (S), Newcastle upon Tyne (NE), Birmingham (B), Leeds (LS), and Cardiff (C)

Sources: the 2011 Censuses (Crown Copyright). Map base: Bethan Thomas.