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Communities within Communities: a Longitudinal Approach to Minority/Majority Relationships and Social Cohesion, 2008-2009

User Guide
Department of Sociology, University of Surrey

Research Report for the RES-000-22-2796 ESRC project:

Communities within Communities: a longitudinal approach to minority/majority relationships and social cohesion

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Background

In our rapidly changing trans-national world of global cultures, ‘the community’ and ‘the neighbourhood’ appear to be parochial and irrelevant spaces for governance and political organisation. Yet, these seemingly outmoded spaces are back on national political agendas. From a UK perspective the ideology of community cohesion has come to dominate policy agendas aimed at cultivating social harmony within multiracial neighbourhoods (Commission on Integration and Cohesion 2007). This approach represents in part the Labour government’s response to the rioting of Asian British youths in the north of England in the summer of 2001. Home Office reports (see for example Home Office 2001) concluded that the riots were dependent upon a lack of ‘social cohesion’ in the racially ‘divided’, ‘morally fragmented’ and ‘economically deteriorating’ northern towns (Burnett 2004: 8). In short, it was reported that Asian and white communities lived racially ‘parallel’ and ‘segregated’ lives. In the aftermath of the riots, a consensus emerged, within policy, political and media circles that ‘multiethnic communities’ in Britain must be encouraged to nurture a national sense of citizenship centred around shared civic values, trust and sense of place (Amin 2003: 463). The cultivation of such values is associated with the formation of ‘a cohesive nation’ (Burnett 2004: 9). Local governments’ various urban regeneration programmes have become a key site through which to implement initiatives aimed at ‘community cohesion’.

The emphasis upon the development of shared national values within the micro-public sphere of ‘the community’ has led sociological commentators to contend that the ‘community cohesion’ model signals a return to older models of integration (Amin 2003; Singh 2004: 67). Our research builds upon this critique through exploration of the lived complexities of belonging, identity, and difference in an ethnically diverse area of Woking in Surrey.

Studies of ethnically diverse neighbourhoods in the UK have produced complex portraits of both interethnic alliances combined with hostilities between and within ethnic groups (Back 1996; Hewitt 2005). Most studies of interethnic relationships in the UK focus upon the interaction between the white majority and Asian and black postcolonial settlers. In contrast our research examined the interrelationship between a white majority that included local residents from Woking and settlers from London, established white British Italian-Sicilian and British
Pakistani minorities.¹ Our aim was to analyse the contrasts and complexities in how people from these ethnicities and across generations experienced their involvement in and attachment to the place they lived. In most similar studies, whiteness is represented by the majority culture. From this point of view, the research focus on members of a white Italian minority adds complexity to the ways in which the invisibility and apparent normalcy of whiteness is expressed and experienced (see also Fortier 2000). In addition, our study area is the place where new migrants to Woking settle, which has enabled an exploration of the white majority and established minorities’ attitudes towards recent immigrants. This aspect of our research has contributed to sociological explorations of attitudes towards new migrants (Eade, Drinkwater and Garapich 2007; Ray, Hudson and Phillips 2008).

Aims and objectives of the research

1. Examine the potential tensions between the community approach pursued by national and local government agencies and the lived complexities of multicultural areas in Britain.

2. Complement existing studies of community engagement with local structures of governance by emphasizing the role of ethnicity and the significance of a longitudinal approach.

3. Contribute to the understanding of minority-majority relations by focusing on an established white Italian minority group.

4. Contribute to the understanding of the relationship between established minority communities and the various groups of ‘new migrants’.

5. Complement the understanding of ethnic interaction at community level through data from an ‘under-researched’ area, Surrey.

How and to what extent the aims and objectives have been met will be addressed in the results section below.

¹ We refer to the majority population as ‘white English’. However, we use the terms English, British, Muslim, Asian, Pakistani, Sicilian, Italian interchangeably to convey the shifting ways in which our research participants articulated their identities (see further the project pamphlet, Jensen and Tyler [2009] section entitled ‘What’s in a name’).
Methods

The fieldwork deployed the life-story methodology (Etherington 2006), and also drew upon ethnographic interview practices (Brewer 2000). Life-stories were conducted with a total of 14 extended families, which included 4 white English, 4 Italian and 6 Asian families (see table of life-story interviews, annex 1). The number of British Pakistani families that participated in the study is slightly higher than for the other ethnicities, because in 2 instances family members decided not to take part after work had commenced with other family members. In these cases new families were found.

Within each family life-story interviews were carried out with one or more members of each generation. For ethical reasons, no interviews were conducted with individuals under the age of eighteen, and so there were family members across ethnicities who could not participate. 11 families were represented by 2 generations, and not 3 generations as planned, due to the absence of a third generation, and/or family members’ decision not to take part. While the aim was to collect one life-story from a male and female member of each generation, this was not always possible because not all families chosen were constituted in this ideal way. However, these realities did not diminish the research objective of establishing a multi-generational and gendered perspective of neighbourhood relations with all the families selected. The life history method facilitated a focus upon both individual reflections and collective experiences within families, across generations and ethnicities.

Care was taken to select families that represented the diversity of each of the three ethnicities in terms of geographical origins, and to capture the socioeconomic diversity within the ward. White English families were recruited through networking in the local area, while minority families were recruited with the help of gatekeepers. An Italian man and his English wife, who were held in high regard by the Italian community, assisted with the selection of the Italian-Sicilian families, and helped with the translation of 2 interviews.

As anticipated, it was not always culturally appropriate for the white male Danish researcher to carry out interviews with Asian female respondents. Therefore an Urdu-speaking Asian female Research Assistant was hired. The Research Assistant had worked with local women for more than 10 years, and had cultivated their trust.

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2 We use the terms ‘first generation’, ‘second generation’ and so forth to highlight the intergenerational relationship between family members. We do not mean for these terms to refer stereotypically to progressive stages of migration and assimilation into the majority culture (see Hesse and Sayyid 2006 for a critique of such an approach).
The Research Assistant helped with recruiting Asian families to the project, and carried out the interviews with these families. Notwithstanding the successful recruitment of Asian families, a number of those approached, particularly first generation British Pakistani men, were reluctant to participate. They were suspicious of what they thought might be the project’s ‘hidden’ agenda. In the face of an increasingly Islamophobic political climate in the UK, they suspected ulterior motives to the research, that the research team might not have been aware of.

In order to establish an understanding of the broader local context, a total of 30 related semi-structured interviews were conducted with local residents, politicians and community workers, including individuals employed in local ‘services’ such as housing, schooling and community development (see annex 2 for a list of networking interviews). These interviews were vital for networking with families in the area, dissemination purposes and necessary to establish a broader understanding of the socio-economic composition and ‘cohesion’ of the ward. In addition knowledge of the locality was furthered by Jensen being a resident of the neighbourhood. This made it easier for him to stay abreast of local developments. Jensen and Tyler also participated in key community events such as summer festivals and community meetings.

In total 66 interviews were conducted, 56 of which were digitally recorded in English and were transcribed verbatim. 5 interviews were recorded in Urdu and orally translated into English, 4 interviews are summaries based on notes, and 1 interview is a telephone interview. Contextual knowledge of the locality and networking was enhanced by access to the full dataset of an oral history project with the residents of Woking, conducted by researchers at a local museum.

Before the project commenced, ethics clearance was received from the University of Surrey’s Ethics Committee (see letter of approval, annex 3).

Results

1. Ethnicity and the local socioeconomic landscape

Research focussed on the ‘under-researched’ locality of Woking situated in the relatively wealthy South Eastern county of Surrey. Compared to its surrounding predominantly white and prosperous neighbourhoods, the Maybury-Sheerwater ward (M-S) is socio-economically ‘deprived’ and ethnically diverse. According to the 2001 Census, 34% of the total population of the ward belonged to the category ‘people in
ethnic groups’. The ward has consistently been ranked among the most deprived in Surrey (Communities and Local Government 2008). M-S was the only area in the County to receive funding from the Single Regeneration Budget in the period 1997-2003.

Three distinct neighbourhoods can be identified in the ward. The Walton Road Area dates back to the late nineteenth century, and is the site where new immigrants to Woking settle. The two other neighbourhoods are the Maybury estate and Sheerwater estate, both council estates developed after the Second World War. While the Maybury estate was built by Woking Borough, the much larger Sheerwater estate was developed by the London County Council (later known as the Greater London Council, GLC) to house Londoners displaced from the city. Sheerwater was managed by the GLC until the ownership of the estate was transferred to Woking Borough in 1980.

Over the past forty years, the three dominant ethnicities in M-S have been: The white English majority (consisting of people who claim belonging to Woking and London); the Italian-Sicilian minority from villages in Sicily and Campania, near Naples; the British Asian Pakistani minority, with the majority settling in Woking from the Mirpur area in the Pakistani-controlled part of Kashmir.

While Londoners settled in Woking in the 1950s, most Pakistanis and Italians came to Woking during the 1960s and 1970s. Pakistani and Italian migrants settled in Woking because of the promise of employment in local nursery gardens, and the major industries located in Woking, where the Londoners also found work. Furthermore, Woking is home to the Shahjehan mosque, the first purpose-built mosque in Britain built in 1889. The Mosque is an important place of worship for the Muslim minority. Indeed, first generation Muslim settlers with whom we worked reported that they attended Mosque on a daily or weekly basis. Approximately 40% of the British Asian Pakistani population in Surrey lives within a radius of one mile of the Mosque (2001 Census).

The profile of M-S has changed considerably over the last forty years. M-S lost its major industries during the restructuring of Britain’s economic infrastructure from an industrially based manufacturing economy, to one dominated by hi-tech and service industries. In parallel with this development, and often caused by it, the local population branched out into new types of employment. An estimated 1 in 4 British Asian men is currently employed in the taxi industry, mostly Woking-based,
Pakistani-owned companies. The Italian minority moved from working in local factories and/or nursery gardens to employment as gardeners in private houses, with one respondent estimating that today 70% of first generation Italians either owned or worked for private gardening and landscaping businesses. The Londoners who settled in Woking are now retired, and their children are not easily identified with any single employment sector, the same goes for local white English families from Woking.

Overtime, the majority of Italians have moved ‘up and out’ of the ward, and settled in more affluent parts of Woking. By contrast, Asians now constitute the largest minority in the area, but yet whites remain in the majority, with a significant number of white working-class people living on the Sheerwater estate.  

Interethnic neighbourhood relations in M-S have also been shaped by changes in the housing policy. The 1980 Housing Act made it possible for council tenants to buy their properties. While the majority of white English Sheerwater residents made use of their right-to-buy, it was mainly British Asians who brought houses on Maybury estate, where they, according to estimates made by local residents and housing officers, now constitute approximately 65% of the total population.

In addition, the social dynamics of Sheerwater has been affected by the transfer of the estate from the GLC to Woking borough in 1980. As the number of council-owned one-bedroom flats on Sheerwater was higher than the other wards combined, there has been a concentration of so-called ‘vulnerable households’ from the Borough to the Sheerwater estate. It is this concentration that has contributed to both long-term white English residents’ and outsiders’ perception of the social and economic decline of Sheerwater (see Tyler 2008/9; Forthcoming).

2. Governance, politics and community engagement
Our research has provided insight into the ways in which ethnicity mediates local people’s engagement with local structures of governance across time (objective 2). It is the status of M-S as a deprived area that has been responsible for the recent local government initiatives in the ward. Most significant is the Sheerwater-Maybury Partnership, implemented 1997-2003 with a total £3.4 million invested from the Single Regeneration Fund. While this initiative resulted in significant investments in community centres, schools, health facilities and other local amenities, the final

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3 According to the 2001 Census, 2,409 out of a total population of 8,974 inhabitants identified as ‘Asian or Asian British: Pakistani’, and 5,310 inhabitants classified as ‘White’.
evaluation of the Partnership concluded that the success of the scheme was dependent upon the employment of community workers whose task it was to liaise with local residents (CSC 2003). The ‘community’ also became the site of intervention for the ‘Social Inclusion and Community Cohesion Strategy’ developed in 2004 by Woking Borough Council (WBC). The aim of the project was to target those areas with the highest levels of deprivation (Woking Borough Council 2004: 11-12). Once more the deployment of dedicated frontline staff to these areas was considered by WBC as a vital strategy.

Clearly, the past ten years have seen significant regeneration initiatives by the Borough Council. But yet, M-S residents that we interviewed perceived the Council to show a lack of support and involvement in local issues. Historically the perception has been that the Council has understood the white working-class residents in Sheerwater and minorities in Maybury as ‘enclosed’ communities, and thus set apart from the rest of the Borough. It is precisely this feeling of being ‘outsiders’ that has provided the motivation for some residents to engage with local structures of governance. In this regard, we have traced patterns of community engagement across a 50 year period both along and across ethnic lines. In this way, our study illustrates how residents have cultivated the skills necessary to become ‘empowered’ and thus take responsibility for their ‘communities’ (for an analysis of governance and community engagement see Baistow 1994/5; Rose 1996; Hyatt 1997; Cruikshank 1999; Tyler 2007).

One early example of neighbourhood-based mobilisation along ethnic lines is the organisation of first generation white residents from Sheerwater in the 1950s. Coming from the Greater London Area, they self-identified and were perceived by local Woking residents as ‘outsiders’. Consequently, a range of Sheerwater-based voluntary and social associations emerged, some of which were aimed at gaining access to local amenities from Woking Borough, such as telephone boxes on the estate. From this point of view, Sheerwater estate from the 1950s to 1980s represented an idealised image of white working-class community characterised by collective values and cohesion (see also Blokland 2001).

Asian migrants in the 1960s were also defined by locals as ‘outsiders’. However, in contrast to second and third generation Londoners who overtime became ‘insiders’, younger generations of British Asian respondents felt stigmatised and marginalised by the majority as ethnic ‘outsiders’. It is precisely this feeling of
marginalisation that has pushed Asians to claim ‘a level playing field’ with the white majority culture, especially within the political sphere. While local politics in the ward traditionally has been the preserve of white English councillors, the first Asian Councillor was elected in 1996. By 2008 all four locally elected Councillors – three for Woking Borough and one for Surrey County Council – were British Asian Pakistanis.

This successful political engagement with local structures of governance by British Asians contrasts with the perceived disengagement of white English and British Italian residents. There is little tradition for Italians to engage collectively in local politics or with the local authorities. Moreover, in recent times, the white English electorate has been characterised by resignation and apathy.

While the aforementioned examples of community engagement follow ethnic lines, the research also identified cooperation across ethnicity. Examples include residents’ associations where residents from the Maybury and Sheerwater estates respectively worked across ethnic locations to call to account the Departments of Woking Borough Council responsible for the upkeep and management of each estate. However, these local-level attempts to bring about change were often limited by the small numbers of residents that participated in community based politics.

To conclude, our findings suggest that a longitudinal perspective to community engagement with local structures of governance enables an exploration of the ways in which residents come to mobilise along ethnic lines to stake their claims and gain influence. But yet at the same time, when residents have something to be cohesive against they can come to act collectively across ethnic identities to hold local authorities to account.

3. The complexities of social cohesion and integration
The research focus on the dynamics of social cohesion and integration illuminates the potential tensions between the community approach pursued by national and local government agencies and the lived complexities of multicultural areas in Britain (objective 1). Our research illustrates how the neighbourhood does not always become a common source of ‘cohesion’ for those who live in multicultural areas. From this point of view, our findings support Amin’s (2002: 972) contention that, ‘there are limits to how far community cohesion – rooted in common values, a shared sense of place, and local networks of trust – can become the basis for living with
difference...’. However, at the same time our research does not support the ‘parallel lives’ thesis that suggests people’s lives within multicultural areas ‘do not seem to touch at any point’ (Home Office 2001: 9).

We found that interethnic relationships between neighbours were described by the following phrase, articulated by informants across generations, gender and ethnic locations: ‘they keep themselves to themselves’. While this phrase captures the absence of regular patterns of social interaction between neighbours across ethnicity, detailed intergenerational analysis shows that interethnic relationships are more complex. In this regard, we found many examples whereby neighbours who did not generally interact, helped each other in times of crisis or emergency, and offered comfort at times of sadness such as bereavement.

First generation Italian men and women, Asian men and white English men and women respondents often worked for a period of time in the same local factories. However, we found that in most cases first generation Italian and Asian respondents’ senses of belonging and relationships were centred around their nuclear and/or extended families and thus focussed upon the home, the house, place of origin, and for some older Muslims the Mosque. In other words, while expressions of belonging often included a diasporic sense of attachment to one’s homeland, they did not always include the wider local neighbourhood. However, in the case of first generation Italians, family-orientated senses of belonging did not screen out a feeling of integration into Englishness (see further section 4).

This differs from the neighbourhood nostalgia expressed by the majority of first generation white Londoners and long-term white residents to Woking, who emphasized the formation of strong community ties and relationships in the past. This has been described by Back (1996) as the classic ‘death of community’ discourse, whereby the easy conviviality of yesteryear, associated with traditional white working-class ways of life was thought to have disappeared with the settlement of ethnic minorities and new migrants. However, by contrast to the people with whom Back worked in the 1980s, the picture is different in M-S. While there is apprehension among some older white English residents of what they perceive as an increasing Asian presence, the decline of community is first and foremost blamed on segments of the white English working class, characterised by respondents as ‘yobbos’, ‘downtrodden’, and ‘undesirables’. Particularly pertinent to this observation is Skeggs’ (1997; 2004, see also Lawler 2005; Reay et al 2008) contention that class
identity is entwined with ideas of respectability, that is dependent upon the creation of
distinctions between oneself and others. Interestingly, the majority of Italian and
Asian interviewees did not articulate these particular discourses of class distinction,
except when they were forced into a relationship with those defined and marked as
lacking respectability (see Tyler Forthcoming).

For second and third generation British Asian and Italian informants, the
parental home continued to be the site where identities were rooted. In this regard,
some Asian parents, but not Italian parents (see section 4), suggested that their
children’s social organisation was mostly structured according to ethnicity and
religion, for example, around the Mosque and local youth clubs attended by Asian
children. However, the same parents also reported that their children had formed close
friendships with white English children at school.

While religion is seen to hold a less significant role for second and third
generation Italians, the picture is different and more complex for British Asian
Muslims. We found second generation Asian respondents to be very reflexive about
the way in which they practised their religion, especially in the face of what was
understood to be increasing Islamophobia in Britain. Rather than simply accepting a
given Muslim identity, they were thinking through what Islam meant for them, and
how the teaching of Islam shaped the ways in which they practised their faith. In
some cases, this led to some respondents to become more devout over time.

However, religious belief and commitment did not lead to a decline in
interethnic and religious friendships. Rather, for many British Asian, Italian and white
English people in their twenties who pursued higher education and/or employment
outside of Woking, the neighbourhood was not a significant sphere for social
interaction. In this sense, informants emphasized how interethnic friendships were
formed at university and in the workplace. Indeed, at a local level we were told that it
was increasingly common that friends from other ethnicities and religions were
present at significant events, for example weddings and funerals. In addition, there is
some evidence that the formation of interethnic and religious friendships formed
either at school in Woking, or at work or university elsewhere, can enable individuals
to move beyond and challenge racial, ethnic and religious stereotypes.
4. Whiteness and the Italian minority

Our research has contributed to the sociological understanding of minority-majority relations by focussing upon the interaction between the white majority culture and a white Italian minority (objective 3). Fortier (2000: 23) argues that public and popular representation of Italians as ‘invisible immigrants’ illustrates the political indifference that Italian migrants experience in Britain, and the untroubled nature of their inclusion into British society. ‘Invisibility’ was a process that second and third generation British Italian informants readily recognised, both in terms of personal experience and in relation to the wider Italian-Sicilian community in Woking. From this point of view, there were times in which the identity of Italians became invisible and thus merged with the identity of the white English majority. However, there were also times and places in which white Italian-Sicilian identities became ‘culturally marked’ and thus ‘visible’ (Frankenberg 1993).

Sites of visibility included a house in the Maybury area that had the appearance of a Roman villa, as well as an Italian-owned shop that sold goods imported from Italy and Sicily. These symbols of Italian-ness were interwoven into the fabric of the landscape to form ‘banal symbols’ of nationalism which ensured that English ‘background space’ was made into Italian ‘homeland space’ (Billig 1995). When asked to identify the cornerstones of the Italian ‘community’, most interviewees pointed to the local Catholic Church and family dances that used to be arranged on a regular basis. However, by contrast to the visibility of the Mosque and Asian organisations, there was no formal Italian community organisation in Woking.

Central to Italians’ feelings of integration into Englishness, across generations, was their ability to negotiate their identities to give the appearance of total assimilation into white English culture. This flexible negotiation of Italian-ness was most evident in the life histories of the younger members of the second and third generations. For example, one young man in his early twenties reported that he felt and acted ‘most Italian’ when on holiday in Sicily visiting his family’s village. Moreover, both first, second, and third generation Italian respondents showed cultural affinity and identification with the white English majority and not with the British Asian Pakistani minority. In this way, Italian respondents’ shared sense of whiteness and even western-ness with majority white English culture eclipsed parallels that were made between the British Pakistani and Italian communities in terms of migration histories and minority status.
In stark contrast to Italians’ negotiation of whiteness, Italian-ness and English-ness, we found that British Asian Muslims across generations were always racially and culturally marked in terms of skin colour and religious location. Central to these processes of ethnicisation and racialisation was emphasis upon and objectification of the Muslim identity of British Asians and their children.

The research focus on Italians as a white and ‘invisible’ minority highlights the power and privilege associated with white racial identity in the UK. In stark contrast to Asians’ visibility and political mobilisation, the invisibility of the Italian minority might explain their lack of collective political organisation because they did not feel discriminated against.

5. Attitudes to new migrations

Our research has contributed to the understanding of the relationship between established minority communities and the various groups of ‘new migrants’ (objective 4). M-S is the site for new migrants to settle in Woking. The new migrants to the ward do not figure in the most recent census data from 2001. However, the head teacher in the largest secondary school in the ward reported that more than thirty languages were spoken at the school, with Polish and Nepalese pupils constituting the largest groups of incomers.

Drawing upon extensive interviews conducted in London and Manchester, Ray, Hudson and Phillips (2008) explore how white English and established black Caribbean minorities expressed anger towards the lack of resources in their neighbourhoods. These writers examine how these sentiments became combined with resentment towards new immigrants. Work by Eade, Drinkwater and Garapich (2007) complicates this picture to some extent. These writers report that 90% of Polish migrants that they surveyed in London suggested that they had been ‘favourably or very favourably’ received by the British public. These migrants argued that their whiteness meant that they were treated better than non-white Britons and black migrants.

In parallel to Ray et al’s (2008) study, the white English majority and Asian and Italian minorities in Woking collectively constitute a majority of long-term residents who encounter new immigrants. Moreover, there was evidence of hostility from both white and Asian Pakistani residents towards newcomers. In this sense, we noted some racial abuse in school yards and occasional brawls among young Asian
and Polish men in central Woking. These happenings were reminiscent of confrontations between Italian and white English teenagers in the 1970s. But yet in contrast to Ray et al (2008) findings, anti-immigration sentiments often aired at a national level, such as ‘new migrants are stealing our jobs’, were not articulated by the majority of white English, Italian and Asian people with whom we worked across generations. In fact, most Italian and Asian first generation informants acknowledged the similarities between their own situations in the 1960s and 1970s and the challenges faced by the new immigrants. Moreover, some white English respondents drew upon past migrations to the area to interpret and make sense of the settlement of new migrants.

In striking parallel to Eade et al’s finding that Polish immigrants to London considered their white, European and Christian identities to be an ‘asset’ (2007: 17), some British Asians felt that the cultural identities of Eastern European immigrants facilitated their integration into the majority white English culture. In this regard, some Asian Muslim informants thought that Eastern Europeans would find it easier to mix socially with the majority population because they were less restricted in terms of alcohol and food consumption.

**Activities**

To date we have delivered 5 papers at the following conferences:

- University of Lampeter, *Consent and Dominance Workshop*, February 2009.
Forthcoming papers include:

- University of Surrey, CRONEM, Diasporas, Migration and Identities: Crossing Boundaries, New Directions, June 2009.

**Outputs**

We have held three locally based workshops in M-S to disseminate research findings to participants and the wider community. We drew upon the discussion from the workshops to publish a 20 page pamphlet summarising findings in non-technical language. The pamphlet has been distributed to participants and has been made available to the wider public through its distribution to Woking Borough Council, a local museum, the library and shops. In addition, we have collected and transcribed 66 interviews for deposit at the ESDE archive. To date, one article has been submitted to the peer-review journal Sociology for publication.

**Impacts**

We have briefed local community workers and representatives from Woking Borough Council on our findings. Tyler has taken up an advisory role on the management committee of an organisation for Asian women in Maybury. Jensen has advised on research projects in the locality. The report will be sent to the local press and national government and statutory agencies.

**Future research priorities**

While the current research has examined the interaction between white working-class residents and minorities that live in the most multicultural area of Woking, what we have not learnt is the white middle-class majorities’ attitudes towards multiculturalism. Thus an important research priority is to explore the experiences of ethnic difference for white middle-class residents within the context of current policies on multiculturalism and sociological debates on whiteness.

(Words 4,998)
### Annex 2: OVERVIEW OF NETWORKING INTERVIEWS

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<th>Supplementary data</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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1) Summaries based on notes.
2) Supplementary data refers to interviews carried out as part of an oral history project implemented by The Lightbox, a Woking-based museum.
3) Interview conducted in Urdu, then translated into English on digital recorder and transcribed.

4) Total number of contextual interviews made available to ESDE archive.

Annex 3

Dr Katherine Tyler
Bibliography


Journal of Urban and Regional Research 27, no. 2: 460-63.


Tyler, K. (2008/9) New ethnicities and old classies: Respectability and diaspora, conference paper, versions of which were presented at the University Auckland, NZ, and the University of Lampeter, Wales.


ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Non-Technical Summary

A 1000 word (maximum) summary of the main research results, in non-technical language, should be provided below. The summary might be used by ESRC to publicise the research. It should cover the aims and objectives of the project, main research results and significant academic achievements, dissemination activities and potential or actual impacts on policy and practice.

Aims and objectives

In our rapidly changing trans-national world of global cultures, ‘the community’ and ‘the neighbourhood’ appear to be parochial and irrelevant spaces for governance and political organisation. Yet, these seemingly outmoded spaces are back on national political agendas. From a UK perspective the ideology of community cohesion has come to dominate policy agendas aimed at cultivating social harmony within multiracial neighbourhoods. It is in this policy milieu that our research focussed on the ‘under-researched’ locality of Woking situated in the relatively wealthy South Eastern county of Surrey. Compared to its surrounding predominantly white and prosperous neighbourhoods, the Maybury-Sheerwater ward (M-S) is socio-economically ‘deprived’ and ethnically diverse. According to the 2001 Census, 34% of the total population of the ward belonged to the category ‘people in ethnic groups’. M-S was the only area in the County to receive funding from the Single Regeneration Budget in the period 1997-2003.

Fieldwork in Woking aimed to elucidate how experiences of difference and belonging were played out over time and across space for established British Italian and Pakistani Asian minorities and the white English majority. Our aim was to analyse the contrasts and complexities in how people from these ethnicities and across generations experienced their involvement in and attachment to the place they lived. To do this the research drew upon 36 life-story interviews with a total of 14 extended families, across ethnicities. In addition to the life-story interviews a total of 30 semi-structured interviews were conducted with local residents, politicians and community workers.

Main research results

The past ten years have seen significant regeneration initiatives by the Borough Council. But yet, M-S residents that we interviewed perceived the Council to show a lack of support and involvement in local issues. Historically the perception has been that the Council has understood the white working-class residents and minorities as ‘enclosed’ communities, and thus set apart from the rest of the Borough. It is precisely this feeling of being ‘outsiders’ that has provided the motivation for some residents to engage with local structures of governance. Our study illustrates how residents have cultivated the skills necessary to become ‘empowered’ and thus take responsibility for their ‘communities’. Our findings suggest that residents come to mobilise along ethnic lines to stake their claims and gain influence. But yet at the same time, when residents have something to be cohesive against they can come to act collectively across ethnic identities to hold local authorities to account.
The complexities of social cohesion and integration

Our research illustrates how the neighbourhood does not always become a common source of ‘cohesion’ for those who live in multicultural areas. However, at the same time our research does not support the ‘parallel lives’ thesis that suggests people’s lives within multicultural areas ‘do not seem to touch at any point’ (Home Office 2001: 9).

We found that interethnic relationships between neighbours were described by the following phrase, articulated by informants across generations, gender and ethnic locations: ‘they keep themselves to themselves’. While this phrase captures the absence of regular patterns of social interaction between neighbours across ethnicity, detailed intergenerational analysis shows that interethnic relationships are more complex. In this regard, we found many examples whereby neighbours who did not generally interact, helped each other in times of crisis or emergency, and offered comfort at times of sadness such as bereavement.

Whiteness and the Italian minority

Our research has contributed to the sociological understanding of minority-majority relations by focussing upon the interaction between the white majority culture and a white Italian minority. Fortier (2000: 23) argues that public and popular representation of Italians as ‘invisible immigrants’ illustrates the political indifference that Italian migrants experience in Britain, and the untroubled nature of their inclusion into British society. There were times in which the identity of Italians became invisible and thus merged with the identity of the white English majority. However, there were also times and places in which white Italian identities became ‘culturally marked’ and thus ‘visible’. In stark contrast, we found that British Asian Muslims across generations were always racially and culturally marked in terms of skin colour and religious location. Central to these processes was emphasis upon and objectification of the Muslim identity of British Asians and their children.

Attitudes to new migrations

The white English majority and Asian and Italian minorities in Woking collectively constitute a majority of long-term residents who encounter new immigrants. Moreover, there was evidence of hostility from both white and Asian Pakistani residents towards newcomers. But yet in contrast to the anti-immigration sentiments often aired at a national level, such as ‘new migrants are stealing our jobs’, we found that such views were not articulated by the majority of white English, Italian and Asian people with whom we worked across generations. In fact, most Italian and Asian first generation informants acknowledged the similarities between their own situations in the 1960s and 1970s and the challenges faced by the new immigrants.

Outputs

We have organised three locally based workshops in M-S to disseminate research findings to participants and the wider community. A 20 page pamphlet summarising findings in non-technical language has been distributed to participants and has been made available to the wider public through its distribution to Woking Borough Council, a local museum, the library and shops. To date, one article has been submitted to the peer-reviewed journal Sociology for publication. We have presented papers at 5 conferences.

Impacts

We have briefed a number of local community workers and representatives from Woking Borough Council on our research findings. Copies of the pamphlet have been distributed...
widely to local community and user groups. Tyler has taken up an advisory role on the management committee of an organisation for Asian women in Maybury. Jensen has advised on local government funded research in the locality.
Interview Schedule: Outline of themes to be explored with research participants

Please note that unless stated otherwise these themes will be explored with all research participants across ethnic, age, gender and classed locations.

**Theme 1: Settling in XXX: Migration Histories**

This theme is to be explored with the older generation of Pakistani and Italian migrants (i.e. generations one and two where appropriate)

Specific themes to explore include the following:
- Memories of life before migration to the UK
- Motivation to come to the UK
- Motivation to come to XXX
- Early memories and experiences of life in Britain in general and XXX in particular, in terms of work, education, home and family.

Research participants who have not migrated to the UK from another country will be asked about their reasons for living/settling in XXX and XXX wards. They will also be asked to elaborate on their early memories and experiences of life in this area of XXX, in terms of work, education, home and family.

**Theme 2: Experiences of the neighbourhood**

This theme will examine research participants’ views on the changes in the neighbourhood during their period of residence in terms of the physical and social make-up of the area. Specific themes to explore include the following:

*Views on transformations of community networks and relationships*

Research participants will be asked about their relationships with individuals such as neighbours and family members in the area. For example, informants will be asked how these relationships have changed over time, if at all? Research participants’ views on their membership of and interactions with various community, political and religious groups in the area will also be explored. Research participants will be asked to reflect on how they think these networks and relationships have changed over the life-course, for example, from the time of being a migrant, to being a parent, and to becoming an old person?

*Views on transformation of the area in socio-economic terms*

Research participants will be asked their views on the changes to the area in socio-economic terms. Specific themes to be explored will include the following:
- employment opportunities and working patterns, quality of local schools and education, quality of public buildings, quality of rented and private housing, safety and crime in the area.
Theme 3: Relationships outside the area including diasporic ties

This theme will explore research participants’ relationships with family, friends and acquaintances outside the neighbourhood. We are particularly interested in informants’ relationships with family and friends inside and outside of the UK. How have these relationships changed over the life-course and with time. How are these relationships maintained? Why are they valued?

Theme 4: Leaving or staying in the area

If the family member does not live in the area but returns to visit parents, friends and so on, the motivation and reasons for leaving the area will be explored. In such cases, research participants will be asked about their reasons for returning to the area to visit. Advantages and disadvantages of not living in the area will also be examined.

We will ask informants who live in the area if they have an aspiration to leave the area in the future or do they wish to stay. We want to know why they wish to stay in the area or leave and how the motivation to stay or leave changes over the life-course and with time.

Theme 5: Interactions with ethnic groups

Research participants’ views on the relationships between the differing ethnic groups (i.e. the White majority, Italian and Pakistani minority) in the area will be explored. We shall ask all research participants their perception of the changes in these relationships over time and over the life-course. Moreover, we are interested in how informants understand these relationships to be played out in the present. Research participants’ relationships and interactions with members of ethnic groups different to themselves (i.e. Pakistani, Italian and White majority) will be explored. In this vein, informants will be asked to provide examples of interethnic friendships OR why the interviewee thinks there has been a lack of contact and relationship across ethnic groups.

Theme 6: Interactions with new migrants

Research participants’ views on the relationships between new migrants, for example from Poland and West Africa, and established ethnic groups that live in the area will be explored. Informants’ experiences of the relationships and interactions with established ethnic groups and new immigrants will be examined. Examples of interethnic friendships OR why the interviewee thinks that there has been a lack of contact and relationships with new migrants will be explored.
Theme 7: The Council and urban regeneration in the area

This theme will explore research participants’ views on the local District Council in terms of their management and maintenance of the area from the disposal of rubbish, to the quality of the roads, education, facilities for local youth, cultural and religious provision and so forth in the area. This theme will also consider informants’ perception of the impact, success, or failure of the recent regeneration project in the area – the XXX-XXX partnership carried out 1997-2003. We are interested in informants’ views of the social and economic benefits/changes/improvements or disadvantages that resulted from this project.
Consent Form

- I the undersigned voluntarily agree to take part in the study on ‘Communities within Communities: a longitudinal approach to minority/majority relationships and social cohesion’.

- I have read and understood the Information Sheet provided. I have been given a full explanation by the researcher, Dr Ole Jensen, of the nature, purpose, location and likely duration of the study, and of what I will be expected to do. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions on all aspects of the study and have understood the advice and information given as a result.

- I understand that all personal data relating to research participants is held and processed in the strictest confidence, and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). I agree that I will not seek to restrict the use of the findings of the study on the understanding that my anonymity is preserved.

- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without needing to justify my decision and without prejudice.

- I confirm that I have read and understood the above and freely consent to participating in this study. I have been given adequate time to consider my participation and agree to comply with the instructions and restrictions of the study.

Name of research participant (BLOCK CAPITALS)

........................................................
Signed ................................................................
Date ........................................................

Name of researcher/person taking consent (BLOCK CAPITALS) ........................................................
Signed ................................................................
Date ........................................................