



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

ECE/CES/GE.30/2008/11
8 July 2008

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Group of Experts on Gender Statistics

Fifth Session

Geneva, 6-8 October 2008

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**MEASUREMENT OF GENDER DISPARITIES WITHIN OTHER SUBPOPULATION
GROUPS**

**Moving on up? Statistics on gender and ethnic group in the Equal Opportunities
Commission's investigation into ethnic minority women and work**

Note by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, United Kingdom

Summary

Between 2005 and 2007 the Equal Opportunities Commission for Great Britain (EOC) carried out an investigation into ethnic minority women and work. This paper describes the wide range of quantitative research which formed a major part of the investigation.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. For nearly 32 years the EOC was the leading agency working to eliminate sex discrimination in Britain. Set up under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (SDA), its duties were:

- (a) to work towards the elimination of discrimination;
- (b) to promote equality of opportunity between women and men equally;
- (c) to keep under review the working of the Act and the Equal Pay Act 1970 and, as necessary, to draw up and submit to the Secretary of State proposals for amending them.

2. In October 2005 the EOC launched *Moving on up? Ethnic minority women at work a Great Britain - wide investigation* into the participation, pay and progression of ethnic minority women in the labour market.

3. The overall aim of the investigation was to understand more about the diverse experiences and aspirations of ethnic minority women in relation to work, including barriers to progress. It was known that there was insufficient labour market evidence easily available that would show how gender, race and faith intersect in the labour market, so a key element of the investigation was to develop existing and new sources of statistics in order to extend the evidence available. Although the focus of the investigation was on women, as far as possible statistics were developed that would allow comparisons between women and men within and between ethnic groups.

4. This paper provides an overview of the different components of this part of the investigation. Further information about the investigation and related research is available from the EOC's legacy website: <http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/eoc/Defaultade7.html?page=20294>
<http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/eoc/Default08e9.html?page=17927>

5. On 1 October 2007 the EOC became part of the Equality and Human Rights Commission. This new public body has a wider remit than previous Commissions, including human rights and good relations in addition to the protected grounds under British equality legislation. These protected grounds are: gender, transgender, age, disability, ethnic group, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

II. ETHNIC MINORITIES IN BRITAIN

6. In 2001 the ethnic minority population in Britain was 4.6 million or 8.1 per cent of the population.¹ In this paper 'ethnic minority' refers to visible minorities which are mainly from Black or Asian groups, including Chinese. The sizes of the various population groups are: Indian

¹ EOC (2004) *Ethnic minority women and men*, Women and men in Britain series. Manchester: EOC.
http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/eoc/PDF/ethnic_minority_women_and_men_briefing.pdf?page=17928

(1.8 per cent of the population), Pakistani (1.3 per cent), Black Caribbean (1.0 per cent), Black African (0.8 per cent), Bangladeshi (0.5 per cent) and Chinese (0.4 per cent). The ethnic minority population tends to live in Britain's major cities and conurbations. For example, while in 2001 one in ten white people lived in London, this compared with almost half (45 per cent) of all ethnic minority people. This geographic distribution can make it difficult to achieve a representative survey sample without substantial expenditure.

7. The investigation focussed particularly, though not exclusively, on Black Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. Pakistani and Bangladeshi women were included because they have the lowest rates of employment of any ethnic group, and Black Caribbean women because they are under-represented in senior level jobs, despite being more likely than white women to work full-time.

8. These groups of women have had very different migration histories² with Black Caribbean people beginning to arrive in Britain in the 1950s. Pakistani migration also began in the 1950s when single or married men arrived on their own, but families and wives only joined the migration in the 1970s. At the same time Bangladeshi migration started following the independence of Bangladesh in 1972.

9. The relatively recent immigration patterns of some ethnic minorities mean that their age structure differs from the population as a whole. The ethnic minority population is relatively young: for example, in 2001 38 per cent of the Bangladeshi population were under 16, which was double the figure for the white population. Thus the ethnic minority population forms a higher than average percentage of pupils and young people leaving education.

10. Recent population estimates suggest that between 2001 and 2005 the working age population of England increased by 900,000, including increases of 780,000 for the ethnic minority population and 230,000 for the 'other white' population, whilst the white British and Irish working age populations both decreased in size (by a total of 110,000).³

11. Earlier publications by the EOC had brought together statistics disaggregated by sex and ethnic group to begin to investigate the combined effects of gender and ethnic group on experiences in education, employment etc, but further work and data were required to carry out a more complete investigation.

² Bhavnani, R with Performance through Inclusion (2006) *Ahead of the game: the changing aspirations of young ethnic minority women*, Moving on up? Series. Manchester: EOC.

³ ONS (2007) *Population estimates by ethnic group 2001-2005 (experimental)*. Accessed 1 July 2008 from <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=14238>

III. STATISTICS DISAGGREGATED BY SEX AND ETHNIC GROUP: THE CHALLENGES

12. Whilst statistics disaggregated by sex are relatively easy to obtain for the population of Great Britain, those disaggregated by sex and ethnic group are less common. Many official surveys which collect data by ethnic group use the same classification as the 2001 Census:

- (a) White, divided into white British, white Irish, other white;
- (b) Mixed, divided in England and Wales into white and Black Caribbean, white and Black African, white and Asian, other mixed background;
- (c) Asian or Asian British, divided into Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, other Asian;
- (d) Black or Black British, divided into Caribbean, African, other Black;
- (e) Chinese or other, divided into Chinese, any other.

13. However not all do and those that do use this classification may not collect data from a sufficiently large sample to support disaggregation of the results by gender and ethnic group. It is common to see analysis restricted to the five main groups (white, mixed, Asian, Black, Chinese or other) or even to just two groups (white and non-white or ethnic minority). Alternatively the analysis by gender may be separate from the analysis by ethnic group so that the potentially different results for women and men from each ethnic group are not available.

14. Two solutions to this problem of sample size are represented in the following projects. One is to use the population Census (see section VIII below), which covers the majority of the population but takes place only every ten years, and the other is to pool data from a regular survey such as the Labour Force Survey (see section IX below).

15. Further, less robust evidence is provided by small surveys targeted at specific geographic areas and oversampling the ethnic minority groups of interest (see sections IV-VII below). Although these surveys cannot be interpreted as representative of the ethnic groups covered, they do provide indicative results which can be used effectively to draw attention to specific issues.

IV. CHALLENGING THE STEREOTYPES OF YOUNG WORKING WOMEN

16. For the launch of the investigation, the EOC commissioned Connect Research & Consultancy Ltd to carry out a small face-to-face survey of young women who were in work.⁴ In order to address the assumptions often made about ethnic minority women's choices and the reasons for their lower levels of employment and higher unemployment rates, the survey covered three main areas:

- (a) their aspirations for promotion and future career development;

⁴ Botcherby, S (2006) *Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean women and employment survey: aspirations, experiences and choices*, Moving on up? Series. Manchester: Equal Opportunities Commission. <http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/eoc/Default8103.html?page=19979>

- (b) their experiences of finding a job and how they were treated at work;
- (c) what had influenced their choice of employer.

17. This provided information on the types of disadvantage, discrimination and stereotyping faced by young ethnic minority women in the labour market compared with young white British women.

18. The main aim of the survey was to provide some quick indicative results in time for the launch of the investigation. Since the investigation was to concentrate on Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean women, interviews were conducted in three areas of Britain where these ethnic groups are well-represented: London, Birmingham and Leeds/Bradford. The sample also included an equivalent group of young white British women from the same areas for comparison. Interviewees were screened to identify a sample of those in work and in the age group 16-34, and the final sample included 812 women, just over 200 from each ethnic group. Although the survey results could not be described as representative of young ethnic minority women across Britain, key results were used effectively in the press release launching the investigation to raise the issues of young ethnic minority women's ambitions and experiences in work.

V. CHALLENGING THE STEREOTYPES OF 16 YEAR OLDS

19. The survey of young women was followed by a second small survey of 16 year olds conducted by Performance through Inclusion Ltd and Reena Bhavnani.⁵ In Britain young people are faced with key, pre-labour market decisions at this age, for example, whether to continue in full-time education and if so what type of course to follow. Their choices may be affected by their perceptions of the labour market and of what they believe is possible. The aims of the survey were:

- (a) The choices young people are making at 16;
- (b) The direction of their job/career interests and aspirations;
- (c) Who is influencing these job/career interests and aspirations;
- (d) Some of the key factors influencing choices and aspirations, including geography, travel, beliefs about work, expectation of discrimination and other issues;
- (e) The influence of lifestyle factors and their impact upon choices and aspirations;
- (f) Young people's experiences/perceptions of advice and guidance agencies;
- (g) What would help young people to negotiate the factors identified above more effectively.

20. A paper-based survey was conducted in 14 schools in Greater Manchester, Birmingham and London achieving a sample of 1,191 responses in total. So again the sample will not be representative of all 16 year olds. Also larger samples were achieved of some gender and ethnic

⁵ Bhavnani, R with Performance through Inclusion (2006) *Ahead of the game: the changing aspirations of young ethnic minority women*, Moving on up? Series. Manchester: Equal Opportunities Commission. <http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/eoc/Default4ea0.html?page=19988>

group combinations than others. Fewer than 50 young Black Caribbean men and young Indian men answered the survey.

21. The results of the survey were included in the investigation's interim report and used to highlight key issues, for example that Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean girls have the same aspirations as white girls and are as ambitious about their education and careers.

VI. GRADUATES

22. EOC sought to explore further the situation of ethnic minority students using data from Hobsons Graduate Recruitment Review,⁶ a survey carried out between November 2005 and March 2006. The report⁷ describes analysis of responses from over 10,000 white British Nationals and nearly 4,000 ethnic minority undergraduates. This latter group included both British and other nationalities domiciled in Britain, plus overseas students.

VII. THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

23. To complement the surveys of individuals, a survey was also commissioned from IFF Research Ltd to fill some of the gaps in evidence regarding the perspectives of employers.⁸ The aim was to increase knowledge on:

- (a) the current labour market position of ethnic minority women;
- (b) factors affecting participation and progression in the labour market for women from different ethnic backgrounds;
- (c) employer practices that are helpful to ethnic minority women's participation and progress at work, as well as practices which may unintentionally discriminate against women from specific ethnic minority backgrounds.

24. In order to concentrate on employers most likely to have had applications from or to be employing ethnic minority women, the study was carried out in areas with an above average proportion of ethnic minority individuals in the resident population. This resulted in the selection of 22 'travel to work areas' (TTWAs)⁹ that contained a proportion of Black or Asian individuals

⁶ See www.hobsons.uk.com for further information.

⁷ Speed, L (2007) *Job seeking behaviour of ethnic minority students*, Moving on up? Series. Manchester: EOC.

<http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/eoc/Defaultb8c5.html?page=20059>

⁸ Adams, L and Carter, K (2007) *Black and Asian women in the workplace: the employer perspective*, Moving on up? Series. Manchester: Equal Opportunities Commission.

<http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/eoc/Default8977.html?page=20058>

⁹ Travel to work areas divide England and Wales into non-overlapping areas in each of which the majority (in most cases at least 75 per cent) of the working population both live and work. See <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/twa.asp> for details.

that was equal to or higher than the national average of 7.7 per cent. In addition, only employers with 25 or more staff were included in the survey.

25. In total 801 employers were interviewed in the main survey using computer aided telephone interviewing (CATI). The sample was drawn from a commercial business database which was stratified by sector and number of employees. This was followed by a boost survey of 356 employers of ethnic minority women. These were classified as employers whose workforces included a proportion of Black or Asian women that was greater than or equal to the proportion of Black or Asian women in the economically active population in the TTWA in which their workplace was based.

26. The results of this survey were also used in the interim report to contrast employers actions with their intentions and the aspirations of ethnic minority women. For example nearly 60 per cent of organisations employing more than 25 people in areas with higher-than-average numbers of Black/Asian people don't have a workforce that reflects the number of Black and Asian women in or seeking work, although the vast majority of employers surveyed said they saw the business case for employing ethnic minority women.

VIII. THE BIG PICTURE: SECONDARY ANALYSIS OF THE 2001 CENSUS

27. To obtain a more detailed picture of the labour market participation of ethnic minority women, the EOC commissioned Lisa Buckner and Sue Yeandle at the University of Leeds to analyse data from the 2001 Census in England and Wales.¹⁰ Only a major source, such as a very large survey or census, is sufficient to support such a geographical analysis linking ethnic minority populations clustered in particular districts with their local labour markets. The three questions addressed by the report are:

- (a) Are ethnic minority women disadvantaged in the labour market mainly because they are clustered in localities where labour market opportunities are generally poor?
- (b) Do different groups of ethnic minority women have consistently high/low levels of economic activity and unemployment, irrespective of where they live, related to cultural preferences or arising from discrimination?
- (c) Is it sensible to set national targets for labour force participation, either for all women or for women from different ethnic minority groups?

28. Data for 376 local authority districts was analysed to compare the economic activity and unemployment rates of Indian, Black Caribbean, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and white British women of working age between and within districts. This exercise was then repeated for districts where ethnic minorities form at least five per cent of the population and for major cities. In all cases wide variations in economic activity and unemployment rates were found.

¹⁰ Buckner, L, Yeandle, S and Botcherby, S (2007) *Ethnic minority women and local labour markets*, Moving on up? Series. Manchester: EOC.
<http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/eoc/Defaulta279.html?page=20060>

29. Further work compared areas with similar economic activity or unemployment rates for women to see whether ethnic minority women also had similar experiences in these districts. Finally, Neighbourhood Renewal areas were selected as examples of 'deprived' districts.

IX. EQUAL PAY: SECONDARY ANALYSIS OF THE LABOUR FORCE SURVEY

30. The Census in England and Wales does not collect data on income, so another approach was used to obtain a large enough sample to support an analysis of pay by gender and ethnic group. Lucinda Platt from the University of Essex was commissioned to produce an analysis of pay gaps based on pooling data from four years of the Labour Force Survey.¹¹

31. In this way, it was possible to compare the average hourly earnings of full-time and part-time employees by gender and ethnic group, and to estimate the extent of pay gaps. In each case white British men were taken as the comparator and their pay compared with that of white British women and women and men from Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean and Black African ethnic groups.

32. The report also looks at pay gaps among: employees qualified to at least level 3, employees aged 25-54, at different points in the earnings distribution and for weekly pay. The design of the Labour Force Survey is a rotating panel, with new households forming one fifth of the sample each quarter. Responding households then stay in the sample for five consecutive quarters, and employees are asked about their pay in waves 1 and 5. To avoid repeat observations from the same households, only wave 1 responses were used in the analysis from a total of 16 consecutive quarters (June-August 2001 to March-May 2005) and pay was adjusted to 2005 prices.

X. CONCLUSION

33. The EOC published two reports from the investigation, an interim report in September 2006 and a final report in March 2007. The latter was accompanied by a volume of statistics which brought together a range of statistics collected during the course of the investigation, many of which had not been published elsewhere. These reports are:

- EOC (2006) *Moving on up? Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Black Caribbean women and work: Early findings from the EOC's investigation in England*. Manchester: EOC.
- EOC (2007) *Moving on up? The way forward: Report of the EOC's investigation into Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Black Caribbean women and work*. Manchester: EOC.
- EOC (2007) *Moving on up? Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Black Caribbean women and work: Key statistics*. Manchester: EOC.

¹¹ Platt, L (2006) *Pay gaps: the position of ethnic minority women and men*, Moving on up? Series. Manchester: EOC. <http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/eoc/Default5d28.html?page=19978>

34. The important role played by appropriate statistical evidence is clearly seen in these volumes which quote both quantitative and qualitative evidence extensively. The final report also proposes a set of indicators on which to base future measurement of progress:

Employment gap	Priority groups	Indicator of progress
Participation	Bangladeshi and Pakistani women and Muslim women	Economic activity rate Economic activity rates in local authority areas where they are currently 20 per cent or lower
Unemployment	All groups of ethnic minority women and Muslim women	Unemployment rate
Progression	All groups of women (including white women)	Percentage of women in employment who are managers and senior officials Percentage of employers employing ethnic minority women
Pay	Bangladeshi and Pakistani women	Pay gap compared with white British women and for all women compared with white British men
Segregation	All groups including Indian women, Black African women	Small clusters in particular industries Better spread across workplaces Better spread across occupations
