Barriers to employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain

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Summary

This report presents the findings from research commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), and carried out by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) on the barriers to employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain. The research study comprised five discrete stages: a review of the literature and other relevant information; interviews with key experts and informants in the field; an analysis of the labour markets of five selected locations in Britain – Birmingham, Bradford, Bristol, Glasgow and Tower Hamlets in London; a survey of 1,000 employing establishments in the five locations; and in-depth interviews with Pakistani and Bangladeshi job seekers and non-job seekers.

Literature review

The literature review makes a number of critical observations, which set the context for the more detailed findings for the research as a whole, and also explain the disadvantage Pakistanis and Bangladeshis face in the labour market. First, migration and settlement patterns have influenced, or even determined, the labour market positions of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain. Pakistani and Bangladeshi migrants had quite distinct patterns of settlement. Pakistanis were attracted to work in the textile industries of the northern towns, and in the metalworking and car industries in the Midlands. Bangladeshis were the last ethnic minority group to settle in Britain. The Bangladeshi population is also the most geographically concentrated of any ethnic minority group. The majority settled in London; with over a quarter of the total UK Bangladeshi population located in Tower Hamlets in East London. It is notable there has been little movement of Pakistanis or Bangladeshis away from these original settlement areas.

A second contextual observation is that only a relatively small proportion of working-age Pakistanis, but especially Bangladeshis, were born in Britain. At the same time, both Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups have a younger demographic profile and also larger families compared with the rest of the population. The combination of these factors has influenced the development of human capital, especially among Bangladeshis.
The labour market disadvantage of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis can be seen at two levels – structural and individual. At the structural level, the decline of manufacturing from the 1980s onwards, and the rise of the service sector had a more severe impact on Pakistanis living in the mill towns of Northern England. By uncanny coincidence, the bulk of Bangladeshi immigration occurred at a time of severe economic recession in Britain. Thus, although they settled in the more prosperous South East region, Bangladeshis did not benefit from that prosperity because of the changed structure of industry and the operation of the British economy as a whole. Although self-employment is popular among the two groups, it has not proved a panacea to the labour market disadvantage of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. Discrimination has also had an impact on their labour market outcomes. Ethnic penalty is most severe for Pakistani and Bangladeshi men and women. But it is not clear whether religious discrimination is leading to double discrimination for the two groups. Participation in welfare-to-work programmes is low among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. Where they do participate they have lower job outcomes. The New Deal is not considered credible as providing real jobs. The evidence suggests that people avoid New Deal by going into employment, even though some of it is unsustainable.

Disadvantage at the individual level arises from the fact that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have substantial human capital problems. Human capital is the possession of high level qualifications, vocational skills and real world experience of work. Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have the lowest level of English language proficiency of all the major ethnic minority groups. The Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities in 1997 found that only four per cent of Bangladeshi and 28 per cent of Pakistani women aged 45-64 years spoke English fluently or well. Fluency in English has been found to increase people’s probability of being employed by up to 25 per cent. Indeed, poor English impacts negatively upon the views of prospective employers. Pakistanis and Bangladeshis also have the lowest levels of education and qualifications among people migrating to Britain aged 16 and over. In 1994, almost three-quarters of Bangladeshis, and almost two-thirds of Pakistanis had qualifications below ‘O’ level standard. There is evidence of improvements in attainment of Bangladeshi children living in London, since the early 1990s.

The evidence on attitudes to work among women is less clear-cut. However, when age, education, marital status and English language proficiency are standardised, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women have lower still activity rates. Many women positively choose to give primacy to family life. It is a view that is shared by different generations of women. There is evidence that people are discouraged from participating in the labour market, if they consider their chances of finding suitable jobs within a reasonable time to be small. This is the discouraged worker effect, and also partly explains the rise of workless households within the two groups.

Labour market review

The aim of the labour market review was to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the labour market conditions in the five case study areas. A range of indicators is
presented to provide an assessment of the performance of the local economies. The analysis focuses on demand and supply issues, and an assessment of the balance between demand and supply.

On the demand side, the employment rate measures the proportion of working age population that is in employment. Only Bristol had an employment rate higher than the average for Great Britain. Birmingham, Glasgow and Tower Hamlets had much lower rates. In assessing labour market demand, the employment rate has a disadvantage in that it also reflects the strength of labour demand in adjacent regions, if significant numbers commute to jobs outside the area. Jobs density provides a more interesting measure; showing the number of jobs, compared to the local working age population. On this measure, Tower Hamlets, Bristol and Glasgow had more jobs than local residents.

An alternative indicator to consider is the number of employee jobs in the region. Overall, there has been a contraction in primary production, but an expansion in public administration, education and health, and financial services. Specifically, though, Birmingham has suffered a decline in manufacturing and financial services. In contrast to this, Bradford registered a slight expansion in manufacturing. Tower Hamlets recorded significant expansion in transport and communication. In Glasgow, there was a significant fall in transport and communications and in manufacturing, but growth in construction and public administration. The other important indicator of labour market demand to look at is self-containment. This gauges the size of commuting flows into and out of the area. On this measure, Bradford is the most self-contained labour market. By contrast, only 15 per cent of people who work in Tower Hamlets actually live there. The other areas attract more in-commuters than there are residents going to work outside the area. Having looked at the overall level of labour demand, the last measure to consider was the balance and quality of employment. Tower Hamlets is heavily reliant on one sector – banking and finance. Otherwise, it has a lower than average proportion of manufacturing, public administration, hotels and restaurants. Bradford and Birmingham have a higher than average proportion of manufacturing. All other areas have a fairly balanced spread of employment.

The analysis of labour market supply issues focused on qualifications and skills. In terms of area, Bradford and Birmingham have poorly qualified working populations. Within this, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were very under-qualified, compared with the national average. This means that they are at an extreme disadvantage when competing for jobs in labour markets with large proportions of skilled occupations.

The question that arises is whether the sectors that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are largely concentrated in nationally are reflected in the opportunities available in the spatial areas. On this, there appears to be a mismatch between the sectors of employment growth and those where Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are concentrated.
Expert interviews

The main purpose of the expert interviews was to provide a context for the rest of the study. The interview discussions covered key policy issues, perceived barriers to employment, an assessment of employers’ policies and practices, and a review of local activities and initiatives to overcome the barriers Pakistanis and Bangladeshis face in the labour market.

The expert interviews highlighted key policy issues in a number of areas, including demographics and migrational patterns, education, and employment. Demographically, ethnic minorities will account for increasingly large proportions of the working-age population, providing a clear business case for raising the participation of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the workforce. Education was seen as a crucial policy area. Data on achievement at school show that Pakistanis’ and Bangladeshis’ achievement is improving, but that this improvement is disproportionately amongst girls rather than boys. Lack of English language skills was highlighted as a barrier for some groups, although the extent to which this is an issue varies amongst the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities by age and generation. There was consensus that welfare-to-work programmes may not be operating as effectively for ethnic minorities as they do for the White population, and Jobcentre Plus staff do not always reflect the communities they serve. There was also an important issue of whether women would be expected to participate in paid employment; and similarly, concern about the high levels of unemployment amongst older Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. Within employment, the lack of Pakistani and Bangladeshi representation at senior levels, and pay differentials that exist between ethnic groups, were raised as areas of concern.

Employer survey

A survey of employers was conducted across the five areas in order to explore employers’ views on skills gaps and other issues facing ethnic minority groups, in general, and Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups in particular, in the UK labour market. More specifically, the survey examined the recruitment practices and experiences of employers, with the aim of understanding their approach and attitude to employing ethnic minorities.

On the whole, businesses located in areas with high ethnic minority populations were more likely to be owned by someone of ethnic minority origin. They were also more likely to employ ethnic minorities. Thus, for example, establishments in Bristol reported fewer ethnic minority staff, in contrast to those in Tower Hamlets, which had relatively higher representation of such staff.

Establishments that employed Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff were more likely to have staff working part-time, or in temporary and casual jobs. In all areas, the proportion of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis working in such positions was higher still. This implies that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were more likely to be disadvantaged,
in respect of not having access to full-time jobs or permanent contracts in the workplace.

Establishments that employed ethnic minorities were more likely than those that did not, to have equal opportunities policies in place, often accompanied by monitoring procedures. Not all such policies were formal, though; and a significant proportion still relied on informal methods of advertising their jobs. Employers with ethnic minority staff were less likely to use formal recruitment processes, such as interviews, to assess the suitability of candidates. They were also more likely to look for candidates with ‘soft’ skills, rather than rely entirely on ‘hard’ skills, such as work-related qualifications. It is a moot point whether the more formalised recruitment process used particularly by the larger organisations puts Pakistani and Bangladeshi applicants at a disadvantage. Another way of looking at this is whether their use of formal processes makes them unattractive to potential candidates from the two groups.

The reasons why a large proportion of establishments received fewer applications from Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were beyond the scope of this survey. Nevertheless, some employers had real concerns about employing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis; partly because they could not accommodate their religious needs, but also because they were concerned they would not fit in with other workers.

Individual interviews

The interviews with individuals formed the main stage of the research. The aim was to carry out in-depth interviews with Pakistani and Bangladeshi jobseekers and non-jobseekers in order to understand, from their point of view, the things that make it difficult for them to move into work.

Looking first at their background, almost all the households in this study, whether Pakistani or Bangladeshi, contained children. Most households were large, and contained between three and six children. Several households also contained not the nuclear, but extended family; and it was common to see households of eight to ten people, including parents, in-laws, and married siblings and their children. The composition of households in this way meant it was common to see several adults living in the same household, easily leading to the condition of workless households.

The respondents tended to live in the same area for long periods. There was little movement of people, once they had settled in their area. On average, the individual Pakistanis in the study had lived in their area for between 15 and 30 years. Bangladeshis, as recent arrivals, had stayed in their area for only up to 15 years on average. Where people had moved at all, they relocated to areas where other Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were dominant.

Half the respondents were first generation migrants, ie they were born outside the UK, and migrated here as adults of working age or as children. With a longer history of settlement here, however, the respondent Pakistanis were more likely than
Bangladeshis to be born in the UK. In this case, it was their parents and grandparents who first came here. The majority of Pakistani and Bangladeshi first migrants came from predominantly rural communities. Given their rural background in their countries of origin, it is not surprising that only a small number of those who first came to the UK as adults had attended school or had formative education in Pakistan or Bangladesh. Women in particular were unlikely to have any education at all. The second and subsequent generations of respondents had all or most of their formative education in the UK. Partly because of their rural origins and partly because of where they settled, a considerable proportion of the older respondents interviewed did not speak fluent English, even after lengthy residence here.

Turning to their labour market history, the older respondent Pakistanis found work in factories in the Midlands and in the textile industries in West Yorkshire, when they first arrived in the UK. Most of these were unskilled jobs. The decline of manufacturing in the late 1980s and early 1990s resulted in most of them suffering long periods of unemployment, interspersed with short periods of work. The accelerated decline and demise of manufacturing in the 1990s resulted in large numbers of Pakistani men becoming unemployed for much longer periods. Only a few of the older Pakistani women had ever worked, either back at home or here in the UK. Like the men, those women who found work, did so in manufacturing, often as machinists in garment factories. The majority of Bangladeshis also found unskilled work, initially in the textiles industry and in garment factories. Increasingly though, many found jobs in the booming (Indian) restaurant sector, as porters, waiters and chefs. The decline of clothing manufacture and fluctuations in the fortunes of restaurant businesses resulted in unemployment on a large scale among both younger and older Bangladeshi groups.

The analysis of their current labour market status showed that one in three respondents were economically inactive. More than two-thirds were in receipt of out-of-work benefits, and one in ten were not in work but were not claiming benefits either. Pakistanis were more likely than Bangladeshis to be inactive. More than one-third of Pakistanis were on Income Support (IS) or Incapacity Benefit (IB). A high proportion of Pakistanis were claiming IB because of ill-health related to their previous employment.

In terms of their attitudes to work, the majority of Pakistani and Bangladeshi jobseekers indicated they would like to work. There was some difference in motivation between women and men who wanted to work. Women wanted to work to liberate themselves from their traditional positions of depending financially on their husbands. Men, on the other hand, wanted to work so they could be financially secure to resume their dominant position as providers for their family. Women differed from men in another respect too. Their ambition to work was backed by strategies to get into employment; such as learning English or undertaking training; and also looking at jobs with career prospects. By contrast, men wanted to go back to the unskilled jobs they knew best from the past.
There is a fundamental shift in attitudes towards Pakistani and Bangladeshi women working outside the home. More young women, particularly Bangladeshi, took a positive view of women working; as a way to become more independent financially. They were helped especially where they had role models of female relatives in work, or better still, in prestigious occupations. The importance of family role models must not be underestimated. The change in attitudes towards women working is much slower among Pakistanis. Parental attitudes are much stricter and less accommodating towards women working, a position that is reinforced in the wider community. It is not clear how much of this is cultural and how much is influenced by religion.

The evidence from the analysis of the interviews with individuals shows that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis face multiple barriers, which make it difficult for them to get jobs. It was possible to group the range of barriers into five main categories: personal characteristics, households, human capital, area-based, and employer attitudes.

Looking first at personal characteristics, it was evident that age represented a significant barrier to work, especially for men in their 40s and 50s. It is striking that at the age where most people of working age in Britain are at the height of their productive capability, a large number of Pakistani and Bangladeshi men had stopped working altogether. Age was linked directly with people’s health, and Pakistani and Bangladeshi men were likely to suffer multiple health problems, which also prevented them from working. Age also excluded older men from new forms of skilled employment, particularly because the only skills they possessed were limited, outdated and no longer relevant to the changed industrial economy of Britain.

The most significant household barriers for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women related to childcare and other caring responsibilities. Most women had to grapple with the issue of looking after their family. Hence, women’s desire to work had to be balanced by the need to be a good mother by staying at home to look after their children. It was evident that the majority of women were reluctant to consider childcare arrangements outside the home, particularly when their children were small. This had consequences for their participation in the labour market. Given that they also have large numbers of children, it is not surprising that women with children were out of the labour market for long periods. This helps explain the low economic activity rates found among Pakistani and Bangladeshi women.

On the whole, religion – in this case being Muslim – was not a significant barrier to people’s employment, particularly as far as the type of work they were prepared to do. There were some exceptions, however. Women in particular would not work in places where alcohol was served, gambling establishments, and places where they could not observe Hijab, ie covering of the head and body. Men, additionally, could not work in places where they were required to handle pork.

The evidence from the interviews with individual Pakistanis and Bangladeshis suggests that the biggest barrier to employment for the two groups relates to the low levels of human capital they possessed. The majority of people interviewed had
low levels of education and qualifications, low levels of confidence, limited experience of different types of jobs, and limited networks of contacts in different sectors. At the root of the low level of human capital they possessed was the lack of facility in the English language. While it is not surprising their poor English language skills affected their labour market achievements, the wider damage was to their ability to acquire human capital and determination. People who had language difficulties were also more likely to face multiple barriers to employment.

Very few jobseekers and non-jobseekers reported they had experienced direct discrimination from employers. Nevertheless, most respondents still believed employers would discriminate against them because of their ethnicity, and increasingly because of their religion. They based their views on the fact that they were particularly unsuccessful in the recruitment process. Respondents who took a negative view of employers’ policies and practices believed their Asian names counted against them. Those who believed they faced discrimination because of their religion cited the outward appearance of men who wore religious dress and women who observed the Hijab, as the possible reason for their lack of success at interviews. Thus, although they could not prove it, respondents still had strong perceptions of discrimination, which they believed was a barrier to their getting jobs.

The respondents had different experiences of Jobcentre Plus and its programmes aimed at helping people into work. Their experience differed according to their labour market status. Those claiming Jobseekers’ Allowance (JSA) had the most contact with Jobcentre Plus. Even then, the extent of the contact depended on whether or not they were involved with any New Deal programmes. Respondents who were economically inactive were less likely to have much or any contact. Most of the younger people who were eligible had been on New Deal for Young People. None of those who had been on the New Deal had found a permanent job, as a result. Not surprisingly, people had become very disillusioned with the programme. They were going through the motions of signing on every fortnight for JSA, and using the Jobcentre to look for work.
Introduction

This report presents the full findings from the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) research on the barriers to employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain, carried out on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The research study comprised five discrete stages:

- a wide ranging review of relevant literature and other information;
- a series of interviews with a broad spectrum of experts in the field;
- a full scale analysis of the labour markets of five selected locations in Britain: Bradford, Birmingham, Bristol, Glasgow, and Tower Hamlets in London;
- a survey of employers in the five selected locations;
- a series of in-depth interviews with Pakistani and Bangladeshi jobseekers and non-jobseekers.

This report covers the five stages described above. The findings are presented separately in parts. Part A covers the review of the literature; Part B provides analysis of the five labour markets; Part C, the findings from the interviews with experts; Part D covers the findings from the survey of employers; and Part E, the findings from the interviews with individual jobseekers and non-jobseekers.

Review of the literature

The objective of this stage was to marshal and carry out an in-depth review of current research literature and data in order to identify the key issues affecting ethnic minorities in the labour market. The literature review is helpful in identifying any potentially additional sources of data and to inform the design of the research instruments for the other stages of the research. More specifically, this review of the literature focused on previous research studies which have highlighted some of the possible barriers to the employment of Pakistani and Bangladeshi jobseekers. In this regard, the review provides a useful background to greater understanding of the
pertinent issues which affect ethnic minorities as a group, but also highlight differences between them. In particular:

- participation in education and training;
- economic activity rates;
- unemployment differentials;
- occupational attainment, including self-employment;
- the effect of geographical location;
- sectoral participation of different groups.

**Labour market analysis**

In order to formulate and implement appropriate and effective labour market policy, and to appreciate the consequences of broader economic policies, it was necessary to understand the nature and operation of the labour market. In particular, it was important to examine the operation of the labour market at the local level. The aim of the labour market analysis was to look more critically at the general data in each area, in order to identify the dynamics of change, not simply their local labour market consequences.

For this stage, therefore, we collected and carried out a comprehensive analysis of labour market data on the chosen geographical areas. We identified a range of indicators which could be used to assess the health or otherwise of the labour market in the chosen areas, and which were likely to affect the success of jobseekers.

The focus of the analysis was on demand and supply-side indicators, which together, determine the functioning of the labour market. On the demand-side, we looked at indicators which highlight, among other things, the:

- extent to which there is an adequate volume of jobs;
- balance of the quality of jobs, including: the range of industries; the range of skill requirements; range of pay levels; the range of working arrangements (full-time/part-time; employee/self-employed, etc.);
- dynamism of the labour market, including entrepreneurship and innovation, and new firm generation.

On the supply-side, we looked at indicators which highlight:

- the extent to which there is an adequate volume of supply; for example, the size and location of the workforce; economic activity rates;
- an adequate quality of supply, which includes: basic skills, vocational skill, higher level skills, attitude/motivation, and workforce health and well-being;
- responsiveness of supply, ie renewal of skills, lifelong learning.
The main aim of focusing on these indicators was to enable us gauge how well the labour market functioned in particular areas, in terms of its efficiency, i.e., effectively matching jobs to people (through advice, guidance and placement services), and equity, i.e., providing even and fair distribution of opportunities for individuals and localities. At the final stage of the project, we will use these indicators to highlight particular problems faced by ethnic minorities in specific local labour markets.

**Data sources**

More than ever before, increasing attention has been focused on the role of human resources in local economic development. In particular, local authorities, Local Skills Councils (LSCs) (successors to Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs)) and Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) are seeking ways of improving the skills of the labour force and, consequently, collect and analyse a great deal of labour market information (LMI). In addition, those organisations carry out local employer surveys, which will provide information on recruitment patterns, and shed light on what employers perceive to be some of the barriers to the recruitment of Pakistani and Bangladeshi people.

The indicators are based on data sources that are produced on a national basis, are reliable, are constant across all regions, and allow data to be collected for sub-regional areas as well. At national level, the main source of readily accessed secondary data was the computerised database provided by NOMIS. The main advantage of NOMIS is that much of the data can be manipulated to form different geographical aggregations, from the local to national. But even more important, NOMIS provides information from the Census of Population and the Labour Force Survey (LFS), as well as official unemployment counts (total, stocks and flow, age and duration), and reported job vacancies at Jobcentres. The other data sources used include the 2002 Annual Business Inquiry, and findings from the Employer Skills Survey 2003.

**Expert interviews**

The aim of the interviews with experts was to assist in scoping the key issues for the overall study, and to supplement the literature review and statistical analysis of the labour market. The selection of interviewees was agreed with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The objective of the interviews was to obtain a wide range of views on the nature and extent of the barriers facing Bangladeshis and Pakistanis in the labour market.

In addition to national experts, it was considered valuable to undertake a number of specific interviews with local stakeholders and community representatives in the labour markets in which the research was being conducted. The aim of these interviews was to provide particular insights into different aspects of the operation of the local labour market; and as well, to draw on local stakeholders’ knowledge and understanding of the interaction between the labour market and the local community. Together, these interviews contributed to the process of defining the
Employer survey

The aim of the survey of employers was to explore their views on what they considered to be the particular skills and other related gaps that ethnic minority groups in general, and Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in particular, face when seeking employment. A telephone survey, using a structured questionnaire, was considered the most suitable method for exploring the views of employers. The survey was designed by IES, and the fieldwork was carried out by TNS Social. Approximately 1,000 establishments in total were interviewed in the five selected geographical areas covered in this study. The analysis of the data from the survey was undertaken by IES.

Individual interviews

The interviews with individual jobseekers and non-jobseekers formed the main stage of the research. A qualitative approach was adopted to conduct the interviews, in order to achieve a greater understanding of the perspectives and experiences of the individuals themselves. It was agreed to undertake interviews with 250 individuals in the five locations, ie 50 interviews in each location, with individuals selected to reflect the make up of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi population in each location. As it was important for the research to consider Pakistani and Bangladeshi individuals who have overcome barriers to employment and have gained jobs, a small number of such individuals were included in the interviews. Because the research was intended to study the experiences of people who face different types of barriers to employment, sampling criteria were adopted which reflected respondents’ age, gender, educational qualifications and skills, migrational background (ie first, second or third generation), level of English language fluency, and current labour market (employment) status.

The individuals were interviewed using a semi-structured discussion guide. As far as possible, the interviews were conducted in English by the IES researchers. However, where the respondent did not speak any, or was not fluent in English, or preferred the interview to be conducted in their community language, they were interviewed by a bilingual interviewer provided by Agroni Ltd. The interviews were all recorded and transcribed before analysis, using a dedicated qualitative data analysis software.

The presentation of the final report in this way means that the discrete parts can be regarded as mini reports in themselves. Our recommendations on the implications for policy from the research findings draw on information from the different stages.
Part A
A review of the literature
1 Introduction

There have been several research reports and other literature that have examined the position of ethnic minorities in the British labour market. Many of these have provided large-scale overviews of the labour market profile of the ethnic minority population and the barriers to employment faced by them. It has become increasingly clear though, that the labour market position of ethnic minorities in the UK is far from uniform, and there are significant differences between the ethnic minority groups themselves. For example, the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities (Modood, Berthoud et al., 1997) drew particular attention to the ethnic diversity in the labour market circumstances of the (ethnic) minority population. The survey report’s accent on the need for ethnic diversity to be taken seriously was shown by the emphasis it placed on ethnic differentiation in highlighting the socio-economic position of minority groups. That theme was prominent in the recent report by the Cabinet Office Strategy Unit (Strategy Unit, 2003), which identified wide variations in the labour market position of different ethnic minority groups. It also highlighted regional variations in the overall picture of labour market disadvantage, and significant gender differences in labour market participation. Among the most significant findings of these studies is the fact that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are amongst the most disadvantaged groups, as measured by (high) unemployment rates and (low) economic activity rates.

It is true to say, though, that most studies have provided either a broad framework of all ethnic minority groups, or a narrow in-depth qualitative research focusing on particular groups. Nevertheless, there is a gap in the literature, in terms of studies exploring the perspectives of members of specific ethnic groups and their experiences of barriers to entering the labour market. An understanding of such experiences, however, is central to the success of any (government) initiatives to address the barriers that currently limit their participation in the labour market.

The objective of this part is to review the existing literature in order to identify the key issues affecting Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the labour market. The section begins by setting out, in Chapter 2, the current position of Pakistani and Bangladeshi populations in Britain. It focuses on the migration of the two groups to Britain. The significance of migration is that both its timing and resultant settlement patterns...
contributed, in some way, to the labour market disadvantage of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the first place. It is the case that London and the South East (region) have been the source of economic dynamism for several decades, but even more so over the last 20 years. So, groups that are strongly represented in London and the South East are likely to do better, in employment terms. To the extent that compared with other ethnic minority groups, the Pakistani population is concentrated much more in the Midlands and the North, it could be argued that they have not benefited, as have other ethnic minority groups, from the labour market opportunities that this dynamic economic region offers. There may appear to be a paradox here as far as Bangladeshis are concerned, because these advantages do not accrue to them either, although they have a strong concentration in London. In this case, it is the timing of their migration, not the location of their settlement, which appears to be significant.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 aim to understand the factors contributing to, and perpetuating labour market disadvantage. The focus here is on disadvantage at two levels — structural and individual. The emphasis is very much on the factors which have been shown to affect labour market outcomes. At the structural level (Chapter 3) therefore, we examine the effects of industrial restructuring and the rise in workless households. The impact of racial discrimination in the labour market and in society in general is discussed in some detail; as is the extent to which self-employment is a viable alternative to employment and a means of reducing unemployment levels among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. Chapter 3 concludes with an assessment of the participation of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in active labour market initiatives, in particular the New Deal. The structural theme is continued in Chapter 4, this time looking at disadvantage, which can be attributed to the effects of the communities in which people live. There is much debate about whether people are disadvantaged by the areas where they live, or whether they live where they do because they are disadvantaged. One of the implications of this is found in theories about the effect of concentrations of minority groups in some of Britain’s large urban areas; and whether such concentrations offer employment opportunities which might not be available elsewhere; or conversely, make it more difficult for people to look beyond their communities for such opportunities.

Chapter 5 is concerned principally with disadvantage at the level of the individual. It seeks to capture the cumulative effect of all those elements which make up what is termed ‘human capital’: English language facility; education and qualifications; and personal aspirations, including attitudes to paid work. These are the supply-side factors which also have an influence on labour market outcomes.

Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are often grouped together in the literature, but whenever possible, distinctions will be made between the two populations in this review. Distinctions will also be made between the positions of first and second (or subsequent) generations, different age groups, and between men and women.
2 Context

2.1 Brief history of migration to Britain

Large-scale, sustained migration from south Asia has been a post-war phenomenon (Ballard, 1994). From the early 1950s until the end of the 1970s, the British economy was acutely short of labour. As a result, at the beginning of this period, the British Government encouraged migration from the Indian sub-continent and the Caribbean islands. Mass migration from the sub-continent, though, coincided with the post-partition era (Platt, 2002). According to Platt, Pakistani migration, from West Pakistan and especially Mirpur, started in the late 1950s and peaked in 1961. It has been argued, however, that although partition affected a much wider area, this is not in itself sufficient explanation for emigration (Shaw, 2000). A common feature of these regions was that the people had a history of economic migration. Punjabis from the Punjab and North West Frontier had experience of working as labourers abroad, and of service in the British and Indian armies and navies (Shaw, 2000). Mirpuri were a major source of recruits to the merchant navy. Experiences of migration for work gave people from these communities confidence to seek fortunes abroad and to work for money to improve their status at home (Shaw, 2000).

Until 1962, Pakistanis could enter Britain without restriction as British subjects under the 1948 British Nationality Act. The 1962 Commonwealth Immigrations Act barred free entry of new workers from the British Commonwealth, although it permitted family reunion (Phizacklea and Ram, 1995). The threat of forthcoming controls accelerated the process of migration, with the numbers of migrants from Pakistan greatly increasing in the 18 months prior to the passing of the Act (Shaw, 2000). The 1962 restrictions had the effect of reinforcing existing patterns of emigration, with a person’s migration depending on prior contacts in Britain (Shaw, 2000).

Bangladeshi immigration to Britain is more recent than the bulk of Pakistani immigration (Platt, 2002, p98). Although primary immigration had taken place during the 1960s, it accelerated in the 1970s after the secession of East Pakistan into
the new state of Bangladesh. The vast majority of Bengali migrants to Britain came from the Sylhet District. Sylheti peoples had a long history of overseas economic migration to other parts of Asia and as seamen in the British merchant navy (Gardner and Shukur, 1994). Uniquely in the region, farmers in Sylhet were owner-cultivators, rather than just tenants, and accustomed to autonomy and financial independence. When opportunities for overseas migration arose they were in the best position to raise the capital outlay for their fares (Gardner and Shukur, 1994). As Ballard points out, overseas migrants are rarely drawn from the poorest families: ‘migration is above all an entrepreneurial activity, in which success usually depends on making substantial initial investment’ (Ballard, 1994, author’s emphasis). Like migrants from Pakistan, the main motivation, initially, was to take advantage of higher wages in Britain and remit money back to their home countries for investment in land and housing. Whilst most of the Sylheti migrants were small owner-cultivators in their homelands, there was also considerable heterogeneity amongst them, in terms of wealth, skills and education (Gardner and Shukur, 1994). A small minority were from urban centres and more likely to have commercial skills and/or qualifications.

Migrants from Pakistan and Bangladesh generally settled in Britain through a process of ‘chain migration’ (Shaw, 2000; Wrench and Qureshi, 1996). In the country of origin, relatives pooled their money and gave it to one man to emigrate to Britain and find work. He then saved money and sent it back to his family to pay for another relative to join him; who also saved for another kinsman to join them, and the ‘chain’ was established (Shaw, 2000, p26). Prospective migrants learnt of opportunities and had initial accommodation and employment arranged for them by close contacts with previous migrants (Wrench and Qureshi, 1996). In one area of Britain, the majority of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis may, therefore, come from one or two particular villages, due to the effects of chain migration. The restrictions of the 1962 Act had the effect of reinforcing existing patterns of emigration, with a person’s migration depending on prior contacts in Britain (Shaw, 2000).

Once Bengalis and Pakistanis had settled in Britain, their wives and families joined them. Some families quickly reunited themselves whilst others waited until the 1970s or mid-1980s, when they were in a better and more secure situation. Total immigration for Bangladeshis, therefore, peaked in the 1980s as a result of family reunification (Platt, 2002). Some British Bengali families have reached their third generation in Britain, others, especially newly married women have only recently arrived (Gardner and Shukur, 1994). On the whole, Bangladeshi family reunion happened much later than for the Pakistanis. The 1994 Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities (NSEM), which had a nationally representative sample of 8,063 people, found that 13 per cent of working-age Bangladeshis and 28 per cent of working-age Pakistanis were born in Britain (Modood et al., 1997). Compared to other South Asians and Caribbeans, Bangladeshi children (at 22 per cent) had the highest incidence of being born outside Britain.

1 Bangladesh, formerly East Pakistan, became an independent state in 1971.
Pakistani and Bangladeshi migrants to Britain had quite distinct patterns of settlement. The largest Pakistani settlement was in West Yorkshire, with substantial presence in the West Midlands (Birmingham), Lancashire and Glasgow. There were also smaller settlements in Bristol, Aylesbury, High Wycombe, Luton, Oxford, Reading, Slough, and parts of London. The settlement pattern largely reflects the industrial labour shortages in the 1950s (Shaw, 2000). They were attracted to work in the textile industry of the Northern towns, and in the metalworking and car industries in Birmingham (Platt, 2002). The Bangladeshi population in Britain is the most geographically concentrated of any ethnic minority group. According to the 1991 Census (Phillipson et al., 2003), the majority of Bangladeshis in Britain settled in London, with a quarter of the total British Bangladeshi population located in the borough of Tower Hamlets. There has been little population drift for both Pakistanis and Bangladeshis away from the original settlement areas (Bunglawala, 2004). Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, who are predominately Muslim, make up almost 60 per cent of the UK Muslim population (ibid.).

2.2 Age and family structures

All ethnic groups in Britain have a younger demographic profile than the White population. Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have the highest proportions of people under the age of 14, at around 40 per cent in 1991 (Platt, 2002). Although, by 1997, the proportion of children within the populations had decreased, it still remained high for both groups (Pakistanis 34 per cent, Bangladeshis 40 per cent). Young adults also make up a substantial share, with very few in the oldest age groups. In 1991, the median age of the Bangladeshi group was 17 years, which was less than half the 37.4 years of the White population (Wrench and Qureshi, 1996).

Ever tighter controls aimed at reducing migration of people from the Commonwealth meant that the inflow of South Asian migrants has steadily declined to a minimum (Ballard, 1994). However, the fact that at the time of peak migration the vast majority of Pakistani and Bangladeshi migrants were young adults, who also tended to have relatively large families, meant that the population continued to expand. There was some evidence in 1994 to suggest that fertility rates amongst Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities were falling, especially amongst the British-born generation (Ballard, 1994). However, as the populations were so skewed toward young people, significant growth continues.

Pakistani and Bangladeshi families also have larger families than any other groups. The total period fertility rate – ie the amount of children that a woman could be expected to produce during her child-bearing years – for Bangladeshi and Pakistani women in 1991 was 3.3, compared to 1.8 for Britain as a whole (Dale and Holdsworth, 1998). Indeed, at the time of the Fourth NSEM, Pakistani and Bangladeshi families stood out as being far larger than others; 33 per cent of Pakistanis and 42 per cent of Bangladeshis had four or more children (Modood, Berthoud et al., 1997, p41). More recently, results of the Family Resources Survey (FRS) showed that in 2000/01, just over 70 per cent of all Pakistani and Bangladeshi
households in Britain had children, and one-third had three or more children. In contrast, households with three or more children made up five per cent of all households (Platt, 2002). As Platt has pointed out: ‘large families are becoming less prevalent in Britain, but where they do occur they are also related to higher risk of poverty’ (Platt, 2000, p86). The Fourth NSEM highlighted one striking difference in the age profile of ethnic minorities at the time of migration. The great majority of children of every ethnic group were British-born. Only among the Bangladeshis was there a significant number of children who were born in their country of origin. This also means that only a relatively small proportion of working-age Bangladeshis were born in Britain (Modood, Berthoud et al., 1997, p21). This has significant implications for the development of human capital among this group in particular, as will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Statistics have shown that Bangladeshi and Pakistani people in Britain are less likely than White people to be widowed, reflecting their younger demography (Berthoud and Beishon, 1997). Divorce is also less common among Bangladeshi and Pakistani ethnic communities than currently in the White community (Berthoud and Beishon, 1997). The Fourth NSEM found that it was extremely rare for Bangladeshi and Pakistani mothers to be single. Recent analysis of Labour Force Survey (LFS) data has shown that Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone mothers tend to be separated, divorced or widowed rather than single. In 2002, only one per cent of Pakistani lone parents were single, compared to 52 per cent for White women (Lindley, Dale and Dex, 2003).

The migration and settlement patterns of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have led to their concentration in specific locations in Britain. The two groups also have a younger age profile, which partly reflects the high incidence of large families. Both of these factors have an important effect on the economic activity of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain.
3 Disadvantage at a structural level

3.1 Industrial restructuring

The nature of employment has changed considerably in the last 30 years, as a result of shifts in the nature and organisation of the world economy. Western economies have moved towards a tertiarisation of economic development, with manufacturing shifting to newly industrialising countries and the service sector becoming more dominant (Martin, 1994). The increasing globalisation of the world economy also means that the markets for manufacturing, services, and especially capital, have become more integrated, and money, people, goods, ideas and products have become more mobile (Appadurai, 1996).

In the UK service sector, most growth has occurred in the prosperous South East region, away from the industrial heart-lands of the North (Allen, 1999). At the same time, manufacturing and mining have declined in much of the rest of the country, particularly in old industrial regions such as the North, South Wales and the East Midlands (Hudson, 1989). Although some new industrial spaces have developed in old manufacturing regions (Tickell and Peck, 1992), many workers have been left trapped in deindustrialised locations, and unable to afford to move, or to commute, to distant parts of their local labour market. To a large extent, these labour markets have become internally balkanised, both occupationally and spatially (Martin, 2000).

The first post-war Pakistani migrants who came to the UK were needed in the foundries in the Midlands and textile industries in the North (The Runnymede Trust, 2000). They arrived in Britain into a climate of racial prejudice, when often, the only employment available to them was in occupations that did not attract White labour (Shaw, 2000). This was often in unskilled or semi-skilled labouring jobs. In fact, it could be viewed that migrant workers were sought to fill the vacuum created by upward mobility of indigenous workers during a period of full employment (Iganski
and Payne, 1999). In 1971, 72 per cent of ‘Pakistani/Bangladeshi’ males and 32 per cent of ‘Pakistani/Bangladeshi’ females, were employed in manufacturing, compared to 43 per cent of all working males and 29 per cent of all working women (Iganski and Payne, 1999). In the 1990s, all ethnic minority groups were over-represented in manufacturing industries. Pakistanis continued to work mainly in the heavy manufacturing and textile industries in the West Midlands and Yorkshire up to the early 1980s. They were hit particularly hard by the recession of that period, with little or no alternative employment readily available (Platt, 2000). That recession was also the harbinger of the restructuring of the British economy and large-scale de-industrialisation. Given that labour in the manufacturing sector has been the hardest hit by economic restructuring, it would not be illogical to conclude that ethnic minority groups have been disproportionately affected by job losses.

It has been pointed out, however, that there is a dearth of empirical investigation into the effect of economic deindustrialisation on the labour market experience of ethnic minority people in Britain (Iganski and Payne, 1999). Using evidence from the LFS and the Census, Iganski and Payne have argued that, overall, the ethnic minority populations in Britain were less affected by the job losses of industrial restructuring than Whites, and furthermore, have benefited in terms of social mobility as a result of new opportunities created (1999). Between 1981 and 1991: ‘the minority ethnic groups retained a higher share of manufacturing jobs and also expanded into service sector employment to a greater extent than the White population’ (Ibid., p206). They proposed that it is not deindustrialisation, per se, that was the cause of higher unemployment amongst ethnic minority populations, and dispute the view of ethnic minority groups as victims of industrial restructuring. Whilst not seeking to down-play the effects of racial discrimination, nor stereotyping, that leads to occupational segregation, they attribute some of the higher unemployment rates of ethnic minority people to steeper increases in economic activity.

Pakistani and Bangladeshi men, however, stand out as the only minority ethnic group to have suffered a proportionally greater loss of manufacturing jobs than the British male population as a whole (Iganski and Payne, 1999). Pakistani and Bangladeshi men were the only minority ethnic group to demonstrate a strong association between the decline of manufacturing and a growth of unemployment between 1981 and 1991. In this same decade there was an overall decrease in female unemployment. Pakistani and Bangladeshi women were the only group to experience both an increase in manufacturing and service sector employment. But their increased share in employment in these sectors did not match the sharp increase in the number of economically active women from that group. The net result was that they experienced the largest rise in unemployment amongst ethnic minority women (Iganski and Payne, 1999).

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2 This was the classification used by the Labour Force Survey (LFS) at the time.
Similar research based on the 1991 Census, disaggregated the position of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis and found a different picture emerged for each group (Green, 1997). In 1991, Pakistanis (58 per cent) along with Black-Caribbean men (66 per cent) were disproportionately concentrated in declining occupations compared to ethnic minority groups as a whole (49 per cent) and White groups (51 per cent). These occupations, predicted to decline in the medium-term, included plant and machine operatives and buyers, brokers and sales representatives. On the other hand, only 24 per cent of Bangladeshi men were employed in declining occupations, in the main reflecting their concentration in the distribution sector, which includes the restaurant trade (Green, 1997). South Asian women were identified as being vulnerable in the face of forecasted labour market trends. This is because they are concentrated in craft and related occupations, and plant and machine operative occupations, which are both in decline (Green, 1997).

3.2 Rise of workless households

Although employment is as plentiful now as it was 30 years ago, the number of adults living in workless households, and the number of workless households, have almost quadrupled. According to Gregg et al. (1999): ‘there has been a simultaneous rise in households that are fully employed and in those with no access to earned income’. Indeed, Britain is reputed to have the fourth highest workless household rate in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Gregg et al., 1999).

The rise in employment rates amongst women comes almost entirely from women with employed partners (Desai et al., 1999), leading to increasing divisions between work-rich and work-poor households (Bonjour and Dorsett, 2002). The decrease in real terms of wages for entry-level jobs has meant that the monetary benefits of moving from benefits to those jobs have been smallest for workless households. Again, Gregg et al. have pointed out that: ‘low paid jobs can more easily be taken with the support of another income’ (Gregg et al., 1999, p89). Adults in workless households are, therefore, spending increasingly long periods out of the labour market (Arrowsmith, 2004), with 60 per cent not being in employment in at least three years (Gregg et al., 1999).

It has been noted that Bangladeshi and Pakistani households are disproportionately affected by this phenomenon, as they have higher male unemployment than most other ethnic groups in the UK (Cabinet Office, 2000; Modood et al., 1997). In 1984, one in five Asian households had no wage earner, compared to one in 12 White families (Brown, 1984).

3.3 South Asian businesses, enterprise and self-employment

The Cabinet Office analytical report (PIU, 2002), which fed into the 2003 Strategy Unit report suggests that one reason why ethnic minority groups are disadvantaged
in the labour market is because ethnic minority businesses are expanding slowly and producing only nominal job opportunities for their communities. For individuals who lack good English language skills, working with people from the same community may be one of only limited options in the labour market. It, therefore, seems useful to summarise, as far as the literature permits, the state of Pakistani and Bangladeshi owned businesses and levels of self-employment.

From the 1970s to the 1980s, entrepreneurs of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin were well represented in the British renaissance of self-employment (Jones and Ram, 2003). By the early 1990s, Asian self-employment rates were over one-and-a-half times that of the White population. However, the results of the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities (NSEM) identified that while one in four Indian and African-Asian men were self-employed, one in five Pakistani men were self-employed, about the same proportion as White men, and one in ten Bangladeshi men (Modood et al., 1997). For all ethnic groups, the rate of self-employment is much higher for men than for women. Because of the high unemployment rates of the Pakistani community, it represents the ethnic group most dependent on self-employment: 35 per cent of employed Pakistani men and 14 per cent of employed Pakistani women are self-employed (Modood, Berthoud et al., 1997).

A feature of Asian businesses, particularly Muslim ones, is that they tend to be concentrated in a limited number of business sectors (Rafiq, 1992). These include food retailing, news agencies and clothing, which tend to have narrow profit-margins. A survey of Asian firms in Bradford revealed that only 55 per cent of small businesses claimed to have made a profit in the previous year; with a small minority of their owners claiming supplementary income benefits because their income was so low (Rafiq, 1992). Ram has suggested that South Asian entrepreneurs chose (or were ‘sucked into’) specific business sectors because those sectors required little initial capital and medium-to-low expertise (1992). Informal networks of advice, information and finance have also influenced the type of business chosen (Basu, 1998).

However, the traditional sectors of Asian self-employment have come under intense pressure in recent years. The market share of local food stores and newsagents have been squeezed by the expanding supermarket industry. The clothing industry faces global competition, especially from the developing economies of Asia and Eastern Europe. Independent pharmacy stores, which were a bright investment prospect in the 1990s, now face steep competition from the in-house pharmacies of supermarkets and from the expansion of pharmaceutical chain stores. Although the restaurant sector is currently one of the fastest growing service industries, Bangladeshi and Pakistani-owned restaurants face increasing competition from other regional culinary specialities, such as Thai. Consequently, only well-resourced enterprises are in a position to take advantage of the growth in this sector (Jones and Ram, 2003).

In summary, most of the traditional Asian markets that Pakistani and Bangladeshi entrepreneurs operate in are either in decline or are affected by tougher competition.
There is some evidence of a younger generation of ethnic minority businesses moving into high growth, non-traditional markets, such as the new economy, but there is insufficient data to analyse this comprehensively (Ram and Smallbone, 2001).

According to the Fourth NSEM, Pakistani-owned businesses tend to employ fewer staff than other South Asian businesses, but more staff than White businesses (Modood, Berthoud et al.). A follow-up study of Asian self-employment (which did not include Bangladeshis) reported that Pakistanis employ proportionately more family members than other Asians (Metcalf et al., 1996). Pakistani businesses, overall, had grown in terms of employee numbers since starting up. However, the evidence suggested that these businesses ‘employed’ family members to ward off unemployment.

Although Bangladeshis have very low levels of self-employment, where Bangladeshi businesses do exist they are larger than average, with nearly a quarter reporting that they employed six staff or more (Modood, Berthoud et al., 1997). That is compared to 14 per cent of Indian and seven per cent of White businesses. These businesses, in the vast majority of cases, are restaurants. A local area study of businesses in Bradford, in contrast, found that Asian businesses employed an average of three staff, compared with a district average of 11 (Rafiq, 1992). All small businesses, regardless of ethnicity of ownership, are prone to such problems as: lack of expertise in sales and marketing, limited training for staff, lack of financial control, and shortage of finance (Ram, 1992).

Self-employment has produced much better financial rewards for African-Asians and Indians than for Pakistanis (Metcalf et al., 1996). The Fourth NSEM showed that Pakistani-owned businesses had lower mean weekly incomes than any other ethnic group (Modood et al., 1997). It seems that Pakistanis have the least resources, both financial and skills, and are least likely to see their turnover grow, with many experiencing decline (Metcalf et al., 1996). Decline can partly be explained by their lack of business skills and wrong initial choice of business, ie moving into declining or highly competitive markets. Another explanation put forward is that they have lower socio-economic positions relative to other groups. The socio-economic position of a community determines its expenditure, affecting the profitability of businesses located within it, and initial capital determines the rate of accumulation of businesses (Rafiq, 1992).

One theory is that differing market strategies result in differential success rates for Asian businesses (Fallon and Berman-Brown, 2004). Indian Hindus and Sikhs more commonly market non-ethnic products to mainstream customers, resulting in superior business performance. Pakistanis and Bangladeshi Muslims appear to concentrate on an ‘ethnic niche’ strategy to develop. This is where goods and

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3 Non-response to questions about income was high for all respondents, and the sample size of Bangladeshi self-employed people became too small for separate analysis.
services are marketed to a well-defined target group of co-ethnic customers. Such businesses are characterised by family involvement and concentration in inner-cities. This strategy tends to yield lower levels of business growth and performance (ibid.).

The question of whether ethnic minority businesses face discrimination in accessing conventional sources of finance remains largely unanswered (Ram and Smallbone, 2001). There is a widely-held perception though, that ethnic minority businesses face financial barriers, unlike their White counterparts. South Asian businessmen in Wolverhampton, for example, reported that differential treatment by banks and insurers had thwarted their plans for growth (Ram, 1992). Finance available to Muslim business may also be affected by religious beliefs. According to Islamic laws, the correct form of loan is that given or received without interest (Shaw, 2000). Over a quarter of Pakistani entrepreneurs surveyed said that their religious beliefs affected their access to borrowing (Metcalf et al., 1996).

Research has consistently found that ethnic minority businesses as a whole have a low propensity to use mainstream business support services, such as Business Link. They are more likely to rely on self-help or informal help (Ram and Smallbone, 2001). It is contended that business support is crucial to the expansion and development of ethnic minority businesses (Fallon and Berman-Brown, 2004). Attitudinal barriers include a lack of trust or confidence in those delivering formal support and doubts about the relevance of the support offered. On the part of mainstream agencies, they have had problems identifying and reaching ethnic minority businesses, partly linked to inadequate databases (Ram and Smallbone, 2001). They have been criticised for being too reactive and programme-led (Fallon and Berman-Brown, 2004). Specialist agencies, often working in difficult settings to provide support to ethnic minority business, have been undermined in the past by insecure funding and unclear objectives (Ram and Smallbone, 2001). Second generation entrepreneurs are reportedly demonstrating a higher latent demand for external advice and support (Ram and Smallbone, 2001).

There is long-standing debate in the literature on ethnic minority businesses about the reasons why ethnic minorities are attracted to self-employment. Several explanatory models (which are not necessarily mutually exclusive) have been proposed, and include: the fact that certain ethnic minority communities have a cultural flair and familial support for enterprise (Werbner, 1984; Basu, 1998); businesses are established in pursuit of improved social status (Srinavasan, 1992); that ethnic minority groups are ‘pushed’ into self-employment by barriers in the wider labour market, notably economic restructuring and racism (Ram, 1992); and that discriminatory wages in paid employment influences choosing self-employment (Clark and Drinkwater, 2000). It seems that Indians and African-Asians are more likely to be pulled into self-employment in search of economic and social opportunities. In contrast, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are more likely to be pushed into self-employment by poor employment prospects or racism at work (Fallon and Berman-Brown, 2004; Metcalf et al., 1996; Phizacklea and Ram, 1995). Initial motivation can affect the business skills, capital, choice of business and entrepreneurial flair at business inception and subsequent outcomes (Metcalf et al., 1996).
3.4 Racial and religious discrimination

3.4.1 Discrimination

Racial discrimination in the labour market can have a negative impact on the victim, as well as the workplace and society in which they occur. The Strategy Unit has acknowledged that despite significant improvements generally, racial discrimination still exists within some workplaces. The evidence for this is found in public surveys, discrimination tests, the personal testimonies of ethnic minorities, from the findings of Employment Tribunals (Strategy Unit, 2003), and from (general and specific) investigations by the Commission for Racial Equality. Heath and Yu (2001) reported that in 1991, the Commission for Racial Equality received 1,655 applications for assistance, the vast majority of which related to employment. More than half of the complaints about discrimination in employment were about unfair dismissal or refused promotion.

The Strategy Unit report on ethnic minorities’ participation in the labour market was unequivocal in its conclusion that persistent discrimination has served to block opportunities, not only of the first generation of immigrants, but also the British-born (so-called) second-generation ethnic minorities, in the labour market.

The impact of direct or indirect racial discrimination on the labour market chances of minority ethnic groups is notoriously difficult to quantify. Indeed, Heath and Yu (2001) have noted that there is increasing sophistication in the process of discrimination; for example, through the widespread practice of one organisation putting pressure on another to discriminate. During periods of high unemployment in the 1980s and early 1990s, it was common practice for employers to recruit staff through recruitment agencies. A survey by Thames Television in 1990 showed that 17 out of 20 agencies they approached appeared willing to comply with subtly-given instructions for them to discriminate against ethnic minority applicants and clients. A more recent body of work has proved that ethnic minorities pay an ‘ethnic penalty’ in the competition for jobs (Carmichael and Woods, 2000; Heath et al., 1999; Karn, 1997). Carmichael and Woods carried out regression analysis of Labour Force Survey (LFS) data that controlled for differences in human capital and personal characteristics. The analysis found that these differences could not fully explain the differences in unemployment propensities and occupational attainment by ethnic minority groups, compared with White people. They attributed at least some of the disadvantage of ethnic minorities in the British labour market to discriminatory recruitment practices by employers (Carmichael and Woods, 2000). It is this residual ‘net difference’ which several authors have referred to as ‘ethnic penalties’.

However, there is also evidence to suggest there is considerable diversity between different ethnic groups in their experience of this phenomenon. Ethnic penalty is most severe for Pakistani and Bangladeshi men and women (Carmichael and Woods, 2000). Evidence of ethnic penalties serves to highlight the fact that discrimination persists today despite the enactment of anti-discrimination legislation and measures (Strategy Unit, 2003). In this regard, Carmichael and Woods believe
that current legislation in Britain is failing to prevent or deal with discrimination; and have suggested that: ‘The scope of anti-discrimination therefore needs to be widened in order to deal more effectively with the barriers to employment and occupational attainment that have been shown to exist’ (Carmichael and Woods, 2000, p93).

Evidence from Lindley’s analysis of the Fourth NSEM provides some insight into why people of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin may have a higher ethnic penalty. Lindley suggests that non-White Muslims in Britain may be suffering double discrimination: for being from an ethnic minority group and for being Islamic (Lindley, 2002). That research estimated that approximately half of the substantial disadvantage that Muslims experience, in terms of earnings and employment, relative to other non-White religions, can be explained by (poorer) characteristics, such as lower levels of English language fluency and human capital in general. The remainder of the disadvantage is a ‘pure Islamic penalty’:

‘This supports the existence of religious discrimination towards Muslims, although such unexplained differences may well contain unmeasurable components such as motivation and attitudes towards employment.’

(Lindley, 2002, p439)

Lindley’s study built upon the work of Brown (2000), which suggested that religion was an important determinant of economic activity amongst Britain’s South Asian population. Significant differences were identified between Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims. Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims were shown to be the most disadvantaged in terms of unemployment of all the South Asian religious groups. Blackaby, Leslie, Murphy and O’Leary (1999), have also provided other supporting evidence to show that Muslims experience greater ethnic penalties than any other religious group, irrespective of their ethnicity.

A survey of religious organisations was undertaken by the Home Office in 2001. The survey results showed that a consistently higher and more frequent level of unfair treatment was reported by Muslims than all other religious groups, in respect of education, employment, housing and local government services (Weller et al., 2001). Muslim organisations were most likely to state that their members experienced unfair treatment from private and public sector employers and job agencies. Concerns raised by Islamic interviewees included: being refused employment because of a dress code, stereotyping, low representation, discrimination for wearing traditional or religious dress to interviews, prayer facilities, and religious holidays. These issues were also perceived to greatly limit career progression.

Conflict between Asians and Whites and the police escalated into riots in the summer of 2001 in three northern towns in England: Oldham, Burnley and Bradford. The riots occurred in and around deprived areas where Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities made up the vast majority of residents. A Community Cohesion Review Team was established by the Home Office and led by Ted Cantle. The report (2001) clearly identified Islamophobia as a problem in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford and a source of conflict. It stated that:
'For some young people [Islamophobia] was part of their daily experience. They felt that they were being socially excluded because of their faith and that this was not being recognised or dealt with. It is not simply a coincidence that the Pakistani community were, principally, at the centre of the disturbances.'

(Home Office, 2001)

Growing disaffection amongst Pakistani young people was associated with increasing social marginalisation and religious discrimination (Home Office, 2001). A sample of Asian mothers believed there had been an increase in Islamophobia across the UK, since the 11 September disaster in 2001. They believed this has heightened worries about racism for many Asian women, particularly about bullying and discrimination in the work place (Hall et al., 2004). Quantitative and qualitative research of Bangladeshi and Pakistani young people in Oldham observed that the perception and experience of racism results in a lack of motivation and general disaffection towards the mainstream labour market (Kalra et al., 1999). It is not difficult to surmise from these research findings that the problem of Muslim identity in Britain is likely to intensify, especially for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, as they assert the right to practice their religion on their own terms. But this will have implications for the effective participation of Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims in the labour market if their perception of discrimination, increasingly on grounds of their religion, is added on top of the racial discrimination they already face.

3.5 Participation in Welfare to Work programmes

New Deal has formed the mainstay of the Government’s strategy to tackle long-term unemployment. Various New Deal programmes have sought to raise the human capital of unemployed people through skills training and work experience in order to increase their long-term employability. Much of the literature assessing the effectiveness of New Deal has focused on New Deal for Young People (NDYP) and New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP). The focus of this review is NDYP because of the younger age profile of the two groups under discussion. NDYP is mandatory for 18 to 24 year olds who have been in receipt of Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) continuously for six months. It consists of two phases: The first lasts for a minimum of four months and is called the Gateway period. Participants are allocated a personal adviser who gives support in job search activity and training where appropriate. In the second phase, participants must choose to follow one of four options, including full-time education and training, and subsidised employment (Moody, 2000). Evaluations of the NDYP indicate that, overall, it has raised the proportion of young people leaving unemployment and finding jobs (Blundell et al., 2003; Riley and Young, 2001).

Ogbonna and Noon (1999), have described what they see as problems with NDYP, with regard to its benefits for unemployed ethnic minority groups. They suggest the continued reliance on the private sector to deliver training and placements under New Deal would replicate the discrimination experienced by ethnic minorities under previous schemes (see Cross et al., 1988; De Souza, 1987; Verma and Derby, 1987).
It is known that under the schemes run by the erstwhile Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), many ethnic minority participants ended up in less rewarding programmes than their White counterparts. They frequently failed to get satisfactory work placements, with the result that they had worse job outcomes (Ogbonna and Noon, 1999). Ogbonna and Noon are apprehensive that previous negative experiences of training and work placements could deter ethnic minority groups from active participation; and that ethnic minorities would be ‘channelled’ into less attractive options. Furthermore, they are concerned that the sanctions under New Deal would be used disproportionately against unemployed ethnic minorities.

Analysis of the New Deal Evaluation Database undertaken by the Employment Service (now part of Jobcentre Plus), bears testament to some, but by no means all, of the problems and biases predicted by Ogbonna and Noon. For the period January 1998 to October 1999, more than four-fifths (85 per cent) of NDYP participants were White, and 15 per cent from ethnic minorities, the majority of them Pakistanis and Black Caribbeans (Moody, 2000). Overall, minority ethnic participants entered the programme with better qualifications but from slightly longer spells of unemployment than White participants. Nearly two-thirds (63 per cent) of ethnic minority participants, compared with 57 per cent of White participants, left New Deal at the end of the Gateway and did not go on to the optional phase. A lower proportion of ethnic minorities (12 per cent) also entered the subsidised jobs option than did White participants (20 per cent); and conversely, only 43 per cent of White participants entered full-time education and training, compared with 59 per cent of ethnic minorities (Moody, 2000). Qualitative research into the views of ethnic minority New Deal participants confirmed that subsidised employment was not only the preferred option but the main motivation for participating in New Deal (Fieldhouse et al., 2002).

Overall analysis showed that minority ethnic participants of NDYP have had less successful job outcome rates than White participants, in spite of the fact that they were better qualified on entry. According to Moody’s analysis, a great deal of the eight percentage points difference in positive outcome rates between ethnic minority participants and their White counterparts can be explained by location effects. Inner city areas, where minority ethnic groups are concentrated, have low job outcome rates for all ethnic groups. Moreover, a higher proportion of New Deal participants in inner cities enter the full-time training option than into subsidised jobs, highlighting the need to improve performance of New Deal in inner cities (Moody, 2000). But Moody also speculates that the remaining differential between the ethnic minority and White participants might be due to occupational preference, differences in mobility, and discrimination in the labour markets (Moody, 2000).

Evidence from NDYP has provided some positive signs that it is benefiting Bangladeshis as well as any other group. Bangladeshi participants, along with Chinese and Indians, came closest to achieving parity of job outcomes with White participants (Moody et al.). Ethnic minority participants in Oldham, which has large Pakistani and Bangladeshi populations, were enthusiastic about New Deal, and felt that their
confidence, skills and overall employability had been enhanced as a result of their participation (Fieldhouse et al., 2002). A generic evaluation of NDYP also reported that young people felt New Deal had a positive impact on them in terms of enhanced job-related skills, job search skills and a more disciplined lifestyle. Indeed, there is a strong impression that New Deal is offering a genuinely new route out of long-term unemployment for the majority of participants (Hasluck, 2000).

Whilst the feedback from participants themselves of the New Deal has been largely positive, other qualitative research in Oldham has raised the important issue of non-participation. Kalra et al. (2001) questioned whether NDYP is actually managing to help those who are truly detached from the labour market. Employment Service data showed that from 1998 to 2000, nearly 42,000 (or 12 per cent) out of 470,000 young people eligible to start the scheme, left prior to their initial interview (Kalra et al., 2001). Here, the proportion of ethnic minority leavers is roughly the same as ethnic minority starts (ie young ethnic minorities are not over-represented at this drop-out stage). There is, however, no data available about those who drop out straight after the initial interview.

The question then is whether young people are avoiding New Deal, and if so why. The Oldham research, which involved interviews with Bangladeshi and Pakistani non-participants of New Deal, identified a number of exit strategies (Kalra et al., 2001). Firstly, some young people obtained sustainable jobs (ie jobs that last longer than 13 weeks). The timing of successful job applications meant they did not have to enter New Deal, even if they were not antipathic to it.

But there is some evidence to suggest that others entered employment specifically to avoid New Deal; and that this was generally into unsustainable, unwanted jobs, that were not appropriate to their skills, qualifications or aspirations. Their perception of New Deal was of yet another scheme that would not lead to a real job. Moreover, they did not consider that the training option would have the same credibility as a college course. Consequently, they did not see that NDYP would enhance their long-term employment prospects (Kalra et al., 2001). However, the fact that this group of young people are moving into employment, even if only temporarily, could be deemed a success from a ‘work first’ perspective. Of more concern though, is the fact that the research also identified a very small but significant group of extremely disaffected young people, who preferred to lose benefit entitlement rather than ‘waste time participating in NDYP’. They had previously been on YTS, Job Clubs or Adult Training Programmes and had an overall poor experience of training. They were, in some cases, influenced by negative stories about New Deal from their peers. It is notable, however, that similar issues of disaffection were raised by young White non-participants (Hoogvelt and France, 2000). A key difference between this latter group and young Pakistanis and Bangladeshis was that this latter group did not raise any concerns about the financial implications of benefit sanctions (Kalra et al., 2001). Indeed, between January 1998 and October 1999, ethnic minorities as a whole were actually less likely to experience a sanction under the New Deal (ie withdrawal of benefits due to non-attendance) than White participants (Moody,
In particular, the proportion of young Pakistanis facing sanctions was similar to young White participants. A possible reason for the difference in their respective attitudes towards benefit sanctions could be because a higher proportion of young Pakistanis and Bangladeshis still live at home with their parents, and so enjoy some financial support.

Some South Asians, particularly Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, were unable to join NDYP due to external, social circumstances (Kalra et al., 2001). Some signed off benefits to make extended visits to Bangladesh and Pakistan. Whilst, in some cases, this might have been another strategy for avoidance of the New Deal, in other cases it was due to family obligations such as family funerals or weddings. Some young women of South Asian origin could not enter New Deal because they had taken on caring responsibilities for family members. It has been suggested it is not always judicious to assume that young people always have complete agency when making labour market decisions (Kalra et al., 2001).

Kalra et al. made the important point that although unemployed graduates are equally eligible for New Deal participation, there is no specific strategy for helping them. They found among the people avoiding NDYP, through the uptake of unsustainable jobs, a fair number of graduates (Kalra et al., 2001). As discussed above, minority ethnic graduates tend to be unemployed for longer than White graduates. Research into the over-education of ethnic minorities in the British labour market concluded that: ‘To improve the labour market position of ethnic minorities requires not just providing them with more education but also paying attention to the job-matching process’ (Battu and Sloane, 2004, p557). This suggests that pushing ethnic minority graduates into inappropriate, unsustainable jobs may not be advantageous in their long-term career progression. It is contended that more attention should be placed on differences in job-searching methods used by minority ethnic groups and the White majority to see if there is a relationship between differing methods and match quality (Battu and Sloane, 2004).

New Deal for People aged 25 and over (ND25+) was launched in June 1998 and re-engineered in April 2001. Overall, it appears to have had less impact than NDYP. In total, just under 500,000 have joined the scheme since its inception. The proportion of minority ethnic participants has increased from ten per cent in 1998 to approximately 14 per cent of entrants at the end of 2001 (Wilkinson, 2003). In total, Pakistanis have constituted about ten per cent of all ethnic minority participants, and Bangladeshis four per cent. A similar situation to NDYP appears to be the case for this group too, with a lower proportion of ethnic minority participants (11 per cent) than White participants (26 per cent) moving into the subsidised job option (Wilkinson, 2003). In terms of job outcomes, male participants were four percentage points less likely to be unemployed one year after entering the programme than if it had not been introduced (Wilkinson, 2003). The impact on female participants, though, has been negligible (ibid.). However, in 1998, the proportion of ND25+ leavers who went on to unsubsidised employment was roughly the same for Whites (17 per cent) as non-Whites (18 per cent). Encouragingly, the ethnic group with the
highest proportion of leavers going into jobs was Bangladeshi, at 22 per cent, although it should be borne in mind that the absolute number of Bangladeshis on the scheme that year was just 2,000. Almost one in five (17 per cent) of Pakistani leavers went into unsubsidised employment (Wilkinson, 2003).
4 Disadvantage at the community level

4.1 Area effects

There is ongoing debate as to whether people are disadvantaged by where they live, or whether they live where they do because they are disadvantaged (Sanderson, forthcoming). To the extent that disadvantage is often synonymous with poverty, Cheshire et al., for example, have argued that: ‘the poor are not poor because of where they live; rather they live where they do because they are poor’ (2003, p85).

Since 1980, the debate (on disadvantage) has partly focused on the increasing association between poverty and social housing. Analysis of the General Household Survey shows that in 1979, half of the residents of social housing were in the lowest 40 per cent of income groups. By 1994, the proportion had risen to three-quarters of residents (Page, 2000). Residential sorting means that better-off households seek to live in areas with higher concentrations of similar households; areas which also have better amenities and services. Increasing neighbourhood segregation, with increasing income inequality, has become almost a self-reinforcing process (Cheshire et al., 2003, p85).

Primary research undertaken by Atkinson and Kintrea (2001) appears to support the claim that living in deprived areas in Britain creates additional problems for residents, and further entrenches their disadvantage. They compared the position of two pairs of deprived and socially mixed neighbourhoods through a household survey, to determine if it is worse to be poor and live in a poor area than in a mixed one, and to single out area-effects. They found that the strongest evidence supporting this idea, the so-called area effect thesis, was the importance of area reputation in determining opportunity (2001). Atkinson and Kintrea also observed that the wider economic context of a neighbourhood’s location also has a key influence on neighbourhood outcomes.
A review of the literature – Disadvantage at a structural level

A number of research studies have established that the reputation of an area (or housing estate) can effect the job opportunities of residents (Page, 2000; Dean and Hastings, 2000; Speak, 2000; Atkinson and Kintrea, 2001; Lawless, 1996; Maguire, 1992; DWP, 2003a). In their research, Atkinson and Kintrea found that a high proportion of those living in deprived areas felt that the reputation of the area was a big hindrance to their job prospects, compared to those from socially mixed areas. It is particularly significant that over one-third of those who identified the stigma of the area in which they lived as a factor affecting their job opportunities, were actually in employment, and therefore, had direct experience of the labour market and employers’ attitudes and practices (Atkinson and Kintrea, 2001). It is also, perhaps, not surprising that there is a perception amongst large numbers of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis living in communities in North West England that they suffer from ‘postcode discrimination’ in the jobs market (Home Office, 2001). In Oldham, young people felt that the negative connotations associated with areas with high concentrations of Asians were a basis for indirect discrimination by employers, and a hindrance to people’s employment chances (Kalra et al., 1999).

Support for the area effect thesis has also come from the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU), with evidence to show there are effects on an individual’s outcomes, independent of a person’s characteristics, of living in an area with many other people out of work (SEU, 2004). In other words, living in an area where there are other workless people can severely restrict people’s life chances. The effect operates at two levels: on the characteristics of the area itself, symptomised by lack of jobs, poor transport, etc., and of living with other workless people, with limited networks of friends and neighbours who have knowledge of the labour market, and through whom it is possible to hear of local job opportunities (SEU, 2004). It is estimated that Pakistanis are almost seven times more likely to live in areas with high concentrations of worklessness; and Bangladeshis are nine times more likely to do so than to live in areas with the lowest proportions of worklessness (SEU, 2004).

The significance of the area effect thesis perhaps lies in the way that local areas and communities are increasingly assumed to have characteristics, in themselves, which disadvantage the people who live in them. For ethnic minorities, the argument here is that they disproportionately tend to live in deprived inner-city areas. Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (alongside Caribbeans and Chinese), in particular, are heavily concentrated in inner city areas, and so will suffer disproportionately from the effects of living in these deprived areas. Such areas are characterised further by the flight of jobs and a dearth of business opportunities.

4.2 Spatial mismatch

In the US, plant closures led to mass unemployment and spatial concentrations of poverty in inner-city neighbourhoods where Black people were abandoned, following ‘White flight’ to suburbs, and could not afford to move because they were prevented from doing so by discrimination in housing (Fainstein, 1993; Field, 1989; Kasarda, 1990; Morris, 1993). This led to a ‘spatial mismatch’ between these
communities and employment growth in suburban areas that were often inaccessible by public transport, or involved excessive costs and time to reach (Wilson, 1996). In the UK context, it is argued that this spatial mismatch has operated in a geographical reverse. Large public housing estates are often located on the outskirts of cities, and house communities that are (similarly) isolated from the plentiful supply of employment opportunities in businesses located in Britain’s city centres (Lawless et al., 1998).

But it was not always so. In reality there has been growing economic disparity between Britain’s cities and the rest of the country. At the same time as cities have been hit hardest by the fall in manufacturing jobs, the growth of employment in services has been much higher in towns and rural areas than in cities (Turok, 1999). What should have been an inevitable rise in recorded unemployment in cities in the 1980s and 1990s, especially following heavy loss of male employment, has been masked by a decline in economic activity rates in cities. Furthermore, the out-migration of jobs and people has imposed environmental and economic costs on the areas left behind. This phenomenon has been described in some circles as ‘spatial mismatch’.

Indeed, some recent literature presents spatial mismatch theory as an explanation for higher unemployment rates amongst ethnic minorities, compared to White people, in Britain (PIU, 2002; Green, 1997; Thomas, 1998). Green in particular makes the point that: ‘the disproportionate concentration of ethnic minority groups in large urban areas, in the face of continuing decentralisation of employment, may mean that some sub-groups of the ethnic minority work-force (most notably those with fewest formal educational qualifications) are likely to face particular difficulties in finding and retaining jobs’ (Green, 1997, p89). However, Fieldhouse (1999), analysing results from the 1991 Census, refutes spatial mismatch theory as a satisfactory explanation for Asian unemployment in London. On the contrary, Fieldhouse contends that unemployment is a problem of specific areas, regardless of ethnicity. In contrast to other Asians in London, Pakistani and Bangladeshi unemployment rates can partially be accounted for by the characteristics of the wards they live in. However, Fieldhouse also believes this is likely to reflect residential segregation of the unemployed, where the complex inter-relationship between unemployment, ethnicity and spatial location is mediated by the local context (Fieldhouse, 1999).

4.2.1 Housing and mobility

Housing ownership and housing conditions are known to affect the employment prospects of some people. A Cabinet Office report in 2002 suggested, in particular, that quality of housing has an important impact on employment mobility:

‘If people are unable to move from areas where labour is in excess supply to areas where labour is in excess demand, their chances of successfully gaining employment are reduced.’

(Performance and Innovation Unit, 2002)
The PIU report points out further that housing disadvantage means that ethnic minorities may not be able to adapt to geographical shifts in employment resulting from industrial restructuring (PIU, 2002). In the 1960s, property ownership became a priority for pioneer migrants from Pakistan. Home ownership was the main option for many immigrants, particularly those with large families. They tended to buy the cheaper properties that could be found in the industrial areas where they settled. To a large extent, home ownership brought independence from landlords, but at the same time gave them some status within their communities, and represented a major investment that could be easily capitalised, invested in a business or taken back to Pakistan (Shaw, 2000). In 2000, home ownership was highest amongst Pakistanis, Indians and African-Asians, compared to the other ethnic groups (SEU, 2000). At the other end of the spectrum, Bangladeshis were the least likely to own their homes, and were disproportionately concentrated in social housing. It is a paradox, though, that home ownership has not put them in an advantageous position relative to tenants. It has been noted that many Pakistani and Bangladeshi owner-occupiers live in poor condition terraced housing (SEU, 2000). It has been suggested, moreover, that the poor condition of many of these homes render them a liability rather than an asset, with implications for labour mobility:

‘if their ability to move is constrained by an inability to sell low quality, low value homes.’

(PIU, 2000).

It is more than conjecture to suggest, for example, that the housing markets in the northern regions of England have compounded the economic disadvantage of people living in some of the regions’ poorer areas. In stark contrast to the South East of England, demand for housing in areas such as Oldham and Bradford is extremely low, with the value of terraced housing falling to just a few thousand pounds in 2001 (Home Office, 2001). In Burnley in 2000, there were 4,000 empty houses, and their value stood at only about £1,500 and £2,000, saddling their owners with large negative equity (Home Office, 2001).

The 1991 Census showed that ethnic minorities were more reliant on public transport than the majority White population; and as a consequence, may have access to a narrower range of employment opportunities (Green, 1997). According to research by the SEU, poor transport can reinforce social exclusion and become a key barrier to employment (SEU, 2003). It is contended that ethnic minority groups are at greater risk from spatial mismatch unemployment because their job searches can become more geographically restrictive, because their areas are poorly served by public transport (Thomas, 1998). On the other hand, it has also been suggested that about 20 per cent of the difference in unemployment spells between Whites and ethnic minorities can be attributed to the lower willingness of the latter to commute to find employment (Thomas, 1998).
4.3 Social capital

There has been a growing interest by the Government in the concepts of social capital as a means of combating social exclusion and differential life opportunities. Bonding social capital is, ‘akin to strong social ties between like individuals (eg family members or an ethnic grouping), often located in the same neighbourhood, which enable people to “get by”’ (Kearns, 2004, p8). Bridging social capital, in comparison to bonding social capital consists of: ‘less dense, cross-cutting, weaker social ties between heterogeneous individuals such as friends from different groups, friends of friends, business associates, which have enabled people to “get on”’ (Ibid.). It is possible to argue that if people have high reserves of bonding social capital within their community, this could act to strengthen their confidence. On the other hand, bonding social capital could also act as a barrier to people’s employment horizons. However, the extent to which social bridges link communities into the wider world, or work, or mainstream society, and give access to influence and to wider opportunities, including job opportunities, is very questionable.

Some evidence has been produced to show that people tend to get out of unemployment by finding jobs through friends and acquaintances rather than via formal channels (Wilson, 1996). The networks and contacts that make up social capital can facilitate job search. Studies have shown that more unemployed people find employment though friends and personal contacts than through any other single route (PIU, 2002b). It has consequently been suggested that one of the major reasons why individuals living in poorer areas find it more difficult to move into employment, is because their peers are also unemployed (Fraser and Burchell, 2001). As the Strategy Unit has pointed out: ‘an ethnic minority that is socially isolated will, almost by definition, lack …bridging social capital and will therefore lack access to some employment opportunities’ (Strategy Unit, 2002, p86). However, Kearns has highlighted some disadvantages of social capital. In particular, groups which have strong bonding social capital and are geographically concentrated, may become insular and disconnected, both by desire and by default. There is a risk that such strong communities may become oppressive and seek conformity among their members, thereby, restricting their routes out of poverty and exclusion (Kearns, 2004).

4.4 Enclaves

It has been noted that some ethnic minority groups, including Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, face particular disadvantages because of their spatial concentration in inner city, deprived, and/or workless areas. The issue of whether ethnic minorities are advantaged or disadvantaged, in terms of labour market participation, by living in enclaves has also been a focus of much research. An enclave can be defined as:

‘...a concentration of individuals from the same ethnic background within a specific geographical location.’

(Clark and Drinkwater, 2000, p606).
Analysis of the 1991 Census, alongside the DETR indices of local deprivations, has shown that average deprivation increases as ethnic minority concentration rises (Clark and Drinkwater, 2002). There is a positive relationship between high ethnic minority concentration and high unemployment for both non-White and White residents. The relationship is particularly salient for Pakistani and Bangladeshi men; their average unemployment rates fall from 35 per cent and 41 per cent respectively, in areas of high ethnic minority concentration, to 17 per cent and ten per cent in areas of low concentration (Clark and Drinkwater, 2002). A similar difference in unemployment rates is observed for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women (39 per cent and 43 per cent in areas of high ethnic minority concentration, and 18 per cent and 23 per cent in areas of lowest concentration). These findings contradict the theory that ethnic minority people are more likely to be employed in enclaves as there is lower consumer discrimination (Holzer and Ihlandfeldt, 1998).

Clark and Drinkwater (2002), have also noted that increased unemployment propensities in areas of higher ethnic minority concentration may be the result of the concentration of deprivation in those areas, to such an extent that it affords much lower employment opportunities. In particular, the loss of manufacturing jobs in the 1980s and early 1990s was one of the main causes of reduction in labour demand in many metropolitan areas of England and Wales. Results from the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities (NSEM) showed that living in enclaves does not necessarily cause deprivation. Rather, it can become a problem where concentrations of ethnic minorities coincide with the concentration of disadvantage (Lakey, 1997). Consequently, it has been proposed that policy initiatives targeted towards alleviating pockets of relative deprivation in urban England and Wales would be an effective way of improving the economic position of ethnic minorities (Clark and Drinkwater, 2002).

There is similar debate about whether living in an enclave has benefits for entrepreneurism and self-employment: for example, that it provides a protected market in which a particular group can trade in their preferred language (Aldrich et al., 1985); or that enclaves provide niche markets for culture-specific goods (Rafiq, 1992). Indeed, it could be argued that a successful business enclave could create opportunities beyond the occupational core. For example, the core businesses, such as restaurants, may well need suppliers; they need people to decorate, carry out electrical work and plumbing; they need accountants. Therefore, if people become more skilful in business management and think about business opportunities, they may well identify opportunities which they otherwise might not have outside the enclave. On the other hand, it has also been argued that enclaves cause too much competition amongst entrepreneurs, limiting opportunities (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990). The Clark and Drinkwater study (2000), demonstrated that people living in enclaves are less likely to be self-employed, and that this may be due to the relatively deprived nature of many such communities in England and Wales. Similarly, ethnic minority businesses in low-density areas tend to be larger and create more jobs (Modood et al., 1996).
Spatial segregation along ethnic lines can have disadvantages in terms of decreased bridging social capital of each community. The disturbances in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford in 2001, could be seen as a result of extremely weak bridging social capital of local communities. The Community Cohesion Review Team considered the causes and the impact of spatial segregation of different ethnic minorities (Home Office, 2001). The team did not in any way suggest that integration was a prerequisite of community cohesion, and acknowledged that some people may prefer to live within their own (ethnic) communities, where there are more likely to be suitable places of worship, suitable shops, etc. Ethnic minorities may also want to live in close proximity to their own group to feel more protected from racially motivated intimidation and threats, or they may be constrained to certain areas by poverty and housing policies (Home Office, 2001). There are also indications that their experience of racism has encouraged Pakistani and Bangladeshi people to live in closer proximity to their own communities (Kabeer, 2000; Lloyd and Bowlby, 2000; Phillipson, 2003).

Living in an area with a high concentration of a particular ethnic group does not, therefore, necessarily create problems by itself. The Cantle report found that problems only arose when ‘separation is multi-faceted — eg when geographic, educational, cultural, social and religious divisions reinforce each other to the extent that there is little or no contact with other communities on any level’ (Home Office, 2001, p28). Ethnic separation in some of England’s northern towns has led to a lack of understanding between communities, with adverse consequences for ethnic minorities in those areas (Home Office, 2001). Ultimately, isolated communities, with few links to other communities, will also have narrower access to job opportunities, especially given that large numbers of unemployed people find work through informal networks (PIU, 2002b; Wilson, 1996). Indeed, a lot of job search behaviour that people do is through informal channels, such as word-of-mouth, and not through jobcentres or newspapers. Consequently, if living in an enclave restricts interaction with the outside world, then almost by necessity people would be cutting themselves off from labour market opportunities.
5 Disadvantage at the individual level

5.1 Human capital

In looking at the labour market disadvantage of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, we have concentrated in the previous chapters on disadvantage arising from structural conditions. These may be regarded as circumstantial barriers, particularly to do with housing immobility, transportation problems, discrimination, etc. There is an additional issue, that we are dealing with sub-groups where there is a high preponderance of women of childbearing and child-rearing ages, and high levels of fertility. These represent multiple barriers, and diagnostically, the weight of argument is heavily given to these circumstantial barriers. However, it has become increasingly clear that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis also have very substantial human capital problems.

There is evidence from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) to show that regardless of ethnicity, people are more likely to be economically inactive if they have lower levels of qualifications and that, in particular, men without qualifications have very high unemployment rates (Gregg and Wadsworth, 1999). This fact has formed part of the rationale for the current Government’s active labour market policies, and for the programmes provided by Jobcentre Plus to reduce unemployment by increasing the employability of unemployed people. The Strategy Unit underlined this with its view that one of the key mechanisms for reducing disadvantage is to raise levels of educational attainment and skills of minority ethnic populations (Strategy Unit, 2003). But the Strategy Unit has gone further, to draw attention to the importance (the possession) of human capital as a key determinant of an individual’s labour market achievement. Human capital has been defined, in this regard, as possession of university-level qualifications, vocational skills and real-world experience of work (Ibid.). In this chapter, we look at the level of human capital possessed by Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, and assess its relationship with their participation in the labour market.
5.1.1 Language

When considering non-British born migrants, Bangladeshis have the lowest, and Pakistanis the second lowest, levels of English language fluency of all Asian groups in the UK. According to the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities (NSEM), English was spoken well amongst just 75 per cent of Bangladeshi men and 40 per cent of Bangladeshi women, and amongst 78 per cent of Pakistani men and 54 per cent of Pakistani women. Even more striking, only four per cent of Bangladeshi women aged 45 to 64 years, and 28 per cent of Pakistani women of the same age, spoke English fluently or fairly well (Modood, Berthoud et al., 1997). As it will be seen later, it is relevant that these groups of women generally came to Britain aged over 25 years, and have had the shortest length of residency in Britain.

It has been established that the key factors in determining fluency in English amongst migrant populations are gender and age upon arrival in Britain. As Modood, Berthoud et al. have noted: ‘those who came to Britain after the age of 25 were least likely to have a facility in English regardless of their age today’ (Modood, Berthoud et al., 1997, p80). Age and length of residency are also linked to fluency, as is the extent to which people live amongst their own ethnic group. People who live in areas with high concentrations of others from their own ethnic group are less likely to speak English fluently or fairly. However, once the residential density is over ten per cent, the effect diminishes (Modood et al., 1997). It is quite possible, though, that people choose to live in an area where there are more people of their own ethnic group because of their poor linguistic ability in English (Shield and Wheatley-Price, 2002).

Economic analysis undertaken by Dustmann and Fabbri of the Fourth NSEM and the Family and Working Lives Survey, found that these determinants of language fluency among ethnic minority immigrants to the UK had not changed a decade later (2003). But they found that having children had a negative effect on the probability of being fluent in English. Their findings suggest there is a paradox here; that having children who can act as translators for the parent reduces the incentive to learn. Interestingly, they also found that ‘the effect of overseas qualifications on language fluency is very similar to the effect of education obtained in the UK’, suggesting that education is important because it gives people skills for learning, rather than what is learned (Dustmann and Fabbri, 2003, p706). Location also appears to have an affect on language fluency. Immigrants living in Greater London are more likely to be fluent in English than those living in the Midlands or the North (Shield and Wheatley-Price, 2002).

So what are the impacts of lower levels of fluency? It has been estimated that fluency in English increases the probability of being employed by 20 to 25 per cent above those with poor English speaking ability (Dustmann and Fabbri; Shield and Wheatley-Price, 2001). Not being sufficiently proficient in the language of the host country can also impact negatively upon the views of prospective employers at the interview stage. In any event, most jobs require language skills for effective communication, which is necessary to actually do the job. This is particularly true of service sector jobs.
In this regard, literacy in the host language is a crucial prerequisite even for many unskilled occupations (Dustmann and Fabbri, 2003). By no means least, analysis of the Fourth NSEM has found that fluency in English raises male immigrants’ mean salary by approximately 20 per cent, compared to men with poorer language skills (Shields and Wheatley-Price, 2002). As Shields and Wheatley-Price have put it: ‘language fluency is likely to become increasingly important if the trend towards skilled employment, and away from unskilled jobs, continues’ (Shields and Wheatley-Price, 2001, p744). Overall then, the linguistic competence in the language of the wider society has a profound impact, not just on labour market achievement but also, prior to that, on the propensity to acquire human capital and determination.

5.1.2 Education and qualifications

According to the fourth NSEM (Modood, Berthoud et al., 1997), Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have the lowest levels of qualifications among people who have migrated to Britain aged 16 and over. In 1994, 75 per cent of Bangladeshi and 63 per cent of Pakistani migrants living in Britain had no qualifications, or had qualifications below ‘O’ level standard. Pakistani and Bangladeshi women were less qualified than men. But even where they had them, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were much less likely than African-Asians and Caribbeans to have British qualifications that were recognised in the UK labour market (Modood et al., 1997).

The poor academic attainment of Bangladeshi school children compared to other Asian and White children has been the focus of numerous studies since the Swann Report in 1985 (eg ILEA, 1987; Taylor and Hegarty, 1985; Nutall, 1990). The 1994 NSEM indicated that there were only very minimal improvements in attainment amongst British-educated Bangladeshis in secondary schools compared to other ethnic groups, a situation that was deemed extremely worrying (Modood, Berthoud et al., 1997). More recent data, however, provide some indication of progress amongst Bangladeshi children in compulsory education, and challenges the view of Bangladeshi children as being extremely educationally disadvantaged.

Schools’ attainment data for England in 2003 (DfES, 2005) showed that:

- Bangladeshis and Pakistani children have lower achievement rates, compared to the national average, across all key stages;
- forty-two per cent of Pakistani pupils and 46 per cent of Bangladeshi pupils gained five or more GCSEs (grades A* to C), compared to 51 per cent of all pupils, and 65 per cent of Indian children;
- on average, and across each of the principal ethnic groups, female pupils are achieving higher GCSE results than males. The gender gap for Bangladeshis is one of the largest at 14 per cent. The gender gap for Pakistanis is also high, with 12 per cent more girls achieving more than five GCSEs than boys.

But when considered at a local level, attainment by ethnic group is very varied (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000). Of the six minority ethnic categories analysed across a range of official data sources, every one was the highest attaining in at least one
Local Education Authority (LEA). This indicates that ‘no ethnic group is inherently less capable of academic success’ (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000, p11). Indeed, there has been dramatic improvement in the attainment of Bangladeshi children living in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets since the early 1990s (Gillborn and Gipps, 1996). Since 1994, Bangladeshi pupils have been the highest achieving of the main ethnic groups. They have out-performed their White peers despite their greater levels of economic disadvantage. Bangladeshi students in other areas have also shown substantial improvements in attainment. At the same time, in four out of ten LEAs that monitor ethnicity, Pakistani pupils were more likely to attain five higher grade GCSEs than White pupils locally (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000).

Analysis of the relationship between achievement and eligibility for free school meals (FSM), taken as a proxy for deprivation, has provided some interesting results (DfES, 2005). For all ethnic groups, pupils eligible for FSM perform less well than those not entitled. However, the rates of eligibility for FSM vary dramatically with 55 per cent of Bangladeshi and 37 per cent of Pakistani secondary school children being eligible for FSM, compared to a national average of 14 per cent. In respect of Pakistani children, rates of FSM appear to explain most of the attainment differential. An important finding was that: ‘given the influence of FSM (on attainment), Bangladeshi pupils are actually doing relatively well compared to the national average’ (DfES, 2005, p15). Evidence from Tower Hamlets suggests that while social class continues to be strongly associated with attainment, Bangladeshi pupils seem more able to transcend social class than their White and Caribbean peers (Gillborn and Gipps, 1996).

Until relatively recently, educational researchers have looked at the home environment to explain ‘under-achievement’ of Bangladeshis specifically, and ethnic minorities generally. There has been an assumption that such factors as migration history, family size, English not being spoken at home, culture and religion, and parental aspirations have impacted upon the educational outcomes of Bangladeshi pupils. There has been limited critical examination of the probable impact of teachers’ attitudes, school provision and curriculum on that achievement (Haque, 2000). It is argued that some teachers discriminate against their pupils on the basis of religious and cultural stereotypes (Wade and Souter, 1992). Teachers may perceive that Asian communities are excessively authoritarian and have narrow, restrictive expectations of their children (Gillborn and Gipps, 1996). It has been suggested further that a distinctive Muslim identity can exacerbate the disadvantages of young people (Modood, 1990). Negative stereotypes of Asian pupils, particularly girls, can lead to lower expectations for them by teachers (Gillborn and Gipps, 1996). Low teacher expectation has also been shown to hamper the motivation of these students (Haque, 2000). The result is that students are put onto courses or entered for exams well below their abilities or potential, as a consequence of teachers’ stereotypes and assumptions about the abilities of bilingual children (Haque, 2000). Early streaming of pupils on the basis of such discriminatory practice has serious implications for GCSE attainment.
The example of Tower Hamlets shows that, with the right support, not having English as a first language does not have a negative impact on GCSE outcomes. The borough made it a priority to identify and target the needs of Bangladeshi children, including the provision of better language support (Gillborn and Gipps, 1996). Significantly, by Key Stage 3, bilingual pupils were achieving better results than English-only speakers, demonstrating the importance of continued language support (Gillborn and Gipps, 1996). Nationally, the gap between all pupils and Bangladeshi pupils is now much smaller at Key Stage 4 (GCSEs) than Key Stage 1. Although Bangladeshi pupils are progressing more quickly than the national average, they still have lower final achievement rates (DfES, 2005). It has been suggested that this is due to a high proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language amongst the population. However, as pupils become more fluent in English, there is a significant increase in their rate of progress. The same applies to Pakistani children, albeit to a lesser extent.

### 5.1.3 Participation in non-compulsory education

Evidence shows that minority ethnic groups are more likely and more committed to continuing their education after the age of 16 (Bhattacharyya et al., 2003; Modood, Berthoud et al., 1997). While Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are less likely than many minority ethnic groups to continue their education post-16, they are still more likely to study than the White population. In 2002, it was estimated that 77 per cent of 16 year old Pakistanis and 79 per cent of 16 year old Bangladeshis were in full-time education, both significantly higher than the 69 per cent of White 16 year olds still in education (Bhattacharyya et al., 2003).

Whilst it has been clear for some years that minority ethnic groups are over-represented in higher education (HE) institutes (Bhattacharyya et al., 2003; Connor et al., 2004; Modood, Berthoud et al., 1997), it has become apparent that ethnic minority students are not evenly distributed across HE institutions, and have different outcomes to White students. (Connor et al., 2004). A comprehensive study of undergraduate students and outcomes found that minority ethnic students are concentrated in post-92 universities in urban areas. This reflects residential concentration in those areas, differences in entry requirements and subjects available, and racial bias in admissions at some institutions (McManus, 1998). Indeed, Shiner and Modood (2002), have found that ethnic minority candidates are penalised by old universities, although they did not find evident bias amongst new universities. Connor et al. (2004) have also found that fewer minority ethnic students gain first or upper second degrees. They speculate that these could be some of the reasons why ethnic minority graduates, on average, have higher initial unemployment rates compared with White graduates, although their evidence was not conclusive as to whether being from an ethnic minority group had direct, as well as indirect, impacts on people’s outcomes.

There is some debate about the motivation for minority ethnic participation in higher education. Research of British-born 18 to 24 year olds, by Leslie and Drinkwater, concluded that a mixture of push and pull factors appear to affect the
decisions of all ethnic groups, including Whites. While ethnic minority groups had a higher degree of such push and pull factors which encouraged additional participation, ‘there was evidence of a separate ethnicity effect adding to these economic considerations’ (Leslie and Drinkwater, 1999, p75). Connor et al. identified three key influencing factors on the decision to enter higher education: influence of families, expectations on economic gain and careers, and concerns about student finance. Parental socio-economic position and parental experience of HE also appear to have an effect. However, with regard to ethnic minority students, ‘it is likely that strong positive parental support/commitment to education mitigates some of the negative effects, such as being in a lower socio-economic class’ (Connor et al., 2004).

One further observation that could be relevant to Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, given their socio-economic position, is that households in which the family head is unemployed tend to encourage children to leave full-time education, probably reflecting financial restraints such households face (Leslie and Drinkwater, 1999). Furthermore, social class was a factor with those from an unskilled background least likely to continue education after 18 years.

Analysis of the LFS found that Pakistani and Bangladeshi adults are much less likely than all other ethnic groups to participate in life-long learning. Women from these communities are even less likely to participate than their male counterparts (Bhattacharyya et al., 2003).

### 5.2 Health and well-being

There have been many studies and statistics which have shown that South Asians are, for example, more likely to suffer from cardiovascular disease than other ethnic groups. This made it easy to conclude that South Asians had common dietary or genetic traits that made them vulnerable to the disease. However, the Fourth NSEM which enabled a more detailed analysis of South Asians, showed there was considerable differences between the sub-groups (Nazroo, 2001). The comprehensive nature of the survey provided strong support for a structural-material explanation for ethnic inequalities in health.

Secondary analysis of self-reported health questions in the Fourth NSEM (Nazroo, 2001) showed that:

- the Pakistani and Bangladeshi group were 50 per cent more likely than Whites to report fair, poor or very poor health, while Indian and African-Asians had a similar rate to Whites;

- Pakistanis and Bangladeshis aged over 40 years were at a higher risk of having a diagnosis or symptoms suggestive of heart disease than Whites. As a group, Indians and African-Asians had the same risk as Whites, but a sub-group of Muslims had much higher rates of heart disease than Hindus. Further analysis controlled for socio-economic status found that the relationship between increased risk and ethnicity was no longer statistically significant.
• all ethnic groups had a greater risk of a diagnosis of diabetes than Whites. Pakistani and Bangladeshi men and women had the highest rates of diagnosis. Despite having a relatively young population, one in 13 were diabetic (compared to one in 20 Indians and African-Asians). This was the one health outcome that could only be partially explained by variation in socio-economic position;

• Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were less likely to report respiratory problems than the White population, undoubtedly related to lower incidence of smoking. However, this position could deteriorate; for all ethnic groups, those who migrated aged 11 or older to Britain were far less likely to smoke than those who were born in Britain or migrated at a younger age.

Within all ethnic groups, higher risks of illness and health problems are found amongst those from lower socio-economic groups. Across all groups, after controlling for socio-economic factors, there still remained a small residual difference that seemed to be associated with ethnicity. Nazroo disputes that this residual could be attributed to inherent characteristics, such as biology and culture. He suggests instead that other forms of structural disadvantage could be impacting upon different health outcomes: the effects of disadvantage accumulated over a lifetime; the stress of living in a racist society; and the effects of being geographically concentrated in certain locations, in contrast to the White majority (2001).

Further investigation into the associations between racism, social class and health among ethnic minority people in England and Wales has shown that all forms of racial oppression have detrimental effects on health (Karlsen and Nazroo, 2002). The different ways in which racism impacts on health include racial attacks and perceived discrimination, and more widely, institutional racism, which has contributed to the concentration of ethnic minority groups in lower social classes and unemployment (ibid.). Unemployment itself has been linked to physical ill-health. The results from studies of census and morbidity statistics in Britain, which have shown that unemployment increases the risk of death, irrespective of social class, are widely accepted (Bartley, 1994). Other research has shown that victims of crime and ethnic minority migrants living in fear of racial harassment have significantly lower levels of psychological well-being (Shields and Wheatley-Price, 2003).

Recent research that has analysed Pakistani and Bangladeshi data separately has revealed that the health disadvantage of Bangladeshis is more extreme (Salway, 2004). It suggests that previous research which grouped the two ethnic groups together has concealed the worse position of Bangladeshis. Qualitative analysis found that ill-health was a pervasive force in the lives of Bangladeshis in the UK (ibid.).

Economic inactivity rates are known to be exceptionally high among people with disabilities or health-related conditions. Estimates from the LFS 2003, indicated that 49 per cent of long-term disabled people were in employment, compared with 81 per cent of non-disabled people (Hurstfield et al., 2004). Disabled people from minority ethnic communities can face compounded disadvantage when seeking
work, as they are discriminated against both because of their ethnicity and disability (Molloy et al., 2003; SEU, 2004). There is some evidence that younger Pakistani disabled people are discouraged by their families from working; because of the stigma attached to disability; prompting a desire to take care of, and protect the disabled person (Molloy et al., 2003). It has been shown, however, that community and family attitudes vary, and that attitudinal barriers could be overcome if an individual is determined to lead an independent life.

Within the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities it is at least clear that those who are unemployed are likely to have lower mental well-being than those who are employed. Research studies into the psychological impact of unemployment has consistently found that unemployment reduces the well-being of most individuals (Murphy and Athanasou, 1999). Only very few studies have looked specifically at the relationship between employment status and mental well-being within Asian communities, but they report similar findings to studies of the general population. A survey of British Asians living in the north of England found that the unemployed group had lower levels of psychological well-being and self-esteem than the employed group (Shams and Jackson, 1994). Secondary analysis of the Fourth NSEM suggested that for South Asians, holding other characteristics constant, unemployment is associated with significantly lower levels of happiness than employment (Shields and Waigo, 1999). Joblessness was found to be predominately involuntary across all ethnic groups (ibid.). Discussions around the effects of unemployment on mental well-being are relevant because they, in turn, can become a barrier to successful job search; low self-esteem, for example, impedes re-employment (Darity and Goldsmith, 1996; McGregor and McConnachie, 1995; Waters and Moore, 2002a).

Notwithstanding these studies, there are still gaps in the literature about the true extent to which the factors highlighted may be contributing towards higher than average economic inactivity rates among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain. A recent study has found overall increases in the rates of permanent sickness and disability amongst economically active ethnic minorities. However, Pakistani and Bangladeshi men appear to have lower rates of permanent sickness/disability than in 1991 (Purdam, Simpson et al., 2004).

### 5.2.1 Caring responsibilities

Whatever the causes of inequalities in health, the evidence suggests that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are disproportionately affected by the burden of illness. The impact of limiting illness has been shown to be wide reaching. It affects the individual’s ability to work, and also affects the family as a whole through caring needs, reduced income, reduced social engagement, emotional stress and a need for younger members of the household to take on adult responsibilities (Salway, 2004). Ill-health can, therefore, be considered as a cause as well as an outcome of poverty. It is known of the general population that carers face a number of barriers to employment (Howard, 2002). Carers can often be affected by a lack of skills and confidence, especially if they have been out of the formal labour market for long
periods, and have been isolated in the home. They may face financial disincentives to work, and employers do not always understand the needs of carer employees, or offer appropriate flexible working practices (Howard, 2002).

The migration pattern of Bangladeshis meant that there tended to be an age gap between early migrant men and their wives (Phillipson et al., 1997). When the pioneer migrants returned to Bangladesh to marry, they were generally older than the usual marrying age for men. Females in Bangladesh at the time, generally got married in their mid to late teens, so there would not have been older brides for these returning migrants. In the present circumstances, this means that middle-aged Bangladeshi women are often providing care for much older and/or sick husbands. Research in Tower Hamlets found that many of the Bangladeshi women interviewed had a heavy burden of caring tasks, simultaneously caring for their husbands and children from a wide range of ages (Phillipson et al., 1997).

Some South Asian mothers have reported they do not have spare time for paid employment, given their childcare and domestic responsibilities (Ahmad et al., 2003). In Phillipson et al.’s research in Tower Hamlets, 39 per cent of Bangladeshi women claimed they would have had more help with childcare and other household chores in their native Bangladesh, either from family networks or paid help (Phillipson et al., 1997). The Fourth NSEM found that many Bangladeshi and Pakistani families lacked various domestic appliances such as food processors, dishwashers and even washing machines, increasing the burden of domestic chores (Modood, Berthoud et al., 1997). Some Asian women in more traditional households have reported that cultural norms could cause conflict when juggling work and household responsibilities (Hall et al., 2004). Caring responsibilities have been found to be a stress factor for Bangladeshi women, putting a strain on their own health, particularly when combined with financial hardship (Phillipson et al., 1997).

We have already alluded to the high childbearing rates among Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. The barriers they face may be compounded by the child care responsibilities that go with having large families. A national survey of parental demand for childcare showed that Asian families were less likely to have used childcare than White families; 68 per cent of Asian families (which included Pakistanis and Bangladeshis) had used childcare in the last year compared to 87 per cent of White families (Woodland et al., 2002). Asian families were less likely to have used formal or paid childcare than other ethnic groups. That said, use of paid childcare had increased between 1999 and 2001, from 17 per cent of Asian families to 32 per cent. Asian families were less likely to report dissatisfaction with provision in terms of insufficient childcare places, but also less likely to be satisfied with the quality of provision.

A qualitative study of ethnic minority mothers and childcare produced evidence of their concern over the quality and appropriateness of childcare provision (Hall et al., 2004). The research identified a need for culturally and religiously sensitive childcare services for Asian and Muslim mothers. Such provision could include teaching about cultural beliefs and community languages. South Asian mothers explained that
increased Islamophobia in Britain after 11 September 2001, had increased their concerns about children being bullied or discriminated against while in the care of others. Informal childcare was generally the preferred option across all ethnic groups; Muslim women in particular were found to rely on informal networks such as friends and family. There was some distrust of child-minders (by ethnic minority mothers generally), unless they had been recommended through word-of-mouth. Nurseries were more popular than childminders as they can be monitored, and the children can interact with other children.

A lack of formal childcare provision outside of school hours was reported, either after school or in the holidays (Hall et al., 2004). Regardless of ethnicity or religion, the cost of childcare was an important factor in a mother’s decision to work (Hall et al., 2004). For young women, lone parents and those on low incomes, if informal childcare was not available, the cost of childcare (in particular, private childcare) could be a discouragement. Many felt forced out of the labour market, when employment could not support the cost of formal childcare.

It is not clear in the literature to what extent childcare is a barrier to employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. What is known, though, is that Pakistani and Bangladeshi women display very different life stage patterns to other women, in terms of economic activity. The proportion who are economically active has been shown to fall substantially (from 79 per cent of Pakistani and 84 per cent of Bangladeshi) for young single childless women, to only 23 per cent and ten per cent, respectively, for women with young children (Lindley et al., 2003).

5.3 Attitudes to paid work

5.3.1 Women and work

Results from the Fourth NSEM showed that Bangladeshi and Pakistani women consistently had the lowest levels of participation in the labour market. Regarding women of working age and not in full-time education, over 80 per cent of Bangladeshi women and 70 per cent of Pakistani women were looking after the home or family as their main activity. This compared to around 25 per cent of White, Chinese and African-Asian women (Modood, Berthoud et al., 1997). Taking into account the age structure of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi populations, it might be expected there would be lower levels of economic activity amongst the women, as a higher proportion of them are of child-bearing age compared to the White population. All ethnic groups, including Whites, have low levels of economic activity amongst married women with pre-school children (Modood, Berthoud et al., 1997). However, even when age, education, marital status and standard of English were standardised, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women had lower still inactivity rates (ibid.). This low level of economic activity can partly be explained by high levels of male unemployment in these two communities (see Section 3.2: Rise of workless households), but other factors need to be explored, such as personal and community attitudes to women working outside the home.
The literature is varied in its assessment of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi women’s position in relation to the labour market. It is argued that Muslim women are often perceived as submissive (Kabeer, 2000), and have been subjected to stereotyping as far as their role in the labour market is concerned (Brah, 1994; Dale, 2002; Ahmad et al.). It is a view that has been perpetuated by service providers who often describe Asian women as ‘hard-to-reach’ (Cabinet Office, 2002, p83). A number of area-based qualitative research reports on the labour market prospects of Pakistani/ Bangladeshi/South Asian/Muslim women have shown, however, that Asian women’s position in relation to the labour market is much more diverse, and is characterised by change and negotiation (Ahmad et al., 2003; Dale et al., 2002; Kabeer, 2000; Lloyd and Bowlby, 2000). To understand the complexities of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women and work, it is helpful to consider the decisions they make, whether to work, or to withdraw from the labour market.

Many women positively choose to give primacy to family life, and it has been suggested that South Asian women who do not work should not be portrayed as having a ‘problem’ or as ‘victims’ (Ahmad et al., 2003). Research in Reading of first generation Pakistani women found that overall, the women attached great importance to motherhood as an identity, and believed that parenting should take precedence over personal career aspirations (Lloyd and Bowlby, 2000, p469). But this must not be seen as a view that is restricted to an older generation of women who have little or no formal education, and so more likely to be inactive in the labour market. Dale et al., looking at the labour market prospects of South Asian women, also interviewed 43 Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in Oldham. They found that nearly all the women planned to get married, have children, and care for their children and home. This was true, irrespective of their level of education and qualifications. It is true Dale et al. (2002), found that it was the older Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in Oldham who were most likely to view their role in the home as their primary role. And many could not foresee working outside of the home, as they had such a heavy burden of work looking after the household. However, most of the graduates among the women interviewed, even those who were highly committed to their careers, were very clear that their primary role was as mother, and work had to come second (Dale et al., 2002). In this respect, it may be more helpful to share the view of Dale et al. that Pakistani and Bangladeshi women’s employment choices ‘are influenced not only by structural and human capital factors but also by cultural expectations’ (Ibid.). Indeed, it has been observed that some Pakistani and Bangladeshi women have assumed a ‘traditional role’ not only because they prefer the lifestyle of caring for their children, but also because they believe it is a mother’s responsibility to teach their children the culture, language and the religion of their community. The important and valuable role of transmitter of the diasporic culture gave additional status to their traditional female roles (Lloyd and Bowlby, 2000).

The overwhelming majority of women in all of the mentioned qualitative studies viewed paid work as important for women, whether they were working themselves or not. Work was variously seen as: contributing to the well-being, self-esteem and
identities as women (Lloyd and Bowlby, 2000); a source of independence and confidence (Dale et al., 2002); and providing much needed networks beyond the family and kin (Brah, 1994). Additionally, women’s earnings were considered as important contributions to the household (Brah, 1994). Research in Reading illustrated that Pakistani women whose families had objections to their participation in the labour market: ‘did not react passively to these codes of behaviour but actively debated them in relation to competing notions of appropriate behaviour’ (Lloyd and Bowlby, 2000, p468). They drew on experiences of White British women and other Asian women in Britain and overseas in negotiating their gender roles.

A significant factor in the variance in the participation of young Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in the labour market is education. The women interviewed for the Dale et al. study, who had higher qualifications, ‘appeared more confident and more motivated to argue against the traditional view’ (Dale et al., 2002, p12). Qualifications also gave the women better job prospects and thus greater bargaining power with the family to negotiate their role. This factor partly accounts for the gap between inactivity rates for women with and without qualifications. It is argued that women who are highly educated are more likely to have a stronger character and more likely to marry a man who accepts their views on working (Dale et al., 2002). As more Pakistani and Bangladeshi women enter higher education, the gap between inactivity rates for women with and without qualifications is predicted to fall.

Younger, single women brought up in the UK were much more likely to work outside the home, and many were determined to find a means of combining work and child-rearing after marriage (Dale et al., 2002). This group were generally keen to point out that as women, working was not in conflict with being a devout Muslim and made the distinction between traditional expectations of women and Islamic ones. In fact, many older women, who did not work themselves, saw no conflict between employment and the devout practice of Islam (Dale et al., 2002). In some cases, mothers-in-law were supportive and helpful and provided childcare for the younger women in employment (Dale et al., 2002).

There is no conclusive evidence to suggest that the rural origins of Pakistani and Bangladeshi migrants to the UK has a direct influence on their participation in the labour market (Brah, 1994). However, for a group of professional women from urban areas in Pakistan, their class position in Pakistan, closely associated with their education, was said to have a big impact upon the expectations of the women and significant others about undertaking paid work (Lloyd and Bowlby, 2000). Their husbands were middle-class first generation migrants, and when the women arrived in the UK they tapped into their husband’s and kin’s networks to find work. The authors concluded that in this respect, they have more in common with White British professional women than with other Pakistani Muslim women (Lloyd and Bowlby, 2000).

Whilst we have seen that many younger women find ways to negotiate working, some among this cohort have accepted their role in the home and have felt powerless to change that (Dale et al., 2002). It is often the case that Pakistani and
Bangladeshi women move into the home of their husbands on getting married. Parents-in-law can exert a great deal of pressure on new wives to conform to a traditional role (Dale et al., 2002). In this respect, it is reasonable to assume that for some women, participation in the labour market would be suppressed.

When family opposition does occur it seems it can be very severe, and can mean that young (unmarried) women are literally limited to the household sphere and not allowed to socialise (Brah, 1994). Research into 16 to 17 year olds disengaged from education, employment and training, reported that some Pakistani and Bangladeshi young women were prevented from continuing their post-16 education by their parents, who wanted them to get married (Britton et al., 2002). Another study reported that a small minority of South Asian women wanted their daughters to leave education and get married as quickly as possible, because they were worried about the ‘corrupting’ and ‘Westernising’ influences of education (Ahmad, 2003).

Cultural, gender and religious identities are not fixed and cannot be said, per se, to be a barrier to employment. The evidence suggests that care needs to be taken when making assumptions that cultural attitudes to work are a tangible barrier to employment.

5.3.2 Part-time working

The likelihood of part-time working for minority women in employment is about half that for White women, controlling for life stage and level of qualification (Dale and Holdsworth, 1998). The number of children in a family will influence the cost and ease of organising childcare. As we have already noted, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women tend to have more children than other ethnic groups in Britain. For White women with children, the decision to work full-time or part-time is closely associated with occupation. Those in higher occupations are more likely to stay in full-time work during their child-rearing years. For ethnic minority women, on the other hand, there is little variation in full-time working by occupation or whether they have a child. And unlike full-time working in other occupations, full-time working in manual work does not lead to upward mobility (Dale and Holdsworth, 1998). However, in a wider European context, it is high part-time rates of White women that are distinctive, rather than the employment patterns of minority ethnic groups (Dale and Holdsworth, 1998, p92). Green (1997) observes that, in respect of part-time working, although women are more likely to gain from industrial restructuring, women from ethnic minority groups may be less well placed to take advantage of these changes.

There is little evidence either way, whether full-time working by ethnic minority women is a choice or economic necessity. It could be argued, though, that increased part-time working could be important for increasing economic activity levels for ethnic minority mothers. This may also help reduce perceptions that women who remain in manual jobs appear trapped.
5.3.3 Appropriate work

There is anecdotal evidence to the effect that their preference for particular types of work represents a possible barrier to the employment chances of some Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. It is not yet clear whether such expressed preference is through a deliberate choice or is the result of occupational segmentation. If it is the former then people would, by necessity, be cutting themselves off from certain types of occupations. It has been suggested that some Muslims choose their careers on the basis of social acceptability and suitability on the grounds of religion (Ahmad et al., 2003). Lloyd and Bowlby (2000), found that many women consider certain types of work unsuitable, especially if the job clashed with their household responsibilities; for example, if they involved shift work or travel. At the same time, Muslim women have a tendency to go into high level occupations; and doing low-level manual work is not seen as being appropriate. Teaching and nursery work, therefore, were seen as suitable. Some women felt that as Muslims it was inappropriate for them to mix with men in the workplace; similarly, jobs strongly in the public domain such as ‘waiting’ or bar work. Bar work could also be deemed unsuitable for some Muslims as it involves handling alcohol (Ahmad et al., 2003). Jobs that required ‘inappropriate’ uniforms such as short dresses or few clothes such as a life guard were also avoided. However, notions of suitable work varied not only by class but over the life course of women (Lloyd and Bowlby, 2000). Particularly for older women, financial considerations such as their husbands losing their jobs or the need to send a child to Pakistan, tended to override personal preferences about work.

Home working has traditionally been considered as suitable employment for Muslim women. Economic restructuring has meant that opportunities for piecework for the garment industry is likely to have declined sharply. Analysis of the LFS has shown that, if anything, ethnic minority women are under-represented among those who work at home (Felstead et al., 2001). The Fourth NSEM found that South Asian women had lower rates of home working than other women. Modood, Berthoud et al. suggest further that it is quite possible that the Asian women in the survey were not admitting to home working (Modood, Berthoud et al., 1997).

5.3.4 Discouraged worker effect

It has been noted that young people from some ethnic minority groups are most vulnerable to underemployment. As well as identifying a need for more research into this area, community psychologists suggest that employment status should no longer be considered as a dichotomy of unemployment versus employment, but as a continuum, with variations of both unemployment and employment (Dooley, 2003; Fryer, 2000). Underemployment can also act to discourage participation in the labour market, especially by women. There is certainly a need to understand further the impact on people’s mental well-being of work histories that are characterised by cycles of unemployment, inactivity and low-paid insecure jobs. It is quite conceivable that it is more stressful to be in inadequate employment than to remain workless.
The ‘discouraged worker’ hypothesis suggests that people may become discouraged from participating in the labour market or from job search activities if they consider their chances of finding a suitable job within a reasonable time to be small. Discouragement is most obvious when people claim that they want to work, but do not actually engage in job search. However, it is possible the underlying reason why some people say they do not want to work is that they are discouraged from doing so. The possible causes of discouragement are lack of job opportunities at a local level, and at an individual level, the possession of low human capital (Van Ham et al., 2001). Consequently, it has been suggested that a combination of increasing job opportunities at a local level and increasing individuals’ human capital, will increase people’s motivation to seek employment (Van Ham et al., 2001; Warr and Jackson, 1985).

The paradox of the discouraged worker effect can be seen in the example of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in Bradford, for whom observance of ‘traditional family life also removed the financial pressure, especially on young women, to find a job even when they were no longer eligible for benefits’ (Dale et al., 2002, p15). Lloyd and Bowlby have also found that some Pakistani women with young children were not attracted to the types of jobs available in the part-time labour market, for which they were over-qualified (2000). Provided the family was financially secure, they were happy to stay at home with their children.
Part B
Labour market review of five case study areas
1 Introduction

The aim of the labour market review was to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the labour market conditions in the five case study areas: Bristol, Birmingham, Tower Hamlets, Bradford and Glasgow. A range of indicators are presented to provide an assessment of the performance of the local economies, by looking at both demand and supply-side issues. Particular problems and potential barriers faced by ethnic minorities in these labour markets are also highlighted.

The full review is appended to this report for readers interested in the detailed analysis of the labour markets of the five areas. We present in this section an overview, which summarises the findings for each of the areas. The full review itself begins with an analysis of demand-side issues, such as the strength of the labour demand, the quality and balance of the employment available, and working patterns and job types. To gauge the strength of labour demand, particular attention is given to the employment rate of the working age population, as well as the recent trend in employee jobs and the ratio of jobs to working-age residents. The degree of self-containment is assessed by measuring commuting flows into and out of the labour markets. Tower Hamlets has extremely high levels of in and out-commuting, and for this reason some of the subsequent indicators include data from the wider London region.

The section then continues to consider the balance and quality of the employment available in the five labour markets. The significant indicators here include: employment by sector, occupation, and size of establishment, as well as workplace and residence earnings levels. The national distributions of employment by sector and occupations of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain are also provided to infer whether they could be disadvantaged within the five labour markets. The analysis of demand-side issues concludes by looking at working patterns and job types. The rates of self-employment, temporary working, home working and the availability of part-time work are outlined. This enables us to assess the flexibility and dynamism of the labour markets, and their ability to meet a variety of needs within the workforce.
The review moves next to concentrate on supply-side issues. It looks first at levels of economic activity amongst residents, as well as the quality of the labour supply. Highest qualification levels and basic skills are used to determine the quality of labour in the case study areas. The rates and duration of unemployment and equity in the labour market are also taken into account. Data relating to employment rates of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis is not available at a local level, and so ethnicity is aggregated into Whites and non-Whites. Highest qualifications data for Bangladeshis and Pakistanis is available at a national level and assumptions are, therefore, made about qualifications at a local level.

Data about job vacancies and skills shortages allow an assessment of the match between supply and demand in a concluding section. That section examines the volume of job vacancies, along with the proportions of hard to fill and skill shortage vacancies. The aim is to determine whether the needs of employers are met by the available labour supply.
2  Overview by area

The review is organised around themes and indicators, and at the end of each chapter, a summary is given of the relevant labour market conditions in each of the case study areas. In the concluding chapter, each case study area is discussed in turn and an overall assessment given.

2.1  Bristol

There is evidence of a strong demand for labour in Bristol which attracts a high proportion of in-commuters. Between 2002 and 2003 there was a sharp fall in the number of jobs, although this was from a high base. Employment is well balanced between sectors, with a slight bias toward banking and finance; a growing sector in Britain. Bristol has a similar distribution of occupations to Britain, although with a higher than average proportion of employment in professional occupations and lower than average proportions of elementary occupations. Full-time workplace earnings are not far behind national levels, and part-time workers are actually better paid, on average, than those in the rest of Britain.

Bristol has self-employment rates that are just below average. There is evidence of the availability of flexible working in the Bristol area with relatively high levels of non-permanent work statuses, part-time working and home working. This can be considered a positive sign for the condition of the labour market.

Bristol has very high economic activity rates and a well-qualified working population. Literacy levels in the wider region are good, although aggregate numeracy rates are lower than average. The ILO unemployment rate is a low, while the claimant count is about average. Furthermore, the duration of unemployment claims are shorter than average. The labour market appears to work fairly and equitably, with an excellent non-White employment rate relative to Britain.

The wider region has a low incidence of skills shortages, which is a good indication of match between labour supply and demand. It has average skill gap densities within businesses and organisations and a good flow of vacancies. There are above average levels of vacancies in sales and customer service occupations, which are also found to be hard to fill.
The evidence suggests that overall, Bristol represents a dynamic, equitable and well-balanced labour market. It has a strong demand for labour and a quality of supply that meets that need.

2.2 Birmingham

Birmingham has a relatively low employment rate, and about average jobs density. The demand for labour in Birmingham fluctuates between a fairly healthy and average rates; although demand for labour has been on the increase since 2000. The labour market attracts a high proportion of in-commuters. Birmingham also has a reasonable spread of employment across different sectors, with higher than average employment in public administration, health and education. The distribution, hotels and restaurants sectors provides less than average employment; which may effect unemployment levels of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis living there. Lower paid occupations, such as plant operatives and elementary occupations, are slightly over-represented in Birmingham.

Birmingham has had low levels of self-employment since 1999. It also has a relatively low percentage of employment in small establishments, and lower than average employment of managers. The labour market is slightly skewed towards full-time working, and there are low levels of home working. Birmingham also has above average proportions of employees with non-permanent work contracts. It does not, therefore, have a good balance of working patterns and job types.

Birmingham appears to have structural problems in the labour supply. Economic activity rates are low, while unemployment rates are high; a high percentage of unemployed people are classified as long-term unemployed. The resident population is poorly qualified compared to the rest of Britain, and has lower than average basic skills. There is larger than average disparity between the employment rates of men and women, and Whites and non-Whites.

The rate of vacancies calculated as a proportion of employment, is above average in the Birmingham and Solihull region, implying that some employers may have recruitment difficulties. That said, the rate of vacancies due to skill shortages in the labour market are well below average. There are just above average levels of skill gap densities among staff in Birmingham and Solihull. A high proportion of vacancies are in sales and customer service, which are also the hardest group of vacancies to fill in the region.

2.3 Tower Hamlets

Labour demand in Tower Hamlets is very strong. Employment is dominated by the highly paid banking and finance sectors and, therefore, vulnerable to shocks in those sectors. The labour market has high growth in terms of employee jobs, but is turbulent. Employment is concentrated in professional, higher skilled occupations, with a lack of employment opportunities for lower skilled workers. There are big
financial rewards for highly skilled professionals, the vast majority of whom commute from other areas.

It is an indication of labour market flexibility and dynamism, that Tower Hamlets currently has good levels of self-employment and a high percentage of workers with fixed-term contracts or casual working arrangements. Working patterns and job types are not, however, entirely well balanced, as there are below average levels of part-time working and home working.

Tower Hamlets has an extremely low resident employment rate, and yet has a very high jobs density rate. There are very high rates of inflow and outflow of workers to and from the London borough. Low employment rates among the resident population suggest that while the demand for labour is strong, residents do not appear to benefit from this. Economic activity rates in Tower Hamlets are low, but there are high levels of unemployment among the resident population. In particular, that exist alongside extremely high levels of long-term unemployment. Qualifications and basic skills levels of residents are polarised; at one end are highly qualified and highly skilled people, and at the other, people with low skills and no qualifications. There are substantial gaps between the male and female employment rates, and a 30 per cent difference in employment rates of Whites and non-Whites. The labour market could not be said to function on an equitable basis.

The London East region has very low levels of hard to fill vacancies, average skills gap densities and levels of skill shortage vacancies below average. These indicators suggest a very good match between supply and demand. The hardest to fill vacancies are for skilled trades people and sales and customer service.

Tower Hamlets has a dynamic labour market with an abundance of high paid, high skilled employment opportunities. On the flip side, the market is not well balanced, with much lower than average employment in low skilled occupations. There is clearly a mismatch between the type of labour demanded and the skills of the local population, a large proportion of whom are Bangladeshis. Overall, the borough does not suffer from skills shortages, probably because it has access to a very wide pool of labour outside of its boundaries, and offers good salaries. Therefore, the labour market itself is unlikely to be unduly affected, either by the large population of Bangladeshis or the problems associated with structural unemployment.

2.4 Bradford

Bradford has slightly lower than average employment rates and jobs density, and is a relatively self-contained labour market. It does not seem to have a particularly strong demand for labour. There has not been much expansion in the labour market in recent years, although on the positive side, the labour market has been quite stable.

Bradford has a reasonable balance of employment by sector, occupation and workplace size, and largely follows the national pattern. There is, however, a higher
than average proportion of employment in manufacturing and public administration, and lower proportion (than average) in banking and finance. The recorded average levels of employment in distribution, restaurants and transport, are favourable to Pakistani and Bangladeshi residents, as these are the principal sectors they work in. Full- and part-time work is paid at below the average for Britain.

Bradford has levels of self-employment that are just below average. While patterns of part-time working and employment status mirror the national picture, levels of homeworking are below average. This perhaps reflects Bradford’s sectoral bias towards manufacturing, which is less well suited to home working.

Males’ activity rates are only a little below the national average, but female rates are very low. The city’s population is poorly qualified relative to Britain, and basic skills levels are also relatively low. However, Bradford has only average levels of unemployment and a low proportion of people in long-term unemployment. In terms of gender, the labour market is fairly equitable, but there is a very large gap between the working age employment rate of Whites and non-Whites, with non-Whites faring particularly worse.

West Yorkshire has levels of hard-to-fill vacancies that are just above the national (England) average. The proportion of this which is attributed to skills shortages is also around the national average. A higher than average proportion of hard-to-fill vacancies are in associate professional and personal services occupations. The evidence suggests that there is mismatch between labour supply and demand in the region, although on the plus side there is a high flow of jobs.

The self-contained Bradford labour market is hardly dynamic, but it is reasonably well-balanced and stable. Its large manufacturing sector may be vulnerable to changing trends in employment patterns in Britain, but in the short-term it provides jobs for residents with low skill and educational levels.

2.5 Glasgow

Glasgow has a good demand for labour, with half its workforce commuting from outside its boundaries. There has, however, been a decrease in the number of employee jobs since 2001.

The distribution of employment in Glasgow diverges from the national pattern but still provides a good balance between high and low skilled occupations in the city. There is a bias towards large public sector employing organisations, and there is a substantial banking and finance sector. The manufacturing sector is meagre, by comparison. However, occupationally, employment in professional jobs is balanced by a large proportion of employment in elementary jobs.

Glasgow does not have a particularly diverse or flexible labour market, perhaps influenced by the large public and banking sectors. The level of self-employment in the city is very low; and there are below average levels of part-time working and low occurrence of home working.
There are some supply-side issues in the city that require attention. Glasgow has low economic activity rates, but high unemployment rates; with levels of long-term unemployment well above average. Qualifications levels are highly polarised. A higher than average proportion of people have degree level qualifications, but a higher than average proportion also have no qualifications. There is near parity between male and female employment rates and an average gap between Whites and non-Whites.

2.6 Summary

The picture which emerges clearly from the analysis of the five labour markets is that there is a good supply of jobs all round. There is a high degree of labour demand. Whilst overall there appears to be efficient and functioning between the demand and supply sides, there are issues around the equitable functioning of the labour market in some areas; in particular between men and women, and between White people and people from ethnic minority groups. The evidence suggests, moreover, that there is a mismatch between sectors of employment growth and those where Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are mainly found. This provides a likely explanation for the disadvantage that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis face in the labour market.
Part C
Expert interviews
1 Introduction

This part presents the findings from the expert interviews; a series of 48 interviews carried out with stakeholders and independent experts at both a national and case study level. The case studies comprise five local labour markets which provide a focus for the project as a whole.

1.1 Policy context

This section presents some of the policy issues that were highlighted during the interviews with our experts. While this is not intended to be an exhaustive review of policy, it outlines many of the key policy concerns relating to the barriers to employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain. It also touches on some of the issues highlighted more generally in the Strategy Unit report on Ethnic Minorities in the Labour Market (Strategy Unit, 2003) and as well, provides a context for later sections of this report. The importance of understanding the barriers to employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain was frequently referred to by our experts with regard to the following:

- promoting fairness and equality of opportunity;
- tackling disadvantage in all areas – Pakistanis and Bangladeshis tend to come at the bottom of nearly all measures of disadvantage;
- key labour market drivers – including shifting demographics and the need to create a responsive and sustainable workforce in the future.

There was general consensus that it is imperative for any research into the labour market situations of ethnic minorities, not to treat them as an homogenous group. It is well established now that there is a complex interaction of factors which determine the relative positions of different ethnic minority groups in the labour market. There appears to be almost a ‘survival of the fittest’ model in operation, in which groups, such as Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, are often left behind in the competition for resources and advancement of their communities; with this effect further compounded over time. The effect of social class, in particular, cannot be ignored. Among the South Asian groups, for example, a higher proportion of
Indians than either Pakistanis or Bangladeshis are found in the middle class. By contrast, much higher proportions of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are firmly located in lower socio-economic groups. The different socio-economic background of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis has a strong bearing on their education and labour market outcomes, when compared with Indians.

The policy issues highlighted in the expert interviews are presented in the sections which follow. They cover demographic change and migration patterns, employment and education. Only the broad policy themes are discussed here, but the issues raised therein are discussed in more detail in the main body of this report.

1.2 Demographics and migrational patterns

The changing demographic profile of Britain has placed the issue of employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis squarely on the policy agenda. Although at present only around eight per cent of the population are of ethnic minority origin, they have a younger age profile than the population as a whole. As such, they have the potential to supply an increasingly larger proportion of the future workforce, with estimates of up to half of the working population over the next ten years. The business case for raising economic activity and employment levels amongst Pakistanis and Bangladeshis was raised in many of the interviews. An increasing number of Britain’s ethnic minorities will need to be drawn into the workforce in order to sustain the competitiveness of the UK. In this regard, tackling the barriers to employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis is not simply about corporate responsibility or a social cause, but is also about sustaining the UK’s business prospects. If job vacancies are not filled in future, then businesses will either not survive, or will move out of Britain altogether.

Ethnic minorities in Britain have very distinct migration and settlement patterns, and this is even more true of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. The pioneer Pakistani migrants of the post-war period settled mainly in the Midlands and North of England, with a small, but significant, concentration in Glasgow. The pattern of their settlement reflected the high demand for industrial labour in these areas in the post-war period, demand that could not be met from the White population of the time. Bangladeshis are unique in that they are the most concentrated of all the ethnic minority groups. They have settled mainly in London, although they also have a small concentration in the West Midlands. But they remain unique in the sense that around a quarter of the total Bangladeshi population in Britain is located in the London borough of Tower Hamlets alone. There has been little movement away from these original settlement areas. In terms of employment, Pakistanis have been particularly badly affected by the decline in manufacturing, which began in the late 1970s and continued through the 1980s. In particular, their location away from the dynamic economic regions of London and South East England has compounded their disadvantage. As for Bangladeshis, the bulk of their migration to Britain occurred later than Pakistanis, and in fact much later than almost all other ethnic minority groups. But the peak of Bangladeshi migration coincided with a period of economic recession in the 1980s;
and that fragile economic base made it difficult for Bangladeshis to become established as a significant part of the working population, and of the prevailing labour market. The views of the respondent experts on labour market issues are covered in more detail in Part B.

1.3 Education

Education was seen by the experts to be a crucial area of policy, as educational experiences and achievements play a significant role in determining labour market aspirations and outcomes. The levels of educational qualifications and achievement amongst Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain today are, to a great extent, related to their age and time of migration. In general, the first generation of immigrants among them (i.e., the pioneer migrants), have very low or no qualifications. This is less true of those who have been born in the UK and have been through formal education here.

Annual data on educational achievement, up to 1997, have consistently shown that Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils were among the lowest achievers in the education system. Since 1997, and particularly over the last two years, there has been significant narrowing of the gap at Key Stage Four and at GCSE, although the gap remains slightly wider amongst Pakistanis than Bangladeshis. However, as is true of all groups, girls have out-performed boys. Consequently, the overall level of improvement of Pakistani and Bangladeshi boys has been slight.

A related policy area in the discussion on education is the underemployment of those who are highly qualified. Our experts were divided in their views here. It was argued, on the one hand, that parental pressure on their children to succeed academically, and in particular fields of study, may have an impact on their subsequent underemployment. For example, it is claimed that many Asian families tend to value academic qualification more highly than vocational qualifications. This, in turn, puts pressure on large numbers of young people to opt for academic rather than vocational study, even when they are less capable academically, and with eventual consequences for their job prospects. On the other hand, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis now have higher than average rates of participation in higher education. However, they appear to perform less well in higher education (HE) than would be expected; and are also perhaps disadvantaged in the labour market because they attend less prestigious institutions.

1.4 Employment issues

The expert interviews raised a number of employment-related policy issues, covering variously, access to work and career progression. Looking first at access to work, the key issues appear to revolve around engaging people who have never participated in the world of work, in ways that would raise their awareness, confidence and aspirations. There was particular concern that a young generation is living and growing up in neighbourhoods where employment is not seen as the
norm, and where people have few family members and friends who are in work. This can lead to a ‘cycle of detachment’ from the mainstream labour market, and does not encourage the development of human and social capital; and in turn lead to low aspirations.

A lack of facility in the English language was highlighted as a significant barrier to employment for many Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, although the extent to which language is an issue clearly varies according to age and time of migration. This is particularly relevant for people living in areas with high density Pakistani and Bangladeshi populations. Within such communities, as is the case, for example, of the Bangladeshi community in Tower Hamlets, it is possible for people to live in the community and to lead reasonably full lives, without the need to acquire English language skills. The community infrastructure enables the majority of business and everyday interaction to be carried out without recourse to English. But this, of course, can create difficulties for people who may want to access a wider labour market or other mainstream services.

It was argued that the New Deal and other employment programmes and training schemes do not appear to be working as well for ethnic minorities (with the exception of Indians) as they do for White people. Again, this was attributed partly to the preference for academic rather than vocational qualifications among the Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups. The view of some of the experts was that parents encourage their children to follow an academic career rather than go into vocational training. But their favourable outcome was also partly attributed to the fact that ethnic minorities are less likely than their White counterparts to find work at the end of vocational training, and that this compounds their negative perceptions about the value of such schemes.

There was further concern among the experts about problems of engaging Pakistanis and Bangladeshis with mainstream services and service providers, such as Jobcentre Plus. Some of the problems clearly stem from (English) language difficulties. But there also appears to be mistrust of such services among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. Some experts opined this is because in most areas, Jobcentre Plus staff are not drawn from, and so do not appear to reflect the communities they serve. This often leads to, or even exacerbates, the mutual suspicion and distrust people have of each other. The end result is that some of the people who most need the services provided by Jobcentre Plus to get them into employment, end up not accessing those services at all. Our experts believe there is a clear need for more targeted and sensitive provision to bridge the gap that exists between some communities and mainstream services and providers.

Almost all the experts drew attention to the level of economic activity among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. Whilst emphasising the difference in economic participation levels between men and women in the general population, particular attention was drawn to the very low activity rates for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. This was attributed mainly to cultural norms and practices within large sections of their communities, which do not expect that women will participate in
paid employment once they marry, and especially when they have children. This perhaps explains why there is only a minimal generational effect, in terms of economic activity, between the different generations of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. It is true that the rate of economic activity of the generation of British-born Pakistani and Bangladeshi women is rising, but it is doing so only slowly, and from a very low base.

High levels of unemployment among the middle-aged and older groups of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis is also an area of concern for policy. Unemployment is particularly high amongst people who were originally employed in occupations requiring low or no qualifications and skills; in jobs which have since largely disappeared. The barriers these groups face might be expected to be different from those faced by the younger generation of British-born Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.

Once in employment, the absence of Pakistani and Bangladeshi representation at senior levels in all sectors of employment is striking. Many of the experts interviewed acknowledged there are still high levels of racial discrimination in the workplace, in terms of recruitment, promotion and retention. Even for the most successful ethnic minority groups in the labour market, ie Indians and Chinese, there are still significant pay differentials compared to the White population. The pay gap is even wider between White employees and their Pakistani and Bangladeshi counterparts. Although a good case continues to be made for diversity policies in the workplace, many of the experts questioned the extent to which this message had permeated large sections of the business community. They argued that discrimination remains a significant barrier to employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, since even when they have the requisite language skills, qualifications and experience, they still perform less well in the labour market. The enthusiasm among younger generations of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis to become self-employed, or to work in the family business may be a reaction to a perception that the wider labour market is not conducive for them.

The themes we have outlined in this chapter represent the broad policy areas covered in the interviews with our experts. They are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.
2 Labour markets

This chapter looks at the labour market issues raised in the expert interviews, and the effects that labour market circumstances are currently having, and are anticipated to have, on the Pakistani and Bangladeshi populations. Each of the case study areas is discussed in turn, and the issues raised by the experts we spoke to in each of those areas are outlined. Then, some of the general labour market themes which were highlighted by those with a national or policy overview are presented. Finally, in light of the national picture, the general issues emerging across and between the case study areas are explored.

2.1 Birmingham

2.1.1 The Birmingham labour market

Birmingham was chosen for this study as a city with a large ethnic minority population and buoyant local economy. Birmingham is currently home to the largest number of Pakistanis in the world outside Pakistan, and is set to become the first majority Muslim city in Europe.

The unemployment rate in Birmingham is high at around 7.5 per cent, compared to the national unemployment rate of 4.7 per cent. However, this is a significant reduction from the higher levels of 14 to 15 per cent seen earlier in the past decade, although there are some areas where unemployment remains persistently high. These include the inner city areas, which are often also the areas where there are high concentrations of Black and ethnic minority communities.

Birmingham continues to move away from the heavy industries, such as car manufacturing and big steel factories, to high technology. Large consultancy and solicitors firms have also chosen to locate in Birmingham, bringing high levels of financial, legal and general management employment opportunities to the area. The recent creation of the Bull Ring shopping centre in the heart of the city has brought an additional 8,000 retail and service sector jobs to Birmingham in the last two years. There is an additional retail park currently under development in the west of the city, which will create a similar number of jobs.
There is currently seen to be a mismatch between the available skills in the working age population and the skills required in the labour market, as the traditional manufacturing industry, requiring few qualifications, continues to decline, and is overtaken by jobs which require qualifications. However, over the medium-term, in Birmingham as a whole, this mismatch is likely to improve as educational achievement at school and beyond continues to rise. However, the skills sets available in the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities may be different to skills required by employers.

### 2.1.2 Pakistanis and Bangladeshis within the Birmingham labour market

Birmingham differs from many other areas in the country, as within the next ten to 20 years, the Asian population will become the largest population in Birmingham. As in other areas of the country, the population as a whole is ageing, but the White population is ageing most rapidly. As a result of this, in 20 years’ time, the young population of Birmingham will be disproportionately Asian and Black. In terms of the demand for labour, it is predicted that over the next ten years there will be an increase of 20,000 jobs in Birmingham itself, and an additional 40,000 jobs in Solihull, an area to the south of the city. Hence, the key to the economic future of Birmingham is seen by policy makers as the creation of employment opportunities and initiatives to attract and keep the young Asian population, which will be the largest population of working age in the city. Particular attention will need to be paid to how to get young Asians into engineering, technology and other employment opportunities that are currently emerging in, for example, the retail and service sectors, in business, finance and law.

In the West Midlands there are around 2,000 Bangladeshi-owned businesses, predominantly in catering and supply chains like food, imports and distribution for their community. There are around 153,000 Pakistanis in Birmingham, and they make up around 12 per cent of the total business population in the city. They are particularly well represented in the food and drink sector, tourism and leisure, hospitality, and professional and advisory sectors. More women are coming in to business and setting up networks, such as the ‘All Pakistani Women’s Association’. Bangladeshi women are, at present, less active in terms of economic activity and in setting up networks in their community.

The Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities were targeted in the recruitment to thousands of retail vacancies in the Bull Ring shopping centre. The recent recruitment initiatives, which involved outreach and proactive marketing of vacancies in communities, using, for example, a ‘recruitment bus’ which travelled around the city promoting employment opportunities in the Bull Ring, proved very successful, and a large number of the vacancies were filled by people from those communities. Similar and more extensive initiatives are being planned to bring people from the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities into contact with the employment opportunities in future developments, such as a retail park in the west of the city. However, the issue of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (and the ethnic minority community more widely)
working disproportionately in sectors which tend to be poorly paid, for example, in retail, was highlighted. Likewise, the lack of progression of ethnic minorities in the Birmingham workforce was also raised.

2.2 Bradford

2.2.1 The Bradford labour market

Bradford was chosen in this study to represent a relatively deprived English city with a high concentration of Pakistani and Bangladeshi people.

Jobcentre Plus statistics show that in the Bradford District between 1974 and 2002, 55,000 jobs were lost in manufacturing, whilst 54,700 service sector jobs were created. Seventy-five per cent of overall employment growth has been in part-time jobs, and recent job growth (1998 to 2002) has been only one-tenth that of the national average.

The textile, woollen, engineering and printing industries have now virtually disappeared in Bradford, whilst new job growth has been concentrated in sectors such as call centres and banking and financial services. Job growth is low overall, and many of the new jobs are low-skilled and low-paid, particularly in the packing, retail, hospitality and restaurant industries. There has been a big growth in recruitment agencies, reflecting an increasing proportion of employment being temporary employment, rather than a rise in employment overall. The retail sector is depressed and retail in the centre of Bradford is in stark contrast to retail in the centre of Leeds. There is a lot of commuting to Leeds as similar jobs are better paid in Leeds than in Bradford, and in some cases, jobs in Leeds are seen by individuals to have more status than those in Bradford. Some respondents felt that employers had been put off investing in Bradford because of the riots of 2001. There is currently a great deal of physical regeneration going on in the city centre, creating construction jobs at present, and the prospect of new retail jobs in the future. However, projections suggest that the net impact of jobs is likely to be small, given the volume of investment in physical regeneration.

Respondents suggested that what Bradford needs is skilled jobs, to replace the skilled jobs lost with the decline in traditional manufacturing industries. The type of skills needed for the growth sectors are very different from those required in skilled traditional industries, and the Bradford population has low levels of qualifications overall, compared to the national average. Projected key growth occupations to 2010 are corporate administration, administration/clerical, secretarial, caring/personal services, sales occupations and transport drivers/operatives. The West Yorkshire 2003 skills survey found that the top four occupations that employers found most difficult to recruit for were: clerks, sales representatives, transport operatives and health care.
2.2.2 Pakistanis and Bangladeshis within the Bradford labour market

The Pakistani and Bangladeshi population in Bradford is relatively young. Ethnic minorities in 2001 made up 24 per cent of the population, and that is expected to rise to 29 per cent by 2011. People of Pakistani origin made up 9.5 per cent of the workforce in 2001, but the proportion is expected to rise to 13.4 per cent by 2011.

Employment rates across the Bradford Jobcentre Plus district are 76 per cent. For ethnic minorities, rates are only 49 per cent for men and 23 per cent for women. The average economic activity rate in the Pakistani community is only 42 per cent, with a rate of 64 per cent for men, and 22 per cent for women.

Male and female partners coming to Bradford from abroad for marriage means that there is an increase in the inactive working population in Bradford, and the gap between the ethnic minority employment rate and the rate for the population as a whole is getting wider. Jobcentre Plus respondents were frustrated that they did not know how many Asian men and women are on inactive benefits in the city, particularly as they are focusing on tackling high rates of unemployment and economic inactivity amongst these communities. The Jobcentre Plus system ‘Labour Market System’ (LMS) does not collect this information.

Respondents suggested that the types of jobs that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis had least difficulty getting included retail and basic administration, whilst the same groups had most difficulty getting jobs in customer services or IT. Although there is a sizeable number of legal and medical professionals amongst the Pakistani and Bangladeshi populations, a lack of graduate jobs in Bradford means that many Pakistani and Bangladeshi graduates have to leave the city to find jobs.

2.3 Tower Hamlets

2.3.1 The Tower Hamlets labour market

Tower Hamlets was chosen in this study as an area with a high concentration of ethnic minorities and close proximity to a large, buoyant labour market.

The London borough of Tower Hamlets is within the top ten per cent of the most deprived local authorities in England. The area was once a thriving working-class community but there has been a steep decline in traditional employment opportunities linked to the docks and the garment industry in particular. The car industry in the area around Tower Hamlets has also declined in recent years.

However, the labour market around Tower Hamlets, and in some parts of the borough itself, is vibrant. There are a large number of low-skilled, low-paid jobs available in the borough, as well as higher-paid, higher-skilled work in other parts of the borough such as Canary Wharf, and outside the borough in other parts of central London and in the wider Thames Gateway region. The area has received a lot of inward investment and regeneration funding, and much of the employment
opportunities in the borough itself are now found in the producer service sector (banking, insurance and communications), in the retail sector, and in the public sector (particularly in the local council and the health service).

Many of the new job opportunities in the Canary Wharf area within the borough have gone to people from outside the borough, or to the growing number moving into the borough to live in new housing developments in Docklands.

2.3.2 Pakistanis and Bangladeshis within the Tower Hamlets labour market

The Bengali community makes up 35 per cent of the population in Tower Hamlets, whilst in the ward of Spitalfields and Banglatown they make up more than 58 per cent of the population. It is the largest Bangladeshi population outside of Bangladesh and is a relatively young population and a rapidly growing community. In 1991, there were around 37,000 Bangladeshis in Tower Hamlets, but by 2001, the population had exceeded 67,000.

There have been dramatic improvements in the attainment of Bangladeshi children in Tower Hamlets from the early 1990s, and since 1994, Bangladeshi pupils have been the highest achieving of the main ethnic groups. They have been outperforming their White peers, despite experiencing greater levels of economic disadvantage. The borough has prioritised identifying and targeting the needs of Bangladeshi children, including the provision of better language support, to try and ensure that having English as an additional language does not impact negatively on GCSE outcomes.

However, language remains a barrier to employment for particularly the older generations, who also need help with their ‘soft skills’ and communication skills, as well as language support, to get even entry-level jobs. Improving educational attainment in the area means that language and skills gaps will increasingly become concentrated amongst older generations.

2.4 Bristol

2.4.1 The Bristol labour market

Bristol was chosen in this study as an area in which the minority ethnic population is large in number, but comprises a relatively small proportion of the total population.

Bristol was described as a having a very buoyant labour market. The main sectors of work were highlighted in the expert interviews as being in the public sector, retail, hospitality, construction, and advanced engineering. There are also three universities in the area, providing a range of employment opportunities. The printing industry has declined, as have the apprenticeship opportunities in traditional industries. Increasingly, the jobs available require a certain level of qualifications, skills or experience, and these are not always readily available in the local workforce. Despite the abundance of jobs, employers can find it hard to fill their vacancies, due in
particular to a skills gap. People in deprived communities tend not to have the type and levels of skills that employers are increasingly requiring, hence, it can be difficult to access the employment opportunities that are available.

It was felt that in the future, increasing numbers of jobs would become available in retail, tourism and leisure, and hospitality, but that this would not necessarily help people into work. The concept of a mismatch between the work available and the wages on offer, and the money that people feel they need to earn in order to be able to live in the area was highlighted. Bristol is a relatively expensive area in which to live, and whilst there are increasing numbers of jobs available in the service sector, these are not well paid, and may not be matching up to people’s expectations of what they want to, and/or need to, earn to sustain themselves and their families.

The population in Bristol was described, in general, as an ageing population. It was felt that this changing demographic, together with increasing numbers of jobs becoming available in particular sectors, was likely to be a problem as ever larger proportions of the workforce would be economically inactive after retirement. In contrast, the minority ethnic population is younger than average. The most forward thinking businesses and employers are already looking into diversity issues with regard to the importance of the minority ethnic population as the potential workforce in the future. However, it was pointed out that small and medium-sized businesses did not generally plan into the future in this way, and may face problems in the medium-term in filling their vacancies as a result.

### 2.4.2 Pakistanis and Bangladeshis within the Bristol labour market

Despite large numbers of vacancies for jobs in the centre of Bristol, it seems that large sections of the minority ethnic population, and those living in disadvantaged communities close by, are not accessing these opportunities. Distance does not appear to be an issue, as the city centre and the ethnic minority communities are close by, but a reluctance to travel outside communities may be. It was also suggested that there may be a perception in some communities that particular jobs, and work outside particular communities, are not open to them, or are not suitable. For example, in one of the interviews it was pointed out:

> ‘There are jobs out there but not suitable for our community…they don’t have the skills and also the language and also the confidence.’

(Ethnic minority organisation)

There were reports of many people within the Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities in Bristol working within their own communities due to language barriers, for example, working in restaurants was cited as a typical and relatively widespread example of this pattern.
2.5 Glasgow

2.5.1 The Glasgow labour market

Glasgow was chosen in this study as an area outside England, but with a significantly large Asian population.

The Glasgow economy has changed substantially over the years from heavy industries, including ship-building and manufacturing, to the financial, retail and service sectors. Glasgow was seen as a growing economy, with up to 25,000 additional job vacancies predicted over the next ten years.

As in other areas, there are concerns about the availability of the labour supply to meet the anticipated increasing demand. There are strategies in place to support people who are furthest away from the labour market into training, and eventually into employment. Demographically, ethnic minorities are set to become an increasingly large proportion of the working-age population, with White groups accounting for a declining proportion over time. Hence, it is seen as very important to engage Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the labour market if labour market supply is to keep up with demand.

2.5.2 Pakistanis and Bangladeshis within the Glasgow labour market

Pakistanis form the majority of the ethnic minority community in Glasgow, with smaller proportions of Bangladeshis and other groups including Black Africans and Black Caribbeans. The patterns of poverty seen in some Pakistani communities in Glasgow today are a legacy of the community’s history in the city. When Pakistanis and Bangladeshis originally migrated to Glasgow in the 1960s, they mainly worked in factories and non-skilled jobs, and when those industries declined in the 1980s, people did not have the skills, and in some cases, the language skills, to move into other kinds of work. This resulted in a relatively high unemployment rate within the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities within Glasgow, which has undoubtedly had knock-on effects for the younger generations.

2.6 General labour market issues for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis

In this section, we present the issues raised by those with a national or policy overview, to provide some context for the case study area observations outlined above. They often reflected the views of those we spoke to from the case study areas. The key points made were:

- shifting demographics is a key issue; the White population is ageing faster than many of the ethnic minority populations, including Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. This is creating strong economic policy drivers to increase workforce participation amongst ethnic minority groups to meet the projected demand for skills and labour in the future;
• the decline of traditional and manual industries has led to a lack of suitable skills amongst older, first generation Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, and this has had knock on effects for second and third generations in these communities;

• mobility and the geographical distribution of the population was raised as an issue in terms of labour market participation and success. For example, the Pakistani population are most likely to be in the Midlands or the industrial North and, therefore, are some distance away from London and its dynamic economy. Hence, whilst at present the position of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the labour market may be similar, it was pointed out that the future prospects of Bangladeshis could, in fact, be better as Bangladeshi communities are more concentrated in London;

• it was also observed that there were gender factors interacting with ethnic background, for example, in the Midlands, relatively large proportions of Pakistani women have been employed, but this is different to women in the Bangladeshi community, who are less likely to be economically active;

• stereotypical career paths were raised as an issue, for example, statistics were presented that one in eight Pakistanis is a taxi driver, and one in four Bangladeshis work in a restaurant. These could be taken to be negative assertions, showing a lack of aspiration, or highly segmented or clustered opportunities for some groups. The flip-side of this was also pointed out, that self-employment is particularly high amongst Pakistanis, and likewise, the Bangladeshi restaurant trade is of significant value to the economy;

• in terms of routes through higher education, amongst middle-class Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, the well trodden career paths of medicine or dentistry were highlighted, while working-class students have been more likely to opt for subjects such as IT, business studies or marketing. Underemployment was also mentioned as being particularly noticeable amongst Pakistanis. Recent academic research (Platt, 2005) backs up this assertion, that social mobility (or a lack of it) cannot be explained by educational attainment; well-educated Pakistanis were not achieving the kinds of employment outcomes that would be expected, and were more likely than other groups to remain unemployed;

• there are examples of high attaining ethnic minority groups and individuals accessing, for example, the services and financial services sector in London. However, these sectors and the areas in which they are located are also associated with being leaders in the equal opportunities field.

2.7 Does geography matter?

As discussed in the literature review, although the labour markets of our case study areas were different in terms of, for example, the decline of particular industries in some areas, the issues that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis faced in the labour markets seemed to be remarkably similar.
In particular, large numbers of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the case study areas who moved to this country in the post-war period to work in, for example, the textile industry in Bradford, the shipbuilding industry in Glasgow, and the manufacturing industry in Birmingham, appear to have been left without the relevant skills or language abilities to enable them to move into other kinds of work, once these industries had declined and they were made redundant. Although Bristol did not have the same reliance on a particular industry as Birmingham or Bradford, the Pakistanis and Bangladeshis originally settling in this city had also tended to be employed in low-skilled, manual work, which has also been subject to decline, creating similar unemployment conditions for those affected by their demise. It is worth noting that the way patterns of work have changed as a whole (moving towards more highly skilled work, and work in the retail and service sectors) have resulted in an increasing demand for particular skills, which those who have only ever worked in industry are unlikely to have gained.

Higher than average unemployment rates as a result in the decline of particular industries, together with a fairly inward-looking community focus, regardless of the city in which Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities are based, may also have contributed to low confidence levels and aspirations, which have, in turn, created higher than average unemployment and/or inactivity rates amongst second and third generation Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. In all areas, there were also reports of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis working in stereotypical careers and sectors, eg in the restaurant trade, importing and supplying food and drink to that community, or working as taxi drivers.

Hence, whilst differences existed between the labour markets in the case study areas, and these impacted on the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities to some extent, there were other factors which often seemed more significant. These are considered in the next chapter.
3 Barriers to employment

This chapter outlines the barriers to employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, which emerged for the expert interviews. They are presented under the following sections:

- personal characteristics;
- household;
- attitudes to work;
- human capital;
- area-based;
- employer attitudes;
- differences between and within ethnic groups.

3.1 Personal characteristics

3.1.1 Age

Age was felt to be a very important determinant in the way in which barriers to employment manifested themselves at an individual level. Many of the experts pointed out that there was a high correlation between age, skills and language proficiency. However, this in turn appeared to be highly correlated to a generational effect, with younger first generation Pakistanis and Bangladeshis experiencing many of the same barriers as their older counterparts. The generational effect was felt to include the time it takes to adapt to a new culture, and its ways of operating in terms of employment opportunities and the welfare system, as well as in terms of developing the necessary language and skills. The culture of younger people looking after the older generation was also felt to be having an impact; for example, older Asian men who are out of work will be looked after by their family. It was noted by a small number that those in the Bangladeshi community tended to disappear from the workforce at a younger age than was the case amongst Pakistanis.
Typically, there were reports of men in their 40s and 50s who had come to Britain in the post-war period and worked for many years in industries such as textiles, which have now declined. Whilst working in those industries, there was neither the impetus nor the opportunities to develop English language fluency, particularly with regard to reading and writing, and once this type of work was no longer available, these men did not have the necessary literacy skills to gain alternative employment:

‘I sat in on several interviews at Jobcentre Plus and nearly every single time, these males would be 40 to 50 and they would bring a wife, a son, a daughter because their English was not very good, and they’d got by in the textile industry because there had been one person who’d been like their shop steward, their line manager, and that person spoke very good English and spoke to the managers but came back and spoke in Urdu, Punjabi, whatever language, to the workers. There was one in particular I remember, this guy was 45 years old. He brought his wife with him because she spoke very good English and he was just distraught because he was out of work, his spoken and written English were very poor. That’s what we found in the older age group.’

(Employer organisation)

Ageism was also felt to be operating, as it does in the wider labour market. Similarly, a lack of IT and other transferable skills amongst the older working age Pakistanis and Bangladeshis was felt to be impacting, as it does in the labour market more generally.

Amongst younger people, peer pressure was felt to be a factor – with younger people feeling pressure to do the sorts of work that their peers approved of, or they would be made fun of and looked down on. Related to this was the idea that for men, there can be an issue of ‘aggressive masculinity’ which has developed amongst younger working-class men in particular, not just amongst the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. This mentality was felt to be, for example, anti-school, about physical prowess, about ‘being tough, being hard, and having a reputation as a fighter and a leader’. In fact, it was felt that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have adopted this ideology later than some other ethnic groups (for example, White men, and men of Caribbean descent). There is a connection between this attitude and Islamic radicalism, and also with gang mentality, and criminal activity, all of which can become barriers to employment.

It was observed that amongst younger Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, there was low uptake on training schemes, and low levels of qualifications for some. Despite parental influence towards particular careers and academic achievement, expectations also need to be realistic, in terms of what individuals are capable of achieving, and also what can be earned given a certain level of skills, qualifications and experience. There was a suggestion that younger people in these communities could be highly sensitive, and even slightly paranoid in their reactions, particularly to Islamophobia since 11 September 2001. This could lead them to present themselves as victims, which in turn might play a role in disadvantaging them further.
There was a clear interaction between age and gender (see the next section for a more in-depth discussion of gender issues). It was suggested that younger Pakistani women are taking different routes to those of their mothers and using education as a way of creating opportunities for themselves. They may still identify strongly with their community, and wear traditional clothes, but may have been to university and are employed. However, despite wanting to embrace the opportunities available through education and work, there is still pressure from within communities for young women to abide by the traditions of their culture. They can find it difficult to go out and get diverse jobs as their options are, to varying extents, still constrained by what their family thinks is appropriate.

3.1.2 Gender

In education, it was commonly observed that girls are doing better than boys, despite often having more responsibilities to help around the house. Boys often have more freedom than girls and this could be distracting them from studying. For boys, a lack of educational achievement can lead to limited career options such as working in the family business, or on the fringes of the black economy.

It was pointed out by a number of experts that girls who progress on to higher education do not then necessarily move into employment, perhaps because they choose, or are expected, to look after the home and family, or because they are less able and willing to travel far enough to access suitable employment opportunities. Single women were also said to be subject to changes in circumstances once they got married, i.e., they had to give up their career to concentrate on their husband’s family. Hence, whilst girls achieve more than boys at school, in the labour market, Pakistani and Bangladeshi men are participating more and outperforming women. High proportions of Asian women are economically inactive because they are looking after the home and family. They tend to have much bigger extended family arrangements, with the wife looking after her husband’s mother and father. Many men in Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities do not want their wives to go out to work, preferring them to look after the home and the children. Nor do they encourage their (first generation) wives to learn English as this gives them a freedom they would, in some cases, prefer them not to have. There were a number of assertions that Bangladeshi communities are less Westernised and more male dominated than Pakistani communities, that it is less acceptable for Bangladeshi women to be employed, particularly if they have children. It was suggested that this is perhaps partly due to the fact that the Bangladeshis, on the whole, arrived in the UK later than Pakistanis.

Confidence amongst women was also cited as a barrier, including a lack of confidence stemming from low levels of skills such as language, and a lack of experience of autonomy. These factors appear to contribute to a reluctance amongst some women to leave their communities. It was suggested, for example, that Bangladeshi women in Tower Hamlets preferred to stay within their immediate communities where they felt safe, and this presents a huge barrier to accessing services, and ultimately, accessing employment. More generally, it seems that
Pakistani and Bangladeshi women are not accessing services to the same extent as men, and those who did were already engaged with the labour market.

It was felt to be culture, rather than religion, which impacted negatively on girls’ and women’s opportunities and shaped what their family and community approved of them doing. There were examples of fathers attending job interviews with their daughters, and women being very reticent. The issue of addressing this barrier rooted in cultural choice was raised by several respondents. Whilst considerations in particular communities may be restricting the opportunities of women, it depends on how women themselves perceive their culture and circumstances:

‘It’s a cultural issue. It’s a choice and if it’s a choice then culture is the barrier but that’s only a barrier as far as we’re concerned, it’s not a barrier as far as they’re concerned because it’s the way they want it…At least it’s the way the men want it. Whether the women want it is another question, but we’re not in a position to overcome that, are we?’

(Jobcentre Plus expert)

Within the South Asian culture, the typical differences between Indians and Pakistanis were pointed out:

‘A classic [Pakistani] wife is one who never sees anybody, has not mixed with anyone, and is a holy girl. And we don’t believe in that lark. But in the Indian community she is an outgoing girl, she is educated, she’s got a good job, she can communicate well. So it’s a totally different mindset.’

(Ethnic minority community organisation)

Hence, it was felt that women’s position in their communities was very much as a result of culture rather than religion (ie being Muslim). The influence of the community elders, as the community gatekeepers, was also mentioned as preserving the status quo, with reports of having to meet with elderly Asian men when seeking to address the concerns of young Asian women in the community. The difficulties of changing things for women in their communities, with regard to resistance to change amongst many of the men in their communities was pointed out:

‘The men will want to keep those women where they are – the men won’t allow people to do anything. They say what happens, they are very powerful within those communities and will not allow things to happen, and therefore, again, those communities are disadvantaged because men won’t allow things to happen in the community. They won’t want to see women progress and have a voice because that will unsta bilise the structure. So it’s careful thinking, careful planning and again it’s about role models, it’s about good practice and it’s not going to be done overnight and that’s the biggest thing. It’s investment now that will see hopefully some results in three to five years, because it’s not going to happen overnight.’

(Ethnic minority community organisation)
It was pointed out that well-qualified women are more likely to be able to negotiate with their families and husbands about whether they will work, partly as a result of confidence and partly due to potential earning power.

There were also reports of women’s opportunities being restricted due to their parents’ aspirations for them. For example, some careers such as hairdressing were seen as unsuitable. Girls could also be prevented from studying if this involved travelling too far from home. The labour force participation rate for women is increasing, but perhaps due to parent’s aspirations for their daughters, it is increasing in the service sector. Parents are happy for their daughters to work in offices, but not in a factory, so there is a judgement being made about whether work is appropriate and of a suitable status. There was the perception that some Pakistani women do not want to work in workplaces where there are men, and that they can only go into certain training environments for the same reasons. Many Muslims, but Muslim women in particular, may need to work in careers which are ‘modest’, and certain careers, including manual work, could be deemed unsuitable. However, it was also pointed out that while these attitudes are a barrier for some, there is also evidence that where these are not an issue, women are still not getting the opportunities they need to be able to break into employment and to progress in the workplace. The danger is that attitudes to women working are used to explain the lack of progression, when in fact it accounts for only part of women’s labour market outcomes.

There were many reports of women’s opportunities and aspirations being curtailed by their families and communities. However, the counter-view was also expressed; that the oppression of women in Asian culture was a stereotype hiding a variety of attitudes and practices which could be as much to do with class as they do with culture, religion and ethnicity:

‘There’s always these misconceptions people have about Pakistanis obviously being Muslims, about women being oppressed. To an extent that does happen, but I think that happens in all communities and in all cultures. The lifestyle as it is today it’s difficult not to work I think. And if I talk from my own experience of being a Pakistani, I’ve always been pushed to go out to work and whatever I’ve achieved it’s never been good enough often. You’ve got a qualification you have to go and get another one…It all comes down to how you’ve been brought up. It all depends on what your family background is like in Pakistan. It seems to be carried forward into the United Kingdom.’

(Local authority expert)

Nonetheless, there may not always be strong incentives for women to work, in terms of financial or career attainment expectations which are prevalent in other cultures (for example, amongst White women or Black Caribbean women). Some Pakistani and Bangladeshi women, including those educated to degree level and above, are likely to view family as very important, and to view work as something that must be balanced with the primary concern of being a good mother. For women living in areas where all their neighbours hold similar beliefs, this can be a strong driver. The
importance of role models in raising aspirations for women was highlighted, to show that it is possible to go to university, and to work, and still be a good mother.

Language problems amongst women were cited, particularly amongst first generations of all ages. For example, language could be a big issue when women came over to Britain from Pakistan and Bangladesh for marriage. However, the extent to which this was impacting on their likelihood of obtaining work was questioned, as it was suggested that these women were often unlikely to be seeking employment:

‘Yes we’ve got our language problems. That comes from back home, but what I’m going to say is there are women that come back home to marry boys from here, are they even looking for jobs? Let’s keep this real. Are they even looking for jobs?’

(Jobcentre Plus expert)

There were reports of home working being prevalent amongst women in some communities, particularly older women in Pakistani communities. These older women may be more reluctant to challenge the cultural norms, and have more restrictions, for example, in terms of their own language skills and confidence, as well as from their husbands and families, on the kinds of work they can do.

Some of the other barriers such as childcare or travel were felt to affect women much more than men, due to their responsibilities in looking after their children. There were also examples given of women in both the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities getting divorced or being abandoned by their husbands, meaning that they needed to start to think about their employment prospects and opportunities.

### 3.1.3 Religion and culture

The vast majority of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are Muslim, and hence, religion was frequently discussed in the interviews with experts. There was agreement that it was difficult to ascertain the extent to which religion, as opposed to race and culture, operated as a barrier to employment; these factors were usually felt to be inextricably linked, with few feeling that one was more important than the other. Nonetheless, many of the experts talked mainly about the barriers and issues associated most particularly with religious aspects, with a smaller number discussing the barriers related to race and culture. This may of course have been because barriers associated with particular religious practices or beliefs, or as a result of Islamophobia could be more tangible and easier to define and quantify than those around race and culture.

Religious practices clearly present some issues in terms of potential employment for many employers and employees. There were differing views on the extent to which employers should be expected to adapt to requirements based on religion, with some feeling that employers were not doing enough:
I spoke to a Muslim woman recently who said she went for an interview and she thought everything was going fine, and then at the end of the interview, the employer said, “and will you wear your headscarf if you were to be given the job?” And she did not get the job, but clearly he couldn’t see that that was part of her faith. So for him that was something that was not employable. I think that level of discrimination or ignorance is quite prevalent. Not least with all the Islamophobia that’s going on now, in the Western world.’

(Ethnic minority organisation)

‘If you want to attract more Muslims into the workplace, then you allow time off to go and do the prayers. You know, whatever it is, you need to look at those things.’

(Policy expert)

There were reports that employers’ perceptions around some religious practices could act as barriers to employment. For example, employers might perceive that during Ramadan, the month of fasting, their Muslim employees would not be as productive. Similarly, fixed ideas that all Muslims need to pray five times a day and adhere to a rigid routine may also stand in the way of employment. It was pointed out that given a little flexibility from employers, many Muslims will find ways of fitting in their prayers around the working day, and still others are less active in practising their religion:

‘If you understand the religion in Islam, if you can’t pray at a certain time there’s no harm in you going home and praying at home for the one you missed in the afternoon. Again, that barrier is sometimes automatically put there.’

(Local authority expert)

However, for some, the absolute need to have time off for prayer on a Friday was seen as a potential barrier amongst some employers, as was wearing Asian clothing. It was felt that there needed to be communication on both sides to overcome these barriers. There were different perceptions around the extent to which employers should be flexible about their working conditions around dress, and the extent to which individuals should be willing to adapt their usual dress code.

Related to the key importance of religion and culture was the issue of Madrasses, Muslim supplementary schools. One of the interviewees felt that although these were important in teaching children their basic religion and reading the Koran, the large amounts of time spent attending could deflect from mainstream school activities such as homework. Other respondents felt that the importance placed on retaining religious and cultural identity could be at the expense of other advancement such as education and employment. It was suggested that this was particularly the case amongst Pakistanis, and was contrasted with other South Asian cultures, typically the Indian culture. However, there could be clear differences by age, with community elders being particularly determined to preserve the way that religion
was practised by all age groups in their communities, when younger people did not always agree with their views. Behaviour bound up in religious culture may also be having impact; for example, Islam teaches a lack of eye contact between the sexes, but this is, in general, counter to the British working culture. Some experts disagreed that religion was a key factor, feeling that race was more prevalent.

There were also issues raised regarding the types of work which would be deemed to be acceptable in terms of religious adherence. It was felt that for many Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, working in restaurants, bars, hotels, working with non-Halal meat, and for women, jobs in the evenings would be precluded. However, these restrictions could be interpreted differently according to the culture of particular communities. The variation in how Islam is practised was striking. For example, it was felt that for some Muslims, particular careers and places of work were out of the question, whilst others were willing to push the boundaries of what was generally felt to be acceptable.

The lack of opportunity for Muslim employees to mix socially was highlighted. Socialising with colleagues outside work in certain environments, particularly those where alcohol is served, was felt to be unsuitable for many Muslim employees. Muslim employees may be missing out on social networking at work, which in turn limits the ‘word-of-mouth’ opportunities available. The opportunities available to Muslims through such informal networking routes was contrasted with those available to Hindus and Sikhs, who were more likely to be able to join their colleagues for drinks after work in pubs and bars. Whilst this in itself is not a barrier to employment, it was raised by some of our experts as being relevant since it could present a barrier to career advancement and cohesion in the workplace. This in turn is likely to produce fewer career role models for the community, and perpetuate low aspirations.

Islamophobia, particularly since 11 September 2001, was discussed in many of the interviews. Examples of Muslim extremism have clearly raised fear and reinforced stereotypes and prejudices. These then translate into particular discriminatory actions against the wider Muslim community, from unprompted physical attacks, to employer discrimination. There were reports of, for example, employers not wanting to employ people with certain names which were clearly Muslim, or in different levels of service provision received by the Muslim community. The increased profile of Muslims, and a wider recognition that wearing a headscarf signifies the wearer as a Muslim was reported, and in the current climate this was seen to be a factor in discrimination:

‘I think the issue of discrimination by employers is still prevalent, particularly in the current climate. If you’ve got outward manifestations, that’s going to affect how you are perceived. More and more people are adopting orthodox Islamic dress, so I think discrimination is a key issue.’

(Policy expert)
It was pointed out in some of the expert interviews that there are different kinds of racism; but one of these is anti-Asian racism which grew in the 1980s and 1990s. This impacts on all Asians to some extent, but most particularly on working-class Asians, disproportionate numbers of whom are Pakistani and Bangladeshi. This cultural racism has in more recent years become amplified and has shifted into racism against Muslims. However, it is not true to say that the circumstances of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are defined by racism with religion at its core. Their disadvantaged profile goes back to when they first arrived in Britain, long before the more recent phenomenon of Islamophobia.

3.1.4 Health and disability

The economic disadvantage within the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities is severe, with 90 per cent of the Bangladeshi population, and 70 per cent of the Pakistani population on incomes in the bottom one-third. This poverty affects many areas of their lives, including health. Health inequalities between ethnic groups increase dramatically with age. Pakistanis and Bangladeshis tend to exit the labour force at an earlier age than is the case amongst White people. This appears to be due to a mix of effects including redundancy from traditional industries, but also to health. For example, amongst older first generation men, the kinds of work they did often had a detrimental effect on their health.

There is also a strong effect of area deprivation on health, over and above economic circumstances. Hence, those living in poor areas were affected by this, in addition to the effects of being poor as individuals. The issue of health declining with age, and declining more rapidly amongst Pakistanis and Bangladeshis than amongst many other ethnic groups, was cited. Some of the health problems experienced could be related to the types of work done in the past – often labour intensive, low-skilled manual work. The high correlation of health, age and measures of poverty was also raised, with poverty being far higher than average amongst Pakistanis, and to an even greater extent amongst Bangladeshis. What could be considered to be a counter-effect was that for older people at least, living in an area with a strong presence of their own ethnic community was beneficial as they gained a great deal, because these communities gave them roles, and because they had historical links with these communities. Communities built and owned by local ethnic minority people can be of significant benefit to those living within them (Grewal et al., 2004).

Amongst the British population in general, those with disabilities find it particularly difficult to move into work and often require additional assistance to do this. However, for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, there was felt to be a cultural dimension which decreased the likelihood of their entering, or re-entering the workforce. Clearly, disability interacts with other barriers such as a decreased likelihood of accessing services, and employer discrimination. But there was also felt to be an expectation that the wider family will support those who are sick or disabled, contributing to the low take-up by ethnic minorities of help offered by organisations such as Remploy, who help people with disabilities into work:
‘It’s a big cultural thing that. If you’re unemployed, you’ve got a disability or a learning difficulty, it’s common for you to stay at home. There’s no push towards getting you out to work. You’ve grown up thinking that life will revolve around living at home and that’s normal.’

(Local authority expert)

### 3.1.5 Having a criminal record

The barriers of being an ex-offender were raised by a minority of the experts interviewed. In general, these appeared to be similar to those experienced by ex-offenders in the wider community, for example, a lack of confidence and skills, or a difficulty in opening a bank account. However, peer pressure to become involved in crime was also mentioned. This is related to the young male cultural issue of ‘aggressive masculinity’, and the rise of gang mentality, as discussed in Section 3.1.1. There was a suggestion that prior negative experiences of services in the past created barriers to accessing those services in the future, and that this was most pertinent for those who have been involved in criminal activity.

### 3.2 Household

#### 3.2.1 Large families

Large families and a lack of suitable accommodation can lead to overcrowding in housing, which can be a barrier to doing well in education and to employment. This is particularly the case for some Bangladeshis where it seems more common to have extended families including in-laws and aunts and uncles, as well as the nuclear family of parents and children, living as one household and family unit. Overcrowding can have an impact on education, as it can make it more difficult for children to do homework. Respondents in Tower Hamlets (which has a high level of overcrowding in terms of council accommodation) suggested that this can lead to boys being sent out to play and girls being kept inside, which can then have an impact for boys on educational achievement and a propensity to get into trouble.

However, it is difficult to discern at what level a family becomes large enough to be a barrier. There is the obvious problems of overcrowding, however, this is more about the lack of space in the accommodation than about the absolute size of a family per se. Thinking beyond the barriers caused by overcrowding, there is also the issue of having responsibility for the extended rather than the nuclear family, which may prevent working full-time, or prove a disincentive to work at all. Extended families may or may not live in the same household. Regardless of this, family commitments for the Pakistani and Bangladeshi community can often include a range of extended family contacts, for example, parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews. The expectations from other family members that individuals will take responsibility for particular family members can shift over time depending on circumstances within the family as a whole. Conversely, several of the experts commented that these extended family arrangements also enabled some
individuals to remain out of work for long periods without significant financial hardship, as the extended family would provide for them. Family responsibilities are discussed further in Section 3.2.3.

### 3.2.2 Benefit traps

At the household level, ‘benefit traps’ may, for some individuals, operate as a barrier to moving into paid employment. Leaving benefits for the type of low-skilled, low-paid work that may be the only option for some, means not being much better off in work, especially after housing costs and work-related costs such as travel and clothing are taken into account. This financial disincentive to work is even stronger for large families, who may be financially better off claiming benefits than working when the costs of childcare and supporting a large number of children are taken into account. Respondents suggested that as Pakistanis and Bangladeshis tend to have larger families than some other ethnic groups, this is a particular issue in these communities. For some individuals, the perception that they may be worse off (or not significantly better off) in work may be inaccurate, due to a lack of awareness of how in-work benefits and tax credits affect their financial position in employment.

The benefits trap was thought to affect many Pakistani and Bangladeshi women, particularly those who come to the UK for marriage. It may serve as a way of reinforcing their place in the home, as the availability of benefits removes the financial imperative to work. A smaller proportion of Asian women than White women work part-time, and yet this could be a good way to bring Pakistani and Bangladeshi women into the workforce, allowing them to balance their work and family commitments. However, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women may be deterred from taking up part-time opportunities due to a perception that they will be no better off than on benefits.

### 3.2.3 Family responsibilities

Family responsibilities can be a barrier to work. For some women in the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, family responsibilities include looking after their elderly in-laws, looking after their children, having practical and/or financial responsibilities for other members of an extended family, and being responsible for the majority of the housework. This can make taking, and sustaining, paid employment difficult. In some cases, individuals want part-time work because of their responsibilities for providing care and/or childcare for members of their extended families, and/or to fit with the working patterns of their partner. It can be difficult for them to find suitable employment, either because employers offering part-time jobs want candidates to be fully flexible (e.g., offering a 16 hour per week contract with candidates needing to be available from 8am to 8pm, seven days a week), or because individuals may have unrealistic expectations of the extent to which employers can offer hours that fit with their complex family responsibilities. For some individuals, it is their choice to prioritise family responsibilities over employment. However, for those who do want to move into paid employment, family responsibilities (and the expectations of their family and/or wider community that they are responsible for this unpaid work) may be a barrier to paid employment.
The high incidence of marriage with partners from abroad in some areas can lead to individuals wanting jobs immediately to provide evidence that they are employed, so that they can bring their partners in from Pakistan or Bangladesh. This can limit the types of jobs available to them, as the focus is on finding immediate work, rather than on having time to invest in skills and training to move into a job with more opportunity for career progression.

3.2.4 Family support networks

Family support networks can take away some of the pressure and urgency for finding work, particularly for younger people. Some respondents felt that it was more common for young Pakistanis and Bangladeshis to be financially supported by their families than it was for their White counterparts, for example. Not having to pay rent, having use of a car, having money provided by family members and having meals provided for them may be a disincentive for some young men to find work. This can lead to economic inactivity, but with not claiming benefits (see Section 3.3.3).

3.2.5 Lone parenthood

Being a lone parent can also be a barrier to work. Respondents highlighted how some economically inactive lone parents within the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities are only ‘temporary’ lone parents because their husband is abroad. These lone parents may have little interest in being helped to return to employment, if they intend to come off Income Support (IS) and continue looking after the home and family on a full-time basis when their husband joins them here. There is, therefore, a lot of churn (coming on and off benefits) amongst Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone parents claiming IS. In some cases too, individuals become lone parents when their arranged marriages break up. Lone parents who came from Pakistan or Bangladesh to marry under such circumstances may be left with young children, with no extended family support, but also with low levels of English and other skills.

In Bradford, group sessions are run for lone parents, but it has been difficult to get lone parents from these communities to participate, even when they tried specific groups for Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone parents with language support.

3.2.6 Childcare

Affordable childcare is an issue for low-income groups within the Pakistani and Bangladeshi community. As with other ethnic groups, some women may choose not to work when any income from their employment may be needed to pay for formal childcare. Affordable childcare is a particularly acute problem in large family households. As well as a need for more affordable childcare, there is also a need for more culturally appropriate childcare, for example, in terms of the food provided or whether religious practices are observed. There may also, in some cases, be resistance amongst other members of the ethnic community to women using formal childcare. Even where extended families are used to provide childcare, grandmothers
may expect some financial recompense for looking after their grandchildren, and younger parents may not always be comfortable with grandparents looking after their children, as childcare practices have changed.

3.3 Attitudes to work

This section looks at our interviewees’ views on how attitudes to work, at both an individual and community level may be affecting the labour market outcomes of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. It covers aspirations and knowledge of the labour market, inactivity and not wanting to work, informal working and self-employment issues.

3.3.1 Aspirations and knowledge of the labour market

Typically, there were felt to be two extremes of employment choices for South Asians. If children do well, they may become doctors, lawyers or accountants, because their parents will encourage them to go into these careers. If they do not reach the necessary levels of academic achievement, then they will typically move towards taxi driving or working in restaurants and shops. There is clearly a large gap between those two paths, and a range of potential opportunities in between that are not being accessed. The influence of what is considered to be a career with status was felt to be very strong, reinforcing the aspirations to become a doctor, a lawyer or an accountant. Jobs which fall outside these traditional paths are generally not viewed as positively by families and parents, who may have placed their own aspirations in the hands of their children, having not had the chances to fulfil their own ambitions. But not all young people have the aspirations or ability to follow their parents’ dreams. Nonetheless, family pressure can curtail other routes of more suitable employment. Manual and vocational trades in particular, tend to be viewed as low status and unsuitable:

‘There is also the perception that professional training is not valued in some BME communities, so, “I want to go to college and be a plumber” may not be what parents want to hear young people are doing. They want to say, “well, why don’t you take your ‘A’ levels and go to university and be a Doctor?” So there are cultural issues and perceptions of vocational training which impact on people’s outcomes in terms of employment.’

(Ethnic minority employment organisation)

There is a lack of role models within Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities to widen aspirations outside the two traditional polarised career paths. For example, the current lack of Asian role models in senior management in both the public and private sector may be preventing young Pakistanis and Bangladeshis from aspiring to a wider range of careers. There are sectors in which Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are particularly absent, for example, construction, teaching and the social sciences. Confidence was cited as an issue, preventing people from considering the range of jobs open to them. However, aspirations were felt to be changing in some areas. For example, IT was emerging as a career choice, and there were examples of Asian
owned IT businesses including design and web-based enterprises. Finance and service sector industries were also mentioned as growth areas.

Aspirations to work in higher level or higher status positions were not always felt to be realistic, especially where people’s language and skills base was relatively low. It was also argued that aspirations did not match the opportunities available in the labour market, and stereotypical careers advice was mentioned as a reinforcing factor, and it was felt that younger generations need to be given information about, and encouraged to, consider a wider range of careers:

‘The labour market is changing so rapidly that I think there is an issue of what their parents might aspire to, the opportunities are now incredibly different. And it’s possible that the schools as well as the young people and the parents don’t have a good understanding of that.’

(Jobcentre Plus expert)

The roots of some communities, for example, the Pakistani communities in Birmingham, can be traced back to a very rural, low-skilled economy. Culturally, their career expectations have continued to be at a low-skilled level in Britain. In the absence of role models in the community, showing routes to particular careers is difficult, and perhaps not deemed necessary, for individuals to step outside these more traditional expectations and aspirations.

It was suggested that young men generally, including young Pakistani and Bangladeshi men, did not know how to make themselves employable or how to navigate the labour market. This included the expectation that they should not have to conform to what employers expected of them. For women, employment aspirations could be curtailed by their family’s expectation:

‘They are trained for domestic chores. Their aspirations are killed and they don’t want to do anything else. They get shown what to do if a guest comes and how you should put a scarf on your head.’

(Ethnic minority community organisation)

For women whose families allow them to work, it may be easier to work in the kinds of jobs of which their families approve, rather than risking causing controversy and arguments by working in non-traditional occupations.

### 3.3.2 Self-employment

Self-employment was seen to be one of the ways in which Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have survived in Britain, despite having suffered severe economic misfortunes. Around one-third of Pakistani men are self-employed, for example, often owning shops or driving taxis. The restaurant trade was commonly cited as a significant area of work, often on a self-employed basis, for Bangladeshi men. Some of the experts felt that it was considered to be an option by some young people due to the presence of role models in their communities, and because they felt that the wider labour market may not be conducive for them, due to perceived and actual
discrimination. There were reports that working in the family business was a ‘safety net’ for the younger generation if they did not do particularly well at school. Conversely, young people might be pushed into working in the family business despite their wider aspirations, or young men could be expected to take on the same jobs and roles as their fathers. Aspirations towards work serving the Asian community, rather than the wider community, may also be a limiting factor. But there may be difficulties in breaking out of that role, due to past patterns of employment and self-employment, and experiences or expectations of discrimination in the wider labour market.

Self-employment may, for many, have been a default option, through a perceived lack of opportunities elsewhere, or as a result of discrimination, rather than a conscious choice. It was felt that business advice, both to help people run their existing business more effectively, and to assist in diversification in the future, would be useful. Given the large proportions of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis working on a self-employed basis, policy initiatives need to work with these current patterns, helping struggling businesses to survive, and assisting in the creation of more opportunities within businesses that are thriving.

3.3.3 Attitudes to claiming benefits

The reliance on the family, and a stigma around claiming benefits was cited as a key reason why larger than average proportions of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities were economically inactive and not claiming benefits. One interviewee described it as a reluctance to take what was seen as being ‘charity’, that it was a ‘dishonourable’ thing to do. In other cases, people may not enter the benefits system because they do not understand the ramifications it might have on their wider family, for example, for fear of affecting their parents’ business or their father’s pension. These disincentives work together with other factors, for example, large families living together means that there is less pressure to sign on to claim housing benefit; as housing and living costs will be absorbed by the rest of the family. Hence, there are those who want to work, but do not sign on, for reasons including family pressure not to do so. Although they are actually jobseekers, they are classed as inactive by the system and in national labour market statistics.

It was reported by some of the experts, particularly those at case study level, that amongst Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, there can be a suspicion of, and disillusionment with Jobcentre Plus and of other government agencies. This was even more the case if individuals had bad experiences with services in the past. Some people have trouble opening bank accounts due to a lack of having the necessary identification that is asked for. This ties up with a general lack of experience and lack of confidence in navigating around the various official systems which eventually allow access to benefits. For those who are new to this country, or those with relatively low language skills, such systems can seem relatively impenetrable. However, not applying for benefits at Jobcentre Plus also means that people are not accessing the other services available to them; and they are at risk of becoming increasingly disengaged.
Some of the issues in the paragraphs above contradict the points outlined in Section 3.2.2 which looks at the benefits trap. This reflects the fact that the interviews elicited a wide range of views from the experts. This in turn highlights the complexity of the issues and circumstances of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain. Their attitudes to claiming benefits may vary according to a range of family, cultural, historical and social circumstances.

### 3.3.4 Reasons for not working

Labour market aspirations and whether or not people want to work is clearly bound up with gender role expectations – in particular, the roles which women see for themselves, and the roles which are ascribed to them by their families and their community. The expectations that Muslim women, particularly after they are married, and even more after their first child, will not work is no doubt related to the large proportions of the female Pakistani and Bangladeshi working-age population choosing not to work. It was pointed out by a number of experts that where this is a voluntary decision rather than being imposed, viewing it as a barrier to work was misleading.

However, for some people the incentive to find work was felt to be low. They received benefits and perhaps in addition to this, money from their family. There are also those who would want to work were it not for the benefits trap. The safety of being on benefits was also cited as an issue, which prevented people from wanting to move into work.

Patterns of visiting the home country, and the ways that this affected the extent to which people were actively seeking work were also commented on. For example, when people are planning to visit Pakistan for several months at a time, it may be easier to do this when claiming benefits than when in employment. There were reports where young Bangladeshi women signed off when they became eligible for the New Deal after six months of unemployment, to go into arranged marriages either in the UK or in Bangladesh.

Others felt that there was a lack of suitable opportunities, rather than an unwillingness to work, and that the impact of discrimination may have an influence on people’s choices of whether or not they withdraw from the labour market. In addition, there is the issue of lowered aspirations generally amongst men and women, which is seen in areas with high concentrations of second generation unemployment. Such communities can lack career role models and this is perpetuated in a culture of unemployment. This is what the younger generation have grown up with, and hence, it can become the norm.

### 3.3.5 Informal work

The informal economy was felt to be quite an important source of income for both the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. Work which enabled people to still claim benefits was considered to be attractive to many, and also readily available through extensive family and social networks. It was believed that many people worked in the informal economy, but did not sign off benefits:
'More and more people today are not getting into employment because it is so much easier to get cash in hand with evening jobs, with restaurants, and with relatives being in these trades. Who would take up a job when you can get a packet from wherever you’re employed – cash in hand – and then you get another packet from unemployment?…If you actually study the background of people who are unemployed you will find nearly half of them working.’

(Ethnic minority community organisation)

Working in the informal economy was said to typically involve working in restaurants, shops, factories, driving taxis, and home working such as sewing. Criminal and gang activity, including drug dealing was also mentioned.

3.4 Human capital

3.4.1 Confidence

A lack of confidence can be a big issue for some individuals and is often linked to factors such as low aspirations, having been out of work for a long time and a lack of English language skills. A lack of confidence can impact on people’s willingness to travel outside their local area to look for work or to access services, their willingness to apply for jobs and their ability to perform well in interviews. Respondents highlighted the importance of building confidence as a first step towards work. This can be done in a number of ways, for example, by emphasising the transferable skills that individuals have developed, perhaps in looking after the home and family, by providing both one-to-one support and practical help to apply for jobs in group situations, by mentoring and by work experience (see Chapter 4 for details of projects designed to do this).

3.4.2 Language

One respondent emphasised that very few people speak English in Pakistan and Bangladesh, so language is a problem even for professionals who come to the UK. Whilst ability in English language is a very real issue for first generation migrants who came to the UK as adults, and whose compulsory education took place outside the UK (see Section 4.7.3), some respondents suggested that ESOL (English as a Second or Other Language) training is sometimes seen as a panacea, when language is not the main issue for many Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.

In some case study areas, respondents highlighted the large volume of ESOL provision available, suggesting that the problem is not due to a lack of support (although there may not always be specialist provision for different ages or genders, or flexible provision at suitable times). However, for people for whom a lack of English language skills is an issue, there can be barriers to engaging in English language training. These include a lack of confidence, wanting to find work quickly when partners are coming from abroad for marriage, and not wanting to return to a classroom situation. For those who cannot read or write in their first language, learning English is even more difficult. Where individuals live in ‘enclaves’ (see Part A,
Section 4.4) learning a language may not always seem a priority when they can access local services and engage in community activities in their first language. In the Bangladeshi communities, where much employment is concentrated in Bangladeshi restaurants, individuals may not want to learn English to find other kinds of jobs, as English has not been necessary for them before when working. Some individuals, therefore, choose to move straight into work rather than undertake ESOL training, which often means the only employment available to them is low-skilled and often temporary. Even when such employment is gained, a lack of English language skills may prevent progression in the workplace.

Participants in ESOL training may find it is not always relevant to the workplace. Some respondents from Jobcentre Plus highlighted how it can take longer for some Pakistanis and Bangladeshis to complete training courses due to the technical language involved (a heating and ventilation course for example), but that lack of funding means that it is not always possible to extend courses to give individuals more time to gain a qualification. Languages (such as Bengali, Sylheti, spoken by Bangladeshis, and the Pakistani languages of Urdu, Punjabi, Pushhtu and Hinko and the dialect of Mirpuri) are very fast when spoken, and one respondent highlighted how they had to teach their clients to speak English more slowly in job situations, as people were failing telephone interviews for customer service jobs because they were speaking too fast. Language was often cited as a reason for candidates not getting past the first stage of an application process.

Language also interacts with other barriers to work. For the older age group who may have been made redundant after working for many years in traditional industries where they did not need English skills but were relatively well paid, even when specialist ESOL provision is available (for example, classes for the over 50s), wanting a better paid than entry-level job may be an additional barrier. Improving English language skills will not necessarily, on its own, lead to an increase in the numbers obtaining employment. Where individuals face multiple barriers to work, other issues may also need addressing before employment becomes possible.

### 3.4.3 Compulsory education

Some respondents suggested that the achievement of Pakistani and Bangladeshi children in schools is improving, but that boys are not doing as well as girls. Peer pressure can have an impact on this (see Section 3.1.1). In some areas, respondents cited schools based in areas where Pakistanis are concentrated that are still doing very badly in comparison with other local schools. Overcrowding can make it difficult for some children to do their homework (see Section 3.2.1). Extended visits to Pakistan or Bangladesh can also lead to children missing out months of schooling which can impact on their achievement.

One academic expert cited the research showing that education policy currently sets the context within which schools and teachers operate, and that this, in fact, systematically disadvantages certain groups right from the start of schooling (Gilborn and Youdell, 2000). It was argued that this disadvantage continues all
through the education system and beyond. For example, any hierarchical teaching
groups created through tiering, streaming, banding, etc. tend to be cemented
quickly and preserved, and this has knock on effects for educational attainment, and
employment prospects and aspirations. The relevance of this to Pakistanis and
Bangladeshis is that streaming and tiering decisions tend to be made by a
combination of tests and teachers’ judgements, and pupils are judged as early as age
five and six. For a variety of reasons, including levels of English language fluency at
the start of schooling, and stereotypical judgements from teachers, certain groups,
including Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, are more likely than other groups to be
placed in the bottom sets. And once they are in the bottom set, it becomes incredibly
difficult to progress:

‘Because once you’re in the bottom groups, you’re taught by teachers who
have systematically lower expectations of you, you usually cover less of the
curriculum. So although there’s a rhetoric that certain kids can move up, and
certain kids can move down, it actually becomes impossible for you to move up
in a meaningful way, because after a year or two you’re so far behind the
necessary curriculum of the next groups that it’s done and dusted.’

(Academic expert)

It was argued that the classic example of how these early decisions impact on labour
market prospects is shown in the GCSE system. There is currently a two tier model
with two separate exams per subject. The top tier exam covers all the curriculum and
the possible outcomes are grades A* to D, or U. The lower or foundation tier covers
only part of the curriculum, and the outcomes are all the grades D through to U.
Pupils studying in lower streams will be taught a partial curriculum, to equip them for
the foundation tier exam, and the highest grade they can hope to achieve is a D,
which is generally classed as a fail. Due to earlier streaming decisions and the impact
these have had on education attainment throughout school, Pakistanis and
Bangladeshis will be more likely than average to be entered for foundation GCSEs
and, therefore, will not have the chance of obtaining the kinds of grades required to
progress onto more advanced educational routes and careers. Whilst the decision
about which GCSE examination to enter pupils for is not made until age 15, this
decision has in fact been compounded through all of the earlier stages of education.

Parental involvement in education is an important way of improving the outcomes
of Pakistani and Bangladeshi children in schools. However, it can be difficult for
parents to get involved in their children’s schooling, particularly when parents
themselves do not have English language skills and cannot help children with
homework or communicate with teachers. Similarly, a lack of role models within the
teaching profession for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis was mentioned. However,
examples of work which has been done in Tower Hamlets under the New Deal for
Communities has overcome these potential disadvantages and reversed poor
performance trends at schools with high proportions of Bangladeshi children. The
work has capitalised on the importance which is placed on education by these
communities. Teachers and community workers have worked closely with parents
and religious leaders to bind the family more effectively into the life of the school. A community with a high proportion of Bangladeshis, which six years ago was performing very poorly at school, is now the best performing community in Tower Hamlets, with Bangladeshi girls performing the best within this. Section 5.2 also gives examples of some projects designed to increase parental involvement.

3.4.4 Qualifications

A lack of qualifications can act as a barrier to work. There are still children leaving school with no qualifications. For example, Jobcentre Plus in Bradford gave statistics on qualification levels in Bradford. Of the working age population aged 25 to 64, 74.5 per cent of Pakistanis have no qualifications, compared to 34.3 per cent of the White population. For the 16 to 24 age group, 27.4 per cent of Pakistanis had no qualifications, compared to 19.1 per cent of the White population. This is despite the fact that 76 per cent of Year 11 Pakistani pupils stay in full-time education, compared with 60 per cent of White pupils. Qualifications from abroad may not be recognised and conversion courses may not be available. Individuals migrating to the UK for marriage may lack qualifications from home, as well as lacking UK qualifications due to not having had compulsory education in the UK.

Nationally, increasing numbers of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are moving into higher education, in larger numbers than would be expected when taking into account parental background. This is leading to polarisation between the groups who leave school at 16 with no or few qualifications, and those who go on to higher education and gain graduate level qualifications. Pakistani and Bangladeshi women with higher education are more likely to be economically active than those without higher education qualifications. Some respondents suggested that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are more likely to go to university close to home and remain living at home within their ethnic community (making it less likely they develop ‘bridging social capital’).

Gaining a graduate qualification does not necessarily translate into moving into a graduate job, and Pakistani and Bangladeshi graduates are more likely than White graduates to be unemployed a year after leaving higher education. Some individuals do not want to move away from areas of the country where their communities are concentrated, which makes it more competitive for them, as graduate jobs in these areas are limited. Employer discrimination also plays a role and Pakistani and Bangladeshi graduates may also have poorer results than White students. Some graduates may lack any experience of work, particularly women who may not have been allowed to work by their families whilst studying. This is in contrast to other students who may have worked Saturday jobs whilst aged 16 to 18 and who may have worked evenings and weekends whilst at university. Whilst these jobs are not directly relevant to possible graduate careers, they do provide employers with evidence of skills such as time-keeping, responsibility and team-working. These issues mean that highly qualified individuals may end up in low-skilled jobs such as taxi driving, or may not end up being economically active, after participating in higher education.
3.4.5 Skills

Some Pakistani and Bangladeshi individuals may also lack job application skills and interview skills. Individuals may lack confidence when applying for jobs, and have a lack of knowledge of how to approach employers, how to do a good application form and CV, and how to present themselves well at interview. This means that whilst some individuals may seem, from their qualifications and experience, to be in a good position to get a job, they may not be successful in the application and interview process.

Basic skills as well as language skills may also be an issue for some. Even when language is not an issue, individuals may have problems with literacy and numeracy. However, it was suggested by some respondents that there is some resistance to training, with individuals with basic skills issues in some cases being more focused on finding work than improving their basic skills. A lack of IT skills means that some individuals exclude themselves from the types of jobs where computers are used. Some individuals may have an expectation mismatch between the qualifications and skills they have, and the type of work that they would like to do. Respondents suggested the need for a better bridge between education and employment for young people, particularly for those who are unclear about their employment options.

3.5 Area-based

Some Pakistanis and Bangladeshis may choose to live in ‘enclaves’ (concentrations of individuals from the same ethnic background within a specific geographical location) so that they are close to mosques and Pakistani and Bangladeshi businesses, so that their children go to school with other children from their communities, and because the area feels like a ‘safe haven’. Whilst living in an enclave may not lead to a higher likelihood of unemployment, per se, where enclaves coincide with pockets of deprivation it can be a problem in terms of access to employment.

Living in deprived areas can act as a barrier to work for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, just as it can for all other ethnic groups. Those living in areas of high unemployment, regardless of their personal characteristics, are more likely to be unemployed themselves and also face a lack of access to services. Pakistanis and Bangladeshis living in deprived areas may also face a lack of geographical mobility. For example, Pakistanis are heavily over-represented in owner-occupied housing that is low-quality and low-value, and they are, therefore, less able to move to areas with greater employment opportunities.

Those living in deprived areas may not have the financial resources to travel to jobs elsewhere or may not be able to travel far because of family responsibilities. Respondents also widely reported that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis may want to work within the area where they live and where their ethnic community is concentrated. Having this ‘comfort zone’ or ‘safe haven’, means that even where
deprived areas are adjacent to areas of employment, individuals may feel more safe and comfortable working in the area they know and are less likely to travel outside their area, eg from Bradford to Leeds, from inner-city Birmingham to Birmingham airport, or from Tower Hamlets to other London boroughs. Having the confidence to travel and use public transport may also be an issue for some, particularly for those who are not fluent in English.

Limited social networks can also act as a barrier to employment. If older generations have limited social networks this can impact on their children. There may be strong networks within Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities (known as ‘bonding social capital’) but a lack of links across to those outside of the ethnic community (‘bridging social capital’). Bonding social capital may be particularly strong where communities have grown through in-migration from extended families overseas, and where there is still a high incidence of marriage from abroad. A lack of ‘bridging social capital’ may result in limiting social networks and, therefore, access to labour market opportunities that are passed on through word-of-mouth, particularly if others within the community are also out of work. A lack of employment in occupations where not many Pakistanis or Bangladeshis are represented means communities are less able to provide role models and encourage others to apply for jobs in these sectors. For those who are employed in these occupations, they may lack in-work support networks, both from others from their own ethnic community, and from those outside their own communities, particularly if they do not engage in similar out-of-hours social activities.

### 3.6 Employer attitudes

This section considers employer attitudes, policies and practices which may be presenting barriers to employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. It covers employers’ perceptions, policies and practices, small employers, and in-work issues.

#### 3.6.1 Employers’ perceptions of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis

Stereotyping was felt to be an issue, with employers having expectations about the kinds of work that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis wanted to do, and the kinds of employees they would make. There were reports that employers could make assumptions about the way a Pakistani or Bangladeshi employee in some public facing roles (for example, a solicitor) would relate to the White community, and this could, despite the efforts of individuals, confine their opportunities to working within ethnic minority organisations. There can also be expectations amongst employers that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis will have language or basic skills issues.

For women, there were additional issues, such as uncomfortable working environments as a result of employer stereotyping and harassment. One example was given of a woman in employment being repeatedly questioned by her manager about forced marriages, and when she was going to have to get married. There were perceptions that among South Asians, the Indian community are generally seen as being most likely to be the graduates and the hard working employees, rather than
Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. Employers’ concerns about doing and saying the wrong things were also mentioned, contributing to systematic racism, for example, when employers prefer to recruit people from their own ethnic background on the basis of uncertainty and fear of the unknown.

Prejudice or a lack of understanding on the part of employers can manifest itself in a variety of assumptions, which may or may not be borne out in reality. An example of perceptions of this kind include assuming that Muslims may not be productive as a result of some religious practices, including frequent and regular requirements for time off for prayer, or during Ramadan, the month of fasting during daylight hours. It was felt that cultural and religious awareness training amongst employers could help address this.

Another expert spoke of business concerns, and perceived risks to business of employing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. These can prevent employers from employing people from particular groups if they have no experience of doing this in the past:

‘Because as an employer you want to grow without any problems, and if a certain workforce shows high risks, or potential risks of those problems then you will use all your resources to avoid that problem. You do not welcome, or want to give the opportunity for any risks, so as a board, as a private entity, you always want to avoid the risks for your business. Hence, the majority of the employment for these communities has been the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. So the majority of Bangladeshis are employed by Bangladeshis and the majority of Pakistanis are employed by Pakistanis.’

(Ethnic minority community organisation)

Discrimination and the ethnic penalty were felt to be ever present, meaning that Pakistani and Bangladeshi jobseekers needed to be better qualified than their White peers to secure the same kinds of work and opportunities:

‘So something’s going on which is about fair opportunities, and access to viable, sustainable work. But what I’m saying in a roundabout way is I’ve found that when we get new communities come here, after a few years they realise that there is a big barrier out there, it is about discrimination. They’ve got all the other things they need, in terms of language, qualifications and experience, but they can’t overcome that one big barrier. That’s still true today. And it disappoints me that that’s what we still have to overcome. And I don’t think initiatives to date have really been able to grapple with that.’

(Ethnic minority employment organisation)

Islamophobia has exacerbated prejudice and discrimination, making it harder at present for Muslims than most other groups to get a fair chance in the labour market. For some employers, the wearing of any non-English traditional dress could be a ‘turn-off’, but since 11 September 2001 it was felt that any items of dress or behaviour which identify a jobseeker as a Muslim may serve as a particularly strong barrier to employment in the eyes of some. In the same way, accents and names were felt to be a barrier, as some employers discriminated against people with non-English sounding accents or Muslim-sounding names.
Where there has been racial unrest and disturbance this can have a long lasting negative impact on employer attitudes in the area. For example, the legacy of the riots in Bradford mean that employers still have a negative perception of the Asian communities. This may also be linked to postcode discrimination, where employers prefer to avoid employing people living in the areas where the riots took place. Within the Asian community, for example, between Muslims and Sikhs, there was also felt to be discrimination.

### 3.6.2 Policies and practices

There was felt to be an enormous amount of variation in the extent to which employers had equal opportunities policies in place, and in the extent to which they were carried through to the day-to-day practice within organisations. Indirect discrimination was seen to be particularly difficult to quantify. The public sector was felt to be leading on best practice in some areas of the country, and there were examples of careful consideration of where to advertise to increase coverage of job advertisements across the community.

Some employers have changed their policies and practices, particularly if located in inner cities, or within particular communities, by providing facilities such as prayer rooms in order to attract and retain a diverse workforce:

> ‘More and more companies are becoming a lot more aware of equality, especially in Bradford in terms of like Friday prayers, offering them the prayer rooms. A lot of our organisations know what festivals mean as well, like Diwali and the importance of fasting and all that. Whereby, in the past it was like people were very oblivious to others when they were observing fasting during the month of Ramadan. This year we got an email around before just for people to be a bit sensitive around those that are fasting. Don’t eat fish and chips in front of someone that’s fasting naturally. So I think generally people are…The employers that we work with have to have equality, equal opportunities in place otherwise we refuse to work for those companies.’

(Local authority expert)

In addition, many major banks and retail chains are keen to employ ethnic minorities in an effort to match their workforce to their changing customer base. It was, therefore, felt that both legislation and business drivers were the impetus behind these changes. However, it was argued that employers tended to only change their practices when they reached a point where they could not recruit the required numbers of people through their usual methods, rather than as a general practice. The point was made that employers with a ‘social conscience’ were also needed to offer flexibility and help particular groups move into the workforce and progress upwards, as they would need a degree of mentoring and development. There was scepticism too about the extent to which the business benefits of diversity had been adopted, and it was felt that despite policies being in place, discriminatory practices still clearly existed on the ground:
‘The business case sounds nice, people don’t get offended by it, but how many employers have adopted the business case for diversity? Very few. We obviously want to keep pushing that, promoting that, and that’s obviously valuable, but at the end of the day, it’s still very easy for employers to discriminate in the workplace, and give all kinds of reasons why they did not choose a Black person for the job or a Bangladeshi person, or a Pakistani person. You only have to go around the workplace in London, and see what the situation is. And also the way employers recruit, especially for certain high level jobs, where they still only go to certain universities, it just so happens that they see very few Black students at those universities, because many of us will be in the new universities, in urban areas. And, therefore, straightaway you’re finding you haven’t got even the slightest opportunity to get that job, because you haven’t gone to a certain university.’

(Ethnic minority employment organisation)

Discrimination may be occurring, but some experts argued that employers do not always realise that their practices constitute discrimination. Internal vacancies were highlighted as an example of potentially discriminatory practice. More generally, the ways that employers have traditionally externally recruited, for example, by word-of-mouth, or by advertising only in national and regional English newspapers, mean that vacancies will not be reaching all sections of the community. In addition, care needs to be taken with the language used in advertising vacancies:

‘Advertising in something like the Guardian, I think you are really narrowing your field of people who are going to apply to that advert. Using certain language in the job descriptions and certain application forms. That’s what we’ve been told by, again, talking to some of the Asian and Indian people that they couldn’t quite understand what people were trying to get at in the application form. What we could say is, not using plain English. We actually went and changed our application form here, purely because there were one or two things on it that were what you might call high-faluting words that could have been changed into more simple, plain English.’

(Jobcentre Plus expert)

The representation of ethnic minorities across organisations was seen to be key. Statistics show that ethnic minorities are under-represented in workplaces, in comparison with their proportions in the local populations. Recruitment, retention and progression are all issues, and areas in which Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are currently under-performing. Particularly at the top of organisations, there is a lack of representation of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis and, therefore, a lack of role models for these communities:

‘You may get through the door but you’re not necessarily going to go up the ladder.’

(Jobcentre Plus expert)

The problems with collecting workforce ethnic origin statistics which are not acted upon, or the cynical use of recruitment targets was discussed. For example, it was
suggested that some employers would prefer to employ non-Muslim Asians, which would still fulfil their equal opportunities recruitment criteria. There was also a suggestion that whilst responsibility for ensuring fair practices should run through the whole organisation as a whole, this was often not the case:

“A lot of White organisations think if they appoint a Race Equality officer, oh well, you’ll deal with all the race stuff, and they don’t realise that it’s everybody’s responsibility in that organisation. I’m not saying it’s quite as black and white as that, but really certainly from having done the work so far and what I’ve seen so far, it seems to me that’s the way it’s coming across, a lot of big White organisations like the police and the health service, they all have Race Equality officers and they say, oh, you’ll just deal with all the race equality stuff. It does have implications for everybody. I’m not saying they’re not embracing that, but it just seems that sometimes it’s a tick box exercise more than actual change of factors and change of organisation and attitude change.”

(Ethnic minority organisation)

In terms of day-to-day practice, there were views that both sides – employers and employees – needed to make more effort to compromise and integrate:

“In the workforce it must be the same – you’ve got employees praying five times a day, it’s very difficult. I mean you’re working, doing well and then you have to go out at whatever time of day and do your prayer….The solution is…accepting everybody. At the end of the day you’re not in Pakistan or Bangladesh, you’re in England. I’m sorry but this is where you are. We’re not imposing anything on you, don’t do that to us and accept the situation as it is.”

(Ethnic minority organisation)

3.6.3 Small employers

There were felt to be some issues which were particularly pertinent for smaller businesses in terms of their policies and practices. A key issue is that small businesses generally do not have the kind of equal opportunities and diversity policies in place that larger organisations have. There was felt to be a lower level of awareness amongst smaller employers of what would constitute discriminatory practice due, for example, to the absence of a dedicated Human Resources function. Small employers may not know where to go for advice on these issues, to learn about, or ensure that they comply with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act.

Compared with smaller enterprises, larger employers also have more of an incentive to represent the communities that they serve from a business point of view. They tend to be more aware of the predicted forthcoming skills shortages and be looking at ways of recruiting from wider sections of the community in an effort to pre-empt these. Smaller businesses were felt to generally be less forward thinking and less pro-active when it came to such issues. Smaller employers usually have limited resources, and may have less capacity than larger employers to be able to provide, for example, a dedicated prayer room. They are generally more concerned with the
day-to-day profit margin and this reduces their capacity to take what they perceive as risks when recruiting their workforce.

It was felt that a small Asian business would probably be reluctant to employ a White person, due to fears that they wouldn’t fit in. It was pointed out that discrimination can exist on both sides.

3.7 Differences between and within ethnic groups

3.7.1 Differences between Pakistanis and Bangladeshis and the Indian community

Differences between the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities and the Indian community were highlighted in these interviews. Differences in employment outcomes were explained by respondents as being partly due to the impact of religion, as Indians are more likely to be Hindus or Sikhs, while Pakistanis or Bangladeshis are more likely to be Muslims. There was a feeling that Muslims were less ‘Westernised’ than those of other religious faiths, with religion having, in some cases, more of an impact on culture in terms of living in enclaves, having less strong social networks outside the ethnic community, and in terms of attitudes to women working and types of employment that are deemed suitable.

The importance of the impact of class on culture was also highlighted when comparing the Indian community in the UK to the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. Respondents suggested that Indians migrating to the UK were in many cases from middle-class and well-educated backgrounds, for example, those Indians who came from East Africa to the UK, in contrast to Pakistani and Bangladeshi migrants who more commonly came from a working-class background. Although the Pakistani and Bangladeshi migrants were usually working class and had often been peasant farmers, they were not from the poorest backgrounds, as unlike some in their countries, they had the resources within their families to enable them to migrate. Nonetheless, it was argued that Indian migrants were generally from more middle class backgrounds, and were better qualified, and as a result have better language skills, have higher aspirations, and do better in schools than their Pakistani and Bangladeshi counterparts.

3.7.2 Differences between Pakistanis and Bangladeshis

One respondent argued that Pakistani communities are more internationally facing, with activists and leadership being more focused on international issues, such as the conflict in Kashmir, than on UK issues. In contrast, leadership in the Bangladeshi community is more focused on UK issues such as education. Bangladeshi communities were also reported to be doing better than Pakistanis in some areas in terms of education.

Bangladeshi communities in the four case study areas in this study where Pakistani communities are much larger (Bradford, Bristol, Birmingham and Glasgow), are
often small (sometimes overlooked in policy and practice terms) and quite distinct from the Pakistani community. Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have very separate communities and different languages, so that smaller Bangladeshi communities cannot access opportunities within Pakistani businesses for example. However, communities infrastructures in terms of community-based services are very well developed in the Bangladeshi communities.

3.7.3 Differences within the Pakistani community and within the Bangladeshi community

Within the Bangladeshi community, there are distinct differences between those who migrated from the city of Dhaka or other cities, and those who migrated from the rural areas of Sylhet. Within the Pakistani community, there are distinct differences in culture (and in some cases language) between:

- those who migrated from the rural areas of Mirpur and Attock that have low-skilled, agricultural economies;
- those from Azad-Kashmir (a disputed province of Pakistan) who may identify more as Kashmiris than Pakistanis;
- the Pathan community from Peshawar (on the border with Afghanistan) who have particularly strong attitudes against women working; and
- those from urban areas (in Bradford people often used the term ‘Pakistanis’ only when talking about those from urban areas).

Barriers may be very different for different groups within the Bangladeshi community, and for different groups within the Pakistani community, as class and cultural backgrounds have an impact on attitudes to women working and on skills, education and aspirations.

There are also differences within the Pakistani community and within the Bangladeshi community in terms of generations. Those who came over as first generation migrants in the post-war period were, in some cases, forced to take jobs beneath their capabilities, impacting on their social networks and, therefore, the chances of the next generation as well as their own. Language is much more of an issue for first generation migrants who came to the UK as adults than for later generations whose compulsory education took place in the UK. This applies both to those who came to the UK in the post-war period, and more recent arrivals who have come to the UK to either marry, or to join other family members.

The decline of traditional industries has had an impact on first generation migrants who came in the post-war period and are now in their 50s, who had relatively well-paid jobs in textiles or other manufacturing industries where English was not a necessity and who now have few transferable or English language skills. Having often been with the same employer for over 30 years, these individuals have often never had a job interview in their lives or had to do a CV or use IT. Despite their levels of work experience, they find it very difficult to find jobs. Learning English
(particularly in a classroom environment) and applying for new jobs in the service sector is not an attractive proposition for this group.

Respondents reported that in some areas, sub-communities in the UK, based on those who migrated from rural areas in the post-war period, have been ‘frozen in time’ in terms of attitudes and culture, while attitudes and culture in those areas of Pakistan have in some cases since moved on. In some communities, younger generations are challenging these attitudes, and expert respondents who were themselves third generation described themselves and their peers as having ‘moved on’ from certain traditions and attitudes. This can lead to a divide between these younger generations and their parents and community leaders, who can react negatively to younger people leading a more ‘Western’ lifestyle. More of the younger generations are now being successful in education and going on to university.
4 Projects to help Pakistanis and Bangladeshis

4.1 Barriers to accessing services

The need for more outreach of mainstream services to the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities was highlighted by respondents. Outreach done by organisations like Jobcentre Plus and their sub-contractors, where advisers are dressed casually, offer a more personalised service, speak community languages, are themselves from those communities, and are based in attractive local premises which are not identified as the Jobcentre, can be much more effective than centralised services. Outreach can help overcome low confidence about using mainstream services, in environments that are not intimidating.

Individuals from the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities may, in some cases, need help with understanding their entitlements and understanding how mainstream services operate. Jobcentre Plus in one area felt that as well as by providing outreach, their services could be improved by allowing a longer time for customer interviews and by reducing jargon. There are also barriers to setting up services run by, and for, Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. Lack of funding is a big issue, as is knowing where to go to get help to set up services.

4.2 Examples of projects to help Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities

In our interviews we asked respondents to tell us about any projects that they knew about, whether at national or local level, that were designed to address the needs of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. Table 4.1 sets out the projects that were described. This is not a comprehensive list, and does not include local Pakistani and Bangladeshi community centres which provide a range of services to their communities, or broader work being done by organisations to improve ethnic diversity in their workforces, or national initiatives that deal with Pakistanis and
Bangladeshis as part of a broader target group (and may have specialist workers to do so). Rather, they are specific projects highlighted by respondents that are designed to address specific needs of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities.

Many of these projects have been designed to address the issues discussed elsewhere in this report. They aim to address underachievement in education, specific barriers to employment, health issues, or aim to build the capacity of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi community to access funding for the work that they do, and to take part in decision-making outside their communities.

Table 4.1  Projects to support Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic focus</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Project details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>QED-UK¹</td>
<td>Yorkshire</td>
<td>Taleem Ki Batein (Talking of Education) campaign. DfES funded ten minute video in Urdu that has been distributed to community groups in the Yorkshire region, aimed at parents to improve their understanding of the education system and to increase parental involvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>QED-UK</td>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>Improving Performance of Asian Children Through Supplementary Schooling (IMPACTSS). BBC Children in Need-funded project to work with Madrasses in Bradford to use the captive audience of children attending Madrasses to improve the educational level of children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hackney</td>
<td>Hackney (London)</td>
<td>Home-School Links Project focuses on family learning and links between home and school. It was established because there was low participation of parents and carers in their children's school life. Home school link workers can provide support for teachers, such as translations, and for parents, such as explaining the education process and how to help children do homework and revise. The focus is on the Ocean estates and a large Bangladeshi community is part of the target group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>QED-UK</td>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>New Arrivals programme funded by Jobcentre Plus. Originally targeting the 500 Pakistanis and Bangladeshis who come to Bradford every year from abroad for marriage (also now serves Eastern European new-comers). Includes a ‘Welcome to Britain’ video in Urdu and an advice and support system for new arrivals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>QED-UK</td>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>Jobs Melas in partnership with Newsquest to influence parents, relatives and community leaders who influence the career choices of children. Employers bring their Pakistani and Bangladeshi employees so that parents can ask questions about what it would be like for their children to work in sectors not normally considered by these communities.</td>
</tr>
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Table 4.1  Continued

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic focus</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Project details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>QED-UK</td>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>Pathways to Employment project. A two-day event for 100 16 to 19 year old South Asian children in Bradford involving four schools and ten employers to expose young people to different types of job opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scottish</td>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>Diversity Works project. An event was held in Glasgow to bring together ten employers and 100 jobseekers from ethnic minorities. Bridging gap between employers and these communities and lead to eight job entries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enterprise</td>
<td></td>
<td>At work Bradford Ethnic Minority Outreach contract from Jobcentre Plus. Based in their own premises in the community. Work with employers who need new recruits or who want to increase the diversity of their organisation. Also work with individuals to help with job search, and prepare them for interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Plus</td>
<td>Platinum Birmingham Ethnic Minority Outreach contract from Jobcentre Plus training. Provide training in ESOL, basic skills, IT, NVQs in Business Administration and job search. Work with individuals on a one-to-one basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Plus Contact</td>
<td>Jobcentre Tower Ethnic Minority Outreach contract from Jobcentre Plus Contact Hamlets. Work with community and faith Team organisations where job search surgeries are held. Advisers go into the community and help with job search, and refer individuals on to training and ESOL courses and on to organisations who can help with CVs etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Multi-Task Centre</td>
<td>Bangladeshi Birmingham Funded by Birmingham City Council the centre organises regular sessions with employers and do jobs fairs within the Aston community where the Bangladeshi population is concentrated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jobs At Bradford Funded by regeneration funds including European Regional Development Fund and Yorkshire Forward, and also have Ethnic Minority Outreach contract from Jobcentre Plus. Have 15 Employment Advisers based across Bradford district helping get individuals into sustainable employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B-EQUAL Bradford Aims to assist employers in Bradford district to take advantage of diverse populations in their workforce. Funded by European EQUAL funding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Employers Bradford Racing Ahead Employer led group established by Abbey in 2001. Aim is to identify most effective ways of recruiting and training BME staff. Shares good practice and helps businesses see increasing market potential of BME customers. Receives funding from B-EQUAL.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic focus</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Project details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Fair Cities</td>
<td>Bradford, Birmingham, Brent (London)</td>
<td>Fair Cities pilots are funded by the National Employment Panel to meet the recruitment and skills needs of participating employers, to enable individuals from ethnic minorities to get into work, to get into better paid work, to stay in work and to gain skills and qualifications, and to create workplaces where individuals from ethnic minorities are more likely to succeed. Local employers work together to create workforce strategies to meet their own local needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EMEC</td>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>Ethnic Minority Enterprise Centre supported by Glasgow City Council. Helps young people with pre-employment skills and CVs etc. Do outreach work in communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Silai for Skills</td>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>A training, employment and education centre for women. Provides childcare and training in creative textiles, basic skills, language support, and gives information and advice. Work in partnership with Bristol College and do outreach work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jobcentre Plus Specialist Employment Advisers</td>
<td>Tower Hamlets, Nottingham, Bradford, Manchester, Leicester, Wolverhampton, Birmingham</td>
<td>Specialist Employment Advisers bring together local ethnic minority communities and employers. Work with employers involves helping employers think about how to attract ethnic minorities into jobs and how to improve their progression. Work with communities involves helping connect them with Jobcentre Plus services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>QED-UK Yorkshire</td>
<td>Faith Groups and Health Professionals. Seminars run across Yorkshire to bring together senior health professionals with faith groups to promote a better understanding between them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Awaz Utaoh Bristol</td>
<td>A community safety organisation for South Asian women who may have been victims of crime including domestic violence and rape. Offers counselling, training, opportunities to volunteer and support to get into employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community capacity building</td>
<td>QED-UK Nationwide</td>
<td>Faith Groups and Grant Givers. Project promoting the non-faith work of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh communities to grant givers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>QED-UK Yorkshire</td>
<td>Regen Matters Network. Project that encourages ethnic minority residents to apply for positions within decision-making organisations. Gives people the confidence to operate at strategic levels. Funded by ODPM.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Table 4.1 Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic focus</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Project details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QED-UK</td>
<td>Yorkshire</td>
<td>Funding and Information Mela. To enable networking between grassroots ethnic minority community groups and national and regional grant givers. Funded by Neighbourhood Renewal, Business Link West Yorkshire and the Community Fund.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTEG²</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Project providing capacity-building support to local BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) organisations in London.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 A national organisation based in Bradford that was set up in 1990 to focus on the needs of South Asian communities.
2 Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG) founded in 1996 on basis of a previous network, to focus on unemployment and employment issues in the BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) communities.

### 4.3 Examples of good practice in getting Pakistanis and Bangladeshis into employment

Many of the projects described above were cited as examples of good practice in getting Pakistanis and Bangladeshis into employment, or in improving outcomes for the communities more widely. It is clear that many of these projects use innovative approaches to addressing specific barriers, and are potentially prototypes for the type of work that could be done more widely amongst the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities in the UK to improve education and employment outcomes.

Projects that are part of national initiatives, such as New Deal for Communities, Ethnic Minority Outreach and Fair Cities, are systematically evaluated to see whether interventions are successful and which interventions work best. For other smaller projects, evaluations of this kind are often not undertaken, although funding is often driven by meeting targets to do with, for example, education and employment outcomes for participants.

As well as giving examples of innovative projects designed to meet the needs of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, respondents also cited a number of examples of what they considered to be good practice by employers, and suggested what more could be done by employers to help move these Pakistanis and Bangladeshis into sustainable employment.

Respondents felt that public sector organisations and large private sector employers in areas with high concentrations of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, tended to have gone furthest in pursuing diversity agendas and in changing practices in terms of recruitment and progression. Offering prayer rooms, time off for attending Friday prayers and not organising meetings at this time, observing religious festivals, and allowing Christmas holiday days to be taken at times of other religious festivals, were cited as examples of what such organisations do.
It was suggested that to attract Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, employers might need to:

- offer flexible working hours that can fit with individuals’ family responsibilities;
- not require work clothes that may be unacceptable to some religious groups;
- work to make their image more attractive. An employer may be perceived in a certain way in Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. For example, it was suggested that a large organisation in one area was seen as a glamorous place to work, leading to individuals from these communities thinking that it was not somewhere they would be able to get a job;
- take part in cultural awareness training to help market themselves better to ethnic minority communities and to change organisational cultures;
- value staff for the languages they can speak. For example, in a call centre environment or in other types of customer service roles, having staff with additional languages may help employers deal with customers better.

Employers could also make changes to their recruitment practices. Job specifications could be more competency-based and have less emphasis on skills and experience that may not actually be needed to carry out the job. Similarly, job application forms could be made more straightforward and have less jargon. In terms of advertising, employers could advertise more widely and do proactive advertising in local community newspapers and through mosques, etc.

For organisations aiming to work with employers to place Pakistanis and Bangladeshis into jobs, becoming a successful intermediary requires building up a good relationship with an employer based on delivering the right candidates. Once this initial trust has built up, diversity can be used as a ‘hook’, for example, by suggesting to employers that if they have more Asian staff it may increase their Asian customer base. Employers are also then more likely to trust intermediaries who may argue that, for example, new arrivals are likely to be loyal and reliable employees.

Intermediaries can work with individuals to find work and to sustain it. Work can be done to encourage people to look further afield for jobs, and to help with the practicalities of planning, and paying for, journeys to work. Other examples of good practice included helping a group of Pakistanis into work with one employer, to make the process of applying for, and starting, work less intimidating. By taking individuals on tours of employers and by preparing them for interviews as a group, people may be more confident to start work in an organisation that they may not have initially considered. Positive experiences then spread through word-of-mouth to other members of the community. Intermediaries can also offer in-work support, for example, regular telephone calls in the early stages of employment to see if everything is going well and to help resolve any problems.
5 Summary

This chapter presents the findings from 48 interviews undertaken with stakeholders and independent experts at a national level, and at a case study level. The five case study areas were Birmingham, Bradford, Bristol, Glasgow and Tower Hamlets. The interview discussions encompassed key policy issues, barriers to employment, employers’ policies and practices, activities and initiatives to overcome barriers, and local labour market issues.

The main purpose of the expert interviews was to provide a context for the rest of the project. All material in this summary and this section of the report, is derived from the expert interviews, and hence, should not be viewed as an exhaustive review of the subject matter discussed.

5.1 Policy

The expert interviews raised some key policy areas, including demographics and migrational patterns, education, and employment issues:

- demographically, ethnic minorities will account for increasingly large proportions of the working age population, providing a clear business case for raising the participation of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the workforce;

- education was seen as a crucial policy area. Data on achievement at school show that Pakistanis’ and Bangladeshis’ achievement is improving, but that this improvement is disproportionately amongst girls rather than boys;

- lack of English language skills was highlighted as a barrier for some groups, although the extent to which this is an issue varies amongst the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities by age and generation;

- welfare-to-work programmes may not be operating as effectively for ethnic minorities as they do for the White population, and Jobcentre Plus staff do not always reflect the communities they serve;

- the issue of whether women will be expected to participate in paid employment was highlighted, as were the high levels of unemployment amongst older Pakistanis and Bangladeshis;
• within employment, the lack of Pakistani and Bangladeshi representation at senior levels, and pay differentials that exist between ethnic groups, were raised.

5.2 Labour markets

The five case study area labour markets were discussed individually, and some key themes were drawn out, which are presented here. The decline of traditional industries has led to high unemployment and a lack of suitable skills amongst older first generation Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. The geographical distribution and lack of mobility of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities was cited as an issue, with Pakistanis tending to be located in the North and Midlands, away from the buoyant economy in the South East. Stereotypical career paths were raised in the interviews as being present in the case study areas. Careers such as doctor, lawyer, or taxi driver and restaurant worker were given as typical examples. Although there are some important differences between the labour markets in the case study areas, the issues that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis within them were reported to face, were remarkably similar.

5.3 Barriers to employment

The section outlining barriers to employment covered the following key areas: personal characteristics, household, attitudes to work, human capital, area-based barriers, employer attitudes, and differences between and within ethnic groups.

5.3.1 Personal characteristics

Age was felt to be an important determinant in the way in which barriers to employment manifested themselves at an individual level. Older people, and those who were first generation, were more likely to have language issues and skills needs. For younger groups, peer pressure, and the challenges of breaking out of traditional career paths seemed to be more important.

Gender was considered to be a very important area when looking at barriers to employment. Whilst Pakistani and Bangladeshi girls outperform boys at school, the reverse is true in the labour market. High proportions of Asian women are economically inactive because they are looking after the family and home. The extent to which this was their choice or their family’s decision was discussed by some of the experts.

Religion and culture encompassed the ways in which religious practices might impact on work, and how they could affect employers’ perceptions of Muslim workers. It was felt that wearing Asian clothing would be viewed negatively by some employers. There were also issues raised about the type of work that was felt to be acceptable in terms of religious and cultural adherence. The effect of Islamophobia, particularly since 11 September 2001, was felt to be having a negative impact.
Health and disability affect the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities more frequently than is seen in the general population, and this was strongly linked to measures of poverty. In addition, the types of heavy industrial work done by many Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the past had adversely affected their health, leaving some unable to work.

### 5.3.2 Household

Large families and a lack of suitable accommodation can lead to overcrowding in housing, which can be a barrier to doing well in education, and to employment. This is particularly an issue in the Bangladeshi community, where it is common for extended families to live as one household.

Benefit traps may operate as a barrier to moving into paid employment. Leaving benefits for the type of low-skilled, low-paid work that may be the only option for some, means not being much better off in work. This financial disincentive to work is even stronger for large families. For some individuals, the perception that they may be financially worse off in work may be inaccurate, due to a lack of awareness of in-work benefits and tax credits.

Family responsibilities can make taking, and sustaining, paid employment difficult. Finding suitable part-time work may be difficult for those who want to work alongside family responsibilities. Some individuals need to find jobs immediately, to provide evidence that they are employed so that they can bring their spouses to the UK from Pakistan or Bangladesh, which can limit the types of jobs available to them. Having financial support from their families may be a disincentive to seek work for young Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.

Being a lone parent can also be a barrier to work. Some lone parents within the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities are only temporary lone parents because their husband is abroad, whilst others become lone parents when arranged marriages break up. Lone parents who came to the UK for marriage can be left with young children, no family support and low levels of English and other skills.

Affordable childcare is an issue for low-income groups and is a particularly acute need in large families. There is also a need for more culturally appropriate childcare. There may be resistance amongst other members of the ethnic community to women using formal childcare. Younger parents may not always be comfortable with grandparents looking after their children, as childcare practices have changed.

### 5.3.3 Attitudes to work

Aspirations and knowledge of the labour market were raised as important issues for the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. There were felt to be two extremes of employment routes typically encouraged and pursued; either doctors, lawyers or accountants, or for those with lower levels of academic achievement, taxi driving or working in restaurants and shops. There appears to be a lack of role models within Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities to widen aspirations. Some groups were
also felt to have particularly low career aspirations, and young men in particular may not be aware of how best to market themselves to employers. Self-employment was cited as one of the ways in which Pakistanis and Bangladeshis had avoided discrimination in the labour market.

It was felt that in some sections of the community, there was a stigma around claiming benefits, together with a mistrust of government agencies such as Jobcentre Plus. Hence, people may not be accessing the services available to them, and they risk becoming increasingly disengaged.

The expert interviews highlighted various reasons for not working, including expectations that women will look after the family and home, patterns of visiting the home country for extended periods making it difficult to find and keep work, and a lack of suitable opportunities, due to factors including discrimination. The informal economy was felt to be an important alternative source of income for some, with cash-in-hand work easily available through extensive family networks.

5.3.4 Human capital

A lack of confidence can be a big issue for some individuals and is often linked to factors such as low aspirations, having been out of work for a long time and a lack of English language skills. A lack of confidence can impact on people’s willingness to travel outside their local area to look for work or to access services, their willingness to apply for jobs and their ability to perform well in interviews.

Ability in English language is a very real issue for first generation migrants who came to the UK as adults and whose compulsory education took place outside the UK. There can be a lack of appropriate language provision, provision may not always be relevant to the workplace, and there may be barriers to engaging in English language training, such as a lack of basic skills. Some individuals who live in ‘enclaves’ may not see learning English as a priority when they can access local services and engage in community activities in their first language.

Achievement of Pakistani and Bangladeshi children in schools is improving, although boys are not doing as well as girls. Education policy can systematically disadvantage certain groups, right from the start of schooling, through tiering, streaming, banding, which has knock-on effects for educational attainment, employment prospects and aspirations. Parental involvement in education is an important way of improving the outcomes of Pakistani and Bangladeshi children in schools. However, it can be difficult for parents to get involved in their children’s schooling, particularly when parents themselves do not have English language skills and cannot help children with homework or communicate with teachers.

A lack of qualifications can act as a barrier to work. Some Pakistani and Bangladeshis individuals lack job application skills and interview skills, basic skills and IT skills. There may also be an expectation mismatch between the qualifications and skills individuals have, and the type of work that they would like to do. Nationally, increasing numbers of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are moving into higher education,
but gaining a graduate qualification does not necessarily translate into moving into a graduate job. Graduates may end up in low-skilled jobs, or may not be economically active, especially where they have little work experience, or do not want to move away from their local area.

5.3.5 Employer attitudes

Stereotyping and prejudice were cited as issues amongst some employers, which may have led to employment opportunities being confined to within the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. The ethnic penalty was discussed by several of the experts, and there was a perception that Islamophobia had increased and exacerbated employer discrimination.

There was felt to be variation in the extent to which employers had diversity policies in place, and the extent to which they impacted on practice. Indirect discrimination was seen to be particularly difficult to identify and tackle. However, there were reports that some employers had made substantial efforts to accommodate their workforce, particularly if they were located in an area with high numbers of Pakistanis or Bangladeshis in the local population.

There were particular issues for smaller employers, for example, they generally do not have the kinds of policies which are in place in larger organisations. A lack of a dedicated HR function could also lead to a lower level of awareness of what constitutes discriminatory practice.

5.3.6 Differences between and within ethnic groups

Differences between the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities and the Indian community were highlighted in these interviews. Differences in employment outcomes were explained by both religion and class, with Pakistanis or Bangladeshis being more likely to be Muslims, and to come from a working-class and less well-educated background, than Indians.

Bangladeshi communities were also reported to be doing better than Pakistanis in terms of education, but experiences seemed to be similar in terms of employment. Barriers may be very different for different groups within the Bangladeshi community, and within the Pakistani community, as class and cultural backgrounds have an impact on attitudes to women working and on skills, education and aspirations. There are also differences in terms of generations. Some sub-communities in the UK, based on those who migrated from rural areas in the post-war period, were reported as having been ‘frozen in time’ in terms of attitudes and culture, although attitudes and culture of those areas of Pakistan and Bangladesh have since moved on. Younger generations are challenging these attitudes.
5.4 Projects to help Pakistanis and Bangladeshis

The need for more outreach of mainstream services to the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities was highlighted by respondents. Individuals may, in some cases, need help with understanding their entitlements and understanding how mainstream services operate. There are also barriers to setting up services run by, and for, Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. Lack of funding is a big issue, as is knowing where to go to get help to set up services.

Projects were cited by respondents that have been designed to address: underachievement in education, specific barriers to employment, health issues, and the capacity of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi community to access funding for the work that they do. It is clear that many of these projects use innovative approaches, and are potentially prototypes for the type of work that could be done more widely amongst the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities in the UK to improve education and employment outcomes.

Respondents also suggested a range of things that employers could do to attract Pakistanis and Bangladeshis into their workforces, and cited examples of how intermediaries can work with individuals to help them find work and to sustain it.
Part D
Employer survey
1 Introduction

A survey of 1,000 employers was conducted, across five areas, in order to explore employer views on any skill gaps or other issues facing ethnic minority groups in general, and Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups in particular, in the UK labour market. This part presents the results of that survey and draws out the main trends across different employer characteristics.

1.1 Respondents

In this section, the characteristics of the participants are examined to provide a profile of the type of establishments participating in the research. This is important for readers in interpreting the survey findings set out in later sections. Given the impact of operational characteristics on human resources practices, such as size and sector, it was important to determine that the sample was broadly representative of establishments across and within areas on a number of key characteristics. These are presented here.

1.2 Area

The weights were created to ensure that the regional representation reflects the picture of businesses as a whole across the five areas. The weighted data shows that establishments in Birmingham make up nearly one-third of the entire sample, whilst Tower Hamlets makes up only seven per cent (Figure 1.1).
1.3 Other main characteristics

The main characteristics of employers are presented in Table 1.1.

1.3.1 Size

Around half of the sample is made up of micro-establishments, with less than five employees. Forty-two per cent is made up of medium-sized establishments with five to 49 employees, whilst a very small proportion (around seven per cent) is made up of 50+ employees. This corresponds to the profile of businesses in these five areas, following the weighting. There are no significant differences in size between the five areas.

Table 1.1 Characteristics of employers (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Tower Hamlets</th>
<th>Bradford</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Bristol</th>
<th>Glasgow</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business owned by one person</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>33.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partnership</td>
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<td>24.3</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private limited company</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public limited company (plc)</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
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<td>Charity</td>
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<td>1.9</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
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<td>–</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>–</td>
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</table>

Source: IES/TNS P&B Survey, 2005
Table 1.1  Continued

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Tower Hamlets</th>
<th>Bradford</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Bristol</th>
<th>Glasgow</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sector</td>
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<td>76.8</td>
<td>84.9</td>
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<td>79.9</td>
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<td>12.7</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
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<td>Voluntary sector</td>
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<td>2.9</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>–</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>–</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
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<td><strong>Industry</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agric, hunting, forestry &amp; fishing</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
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<td>18.1</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>11.9</td>
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<td>Construction</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<td>5.2</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
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<td>Retail and repairs</td>
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<td>27.6</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
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<td>Hotels and restaurants</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, storage, comm</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real estate</td>
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<td>17.1</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public admin, defence, soc security</strong></td>
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<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
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<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
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<td>Health and social work</td>
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<td>5.7</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community/social/personal</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Size</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4 employees</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>51.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 49 employees</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>41.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 to 249 employees</td>
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<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250 + employees</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial turnover</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than £100,000</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£100,000 to less than £500,000</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>33.5</td>
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<td>£500,000 to less than £1m</td>
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<td>8.8</td>
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<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£1m to less than £5m</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£5m or more</td>
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<td>2.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
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<td>27.6</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part of larger group</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>90.7</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td>84.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, UK based</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, non-UK based</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (N) (unweighted)</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>1,001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3.2 Ownership and sector

A broad range of businesses were included in the sample; 34 per cent were owned by one person and 38 per cent were a private limited company. The spread of business types across the five areas is fairly even, and there were no significant differences between the areas.

The vast majority (80 per cent) of businesses included in the sample are from the private sector. Within both Birmingham and Glasgow there was a greater representation of public sector companies than elsewhere, at 13 and 12 per cent respectively. In Tower Hamlets, Birmingham and Glasgow there was also a good representation of voluntary sector organisations, making up around one-tenth of the sample in each case. However, there were no significant differences by area.

The industry best represented in the sample is ‘retail and repairs’, which makes up 30 per cent of establishments in total. Real estate makes up a sizeable proportion, at 19 per cent, whilst community/social/personal make up 11 per cent. Education and public administration/defence/social security make up very small proportions of the sample. Establishments in Tower Hamlets and Glasgow are less likely to be involved in manufacturing, and more likely to be hotels and/or restaurants.

1.3.3 Financial turnover

Employers were asked to provide details of the establishment’s financial turnover for the last year. Around 24 per cent were unaware of their financial position. This may reflect the fact that individuals interviewed were involved in HR rather than accounts within their establishments. The financial turnover of the companies is reflective of the number of small and micro businesses within the sample, and 55 per cent have a turnover of less than £500,000 per annum. There was no significant difference between the five areas.

1.3.4 Part of a larger company

It is interesting to consider whether the establishments in our sample were part of a larger group, since in multi-establishment organisations it is possible that issues regarding recruitment and equal opportunities are governed centrally and that more HR resources are available. The vast majority (84 per cent) of the establishments in our sample were not part of a larger group. Thirteen per cent were part of a larger UK-based company, and only two per cent were part of a multi-national group. There were no significant differences between the five areas.

Of those establishments that were part of a larger group, 29 per cent were a branch, 20 per cent were a division/subsidiary, whilst 18 per cent were a head office. Around one-third of the firms that were part of a larger group had less than 50 employees overall, whilst an additional 31 per cent had over 1,000 employees in total.
1.3.5 Growth

The majority of establishments (61 per cent) did not expect to employ more staff in the next two years. However, 29 per cent thought that the number of staff would increase (Figure 1.2). Firms in Tower Hamlets were more likely than those elsewhere to believe that the establishment would grow in the near future and this result was statistically significant.

Figure 1.2 Expectations regarding numbers of staff over the next two years

[Bar chart showing the percentage of establishments in different cities expecting increases, decreases, or no change in staff numbers over the next two years.]


1.4 Summary

The sample for the employer survey represents a range of organisations from a range of sectors, of different sizes and which vary across a number of other factors. On the whole, the areas were very similar. However, there were differences in the sectors represented across the areas, with Tower Hamlets and Glasgow having fewer businesses in manufacturing. Also, businesses in Tower Hamlets were more likely to forecast growth in the establishment over the next two years than businesses elsewhere.

Throughout the rest of the section, the findings from the survey have been analysed according to some of the variables, in particular area and size. Differences by area are particularly interesting due to the way the sample has been constructed (i.e., with regard to the nature of the Pakistani/Bangladeshi populations in those areas).
2 Representation of ethnic minorities

This chapter considers the extent to which ethnic minority employees and Pakistani/Bangladeshi employees, in particular, are represented within the respondents’ workforces.

2.1 Ethnicity of owner

All private sector establishments were asked whether the company/establishment was owned by someone of ethnic minority origin (Figure 2.1). This is important since the ethnicity of the owner may have implications for how the establishment approaches the recruitment of ethnic minorities in general, or specifically, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.

Figure 2.1 Whether company is owned by someone of ethnic minority origin

Around one-fifth of establishments in the five areas are owned or part-owned by someone of ethnic minority origin. As might be expected given the different representation of ethnic minorities across the five areas, there is a huge difference by area on this variable. Nearly half of establishments in Tower Hamlets are owned by ethnic minorities, compared to only five per cent of establishments in Bristol.

Other characteristics of companies under ethnic minority ownership were that they tended to be micro-establishments (73 per cent of those owned by ethnic minorities) and involved in retail or repairs (56 per cent).

The respondents were asked to state the ethnic origin of these owners. In 37 per cent of cases the owner was Pakistani. The next greatest representation was Indian owners, which made up 28 per cent of businesses owned by ethnic minorities. Bangladeshis made up just seven per cent of these ethnic minority establishment owners. As anticipated, this varied by area, with a greater proportion of owners being Pakistani in Bradford, and a greater proportion being Bangladeshi in Tower Hamlets.

In the rest of the chapter we examine whether having an ethnic minority owner has any impact on any of the findings. As three-quarters of these businesses are micro-businesses, any apparent differences need to be controlled for the number of employees. The data, therefore, does not help to identify trends amongst larger businesses owned by ethnic minorities (see Part B: Labour Market Review).

### 2.2 Employees

All establishments were asked whether they currently employ any ethnic minority staff, and more specifically, any Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff. Where relevant, data on the number of such employees was recorded (Table 2.1).

**Table 2.1** Any ethnic minority/Pakistani and Bangladeshi employees (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Ethnic minority staff</th>
<th>Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff</th>
<th>Total (N) unweighted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued
Table 2.1 Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Ethnic minority staff</th>
<th>Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff</th>
<th>Total (N) unweighted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 49</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 to 249</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2.2.1 Ethnic minority employees

Overall, across the five areas, 35 per cent of establishments reported employing ethnic minority staff, but there was significant variation by area. Sixty-one per cent of the establishments in Tower Hamlets reported having ethnic minority staff, compared to 22 per cent in Bristol. These differences reflect the different proportions of ethnic minorities in the local populations.

As anticipated, there was a strong difference by size. All of the large employers (250+ employees) stated that they have ethnic minority employees, compared to 23 per cent of micro employers. This is likely to reflect the fact that the more employees in the workforce, the greater chance there is that there will be ethnic minorities amongst them. Amongst micro- and small businesses, those owned by someone of ethnic minority origin were much more likely to have ethnic minority staff (Figure 2.2).
2.2.2 Pakistani and Bangladeshi employees

All establishments with ethnic minority employees were asked whether these employees included any Pakistani or Bangladeshi staff. Seventeen per cent of establishments, overall, did employ Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff. It is interesting, however, that eight per cent of establishments with ethnic minorities (two per cent overall) did not know whether any of their staff were Pakistani or Bangladeshi. This suggests that, beyond some monitoring of general ethnicity, detailed monitoring by ethnic group does not take place.

There was a significant difference by area, and in Bristol, the proportion with Pakistani or Bangladeshi staff was particularly low, at only five per cent. In contrast, in Tower Hamlets, nearly one-third of establishments employed Pakistani or Bangladeshi staff. There was also a significant difference by size. Medium-sized firms were most likely to have Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff, at 43 per cent. Another finding demonstrates that larger employers were less likely to know whether any of their ethnic minority staff were Pakistani or Bangladeshi; 61 per cent of firms with 250+ employees were unaware of the ethnic breakdown. This suggests that, even within these firms, monitoring is minimal.

Companies owned by someone from an ethnic minority were more likely to have Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff. However, this difference was only apparent for small companies (five to 49 employees). Of this group, 72 per cent of those with an ethnic minority owner have Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff, compared to 36 per cent of private firms not owned by an ethnic minority.
2.2.3 Any ethnic minority staff in the past?

Those respondents who did not have ethnic minority employees currently were asked whether they had employed any in the past (Figure 2.3). There was no significant difference by area on this variable. However, larger employers were more likely to have had ethnic minority employees in the past. There was no significant difference due to being owned by an ethnic minority once size was accounted for.

![Figure 2.3 Experience of employing ethnic minorities in the past](image)


2.3 Actual representation

Establishments were asked to give the actual numbers of ethnic minority and Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff in their establishment (Table 2.2). Using the data on establishment size, it was possible to calculate the proportion of such staff in the establishment.

### Table 2.2 Average proportion of ethnic minority/Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Ethnic minorities</th>
<th>Pakistanis and Bangladeshis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>With ethnic minorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>56.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>38.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>47.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>45.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued
Table 2.2  Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Ethnic minorities Overall</th>
<th>With ethnic minorities</th>
<th>Pakistanis and Bangladeshis Overall</th>
<th>With Pakistanis and Bangladeshis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>80.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 49</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 249</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>956</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A number of employers were unable to accurately recall these numbers so the base figures for this table are low. Fifty-nine per cent of large firms with ethnic minorities were unable to state the number of ethnic minorities they employ, and 71 per cent were unable to specify the number of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis staff.

On average, ethnic minorities make up 15 per cent, and Pakistanis and Bangladeshis eight per cent, of staff in these establishments. There was a significant difference by area, in line with the different representations of ethnic minorities and Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the local populations. Establishments in Tower Hamlets have the highest representation of ethnic minorities and Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, at an average of 33 per cent and 19 per cent respectively. Bristol on the other hand, has the lowest, with representation at an average of only four and two per cent respectively. There was also a difference in the representation of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis by size. Smaller establishments had, on average, higher representations, but this is to be expected given that fewer staff are required to make up a large proportion in smaller companies.

There was a significant difference by whether or not the company is owned by an ethnic minority (Table 2.3). On average, ethnic minority owned businesses had higher representations of ethnic minorities and Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in their establishments.
Table 2.3  Average proportion of staff for ethnic minority-owned establishments (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Ethnic minorities Owned by EM</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>With ethnic minorities Overall</th>
<th>Pakistanis and Bangladeshis With Pakistanis and Bangladeshis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>82.9</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>82.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>58.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>49.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2.4 Changes in numbers over the last few years

Employers were asked to specify whether their business had grown, in terms of the number of employees, or reduced in size over the last two years (Figure 2.4). A quarter of establishments thought that they had grown over the last two years and that the overall number of their employees had increased. There were no significant differences by area, although growth appeared to be lower in Tower Hamlets and Birmingham.

Ethnic minority owned micro-businesses were statistically more likely to think that their staff numbers had decreased over the last two years (20 per cent compared to 15 per cent of those without an ethnic minority owner). There was no difference in relation to whether the establishment had ethnic minority employees or not, nor by whether they had Pakistani and Bangladeshi employees. However, the following sections look at whether numbers of ethnic minority staff and Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff are thought to have increased over the last two years.
2.4.1 Numbers of ethnic minorities

Employers were also asked to discuss whether their ethnic minority workforce had increased or decreased over the same time period (Table 2.4). Establishments, overall, were more likely to think that the number of ethnic minority staff had increased than decreased. Thirty-two per cent of those with ethnic minorities thought the numbers had increased over the last two years, whilst only seven per cent thought they had decreased. There were no significant differences in the proportion of establishments stating an increase in ethnic minorities by either area or size. However, larger firms were much less likely to know whether or not numbers had increased.

Micro- and small businesses under ethnic minority ownership were less likely to think that the numbers of their ethnic minority staff had increased over the last two years (Figure 2.5). This may simply reflect a higher starting proportion of ethnic minority staff (see Section 2.2.1). Amongst micro establishments, 17 per cent with an ethnic minority owner thought the numbers had increased, compared to 71 per cent amongst those without. Amongst small employers, the equivalent figures were 18 per cent and 50 per cent respectively.

There was a strong correlation between growth in staff overall and growth in numbers of ethnic minorities, so those who reported a general growth were likely to report an increase in their numbers of ethnic minority staff. Looking at the figures, companies were only slightly more likely to think that numbers of ethnic minority staff had increased than staff overall. Of all firms with ethnic minorities, 32 per cent
thought that the number of ethnic minorities had increased, whilst 29 per cent thought that numbers of staff in general had increased. In Tower Hamlets, Bradford and Birmingham, establishments were more likely to think the numbers of ethnic minority staff had increased than the number of staff overall, whilst in Bristol and Glasgow they were less likely to think so.

Table 2.4  Changes in number of all staff/ethnic minorities (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>All employees*</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>58.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 49</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 to 249</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
* The column referring to all employees is for those with ethnic minority staff only, in order to provide the best comparison group. However, ‘all employees’ includes the ethnic minority group.

Base: N (unweighted) = 543.
2.4.2 Pakistanis and Bangladeshis

Overall establishments were more likely to think that the numbers of Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff had increased (23 per cent) than to think they had decreased (five per cent) see Table 2.5. Again there was no significant difference by area or size on this factor. Nor was there a significant difference by whether the company was owned by an ethnic minority.

Again, there was a correlation between growth in staff overall and growth in numbers of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, so those who reported a general growth were likely to report an increase in their numbers of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. However, the figures show that companies were less likely to report an increase in the number of Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff than in the number of staff in general (22 per cent compared to 32 per cent). This may be due to having fewer Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff to begin with. It is only in Bradford that companies were more likely to report growth in the numbers of Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff than growth in employees overall. In all other areas the growth was less likely to be reported amongst this group.
Table 2.5  Changes in number of all staff/Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>All employees</th>
<th></th>
<th>Pakistanis and Bangladeshis only</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td>Same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>58.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>79.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>46.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>All employees</th>
<th></th>
<th>Pakistanis and Bangladeshis only</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td>Same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>78.6</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>77.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 49</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 to 249</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>64.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: N (unweighted) = 263.

2.5  Part-time and casual work

Table 2.6 looks at the proportion of companies with part-time or casual workers. The base numbers for this table are low as some employers were unable to break down their staff numbers into full- and part-time workers, or into permanent or casual staff. Overall, 45 per cent of companies have part-time workers and 17 per cent have casual workers. Companies that employ ethnic minorities and those that employ Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are more likely to offer part-time employment (58 per cent and 62 per cent respectively). Similarly, they are more likely to have casual workers (28 per cent and 27 per cent respectively).

Table 2.6  Proportion of companies with part-time or casual workers (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All companies</th>
<th>Companies with ethnic minorities</th>
<th>Companies with Pakistanis and Bangladeshis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part-time workers</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>62.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual workers</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N 914 330 165

2.5.1 Proportion working part-time

Part-time work is more common amongst ethnic minorities in Bradford and Birmingham than amongst staff in general, but less common in Bristol (Figure 2.6). Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff were more likely to be working part-time than ethnic minorities as a whole in all areas except Bristol, where they were the group least likely to be working part-time. Amongst establishments of different sizes, the discrepancy in the proportions working part-time was most notable amongst smaller employers. Thirty-eight per cent of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in micro-establishments worked part-time compared to 19 per cent of all employees. The equivalent figures in large employers were 15 per cent and 13 per cent.

![Figure 2.6 Average proportion of staff working part-time](chart.png)


2.5.2 Proportion working as casual workers

In all areas, except for Bradford, ethnic minorities in the respondent establishments were more likely to be involved in casual work than employees as a whole, and Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were more likely still (Table 2.7). In Bristol, the average proportion of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis working on a casual basis was extremely high, at 49 per cent. This may explain why there were so few working part-time. However, in Bradford, the proportion of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis working casually is slightly lower than for staff in general. The proportion of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis working in casual jobs is consistently higher across all sizes of establishments.
Table 2.7  Average proportion working as casual/temporary workers (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>All employees</th>
<th>Ethnic minorities</th>
<th>Pakistanis and Bangladeshis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 49</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 to 249</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N (unweighted)</td>
<td>901</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2.6  Summary

The proportion of ethnic minority owned establishments, and the representation of ethnic minority staff, and specifically Pakistani and Bangladeshi employees, varied across the five geographical areas but in line with ethnic minority representation amongst the local populations. Establishments in Tower Hamlets were most likely to be ethnic minority owned and had higher representations of ethnic minority and Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff. Establishments in Bristol were least likely to be ethnic minority owned and had lower representations of ethnic minorities and Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.

One-third of establishments with ethnic minority staff estimated that the numbers of ethnic minority staff had increased in the last two years, but this corresponded to the growth of staff more generally. However, only one-fifth of establishments with Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff thought that the numbers of staff from this group had increased, which was slightly below the level of general growth within these companies.

Establishments that employ ethnic minorities or Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are more likely to have staff working part-time or as casual workers. In addition, ethnic minorities in these establishments are more likely to work part-time than staff overall in some areas, and more likely to work in casual posts in most areas. Pakistanis and Bangladeshis appear to be more disadvantaged that ethnic minorities overall in this respect. In all areas, they were more likely than ethnic minorities to be working both part-time and in casual posts in these establishments.
3  Equality policies and actions

Establishments were asked for detailed information regarding their equal opportunities policies, and whether they had taken part in any activities to improve the representation of ethnic minorities in their organisations.

3.1  Policies

A relatively small proportion of establishments (37 per cent), stated that they had policies on equal opportunities or diversity (Table 3.1). In the majority of cases, these were formal and written. Of the formal policies, the majority included race, religion and ethnicity. However, policies were much more likely to include race than either of these other aspects of diversity, and only 19 per cent of all establishments included nationality in their policies.

Table 3.1  Whether company has an equal opportunities policy (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes, have policy</th>
<th>Formal and written</th>
<th>Includes race</th>
<th>Includes religion</th>
<th>Includes nationality</th>
<th>(N) unweighted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>1,001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


No areas were statistically more likely to have equal opportunities policies than others, and none were more likely to have formal policies. However, businesses in Tower Hamlets appeared to be more fully informed about what such policies could
Employer survey – Equality policies and actions

include, as the vast majority of businesses with formal policies included race, religion and nationality. In Bristol, fewer businesses were specific about the areas that their policies covered. Employers in this area were significantly less likely to have policies which specifically mentioned race and religion.

Large establishments were more likely to have a policy than smaller businesses. All of the large firms stated that they had policies, and that these were formal and written. Larger firms were also more likely to be specific about including race, religion and nationality within their policies.

Amongst micro businesses, 26 per cent of those with an ethnic minority owner had a policy compared to only 12 per cent of others. This difference was significant. The operation of an equal opportunities policy did appear to be related to whether the establishment employed ethnic minority workers, although this only held for micro and small companies. In both cases, those with ethnic minorities were more likely to have a policy in place (Figure 3.1). These were not, however, more likely to be formal. There was no difference depending on whether the establishments employed Pakistani and Bangladeshi employees.

**Figure 3.1 Extent to which establishments with ethnic minorities have policies**

3.1.1 Aspects covered by policies

The formal and written equal opportunities policies that establishments had, tended to cover the following aspects of Human Resources (HR) activity:

- recruitment (77 per cent);
- retention of staff (61 per cent);
- promotion of staff (59 per cent);
- career development (62 per cent);
- internal staff relationships (59 per cent);
- customer service (56 per cent).

In eight per cent of cases, establishments with formal policies were not specific about the activities that were covered. There were no significant differences by area or size. The numbers were too small to examine whether there were any differences between companies owned by ethnic minorities and those not, or between those that did and those that did not have ethnic minority/Pakistani and Bangladeshi employees.

3.1.2 Aims of policies

It was important to understand the reasons that employers have for operating policies on equality and what they thought they were trying to achieve with these policies. The major reasons given were as follows:

- to avoid discrimination (57 per cent);
- to create a working environment that acknowledges diversity (18 per cent);
- for moral, ethical and social reasons (12 per cent);
- to comply with employment legislation (11 per cent);
- to follow good practice (seven per cent).

However, as many as nine per cent of those with formal policies were not sure of the purposes of their policies. Again, the numbers were too small to examine differences in reasons between those companies that do or do not employ ethnic minorities/Pakistanis and Bangladeshis and those that are and are not owned by an ethnic minority. There were also no significant difference by size or area.

3.2 Actions taken to improve ethnic minority representation

Establishments were asked whether they take any actions to either monitor the numbers of ethnic minority staff or applicants, or to actively recruit more ethnic minorities.
3.2.1 Monitoring

Only 14 per cent of all establishments had monitoring in place, three per cent planned to monitor in the future, but the vast majority (81 per cent) did not carry out monitoring at all (Figure 3.2). Bradford was the area least likely to have monitoring in place, at nine per cent, but overall, there were no significant differences by area.

Figure 3.2 Experience of monitoring

The extent of monitoring was clearly related to the size of the establishment. Whilst the majority (58 per cent) of large firms were operating some form of monitoring, just 17 per cent of small firms and eight per cent of micro firms had any monitoring in place. Amongst micro establishments, 19 per cent of those with ethnic minority employees said that they did already monitor, compared to just four per cent of those without ethnic minorities. This difference was significant. These questions include some organisations that do not currently have ethnic minorities, but that had employed ethnic minorities in the past. The ethnicity of the owner made no significant difference to responses to this question and neither did whether the organisation employed any Pakistani or Bangladeshi staff.

3.2.2 Actions taken to increase recruitment of ethnic minorities

In addition to questions regarding recruitment practice, establishments were asked whether they had taken any positive steps towards recruiting ethnic minorities. This included actions such as advertising in ethnic minority press, and providing facilities such as prayer rooms, etc. Very few establishments had taken any active steps towards recruiting ethnic minorities (Figure 3.3). Only eight per cent claimed to have been proactive.
Businesses in Tower Hamlets were much more likely to have taken action than elsewhere. Nearly one-fifth of businesses in this area had taken steps, compared to only five per cent in Bristol. Of the large firms, 38 per cent had taken some action, compared to only seven per cent of small firms and seven per cent of micro firms.

**Figure 3.3 Activities taken to actively recruit ethnic minorities**

![Bar chart showing activities taken to actively recruit ethnic minorities in different cities: Tower Hamlets, Bradford, Birmingham, Bristol, Glasgow.](chart.png)


Small companies with ethnic minority staff were more likely to have taken proactive steps towards diversity than other small firms. Of these, 12 per cent had taken some action, compared to four per cent of those not owned by an ethnic minority. However, specifically having Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff did not make a difference, nor did being owned by an ethnic minority.

Those establishments which claimed to have been proactive were asked to describe what their activities had entailed. The main approaches taken included:

- advertising in ethnic minority press (19 per cent);
- providing work experience opportunities (18 per cent);
- specific targeting of individuals (16 per cent);
- advertising in community-based publications/centres (13 per cent);
- proactive meetings with ethnic minorities (13 per cent).

Numbers were too small to allow any further analysis.
3.3 Use of government programmes

All establishments were asked whether they had heard of, and whether they had participated in, any government programmes aimed at helping unemployed people back into work. Just under half of the sample had heard of such schemes (Table 3.2). This differed by size: 88 per cent of large employers had heard of such programmes compared to just 39 per cent of micro establishments. There was no statistical differences by area. Additionally, no differences were detectable by whether or not the company had ethnic minority/Pakistani and Bangladeshi employees or whether the company had an ethnic minority owner.

Table 3.2 Experience of government programmes to get people back into work (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Yes, have heard</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Yes, currently participate</th>
<th>Yes, have participated in the past</th>
<th>Total (N) unweighted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 49</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 249</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>1,001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Very few of the establishments had actually participated in a government scheme – just 18 per cent. The extent to which schemes had been used did not differ by area. However, large and medium-sized firms were more likely to be participating in any such programmes or to have participated in the past. Whether an establishment had ethnic minority/Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff or whether they were owned by someone of ethnic minority origin made no difference to their propensity to participate in such a scheme.

Seventy-one per cent of all the establishments that had taken part in a scheme (13 per cent overall) had recruited an unemployed person as a result. Establishments in Glasgow were the most likely to have employed someone through the schemes (92 per cent of those who took part), whilst in Tower Hamlets and Bristol only half of those who took part recruited someone as a result. There were no differences by size, whether ethnic minorities/Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were employed, or whether owned by an ethnic minority. Just under half of those who recruited staff
through the programme (four per cent overall) said that some of these recruits had been ethnic minorities.

### 3.3.1 Any experience of claims

Only two establishments had experienced a claim being made against them for discrimination on the grounds of race. Both of these were currently employing ethnic minorities. Due to such a small incidence, it is not possible to examine whether any correlations exist between the attitudes/practices of employers and their experience of claims.

### 3.4 Summary

Only a minority of establishments had either formal written equalities policies or monitoring procedures in place, and very few had taken action to improve the recruitment of ethnic minorities. Additionally, all of these activities were less common amongst smaller establishments. Establishments with ethnic minority employees were more likely to have monitoring or equality systems in place, which suggests a link between diversity in the workplace and each of these aspects of HR activity. Establishments in areas with high ethnic minority representation were more likely to have taken steps to improve the recruitment of ethnic minorities, suggesting that businesses in these areas have more of an incentive to improve their workforce diversity.

Very few establishments had participated in a government scheme to help unemployed people into work. Establishments with ethnic minority staff were no more likely to have participated in the schemes, suggesting that this is not a route through which these staff have been recruited. However, where firms had participated, this did result in successful outcomes, as around a quarter of those that had participated had recruited an ethnic minority worker as a result of taking part.
4 Recruitment processes

The recruitment processes that employers use can be very informative about employer attitudes. More importantly, the methods employers use to recruit can act as barriers in their own right. If those seeking work are unable to connect with different advertising methods, or are unable to meet specific selection criteria, this can help to explain why some employers are not successful at attracting or employing a diverse workforce. It is, therefore, useful to examine not only the different processes used, but also the characteristics of employers using techniques in different ways.

In this chapter, we examine the:

- level within the establishment at which recruitment decisions are made;
- techniques used to advertise vacancies;
- stages used in the selection process;
- characteristics that employers seek.

4.1 Responsibilities for recruitment decisions

Respondents were asked to state who within their establishment makes the decisions for recruiting staff (Table 4.1). The most common decision makers overall are managers/directors followed by owners/proprietors, and within micro and small employers these two groups are overwhelmingly the main decision makers. However, the allocation of responsibility for decisions is clearly (and significantly) affected by the size of the employer. Over 50 per cent of large companies use departmental or team managers to make recruitment decisions, for example, compared to just under 25 per cent of medium-sized employers, 15 per cent of small employers and just two per cent of micro employers.

There are a number of other factors which are related to the type of roles that decision makers have within organisations, resulting in significant differences between groups. However, as size is such a major factor, this needs to be controlled for in the analysis. The differences that remain exist only within the micro and small
employers and relate to whether the site is part of a larger group. Where this is the case, the owner is less likely, and the departmental manager more likely, to make decisions.

As this survey was undertaken at the level of establishment (ie individual work unit), it is also necessary to consider the extent to which decisions are taken by organisations within the sites involved in the survey. It is, therefore, helpful to understand to what extent recruitment processes are set by these individuals on site, and to what extent are procedures established at a head office or other function elsewhere. Overall, where establishments were part of a larger group, decisions were overwhelmingly made about recruitment on site (78 per cent overall), however, the numbers involved are too small for further analysis. This suggests that the vast majority of individuals involved in the survey are able to speak with some authority on how recruitment decisions are made in the places where they work.

### Table 4.1 Responsibility for recruitment decisions by area and size (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Manager/ Director</th>
<th>Owner/ Proprietor</th>
<th>Department/ team manager</th>
<th>Specialist department</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total (N) unweighted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Manager/ Director</th>
<th>Owner/ Proprietor</th>
<th>Department/ team manager</th>
<th>Specialist department</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total (N) unweighted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 49</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 249</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>983</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Multiple response question so row percentages do not total 100.
Base: All establishments.

### 4.2 Advertising vacancies

The methods employers use to advertise vacancies is important as some methods are likely to be more effective than others in reaching particular sections of the community.

Employers tend to use a range of methods (Figure 4.1), but it is clear that there are three in particular which employers use. These techniques are the only ones used by more than 15 per cent of the sample, and are, therefore, the focus of the analysis.
The most commonly used techniques were:

- local press;
- word-of-mouth; and
- the local Jobcentre Plus.

There were, however, differences by both geographical area and the size of employer (Table 4.2) in the techniques used. Employers in Tower Hamlets, for example, were less likely to use the local press, and less likely to use multiple sources of advertising. Employers in Birmingham, however, were the ones most likely to use local press, but they also relied on word-of-mouth more heavily than employers in other areas, as did employers in Bristol.

There were major differences by the size of employer, however, with medium and large firms demonstrating very similar usage of the three main advertising methods. This profile is very different, however, to smaller employers. Large employers tended to use more formal methods, particularly Jobcentre Plus, whereas micro employers were more likely to use word-of-mouth, and small employers the local press.

**Figure 4.1 Methods used to advertise vacancies**

### Table 4.2 Main recruitment advertising techniques used (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Local press</th>
<th>Word of mouth</th>
<th>Jobcentre Plus</th>
<th>Total (N) unweighted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>59.6</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 49</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 249</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>861</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Multiple response question so row percentages do not total 100.
Base: all employers who recruit using one of three main methods.

Controlling for size, there are still a number of differences within the sample. These are that:

- amongst medium-sized employers, ones with an ethnic minority owner were much more likely to use Jobcentre Plus;
- small and micro employers with an ethnic minority owner were less likely to use the local press;
- micro employers with ethnic minority staff were more likely to use word-of-mouth;
- micro employers with Pakistani/Bangladeshi employees were less likely to use the local press (although the numbers involved here are small and this result should be treated with some caution).

Respondents were also asked to state which of the methods they used were actually the most useful in helping to fill vacancies. The top three categories were again local press, word-of-mouth and Jobcentre Plus, demonstrating that, perhaps unsurprisingly, employers tend to rely most on techniques that they find the most useful in practice.

There were significant effects of both area and size on the techniques that employers found the most useful (Table 4.3). Tower Hamlets and Glasgow employers, for example, were less likely to use local press, and more likely to feel that techniques other than the main three were the most useful. Employers in Glasgow were also the most likely to find Jobcentre Plus helpful. Two-thirds of employers in Birmingham find their local press and Jobcentre Plus the most useful, and fewer rate other techniques as useful than any other area.
In relation to size, large employers were far more likely to feel that techniques other than the main three were the most useful for them, and none felt that word-of-mouth represented the most useful way of advertising vacancies. In contrast, over 40 per cent of micro employers believed that word-of-mouth was the most effective method for them, as did a quarter of small employers. The larger the employer, therefore, the more likely they are to find more formal methods the most useful.

Table 4.3 Most useful methods of advertising vacancies (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Local press</th>
<th>Word of mouth</th>
<th>Jobcentre Plus</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total (N) unweighted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 49</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 249</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>757</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All employers able to select the most effective method used for advertising recruitment. Source: IES/TNS P&B Survey, 2005.

As size is such a significant factor in how employers use advertising, this was controlled for in the analysis. Significant differences remained only amongst the two smallest groups of employers. The main difference was between employers with ethnic minority ownership and those owned by others. Ethnic minority owned small and micro businesses were more likely to say that word-of-mouth was the most effective recruitment tool they use. Small employers owned by ethnic minorities, however, also rated Jobcentre Plus as the most useful technique, whilst very few of this group (compared to non-minority owned businesses) relied on the local press.
Table 4.4 Most useful advertising method by whether ethnic minority owned employer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No of employees</th>
<th>Whether ethnic minority owned</th>
<th>Base (unweighted)</th>
<th>Most useful advertising technique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Local press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 49</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All micro and small employers able to specify ownership (base refers to maximum number available to answer each question as actual base size will vary by technique selected).


4.3 Selection methods

When questioned about the selection methods used to deal with applications (Figure 4.2), employers appeared to use multiple sources, on the whole, and a wide range were described. For the purposes of clarity, the analysis in the remainder of this section focuses on the most common, and in particular on methods used by at least one in three employers. These methods are:

- interviews;
- references;
- CVs;
- letters of application; and
- application forms.
Both the geographical area of the employer and the number of employees were significant factors in whether each of the main selection methods was used or not\(^4\) (Table 4.5). In Birmingham, for example, around 30 per cent of employers do not use a formal interview to assess candidates. They are also less likely to use the other main techniques. Employers in Tower Hamlets are the most likely to ask potential employees for a CV, but perhaps as a result, least likely to require an application letter or form.

Micro employers are the only group who do not completely rely on the use of interviews (amongst all other groups, use of interviews is above 90 per cent). Micro employers also tend not to use references in the same way as other employers, or to use other written methods of selection. Overall, they tend to be less likely to use the main recruitment methods. Small and medium-sized employers appear to use the different selection tools to the same extent, although medium-sized employers are more likely to use application forms. Large employers use each of the tools in greater proportions that the other size bands, with the exception of the application letter which is used more by small and medium-sized employers.

\(^4\) With the exception of application forms, where the differences were not significant for area.
Table 4.5  Selection methods used by area and size (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>References</th>
<th>CV</th>
<th>Application letter</th>
<th>Application form</th>
<th>Total (N) unweighted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>80.7</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 49</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 249</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>72.9</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>99.0</td>
<td>91.6</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>64.4</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>981</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All recruiting employers.

Controlling for size, significant differences are apparent when the ownership of the employer is considered. Ethnic minority owned businesses are less likely to use all the different main techniques (Figure 4.3). However, this type of organisation does not use other techniques to compensate, so it would appear that, overall, ethnic minority owned businesses use a narrower range of techniques to help them make decisions.

There were also significant differences within the micro employer group according to whether they employ ethnic minority staff. Those that did were less likely to use interviews as a selection tool. Amongst small employers with ethnic minority staff, the use of a letter of application as a selection tool was less common.
When asked to rate the most useful selection tool from those that their organisation used, by far the most popular overall was thought to be the interview (49 per cent), followed by the reference (13 per cent). Each of the remaining techniques were rated as most useful by eight per cent or less of the total survey sample. We have, therefore, focused on the use of these two main techniques here and contrasted them with the use of ‘other’ techniques for analytical purposes.

There was no significant effect by area, but there was by size. Larger employers were less reliant on references and most likely to feel that a tool other than the main two was the most useful. Small employers were the most likely to feel that references were the most useful selection tool. Controlling for size, the only significant difference was that employers under ethnic minority ownership were least likely to rate the interview as the most useful tool, and more likely to rate other methods. This is likely to explain why these businesses were also less likely to use an interview than those under other ownership.
4.4 Attributes sought

The final stage in recruitment, having advertised vacancies and dealt with applications, is to try to identify individuals with the right skills and characteristics to work within the recruiting organisation. As might be expected given the wide range of employers involved in the survey, employers are looking for a quite different attributes when selecting which staff to employ. For the purpose of this analysis, only the top six have been analysed, and these represent the only attributes used by more than 15 per cent of employers overall. There are significant differences by both size and by area in the attributes that employers are looking for.

The significant differences are that:

- Tower Hamlets, Bradford and Glasgow are more likely than Birmingham and Bristol to look for work experience;
- the propensity to look for work experience increases with the size of the employer;
- large employers are much more likely to say they are looking for interpersonal skills.

Motivation and attitude are significantly more important for medium sized employers.

### Table 4.6 Most useful selection techniques (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Base (unweighted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>59.6</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Base (unweighted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 49</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 249</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>807</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All employers using a selection technique and able to say which one they found effective, 807 unweighted.

As employer size has such an impact on what employers are looking for, this has been controlled for in further analysis. However, even controlling for size, the following significant differences were identified:

- amongst small and micro employers, ethnic minority-owned businesses were less likely to look for work-related qualifications. The micro employers amongst this group were also less interested in communication and interpersonal skills, but small minority owned businesses were more interested in an individual’s motivation and attitude;

- micro employers with ethnic minority staff were less likely to look for work related qualifications, but more likely to look for work experience as part of recruitment. This group were also more likely to consider an individual’s motivation and attitude in recruitment;

- employers with Pakistani/Bangladeshi staff in the small and micro size bands were less likely to consider inter-personal skills at recruitment, but more likely to look at an individual’s motivation/attitude.

When asked to rate the most important characteristic in terms of predicting who will perform well on the job, none emerged as having a particularly high rating. It was possible to identify differences by employer size but there were no clear patterns. There were also some examples of the differences by area. One example is that numeracy skills were considered most important for employers in Tower Hamlets and least important for those in Glasgow, whereas, employers in Bradford were least interested in literacy skills. However, it is hard to identify any clear patterns or trends using this data in isolation.

### 4.5 Summary

The majority of respondents work in establishments where decisions about recruitment are made on site. Amongst larger employers, these decisions are generally delegated to a departmental manager or equivalent, whereas, in small and micro employers the owner or general manager is the one responsible for decision making. This suggests that within smaller employers there are less formal structures, meaning that whilst procedures can, therefore, be potentially more flexible, decisions are likely to be more reliant on the views and perceptions of individuals.

The ways in which employers attract recruits are largely limited to three main techniques, particularly in smaller workplaces. These are: local press, Jobcentre Plus and word-of-mouth. Whilst large employers tend to rely on more formal methods of advertising, and smaller ones less so, there are other differences by geographical area. In addition, employers that are owned by ethnic minority individuals are more likely to use Jobcentre Plus and word-of-mouth than to advertise in the local press, as are employers with Pakistani/Bangladeshi staff and/or ethnic minority workers. Ethnic minority-owned employers in particular were likely to find word-of-mouth the most useful recruitment tool.
A range of selection techniques are also used to determine who to employ. Larger employers use a wider range of techniques, and amongst smaller employers those under ethnic minority ownership use fewer techniques than others of that size. Interviews are felt to be the most useful selection method, but ethnic minority employers are less likely to think so. Work experience is sought out more by larger employers on the whole. The most important characteristics sought by ethnic minority owned businesses are work experience, but also motivation and attitudes, with less reliance on work-related qualifications.
5 Experiences of recruiting ethnic minorities

One of the major aims of this survey was to understand employers’ experiences of recruitment of ethnic minorities in general, and specifically of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. Participants were asked how regularly they had recruited ethnic minorities/Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the past, and then those that currently have such staff and experience of recruiting in the past two years were asked a series of questions relating to the performance of these groups during the recruitment process.

5.1 Recruitment of ethnic minorities

Amongst companies with ethnic minority staff, 23 per cent were unsure how often they recruited them (Table 5.1). However, 22 per cent said that they recruited ethnic minority staff every year. There was no difference by area in this regard. This variable was not examined by size, since size clearly determines how frequently a company is able to recruit. There was also no difference with regard to whether the establishment was owned by an ethnic minority.

Table 5.1 How often ethnic minorities are recruited (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Every year</th>
<th>Most years</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Only once</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Total (N) unweighted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>532</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 Recruitment of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis

Establishments that have Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff were similarly asked how often staff from this ethnic minority group were recruited into the establishment. Establishments were less likely to recruit Pakistanis and Bangladeshis as frequently as other ethnic minorities (Table 5.2); 21 per cent of those with Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff had only recruited them once and only 15 per cent had done so as often as every year. As before, a high proportion were unsure of how often they recruited staff from this group, providing further evidence of the lack of accurate monitoring within employers. There was no difference by area or whether owned by ethnic minority again.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tower Hamlets</th>
<th>Bradford</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Bristol</th>
<th>Glasgow</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every year</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most years</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only once</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (N) unweighted</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


5.3 Comparing performance at recruitment

Research has shown that there is an ‘ethnic penalty’ in terms of performance in the labour market. This survey aimed to understand whether there is any additional penalty that comes from being of Pakistani or Bangladeshi origin. In addition to understanding the recruitment practises of our sample, the survey examined whether there were any perceived differences in recruitment between a) ethnic minorities and White candidates, and b) between Pakistanis and Bangladeshis and other ethnic minority candidates.

5.3.1 Ethnic minorities compared to White candidates

All establishments with ethnic minority staff who had conducted some recruitment in the last two years were asked to compare the performance of any ethnic minority candidates with White candidates.

It is important to note that a number of the respondents found it difficult to answer these questions. In most cases, around a quarter said that they did not know how ethnic minority and White candidates compared along these lines.
Number of applicants

Employers were clear that they received fewer applications from potential ethnic minority staff (Figure 5.1). One-third of those asked thought that the number of applications from ethnic minorities was lower than the number from Whites. However, 45 per cent were unable to say why this was the case. However, this is likely to reflect the lower numbers of potential minority ethnic candidates within the population to some degree.

Establishments in Bristol and Glasgow were particularly likely to state that the number of applications from ethnic minorities was lower than from Whites (48 per cent and 55 per cent respectively). Larger firms were also more likely to see the numbers as being much lower. Seventy-one per cent of those with 250+ employees stated that the numbers were lower, compared to eight per cent of micro firms. This finding is expected given that larger firms will receive many more applications overall. There was no difference depending on whether the establishment was owned by an ethnic minority.

Figure 5.1 Ethnic minority candidates compared to White candidates


Quality of applicants

Around half of establishments thought that the quality of the applications from ethnic minorities and Whites was equal. However, 14 per cent thought that the quality was lower amongst ethnic minorities. There was no difference by area or size on this factor. However, whether the establishment was owned by an ethnic
minority did make a difference. Small establishments with an ethnic minority owner were more likely to give higher ratings to ethnic minority applicants than other companies; 35 per cent rated them as higher compared to only seven per cent amongst other companies. The numbers were too small to examine differences amongst micro establishments.

The numbers stating that the quality was lower are very small (N=52), but the two major reasons given for lower quality were that ethnic minority applicants don’t have the English language skills (28 per cent of those who stated it was lower), and they don’t have the past work experience (27 per cent).

Number of candidates short-listed

In terms of number of candidates shortlisted, the spread of responses was quite high. Sixteen per cent of establishments thought that the number of ethnic minorities short-listed was lower, compared to 13 per cent who thought it was higher. In most cases respondents thought this was simply a function of the fact that there had been fewer ethnic minority applicants to short list in the first place. There was no difference in ratings by area or size.

There was a difference according to whether the establishment was owned by an ethnic minority but this was in terms of the distribution of responses rather than the level of the ratings. Amongst establishments owned by an ethnic minority, only 21 per cent thought that the numbers had been equal, compared to 49 per cent of other establishments. Around equal proportions thought that they had been higher or lower. Again, the numbers were too small to examine any differences amongst micro establishments.

Quality of candidates short-listed

Assessing the quality of candidates short-listed, most employers rated ethnic minority and White candidates as fairly similar. However, respondents were more likely to think that ethnic minority candidates had a higher quality of application. Eleven per cent thought that the quality of short-listed ethnic minority candidates was higher than that of White applicants, compared to eight per cent who thought the quality was lower, although the bulk of employers could either detect no difference or were unable to say.

Most larger employers thought the quality of candidates was similar, but micro establishments were more likely to consider that ethnic minorities fared worse (15 per cent) or that they performed better (18 per cent). There was no difference according to whether the establishment was owned by an ethnic minority, although only low numbers are available for analysis. The major reason for thinking the quality was lower was that ethnic minority candidates do not have the past work experience required (although the numbers involved are very small, N=25).
5.3.2 Pakistani and Bangladeshi candidates compared to other ethnic minorities

Establishments with Pakistani and Bangladeshi employees who had recruited in the past two years were also asked to compare the performance of Pakistani and Bangladeshi applicants with applicants from other ethnic minorities (Figure 5.2).

Making comparisons between Pakistani and Bangladeshi candidates and those from other ethnic minorities was clearly something that employers found difficult. Around one-third of those asked were unable to say whether there were any differences. The numbers used in the following analysis are, therefore, small and the findings need to be treated with some caution.

Figure 5.2 Pakistani and Bangladeshi candidates compared to other ethnic minority candidates

![Figure 5.2](image)


Views were mixed and some establishments thought that the numbers of applicants were greater and quality of applications better from Pakistanis and Bangladeshis compared to other ethnic minorities. Roughly the same proportion, however, felt that the numbers and quality were lower. In each case the numbers were too low to examine any further differences.

Number of applications received

In all areas, except for Bristol, establishments received more applications from Pakistani and Bangladeshis than from other ethnic minorities. In Tower Hamlets, 67 per cent stated that they received more applications from Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.
Large employers were much more likely to receive higher numbers of applications from Pakistani and Bangladeshi applicants than from other ethnic minorities; 50 per cent thought that they received more whilst the equivalent figure was only five per cent amongst micro firms (although the numbers amongst this group were very small).

Quality of applications
In terms of quality, many establishments thought that Pakistani and Bangladeshi applicants were of equal quality to other ethnic minority applicants. There was no difference by area, but larger firms again gave more favourable ratings to Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. A quarter rated the quality as much higher amongst this group, whereas, smaller firms held a greater range of views.

Number of candidates short-listed
Roughly equal proportions of employers believed that the number of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis they short-listed was lower than numbers of other ethnic minority groups. Around a quarter of larger employers were more likely to state that the number of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis they short-list is higher than the number of other ethnic minorities. None of the larger firms stated that the number was lower. In other establishments, the responses were less favourable. In medium-sized establishments, 28 per cent thought that the number short-listed was lower amongst Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. There was no significant difference by area.

Quality of candidates short-listed
A large proportion of employers thought that there was no difference between the quality of Pakistani and Bangladeshi and other ethnic minority candidates short-listed. Larger firms rated applicants from both groups similarly, but smaller firms were less positive. Thirty-seven per cent of micro firms thought that the quality of Pakistani/Bangladeshi candidates was lower, but the numbers here were small so this finding is not conclusive.

5.4 Why have no ethnic minority employees
Those establishments which did not currently have any ethnic minority employees were asked to consider, without prompting, the reasons why. The main reasons given were as follows:
• they do not apply for jobs here (40 per cent);
• there are no vacancies/jobs (12 per cent);
• do not recruit/no need to recruit (12 per cent);
• there are no suitable jobs here (ten per cent);
• they join, but then they leave (seven per cent);
• they apply but are not successful (six per cent).
Employers, therefore, see the major reason for a lack of diversity in their workforce as something that is beyond their control, namely that they do not receive applications from some sections of the community. However, this differed by area. Only 21 per cent of employers believed a lack of applicants was a major factor in Tower Hamlets, whereas, 60 per cent of those from Glasgow felt this was a reason. Interestingly, 52 per cent of employers from Bradford, which has a high ethnic minority representation, also gave this reason. Similarly, larger employers were more likely to state that they do not get the applications from ethnic minorities. Eighty-two per cent of large firms stated that they do not receive applications, compared to 30 per cent of those with less than five employees.

5.4.1 Why do not apply for jobs

All employers who thought that ethnic minorities did not apply for jobs in their company (211 in total) were asked why they thought this was so. Forty-six per cent of these stated that they did not know. Other reasons given were that:

- not many ethnic minorities live around here (14 per cent);
- they don’t want to do this type of work (11 per cent);
- they don’t have the qualifications (five per cent);
- they don’t have past work experience (four per cent).

It was not possible to break this down any further as the numbers involved are too small.

5.4.2 Why not successful in getting jobs

Forty establishments claimed that one of the reasons they do not have ethnic minorities is because they are not successful in getting the jobs. The major reason they gave for this is that they do not have the right work experience (25 per cent of those asked). Only two establishments said that it was due to not having the right qualifications, and only four stated that it was because they do not have the right English language skills.

5.5 Summary

A sizeable group of establishments with ethnic minorities and Pakistanis and Bangladeshis said that they recruited from these groups only rarely. Some employers found it hard to say how often they recruited such individuals, suggesting low levels of recruitment monitoring.

A number of establishments had difficulty in responding to some of these questions, which again highlights the lack of detailed recruitment monitoring. Many organisations could not easily identify reasons why ethnic minorities in general, or Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in particular, may not apply or succeed in the application for a job.
Where employers did perceive differences between groups, the most commonly cited was a difference in the number of applications they received. Fewer applications had been received from ethnic minorities than from Whites, but Pakistanis and Bangladeshis appeared more likely to apply for jobs than individuals from other ethnic minority groups. Employers were more likely to have received applications from ethnic minorities or Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in areas where these groups are better represented in the local populations. Establishments which did not currently have ethnic minority staff believed that low levels of applications from them was the reason why.

On the whole, ethnic minority applicants were less likely to be short-listed than White applicants but this was partly a function of the lower number of applications from this group. However, a small minority of establishments which did not employ ethnic minority staff thought that this was due to them not being successful in getting the jobs (rather than that they did not apply in the first place). Most establishments regarded the quality of applications as fairly similar from ethnic minorities and White applications, and from Pakistanis and Bangladeshis and other ethnic minority groups. However, larger employers gave more favourable responses to Pakistanis and Bangladeshis than to other ethnic groups, and as such were more likely to shortlist them.
6 Attitudes towards employing ethnic minorities/Pakistanis and Bangladeshis

As underlying attitudes may affect how staff are either treated through the recruitment process or once in the workplace, it was very important to assess participants’ attitudes towards employing both ethnic minority staff in general, and Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff in particular.

6.1 Any advantages?

All establishments were asked whether they saw any advantages to employing ethnic minorities. A fairly high proportion were not sure whether there are any advantages to employing ethnic minorities (Table 6.1). Fifty-three per cent, however, thought that there were no advantages, whilst 32 per cent thought that advantages were apparent. There was no significant difference by area.

Table 6.1 Advantages to employing ethnic minorities (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Total (unweighted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>999</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IES/TNS P&B Survey, 2005
There was a strong difference in opinion depending on the size of the establishment (Figure 6.1). Larger establishments were more likely to feel that advantages did exist; 47 per cent of large firms believed there were advantages to employing ethnic minorities compared to just 23 per cent of micro establishments.

Small and micro-sized establishments with ethnic minority employees had clearer views than those without and were more able to state whether there were advantages or not (Table 6.2). It may be that some of those establishments without ethnic minorities have little, if any, prior experience of working with ethnic minorities and, therefore, did not feel in a position to comment. Those with ethnic minority staff were much more likely to state that there were advantages, whilst over two-thirds of micro establishments without any ethnic minority employees did not believe there were any advantages to employing them.

Small and micro establishments owned by an ethnic minority were more likely to, firstly, feel that they could respond to the question, and secondly, state that there were advantages to employing ethnic minorities (Table 6.3).

**Figure 6.1 Advantages to employing ethnic minority staff by size of company**

Table 6.2  Advantages to employing ethnic minorities (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>With ethnic minority employees</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Total (unweighted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>67.5</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 6.3  Advantages to employing ethnic minorities (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Ethnic minority owned</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Total (unweighted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>58.9</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Those establishments which either had Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff, or had received applications from this group in the past were asked whether they believed there were any advantages to employing staff from these ethnic minority groups (Figure 6.2). As before, a high proportion found it difficult to answer this question. There was no significant difference in attitudes across the five areas, nor, in this case, by size.
Ethnic minority-owned establishments held views on the advantages of employing ethnic minority workers (Table 6.4) and none said that they did not know whether any advantages exist. This group was also much more likely to state that they thought that there were advantages. There was no significant difference in the responses between those establishments that had Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff and those that did not.

Table 6.4 Advantages to employing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Ethnic minority owned</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Total (unweighted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


6.2 Attitude towards employing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis

All employers were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with a series of statements related to employing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (Figure 6.3). Please note that the semantic direction of some statements has been reversed (eg ‘I would worry about their English language skills’ has been reversed to ‘I would not worry about their English language skills’) in order to make the responses comparable.
A number of establishments found it difficult to rate their agreement with the statements, but where people were able to express a view, many establishments felt that there were benefits to employing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. For example:

- 41 per cent agreed that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis bring additional skills or perspectives to work;
- 36 per cent thought it was morally right to employ them;
- 30 per cent believed it helps reflect the customer base;
- 29 per cent believed it was good for business;

• 28 per cent thought it helped provide a better service to customers;
• 26 per cent thought that it helped fill vacancies.

The statements also asked whether they had any concerns about employing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. The major concern was English language skills; 35 per cent said that they would worry about the level of their English language. Others included:
• worry about accommodating their religious needs (13 per cent);
• worry that they would take longer to train (12 per cent);
• worry about them bringing claims against them on the grounds of race discrimination (11 per cent);
• worry that they would not fit in with other workers (seven per cent).

There were differences in attitudes between the five areas, including:
• businesses in Tower Hamlets were more likely than elsewhere to agree that employing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis is good for business, helps provide a better service to customers and helps to reflect the customer base;
• businesses in Bristol were least likely to think that having Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff helps provide a better service to customers (which may reflect the lower proportion of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the local population);
• establishments in Bradford were most likely to agree that they were concerned about discrimination claims being made against them.

Size also affected attitudes to employing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. Larger firms were the most likely to agree that employing individuals from these ethnic groups is good for business. Micro and small establishments, in contrast, had more concerns about employing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. For example:
• small and micro employers were both more likely than other firms to worry about English language, and micro establishments were also more likely to worry that they will take longer to train;
• both micro and small establishments were more likely to worry about accommodating religious needs;
• micro establishments were more likely to worry that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis will bring claims for racial discrimination against them.

Ethnic minority-owned businesses showed different attitudes to other businesses, even after accounting for size. They were more likely to agree that there are benefits to employing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis; that it is good for business; that it helps to fill vacancies; and that it helps provide a better service to customers. However, they were also more likely to worry that Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff will take longer to train.
On almost all of the statements, establishments with ethnic minority staff were more likely to agree that there are benefits to employing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. However, when it came to concerns, there were few differences in the responses. Those with ethnic minority staff were no less likely than other firms to state that they have concerns about employing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis because of their English language skills, in case they take longer to train or do not fit in with other workers or because they may not be able to accommodate their religious needs. However, they were less likely to be concerned about claims being brought against them.

A similar pattern of differences was found between those who do and do not currently employ Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. Those who did employ Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were more likely than others to see the benefits, but were, in most cases, likely to have similar concerns to those without Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff. However, they were less likely to be concerned about addressing religious needs, possibly because they already have experience of dealing with these, and were less likely to be concerned about claims being made against them.

6.3 Summary

A large proportion of establishments did not believe that there were any advantages to employing ethnic minorities, or Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. Establishments which have ethnic minority staff were more likely to believe that there were advantages. However, small and micro establishments without ethnic minority staff, which arguably make up the bulk of businesses in the UK, were the least likely to believe that there are advantages. This suggests that where employers have had experience of working with individuals from ethnic minority groups, this experience translates into more positive attitudes towards further employment.

Attitudes towards employing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were mixed. A number of establishments recognised some of the benefits, such as that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis bring additional skills to the workplace, that such employment is good for business, and that it helps to reflect the customer base. This was particularly true amongst businesses which already have ethnic minorities and Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. However, particularly amongst small and micro establishments, there was a sizeable group which did not see any benefits to employing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. Small establishments were in fact quite likely to have concerns about employing individuals from this ethnic group, particularly regarding their English language skills and the company’s ability to accommodate their religious needs.
7 Conclusions

This survey has examined the recruitment practices and experiences of a range of employers across five areas of the UK with the aim of understanding employers’ approach and attitudes to employing ethnic minorities in general, and specifically, towards Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.

The representation of these groups varies tremendously across the five selected areas. Areas with higher representations of ethnic minorities and Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were more likely to a) be owned by an ethnic minority; b) employ ethnic minorities or Pakistanis and Bangladeshis; and c) have a higher representation of such groups amongst staff. As such, areas like Bristol have a very low representation of these communities in the workforce, whilst the representation in Tower Hamlets is relatively high. Nonetheless, in all five areas employers were as likely to report growth amongst their ethnic minority staff as amongst staff in general. In terms of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis specifically, there was also a consistent pattern of growth across all areas. However, it appears that the growth is slower for this group, as fewer establishments reported growth amongst Pakistanis and Bangladeshis than reported growth in general. As such, whilst the ethnic profile of the workforce in establishments is changing, it appears to be doing so slowly.

Establishments that employ Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, or other ethnic minorities, are more likely to have staff working part-time or as temps. In addition, within establishments, the proportion of ethnic minorities working part-time is higher in some areas, and the proportion working as casual workers is higher in most areas, than for staff overall. In all of the areas, the proportion of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis working in these posts is higher still. This strongly suggests that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are particularly likely to be disadvantaged in terms of access to full-time jobs or permanent contracts in the workplace.

Employers that already have ethnic minority staff in post are more likely to have policies and monitoring procedures in place, suggesting a link between the two. However, the policies are no more likely to be formal, and informal methods of advertising jobs (such as word-of-mouth) are preferred to more formal avenues such as advertising in the press. This type of employer is also more likely to have taken
active steps towards recruiting ethnic minorities, such as through advertising in ethnic minority press.

In the assessment process, those that already employ ethnic minority staff were less likely to use formal processes such as interviews to assess the suitability of a candidate. There were also less interested in looking for ‘hard’ skills such as work-related qualifications, but more concerned about ‘soft’ aspects such as motivation and attitudes. This suggests either that the more formalised recruitment process, such as those used by larger establishments, can be unfavourable to ethnic minorities and Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, or that employers using such techniques are unattractive to workers from these communities. However, in the absence of any information regarding types of jobs it is difficult to make this assessment. What is clear is that large employers may need to rethink their recruitment practices if they are to begin to improve the diversity of their workforce.

In terms of experiences of recruiting individuals from ethnic minority groups, most establishments thought that there were few differences in the performance of ethnic minorities compared with White applicants, or Pakistanis and Bangladeshis compared with other ethnic minority applicants. If anything, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were perceived as providing higher quality applications than other ethnic minorities, particularly amongst large employers. The major issue, as far as employers were concerned, was the lack of applications from these groups. Whilst there was some variation by area, many establishments stated that they received fewer applications from ethnic minorities than from Whites, although amongst ethnic minorities, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were thought to send more applications than other groups. For those establishments that did not have ethnic minority staff, this was seen as the major reason why not; they do not receive the applications in the first place. This raises the question of whether or not the recruitment process does attract ethnic minority applicants.

However, a number of establishments had difficulty in responding to some of these questions, which highlights the lack of detailed recruitment monitoring. Many organisations could not easily identify reasons why ethnic minorities in general, or Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in particular, may not apply or succeed in the application for a job.

The experience of employing ethnic minorities is clearly related to more positive attitudes towards what staff from these groups can offer. Such employers are less likely to be concerned about the risk of claims being made against them for discrimination. However, the direction of this relationship is unclear. Does the experience of employing ethnic minority staff change attitudes, or are employers with more positive attitudes simply more likely to recruit staff from non-White backgrounds?

Attitudes towards Pakistanis and Bangladeshis varied tremendously by size, and smaller companies were less likely to see any advantages, and were more likely to have concerns. Therefore, whilst in terms of recruitment practices, they may be in a
better position to recruit these staff, it could be argued that smaller employers have less of an incentive to do so. There was also a difference by area, particularly with regards to whether employers can see any business benefits. Establishments in Bristol, where the representation of ethnic minorities in the general population is low, were understandably less likely to see any business benefits that come from being able to reflect the customer base.

Whilst the numbers of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in establishments appear to be growing, therefore, they are still more likely to be in the least secure jobs, and to represent a small section of the workforce, particularly in some areas. Whilst ethnic minorities are more likely to be in establishments that have informal recruitment processes, and do not generally employ methods such as interviews or ask for work-related qualifications, the quality of their applications is unlikely to be seen as very different. If anything, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are seen more favourably in this regard than other ethnic minority groups. If employers are successful in attracting applications, therefore, then these are seen as being as high a quality as those from any other ethnic group.

The reasons for receiving fewer applications is beyond the scope of the survey. However, this survey did find that employers still have some very real concerns about working with Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. It appears that these attitudes are what needs to be addressed. Familiarity with working with Pakistanis and Bangladeshis seems to be key, but this presents a vicious cycle. If more employers are to work with Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, their concerns are likely to reduce. However, until these concerns are allayed, and the benefits of employing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are more widely visible, they are unlikely to take steps towards employing more individuals from these communities.
Part E
Individual interviews
1 Introduction

This part presents the findings from the main stage of the research. The aim of this stage was to carry out in-depth interviews with Pakistani and Bangladeshi jobseekers and non-jobseekers in order to understand, from their point of view, the things that make it difficult for them to move into work.

The detailed methodology adopted to conduct the interviews with individual Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents is set out in Appendix E. That discusses the sampling strategy, including the criteria, the recruitment process, the conduct of the interviews themselves, and the analysis of the interviews.

Following this introduction, Chapter 2 provides the context for the rest of the report, by setting out the background of the respondents. It describes in detail the characteristics of respondents’ households, their housing and conditions, and how long they have lived in their areas of residence. The chapter also looks at the migration history of respondents, their educational background, labour market history, and importantly, what languages they speak; in particular, their fluency in the English language.

Chapter 3 looks at the current labour market status of respondents, ie what they were doing, in terms of employment or claiming out-of-work benefits. The chapter is extended to also look at what other people in respondents’ households were doing. As we were interested to know what coping strategies respondents could be using to get into employment, there is a brief review of the job details of a comparative group of people in employment, including what techniques they had used in their job search.

Chapter 4 looks at respondents’ attitudes to work, in particular, whether work is a goal and if so, what type of work they would like. The chapter delves deeper into respondents’ attitudes to work by looking at how they are going about securing employment; in other words, the methods they were using to look for work. As people’s aspirations and expectations also inform their attitudes to work, the chapter looks at that aspect of respondents’ lives. The chapter concludes by trying to gain an insight into the problem of low economic activity rates among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis by looking at attitudes to women working outside the home, among the two groups.
Chapter 5 goes to the heart of the research by identifying the main barriers to employment among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. This chapter assesses the significance of a range of barriers, which are grouped under specific heading relating to: personal characteristics; household level; human capital; area-based; and employer attitudes. The analysis focuses on specific barriers within each of the main groupings.

This part is rounded off by looking, in Chapter 6, at the help that respondents thought they might need to move into paid employment. There is particular focus on respondents’ experience of Jobcentre Plus and its programmes, although other help respondents had received in the past to move into work is discussed too.

Chapter 7 is the concluding chapter, and provides an effective summary of the findings for this stage of the research.

Whenever possible within this report, we have sought to make distinctions between the two populations by looking at their specific characteristics.

In this report, quotes from interviews are used to illustrate points made in the text. They are used to show both comments made by very many of those who took part in the research, as well as comments that were more unusual, but important in terms of the objectives of the research. All the names of respondents have been changed. Each quote indicates the ethnicity, gender, and labour market status of the respondent, and age or area where relevant (when these issues are being discussed). Observant readers will notice that there are overlaps in some of the direct quotes used in this section. This is intentional, and the quotes are used to illustrate different circumstances, but also reinforce the fact that respondents face multiple barriers.
2 Background

This chapter presents background information on the respondents interviewed during the course of this research. It looks in turn at the household structures and the types of housing in which the respondents live, how long they have lived in the area, and their patterns of migration to the UK. The chapter then looks at language, and in particular which language respondents consider to be their first, and the extent to which they speak English. The varied educational background and qualifications of the respondents are outlined, and finally the respondents’ labour market histories are considered.

2.1 Household

The interviews covered a wide range of ages of both Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, and it was age, to some extent, which governed household composition, ie those who were older tended to be married and lived with their spouses and children, those who were younger and had not yet married lived with their parents and siblings.

Around half of the respondents were living with their husbands or wives, and most of these respondents reported that they had children who lived with them. The number of children living in their households varied considerably, but very few respondents reported having no children or only one child. Some respondents had two children, but more usually they reported having between three and six children. Younger respondents, ie those in their 20s and 30s who were married, usually had all their children living with them, as they were pre-school or school age. Older respondents, ie those in their 40s and above, also tended to have at least some of their children living with them, although often, some had moved out, usually because they had got married and had gone to live with their partner, and possibly also other relatives. However, some had daughters or sons who had married and were still living in their households. There were also lots of examples of households comprising husbands, wives, children and an elderly parent. Some respondents lived in households with more extended families, of perhaps eight to ten people, including parents or parents in law, married siblings and their children, cousins, aunts etc. Somewhere between one-tenth and one-fifth of both Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents reported living in this type of household.
Around one-fifth of respondents lived with their parents and siblings, most often because they were not married and had not left home permanently. These respondents were almost exclusively in their teens and 20s. There were a few examples of respondents who were married and living with their parents while they waited for their husband or wife to join them from Bangladesh or Pakistan, and there were also occasional examples of those who had been married but were now divorced and had returned to the parental home. These respondents usually lived with both parents and sometimes other family members too, although a small number reported living with only one parent due to separation, divorce or death.

A few of the respondents reported that they themselves were lone parents, and lived with one or more of their children. A small number reported that they lived with other family such as sisters, brothers or cousins. A very small minority of respondents reported living on their own, and there were a couple of isolated examples of respondents living with friends rather than family.

There were few differences between the Pakistani and Bangladeshis interviewed in terms of the types of households in which they lived. The only difference was that slightly larger proportions of Pakistanis compared to Bangladeshis reported living with their parents and siblings rather than with their husbands/wives and children.

Respondents with children of school age or under, reported that they had at least some responsibility for their care, although women were likely to take on a larger share of this than men. Other caring responsibilities for those living in their households were reported more rarely, but some respondents said that they looked after elderly parents in poor health, or perhaps their spouses who were or had been ill. Caring for grandparents or siblings with disabilities was also mentioned occasionally.

2.2 Housing

There were some interesting differences between Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in terms of their housing, particularly given that the households in which they live appeared to be very similar. More than two-thirds of the Pakistani respondents reported that they or a member of their family, for example, their father, mother, son or aunt owned the property in which they lived. However, only about one-third of the Bangladeshi respondents owned (or reported that their families owned) the properties in which they were living. The rest rented their homes, usually from the council, although a fair proportion rented from private landlords, and a smaller number from housing associations.

Around half of the Bangladeshi respondents lived in houses, the other half lived in flats, whereas, virtually all of the Pakistani respondents lived in houses. It should be remembered that a large proportion of the Bangladeshi respondents lived in a London borough, where it is generally less common to live in a house than is the case in many other cities in the country. However, the difference between the two groups is still marked and striking. In general, the flats had one or two bedrooms, and the houses had three or four bedrooms, although there were a few examples of
respondents living in houses which had six or seven bedrooms. As a result, in
general, the Bangladeshi respondents lived in smaller homes with fewer bedrooms
than was the case amongst the Pakistani respondents, and since they were less likely
to own their homes, and more likely to rent from the council, they had less control
over the conditions in which they lived.

Although there was considerable variety in terms of the size of households within
both the Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups of respondents (see Section 2.1.1), as a
whole, the Bangladeshi respondents’ households appear to be of a similar size to
those reported by the Pakistani respondents. Hence, the fact that they lived in
smaller homes suggests that they tended to live in more crowded conditions, and
this was commented on by several of the Bangladeshi respondents. For example,
one Bangladeshi respondent who lived in Tower Hamlets in a rented two-bedroom
house with his wife and three children, said that their accommodation was not
sufficient for his family’s needs, and a Bangladeshi man living with his wife and four
children in a two-bedroom council house in Birmingham echoed this view.

The striking differences between these Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents in
terms of their living conditions should be borne in mind. While these findings cannot
claim to be representative of the conditions in which all Bangladeshis and Pakistanis
are living in the UK, they do tie in with the literature which suggests that deprivation
in terms of housing is particularly acute in the Bangladeshi community. In this
instance, these findings also provide context for the remainder of this report.

2.3 Area

This section outlines how long the respondents had lived in their current area of
residence. Responses varied from those who had recently moved into the area and
had been living there for only a few months, to those who had lived in the area for
more than 30 years. There were such examples at each end of the scale amongst
both the Pakistani and the Bangladeshi respondents. However, a greater proportion
of the Pakistani respondents reported that they had lived in their current area all of
their lives, or that they had lived in their area for 30 years or more.

The second generation Pakistani respondents were mainly in their late teens and
20s, but there were also some respondents in their 30s who had lived all of their lives
in the same area. There were a couple of respondents who had lived in their current
area for more than 40 years, after having migrated to the UK in the 1960s, and
several more who had lived in the area for between 20 to 30 years, after having come
to the UK slightly later. Many of the Pakistani respondents had lived in their current
area for between ten and 20 years. There were also examples of respondents who
had lived in the UK for much or all of their lives but they had moved between towns
and cities and had been living in their current area for a shorter time. One
respondent, for example, had moved from West Yorkshire to Birmingham to find
work, another had moved from Birmingham to London to get married, and another
had moved from Birmingham to Bradford. A minority of respondents had been
living in their current area for less than ten years.
Amongst the Bangladeshi respondents, there were also some who had lived in their current area all of their lives, and these respondents tended to be in their late teens or 20s. Many of the Bangladeshis had come from Bangladesh to London in the late 1980s or early 1990s and had moved around within the city before settling in their current area. There were some first generation migrants who had remained living in the same area in the UK for 20 years or more, and in a couple of cases, respondents said that they had lived in the area for 30 years, ever since they came to the UK, but this was the longest duration. In general, Bangladeshis reported having lived in their current area for a slightly shorter time than the Pakistanis, and this was at least in part as they tended to have arrived in the UK at a later date. Just over a quarter of the Bangladeshis reported that they had lived in their current area for between five and ten years, and a similar proportion reported having lived in the area for between ten and 20 years. A few had lived in the area for five years or less. There were examples of those who had settled in the area after having moved from Bangladesh, and other cases where respondents had moved from other cities, for example, from London to Birmingham, or from Bristol to London. Amongst those living in Tower Hamlets in particular, there were examples of individuals having lived in various London boroughs as a result of waiting for permanent housing provided by the council. Most of the Bangladeshi respondents lived in the Tower Hamlets area (and hence, the patterns in Tower Hamlets mirrored those of the Bangladeshi respondents), although there were a small number in the other case study areas, most particularly Birmingham.

Looking at the other case study areas where this research was conducted, a few patterns emerged. In particular, those in Bradford seemed to be the most settled, as many had lived in the same area for their whole lives, and several had lived there for more than 30 years. There was a similar pattern in Glasgow. In Bristol, the respondents more commonly reported having lived in the area for between five and 20 years, and some for less than that, although there were a few respondents who had lived there all their lives, or for 20 years or more. Birmingham presented a more mixed picture, although respondents had most commonly lived in that area for ten to 20 years. Some of the younger respondents had lived there all their lives, and others had lived there for at least 20 or 30 years. There were also some respondents who had lived there for less than five years, sometimes as a result of moving from other areas in the UK, or from Pakistan or Bangladesh for marriage.

2.4 Migration

Looking at the respondents as a whole, 121 of the respondents were first generation, ie they were not born in the UK. The rest of the respondents were either second or third generation, ie their parents or grandparents had migrated to the UK and the respondents were born here. This section looks in more detail at the different migrational backgrounds of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents.

Many of the Pakistani respondents had been born in the UK and spoke of their fathers or grandparents first coming to the UK in the 1960s to take up employment
opportunities. Others said that they had come to the UK when they were young children, joining their fathers who had migrated earlier and worked for a number of years. They had often saved up money and bought houses before sending for their families:

‘Well my dad came, I think it was the early 60s. Because we were born, that’s me, my younger brother and my older brother, the three of us were born here in the UK. I think it was around 1960.’

(Pakistani man, employed, age 37, second generation)

‘My dad was the first in the family and he came in the 60s. He brought the family over in 1975 and I was born in 1979.’

(Pakistani woman, in employment, age 26, second generation)

‘My grandparents came over about 45 years ago, then my dad came over at the age of 14.’

(Pakistani woman, economically inactive, second generation)

Some of the respondents themselves had come to the UK with their fathers, as teenagers or young men during the 1960s and 1970s and had lived in the UK for 30 years or more. Some sent for their families when they were financially stable, others had married in the UK and their children were born here. The original purpose of their moving to the UK was to find work, and to provide a better life for their children:

‘First my dad came you see (in 1971). I came because he came to work… I think I was 13 or 14.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker, age 45, first generation)

There were also examples of respondents who had been born in the UK, but who had been taken by their parents to Pakistan when they were very young, returning to the UK after many years, or perhaps for or after marriage. Likewise, there were some examples of respondents who had moved back and forth from Pakistan to the UK, settling in each country for several years at a time, before moving again.

A smaller but still substantial number of respondents had come to the UK later, during the 1980s, 1990s, or 2000s, and this was mainly to marry in the UK, or to join their husband or wife who was living in the UK already. Occasionally, respondents said that they had migrated to the UK in the last ten years to find work, to study or to join other family, for example, siblings:

‘I was born in Pakistan and became a resident in the UK about seven years ago. I am originally from Islamabad in Pakistan where I have lived with my parents all my life before coming to UK through marriage. My wife invited me to UK. I am now a permanent resident here.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker, first generation)
‘I was born in Mirpur, Pakistan in 1976. I am Pakistani Muslim. I am married to Pakistani girl from Bristol (British citizen) in early 2002 and came to UK in mid-2002. Since my wife is British Citizen, my application for indefinite leave to remain was approved in 2003. I am now awaiting British citizenship.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker, first generation)

Respondents most commonly said that they or their families were originally from Kashmir and the Mirpur district. However, some hailed from Rawalpindi and Islamabad, some were from Lahore, and others were from the Punjab.

The Pakistani respondents described themselves as Pakistani or British Pakistani. Occasionally, respondents described themselves as Asian or Kashmiri. Those who said they were British Pakistani were mainly those who had been born in the UK, although some who had been born in Pakistan also described themselves in this way. Similarly, some of those who had been born in the UK said they were simply Pakistani, as did those who had been born in Pakistan.

The Bangladeshi respondents presented a wide range of migrational backgrounds, and although some had been born in the UK, most had arrived in this country as babies, children or adults. There were examples of people first arriving in this country from the 1960s to 2002. A few of the respondents had arrived in the UK in the 1960s; but more usually, the respondents were the children of these original migrants. Some of the respondents said that their fathers had came to the UK as teenagers together with older relatives (usually the respondents’ grandfathers), to find work, and others had arrived in a similar way in the 1970s. Some of the respondents had been born in the UK, but a larger number had been born in Bangladesh and came to the UK, usually together with their mothers and other siblings, when their fathers were able to send for them:

‘My dad came (to the UK) when he was about 15. My grandad came to work in the factories and brought his family. My dad went to school here, he’s 45 now. They used to live in Yorkshire and when my dad got married in his mid-20s and he brought his wife to live in London. By then she had had my brother and me.’

(Bangladeshi woman, jobseeker, age 22, first generation)

‘My father came first in 1960s and worked as an engineer. My mother came in 1978, my big sister was four years old.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker, age 20, second generation)

Respondents had moved to the UK in this way in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. There were examples of Bangladeshi-born children of a range of ages joining their fathers in the UK – some were just a few months or a couple of years old, while others were in their teens. There were also those in their teens and 20s who had come from Bangladesh to the UK in the 1990s and 2000s to get married or to join their husbands or wives who were British citizens, or who had come to join other family members:
‘I am a Bangladeshi. I was born in Bangladesh. I came to Britain in 1995. I came here to join my wife. I come from the district of Sylhet in Bangladesh.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker, first generation)

‘I was born in Bangladesh. I arrived in UK in 1998 from Bangladesh and subsequently became the citizen of Britain as I got married a girl (now my wife) who is by birth, citizen of this country. After my marriage, my wife helped me to come here. My wife’s family came in the UK in early 50s and my father-in-law came first.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker, first generation)

Respondents said that they or their families had come to the UK for employment, to improve their educational opportunities, or to join family. There were occasional examples of Bangladeshi men having come to the UK to continue their education, for example, to pursue postgraduate studies:

‘I came from Bangladesh and subsequently became the citizen of Britain. I came from a village in Sylhet in 1976 with my father, which is a district of Bangladesh. At that time my father worked in Britain and he brought me for better life and adequate schooling.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker, first generation)

‘I came in 1992 to do my scholarship and in 1996 I went back to Bangladesh. In 2000 I did research then went back. In 2002 I came again but this time I got immigration so I didn’t go back.’

(Bangladeshi man, in employment, first generation)

These Bangladeshi respondents (or their families) were almost all from the Sylhet region of Bangladesh. A few respondents said that they were from elsewhere, for example, the former East Pakistan, the city of Chittagong, or the Sunamganj district. One of the respondents commented on the migration patterns of Bangladeshis, where they mainly came from, and why:

‘My dad followed his brothers. My grandfather was in the Navy during the British Empire. Most of the people are from Sylhet or Mirpur because those states were poor and people aren’t very educated from those parts. They wanted to get out, they’re normally farmers. My eldest uncle came through a work permit and my dad followed through a voucher scheme…From their point of view it was to earn money and settle back into Bangladesh. Then things changed and people started bringing their families over. They still had the thought that they’d go back one day but this generation realises this is their home. Some of our elders still think they’ll go back. But we’ve got families, friends and careers here.’

(Bangladeshi man, in employment, age 34, first generation)

Most of the Bangladeshi respondents described their ethnic origin as Bangladeshi, although a small number described themselves as Bengali.
2.5 Language

Across the respondents as a whole, 138 were fluent in English. A further 93 respondents were not fluent in English; this varied from being able to speak in broken English, to having few or no words of English. Most of these interviews were conducted in respondents’ first language and later translated into English for analysis.

The Pakistani respondents tended to speak fluent Urdu or Punjabi, and some were able to speak both of these fluently. Many were also fluent in English, particularly those who were second generation, or those who had come to the UK at a fairly young age. Those who had come to the UK as adults were usually less fluent in English, some had very good English, but some spoke only broken English and others spoke little or no English. It was fairly common for respondents to report that they spoke Urdu, Punjabi and English, although they were rarely equally comfortable speaking all three languages.

Respondents’ first language was usually either English (amongst second generation respondents) or Punjabi (amongst first generation respondents) although Urdu was the first language for some. Some respondents said that they were equally happy to speak English or Punjabi, or English and Urdu, and that the language they used depended on who they were talking to:

‘Mainly Punjabi and English with brothers and sisters. My mum and dad understand when we speak English but prefer to give the answer back in Punjabi.’

(Pakistani women, jobseeker, first generation)

‘It depends who I’m talking to, if I’m talking to my wife I talk Punjabi, if I’m talking to my kid, I’ll speak English to him, but then sometimes I will have to explain in our language, the way he understands it.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker, first generation)

The Pakistani respondents usually reported speaking a mixture of languages with their families, depending on their families’ preferences and abilities. For example, some respondents reported speaking English outside the home, but speaking Punjabi or Urdu with their parents or wider families, if their English was limited. Others said that their parents understood English but preferred to answer in Punjabi or Urdu, while a small number reported that their parents had fairly fluent English. Some of the respondents said that they tended to converse in a mixture of languages, especially when with their friends and children:

‘It’s a mix of languages, a mix of Punjabi and English, you will mix different words together, when non-Asian friends come in they say, “what was that, I missed that,” and you don’t realise you do that. We just mix it together.’

(Pakistani women, jobseeker, second generation)
‘English with my children, but Urdu as well. Sometimes I mix them all together.’ (Pakistani women, economically inactive, first generation)

A few respondents expressed their concern that their children should learn to speak in the mother tongue as well as in English:

‘We grew up speaking our own language (Urdu and Punjabi) at home. English outside, at home, I want all my kids to grow up speaking our languages.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker, second generation)

There were other languages and dialects reported less frequently alongside the various combinations of Urdu, Punjabi and English. These included Arabic, Mirpuri, Hindi, Pushtu, and Enco.

The Bangladeshi respondents most commonly said that they spoke both Bengali and English, and some were equally comfortable using either language. Proficiency in English language was strongly associated with the respondents’ migrational profiles; those who had been born in the UK or who had come to the UK when they were fairly young were the most likely to have fluent English. Those who had migrated to this country when they were adults, for example, as a result of marriage, often spoke little or no English. Some of the Bangladeshi respondents said that Bengali was their only language. Others with little or no English spoke Sylheti (a Bengali dialect) and Bengali, while others spoke only Sylheti. A small number of respondents spoke only Sylheti and English.

A substantial number of the Bangladeshi respondents said that Bengali was their preferred language (although some of these also spoke English) and a smaller number preferred speaking the Sylheti dialect. Many of the second generation respondents were most comfortable using English. There were also some respondents who were equally comfortable speaking either Bengali or English. As was seen amongst the Pakistani respondents, the Bangladeshi respondents who were able to speak English as well as the mother tongue of their family adapted the languages they spoke depending on who they were with:

‘I speak Bengali and English, but it depends who I’m talking to. Mostly Bengali with my parents.’

(Bangladeshi women, jobseeker, first generation)

‘Bengali, we have to (use it). We speak both, ever since we were young my parents taught us we have to speak our mother language which we have been. We use English as well.’

(Bangladeshi woman, economically inactive, second generation)

There were some other languages and dialects spoken by a few of the Bangladeshi respondents, and these included Hindi, Urdu, Indian, and Gurjurati:
‘Mostly Bengali. I’ve got different languages because I used to work in restaurants as a waiter so I can speak Punjabi, Indian, Pakistani.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker, second generation)

2.6 Education and qualifications

There was a wide range of educational experiences amongst the Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents, spanning those with little or no formal education, to those with postgraduate qualifications. This section outlines the education and qualifications of the Pakistanis and then the Bangladeshis who took part in this research.

**Pakistani respondents**

Some of the Pakistani respondents had all of their formative education in Pakistan before coming to the UK, some had been educated entirely in the UK, while a small number had education in both countries, often starting in Pakistan and finishing in the UK. Of those who were educated in Pakistan, many had attended school until they were age 16 or 17, and had gained qualifications equivalent to GCSEs. A small number had progressed onto college where they had gained further qualifications equivalent to ‘A’ levels or GNVQs. A few had time away from school to attend religious studies. Some of the men had left school earlier than age 16 to work and help to provide for their families, and a number of the women had to leave school early because their families had made them stop attending. Other women said that their families felt that school or college was too far away for them to attend, or that education was simply not a priority for them, so a few women who had grown up in Pakistan had attended school for only a few years or not at all:

‘I studied ‘till primary year four in Urdu language in my home village near Mirpur, Pakistan. Then I moved into farming with my father. My father has 20 acres of farming land in our home village. Nobody encouraged me to pursue my studies further.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

‘I finished at 14, I am the oldest in my family and my mother was ill. My father say stay home and look after. I can’t go for education…Twice (I went to) English classes. Then I start work and they stop. I worked for 15 years as a machinist.’

(Pakistani woman, not claiming benefits)
'I did complete a formal compulsory education and studies up to fifth year in school only. I performed average at school which I felt was good. I discontinued education without any formal qualifications. I had to leave education at the age of ten because my school was very far from home and for Pakistani girls, it was not considered very necessary to send them to school. I have no formal qualifications from abroad, but I have attended English language training course since I have been here.'

(Pakistani woman, economic status unknown)

Some of these women had been in the UK for many years, while others had migrated much more recently to get married. They usually had little or no English language, and although they said they would like to learn English, they viewed taking care of their children and the home as a greater priority. A couple of these women had been actively discouraged from learning by their husbands. However, some of the respondents who had been educated in Pakistan and had arrived in the UK as adults said that they were attending English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) or English language classes, or that they had in the past. Many said that they would like to attend again, but there were other things, such as looking after family or finding work, which were a higher priority for them.

Aside from English language classes, the respondents who had been educated in Pakistan had rarely done any learning since leaving school, although a small number had done short courses at local centres, for example, IT courses at local learning centres for Asian women.

Those who had school or college level qualifications from Pakistan said that their qualifications were not recognised in this country, and those whose English was not fluent also said that they were unable to explain to an employer what qualifications they had done and what the UK equivalent would be. Just one male respondent had gained a degree in Pakistan (and also an MSc and an MPhil) and after working as an Assistant Professor at a University in Pakistan for several years, had come to the UK to do a PhD. However, following this he had been unable to find work either relevant to his specialist areas, or to be admitted onto teacher training programmes in the UK.

Some of the respondents had begun their education in Pakistan but had come to the UK with their families and attended school in this country. They had usually found it a difficult transition to make, particularly as a result of language difficulties. The earlier in their education that they had settled in the UK, the more likely they were to have been able to redress this and gain some qualifications. Those who joined the UK education system well into their secondary education had struggled at school and had no qualifications. There were also a couple of examples of those who had been born in the UK and had then lived in Pakistan for some years before returning to the UK and continuing their education here, and they too tended to find it difficult to slot back into the UK education system, not least because of language difficulties.
The Pakistani respondents who had all of their education in the UK also presented a variety of experiences and outcomes. They tended to be in their teens, 20s or 30s, whereas many – although not all – of those who had been educated in Pakistan were older than this. Quite a number of these respondents had attended school in the UK from age four to age 16, and had taken and passed some GCSEs, from where they progressed into studying for vocational qualifications such as GNVQs. Several of the women had done GNVQs in childcare, while amongst the men, motor mechanics was a fairly popular choice, either as a GNVQ, or for those who had not gained any GCSEs, as part of a YTS or equivalent scheme.

Others had left school with few or no qualifications and had either done no learning since then, or had been on training schemes or short courses, often through the New Deal. A few of the respondents had tried several full-time post-16 courses but had not been able to settle and complete any of them, as they found them too difficult or not suitable for some reason. Hence, they had been unable to gain any qualifications at all, or improve on the GCSEs they had gained at school. For example, one man had passed six GCSEs at school but had dropped out of his college course in electronics as he had found the assessments too difficult. Others had gained GCSEs at school and had done several courses since then to try to find something which suited them, completing some and dropping out of others:

‘I did GCSEs and went on to ‘A’ levels. I dropped out, I did one and a half years so I had an AS level in Sociology, History, IT. I stopped for two years as I couldn’t cope with it. I went to Pakistan for a holiday, came back and started the Access course…. When I came back I (also) did a few courses, computers, dressmaking, textiles. I did level three.’

(Pakistani woman, not claiming benefits)

Occasionally, respondents said that they had started a college course but had not completed it due to family circumstances, or because they had got married and, in the case of men, had to find work, or in the case of women, had to move to be with their husband.

Several of the respondents spoke of the difficulties they had at school with language, and some said that they had been bullied or picked on because they were Asian. Others said that the teachers had not encouraged them to aim for what they really wanted to do, but had told them they would not be good enough. A few said that they had not liked school and had left as soon as they could, but others had enjoyed school. These difficulties were compounded when respondents’ families had also not encouraged them in their education:

‘People take advantage because you’ve been born and bred here that you’re going to be au fait with the language, they don’t realise you don’t speak it when you go home. When I was going to secondary school I seemed to learn a lot more of the language than I did when I was at primary school. I was a lonely child and there was a lot of racism around so it wasn’t that easy. I ended up with my English, I caught up by reading.’

(Pakistani woman, in employment)
‘I had to leave, my mam was ill. My dad was strict, he always wanted me to leave school, he never encouraged us in education. He said no more school. I wish he had encouraged us. It was a strict family. We were the only coloured people there (at school) apart from another family. I was bullied as well. I went on holiday so it gave me a chance to repeat a year. I wish my father had encouraged me. He did his best but it was probably the way he was brought up.’

(Pakistani woman, jobseeker)

Some of the respondents had gained degrees in the UK; they were almost all in their 20s and were fairly recent graduates, in subjects such as computer science, biological sciences, English language and library studies. Most were still looking for relevant work, but felt optimistic about their chances. A few other respondents said that they would have liked the opportunity to go on to Higher Education but that their family and/or financial circumstances had not allowed them to at that time, although things were changing now:

‘In the early 80s the only people who went to university were the people who were well off but because my parents are working class, my father is quite old fashioned and he couldn’t see any reason for a further education. Me and my sister didn’t get an opportunity. My sister did her ‘A’ levels but after that went straight into employment. She missed out which is why she’s doing all these courses now. I don’t feel too bad about it now. I did ten years ago. As time has gone on they’ve realised it’s a good thing to get your children educated. Its turned around now, they’ve realised if you have a good education you’ll get a good job and it’s become the same for females as well as males.’

(Pakistani woman, in employment)

‘I went to school until 16 and then to college and uni...I was at college doing special English classes. My parents pushed for education and I did GCSEs and didn’t get very good grades. They were doing these BTEC courses then HND, it was a stepping stone to being a graduate...At uni I did business organisation studies.’

(Pakistani woman, in employment)

Many of these respondent said that they had sisters or brothers who were doing well educationally. They were still at school, or at college or university, studying for ‘A’ levels, NVQs or degrees.

Bangladeshi respondents

Turning to the Bangladeshi respondents, there were many similarities with the education histories of the Pakistani respondents, although there was overall slightly more polarisation between those with very little or no education, and those who were highly qualified to degree level and beyond.
Of those who had been educated in Bangladesh, some had studied at school up until around age 18 and gained qualifications equivalent to GCSEs. Some had stayed at school or college a little longer and had gained higher level qualifications. However, in the UK their qualifications were not recognised, and they usually had little English language, meaning that if they wanted to pursue their education, they effectively had to start from scratch, first with ESOL classes, and basic level vocational qualifications:

‘I think because I’m educated in Bangladesh no one thinks I’m very qualified.’

(Bangladeshi woman, jobseeker)

One respondent who arrived in the UK in 2002 hoped to do her GCSEs at college and then train to be a primary school teacher. A number had attended school in Bangladesh but had left before the age of 15 because working was a priority due to poverty. Men had often left school early because it was expected that a son would help on his father’s farm rather than remain at school, or due to the death of a parent. One of the women had left school at 15 to get married, and another said it was too far to walk the long distance to school. A couple of respondents had left school in Bangladesh to come to the UK, and did not continue their education, but found work, partly because of the difficulties of attending schools where they needed to be able to speak English:

‘I went to school up to the primary level. I wanted to continue my education but facilities for support were not the same at that time, unlike now. I therefore went to work, considering employment would be better than study. I stopped my schooling in Bangladesh when I was 14 years old. Language (English) was a barrier at that time for not going to school. Not only was I weak in English at that time, all the other people around me were also weak in English as well.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

Some of these respondents had attended ESOL classes since coming to the UK, but very few had done any additional learning or training. Some of the women said that domestic and childcare responsibilities had prevented them from going to ESOL classes.

Several of the first generation Bangladeshi respondents had gained degrees before coming to the UK, usually in Bangladesh, but some had studied elsewhere in the world. They had most usually done additional learning since arriving in the UK, sometimes this was post-degree level, but sometimes they attended ESOL or vocational classes. One man had gained a degree in environmental science and had worked for the Government before coming to the UK to do a PhD in community participation. After that he also studied for an Adult Education teaching qualification, and was now running a community centre and teaching ESOL. A woman had gained a degree in political science, Islamic history and English, before marrying aged 21. Since coming to the UK she had taken ESOL classes and courses in childcare and making Asian clothes.
Most of those who had been brought up in the UK had gained GCSEs, and many had progressed on to ‘A’ levels, BTECs, or NVQs. Some had finished these courses, but others had dropped out due to family issues, having to go to Bangladesh, or because they found the courses too difficult. A couple of the women had gained places at university, but one couldn’t go as her mother became ill, and another got married. Another had started university but got married after the first year (an arranged marriage to a UK-born husband) and dropped out of her studies. Some of the respondents did not continue studying beyond GCSEs, either because they did not do very well in them, or because the lure or necessity of working and earning money proved to be more attractive.

A number of the respondents had gone through the education system and gained degrees in, for example, electronics, marketing, economics, and maths. A couple had also gained postgraduate qualifications. They had all studied at universities close to their homes. One of these respondents talked about his experiences at school more generally:

‘When we were growing up it was difficult. There weren’t that many families from Bangladesh… We didn’t have much support in education. Our parents’ intention was to go back and they didn’t understand the education system here. We didn’t have role models, anyone who could tell you how things worked so that’s where the difficulties were. Our families at 4pm would have to go to mosque, two hours of that and then come back and do your Bengali another two hours. There wasn’t that much time for the English side and if you did get stuck on something you had to go back to school or do it yourself. I went to primary and secondary school. I went to college and university. During the school years there was the institutional racism. Now we realise it, there were teachers at school who were reluctant to help. There were some who were helpful but some were reluctant and didn’t have the time. At college and university we had to do it ourselves. My younger brother has found it easier.’

(Bangladeshi man, in employment)

Some respondents had begun their education in Bangladesh, moving to the UK and continuing their education in English schools. It had taken some a year or more to become fluent in English, putting them at an immediate disadvantage in the English education system. This was made worse for some because they had to move around and change schools several times before their families were able to settle more permanently:

‘I changed school a lot, we changed house, three houses we moved and I changed school. It’s a big problem that I don’t learn proper English.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)
'When we came to this country I was about 14 years old and as you can see my mum is just an ordinary village girl. She doesn’t have much education, so obviously if you want someone to have a good education, obviously you need parents help. So at that time we used to live in London. And we didn’t have a place to stay. We moved around so many places to get a house, council flat. So, at first we lived in Shoreditch in London, Aldgate, with my auntie. So they have a one bedroom house and one front room, so we sleep in the front room. There were four of us, my sister, my brother and my mum. Then after about six or seven months we went to a hotel in London. So we stayed there for about one year. That was about 15 miles away from Shoreditch. So from the hotel they gave us a temporary house in Crouch End, that was about another 20 miles. So I had to move schools.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

It was notable amongst the Bangladeshi respondents who were born in the UK, that there were a number who had a fairly disrupted education due to having spent time in both the UK and Bangladesh. This had either involved extended stays in Bangladesh before returning to the UK, or a certain amount of travelling back and forth between the two countries:

‘Because my parents went to Bangladesh quite often I missed a lot of school. I’ve been living in Bangladesh for six months, then here for six months.’

(Bangladeshi woman, economically inactive)

Several of the young men had been sent from the UK to Bangladesh at around age 13, to concentrate on Islamic studies for between two and five years. This meant that by the time they returned to the UK they had missed their GCSEs, or had missed too much of the syllabus to pass them, leaving them without any qualifications. One was now studying for his GCSEs at college, and another had done some basic courses in computers, English and maths since having returned to the UK. One respondent had travelled backwards and forwards from the UK to Bangladesh throughout his school years as his parents could not bear the cold weather in the UK winters, and he left school with no qualifications. His family had not viewed his education as important, and he had never been under any pressure to obtain qualifications.

2.7 Labour market history

Although there was considerable variation in the labour market histories of the respondents, there were also some common themes across the respondents as a whole. The emerging patterns are discussed below.

Pakistani respondents

Looking first at the labour market histories of the Pakistani respondents, it is clear that they were affected in part by the age and migrational background, as well as gender and levels of education. However, it was clear that amongst many of the respondents, their labour market histories were composed of periods of employment
with a number of employers, punctuated by episodes of unemployment during which time most respondents claimed benefits. Many had also spent time abroad, and there were examples of this being both as a result and a cause of unemployment. The picture across the Pakistani respondents as a whole was one of broken labour market histories.

Amongst older male respondents, it was common to have worked in Pakistan before coming to the UK. They had often worked as farmers in their villages, and had found work in factories or textile mills on their arrival in the UK in the 1970s. Some had stayed with the same employer for many years while others had moved between factories as the demand for this type of labour declined and they were laid off. When they were employed, they usually worked full-time, but took part-time work if that was all that was available. They often had periods of unemployment between jobs, when they claimed benefits, most usually Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) or the equivalent at that time. As factory work became increasingly scarce, many became unemployed for longer periods of time, and eventually were unable to find work. This often coincided with their health having deteriorated, due to a combination of their previous working conditions and their age, to a point where they were unable to do this kind of work, but were not experienced or skilled to gain work in other fields. Some of the men who had come to the UK more recently had similar problems finding work due to lack of English language and other skills:

‘I was a farmer in Pakistan ‘till 2002. (In the UK) I worked for two months in Cash & Carry shop, eight months with laundry shop and nine months with chocolate factory. These all the jobs were unskilled labour jobs. I was asked to leave in all these jobs since I could not speak English.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

There were a number of Pakistani male respondents who had experienced industrial accidents or health problems as a direct result of the work they had been doing (this was usually factory work or other physically demanding work), and had been unable to work as a result. Others had to stop working due to more general health issues, for example, diabetes, high blood pressure, and back problems, and had claimed JSA or Incapacity Benefit (IB) since being signed off by their doctors. There were a few respondents who had been unable to work for many years and had claimed benefits, and others who had been on benefits due to ill-health for a shorter time:

‘I caught some disease from that factory. I used to get headache every day because of the noise level was very very high. I used to complain a lot. They used to move me to another section. Then they put warm machine there. Then I said look the doctor told me I can’t work any more.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

‘About five or six years ago, I worked in a factory, and this was making electric
brackets. I used to work 40 hours per week. I stopped working in this factory as I got asthma due to smoke. My doctor advised me to stop working in the factory where my breathing related illness, asthma, gets worse. My last paid work was in a builder’s shop, which was about one year ago. I used to work about 25 hours per week.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

A few of the older Pakistani women had also worked in factories, usually sewing and making clothes. They had taken this type of work as they had not needed any particular skills to obtain it, and they had not needed to be able to speak English. However, they too found themselves out of work when these factories closed, and were unable to find other work. Other women had little or no experience of the labour market, often they had concentrated on bringing up their children. During this time they had claimed benefits, or had been supported by their families.

A fair number of the Pakistani respondents (usually men) had worked in their families’ businesses; these included clothes shops, takeaways and textiles businesses. They had usually done this in between periods of working for others or claiming JSA, and it had sometime been on a fairly informal basis:

‘I used to work for my uncle, retail, grocery stores. Asda, Tesco, Safeway’s and markets for my cousin on Sundays, selling clothes.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

‘At 19 I started working in our own business which was a takeaway. Since 19 to 20 I’ve been working there. It’s my brother-in-law’s business. That’s where most of us end up if you don’t get a job.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

A very small number of respondents had had their own businesses, for example, grocers shops and corner shops. A few had experience of working abroad – in countries other than Pakistan – for example, Germany or Dubai, and this had usually been as a result of family or other contacts offering them work.

There were some kinds of work which were particularly common amongst the Pakistani respondents (in addition to working in factories and in the textile industry), and these were packing jobs, taxi driving, and working in takeaways and restaurants. There were lots of examples of people working in low-skilled jobs including factory work, shop work, packing, or delivery jobs, sometimes for Pakistani employers in the local area. These jobs were often temporary, or respondents left due to family circumstances or to go back to Pakistan for a few months, and when they returned they were unable to find work straight away. Hence, there were periods of unemployment, of various lengths, during which they claimed JSA:
'I did that [stacking shelves in a supermarket] for three months and they said they’d decide whether or not to keep me on. They’re closing the store down and making it smaller so they didn’t need staff, so they wrote to me and said they don’t need me.’

(Pakistani women, jobseeker)

Many of the younger Pakistani respondents had spent time in and out of work, with periods of claiming JSA in between. Some of the women had done part-time work to fit in around their children, for example, working as a lunchtime assistant at local schools. Some of the younger respondents had also done voluntary work, sometimes as a result of being on the new Deal. Amongst young women this had often involved working with children, for example, on playschemes, or at community centres. One man had, however, done more than ten placements in the media following his degree and was in the process of applying for his equity card.

Those with degrees had sometimes done more specialised work or were looking for ways in to their field through additional training or voluntary work. They had often had periods of claiming JSA since graduating and some had extended visits to Pakistan to stay with family. Other less qualified respondents (usually those who had been educated in the UK) had worked in a range of jobs for varying amounts of time, for example, in banks, at an airport, in insurance or telesales, for a local authority, and in administration. Some had never worked at all, and had done a mixture of claiming benefits, studying, and living abroad since leaving school:

‘I went abroad for a couple of months. After I left university I was signing on for about six months and job seeking, then I took a break and took it easy. Visited family and friends, went to the Peak District, Wales, stayed with my sister in London. I took time out and I went to Pakistan for four months.’

(Pakistani women, jobseeker)

Respondents had rarely done more than one job at once, and some had worked part-time while claiming benefits. Much of the employment had been on a temporary or contract basis, and a number had worked through agencies. To an extent this had suited the respondents and allowed them to work flexibly and visit Pakistan for extended periods, but it also gave them little job security or permanency.

‘I left college so I had temporary contracts, I was going to go back to college but I didn’t. I got a permanent job at [named plc] and the money was good so I stayed, in Bradford, I stayed three and a half years and then I went to a private company for a year then my granddad was ill abroad so the whole family went to see him and we stayed there for a few months, so after I came back I didn’t have a job. I signed up with agencies and started signing on, worked at the gym, I got temping work with the NHS, here, there and everywhere. I couldn’t find good pay anywhere in Bradford. Then this job came up and the money was good, I’ve been here for a year now.’

(Pakistani woman, in employment)
‘I started joining agencies. My sister was a supervisor in [named company] and she got me a job and told me what agency to join. Even there I worked through an agency for over 30 weeks and they were meant to give me a contract but they did not. I’d been there for two years and they must have laid me off about three times…I started joining different agencies and getting different jobs. I’d join an agency where I’d know there were vacancies.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

Occasionally, respondents had chosen to sign off Jobseekers Allowance, preferring to be supported by their family as they did not like the pressure of having to find work.

**Bangladeshi respondents**

Turning now to the labour market histories of the Bangladeshi respondents, there were many similarities to those of the Pakistanis, in that there had been a high dependency for work on certain sectors, most particularly the restaurant trade and the textile industry, which were now in decline and had badly affected some of the respondents’ labour market opportunities. There had also been a high proportion of work which was short-term, in between periods of unemployment, when respondents usually claimed JSA. Some of the respondents had given up their jobs to return to Bangladesh for family reasons and had found that work was no longer available with their old employer when they returned to the UK. This contributed to the ‘broken’ and sporadic nature of many of the Bangladeshi respondents’ work histories:

‘[I worked doing] finance, banking, invoices, everything for this company. I left in 2003, summer. We had to go to Bangladesh for personal reasons and while I was working there I never took no holidays so I’m entitled. The manager said if you leave you can’t have your job back. I had to go it was a personal reason. I was in Bangladesh for four weeks.’

(Bangladeshi woman, jobseeker)

This was two and a half years ago, and the respondent had not worked since.

As was seen amongst the Pakistani respondents, some of the Bangladeshi respondents had also worked in textile mills and garment factories when they had first arrived in the UK from Bangladesh. This work was often for fairly long hours, eg 40 to 50 hours each week. Some had worked in the same factory for a number of years and had found it difficult to find alternative work when the factory closed:
I worked in UK as paid employee in a big company and felt comfortable with the nature of the job. Initially, the work was with my father as a mechanics helper and then in a garments factory where I joined as trainee tailor. Subsequently, that factory shifted to Whitechapel and I became a full-time tailor for making ladies jackets with good salary. The working hours were eight per day including some overtime. After that job, I worked with another garments factory at Hackney with the same position and continued more than three years. I drew my last salary from that factory in 2002 when factory was closed due to financial problems. After separated from the job, I went for Hajj. I worked continuously in different factories ‘till the date I mentioned here. I never had been redundant from any of my job place ‘till 2002.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker)

The most commonly reported work which Bangladeshi respondents had done in the past was working in Indian/Bangladeshi restaurants, as porters, waiters or chefs. Respondents had often found their work through friends or family, and taken it as the jobs were relatively unskilled and did not require them to speak good English:

‘I have no idea about any other job so one of my friends, he gave me a chance to work in a restaurant.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

‘Most Bangladeshi people, especially the people that are a very tight knit community, we all live together and our way of earning a living is working in Bangladeshi restaurants. So you don’t really need any qualifications, you just pick it up from friends, family members. So that’s what I did.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker)

‘In Bangladeshi I worked in a bank as a cashier from 1977 to 1996. When I came to England in 1996 I worked as a waiter in Bristol because I have a cousin in Bristol. Before that I lived in Canterbury for a short time and worked as a waiter because I have a brother-in-law. I didn’t apply for any other jobs because of my English.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

Restaurant work had been relatively steady in the past, but in recent years, restaurants had reduced the number of staff as business had become slower. One respondent noted that this had happened particularly after 11 September 2001. Some of the men had worked in the restaurant trade for many years, ever since arriving in the UK, sometimes in the same restaurant, but they had often worked in different restaurants, sometimes in different cities around the country, and they had travelled to different cities to work. Some had done a combination of restaurant and factory work:
‘I worked first at a] Factory in Redditch. After six weeks I went to Bradford, another factory. Then I came back and after two or three weeks I went to London for a restaurant then I worked for four years in London…I live for four years in London then I came back to the Midlands and worked here in a restaurant…I finished restaurant work about five or six years ago.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

He had been claiming JSA since then.

‘I started paid work in the same factory where my father used to work. I worked there for seven weeks. It was a steel factory, but I worked as a labour, just to help people. I then moved to start work in a restaurant and then continued to work in different Bangladeshi restaurants. This used to involve be split-shift work from ten am to three pm and from six pm to midnight. My last paid job was about six years ago. In my last job I used to work from five pm to midnight and this was working at my son’s food takeaway.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

When they were laid off as a result of declining business, many of the respondents were not equipped to work anywhere else as this was the only type of work they had ever done. Most had been claiming JSA ever since, for periods of several years. They had experienced short periods of unemployment in the past while hoping to find more restaurant work, and usually hoped they would find more work in the future.

There were a small number of Bangladeshi male respondents who had been claiming JSA for long periods of ten years or more, and this was often as a result of poor health or injury after having worked in factories or restaurants:

‘I worked in Bangladeshi restaurants and factories as a paid worker. I was a kitchen porter in restaurant and labourer in factory. In my last job as restaurant porter, I worked for six years. I met with an accident in the restaurant while carrying heavy items. This made me to be out of work since then. I worked about 40 hours in my last job.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

Those men who had worked in Bangladesh prior to moving to the UK, had usually done farm work in their family’s village. However, there were a few examples of respondents who had skilled or professional jobs in Bangladesh, although they had found it difficult to obtain work of a similar level in the UK. For example, one man had worked in a Bangladeshi university as a professor. In the UK he had found part-time work as an ESOL teacher, but was still looking for additional work. Two respondents had worked as primary school teachers in Bangladesh, one had arrived in the UK relatively recently and had taken an ESOL course at her local college, with a view to training as a primary school teacher in the UK. The other, a local government worker in Bangladesh, had worked in restaurants when arriving in the UK, and had looked after his children after his wife had left him. He had been claiming benefits for the last two years, but planned to find more restaurant work in the future.
There were also a notable number of Bangladeshi respondents who had worked for periods of time in retail, often for high street chains. They had usually worked on temporary contracts and had claimed JSA or done other temporary work in between these episodes. Two of the respondents had done retail work during the summer holidays when they were at university. As was seen amongst the Pakistani respondents, a number of the younger respondents had done voluntary work or work placements, often also in childcare, or community centres, although some had work experience in retail, often for high street stores. This was sometimes through the New Deal, after they had been claiming JSA for six months. For one of the respondents, a long period of voluntary work had led to employment:

‘While I was at uni I had a part-time job in a shop and then I carried on for a couple of months and went to look for work but it’s difficult finding a job, you need experience and retail experience wasn’t relevant to the jobs I was looking for. I decided to volunteer and I did that for CEMVO (Council for Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations). Initially, I did three months helping to organise a talent show for young people...I stayed there and got paid for a couple of days and I carried on for two and a half years so I did that job and this job for a while.’

(Bangladeshi women, in employment)

The economically active Bangladeshi women tended to be in their teens and 20s. Some of the women respondents had never had paid employment in this country, they tended to have been born and brought up in Bangladesh and had come to the UK to get married, where they had relied on their husbands’ earnings and/or claimed benefits. Other women, particularly those who had been brought up in the UK, had worked for a while in a variety of settings, including retail, offices and a laundry, before leaving work when they had children:

‘I have five children and do not have time [to work]. I can do later when they are growing up.’

(Bangladeshi women, economically inactive)
3 Current labour market status

3.1 Introduction

An important aspect of the interviews was to look at the extent to which respondents were engaged with the labour market, in particular what the participants were doing, in terms of employment, claiming out-of-work benefits, or not claiming for one reason or another. This chapter reports on the labour market status of the respondents. First of all, for those claiming benefits, we wanted to know which benefits they were claiming, as these provide evidence about whether or not they were active in the labour market. It was also important to find out how long people have been claiming particular benefits and, importantly, to assess the impact of being out of work on their daily lives. It might be argued, for example, that people tend to lose their motivation to participate in the labour market the longer they are out of work and on benefits. It is generally known that a significant group of unemployed people do not claim any benefits. We sought to find out why this group was not claiming benefits and, as well, how they were managing financially under those circumstances. There is increasing evidence to suggest there is polarisation between households that are fully employed and those with no access to earned income. Workless households have become a phenomenon of the labour market, and is a concern for policy makers. We sought to find out the extent to which this was true of our respondents, and extended the interviews by asking them what other members of their household were doing. Finally, for those people who were in employment, we were interested to know what sort of jobs they were doing, and how they had got their jobs.

3.2 Current labour market status of respondents

For the sample as a whole, approximately three out of five of the respondents (60 per cent) were economically active, in the sense that they were either available for work or were already in some form of employment. However, one in three (33 per cent)
were economically inactive. Looking at the sample in detail, approximately seven out of ten of all the respondents who provided information about their labour market status (70 per cent) were claiming out-of-work benefits. The remainder comprised mainly people who were in some form of employment (12 per cent) and people who were not claiming any benefits at all (11 per cent). However, a small number of respondents (three per cent) were receiving a variety of benefits, some of which related to employment; for example, pension credits and tax credits.

3.2.1 Benefits claimants

Looking at claimants as a whole, around seven out of ten (107 out of 154 respondents) were in receipt of Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA), one in five (30 respondents) were on Income Support (IS), and around one in ten (17 respondents) were on Incapacity Benefit (IB). There were some interesting differences in the type of benefits received by Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents, although these were largely the effects of gender and age.

**Ethnicity**

Bangladeshi respondents (74 per cent) were more likely than Pakistanis (64 per cent) to be on JSA. In contrast, one in seven Pakistani respondent claimants were on IB, compared with fewer than one in ten Bangladeshi claimants. An identical proportion of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were on IS (17 and 18 per cent, respectively). From the evidence, the Pakistani respondents in the sample were more likely than Bangladeshis to be inactive. More than one-third of all Pakistani respondents (37 per cent) were claiming IS, IB, or not claiming any benefits at all, compared with just over a quarter (28 per cent) of Bangladeshi respondents. The difference was accounted for largely by the relatively high proportion of Pakistani respondents claiming IB and those not claiming any benefits.

**Gender**

The gender profile of recipients was different both between groups and within groups. Four in five Bangladeshi men and almost two out of three Bangladeshi women were on JSA. A similar proportion of Bangladeshi men and women (one in 12 and one in 16, respectively) were on IB. However, three times as many Bangladeshi women as men were on IS; one in ten men and one in three women were receiving this benefit. For Pakistani claimants, almost three out of four Pakistani men were on JSA, compared with only half Pakistani women. Among Pakistani respondents, a similar proportion of men (one in seven) and women (one in eight) were on IB. As was the case for Bangladeshis, more than three times as many Pakistani women (almost two out of five) as men (one in ten) were on IS. In terms of economic activity, almost twice as many women as men across the whole sample were inactive; two out of five women (42 per cent) were inactive, compared with one in four (24 per cent) men. Among Bangladeshhi respondents, almost one in four men and one in three women were inactive; whilst among Pakistani respondents, just under one in three men and almost half the women were inactive.
Notwithstanding their ethnicity, the issues that emerged from the interviews with respondents highlighted more the gender differences, which also tended to affect people’s labour market circumstances. For a significant number of women, it is adverse family circumstances which determine their contact with the benefits system, and also with the Jobcentre and its activities. The experience can be both positive and negative. For example, while married women depend on their husbands for financial support, that dependence is transferred to the benefits system when they divorce or separate or, in a lot of cases, when husbands go back to Pakistan or Bangladesh. The experience of one respondent who is a first time claimant of IS is illustrative. She was financially dependent on her husband when he lived in the UK. But he is now in Bangladesh, and it has proved very difficult to get money from him; so she has been forced to get help from elsewhere. Another respondent had moved away from the matrimonial home with her own children after a dispute with her stepchildren. She has been claiming JSA since. On the other hand, some women detach themselves from the labour market because of the operation of the benefits system. Thus, one respondent had her JSA stopped because her husband’s part-time job, which had irregular hours, sometimes took his income above the threshold for receipt of that benefit.

It is true to say, though, that the disruption of family lives is not a one-way street, and can equally affect men’s circumstances. In one case, a male respondent on IS (and Child Tax Credit), had moved from one benefit to another after separating from his wife. But before the separation, he was on JSA. The difference appears to be, however, that women are more likely to use their adverse circumstances to make changes in their lives, in particular from economic inactivity to being active in the labour market. A Pakistani woman had been claiming IS for about eight months after her husband left her. But she had enrolled on a teaching assistant training course at the local college, which was due to start in the new academic year (August 2005). Another Bangladeshi woman who had separated from her husband described the impact of being out of work, but also what actions she was taking to get back into employment:

‘It’s not fun waking up in the morning and you have nothing to do. I have gone for job interviews, I have applied for reception jobs, when I send my CV through and they see a gap of unemployment, sometimes you don’t want to tell employers personal stuff like you’ve been suffering depression. It does affect it. I don’t get interviews. When I do go for interviews because I haven’t worked for a certain amount of time they don’t me the job.’

I’m waiting to do a training next month, police training to become a police officer. It’s done through Tower Hamlets College in Poplar, and they train you for four months with a police officer. He teaches you everything about the force, then they help you apply and you get to become a police officer quicker. If I apply on my own I’d have to wait 12 to 18 months. The training starts next month, but it’s unpaid on a voluntary basis for four months.’

(Bangladeshi female, jobseeker)
These were not isolated incidents, as we found numerous examples of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women generally trying to improve their English by attending English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, often under the New Deal programme. A Bangladeshi woman on JSA and living in Tower Hamlets was attending an English class at the local Town Hall two days a week for three hours each day. Indeed, ambition went further than just becoming competent in English, because we also found a significant number of women respondents willing to undertake training in order to gain qualifications for specific jobs. One Pakistani woman on IS was waiting to start a training course in hairdressing and beauty therapy in September (2005) ‘because my daughter will be a year old’. Another Pakistani jobseeker in Glasgow was doing a taster course in health care because she wanted to work at a nursery. Also in Glasgow, a Pakistani woman on IS who had already completed an HNC in Administration and Business Management, was now studying part-time for an HND, to fit in with her childcare responsibilities.

The wider issue here, and in the other cases, is the extent to which the ‘benefits trap’ is a significant factor in perpetuating inactivity, and whether the effects are different for men and women. Indeed, the more general question to ask is whether the benefits system itself operates adversely sometimes against Pakistani and Bangladeshi women who would like to participate in the labour market, especially as they are more likely to want part-time work. We heard the example of a female respondent who had started a part-time, temporary job:

‘First of all four hours one week, then eight hours every week. Then it increased to 16 hours, then came down to eight hours...I am getting Jobseeker’s Allowance, but I get £7 at the moment. I take my pay slip every month, and every time I do more hours, my money gets reduced.’

(Bangladeshi female, jobseeker)

The issue is relevant, particularly as women claimants appeared more willing than men to re-engage with the labour market. On the whole, women respondents were more proactive, and were prepared to use a variety of means to get into employment. For some, this meant taking unpaid voluntary jobs in order to develop the work experience employers are looking for. One respondent, who had been on JSA for a year described her experience with a voluntary health organisation:

‘I found it in the newspaper as I was looking for jobs. They were saying they needed a health adviser for their local community. I had the interview. You get health professionals and they talk about their job and basic health. It’s voluntary, and I finish the course and get signed up to work and find a job with them.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker)
A Pakistani respondent had been on IS for three years. But she was seeking to
become more independent, and so found lunchtime, temporary work. This had
encouraged her to start driving lessons so she could widen her options of jobs.
Another Bangladeshi respondent on New Deal had found temporary childcare
work, providing cover when staff were not available. She was working three hours
a week, and was being paid £5 an hour (£15 tax free a week) in addition to her JSA.
Yet another Pakistani respondent was working two hours a week in a crèche,
looking after children while their mothers were learning to sew at a community
centre. She was being paid £15 a week for that work.

It is perhaps true to say here, though, that women have better opportunities than
men to do temporary or voluntary work, especially those that involve working with
children, or other work suited to home working. Sometimes home working allowed
women to remain economically active, but at the same time carry out their caring
responsibilities. One Pakistani jobseeker in her 30s had chosen to work at home,
packing birthday and Christmas cards. She was working three hours a day, or less
than 16 hours a week, and was earning about £50 a week, or sometimes less.
Although she could work more than 16 hours if she wanted, she had chosen to do
the hours she was doing so she could still claim JSA. But it also suited her to stay at
home because she could then look after her mother, who had a long-term illness.
The willingness to engage with the labour market by taking temporary work often
led to women gaining permanent employment, as we shall see when we look at the
job details of people in employment. But even where there was no guarantee of a
job, engagement with the Jobcentre seemed to offer women opportunities for more
structured job search, which they found very useful:

‘I’m receiving Jobseeker’s Allowance, but because I’ve been with the Jobcentre
for six months I have to attend the Employment Zone; and you work on a one-
to-one basis, where you go twice a week and work with them through
vacancies, and ring up for vacancies. It’s been quite good.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 20s)

To the extent that the Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in our interviews were
more willing to participate in the labour market, the myth of the submissive Asian
woman, weighed down by cultural and other responsibilities to become economically
inactive, is just that for this group. The willingness of benefits claimants to
participate in training and education was one of the most noticeable, and defining
differences between men and women. Very few of the men interviewed were
participating in any form of education or training. Very few men were also doing any
voluntary work as a route back into employment.

It was not only in direct, active engagement with the labour market that the women
respondents differed from the men. On the whole, the men in our sample were
more likely than women to claim benefits for much longer periods. We found many
examples of men who had been on benefits for at least five years, and in some cases
as long as ten to 15 years. The men on inactive benefits were more likely to be in their
50s. But some men in their 40s had also been on active benefits, and in some cases
for as long as ten years. There were no major differences according to ethnicity, with Pakistani and Bangladeshi men in their 40s and 50s equally likely to be on long-term benefits. For some men the ‘benefits trap’ was real, and uncertainty that their benefit status might be changed against their will also made it impossible for them to take advantage of opportunities to engage with the labour market. A Pakistani man described his moving between different benefits. While on JSA, his doctor certified he was incapacitated because his temperature rose quickly when he was stressed or nervous. He was put on IB as an emergency measure. After four months his doctor deemed his condition had settled, and he reverted to JSA. He was disappointed that he was no longer on IB:

‘All I’m getting is £80 now. It used to be £84, [but] from April they put it down. I used to get £130 with disability, but they took it off from me.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker)

In such cases, uncertainty about how much they will receive under different types of benefit means they seek to maximise their entitlement; especially so where IB (with disability) ‘pays’ more.

Another difference between men and women claimants was in the periods of time men actually disengage from the labour market in order to spend time outside the country, in Pakistan or Bangladesh. There were several examples of men going back to their country of origin for periods of up to five months, or more in some cases. Pakistani men in particular tended to visit Pakistan more often and for longer periods than Bangladeshi men. Not surprisingly, the need to visit Pakistan or Bangladesh for lengthy periods at a time means there is no continuity of job search and engagement with other support from the Jobcentre. Benefit claimants stop claiming while they are away, but start new claims when they return to the UK. Again, it could be argued that the ‘benefits trap’ acts as a disincentive to work. It is not only the fact of financial support, meagre as it may be, but it allows people to move in and out of benefits when they need to, especially to visit Pakistan or Bangladesh.

Age

The age profile of claimants also varied by the type of benefit received. Perhaps, not surprisingly, younger respondents in the claimants sample were more likely than those older to be on JSA. Almost four-fifths of young people in their teens or 20s were on JSA, compared with just under two-thirds of respondents in their 30s and a similar proportion of those aged 40 and older. On the other hand, one in five respondents over the age of 40 were on IB. Only one respondent under 30 years old and two in their 30s, were on this benefit. The picture was quite different for people on IS. Just under one-third of respondents in their 30s were on IS, compared with one in five young respondents in their teens or 20s, and one in seven of those in their 40s or older. As was noted earlier, the significant difference here was ethnicity. One-third of Pakistani respondents aged 40 and over were on IB, compared with only one in eight Bangladeshi men of similar age. By contrast, almost three out of four Bangladeshis, but only half of Pakistanis in this age group were economically active and receiving the JSA.
It might be expected that young people (those in their teens and 20s) would be more likely to engage with the labour market. The evidence from the interviews supports this view. Active engagement with the Jobcentre, for example, enabled people to be put in touch with specialist agencies that provide more in-depth support for unemployed people, not only with job search, but also with work placement. Even more important, engagement with the Jobcentre also created opportunities for young people to get back into education, often as part of the New Deal. This in turn meant that the young claimants in our sample had been on benefits for a much shorter duration. Notwithstanding this, it was also the case that some young people continued on benefits longer because they received additional support from their family, which enabled them to cope better financially. However, the withdrawal of family financial support sometimes worked in reverse, by precipitating the decision to claim benefits. Thus, a young Bangladeshi jobseeker started claiming benefits two years ago after she finished working in telesales only because her family would not support her any longer.

In a few instances too, we found that young people used the benefits system as a means to qualify for other out-of-work benefits. In one case, a young Bangladeshi woman was claiming JSA and Housing Benefit. She had been claiming JSA for about 13 weeks. She claimed JSA after her last job, but then stopped when she thought she had got another job. However, the job fell through, after which she relied on her family and friends for financial support, until 13 weeks ago when she moved into her new flat. She signed back on JSA in order to qualify for housing benefit to pay the rent on her flat.

3.2.2 Non-claimants

Around one in ten of all respondents who provided information about their labour market status was not claiming any benefits at the time we interviewed them. There were more Pakistani than Bangladeshi non-claimants. One in seven Pakistani respondents were not claiming benefits, compared with almost one in 20 Bangladeshi respondents. Women were also more likely than men not to be claiming benefits. Again, one in seven women were non-claimants, compared with one in 12 men. Pakistani women accounted for the large difference in the ethnicity of non-claimants. One in five Pakistani women was in this situation, compared with fewer than one in ten Bangladeshi women. In terms of age, non-claimants were mostly in their 20s and 30s.

We asked our respondent non-claimants why they were not claiming any benefits. They were not doing so for a variety of reasons. But the majority appear to be put off by what they considered to be the aggressive attitude of Jobcentre staff. Some young men in particular claimed they would ideally like to access Jobcentre support and engage formally with the labour market, but did not want to deal with that level of aggression. Some did not want to deal with what they described as interrogation by Jobcentre staff:
‘They’re okay with two weeks but after that you have to sit down and there’s such a queue and you have to give so many answers and they nag and they’re aggressive.’

(Bangladeshi male, non-claimant, 30s)

‘I hate claiming, I feel like a bum. I signed on for six months once and it was horrible. They put too much pressure on you. After six months you have to go on these courses.’

(Pakistani male, non-claimant, 20s)

Others were reluctant to claim because they had not had a good experience with the benefits system in the past, and would rather help themselves get a job than use the Jobcentre. A young Pakistani described signing on as a ‘nightmare I don’t want to repeat’. Asked if he would sign on again if nothing materialised, he replied:

‘Only in extreme circumstances, I don’t want to. To avoid that I’m doing another IT course along the lines of the Microsoft course, except it’s more hands on and the role is for a helpdesk. I’m looking to take a couple of exams, with a view to finding work.’

(Pakistani male, non-claimant, 20s)

Men were also more likely to get financial support from other members of their family. Older men in their 50s were often supported by their children, and so could take temporary jobs, as and when they thought necessary. As a Pakistani man put it:

‘Occasionally I get a job. My son works [and] he subsidises me. When I’m bad [have no money], I do contract for three to four weeks and that’s enough to keep me going for a few months. I help out with food when I can.’

(Pakistani male, non-claimant, 50s)

The reasons given by the women respondents for not claiming benefits were quite different. In particular, women hardly mentioned confrontational encounters with Jobcentre staff among the reasons for not claiming benefits. On the whole, the reasons they gave appeared to be more personal. Some women were not claiming because to do so was against their moral and religious beliefs. One Pakistani woman had been on JSA for a couple of months, but then stopped claiming. Her main reason for not claiming was that she was young and able to work and, therefore, should not need to rely on the state. She would claim benefits if she was old or ill. But she had also stopped claiming on religious grounds, ‘because Islam teaches [people] to work hard and be honest’; and she did not think her claiming benefits fitted with this teaching. Some women non-claimants, though, were faced with a dilemma; that whilst they wanted to assert their independence, they were deemed not to be entitled to benefits because it was expected their husbands would support them financially. In this respect, women appear to be treated on the basis of their spouses’ labour market circumstances, even though they would like their own income and independence. A Pakistani woman described this dilemma, in halting English, which we report verbatim:

‘Occasionally I get a job. My son works [and] he subsidises me. When I’m bad [have no money], I do contract for three to four weeks and that’s enough to keep me going for a few months. I help out with food when I can.’
‘I claimed before Jobseeker’s Allowance, but they gave me one year then they stopped. They said no national insurance, your husband working, that’s why. I don’t want to depend on him. I like to work. They always ask for good experience [but] everyone start from scratch.’

(Pakistani female, non-claimant, 40s)

This respondent was looking for work, which would also enable her to be financially independent. She acknowledged lack of experience would count against her, but did not appear daunted by the prospect of starting from the bottom. And another woman, asked why she was not claiming out-of-work benefits, and whether she was entitled to them, replied:

‘No, my husband’s working. I’ve been to the Jobcentre and they said if your husband’s working, he’s supposed to be supporting you.’

(Pakistani female, non-claimant, 20s)

Of course, it is reasonable to consider some people are not entitled to benefits, on the basis of the financial circumstances of a spouse who is in work, especially where they are earning a high salary. Some women respondents who were not claiming benefits accepted this situation without complaint, because they were supported by their husband, even though they were looking for work and, de facto, economically active.

Whilst overall, male non-claimants were more likely to cite a reluctance to put up with what they perceived as unreasonable pressure from Jobcentre officials as a principal factor in not claiming benefits, the grievance often found expression in complaints extended more generally towards the inflexibility of the benefits system as a whole. A Pakistani jobseeker’s frustration at his (unsuccessful) attempts to reach agreement with Jobcentre officials to allow him time to collect his child from school is indicative of people’s perceptions about an inflexible benefits system:

‘I wanted to work something out with the Jobcentre, because they’ve got a system of their own, you’ve got to follow their system. I was asking them, “could you let me off like an hour or so early.” They [Jobcentre advisers] usually finish at four, I asked if I could finish at three o’clock, just to pick my kid up and stuff.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 30s)

Indeed, the perceived inflexible attitude of some Jobcentre advisers meant that some people preferred to become inactive by not claiming benefits altogether. According to a woman respondent who was not claiming any benefits (at the moment):

‘Well, I’ve been given two options, either to stop my benefits or to go back to the same training centre and the same placement, and I wasn’t happy about that. So I’ve decided to stop claiming rather than go back to what I was doing.’

(Pakistani female, non-claimant, 20s)
We found some evidence to suggest some people were not claiming benefits because of uncertainty about whether or not they were entitled to them, or eligible to do so. In a few instances, however, reluctance to claim was more to do with the stigma attached to dependence on benefits. A Pakistani jobseeker did not claim benefits for some time, before starting to do so recently, because:

‘I was ashamed when I went to the Jobcentre to claim benefits. She [adviser] said, “it’s okay, a lot of people come here, don’t worry”‘.

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 40s)

### 3.2.3 Impact of not working

So, how did our respondents feel about not working? We asked both claimants and non-claimants what impact being out of work had on their daily lives. Far from the popular perception of people enjoying an easy life on benefits, our respondents, without exception, described their daily lives as one of unremitting boredom, of doing the same things over and over again. Perhaps not surprisingly, boredom appeared to set in particularly early for young people:

‘I’m not doing much. Before, I would get up, go to work, and then I’d be out and about. [Now] I’m getting up a little later, which I don’t like, but knowing that I’ve not got to get up early, it does affect you. It’s all about routine at the end of the day.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 20s)

‘I wake up, sit around here. After that I go to my uncle for a while, then I come back and stay here.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 20s)

A young Bangladeshi woman described the impact of being out of work to include the loss of friends and boredom:

‘The day is long-drawn out, you have no money and so you cannot do the things you would like to do with your friends.’

(Bangladeshi female, jobseeker, 20s)

For both old and young alike, it was the loss of structure which comes from the routine of going to work, that seemed to lead to loss of motivation. But loss of motivation was also often an early symptom of what respondents described generally as the debilitating effect of unemployment. More often than not, this led to loss of self-confidence and a sense of low self-esteem. A young Bangladeshi man described how being out of work had a detrimental effect on him. He constantly felt angry and stressed. He did not feel good about himself. At first he thought being unemployed was ‘okay’. But now he felt lazy, and did not feel motivated to do anything.
On the whole, men were much quicker to express their frustration at not being in work; more so than our women respondents did. For most men, their reduced financial circumstances resulting from unemployment was often as much of a shock as anything else they had experienced before:

’[It is] hard financially. I’ve never been in that situation before. I’ve never applied for Jobseeker’s Allowance in my whole life. It’s big struggle. It’s hard to adjust.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 40s)

The loss of financial independence was the most likely cause of the stress most male respondents claimed they suffered. This was particularly true for older men, although not exclusively. One Bangladeshi jobseeker in his 50s was suffering from anxiety, especially because he had no job and, therefore, no money. Men and women were equally traumatised by the fact that they could not provide for their children’s needs, ’especially with a child you have to say no to them’, as a young Bangladeshi mother reported. In some cases, family relationships were under enormous strain because (unemployed) adults were almost on top of each other all the time. A Pakistani woman described the strain of unemployment on life at home:

’We argue a lot because he’s home all the time. The language barrier, I have to go with him for everything to translate what he’s saying. Because he can’t speak the language he rarely goes out.’

(Bangladeshi female, non-claimant, 30s)

But perhaps the most serious impact of being out of work is the adverse effect on people’s mental and physical health. A Pakistani non-claimant in his 30s was suffering from depression because he was not working. He had been on anti-depressants for a year. But when he was working his mind was occupied. A young Bangladeshi woman described the consequences of depression, as a result of unemployment:

’It’s not fun waking up in the morning and you have nothing to do. I have gone for job interviews. I have applied for reception jobs. When I send my CV through and see a gap of unemployment, sometimes you don’t want to tell employers personal stuff, like you’ve been suffering depression. It doesn’t affect it. I don’t get interviews. When I go for interviews, because I haven’t worked for a certain amount of time, they don’t offer me the job.’

(Bangladeshi female, jobseeker, 20s)

It is worrying, though, that a sense of hopelessness appeared to have set in for some respondents, to the extent there was almost a grudging acceptance of their current status; that they could see little or no prospect of ever working again. As a Pakistani man put it:

’I’ve become used to it. I would like a job, I would like to buy [my] this property, and I’m concerned about my pension.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 30s)
3.3 Labour market status of other household members

We asked our respondents what other people in their household were doing: whether they were in paid employment, in full-time education, or were claiming any out-of-work benefits. As we found with respondents themselves, there was little difference in ethnicity, as both Pakistani and Bangladeshi households often had identical characteristics. A key characteristic of our respondents was that the majority lived in households with married couples and children. The households themselves comprised either those with only the nuclear family, or those with multiple (or extended) families, e.g. where young people live with their in-laws, uncles, aunts and cousins. However, there were considerable differences in gender and age.

3.3.1 Gender

Women

Perhaps the most striking feature of almost all households was that married women were less likely to work, especially if they have (or had) children. Indeed, in the overwhelming majority of households, most women in their 30s onwards had never worked, either in their country of origin or here in the UK. Their main role had been to stay at home and bring up their children, or to care for relatives who lived with them. Households with two working parents were a rarity. It is true to say, though, that some of the young women among our respondents had worked previously. Even so, young women appear to follow the pattern of the older generation, and leave employment as soon as they get married in order to look after their home and family. Of course, not all young women become economically inactive after marrying. We found examples of young married women continuing in education, although they were mostly from households without children yet.

Whilst we did not probe respondents (at this stage) for the reasons why women do not work, there were strong indications, almost bordering on assumed expectation, that married women would stay at home to look after their children. Most men, asked if their wives were in work, replied in the negative, and added almost unhesitatingly, ‘she looks after the children’. It is interesting too that respondent men regarded their wives’ role in looking after the home as a full-time job; with expressions such as, ‘she is a full-time housewife’. As a Pakistani man put it:

‘My wife does not work. As a housewife she has enough on her plate – to look after our children and maintain the upkeep and running of the household.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 30s)

It is not clear the extent to which this expectation is influenced by cultural and other practices within Pakistani and Bangladeshi households. We explore attitudes about women working in the next chapter.
It was clear that looking after children was the priority for married women. However, women also had extended responsibilities as carers, particularly where they had older husbands, or husbands who were suffering ill-health.

In some cases, though, it was the wives themselves who were suffering ill-health, and could not possibly work, as a result. One Pakistani man, not claiming any benefits himself, reported:

‘My wife’s on Incapacity [Benefits] at the moment. I’m not getting anything because my wife gets it. I am able to work, but I can’t work because my wife’s not well. I can’t claim Incapacity or Income Support or Jobseeker’s, because I’m not actively looking for work. My wife can claim.’

(Pakistani male, non-claimant, 30s)

However, we also found examples in some households of married women who were in some form of employment. There were more Bangladeshis than Pakistanis in this group of married women. A Bangladeshi woman was working part-time (five hours a week) as a ‘dinner supervisor’, and another as a ‘dinner lady’ at two separate local schools. Another Bangladeshi woman was working part-time as a supplementary teacher in Bengali. Yet another was working as a freelance make-up artist.

**Men**

The men in our respondents’ households were mostly spouses or parents. In contrast to women, most men in respondents’ households were either still in work, or had worked in the past, or were inactive because they had retired or were suffering ill-health. Pakistani men in this group were more likely than Bangladeshis to be currently in work, or had worked in the past. Pakistani men currently working also had more varied jobs than Bangladeshis. They included: working for the council; working as a customer service rep in a superstore; machine work at Land Rover; working in a factory; self-employed taxi drivers (2); self-employed driving instructor; police officer; mill worker; and in accounts. Only a few Bangladeshis in this group were in work. One was a self-employed Arabic tutor. The others worked mainly in restaurants, as chefs or in the kitchens, and the remainder in unspecified full- and part-time jobs.

The older fathers of young respondents’ households were less likely to be working because they had retired or were suffering from long-term illness. There was no difference between Bangladeshis and Pakistani men in this group in the incidence of illness or retirement. Most men in this group were receiving incapacity benefits, and drawing their pensions or receiving pensions credits prior to their retirement. In a few cases, though, the spouses were not in work and not eligible for benefits because they had only recently come to the UK after marrying their British wife.
3.3.2 Age

Young people in the households were either the children of the parent respondents, or siblings who were still living at the family home. As might be expected, their labour market status was more varied. The majority of households had young children and young adults, as well as older children and siblings who were in full-time education. But they also contained older children and siblings who were either in work or unemployed.

Children and siblings in education

The majority of young children and siblings were in full-time education at school. In Bangladeshi households the youngest children and siblings were either starting school, or were in primary school. Those slightly older were at secondary school studying for their GCSEs, whilst others were doing their ‘A’ levels at college. In some cases, though, young females were attending and studying for their GCSEs at Madrasas. Pakistani households generally had slightly older children and siblings; so that most were studying at college and Islamic schools.

Young adults in education were studying either at college or at university. Bangladeshis in this group were studying a broad range of subjects. Those already at college were studying IT and Business; and those at university, Medicine, English, Theology, Sociology, Business, and Sports Science. These latter were studying at universities including Bristol, London, Brunel, Aston, Roehampton College, and Goldsmith College. Young Pakistanis in the group were more likely to be at college, with only a few at university. They were also studying a narrower range of subjects, including Business, Media, Computer Aided Design, Nursing, IT, and Motor Mechanics.

There was no consistent pattern between households where the respondent was on out-of-work benefits and those with the respondent in work. On the whole, though, children and siblings in the latter household were more likely to be in higher education, often at university. But some of the young adults in higher education were from households where the respondents were receiving out-of-work benefits. In one case, three daughters from a Bangladeshi household where the male respondent was on JSA, were all at university.

3.3.3 Workless households

Older children and siblings living in respondents’ households were more likely to be working than to be unemployed. This was true of both Pakistani and Bangladeshi households, and among both sexes. There were some households, though, where no adult of working age was in employment. For some respondent households, this was because both parents were not in work; the father would be retired, or was suffering long-term illness, or receiving other out-of-work benefits, whilst the mother had never worked. It was common for such households to also include children in full-time education; which meant nobody in the household in paid employment. Some would only recently have become workless households as a result of an adult becoming redundant from work, or certified as incapable of work.
However, some households had different generations of people not in work, with successive generations of adults in receipt of out-of-work benefits. There was no difference in the incidence of workless households between Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.

3.4 Job details of people in employment

Among the economically active, about one in seven Pakistani respondents were in some form of employment, compared with one in 12 Bangladeshi respondents. We discussed a wide range of issues with respondents who were in employment. We report, in this section, information they provided about their jobs, and how far away their work was from where they lived, and also how they first heard about the job. As our respondents were largely self-selected, we have not sought to compare differences between or within groups. Our interest is more on the sectors they were working in, and what strategies they had used to get into employment.

Given that there were more of them, the Pakistani respondents in this group were also engaged in a wider range of jobs; unskilled, semi-skilled, and professional. The unskilled jobs included store shelf packing, waiters, checkout till operators, retail sales assistants, school lunchtime supervisor, and delivery and taxi drivers. Among the semi-skilled were administrative assistants and community support workers. The professionals included accounts managers and a biomedical scientist. Bangladeshis were mainly in administrative and professional jobs; community centre co-ordinators and personal development tutors, community support workers, employment (agencies) co-ordinators, finance officer, childcare assistant, sales assistant and chef/waiter. It was noticeable that most of the respondents were working with voluntary organisations. Indeed, the voluntary sector is attractive for ethnic minorities in general, as most of them deal specifically with particular ethnic minority groups, and sometimes in particular local areas. This enabled respondents to work with disadvantaged groups and individuals from their own communities.

We asked our respondents how far they travelled from where they lived to their place of work. On the whole, most people lived and worked in their local areas. But in some cases, respondents made journeys lasting at least half an hour, and in one case, up to 45 minutes. Others were prepared to relocate, or even switch occupation in order to work in the ‘good job’ they were now in. Perhaps, not surprisingly, most respondents claimed to enjoy their job, even if the pay was low. A few though, said they were working ‘just for the money’. In particular, respondents liked their organisation’s flexible working arrangements, which enable them to fit in work with their family responsibilities. Others too liked the fact that employers had made provision to meet their religious needs; for example, time for prayers and designated areas (or space) for prayer.
We were most interested to know how respondents had heard about their job in the first place. Almost three out of four of our respondents heard about their jobs through informal contacts, either from their community generally, or from friends working in the organisation. Some jobs are advertised through word-of-mouth because employers, often small local shops, looking for reliable people they could trust, rely on their contacts in the community for people recommended as suitable. But other jobs, even if advertised more widely, are targeted at people from a particular community. In one case, the local police were looking to recruit young ethnic minorities, and made that information known at a local mosque, where the respondent’s father was a volunteer.
4 Attitudes to work

The low rate of economic activity among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis is well documented. It was an important part of this study to find out about people’s attitudes to paid work. That is the subject of this chapter. The chapter deals with a wide range of issues which, together, provide an indication of the way our respondents viewed the world of work. We wanted to find out whether work was a goal in the first place; in particular whether gaining employment was a major concern for respondents, either at the moment or in the future. It might be expected that a positive attitude to work would be reflected in respondents’ job search activities; for example, whether or not they apply for jobs, and with what results. Even more important, it might also be expected that people’s desire for particular types of jobs would partly reflect their individual aspirations and expectations, or more widely their family’s. Given that much of the low rate of activity among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis is attributed to the lower levels of activity amongst women, we round off the chapter by looking at attitudes in the two ethnic groups to women working.

4.1 Attitude to work

Although there were considerable differences in the labour market status of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (as we saw in the previous chapter), these were more muted in attitudes to work. The differences were to be found principally between men and women, although the effects of age were at times more dominant.

4.1.1 Women

Contrary to popular perception, we found evidence to show that working was a goal for a lot of women. Many women wanted to work principally because of the independence that came with working. They wanted, in particular, to be financially independent; to have money of their own so they ‘could do more things’. The stress on financial independence was most noticeable amongst women in their teens and 20s, but also those in their 30s. They wanted to be able to stand on their own two feet, and not feel so helpless. This was equally true for married and unmarried women. For married women, the need to work was in order to be both independent
and be able to provide better for their children. A Pakistani woman in her 30s said she felt ‘too old to rely on handouts and waiting for her husband to turn up [with money]’. Another Bangladeshi woman lamented the fact that she had not been able to go work after she married and had children:

‘It’s been so many years. I wish I could work. I would have more money and more things. My husband supports us and wants to give us our best. But I would like money in my hand.’

(Bangladeshi female, economically inactive, 30s)

Some married women believed gaining work was important not only currently, but would become even more so in the future. They needed to work in order to safeguard their family should their husband fall ill or become incapacitated. In a few instances, though, married women appeared keen to work in order to make up for what they saw as their thwarted ambitions and other opportunities they lost because they had to marry at a very young age. One Bangladeshi woman in her 20s wanted to work because she felt particularly frustrated when she considered that her school friends did not suffer her predicament. They had completed university, and now had good jobs. It made her think of what might have been. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the respondent married women who were most keen to work did not think there were many obstacles to their taking paid work. Most believed they would be able to fit work with their parental responsibilities, although they would be looking for work that would allow them to maintain a good work/life balance.

For unmarried women in their teens and 20s, being in work would make them less dependent on their parents and on benefits, and in the process, boost their confidence and self-esteem. It was all part of the process of getting a life of their own. A young Bangladeshi woman wanted to work so she could fulfil her dream of owning a car and a house, and as she pointed out:

‘You can’t do anything by being on benefit. To complete your dream, you must have a job to pay for the things you want.’

(Bangladeshi female, jobseeker, 20s)

The fact is that most of these young women wanted a better life, and did not think they could have that when their only income was JSA. Unlike their married counterparts, these young women did not have any other important demands on their time, as they did not have to look after any family members.

For some middle-aged women, gaining employment was important not only for the financial rewards, but also because it would help keep themselves active and healthy, both physically and mentally. A Bangladeshi woman in her 40s believed she would be happier if she could find a job, because if she was earning, she could not only spend more on essentials, but her health would also improve. For her, nothing was more important at the time than getting a job. This was true of another Pakistani woman, also in her 40s, who thought getting a job would make her life easier. She
did not want to ‘ask anybody for money’, but she also wanted ‘to keep occupied, rather than having nothing to do all day, sitting at home and getting depressed and bored’.

It is a further sign of their positive attitude to work that some respondent women indicated they were prepared to undertake training, if necessary, in order to improve their chances of getting a job. Those with a specific job in mind were also aware of the type of training they required. For example, a Bangladeshi woman wanted particularly to go back to her job in a pharmacist’s, which she had left when in the middle of her training to become a pharmacy assistant; a qualification which would enable her to give pharmaceutical advice to customers. She was keenly aware she would need to take up and complete her training in order to obtain the necessary qualifications to do this type of work. Another Bangladeshi jobseeker in her 20s who wanted to do social work, was prepared to work whilst studying so she could pay for the cost of accommodation and transport.

In some instances, women were prepared to study further in order to gain more qualifications, to stand a chance of getting a better job. Further education and qualification were seen as an alternative to getting a full-time job now. Thus, a young Pakistani woman who wanted to work with children was studying for an NVQ Level 3 qualification. She was looking to complete the course in 26 weeks instead of the normal 52 weeks. Another Pakistani jobseeker in her 20s indicated she would be happy to take a part-time job that would allow her to continue studying for the additional qualifications she needed for the job she wanted to do. A third Pakistani, also in her 20s and on Income Support (IS), was completing her HND at college because she hoped to work in immigration or welfare rights. Her children were at school during the day, but she had arranged with her mother to look after them after school until she got home in the evening. Lastly, one woman without any formal qualifications was looking for childcare work, preferably in a hospital, because she liked to look after children; and she was prepared to train to gain the qualifications necessary for the job:

‘Without qualification you can still do nursing as an A grade. If not, I’ll restart my NVQ and go in that way. I’d have to enrol with a college and get a placement. That’s an NVQ 2; and then you can do [NVQ] 3.’

(Pakistani female, economically inactive, 20s)

For some women, the imperative of wanting to work was for a more pressing reason. They had married men who were still living in Pakistan or Bangladesh, and would be allowed to come and live in the UK only if their British partners could support them financially without claiming benefits. One young woman had interrupted her university study to get married in Pakistan. She needed to get a job so her husband could join her in the UK. This was so important for her:

‘I have to start working to get him [in]. I can’t go back to university. I have to work now.’

(Pakistani female, economically inactive, 20s)
The respondent quoted above always wanted to be a teacher, but under the circumstances was looking for office work, as a receptionist. In other instances, too, there was a pressing need for some women to work because of the financial implications of a two-income family being forced by circumstances to now rely on benefits. A Bangladeshi woman who was currently on IS had no illusions about how difficult it would be to get back into their career structure, of support role in the education sector; but was prepared to take a different job as a stop-gap measure.

Although some women too indicated they would like work, getting a job was not of immediate concern and, therefore, not a priority because they had other commitments. This was true of women of all ages. We found examples of women in their 20s and 30s, whose priorities revolved around looking after their young children, and who were, therefore, not actively looking for work. Importantly, most had chosen to stay at home out of choice, rather than anything else.

But some had been forced by divorce, separation and other domestic difficulties to stay at home to look after their children. A young Bangladeshi mother explained her situation:

‘Right now it is important, when you’re by yourself and you don’t have much family around you, you want the best for my son. He needs his mother as well. When he goes to school I won’t see him much. In the future I do want to go back to work, and I do want to get paid because I want to give my son the best I can.’

(Bangladeshi female, economically inactive, 20s)

Another Bangladeshi teenager felt that her children were her priority, and would like to concentrate on caring for them. She was experiencing marital problems and was looking for a flat for herself and her daughters, whilst she tried to resolve the problems with her husband. Therefore, housing and her children took priority over work at the moment. However, even some of these respondents were prepared to consider some form of employment if they could find suitable work. Some women would consider home-working, and others, part-time paid work.

Of course, we also found some women for whom work was not a goal – for one reason or another. For older women the principal reason was cultural. It had always been the tradition that women’s main responsibility was to look after their home and family. For much younger women, this appeared to be a temporary situation, at least while their children were still very young. Their priority under that circumstance was to concentrate on keeping themselves busy with looking after their family. A few women also had caring responsibilities, looking after relatives who were suffering long-term ill-health. But a small number of the women respondents were facing domestic difficulties that had affected their health to such an extent they were not able to work. Not surprisingly, the women in these situations were not looking for work, and so getting a job was not a priority. While some claimed they would be willing to work from home if they could get regular work, such as piece work in textiles, we found no evidence to suggest they had tried seriously for this.
Although it was not widespread, we found evidence of women who were caught in a benefits trap, and for whom work was not a goal. This was particularly the case for young Pakistani women who marry husbands from Pakistan. As these husbands were not entitled to benefits, they depend on their wives’ benefits, such as IS, if they have children. Such women were better off on benefits, as their husbands could not get jobs that paid them sufficiently to make up for the amount (of benefits) they would lose. In such cases, there was no incentive for women to come off benefits and look for work. But they were not the only ones who were caught in this dilemma. Some women on benefits were not looking for paid jobs, even though they admitted they could work part-time as their children were old enough and at school. The greater concern for them was that if they took a part-time job, their benefit would be cut. The benefits trap was particularly acute for women who had large families, and whose husbands were not in work either. It was not evident that the women who felt trapped in this position were unwilling to contemplate working at all. Instead, some appeared to be genuinely confused about how much their income would be affected if they did any work at all. They were reluctant to trade the certainty (of benefits) they knew to any unpredictable future income based on a combination of in-work and out-of-work benefits.

It was noticeable that on the whole, the Bangladeshi women we interviewed were more ambitious and, therefore, more enthusiastic in their quest to become more independent through work than the Pakistani women were.

**Requirements of a job**

We next wanted to find out about the kind of job people would want if they were looking for work. More specifically we asked them what type of job they were looking for at the moment, or would look for if they were seeking work. Most of the women respondents who were looking for work were young people in their teens, 20s and 30s. Moreover, they were looking for work in fairly predictable areas. These were mainly office work, such as administration and clerical jobs, retail, social and care work, and teaching. The respondents looking for office work said they liked this type of work because they offered greater flexibility and better career opportunities than were available elsewhere. Most respondents were also confident they would get this type of work because they possessed relevant qualities; they were articulate and spoke excellent English, and had good telephone manners – all skills that would be suited to administration and office work.

It was also evident that women were more likely to look for professional jobs with good career prospects. For example, one Bangladeshi woman in her 20s was looking to go into teaching and was thinking of applying to go back to university in the near future. In the meantime, she had completed a ten-week course to qualify as a teaching assistant. She was confident of securing a job when the new academic year started in September, as people who had done the course had all got jobs. Indeed, it was often their stated ambition for the future, when women respondents were asked what they would like to be doing in five years time, that they expected to be in jobs with career prospects. At the very least, most wanted a job where they
‘could go higher up the ladder and not just stay in one place’. A young Pakistani woman when asked, said she was ‘110 per cent’ certain she would like to be a teacher. She described teaching as her main goal, and was looking to qualify and work in a primary school. For others, a professional job would also give them the opportunity to make use of their university degree. Thus, another Pakistani woman in her 20s expected to be working within the health system in five years’ time, helping people in the community. Importantly, she would also expect to be in a good position where she was earning good money.

Perhaps not surprisingly, only a few of the women respondents were looking for unskilled jobs. These included packing shelves in supermarkets, dinner ladies, sewing and similar factory work. It was also not surprising that the women looking for unskilled jobs were more likely to face a number of barriers, not least, fluency in English.

However, although some women indicated they would like to work, in reality they had no prospect of doing so because they faced multiple barriers. As one woman reported:

‘I have never worked in my life. I can’t read or write in any language and find it difficult when I go to the language classes. I am elderly person aged over 50 years, and cannot remember what I learn. It is very hard for me and I don’t think I will live that long to get educated and then work.’

(Bangladeshi female, jobseeker, 50s)

4.1.2 Men

Just like the women, work was a goal for a large proportion of the respondent men. Unlike the women, though, most men wanted to work in order to regain a financial self-worth that would also enable them to support themselves and their family better than they could now. This was especially true of respondent men in their 30s and older. A Pakistani man in his 40s lamented the fact that he could not provide enough for his family. There were six people living in a two bedroom flat, which was not big enough for them. He wanted to work and to buy a house so that his daughter would have a separate room from her brothers. But more than that, men in the older age group were frustrated by the fact of sitting at home and not working. Three people summed up what was a common view among most of the respondent men, that:

‘I am desperately looking for work because benefits money is not enough to meet the cost of living. I have a family with young children to support; and I want to give them the best possible opportunities in life. The only way I can start to do this is by getting a job at the earliest. I get very frustrated being out of work.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 30s)
‘I want to work. I came to this country to work... Without work it is not possible to look after the children, and this is my ambition.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 40s)

‘I am seriously looking for a job as I don’t like to be idle in the house without any job. I think I have still working capability and energy, so I need a job. I feel bad that all my expenses are depending on these benefits. Any job is fine for me now for maintaining my family, including giving support of [sic] children’s studies.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 50s)

Young men (in their teens and 20s) also felt the need to work in order to support their family. A young Bangladeshi claimed that having seen his father work hard for much of his life without much to show for it, the least he could do was to find work and help his father pay off the mortgage. Living on benefits had made him lazy. It was easy money, and did not make him want to find a job. A young Pakistani expressed a similar view, with his concern going much further as to what would happen to himself and the rest of his family in the near future. Asked why he would like to work, he replied:

‘Independence is one thing. If I want to get married, in the Asian families, then obviously I would have to spend money myself. My dad would help me out, but I want to be able to give a bit to my family who’ve given me so much. I want him to sit back now and enjoy himself. He works quite a lot, and it would be nice to give him something back as well.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 20s)

This respondent felt his family responsibilities extended to supporting his younger sisters in the future:

‘I’ve got three younger sisters who will eventually get married. I would be expected to help out, help them get married, financially and stuff.’

But for young men, there was an added need to work in order to have some self-esteem themselves, and to have a decent life. Work was a goal because they would like to have money in order to do things like other people did. Some felt they were ‘losers’ because they were not working. The views of the young people reported here were illustrative:

‘It’s depressing. You have to get a job for self-worth. I have a bank account and no money in it. You can’t do the things other people are doing... You feel depressed. You feel people look down on you, [as if] we’re a different caste if we’re in England. They don’t respect you if you don’t get a job.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 20s)
‘I get depressed. It’s not easy. My friends have cars and nice clothes. And it
impacts on the family because there are more problems and tension at home.
I don’t want handouts from the Government. It doesn’t make you feel proud.
My family are working people, we’re not freeloaders.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 20s)

‘You need money, man. I want to buy my own house, so I have to work.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 20s)

‘I want to get somewhere in life, get money, have a house, get married, nice
car. It’s a life you want to live if you’re working.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, teens)

It was not only looking after their family that concerned them. Most respondent men
also claimed the amount of benefit they received was not sufficient to maintain their
family, anyway. But they did not like to live on benefits, or even claim them at all.
Some regarded staying on benefits to be just scrounging, which made people lazy;
while others went as far to suggest that sustaining one’s self was more in line with
their religion’s teachings:

‘Money earned by working is also religiously better (Halal). This money gives
mental satisfaction as you earned this by working.’

(Bangladeshi male, economically inactive, 40s)

There was evidence that even more men than women were desperate to work for
the sake of their physical and mental well-being. Several respondents were
concerned that their health had suffered because they were out of work. One
respondent reported:

‘I like working. Work keeps me healthy. When I used to work, I felt my body is
light. As I am not working, my body is not light now.’

(Pakistani male, economically inactive, 40s)

And another:

‘If I get a job I will be happy and more relaxed. My body will be fit, I can enjoy
and can spend. If you don’t have a job, then you realise how your body also
suffers.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 50s)

Perhaps the most dramatic expression of how being out of work had affected some
people’s health came from a Bangladeshi male respondent in his 50s, who was on
Incapacity Benefit (IB). Despite suffering ill-health, he longed to go back to some
form of work. He believed work was important for his own mental health because,
in his own words, ‘I left my spirit in work’.
One of the more significant gender differences in people's attitude to work was that more men were not looking for work because they were suffering ill-health. Pakistani and Bangladeshi men were equally affected in this way. For these men, gaining a job was not a priority for them at present. They were concerned more with getting cured of their illness first. However, as most men suffering long term ill-health were in their 50s and on IB, there appeared little or no prospect of their getting back into employment again. However, not all respondents suffering ill-health were permanently incapacitated. We found respondent men who were looking for work, but were restricted in what they could do because they were afflicted in some way. As a result, most could not do heavy manual work, or work long hours.

**Requirements of a job**

So, what sort of jobs were men looking for? On the whole, the overwhelming majority of men were looking for unskilled work. This was mainly because these were the only types of jobs they could do, either because they had no skills or experience for any other jobs, or because these were the only jobs available for people of their age. For most middle-aged Bangladeshi men in particular, these jobs were mainly in restaurants, as cooks, waiters or kitchen porters. As we shall see in the next chapter, most men in their 40s and 50s had little or no educational qualifications, and did not speak fluent English either. But they did not need to speak English in order to work in restaurants. A few Bangladeshi men in this age group were looking for unskilled factory work and, as had become increasingly common, security jobs. One Bangladeshi man told us:

‘I am searching any laundry and factory job as I have experiences in these areas. I am go [sic] to jobcentre frequently and apply for suitable jobs, including any security job. I understand that the security jobs do no need much educational qualifications. I never think about the other activities rather than regular job.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 40s)

Young men in their teens and 20s were looking for more varied jobs. Those who had attended school in the UK and/or had some educational qualifications were more likely to be looking for jobs in IT and retail; whilst those without were often in the same situation as the older generation, and restricted to jobs in restaurants, retail and warehouse (stocking shelves and packing) and security. It was notable that very few Bangladeshi men had considered self-employment as an alternative to work as an employee.

Like their Bangladeshi counterparts, most Pakistani men were also looking for unskilled jobs. But given their labour market history, Pakistani men in their 40s and 50s were more likely to look for factory jobs or, failing that, in the new area of security operatives. For Pakistani men in their 30s mainly, but also some in their 40s, the only real alternatives to security operatives, and increasingly non-existent factory jobs, was a variety of driving jobs, such as taxis and delivery. Only a few respondent Pakistani men were looking for catering jobs in restaurants.
Just as was the case with young Bangladeshi men, a significant number of young Pakistani men, in their 20s especially, were following a similar job pattern as the older generation. In their case, they were looking for driving and security jobs, primarily, as one young man explained:

‘I want to become [a] motor driver for my livelihood. I have obtained my provisional driving licence and am preparing for the theory test. I intend to pass all stages of UK driving licence within six to nine months. I then would qualify for [sic] taxi driver.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 20s)

On the whole, very few of the Pakistani men we spoke to about their requirement of a job were looking for non-manual, skilled work. Those who said they wanted non-manual jobs were mainly in their teens and 20s; and were looking for office jobs, in accounts, banking and IT.

Unlike women respondents, however, only a few men were prepared to consider undertaking training in order to improve their chances of getting a job. The priority for most was to get a job. Indeed, some did not think they needed any training in order to do a job, because they could learn on the job. It is true that a few said they would train, if it was necessary for the job they would like to do. In practice though, their enthusiasm seemed misplaced, as they were handicapped by the fact that they could not read or write properly.

Men’s ambitions for the future were, at best, modest. Most men in their 40s and 50s were highly uncertain about their job prospects in the next five years; not least because they were not educated and did not have any qualifications that could help them progress any further than their current situation. The best they hoped for, therefore, was to be in a job in five years’ time, although with no specific job in mind. But young men too did not have any firm ideas about what they would like to do. Even where they expressed an ambition to be in a good, well-paid job, it was not evident they knew which jobs these were likely to be, or how to get there. Indeed, the most frequently mentioned ambition of young respondent men was to run their own business. It was more often an ambition based on hope, and not much else. For example, a young Pakistani man thought he would like to run his own hairdressing business. When he was asked why he thought he would like that kind of job, he replied.

‘Because I go by the barber shop and see them busy. They make a lot of money, and at the end of the day it’s all about money.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 30s)

That respondent admitted he didn’t have the right kind of skills or experience, although he was hoping to get them. This raises an important issue about what career guidance is available to young Pakistani and Bangladeshi men.
Although most respondent men claimed that getting a job was a concern for them at the moment, it was not clear how great that concern was. It was also not clear that what appeared to be an indifferent, almost lackadaisical attitude to work was a sign of acceptance of the hopelessness of their current labour market situation. Indeed, for some men, the prospect of going back to the drudgery of unskilled jobs was not an appealing one. That frustration was summed up by one respondent:

‘The problem is that I’m not looking for a job in a restaurant any more. I’m not definitely not looking for a job, because the truth is if I want a job in a restaurant, I can start today. There’s plenty of [such] jobs around, but I’m just mentally fed up. When I can’t do nothing [sic] with them, I come home, I start fighting with my wife. It’s just too much. I don’t want to do it.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 30s)

4.2 Job search

We explored respondents’ attitudes to work further, by finding out to what extent their expressed desire to want to work was reflected in any effort to get a job. Respondents were asked whether they were looking for paid work and, if so, how they had gone about their search for jobs. We wanted to know how often they had applied for jobs, the type of jobs they had applied to, and with what results. We analysed their responses globally, although we highlight differences between and within groups, where necessary.

There was a mixed response overall to the number of jobs respondents had applied for. Some claimed they had applied for ‘a lot of jobs’. Only a few respondents were precise about the exact numbers, but most agreed that ‘a lot’ meant more than 20 applications in the past year. In this respect, the respondent women tended to be more precise, and were more likely to say they had applied for a lot of jobs. This is not too surprising, because as we have seen elsewhere, the respondent women were, on the whole, more proactive in their engagement with the labour market, or had more job choices (see Chapter 3), or were looking for a wider variety of jobs than the men (see Section 4.1.1). For example, a young Bangladeshi female in her teens mentioned she had applied for more than 30 jobs in the past one-and-a-half years. Another Bangladeshi in her 20s claimed she had applied for 40 to 50 jobs in the past year, while a young Pakistani woman, also in her 20s, had applied to as many as 80 jobs.

The respondent men were much more likely than the women to apply for fewer jobs. These ranged from a solitary application at one end of the scale, up to about a dozen at the other. In effect, men were likely to have applied for fewer than 20 jobs in the past year, although in one case a young Bangladeshi man in his 20s estimated that, on average, he applied for one job a week during the year. But several men admitted they had not applied for any jobs recently, or even for a long time.
Although the majority of respondents applied for jobs formally by completing an application form, this was not the only method used in job search. Some respondents contacted employers directly, either in person or by telephone, after finding the job vacancies advertised in newspapers. Jobseekers also used the help of jobcentre advisers to search for jobs. Jobseekers on the New Deal programme in particular, made use of this opportunity during their regular weekly attendance at Jobcentre Plus. Often, advisers would suggest which job sites to search, and respondents would take up the lead and contact the prospective employers. It was evident that young people in particular had used a variety of channels in their job search including, increasingly, the Internet. Only a few respondents indicated they had registered with private employment agencies, although there was some evidence to suggest that employers often favoured recruits applying through private agencies rather than the jobcentre. For example, a young jobseeker had contacted an employer after obtaining details of the vacancy from the Jobcentre:

‘She called me back and said “we’re looking for people with experience who come through agencies”. I didn’t get that job.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 20s)

Another young respondent thought there was a stigma attached to unemployed people on JSA:

‘What really made my ego go down was I was getting desperate. I was just sitting around in the house and I actually wanted to go out and do something. I applied for a job up in [named supermarket] just stacking shelves and I never even got that; and I’m like, you don’t need to be qualified to stack any shelves. The way I seen it, it wasn’t because it wasn’t like White or Black thing. It was just discrimination of someone being on Jobseekers. That’s the way I felt. I actually discussed that with my PA and he goes “it could be”.

(Pakistani male, economically inactive, 20s)

Of course, respondents’ experience with agencies was not always a positive or happy one, as another young woman recounted:

‘I tried an agency, but the feedback I got from them was useless. They said, “we will get back in touch with you in a couple of weeks”. So then what I done was, I started calling, and I would ask for say, Lorraine, and they would say, “she’s in a meeting, she’s going to call back,” she’s always somewhere else apart from her office. I always left my phone number just in case they lost it but not once did they phone me back, and they still haven’t, and I’m talking about six months ago.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 20s)

Women were more likely than men to apply for jobs on a speculative basis. We found an example of a young Bangladeshi woman who had recently applied for four jobs on a speculative basis by sending her CV to employers. Men, on the other hand, were more likely than women to use informal methods of job search; and a number of respondent men said they had not applied for jobs, but rather looked for jobs through their friends and family members.
Inevitably, some respondents had given up job search altogether, and so were making no effort to look for work; some because they could not get the type of work they would like, and others because of their age. Some women were not involved in any job search activity because their husband was away in Pakistan or Bangladesh for an extended period. They were effectively lone parents, and were not looking for work during this time. Another way of looking at such situations is that people’s job search activities were disrupted when they travelled to Pakistan or Bangladesh for such extended periods.

Irrespective of the number of applications they made, it was quite striking that the overwhelming majority of job applicants claimed they had not received a reply from the employers they had applied to. This was a source of much of the frustration felt by respondents, and which appeared to influence their attitudes to work. While some attributed the non-response to bad luck, others felt genuinely aggrieved by it. The views of two young people, when asked about the jobs they had applied for, were typical of that sense of frustration:

‘Quite a few. But one thing I don’t understand is when you apply for it they should at least say we didn’t find you interesting. [But] they don’t end up giving a call back to let you know. My Jobseeker’s Allowance send me to a training course, they’re looking for employment and one of the tutors sent me to an interview, and it’s been three months and still no reply. I asked my tutor to call them and I wasn’t successful.’

(Bangladeshi female, jobseeker, 20s)

‘I was on Jobseeker’s, yeah. That’s how I got in from the [named company] through the Jobseeker’s. After I had left my acting I went into this depression and then I went to Jobseeker’s and even, I’d send away for a job, applied for it…I remember I done a two-week course with Jobseeker’s because they send you on courses. We must have sent away for like six jobs, never even got any…We were sending our CVs and we never got a reply back from anywhere.’

(Pakistani male, economically inactive, 20s)

Notwithstanding the difficulties with employer response, more respondents indicated they had secured an interview from their job application than had not. There was no difference between men and women as far as success in securing interviews was concerned. But almost all those who had were young people in their teens and 20s. Unhappily, none of those who had secured interviews reported they were successful in getting the job. Unhappily too, none of these respondents reported they had received any direct information from the employers after the interviews to say why they were not successful. Some respondents, though, were drawing strength from their interview experiences, and were optimistic they were closer to getting a job as a result.
In the absence of any feedback from employers on the results of their applications and interviews, however, it was difficult for respondents to be categorical about the reasons for their failure. Nevertheless, some respondents had clear ideas themselves as to why they had not been successful. The most frequently mentioned reason by far was their poor English language skill, both oral and written. Most respondents believed this to be the biggest stumbling block to success from their job search. Poor facility in English was almost invariably linked with lack of educational qualifications and other job skills. Some believed their age counted against them; they were too old, and employers were looking for younger recruits. A few mentioned employers to be deterred by gaps in their employment. While it was mainly older respondents who were most disadvantaged in these ways, there was also evidence that an increasing number of younger respondents (men and women alike) had been unsuccessful because they did not have experience of working in the UK. Most of them had been in the UK for a relatively short period, after marrying British Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. But the persistent lack of success in their job search had also left some respondents to speculate whether employers were perhaps discriminating against them because of their ethnicity, as the experience of two respondents showed:

‘I’m finding it very difficult, but I don’t know if it’s because I cover my head with a scarf, and I don’t know if it is because I am Asian, because I’ve applied for 80 jobs and none of them have [sic] got back to me…Not even for an interview, and that was over four months ago now.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 20s)

‘I have tried this year and last year. There were a few vacancies. When I was in town and saw something and asked about and they said that vacancies not available any more, it was still in the window and I wondered if it was racism at the time. There was another incident at a private school and there was a vacancy. They were fine with me on the ‘phone as I was speaking to them, but when I gave my name they said we’ll have to get back to you, it’s gone. I just had a feeling. There have been a few incidents that I’ve felt have been dodgy.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 40s)

It was not only the lack of skills or possible discrimination that respondents had to contend with. There was some evidence to suggest that respondents faced intense competition for the type of jobs they were applying for:

‘There was one job I applied for and 30, 40 people applied for it. To be honest with you, if you go 15 years, when I used to apply for jobs they’d say to me, now they don’t call you for interviews at all you see. You telephone and they say, “sorry, the job is taken.” So what can you do then.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 40s)
'The Council advertised a job for trainee teacher, to be trained on the job and you get a paid wage and you qualify as a teacher. I had an interview for that and there were 200 applications and they only called 30 people in and because they don’t have enough funding they were only allowed to take on about 12, so they narrowed that down to about 15 which they’re going to test and interview again. They ‘phoned me and told me I’d gone through to the last 15. I applied for another PGCE.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 20s)

‘I applied for the job and the bloke said to me, Harry I think it was at the post office; he goes, “600 people applied and we’ve got 200 sorted out already, but now you’re still in there. We haven’t come to you yet. Hopefully we’re going to take you in October or November. So keep applying”.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 50s)

What emerged clearly from the interviews was that respondents did not, on the whole, carry out job search in a systematic way. At best, job search was haphazard. Most respondents were obliged to look at job vacancies and carry out job searches when they went to the jobcentre to sign on, as they were required to, in order to receive the JSA. There was no evidence that much happened afterwards. For example, it was only in a small number of cases that we found evidence of respondents using their own initiative to follow up their applications by contacting the prospective employer. There was no evidence too that respondents had sought advice and guidance on what they needed to do in order to improve their chances of success in their search for jobs. The experiences of the group of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis we interviewed who were in employment provided some contrast to those of jobseekers and non-jobseekers. The respondents who were in employment were more proactive, and used the full range of multi-media to help with their jobsearch. It is possible to argue this might be expected of a group of people who were also more likely to possess higher levels of human capital. But what appeared to distinguish them further from jobseekers was that whilst they used the existing jobsearch facilities as everybody else, eg the job points in the jobcentre, they also relied a great deal on self-help; for example, contacting organisations that were advertised as getting local people into local jobs. This raises an issue about people’s aspirations and expectations, an issue we now turn to.

4.3 Aspirations and expectations

Quite apart from the type of work respondents were looking for, we wanted to find out about their awareness of the full range of employment opportunities available to them. Respondents were asked if they had a good understanding of what jobs were available in the area in which they lived, and whether they had received any advice about the type of jobs that would suit them. The extent to which respondents make the effort to find out about jobs, and also seek advice and guidance would, in part, reflect their own aspirations and expectations. We analysed their responses
according to gender, although the influence of age is also highlighted where necessary.

### 4.3.1 Women

More women appeared to have a good understanding of jobs in their local areas than did not. For the most part, such respondents had acquired knowledge of local jobs either by themselves or by looking at jobs advertised in local newspapers. A young respondent living in Bradford told us:

> ‘I look at the Evening Post to see what’s going, and what the wages are, and what education you need.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 20s)

Some had looked even more extensively, and used not only the jobcentre, but also their local Connexions office as well as the Internet, to inform themselves of job opportunities available locally. As might be expected, though, some of the respondent women had little or no understanding of conditions in the local labour market and, therefore, what options were available to them. To the best of their knowledge there was work they could do at home, or jobs where they could mix with other Asian women, and did not involve much travel either. On the whole, women who were economically inactive or were not looking for work, were the most likely to have limited understanding of the range of jobs available locally.

Although a relatively high number of women seemed to have a good understanding of what jobs were available locally, only few appeared to have received advice about what jobs would suit them. Much of the advice had come from jobcentre advisers. This means only those respondents who had engaged with the jobcentre, other than on a reporting basis, were likely to receive advice about suitable jobs. On the other hand not all those receiving such advice thought it was helpful. Other than the jobcentre, the only careers advice respondents had availed themselves of was at school or college; which respondents also thought was limited in its usefulness.

### 4.3.2 Men

The majority of respondent men had only limited knowledge of what jobs were available in their local area. Moreover, their knowledge was restricted to three main areas – factory work, restaurants and taxis. Without exception, these were the jobs mentioned by respondent men when they were asked. Indeed, the lack of understanding of jobs appeared to extend to a lack of appreciation of the changes that had taken place in the industrial structure of their area, as some respondents exemplified:

> ‘If all the factories re-open then I might have opportunity to take any suitable [job] with them; maybe in the same factory where I had my last job.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 40s)
'I am currently looking for a tailoring job or any other job which might match my past experience. I am not expecting a job with qualifications. Whatever I did [in the past] did not require qualifications, except technical expertise. I have enough qualification to get a job like tailoring.'

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 50s)

Even worse, a significantly high number of men had no idea whatever of what jobs were available in their local area. It was worrying that these included several young people, in their teens or 20s.

Some respondent men, albeit far fewer than the women, indicated they had a good understanding of jobs in their area, and what options were available to them. As with some of the young described earlier, respondent men with a good knowledge of local jobs appeared to do so from their own initiative. Some appeared to have very detailed knowledge, not only about the type of jobs available, but also the hourly rates of pay offered by companies in different sectors.

Very few men had received any advice about the type of jobs that would suit them; and most of these from jobcentre advisers. Even then, the advice from jobcentre staff was by no means uniform, or of the quality which respondents believed would be more helpful to them.

Aside from the jobcentre, even fewer men than women indicated they had received any careers advice at school. What seemed to work best for the few respondents who appeared keenest to get into employment, was self-motivation and family aspiration, role models and support at an early age. Two respondents in particular, suggested as much.

One was a jobseeker:

‘At the end of the day it’s down to the person’s own initiative if they want to work, they will always find a way and means of getting employment. I had the attitude I want to work, get a decent job, nine to five sort of thing, office work. That’s something I’ve always wanted. When I see my dad going out in his suit, it kind of makes me wish, I wish I had a bit of what he’s got. I’d be happy.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 20s)
The other was in employment, and drew on his own experience:

‘I’d been working in a restaurant all my life, but I wanted to do something better… We grew up in a generation where people only worked in restaurants. Only a few of my age group went to university and college. They [most] went through education but then straight to work. Parents have a big part to play. My parents weren’t educated but they wanted me to study. I worked at the same time and I wanted to do something, to be something. The restaurant work gave me good experience but I wanted something different. I studied hard, I’m not a natural… Some of it is with our parents; they’ve left school early or they don’t have the right role models. Some of their parents don’t understand the education system. They realise they want to go back to education or move into a better job but they don’t have the skills and qualification. We do as much as we can.’

(Pakistani male, in employment, 30s)

The two respondents cited appeared to be exceptions. On the whole, respondent men seemed to take an almost self-defeatist attitude that they have nowhere else to turn; that the only jobs they knew, and the only jobs available to them were in restaurants. This was best summed up by another two respondents.

One was a jobseeker:

‘Most Bangladeshi people, especially the people that are a very tight knit community, we all live together, and our way of earning a living is working in Bangladeshi restaurants. So you don’t really need any qualifications, you just pick it up from friends, family members. So that’s what I did. We didn’t take advice seriously because that’s Bangladeshi people do, they work in restaurants so…it’s one of those things really.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 30s)

The other was in employment:

‘Basically, we tend to get a lot of Asian people that are stuck in these positions, for example, they kind of take advantage of their workers, but the people that work in the industry they’re scared to go out of it, even though they don’t like working for Asians, they’ve got this kind of mindset, it’s hard for them. Those that do go move on to better things.’

(Pakistani male, in employment, 20s)

It is, perhaps, the case then that even if people have understanding of other jobs, they appear to be trapped in the jobs they’ve had in the past and would like to again, because it is safer to work in the areas they know best.

4.4 Attitudes to women working

Lastly, within the broad spectrum of factors that influenced people’s attitudes to work, we focused specifically on women respondents (only): to explore their own views on women working outside the home; the attitude of their family and their
community towards women working outside the home, and the extent to which those attitudes made it difficult for them to find employment. We analysed the responses by ethnicity, although here too, the responses were modulated by age.

4.4.1 Bangladeshis

Individuals’ attitudes

The overwhelming majority of Bangladeshi women respondents had no personal objections whatever to women working outside the home. Some respondents were incredulous at any suggestion that women should not do paid work outside the home. Most respondents took a positive view of women working, with some even adamant they would fight for a woman’s right to go to work in order to be able to look after themselves. Indeed, some were much more strident in their defence of women’s right to work, as was the case with one respondent:

‘I don’t care about ethnicity or having kids, always work, even if part-time. You’re your own person. A lot of women sit at home, mentally tortured. My mum and sisters, we decided we would work.’

(Bangladeshi female, in employment, 20s)

While this view prevailed across all the age groups, although in less forthright language than this, many more of the younger respondents in their teens and 20s embodied this attitude nevertheless. Some had female relatives, such as aunts and cousins who worked, so that the notion was not new to them and their family. In any case, some of respondents were in employment themselves and had always worked; or were currently unemployed, but had worked in the past. It was only in rare cases that we found respondents who believed their first priority was towards their family and home; and that this was incompatible with working:

‘Most of the time as a mother I should be with my children, not someone else. I never depend on a babysitter. My child and husband come first and money second. I’m not worried about what people say. I’m concerned about what I think is right.’

(Bangladeshi female, economically inactive, 30s)

Family’s attitude

The majority of Bangladeshi women respondents did not think their own family had any objections against women working in general, nor would they object to them specifically working outside the home. On the contrary, most respondents claimed their family shared their own views that women should work so they could retain their independence. As one respondent remarked:

‘It is not like the days when women were required to stay at home and not come out to work.’

(Bangladeshi female, single, 20s)
This was one of a common sentiment expressed by many respondents. Thus, a respondent in her 30s, opined that in her family there were no issues about women working outside the home. On the contrary, it was seen as a positive thing; and she had a sister who had children and was working. Even where their family had some concern, it was not against the principle of women working, but rather what type of jobs they did, and the hours they worked. A respondent in her 20s said that whilst her family supported her going out to work, they preferred her doing daytime work. It was clear that most families had a pragmatic attitude to women working; that it was now difficult for just one member of the family (in this case, a man) to work and support the rest of the family on a single income. A married woman in her 20s commented that this was difficult on men as well, especially as living in a city like London was very expensive.

Of course, not all families were as pragmatic, and we heard evidence about parents and other family members who objected, some of them strongly, to women working outside the home. For example, one responded described her family’s attitude in this respect:

‘My dad never really wanted any of us to work. My sister is trying to get part-time work now that she’s doing a GNVQ in health and social care.’

(Bangladeshi female, married, 20s)

Even so, that respondent admitted that her family’s attitudes had changed considerably, and that at some stage, her parents had understood why she wanted to work.

‘I think its changing. You do see a lot of women in work. Some families don’t allow their daughters to work, so that keeps them backward. Some families let their daughters go to work and be a bit more independent. Sometimes they haven’t changed, it depends on their individual families.’

It helped the younger generation of women from such backgrounds too, if other female relatives were in work, and especially in more prestigious employment, as the respondent reported above added:

‘My aunt works at St Clement’s Hospital, she’s a co-ordinator. She was an auxiliary nurse before...My sister-in-law is working in a law firm, my other sister-in-law is a teaching assistant as well.’

Much of the evidence from the interviews with respondents suggested that the parents who objected most strongly to women working were of a previous generation, and that their attitude in this respect was untypical of most parents now. It is not surprising that those women who were most severely disadvantaged by that tradition were also very strong supporters of women’s right to work. A respondent in her 50s provided a glimpse of how much had changed.
She had attended school in Bangladesh until the age of about 14 and then left. The reason for her leaving school so early was that her father was a strict disciplinarian, who did not believe that females should be educated. She, therefore, remained helping out in the family home for a further five to six years before she was married. She had since wanted to study and was disappointed she was not able to do so. However, she had ensured that all her children had been educated and her daughter-in-law, who had come over from Bangladesh recently, was being encouraged to attend adult education classes. She described herself now as a confident individual, and did not believe that her wider community too had any aversion to women working outside the home.

While the attitudes of respondents’ immediate family appear to have moderated towards approval, the attitudes of in-laws seemed still wedded to the tradition of women not working outside the home; if not outright avowal, then at least strong disapproval of their daughters-in-law working. A young respondent who expressed her wish to go back to work when her child started school, was not very certain what the reaction of her in-laws would be. She suspected they might feel upset if she went back to work, as they were not used to the idea of women working outside the home. However, the respondent also believed that as a Muslim, she responded directly to her husband’s view on the matter. It was her husband’s, rather than her in-laws’ view that was more important; and if her husband did not object to her working, then she was satisfied with that. In her case, she also believed her husband would be ‘alright with my decision to go back to work’.

The attitudes of husbands to their wives working appeared very important in such circumstances. We heard evidence from several women who claimed their husbands and their husbands’ families objected to them working. It was not clear, however, whether husbands attitudes were influenced by their own family’s or the other way round. A young woman who was now separated from her husband informed us she was not allowed to work while she was married:

‘I was looking for work. Then I got married and I wasn’t working. I wasn’t allowed to work. He was working, and he didn’t want me to work.’

(Bangladeshi female, economically inactive, 20s)

Another woman in her 30s, and economically inactive, informed us she was faced with a dilemma. She was married at a young age, and could not finish her education. After having four children she now felt she would like to work. But she was certain her husband would not let her, and his family would be against it. It was regrettable that this respondent could not express her desire to work to anyone who could help her, because she was concerned that information would somehow reach her family. An older respondent, currently in work, provided an insight to some families’ apprehension from her own experience:
‘Most men do not want their wives working. My husband thought my wife will be independent and leave me. He tried to keep me inside the house but I’m not that kind of person, I’m always trying to do something myself. They spend their life cooking for their husband and children.’

(Bangladeshi female, in employment, 50s)

Community’s attitude

Respondents had mixed views about the attitude of their ethnic community towards women working outside the home. Some reported that people in the communities where they lived were ‘fine with the idea, and more and more women were working’. There was consensus that the attitude of the wider Bangladeshi community was changing; towards acceptance of women working outside the home. Three respondents described the change:

‘In the past it would have been a problem but people have sons and daughters who are more educated and the older generation understand that it’s more acceptable. Even people from Bangladesh are working, you have to make a living and override cultural things.’

(Bangladeshi female, economically inactive, 30s)

‘There was 20-30 years ago but that has changed over the years because more women have been going out to work. I was working in my own restaurant, one of the first women to do that. It has changed over the years….With the economic situation people can’t manage mortgages on one wage and the community is getting educated.’

(Bangladeshi female, economically inactive, 50s)

‘I think it’s changing. You do see a lot of women in work. Some families don’t allow their daughters to work, so that keeps them backward. Some families let their daughters go to work and be a bit more independent. Sometimes they haven’t changed, it depends on their individual families.’

(Bangladeshi female, married, jobseeker, 20s)

It is clear from the evidence presented that there is a change in attitude towards Bangladeshi women working outside the home. The change is reflected across the generations, such that mothers who were not allowed to work now support their daughters’ right to work. Women themselves have shown an increased self-confidence, which has permeated the community sufficiently to influence the change in attitude. Nevertheless, there are still barriers to women working. Although it has become easier for girls to study, there is still an expectation within some families that they have to end their education in order to get married.
A respondent completed her formal, compulsory education in the UK. She finished school, having completed her GCSEs, when she was 16. She went on to complete her ‘A’ levels, and started university to read Psychology when she was 18. However, she left university after one year in order to get married; an arranged marriage to a UK-born husband. This appears to be the expectation in the family. Her elder sister started nursing training, but left to get married; and one of her younger sisters also started university, only to leave after a year, to get married as well.

The respondent thinks it particularly sad that she had to leave university in order to get married. It was her parents who decided she must leave university. But she is philosophical about this. As she put it, ‘you can’t do anything about it, and so there is no need to dwell upon it for ever’.

In some cases, although there are no objections in principle to women working, there are practical difficulties for those women who have large families. And while women working is seen as a good thing, there is a need to strike a balance between working and staying at home when women have young children. There is still concern, especially among the older generation, about women working. Indeed, some respondents who were born in Bangladesh and grew up there before coming to the UK still find it difficult to adjust to the fact that women can work in the UK. Some still have concerns about working in a mixed environment, and would only consider working in a predominantly female environment.

In a few cases too, cultural practices still work against the idea of women working. Part of this reflects what is considered as family honour:

‘Our main barriers are language and culture. Women are the primary carers in the home, it’s a patriarchal society. The idea of honour; if your wife works people will think we don’t have enough money to get by on.’

Another reason is the fear of daughters not getting married, or not finding a suitable spouse because they are educated.

‘Me and [named friend] are the few we know within our age range [who are working]. I only know of four and my sister is one. Most girls did their GCSEs and then they were married off or disappeared. There’s this theory that if you educate your daughter by the time they finish their education they’re getting old and nobody will want to marry her and too educated for the men.’

(Bangladeshi female, in employment, 20s)

Quite often, it is ‘just tradition’, but one which some would resist, as a respondent in work explained, when she was asked her view, if a future husband did not want her to work:
'I couldn’t accept that, he’d have to justify it because we’re equal. We’re brought up in this country. Hopefully I would find someone who wouldn’t mind me working... I know people who are stuck at home, not by choice, but because they’ve been told to. Someone I know was working in a bank until she got married and she was full-time and when she got married she wasn’t allowed to work.’

(Bangladeshi female, in employment, 20s)

### 4.4.2 Pakistanis

#### Individuals’ attitudes

In contrast to Bangladeshi women, a much smaller number of Pakistani respondents indicated they personally had no objections to women working outside the home. While most of these thought it was a generally good idea, some believed there were positive reasons why women should work.

‘I think it’s great. I think they should get out and work. It’s just an extra income, and plus you are being active, meeting people and enjoying life like anyone else does.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 20s)

‘I think it’s very good, and they’re not sitting inside all the time. I’d like to work. It builds up my confidence and self-esteem, and I’m sure it would do the same for them.’

(Pakistani female, economically inactive, 20s)

‘I think they should. You get depressed if you stay at home. Outside, you meet people and improve your education.’

(Pakistani female, economically inactive, 40s)

Some respondents argued there were sound economic reasons why women should work; in particular that men or husbands must not carry all the responsibility for maintaining the family. For Pakistani women born and raised in the UK, the personal choice to work, which was also guaranteed by law, was the more important consideration. However, the majority of respondent Pakistani women expected to stop work when they were married and had children. Although, in exceptional cases, some continued to work, albeit part-time, when they had their first child, almost all would have stopped working by the time they had their next child. As one respondent explained:

‘Asian families are different. A lot of women won’t work, especially after children. A lot of my friends are working after children for career and finance reasons. A lot will give up working because they want to raise a family and they don’t need to. They may work part-time with the first child and leave it with the grandmother; [by] the second child rarely do they continue working.’

(Pakistani female, in employment, 20s)
It was not clear how much the women’s decision to stop work in this way was dictated by cultural practice or choice. It was interesting, though, that Pakistani women were likely to make the same decision, irrespective of their level of education. The respondent cited above explained this too:

‘Asian communities are very family orientated…There is no substitute for your mother…It’s the family, looking after the children. Most [women] are educated, and go to university, have qualifications or study.’

**Family’s attitude**

On the whole, respondents who said they had no personal objection to women working, were also likely to have the support of their immediate family. Their parents did not object to their daughters working either, at least in principle, although in some cases parents placed limits on what type of work they could do and how far away from home they were allowed to travel to work. One respondent in her 20s mentioned that her father would be strict about the type of job she did, and where the job was. In particular, he would not want her ‘to mix with men’; which of course increased her difficulty in finding a job. Another jobseeker described her dilemma, when she was asked how far away from home she would be prepared to work:

‘Now that’s a question. I wouldn’t be able to travel too far because my parents don’t allow me to work out of Bradford to tell you the truth.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 20s)

The common view among respondents was that it was parental attitude that was often most important in the decision about young Pakistani women working outside the home:

‘I think most of the time some Asian parents don’t want the girls to go out and work, but there are some parents who are fine with it. It used to be at one time the parents didn’t want the girls to go out but now they’re alright with it.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 20s)

Whether or not the family’s attitude was an accommodating one to women working, depended very much on how strict they were. Two respondents mentioned that their parents were happy for them to go out and work, and added:

‘They’re not that strict. My dad is open-minded. He would rather we study and get a good education and a good job.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 20s)

‘In my family they’re open about it but most Asian families are strict if ladies work. They usually prefer them to sit at home to do the housework and babysit. In our family most of the ladies are working. We’re more modern.’

(Pakistani female, economically inactive, 20s)
On the other hand, there was some evidence to show that some families firmly believed that women should not work. Their husbands were expected to provide for them and look after them. Three respondents who were all divorced from their husbands described their family’s attitude towards women working, when they were still married, that:

‘Women shouldn’t work if their husband is here [in the UK], then the husband should work and the woman should stay at home. That’s what they think. But here it’s the law, everybody should work here, so we have to.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 30s)

‘He used to work, it wasn’t necessary for me to work. He didn’t want me to work. I just stayed at home.’

(Pakistani female, economically inactive, 40s)

‘I don’t mix a lot. If I was with my husband it [working] would be an issue. He didn’t like women working.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 40s)

Respondents believed that the protective attitude of some families towards women, that prevented them from working, was a generational trait; but one that was likely to disappear, because the younger generation had different values and attitudes to their parents.

Community’s attitude

In contrast to Bangladeshis, the respondents generally agreed that there was much stronger objections from the wider Pakistani community to women working outside the home. Much of this is attributed to cultural influences and practices, rather than religion, which are less encouraging of girls studying, or women working. One respondent used her own experience to described the attitude of the community in this respect:

‘When my sister and brother were going to university we’d have elders coming over from the community and saying “what are you doing, you shouldn’t be sending your daughters to study, its not right”. Dad said, “it’s our duty to send our kids, you’re wrong”.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 20s)

In this respect, the Pakistani community appears to have very polarised attitudes towards women working outside the home. On the one hand, there is a part of the community where women are expected to get married at a young age, have children and look after the home. A respondent described that part of the community as bound by a culture that thinks:
‘A woman should be covered up completely and not be seen out, and the man should provide for her while she’s at home looking after the children, doing all the housework. She doesn’t need an education, that’s how they feel.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 20s)

On the other hand, there is a part composed of families who take a quite different view about their daughters working. Their views were often informed by their own experience of being deprived of education and being married off at a young age. Some did not want their children to repeat their own lost opportunities in the past. Although not extensive, there was some evidence to suggest the two sides of the community do not mix much, as they do not have much in common.

It is perhaps paradoxical then that Pakistani women who were divorced or, in some cases abandoned by their husbands, were forced to work in order to support their family, even in that part of the community where a working woman was not the done thing. While it was not the done thing for women to seek divorce where the husband was absent, they could also not rely on ‘handouts’. One respondent’s experience summed up the paradox.

In her community she feels that women rely on their husband to earn money and work. Her husband has gone, she is not sure where to, when or if he might be back. When he has left her before and returns she has always taken him back, because her community does not divorce and this would be frowned upon. She now felt ‘too old to rely on handouts and waiting for her husband to turn up’, so was planning to train and work.

(Pakistani female, economically inactive, 30s)

There was another paradox: that British women who marry men in Pakistan need to show they are in work and could support their husband, before they (husbands) are allowed to enter the UK to live with them. There was no evidence to suggest there was community resistance to the idea of them working.
5 Barriers to work

5.1 Personal characteristics

5.1.1 Age

Generally, respondents did not see their age as a barrier to work until they were over 40 years old, although there were some exceptions to this. In a few cases, respondents under 30 years old felt that their age was a barrier, as they believed that employers both wanted candidates with more experience, and did not take seriously candidates straight from university as they considered that those who had just graduated ‘had no idea about the real world’. Others said that it was difficult to get managerial jobs if you were young as older people do not like taking orders from someone younger. One respondent aged under 20 felt that if one young person does something stupid at work it affects the reputation of all young employees. This had happened when the respondent had worked in a battery factory, and other young people had been unsafe with acid and equipment. However, others thought that being younger was an advantage when looking for work. Some respondents aged in their 30s felt that their options in terms of work became limited as they reached their late 30s.

Age became more of an issue when respondents were aged in their 40s, although by no means all of those in their 40s saw their age as a barrier to work. Respondents cited a lack of work experience when they had reached their 40s as making it difficult to find work, felt that they were too old to be starting a new career, and that some employers were looking for younger workers, particularly in fast-paced work such as restaurants and supermarkets. Unsurprisingly, age was more likely to be cited as a barrier for those aged over 50 than for other age groups. Respondents over 50 felt that their age restricted the types of jobs that were available to them and a common view amongst this age group was that employers prefer to employ younger people, making it difficult to get a job when you are in competition with younger people. One respondent felt that his age made it difficult for him to find work as he had previously always been his own boss, whilst another described how employers in local retail jobs only wanted younger women just out of school. Another respondent
had applied with a group of other unemployed candidates for a job at a large supermarket, and four applicants had been successful, all of whom were younger than him. Some respondents aged over 50 believed that they could no longer do the physically demanding jobs that they had done in the past, and in some cases there was anxiety about the future from respondents who felt that their age made it increasingly less likely that they would find work.

### 5.1.2 Health

Health was a major issue for many, being cited as a barrier to work for around one-third of all respondents, across a range of ages. In many cases, the health problems described were severe, and it was common for respondents to have multiple health problems.

*Respondents who were claiming health-related benefits*\(^5\)

For respondents claiming health-related benefits, health was obviously a major barrier to work. Respondents described having had to give up work in the past because of their health, and many felt that their health problems meant that they could not work, until their health problems were better, or in some cases they would never work again. These health problems affected respondent’s ability to move their hands, walk, sit or stand for long periods, and sometimes necessitated frequent visits to hospital. It was as common for these respondents to have multiple health problems as it was for them to have a single health problem. Health problems described by respondents included:

- musculoskeletal problems: problems with the feet and ankles, knee pain, pain in waist, back pain, shoulder problems, osteoporosis, arthritis;
- respiratory problems: chest pain and asthma;
- mental health problems: depression;
- other health problems: headaches, stomach ulcers, diabetes, heart attacks, angina, high blood pressure, glaucoma, Crohn’s disease, urinary tract problems, kidney problems, recovery from gall bladder operation, hearing and sight impairments.

There were more respondents claiming health-related benefits who were aged 50 or older, than there were amongst respondents aged in their 40s, or respondents aged in their 30s or 20s.

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\(^5\) Respondents claiming ‘health-related benefits’ refers to respondents either claiming Incapacity Benefit (IB), or respondents claiming Income Support because of health problems who were not eligible for IB (for example, because of insufficient National Insurance contributions).
Respondents who were not claiming health-related benefits

Health was also a barrier to work for respondents not claiming health-related benefits (around two-thirds of those who said health was a barrier were not claiming health-related benefits). For those aged in their 20s who were not claiming health-related benefits, health problems included back problems, hearing and sight impairments, depression, and a problem with a collarbone. These health problems restricted the type of work respondents felt that they could do. Problems with backs and collarbones ruled out work that was too physical, whilst respondents with depression or hearing or sight impairments were reluctant to disclose these to employers, as they felt that it would affect their chances of getting work. For example:

“If I tell them about my disability I won’t get an interview, I want the employer to meet me in person.”

(Pakistani male, jobseeker)

Respondents aged in their 30s who were not claiming health-related benefits also had a mixture of health problems including depression, lupus, asthma, dizziness and blackouts, headaches, and injuries to hand and shoulder from domestic violence. As with those in their 20s, these health problems restricted the types of work that respondents could do, and often meant that they could not go back to doing jobs they had done before their health problems such as laundry work, factory work, machinist work done from home, and working with chemicals.

It was more common for respondents in their 40s and 50s who were not claiming health-related benefits to say that their health problems meant that they could not work at all, in contrast to those under the age of 40 who were more likely to say that their health problems affected their ability to do some types of work. Health problems were more common amongst respondents aged in their 40s who were not claiming health-related benefits, than amongst those in their 20s and 30s. There was a wide range of health conditions amongst this age group, including asthma, high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis, problems with hands, legs, neck and back, mental health problems, and eye problems. In most cases, respondents felt that their health conditions affected the type of work that they could do, frequently stating that they could not do physical work, for example, heavy lifting, or could not go back to jobs they had done previously, such as restaurant work or working in dusty environments. In a few cases, respondents felt that their health meant that they could not work, either because of severe mental health problems, or multiple health problems. For example, one respondent reported having had triple bypass surgery, an industrial accident that meant that they could not stand for long, asthma, a thyroid problem, high blood pressure, and migraines and blackouts.

Respondents aged 50 and over who were not claiming health-related benefits cited health problems including high blood pressure, diabetes, back problems, heart problems, breathing problems and hearing problems as affecting their ability to work. Again, these affected their ability to do physical work, or meant that they...
could not work at all. One respondent had a hearing problem which made it difficult in the workplace as they could not read either. Another could not work due to their multiple health problems: this respondent had problems breathing, joint pain, gastric ulcers, and urinary tract problems.

5.1.3 Religion

Respondents were asked what their religion was, and if it affected the type of work that they could do. Of the 231 respondents, 223 were Muslim, one was Hindu (and felt that religion did not affect the type of work they could do), whilst the other seven respondents were not asked about religion during the interview (it was not always possible to ask this question, particularly in the few cases where the respondent or the researcher was uncomfortable during the interview). This section discusses whether and how religion can be a barrier to working in particular types of job. Religious discrimination by employers is discussed below, in the employer discrimination section.

The data on religion was examined to see if there were differences between those who first came to this country themselves, those whose parents were the first generation of their family to come to this country, and those whose grandparents had been the first generation to come to this country. There were no major differences between these three groups, in terms of the proportions who did not feel that religion restricted the types of jobs they could do, or meant that they had certain requirements of employers to meet their religious needs. The data was also examined to see if there were differences between Bangladeshis and Pakistanis, and there were no major differences, in whether and how religion was a barrier to work.

Female respondents

Between one-third and a half of female respondents who discussed how religion affected their ability to work felt that their religion did not affect the types of jobs that they could do in any way, and did not have any requirements of employers such as needing a place and time to pray. A small group of these respondents explained that they were not practising Muslims, or were ‘not that religious’, whilst others argued that they could be flexible about having time to pray at work, as they could always do their prayers before or after work, or during break times.

The remaining female respondents had various requirements of employers due to the way that they observed their religion, discussed below in the order of those most commonly cited. Many female respondents cited more than one of these issues. The most common concern for female respondents was requiring appropriate places and times to pray. Some women did not need long to pray, whilst one woman said that she needed to pray for half an hour three times during the day and would only work if an employer allowed her to observe prayer. Needing time to pray and needing to stop work early when the fast is ended for the day by prayers during Ramadan was also mentioned by female respondents. The importance of prayer is shown in this example:
‘You should be allowed to do that [pray during the day]. It’s important to me and probably a lot of other people as well.’

(Pakistani woman, jobseeker)

The next most common religious need cited by female respondents was not being able to work where alcohol is sold or served. Needing to observe Hijab (covering of the head and the body) whilst at work was also an important need for women. Some female respondents felt that they could not work in the evenings or at night due to their religion, and some respondents felt that they could either not work with men at all, or would need to work in a mainly female environment. One woman, therefore, wanted to work in her own home, although other women disagreed with this interpretation of Islam:

‘Women communicating with men is allowed in Islam but they [men] don’t understand what the religion is trying to say. In Islam you can work but some of the men don’t understand it.’

(Bangladeshi woman, jobseeker)

Other needs mentioned by female respondents were not working in a gambling establishment such as a betting shop, not working with non-Halal meat, and not working in establishments that promote the practice of accruing interest, such as banks. Some female respondents felt that they could not work in jobs that involved meeting the general public. For example:

‘The only job I could take is office where nobody sees you.’

(Pakistani woman, jobseeker)

A number of women respondents felt that employers were understanding of religious needs involving prayer and dress, and some had experienced this in the past with employers. For example:

‘They gave us breaks to break our fast. If we needed time to pray they would allow that.’

(Pakistani woman, economically inactive)

Others thought that it was difficult to find employers who could meet their religious needs, and two had, therefore, restricted their job search to Muslim employers.

Male respondents

Just over half of male respondents who discussed how religion affected their ability to work said that their religion did not affect the types of jobs that they could do in any way, and did not have any requirements of employers due to their religion. As with female respondents, a small group of those who felt religion would not impact on the types of jobs that they could do were not practising Muslims, whilst others only observed Friday prayers, or argued that they could be flexible about having time to pray at work, and that having times and a place to pray would be desirable, but not essential for them.
The remaining male respondents cited various jobs that they could not do due to the way that they observed their religion, or had various requirements of employers, discussed below in the order of those most commonly cited. Many male respondents cited more than one of these issues. The most common concern, by far, for male respondents was not being able to work in places that sold or served alcohol, which far outweighed other requirements. Needing times and places to pray, especially finishing work early during Ramadan when the fast is ended for the day by prayers, and being able to observe Friday prayers was an important issue for some. For example:

“Yes, when I am working in the stores, Hijani stores, assume we’re coming out for one to two hours for mosque but when I go JJB [Sports] I can’t have it. It’s a 45 minute break, but we spend 1.5 hours in the mosque.’

(Pakistani man, employed)

Not being able to handle pork at work was also frequently cited by respondents, as was not working in a slaughterhouse or non-Halal butchers and restaurants. Other issues mentioned by male respondents included not wanting to work in mainly female environments (or in one case not wanting to work with women at all), not wanting to clean toilets, work with the public, or in places that promoted gambling or the practice of accruing interest.

A number of respondents felt that employers were understanding of their religious needs, and had experience of employers being flexible in current or past jobs. One respondent had been able to work in the Halal section of a factory, whilst another was allowed time to pray. For example:

“When I worked in the factory they were very understandable the management there, and you know our prayer times, they didn’t mind. They were very good in fact.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

However, this was not a universal view. For example:

‘Many Muslims feel uncomfortable with the idea of owing something, a White man and his factory, asking him for prayer times. A lot of us feel intimidated. We know that most of the West is secular and we’re very religious.’

(Pakistani man, economically inactive)

5.1.4 Criminal records and drug dependency

Three respondents reported having current criminal records (whilst a few others had been in trouble with the police when younger but did not have a criminal record). One said that when criminal records were asked about on application forms he lied and said he did not have a record. Another felt that his biggest barrier to work was his criminal record. He felt that employers would discriminate against him because of it, and that a mistake he made when he was younger should not have to be declared to employers. The third also felt that having a criminal record was a barrier to finding work.
One respondent reported being addicted to cannabis. He described how he smoked cannabis when unemployed because he was stressed and wanted to forget his circumstances, but how he did not feel the need to smoke it when working. He felt that his current addiction was acting as barrier to work.

5.2 Household level barriers

5.2.1 Housing

Only a small number of the respondents mentioned their housing as a barrier to work, and the vast majority of those who did were Bangladeshi. A respondent who had arrived in the UK when they were school age, spoke of having moved around a lot, with no permanent home; first staying with relatives, and then living in a hotel for a year before finally being given temporary housing. This respondent had experienced considerable upheaval including having to move schools several times as a result, which they felt had later put them at a disadvantage in the labour market. One Bangladeshi respondent spoke more generally about the overcrowded conditions that many Bangladeshi families were living in, which impacted particularly on the children’s education:

‘Tower Hamlets is overcrowded. Every single family. Six, seven children, five children, they’re living in two bedroom house. Dangerous problem. The children, they don’t have their own table and chair...If you live in this house, six, eight people, no-one can sit down at the table. It’s overcrowded that’s the main problem, the main disadvantage. A lot of families live in two bedroom house, living six, seven. Very hard. It is very hard to get individual room. You need quiet room to continue studies. Children need freedom as well. In one small room, living with three or four children and they’re fighting each other all day and night. It’s not good. That’s why they’re not getting proper education.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

Another felt that sharing a room and the lack of sleep which resulted from this was a hindrance to finding work. A further respondent was looking for somewhere to live as she was in the process of splitting up from her husband, and so searching for suitable housing for herself and her children was taking priority over finding work at the time of the interview.

5.2.2 Lone parents

There were relatively few lone parents interviewed during the course of this research, and hence, there were few comments on this situation as a barrier to work. However, a small number of the Pakistani women interviewed did mention these issues. When their families were unable to help with childcare, they were left with a choice of either using formal childcare providers, or not working. One said that she would only want to work part-time as she did not want to leave her son with formal childcare. Another said that she would like to stop claiming benefits, but needed to find appropriate and reliable childcare. In the past she had found private nurseries
too expensive, and no spaces available at council nurseries. Another respondent said that as a lone parent, she would need to carefully weigh up whether it would be worth her returning to work, given that she would have to pay for childcare. If she was working, she would want to bring home more money than she currently received on benefits. She also felt that she would need to work fairly locally to minimise travel time and be there for her children when they needed her.

5.2.3 Childcare and caring

Attitudes towards childcare

Looking at how childcare and other caring responsibilities were viewed and balanced against working, there were, unsurprisingly, some marked differences by gender. The expectation that women will not work, but will look after their children was widespread amongst the Bangladeshi and Pakistani respondents. Men were most usually left free to find employment, with it being taken for granted that their wives would stay at home and look after the children:

‘As I mentioned, my wife is usually looking after children and that is not an obstacle to get any job in current situation. I am always available to find a job.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

‘I am not responsible for any childcare as my wife and daughter are at home and they look after that matter.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

One Bangladeshi man who had been out of work for some time in order to look after his four sons was waiting for his new wife to join him from Bangladesh. He said once his wife was able to come to live in the UK, she would look after his children, and then he would be able to go to work. There were also instances of women whose husbands were away in Bangladesh and so they currently had sole responsibility for looking after their children.

Many respondents, both men and women, felt that children should be looked after by family, and not by professional childcarers. Mothers were generally seen to have primary responsibility, but there was an expectation that grandparents and other extended family would help with childcare, if they were living locally. For some, the alternative of using formal childcare provision was simply not an option. Women spoke of not being able to relax knowing that their children were with ‘strangers’, and others said they did not trust formal childcare providers to treat their children well:

‘You don’t trust anybody else. You don’t hand your children over to someone who is not family.’

(Bangladeshi woman, economically inactive)
‘Asian communities are very family orientated, if I have children I will probably work but I’m not going to leave my kids in childcare. I believe they should be brought up by their mum and I don’t trust leaving my kids with a stranger. I don’t think it’s fair on the child either.’

(Pakistani woman, in employment)

The majority of the women respondents viewed their primary responsibility as looking after their children, with working as a secondary priority. However, this seemed to be especially the case in the Bangladeshi community, where it was perhaps less of a choice for the individual and more of a cultural obligation, agreed upon by the family as a whole:

‘They [my family] would be against it [working] because the kids are young and my husband won’t let me... Most of the time as a mother I should be with my children, not someone else. I never depend on a babysitter. My child and husband come first and money second. I’m not worried about what people say. I’m concerned about what I think is right.’

(Bangladeshi woman, economically inactive)

Many of the women, both Bangladeshi and Pakistani, felt that their children would be better off being looked after by close family. There was an example of a Bangladeshi women who had pursued a career, returning to work after taking maternity leave from her job to have her first child. Her mother looked after her daughter when she went back to work, but when she had another child two years later she did not return to work. This was partly because her mother was not able to cope with looking after two children, and also because she herself wanted to look after her children rather than work. A Pakistani respondent who had yet to have children herself concurred that the pattern of having to stop work after the second child was also fairly common in her community:

‘There is no substitute for your mother. I know a lot who leave them with their grandmothers, maybe my sisters. We don’t mind giving up our careers for a while. They may work part-time with the first child and leave it with the grandmother, the second child rarely do they continue working.’

(Pakistani women, in employment)

The respondent quoted above also felt that it was principally family and cultural expectations that children were better off being looked after by family, rather than the cost of childcare itself, that contributed to this pattern:

‘It’s [the cost] part of it but not the main reason. It’s the family looking after the children.’

(Pakistani women, in employment)

Cost of childcare was occasionally mentioned as a barrier by a few of the respondents, as was a lack of available places, but in terms of barriers to work, these issues usually seemed to be secondary to an unwillingness, for cultural reasons, to leave children with anyone other than family. Hence, the main barrier concerning
childcare and caring seemed to be that many respondents simply did not want to use it, preferring mothers to look after their children if possible, with help from fathers, grandparents and other extended family. A relatively small proportion of respondents agreed that using formal childcare was an option for them. There were isolated concerns from those who would consider childcare, that it should be culturally sensitive, for example, a Bangladeshi mother expressed a preference for her children to be cared for by Bangladeshis who spoke Sylheti. However, others felt that their families would not approve of their using nurseries or childcare, and their children would not be happy being looked after by people who were not family.

Some of the respondents had other caring responsibilities aside from children, and these were also viewed to be very important, and a higher priority than being in employment. For example, one respondent, a Bangladeshi woman, viewed her main priority as looking after her husband, who was significantly older than her, and not well. She was adamant that she did not want anyone else looking after him. Other women said that they were responsible for looking after their parents who were old and/or sick, and this was their priority rather than working.

There was a great deal of importance placed on women looking after the family and home by many of the respondents, and there was a general expectation amongst most of the male respondents who were married with children, that their wives would not work but take primary responsibility for the family. However, some of the male respondents also spoke of their responsibilities to look after ailing parents, or ill wives, and they took on extra support roles, sometimes instead of work, if their children were ill or needed a lot of care. In general, looking after family was felt to be very important amongst the Muslim community, and was often seen by both men and women to be a higher priority than finding work:

‘I speak for Muslims, Islamic life is very family oriented, you are told you should look after your parents when they get old.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

There were examples of Pakistani men looking for very flexible, part-time or nightshift work so that they could continue to help their wives to look after their children. This was particularly the case for men who had had to look after their wives when they had been ill. Similarly, there were examples of children being ill or needing a lot of care and support, due to particular conditions, eg Autism or Downs Syndrome. In such cases, both parents would feel responsible for caring for them, and the reluctance to rely on sources of support outside the family presented additional barriers to employment:

‘I’m signing on at the moment to Jobseeker’s Allowance, they sent me and I took it on. She [his wife] had a heavy pregnancy, and then the little boy was too young so they needed looking after. So when she was better I thought I’d go for this training, but since yesterday they said she’s have to see a specialist and stuff and so I’ll wait for another few months.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)
‘My wife has to be at home with the kids and even for school maybe I need some time to stay with them if they are not well. If I get time I could fit between nine and five and ten and five… My wife can’t cope with seven children…. Even with childcare I don’t think the problem will be solved.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

The desire to avoid using formal childcare arrangements was notable across the respondents, but once children had reached school age, some respondents who were primary carers felt they would like to look for work which they could fit around their childcare responsibilities. Amongst Pakistani women in particular, there were some instances of women looking for part-time work or training opportunities once their youngest child had started school. However, others felt it was simply too difficult and stressful to balance working with responsibilities to care for family and children. One respondent felt that employers would not view positively the fact that she had always had to concentrate on looking after her family and children, and this was acting as a disincentive to her considering looking for work now that her children were older.

Some felt that they would be able to balance their family responsibilities with working, but others were less certain. For some of the respondents, both male and female, caring responsibilities meant that they would only be prepared to work fairly close to home so that they could get back if they were needed by a family member. Many of the women were only prepared to take flexible, part-time work that would enable them to be there when their children needed looking after, and suggested potential work doing, for example, mobile hairdressing and beauty, or working as a part-time classroom assistant or playground assistant at lunchtime. Depending on the extent of caring responsibilities, some women felt that they would be able to fulfil their responsibilities and work, given the right work opportunity:

‘This is not a barrier. The idea of paid employment fits well with my other priorities. I am living with my parents and although they have some care needs I feel I can balance this with work.’

(Pakistani woman, jobseeker)

However, even those who had support from family, or those who felt they knew of available and suitable crèche facilities, often felt that balancing the demands of work and family would be difficult.

There were also a few examples of women having to drop out of or suspend their studies due to caring responsibilities, for example, when a parent became sick. One hoped to seek out learning opportunities once her children were at school, another had secured a place on a teacher training course, as teaching would fit well with her responsibilities as a parent, but was having difficulty securing adequate childcare for when she would be doing the course.
Balancing work and family

Turning to those who were in work, and how they managed to balance the demands of family life and employment, they said they found it difficult to juggle working with looking after their children, in the absence of extended family help. For example, one man, who worked full-time, and whose wife worked part-time said:

‘I don’t have my extended family around me so during the school holidays it’s tough to look after our kids and work. We can’t afford a child minder, we had to work out our holiday and take help from family friends.’

(Bangladeshi man, employed)

There were a small number of examples of women who worked and juggled family responsibilities with the help of their husbands and family:

‘My eldest goes to school and my husband drops him off. In the evening I pick the kids up three days and my neighbour the other two days. The younger one goes to nursery and his dad drops him off and I pick him up… [We pay for] all of it. We don’t qualify for working tax credit and childcare allowance.’

(Pakistani woman, employed)

Likewise, there were isolated cases when a decision had been taken jointly by a husband and wife together that the man should stop working to look after the children, because the woman would be able to earn more money. This was seen to be preferable to using formal childcare, which ‘wouldn’t feel right’. It should be noted that in these instances it was clear that both partners were educated to a high level and so perhaps atypical compared to the majority of respondents who took part in this research.

5.2.4 Benefits trap

One of the issues explored in the interviews was the extent to which respondents felt that it was financially viable for them to work, rather than claim benefits. There were a variety of opinions on this, depending on earning capacity, family responsibilities, and other personal circumstances, as well as cultural and community influences.

Many respondents who were out of work at the time of the interviews felt they would be better off in employment. They pointed out that the money they received on Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) and other benefits was very low and not enough to live on. A number who were claiming benefits referred to when they had been working in the past, when they had more money than they do now:

‘It’s a bit tight on Jobseeker’s Allowance, it’s hand to mouth.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

‘I could be earning a lot more than I’m getting now.’

(Pakistani woman, inactive)
For married couples and families, the overall financial responsibility generally rested with men rather than women. Bangladeshi male respondents in particular spoke of the difficulties of supporting their families on benefits; some of them said they felt guilty that they were unable to find work and support their families better:

‘I must acknowledge that if I will have a job, then I will be more solvent financially than what I am now. Jobseeker Allowance is not enough to maintain a family smoothly. I expect that I will not be better off if I continue to live with the same jobseeker allowances.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

‘It is very much difficult to manage my family with the government benefits. I am unable to give the instalment of mortgage and the money I have borrowed from friends. So it is important to earn more for my family as well as for my children’s expenditure...I am more confident that I will be in better condition and will be able to minimise my financial burdens if I will get a job. Absolutely, I will earn more money with the job than Jobseeker benefits.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

‘I need to go to work, as the money I am getting from the government is not meeting the financial needs of my family.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

Some respondents mentioned that they were bored being out of work, and did not like having to budget their finances to the degree that being on benefits necessitated. They wanted to work because they felt they would be better off financially, and also because it would feel like a better and more productive way of passing the time. One of the Bangladeshi respondents expressed the view that on religious and moral grounds it is wrong to claim benefits, if there are opportunities to work:

‘I have hands and feet and qualifications, why should I go for something like that? [benefits]...I work as a part-time supply teacher so I would extend my hours. Those who are not religious and have no qualifications can go to the government and take the support, but those who have an education from Bangladesh and know if they do some course they will find a good job.’

(Bangladeshi man, in employment)

However, the need to earn a reasonable wage was also important, and so some were concerned that they would have to get a job that paid reasonably well, for example, one respondent said he would need to earn at least £250 a week to support his family and be able to afford to pay their rent. The issues of needing to have the human capital to do work which would pay more than benefits was also raised:

‘I don’t know. It depends on the salary. If you’re doing qualified work then you get a good salary. If you work as a manual worker you don’t get a good salary.’

(Pakistani man, inactive)
Some respondents spoke about the low wages being offered in their area, ie around the minimum wage, and how they did not offer a financial advantage when compared to living on benefits. One respondent said that asylum seekers and immigrants had enabled employers to pay very low wages for particular types of low-skilled work. This was particularly problematic for people with families to support, or for those who were unskilled and/or not fluent in English, and so the benefits trap became a distinct reality for them:

‘When you’ve got kids they give you benefits and most of the work they offer you, the wages aren’t enough. The Social give you that much. It’s not really worth your while working, you need a wage that pays for the bills. The ones where the wages are good you can’t get a job there. They give work to people from different countries because they work for nothing. They’d rather give them the jobs because they save money. I just want a decent wage...The Job Centre try and offer you jobs, but I’m not working for that wage, it’s not enough.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

The way the benefits trap impacted on those needing to work part-time was mentioned by some of the respondents, usually women with caring responsibilities. One respondent was working for a government department but was only able to work part-time due to her childcare responsibilities. She found that she was no better off than she would be on benefits, and so she took the decision to go to college rather than work. Another, who was claiming JSA and working part-time (which she declared to Jobcentre Plus), was frustrated that she was no better off working than she was living purely on benefits:

‘I’m getting Jobseeker’s Allowance but I get £7 at the moment. I take my pay slip every month and every time I do more hours my money gets reduced. One way or another it’s not enough.’

(Bangladeshi woman, in employment)

Others said that they would like to work part-time but were concerned about their benefits being cut:

‘If you could work ten hours a week without cutting benefit it would be fine.’

(Bangladeshi woman, inactive)

Another respondent agreed, that part-time working left their family worse off than if they remained on benefits:

‘I was angry and frustrated at how the benefits procedure works out. While I am working part time I will be worse off. I want to live in pride with a good feeling I’m doing something for myself and working. Most people don’t think this way because the benefit they get is okay for the family. They get school dinners, if I pay for them it’s going to be £45 a week so I’ll be worse off. Rent, council tax, plus my travelling, this money I will be worse off.’

(Bangladeshi man, Jobseeker)
One Bangladeshi man said that those who had little education and no qualifications knew they would be better off on benefits and were happy to live this way with the support of their community:

‘If they go to benefit they are getting more benefit in terms of housing benefit if you put them together they are getting more than my full-time job. Many of them come from a particular region in Bangladesh, Sylhet, and their education and backgrounds is really poor…When they come to this country they think that is the best option for me. Many have part-time jobs but they don’t show it.’

(Bangladeshi man, in employment)

None of the respondents said that they themselves did paid work at the same time as claiming benefits, however, several spoke of how they knew of many people in their communities doing this. One respondent was particularly candid about the way certain sections of the Bangladeshi community viewed living on benefits:

‘They get benefits and on top of that can earn something without informing the Government. They get advice from their elders, never work, just go to benefit that will be better for you. They work for two years until they get indefinite leave then they stop. I don’t know why the Government is paying so much money to all these people, not only Bangladeshis, I’ve seen Pakistanis as well in this area. They all do that…Why should they work. If there was nothing you would see them sweep the road but if there are facilities available why should they.’

(Bangladeshi man, in employment)

Reasons for dependency on benefits

A dependence on benefits has emerged in some communities as a result of a combination of factors. For example, the decline of traditional industries, and the resulting unemployment which affected many older first generation Pakistanis, has been perpetuated in the subsequent generation by a lack of positive role models in employment, together with the cultural importance placed on the family. However, it was felt that this was starting to change amongst the younger generation, who had grown up and been educated in the UK:

‘Here, the older generation really do influence the children and their attitudes are towards work. When they first came here they went into factories which closed down and they were out of work for ages and claiming benefits, because kids saw their parents on benefits it probably made them think my parents aren’t working so I can claim benefits as well. I don’t need to be working. Plus parents don’t push them. It also keeps the kids closer to them, Asian communities are about family…People in this area who are educated are getting away from this type of living. I want to move out soon.’

(Pakistani woman, jobseeker)
A number of respondents seemed to be used to living on benefits, and were happy with this situation. Others were also being financially supported by their families, which made it easier to live on benefits over a longer time period. For example, a Bangladeshi woman said she did not mind living on benefits as she had no financial worries, and she preferred being at home to having to work. Another respondent, who had been claiming JSA on and off for 11 years said that he was free to help out with looking after his grandchildren, as his sons were both working full-time.

Not everyone had formally worked out whether they would be better off working than on benefits, but some suspected that it would not be worth their while:

‘I think if I went back to my old job would I be better off or would I be better off on benefits. I can’t be sure. I need to work things out.’

(Pakistani woman, inactive)

‘Sometimes yes and sometimes no. I get enough money for myself but if they stopped my disability money I’d have to look for a job.’

(Pakistani woman, inactive)

Another commented about the financial impact of working:

‘It probably wouldn’t make much difference. If I start working then our housing benefit stops.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

The impact of other benefits on the benefits trap

Lastly, turning to awareness of Family Tax Credit and the impact of this on the benefits trap, some of the Pakistani respondents were aware of Family Tax Credit. A small number had experience of claiming it in the past, although they said that the amount they received was relatively small. However, many had not heard of it or were not aware of the details. Similarly, some of the Bangladeshi respondents had heard of Working Tax Credit but did not know much about it.

In terms of the kinds of benefits being claimed, the views of those on IncomeSupport (IS) were divided between those who felt that they would be better off in work, and those who were concerned that being employed would not make much difference to them. Some felt that if they worked part-time they would in fact be worse off. Respondents who were claiming JSA expressed a range of views; there were some who felt that they would definitely have more money if they were in work, and would be better able to support their families. Others felt that they could be better off in work than on benefits but only if they earned more than, for example, £250 a week or at least £6 an hour. Some had done the necessary calculations; for example, one respondent reported that if they worked part-time they would be worse off, even with Tax Credit, while another said that if they came off benefits and had to pay their rent they would probably have less money than they currently received. Most of those claiming IB felt that they would have more money if they worked, but they had
no choice but to claim benefits due to their poor health. Those who were not working and were not claiming were relying on the financial support of their families. They tended to say that they would like to earn their own money so that they were less reliant on others, and had more money of their own.

5.3 Human capital

It has become increasingly clear when comparing the labour market achievements of ethnic minorities in Britain that the human capital assets of particular groups play a large part in shaping their achievements. Human capital can be defined broadly as the possession of qualifications, vocational skills and real work experience. Within this broad definition, it is possible to discern individual layers or assets, such as levels of confidence, language skills, levels of qualifications and job skills, work experience, and the informal networks that provide both information and access to the labour market. In the interviews, we sought to find out the level of human capital possessed by our Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents, and assess the extent to which it determined their participation in the labour market.

5.3.1 Confidence

We began by asking respondents about their confidence in general. Confidence here may be considered at two levels, socially and in job search situations. Generally, confidence at both levels was a major issue for a large number of respondents. There were significant differences, mainly in terms of gender, but also in how fluently respondents spoke English; although very often the two were closely related.

Women

Women were significantly more likely than men to be affected by a crisis of confidence at the social level. Part of this appears to be cultural, at least to the extent that some women’s upbringing did not involve a lot of interaction with the world outside the home. Some women indicated they lacked confidence precisely because of their low social interaction from an early age, which was ‘how girls are brought up’ in their community. So even as young adults, they still suffer that lack of confidence to go out far from home by themselves. In terms of their labour market aspirations, these women readily acknowledged that lack of confidence was a personal barrier which made it difficult for them to find employment, particularly as they did not have the confidence to try to find work outside the area they live. For some women, an upbringing which confined them to the area they live, induced such paralysis that any excursion outside their immediate confines was considered a triumph, as one young woman’s experience illustrates:

‘I don’t travel. Staying here, I don’t have the experience to go out. I’m afraid of going to the bus by myself because my parents don’t allow me to go outside and do anything. I don’t have independence. It’s been a year that I’m starting to go out, and I’m feeling proud of myself. I don’t mind going to E2 and E1 [in London].’

(Bangladeshi female, jobseeker, 20s)
The respondent quoted above also acknowledged the implications of her lack of confidence as a barrier to employment. Asked if she was confident enough to go to interviews and to do well, she replied:

‘I do, but I don’t think I’m quite ready to travel about and do interviews. If it’s near then I’d be confident. At least I’d know the place.’

Many women suggested that their lack of confidence was related more to their poor language skills, especially in interview situations. For some, concern that they would not be able to express themselves had often eroded their confidence, to such an extent they had been nervous at the interviews they did. For more recent migrants to the UK there was, perhaps, the added difficulty of accent, even if they spoke English, as was the case of another respondent:

‘I would love to work, but when I’m speaking to people it seems like they don’t understand me. They really have to listen to me closely, then I feel it must be the way I’m speaking, and that is the main thing. I don’t have the confidence to go out and try to find a job. My main barrier is my language and accent. I should start another English language class and get confidence.’

(Bangladeshi female, jobseeker, 20s)

In extreme cases, poor English language skills meant that women lacked confidence to be assertive in communicating with other people. Some women were aware of what they needed to do in order to overcome their lack of confidence, and pointed to training that would help them develop confidence in themselves. In fact, we found evidence of women who had overcome their lack of confidence in interview situations, in particular, through coaching, practice and training.

Some women put down their loss of confidence to discrimination they faced, from school, employers and society in general. A young Pakistani woman described her experience of how employer discrimination had eroded her confidence:

‘In Bradford I didn’t have a problem with employment. But in Rochdale I did because of my dress code. I wore headscarf. I was asked at one interview whether I had to wear it. It was for a shop assistant at [named supermarket], and I didn’t get the job... It was eight years ago, and I wasn’t confident myself about the headscarf. I was insecure about it. Now it’s no problem.’

(Pakistani female, economically inactive, 20s)

It is true that for some women it was the perception, rather than the fact of discrimination, that was more damaging to their confidence, particularly because the outside world was very much unknown to them. But for others, the link between the two was no chimera. The testimony of a young Pakistani woman was illustrative, and we quote at length from her interview. She was asked, first, if she had experienced racial discrimination:
‘It’s not as if you were actually born in Pakistan. My mum was born in Fife, you know. She is a proper Glaswegian. Sometimes people look at us, and it’s not until you open your mouth and they hear the proper, strong Glaswegian accent and they go right, okay, they actually speak proper Scottish, and they change their attitude just like that.’

She was next asked if she thought wearing a headscarf affected things as well:

‘I do, yeah, because I just have to wear my headscarf. I started about a year ago, before that I never wore a headscarf. I obviously wore these clothes, and not many people said anything to me. The minute I started wearing my scarf, they just changed their attitudes. If I cover my head or whatever, I’m still the same person, I’m not different.’

And continued about how her confidence has been affected:

‘Basically… I also lost a lot of confidence after I left school, because I was a very confident person. The minute I left school, I was unconfident about everything. They don’t bother you but they look at you funny, you know. I think it’s just because of racism that’s gone on in this day and age that it automatically feel [sic] like if you walk past a person they’re going to say something. They might not say anything but you just feel they are going to say something. It’s a whole confidence thing.’

And on her job search experience:

‘I definitely feel as though they [employers] are picturing me in their head then after that. They’re too quick to judge…and they’re judging me before they speak to me. Because of that, now when I go for interviews, I’m always nervous.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 20s)

Perhaps one of the most potent reasons for some women’s loss of confidence was the domestic violence they faced. We were impressed by the willingness of some women to discuss what was a difficult issue for them. It is no exaggeration to describe how domestic violence had a very corrosive effect on the lives of some respondents. One woman who was divorced from her husband, described the effect of domestic violence on her confidence:

‘I would like to work. [But] because I’ve had a lot of problems with my husband, I can’t work. I had a bad time and I had to go through court cases. It was quite bad and it’s affected me. I didn’t have any self-confidence. I was shy and couldn’t mix.’

(Pakistani female, economically inactive, 40s)

She bemoaned especially the lack of support from her family and her community:

‘It was severe depression. [But] they said you have to stay with your husband or you’ll get a bad name if you’re divorced….I [now] feel as I want to make the most of the life which I’ve lost.’
There was some evidence to suggest that family and community expectations about the role of women also contributed to the erosion of confidence and self-esteem. Some had seen their self-confidence wane because their husband did not approve of women working. The impact was particularly severe for women who were in an abusive relationship at the same time. One woman, who was nervous about taking part in the interviews, described how she had become almost paranoid whenever she went out:

‘If people meet me the first thing they say is “are you working? What’s happened about your husband?” It’s always the first question. You don’t have self-esteem. I wasn’t like that before.’

And worse still:

‘At one of my interviews at Shipley I went there and I had a black eye. If I didn’t have the interview I wasn’t too bothered, but I went there and started crying.’

(Pakistani female, economically inactive, 20s)

We have quite rightly concentrated on lack of confidence as a barrier to employment for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. But the story was not always negative. We heard from women respondents who were confident about their own abilities, and did not think (lack of) confidence was a barrier to employment for them. Some believed employers too were happy with their confidence when they had attended interviews. In particular, the women in this group were likely to derive their confidence from previous experience in work, and believed they had relevant skills and would be competent in any future employment.

**Men**

On the whole, the male respondents were more confident about themselves and their own abilities, compared with women. Very few men admitted they lacked confidence. Those who expressed any doubt at all, suggested they did not lack confidence per se, but rather experienced some nervousness during interviews. But where they had genuine concern about their confidence, this was largely because they had (English) language difficulties. This made it difficult for them to apply for jobs, but also raised other concerns about what jobs they could do. In this respect, it was not unusual to find some men say they felt most confident only in familiar work environments, such as Indian restaurants. For many men, therefore, it is perhaps more accurate to describe their condition as one of erosion of confidence, and from a number of extenuating factors. Most notably, lack of qualifications and work experience often combined to dent people’s self-confidence. Consequently, having some work experience, was often sufficient to restore people’s confidence when they went for interviews. In particular, training and other support provided by Jobcentre Plus advisers were cited by some men as having helped them rebuild their confidence for job search and interviews. For others, though, the prognosis was not often this simple, as they felt less confident in their ability to find work because of their age.
Unlike the experiences described by women, the influence of family and community was not a serious issue for men’s confidence. If they had any influence at all it was that, although well-meaning, family and friends were much quicker to provide negative rather than positive feedback about people’s chances of employment; which was often sufficient to lower any confidence people had about their labour market chances. People’s fear of rejection by particular employers was often the result of such negative feedback.

5.3.2 Language

There is a lot of evidence to show that language makes a difference to people’s circumstances. Linguistic competence in the language of the wider society, whatever that language is, and in this case it is English, has a profound impact not just on labour market achievement but also, prior to that, on the propensity to acquire human capital and determination. At the most basic level, lack of facility in the language of the host country is known to impact negatively upon the views of prospective employers at the recruitment stage. In terms of human capital, therefore, language may be considered to be the most important asset for determining people’s labour market outcomes. In view of this, we asked our respondents how fluent they felt they were in English. It is not unreasonable to suppose that second and subsequent generations of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain would be less likely than the first generation migrants to be encumbered by the problem of language.

The migrational background of respondents, therefore, forms the first level of our analysis of the problem of language. We were interested to know the extent to which facility in the English language differed between original migrants, ie respondents who were born in Pakistan or Bangladesh, and respondents whose parents or grandparents migrated first to the UK. But as we have already seen, there are significant differences between the experiences of men and women among migrational groups. Consequently, we take gender as our second level of analysis.

Migrational background: respondents

Irrespective of their ethnicity, the overwhelming majority of our respondent first generation migrants had a poor facility in the English language. Only a few of those respondents did not face a significant language barrier to employment. The consequences of a poor facility in English were wide-ranging, and their impact varied widely too. First, in terms of labour market outcomes, language was considered by this group of respondents to be a significant barrier to getting a job at all. Indeed, a majority of them made a direct connection between their language difficulty and not having a job at present. Some respondents could not speak even a few words in English and hence, had found it difficult to get a job in the past. It is true some respondents could understand English, but they were in the same predicament because they could not speak it properly, or at all. This means that even those in this group, who expressed their willingness to work could contemplate working only
somewhere they would not need to speak English. Unsurprisingly, lack of English restricted not only job opportunities, but had an impact on normal day-to-day communication. As one man put it:

‘My English is not good. I can only manage to do my shopping or travel by bus. If I need to go to my GP, I need an interpreter.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 40s)

Secondly, language was acknowledged to determine the types of jobs people could look for, or could do more generally. The issue here is language as an important determinant in labour market segmentation. In a rather perverse sense, in terms of labour market outcomes, language was not a significant barrier to the ‘typical’ jobs that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in this group could, do, or had done in the past. But it was a barrier for most other jobs. Typically, language is not a barrier to working in, for example, Indian restaurants; and several respondents mentioned they had limited their job search to restaurants because they felt they could not do anything else due to the language barrier. The respondents cited here were typical:

‘I am looking for restaurant jobs, as I do not have other kinds of skills. There might be some other jobs in Birmingham where I live, but as I do not speak English I am not sure which jobs I can do. I feel I will be much better off financially if I could go to work.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 50s)

‘As I do not speak English, I am looking for a restaurant job. I am hoping to get one as I have the relevant skills. My main barrier to find [sic] a job other than restaurant is my language.’

(Bangladeshi male, economically inactive, 40s)

‘When I came to England in 1996, I worked as a waiter in Bristol because I have a cousin in Bristol. Before that I lived in Canterbury for a short time and worked as a waiter because I have a brother-in-law. I didn’t apply for any other jobs because of my English.’

(Bangladeshi male, economically inactive, 50s)

A Bangladeshi woman mentioned the dilemma which forced people to restrict themselves to jobs in only certain sectors. She was asked about her level of fluency in English, and how it made it difficult for her to get work:

‘It’s not great, but at a level I can get by. [But] when there aren’t any Bengali workers, if you don’t understand something there’s no one to explain things to you.’

(Bangladeshi female, tax credit recipient, 30s)
Some respondents faced an even greater predicament, where their access to this segment of the labour market was further restricted because of health reasons. A jobseeker who had unsuccessfully applied for IB was a typical example:

‘I can communicate in English for very basic purpose like shopping. I believe that if I could speak English I would find other jobs which are suitable for my health condition. Working in restaurants requires some lifting, which is difficult for me.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 50s)

Another was on IB, after he was injured while working at a restaurant:

‘I know my English is very limited, though language was never a barrier for me in the environment where I previously worked. Still I agree that learning more English will open more opportunities for me both at work and home.’

(Bangladeshi male, economically inactive, 40s)

Thirdly, and closely related to sectoral preference, the problem of language forced respondents to restrict their job search to their local area. For some respondents then, the problem was manifested in the way they could not travel further afield to a job. So whilst they acknowledged that being able to speak English would widen the opportunity for working in other areas, some respondents admitted that language was even a barrier ‘for travelling to work’. The fact is that where they had jobs within their local areas, respondents did not need to speak much English, whereas, if they went further afield they would have to. Their concern was not always groundless. A Pakistani woman, interpreting for her husband, conceded that even local employers now preferred to employ people who spoke English, and it was inconceivable employers outside the immediate area would not. She felt under the circumstances that language was a barrier for her husband in finding work. Another woman summed up what she described as the local effect:

‘Lots of people are working in restaurants and taxis. People who come from Bangladesh or Pakistan, they don’t have enough skills, [so] most of them go out and find jobs they can do. For example, if you work in [named supermarket] and need experience to do a till, your English has got to improve. Loads of people don’t have those skills. So what they’ve found easiest for them is to go to the restaurants within their own communities, and in a restaurant or a taxi, people help each other.’

(Bangladeshi female, economically inactive, 50s)

The irony is that being confined to working in the local area made it difficult for people to overcome the language barrier by improving their English. It was also true of respondents in this group that only a few could read or write English. So even if they could speak some English, they were still constrained by inability to read or write English.
The language issue came even more to the fore with those respondents who had lost their previous job in an establishment where it was not necessary for them to speak English, and were now trying to get a new job. Some respondents were perplexed by the fact that they did not experience language difficulties in their previous jobs. Once they got the job, language was not a problem in the workplace. Their attitude now was perhaps informed by that fact, and they believed they could get jobs such as packing, stocking shelves, warehouse work, etc. without having to be fluent in English. Some respondents were finding it difficult to come to terms with their circumstances in a changed labour market. The fact is that most people’s previous jobs did not encourage their learning English. A Bangladeshi man described how he did not have any vocational training, except his experience of working as a machinist for a garments factory, stitching ladies coats. Since everyone else there spoke no English, he confined himself to speaking Bengali, and so did not have an opportunity to learn or practise to speak English. He was always surrounded by his neighbours and friends, which did not require him to try to speak any other language. Since he lost that job, though, he has found that speaking English is an essential requirement for a new job; and he has no facility in English whatever. Another Bangladeshi man described his present situation. His English had made it difficult for him to find a different job now; and he contrasted this with the situation when he first came to the UK:

‘In 1982 I got the job straightaway, and I can [sic] do it. They stopped factory jobs, people redundant everywhere.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 50s)

Another respondent:

‘It’s hard to get English jobs. [It is] Easier for me to get an Indian restaurant job. If I get English job, English is a problem.’

(Bangladeshi male, economically inactive, 40s)

Although most respondents had clearly identified language as a barrier to employment, it was less clear the extent to which they had prioritised learning English or getting a job first. Some respondents believed the two went together. If there was a job that did not require much English or other qualifications, then they would apply for it, and ‘go to education in the evening’. Indeed, some had already started a course to learn English. Others, however, were adamant they did not want any training because they had relevant experience for the kind of work they wanted to do. They believed too that although they did not speak fluent English, it was adequate for the kind of work they wanted to do. This raises an issue about whether people in this situation have a good understanding of the significance of (English) language skills to getting a job now, compared with the past. The extent of the difficulty people without English face is shown by the fact that even sympathetic Asian businesses now expect their employees to have a facility in English. The extent of the change in employers’ requirement of competence in English was not lost on some respondents in this situation. A young Pakistani jobseeker was certain
employers would offer him a job, if he could speak, read and write English well. His local Jobcentre Plus adviser suggested he extended his job search activity to include contacting local employers directly by knocking on their door. He had tried that, but admitted:

‘English language has become the barrier. [Even] Urdu speaking companies and shops also expect me to speak fluent English.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 20s)

It is perhaps paradoxical that some respondents believed that getting a job would help improve their English, as they would have to speak to customers. A young Bangladeshi woman acknowledged her lack of qualifications, but did not think this should be an obstacle to getting a job. She was certain she would use the opportunity to improve other aspects of her English:

‘Some people can’t speak English well and they get jobs. It’s my reading and writing. I can improve it [sic] at the same time as when I’m working.’

(Bangladeshi female, jobseeker, 20s)

Another young woman bemoaned the fact that although she attended school in the UK, all her friends at school were Bengali, and so did not get to speak English much. Consequently, ‘it’s a big problem that I don’t [sic] learn proper English.’ But:

‘I want to speak better English. If I got a job I can manage with English. Whatever they need I can do it. When I start work, customers [will] speak to me. I want to learn more English.’

(Bangladeshi female, jobseeker, 20s)

Migrational background: parents and grandparents

It is to be expected that respondents who were born in the UK, or who came to the UK as children with (or to join) their parents and completed their education in the UK, would be fluent in English. It is perhaps much easier to describe those whose parents first came to the UK as the second generation, and those whose grandparents were the original migrants, the third generation. Third generation respondents had no language problems at all, as might be expected of people who were born, educated and brought up, and have lived in the UK all their lives. For this group of respondents, English is their first language, and they expressed a general view that people should be able to speak English to communicate with the public they worked with.

In contrast, some second generation respondents had problems with English, although not all of them on the same scale as their parents’ and grandparents’ generation. Respondents in this group fell into two main categories: The first category comprised those who had arrived in the UK at the cusp of the school leaving age (14 or 15 years old at the time). Very few in this category had any previous education, or continued in education on their arrival in the UK. To all intents
and purposes, they shared the same language barriers as their parents, in terms of fluency in English. At best, some had a good understanding of English, at least when spoken to, although they had difficulty in expressing themselves back in a way that others would understand them. But almost all had no reading or writing skills, and so could not, for example, fill out application forms. A young Pakistani man, who was economically inactive (ie not claiming benefits) admitted he could copy a sentence, but could not read. He did not think, though, that he needed to be able to read when applying for jobs.

The second category comprised respondents who came to the UK at a much younger age, and so were brought up and educated in the UK from a young age. A small number in this category still had problems with English, although not with spoken English. The problem this category of respondents faced was mainly with reading and writing English. Some often started school in the UK without any English at all, and had to attend remedial lessons in order to catch up. Others took much longer to pick up English at school, with the result that English remained effectively their second language. But others lost some language skills because they were taken out of school for extended visits to Pakistan and Bangladesh.

**Gender**

On the whole, the respondent women were less likely than men to face language barriers. The women were more fluent in English, and less likely to say they had any language difficulties in finding or keeping a job. Only rarely did women respondents not understand or speak any English at all. It was not clear whether the higher facility in English was related to women’s age or migrational background. What was more evident was the general sense from the women themselves that they had improved their English, even if they were not fully fluent yet. Some did not speak fluent English, but could speak enough to manage in jobs, such as school dinner ladies, which did not require as extensive English as some other jobs. It was also evident that women were more likely to go on an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course to improve their language skills than men were, and consequently had a much wider choice of jobs to apply for.

The respondent men, whilst acknowledging their language difficulties, were nevertheless more inclined to take the view there were some jobs that did not require English. It was common to hear from men that even though their English was not good, they could still do a job if it was explained to them what they needed to do. It was among men in particular that there was often little or no true appreciation of the significance of English to getting a job now, although some did acknowledge that they needed to learn to also read and write English in order to improve their job prospects. A Pakistani jobseeker, asked whether English was a problem for him, in terms of work, replied:
‘No, I don’t think so in terms of work, not in speaking. [But] if you say write a letter, I can write, but it’s not proper English, professional style. I can write, but I do it my own way to write the letters. It’s not professional.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 50s)

Unlike women, however, only a few respondent men said they were attending any training or course to learn to improve their English. For some, the need was urgent for some of the few jobs they could do. A Pakistani man was on an English course because he was trying to pass his driving test so he could drive a taxi. He had been unsuccessful previously because he could not understand what the examiner required him to do. Another Pakistani jobseeker was on an ESOL course at a local college. He was learning to drive, but had recently failed the theory test. Others wanted to learn English so they could do something different. A man who had only worked in restaurant jobs, acknowledged language was the main barrier to finding a job other than in a restaurant, but added:

‘If I can improve my English I can find many other kinds of jobs; for example, factory work. So I am attending language class in Spark Hill centre [Birmingham] in ESOL.’

(Bangladeshi male, economically inactive, 40s)

Impact of language barrier

It was evident from the interviews that people with language difficulties were likely to face multiple barriers, such as problems with their confidence and lack of other job skills more generally. While the impact of poor language skills are readily described in terms of jobs, we found there were other consequences. An indirect consequence of poor facility in English was that people became imprisoned in their own homes, with adverse effects on family relationships, particularly as those so disadvantaged become dependent on others for normal day-to-day interaction with public services. A Bangladeshi woman in her 30s described how her lack of English meant that she always relied on her older brother to support her, and to take her to any public services she needed to access. He always translates for her, and even takes her to the Jobcentre to sign on, and translates for her when she has her three monthly interviews. It is another paradox, that living in a family where some spoke English made it unnecessary for some of our respondents to learn English themselves. Last, but by no means least, lack of English also meant that respondents were often not aware of the range of support available to get people into work, or how to access these.

Action to help people with English

As we have seen, many respondents acknowledged that lack of English was a severe barrier to employment. It might be expected, therefore, that respondents would take remedial action to address the problem. It is important to say at the onset that there was only little, albeit indirect, evidence to suggest people facing a language barrier were being helped to overcome this handicap. Although some respondents
said they were accessing ESOL provision, it was not clear from their perspective, the nature of the infrastructure in place, or the extent to which it was addressing the specific needs of the respondents in this study. As discussed above, a principal reason for those respondents who were learning English was to improve their labour market chances by improving the range of jobs they could do. We found examples of respondents who had attended ESOL courses lasting six months or more, but who had not improved their English. The problem persisted because other deficiencies respondents had were not addressed at the same time; for example, lack of reading and writing skills, or basic education in general. A poor ESOL infrastructure also means that respondents were sometimes forced to give up the course altogether. In one case, a young Pakistani woman who had attended an ESOL course for six months at one college was asked to switch to another college. The location was not convenient for her, and she abandoned the course. Another Bangladeshi man was offered a course lasting only six-months. His six month study was not enough to increase his proficiency in English. For respondents such as these, ESOL providers may have overestimated – or underestimated – their ability to cope with their level of the study. In both circumstances, respondents were likely to lose whatever motivation they have to learn.

What is true for both women and men is that English has remained firmly a second language, despite the fact that many have lived in the UK for decades. The fact is that a lot of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, when they first came to the UK, did not consider it imperative to learn English. They settled within a network of people from their own communities. They never learnt English, nor were they given the mechanism to do so. This is recognised to be by far the biggest barrier to employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.

5.3.3 Skills and qualifications

The level of skills and qualifications that people have contribute significantly to their human capital. We asked respondents about the significance of skills and qualifications to their pursuit of work: whether, and to what extent, lack of qualifications makes it difficult for them to find work; what level of skills they have and, in particular, whether they have skills that are no longer relevant. Given their common migrational background, the differences in skills and qualifications as barriers to employment were to be found mainly between the different age groups. While there was some gender difference, it was to a much lesser extent compared with age.

**Young people**

Young people were the most likely group of respondents to have reasonably good qualifications, or at least qualifications which they believed employers found satisfactory. These respondents, mainly young people in their teens and 20s, were also more inclined to believe they had enough qualifications to find work.

It was also clear that the lack of qualifications was a barrier for a significant number of young people. There were several explanations for young respondents’ lack of
qualifications. Some had their education in the UK interrupted for a variety of reasons. Young men, in particular, were often taken out of school and sent to Pakistan or Bangladesh to pursue Islamic studies. A young Bangladeshi jobseeker believed the main reason he was currently out of work was that he lacked both educational qualifications and work experience. He attended school until Year 9, when he was sent back to Bangladesh by his father to undertake Islamic studies. He did not complete his studies in Bangladesh, but returned to the UK after a year to continue at another Islamic school in London. He also left this shortly afterwards. As a result, he did not complete his formal, compulsory education and, therefore, has no formal qualifications. Even where young people returned from Pakistan and Bangladesh to continue their formal education in the UK, they were unable to make up for the lost time they had spent away, and left school with poor GCSE grades. The resulting poor educational qualifications had become a barrier to their employment in general.

Some young Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents also blamed the education system for failing them. The shortcomings of the education system were described in terms of poor pastoral care and the low expectations of teachers, and in extreme cases, the failure to provide a supportive, learning environment. Some young people described how their educational experiences had contributed to their leaving school without qualifications:

‘In this country, the area we come from, the education we have, most of us come from [named area], a deprived area. The few that do get into jobs are lucky; most don’t. There was no career options at school. If you didn’t do your homework, they’d shrug their shoulders…After GCSEs when you go to college, you can’t do ‘A’ levels. I had to do one of the low-end courses, BTech in IT. I remember a supply teacher came in and said, ‘right, you’re the dumb ones. I’m here to teach the dumb ones.’ I couldn’t believe it. You lose faith in the education system.’

(Pakistani male, economically inactive, 20s)

‘If you don’t get harassed, you’re bullied…There were times where I wouldn’t even want to go to school. I’d end up dogging it in the park with a couple of friends because you didn’t want to be bothered with that. We had counsellors coming into the school because there was so much violence, and people were coming in with hammers. They were thinking of getting metal detectors. It was starting to be like an American high school, with metal detectors and that. That was [named school] at its roughest. I go there now, and it’s all quiet and everyone’s wearing the school uniform.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 20s)
‘Because of the whole bullying thing, in the last two years of my school life, I was coming home crying every day. I never said anything to anybody for about half a year, and then I eventually told my mum. My mum was worried why I was starting to go quiet… It was because of the bullying. I actually went into a big depression thing after that. I told my mum, and my mum started going to school and talking about it. They said, “why did you not come sooner,” but I felt even if I had they wouldn’t have done anything; and they didn’t. After I told them, I was still getting it. After school they were threatening me, you know.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 20s)

It may be taken as a sign of their optimism that some young people believed there were a lot of jobs they could do, even without formal qualifications. Some claimed the type of jobs they had applied for did not require qualifications. These, though, were mainly low-skill jobs in local restaurants which they were able to pick up from friends and family members. But those who wanted better jobs than this were more inclined to consider leaving school without qualifications as the biggest mistake they had made in their young lives. A Pakistani female recalled how she did not want to stay in education because she wanted to earn money and be independent. In her view, a false perception existed at the time that employers wanted people with experience, but not necessarily qualifications. She was now convinced otherwise, and was waiting to start a training course to gain some qualifications. Another explained why she was making amends now by taking a qualification in childcare:

‘I left school when I was 16. I wanted to study on, but I wasn’t sure. I left college when I was 16 and I wasn’t sure. So I worked in the family business. But now I realise I missed out. I want a proper job; something that I enjoy. That’s why I want to go back into education. I’m waiting for the [CRB] disclosure to come through now. I’ve got care [qualification], computing and EDCL as well.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 20s)

Where young people had some qualifications, some did not still meet employers’ requirements because their numeracy and literacy skills are not up to standard. This relates back to the poor overall GCSE grades of many of the young respondents in this study. However, there was also evidence to suggest that, on the whole, young respondents were the group most likely to undertake education and training in order to get more qualifications. Some were going back to college because they needed more education to get the job they would like to do.

Whilst the young people described so far had the opportunity to attend and complete a formal, compulsory education, some respondents of a similar age cohort were deprived of that opportunity altogether. This was because that group of young people had attended school in Pakistan and Bangladesh, but left before they could finish, to join their parents in the UK. However, they arrived in the UK when they were too old (about 13-16 years old) to continue at school; and because they spoke no English could not continue in further education either. That generation is now much older, but is disadvantaged by facing multiple barriers; without qualifications and lacking fluency in English.
**Older people**

In contrast to young people, the majority of older respondents, in their 40s and 50s, had little or no qualifications. Their disadvantage was compounded further by the fact that what little skills they had from previous jobs in textile and garment factories were out of date and no longer relevant, as these industries had closed down. As a result, older respondents faced the greatest restrictions in the type of work they could do. Their options were now limited to a narrow range of low-skilled jobs, mostly in restaurants. Even then there was a lot of competition for local jobs in this sector, as this group of respondents also wanted to work locally. It is true some older respondents had qualifications, a few of them to degree level, from institutions in Pakistan and Bangladesh. However, these qualifications were generally not recognised in the UK; and in any case they had made no attempt to convert these to their UK equivalent that prospective employers recognised.

We found evidence to suggest there was increasing recognition among older respondents of the importance of qualifications in the changed labour market of today. One respondent summed up the barrier to employment his generation of people with no qualifications were now faced with:

> ‘I have no qualification and training of any sort. It’s a big factor in my generation. When we came, it was all manual, unskilled work. You could leave one job, go to another job and carry on. Now it’s all educational work, computers, office. There was work, and you could get a job easily enough, and you didn’t need training or education. With the way things are now and the way jobs are, all the jobs are skilled or semi-skilled; and if you have qualifications you can get a job. In my generation we have no skills, just manual work; and no education, so we are bottom of the queue for jobs. Everyone has an education, there are no unskilled jobs available. You have to have qualifications, even if it’s basic GNVQ. Before, you drove a forklift. Now you have to have a licence.’

(Pakistani male, economically inactive, 50s)

**Gender**

It is clear from the above that lack of qualifications was a significant barrier to employment, especially for people with no education at all. This applied more to men than women, if only because our women respondents were more likely to be economically inactive. Nevertheless, as we saw earlier in Chapter 3, women respondents often engaged with the labour market after changes in their family relationships. Consequently, women respondents faced the same qualifications barriers as men. Women though faced a unique set of circumstances in addition to this. Most of our women respondents born outside the UK were disadvantaged by cultural practice which did not encourage the education of women at all, or at best only the most basic. Indeed, some respondents described how their parents did not think it was necessary for their daughters to study; whilst others were forbidden to by their husbands and in-laws, when they got married.
Young women born in the UK also faced their own particular set of circumstances. A significant number of young women were taken out of school at a critical time in their formal education. Some had their education disrupted by being married off to spouses in Pakistan and Bangladesh before they had completed their education. A young Pakistani woman recounted that she went to school in the UK and completed primary education. But she left secondary school at the age of 16, just before she was due to sit her ‘O’ levels, and so gained no formal qualifications as a result. When she turned 16 her older sister was already married, and this meant that her parents wanted her to be married. She was subsequently forced to leave school. Not surprisingly, their lack of formal educational qualification had made it difficult for this group of respondents to find work. We also found evidence that some women respondents so affected were taking steps to gain vocational qualifications. But others had adopted a strategy to cope with their predicament, by not applying for jobs advertised as requiring formal qualifications.

Unhappily for many of our respondents, it will not be easy to overcome this handicap. While most recognised they needed qualifications to get back into employment, it was not evident many were taking active steps, if at all, to achieve these. For some, there was no prospect of studying or training to gain any qualifications.

5.3.4 Experience

It is a common-place, almost taken for granted, assumption that employers increasingly look for people with previous experience of their industry, or at the very least, experience of the world of work. We asked respondents about the extent to which a lack of work experience in the UK makes it difficult for them to find work. It is important to reiterate that the majority of our respondents faced multiple barriers, of which experience was only one such barrier. In terms of their labour market prospects, the lack of experience was associated more closely with respondents’ migrational background and, by inference, their age.

Migrational background: respondents

The work experience in the UK of almost all our respondent first generation migrants was limited to unskilled or semi-skilled work in factories, or elsewhere in the restaurant, retail (shop) and taxi trades. A few respondents had no experience whatever, because they had never worked here in the UK, or abroad in their country of origin. We found only two respondents who had worked previously in Bangladesh and Pakistan. One male jobseeker claimed he had ten to 12 years experience working with NGOs in Pakistan, but had found it difficult to get a job because ‘it [overseas experience] doesn’t count for anything’ with UK employers. The other, also a jobseeker, was convinced he could get a job quickly if he had longer experience of working here. But they were uncharacteristic of our respondent first generation migrants in general, in the sense that they were highly educated and highly qualified. Otherwise, the consistent refrain we heard from respondents in this group was that they were looking for jobs as chefs, kitchen porters, machine
operators, warehouse packers, or assistants in Asian-owned food and clothing shops because these were the only jobs they had done in the past and, therefore, had experience in. With most of their experience confined to this narrow range of jobs, it was not surprising that job opportunities overall for our respondent first generation migrants were few and far between.

It might be expected that working in the non-traditional sectors (for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis) would be one way to expand people’s experience and, consequently, their overall labour market chances. In practice, though, respondents who were looking for work outside those traditional areas appeared to be caught in a quandary. The fact is that without relevant experience, respondents could not get a job, but without a job could not get the necessary experience either. This was a dilemma some respondents described as frustrating, as the examples below illustrate:

‘My lack of experience is another big barrier at present, which I am struggling to overcome. I do not understand how I can get experience without getting into work in the first place, as that is where the experience will come from. This is very frustrating.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 20s)

‘To have experience, you need to work before; and it’s a deadlock. If you have experience, you might get a chance to get a job.’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 30s)

Migrational background: parents and grandparents

Our second generation respondents differed from the first, in the sense that they faced a problem of not having relevant experience in particular types of work or, for that matter, in any employment at all. This group was less likely than their parents to face multiple barriers. Although they were fluent in English, articulate and often with good qualifications, some nevertheless were not in employment because they did not have any work experience or the experience employers were looking for. One jobseeker had applied for data entry and general office work, had been invited for interviews, but had not been successful. When asked for her view on why she had been unsuccessful, she replied:

‘You never know. They said I was fine. I think it was lack of work experience. The employers want me to show I’ve worked.’

(Pakistani female, jobseeker, 30s)

Another young female jobseeker told us she would like an administrative job because she would like to work in an office, and also because she had computer and keyboard skills. However, she was not optimistic she could get such jobs because when she had applied for them, she had been told she must have experience. She put the reason she was currently out of work in some perspective, with an explanation that:
‘Every employer wants the best, and they want people with experience. Maybe I am not the best.’

(Bangladeshi female, jobseeker, teens)

Even if they had relevant experience in particular sectors, some respondents still faced a problem in that they did not have the length of experience some employers were looking for. Young people looking for IT jobs in particular, were adversely affected in this way. We also found examples of respondents who faced a similar dilemma to their parents: of not getting a job because they did not have experience, but unable to gain experience without a job. They were just as perplexed by this, as some respondents explained:

‘I am writing those letters and putting in so much effort, and they can’t even look at it properly. If they don’t give me a job, how will I get experience? They’re meant to be giving us a job and more experience. If they don’t do that, how can I get experience?’

(Bangladeshi female, jobseeker, 20s)

‘People in my situation aren’t given a chance. Everyone’s looking for people with experience and qualifications. Where do you get that from?’

(Pakistani male, jobseeker, 20s)

Some young respondents had developed a strategy to cope with this dilemma, and were prepared to look for any jobs they could find, no matter how transient. They were prepared to take such jobs, but also ready to move on if that was not what they actually wanted. The objective was to gain experience. As might be expected, lengthy periods out of the labour market deprived some respondents of the experience they now needed for employment.

5.3.5 Contacts

There is an increasing body of evidence that shows people tend to get out of unemployment by finding jobs through friends and acquaintances, rather than through formal channels. These networks and contacts make up what is generally described as social capital, which is also considered to be increasingly important in job search. We were interested to find out the extent to which such social connectedness is evident in the labour market achievements of our Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents.

Respondents were asked whether they know many friends or family in employment; and whether not knowing other people in work makes it difficult for them to find work. Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have a similar pattern of settlement in Britain. As a result of the pattern of their migration, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are highly concentrated in particular areas in Britain. This means that successive generations are found in the same locations. It would also be expected that the optimum social connectedness would be at the level of migration. In other words, people’s migrational backgrounds are more likely to determine and influence their social
contacts, and through these, their labour market contacts. Respondents’ migrational background forms our level of analysis, although this may be mediated by language, in particular respondents’ fluency in English.

We make an important observation here. More than three-quarters of our respondent first generation migrants were not fluent speakers of English (only six of the 28 respondents in this group claimed they were fluent). In sharp contrast, only three of the 42 respondents whose parents and grandparents first migrated to the UK were not fluent in English. There were no differences in ethnicity and gender.

*Migrational background: respondents*

First generation respondents were almost equally divided between those who said all or most of their friends and family were in work, and those who said they knew only a few friends and family in work. It was not clear the extent to which the former had benefited directly, in terms of labour market information and other job search activities, from those contacts. In contrast, it was clear that respondents who did not know many friends or family in employment were more likely to cite this as one of the reasons why they had difficulty finding work. More generally, some respondents were convinced one of the reasons why unemployed people find it difficult to get ‘anywhere’ is that they have limited contacts. One Bangladeshi jobseeker appeared to see a direct link between the fact that he did not know many people in work and his unsuccessful attempts to find a job:

‘I came to the UK five years ago, but I do not have a wide community network, and that is also a barrier for finding jobs with Bangladeshi restaurants. I know only a few people who are working.’

(Bangladeshi male, jobseeker, 50s)

Certainly, living in closely-knit communities as our respondents did, was seen to confer a labour market advantage in general; in the sense that respondents knew a lot of local employers, and so finding a job locally was made that much easier. We heard many testimonies with suggestions that having a lot of friends and relatives in their area was particularly helpful for finding jobs in the restaurant trade and local shops. Of course, it could be argued such jobs are relatively easy to get because they offer only low-paid and unskilled employment. Even then, as we saw earlier, there was often intense competition from too many people chasing too few such jobs to confer any of the labour market advantages attributed to social connectedness. This was particularly true of older people, in their 40s and 50s, among our first generation respondents. Another unwitting effect of over-reliance on ‘enclave’ contacts was that some respondents who were highly skilled had ended up in the same low-skilled jobs as everybody else.

*Migrational background: parents and grandparents*

There were several obvious differences between the second generation respondents and their parents, in terms of social connectedness. First, their contacts were not as highly localised, ie they were not confined exclusively to the local areas in which they
lived. Secondly, they worked in a much wider range of sectors, and with a wider skills base. Thirdly, and even more importantly, it was often their siblings and other close relatives who were in work, as employees, but in some cases as employers who owned their own business. It was clear that this generation of respondents also benefited from their social contacts as a source of information on jobs. For example, one young respondent had found her previous job from two friends who were working in the post office (Royal Mail):

‘One of my mates told me there was a vacancy, and at that time I was on my Jobseeker’s training. They always send you on a placement for four weeks. If you find a job yourself, that’s alright.’

(Bangladeshi female)

There was further evidence that respondents were also using wider social networks, including community organisations, as potential sources of labour market information. At this level, community organisations deal with much larger employing organisations that are likely offer greater job opportunities. One woman told us how she found her job with the local police:

‘My [named relative] is a secretary of the mosque, and the police have liaison with the Muslims. And he got friendly with someone in the police; and they said they had a youth training scheme starting, and were going to target ethnic minorities. They offered me a job at the end of my YTS.’

(Pakistani female, in employment, 30s)

While these examples tell a successful story, it was less certain that the network of friends and family conferred obvious overall advantages in social connectedness. The evidence was rather mixed. Some contacts worked in sectors with plentiful jobs, such as community voluntary organisations. But others were in highly competitive sectors, such as IT, where it was very difficult to get work, even with the advantage of recommendation by friends and family. In this respect, it is debatable what clout friends and family who did not work in the typical Pakistani and Bangladeshi areas of employers have in helping respondents get jobs elsewhere.

Not surprisingly, we found respondents who were frustrated at their lack of success in getting jobs, notwithstanding their social contacts. Indeed, some respondents felt that employers were spoilt for choice in some areas; with such intense competition for jobs that even graduates were forced to work in low-skilled jobs. A graduate respondent who was working in a non-graduate job expressed a view typical of that sentiment:

‘I’ve got contacts, I mix well, and I like to learn. I have options as a youth worker, interpreter, and experience in retail, admin and customer service. So why can’t I get a proper job?’

(Bangladeshi female, in employment, 20s)

It is a moot point whether the younger generation of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis can continue to rely on their immediate friends and family for information on jobs,
especially as they themselves have only limited contacts in the changed labour market of today.

5.4 Area-based barriers

5.4.1 Characteristics of the labour market and local areas

We asked respondents who were not in work whether a lack of jobs in their town/city, and whether living in their local area within their town/city, made it difficult for them to find work. Some interesting differences emerged between our case study areas in terms of the extent to which living in their town/city or their local area made it difficult for respondents to find work, and in terms of the different labour market conditions in the different areas.

In Bristol, these area-based barriers did not come across as a big issue for respondents. There were a few exceptions to this. A small number of respondents faced a skills/experience mismatch, feeling that there were not enough jobs of the type that they could do in Bristol, for example, sewing machine work, or jobs that did not require experience. A few felt that there were plenty of temporary jobs, but not ‘career jobs’, whilst some others felt that there were not enough jobs in their local area, or that there were ‘more people than jobs’. In the main though, these area-based issues were not a major issue for respondents. This was similar in Glasgow, where the only labour market issue mentioned by respondents was the lack of graduate jobs in Glasgow. Respondents described how lots of competition for graduate jobs meant that graduates often ended up in low-skilled work despite their qualifications. For example:

‘I think in Glasgow there’s not that many highly skilled jobs, I didn’t realise that. Graduate jobs, there’s not enough, there’s too many graduates here. There’s like four universities, there’s too many people with degrees.’

(Pakistani women, jobseeker)

In Tower Hamlets, Birmingham and Bradford area-based barriers were a much bigger issue for respondents. Despite Tower Hamlets’ proximity to the City of London and to the central London economy, respondents highlighted a number of labour market issues that they felt made it difficult for them to find work. Respondents described how a lack of skills amongst some of the local population has led to intense competition for low-skilled work, especially low-skilled work within the local area, as many local people want to work locally. This leads in some cases to many people applying for the same jobs advertised through their local Jobcentre. Skills mismatch was also an issue on this area, as the jobs that are available often need experience in that sector (for example, admin and clerical work, and construction). Another issue cited by respondents was the need to have the right contacts to get local jobs, as local employers tend to employ family members and people they know. This was particularly the case in the restaurant sector. For a few respondents aged in their 40s and 50s, the decline of the garment industry due
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to cheaper labour costs abroad meant that the factories they had worked in for many years have now closed, making their experience no longer relevant. One respondent argued that competition for jobs had also increased because of the availability of migrant workers:

‘A lot of employers are taking on people from East Europe, Turkey etc. These are young people, and they are not on the books either. They are working in the black economy.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

In Birmingham, respondents felt that the main reasons that living in Birmingham or their local area made it difficult for them to find work was that there were not enough jobs available (a common view was that there were lots of people looking for work, and not enough jobs to go around), and that factories had closed, making it difficult for unskilled former factory workers to find other jobs. For example:

‘After [19]80 or ’81/82 there weren’t much jobs in factories in Birmingham. Very hard to get the job. I am not a skilled worker and I am not a qualified engineer or a setter.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

As in other areas, the issue of a mismatch between individuals and jobs was also an issue, with some of the jobs that were available not being suitable for those with health problems, older workers, or those with a lack of experience in that sector. Respondents described how there were not enough jobs in Indian restaurants, how the tendency for Asians to live in the same area and want to work in that area restricts opportunities, and how some of the available jobs offered low wages (a small number of respondents felt that what they described as asylum seekers were under-cutting local wages). The impact of a negative reputation of a local area on the ability of individuals from that area to find work was also brought up. For example:

‘It depends on the area, what if you write in for a job and the area comes up Sparkbrook or somewhere, they are going to look at the application and say we don’t want this person. They tell you to go away. That’s what it is, I reckon that’s the problem, the area, the people, gunshots, gun crime and that area gets down, that area gets degraded.’

(Pakistani man, economically inactive)

In Bradford, area-based barriers were, in general, a much bigger issue for respondents than they were in the other case study areas. The decline of the textile industry was brought up by a large number of respondents and the fact that there were no more textile jobs was frequently cited as a barrier to finding work. Older generations had been employed in these industries where they were able to work without being fluent in written and spoken English, which was no longer possible in growth sectors such as administration, call centres and retail, where language, experience and IT skills are needed. The impact of the closure of traditional industries was highlighted by one respondent:
'The jobs we grew up with have disappeared. The textiles, foundries, bakeries, even the clothing factories have closed.'

(Pakistani man, economically inactive)

Others highlighted how increasing numbers of jobs are moving abroad, including textile and factory jobs, as well as newer industries such as call centres. There was a general feeling that there are simply not enough jobs in Bradford any more, and that this overall lack of jobs is not just a mismatch issue. This leads to too many people applying for the same job, as described by two respondents:

‘I think it’s too many people applying for the same jobs.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

‘There was one job I applied for and 30/40 people applied for it.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

As well as the impact of the general decline in employment in the Bradford labour market, individual local areas within Bradford have developed bad reputations amongst the wider population generally, and with employers, due to the riots that took place in the summer of 2001. Respondents felt that the riots had led to employers not wanting to employ people from certain postcodes, both where the riots had taken place, and other areas where the Pakistani community were concentrated. For example:

‘Manningham, since the riots, as soon as you tell them you’re from [the postcode] Bradford 8 the insurance is high. They put everyone in one boat.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

‘I had a mate, he used to live on my estate on [name] Street and he moved away and he’s been applying for the same jobs [as before], but when he’d mentioned that he’d lived around here he’d never get the job. But as soon as he moved out a month later he applied for it and he got it. Just because he said he lives in BD2 and he got it.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

Respondents also highlighted the volume of short-term jobs in the labour market, as well as the need for experience for the jobs that were available in administration and IT for example. Bangladeshi respondents also highlighted the lack of jobs in Bangladeshi restaurants, where employment opportunities had previously been much greater, citing workers brought in from abroad to undercut the wages of the British Bangladeshi community.

5.4.2 Attitudes to travel

Respondents were also asked about their attitudes to travelling to work, specifically how far away from home they would be prepared to work, and whether they would
be happy to work outside the immediate local area where they lived. The key difference in attitudes to travel was between male and female respondents.

In general, male respondents were willing to travel further to work than female respondents, and the desire to work in the immediate local area in which they lived was far rarer. It was common for male respondents to say that they would be willing to work anywhere in the town/city where they lived, or have a job that required an hour or more travelling time by public transport, in the case of London. Male respondents were sometimes happy to work further afield. For example, respondents in Bradford were happy to travel to work in both neighbouring Leeds, and in the wider West Yorkshire region. How far male respondents were willing to travel depended on the wage they would be earning, with jobs further afield needing to pay enough to make the cost of travelling financially worthwhile. Access to a car meant that male respondents were happy to travel further to work, whilst for those who did not have access to cars, jobs needed to be accessible by public transport. Many male respondents who had worked in the past had experience of travelling considerable distances to work, working in other areas of the country or travelling daily up to a hundred miles to work from where they lived. A common view on travel to work was:

‘I don’t think transport and stuff like that will affect it [ability to work], because at the end of the day, if there’s work, I will get there, I will catch a bus, however far, it doesn’t really matter.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

However, some male respondents did wish to work more locally. Those with health problems found travelling far more difficult. For example, a sight impairment meant that one respondent was unable to drive and sometimes got on the wrong buses, ending up in the wrong place. Other health problems that were cited as making travelling far more difficult for male respondents were back pain, high blood pressure, asthma and diabetes. A few male respondents cited wanting to work more locally so that they were near family, especially when they had young children or family members with health problems, or in case there was an emergency and they needed to return home quickly.

Whilst male respondents frequently cited being happy to work five to ten miles, or ten to 15 miles from where they lived (or in some cases much further), in general, female respondents wanted to work closer to home and the majority said that they did not want to travel too far. On a practical level, on the whole fewer female respondents had access to a car, and jobs, therefore, needed to be accessible by public transport. A common view was that they would be happy to travel further if they had a car, but when they did not, female respondents wanted to work locally, in some cases within walking distance of home or as near to home as possible. There were also other reasons that female respondents wanted to work closer to home than male respondents.
Some female respondents did not know the city (for example, Bristol and Glasgow) that they lived in very well, and would not be confident to travel somewhere unless they knew the area or the place where they were going. Fear of travelling was an issue in some cases, with one respondent not feeling comfortable travelling on her own, and therefore not wanting to work if she could not work locally. Another female respondent was not happy to work outside her own home because of a fear of travelling. Another respondent described her fear of travelling and dislike of leaving her son at home:

‘I’m afraid of going out on my own, especially if I have to leave my son, and cannot come back quickly if something happens to him.’

(Bangladeshi woman, economically inactive)

In some cases, respondents said that other family members would be unhappy if they did not work locally. This was particularly the case for younger women who said that their parents would not, for example, be happy for them to work in central London, or anywhere other than the city centre of Glasgow.

A common view amongst female respondents was that they wanted to work locally so that they would be available for their children if and when their children needed them, and to minimise travel time to fit jobs in with childcare responsibilities. Female respondents also wanted to be near home to look after other family members, for example, to be able to come home to cook lunch for family members, or for other caring responsibilities:

‘I like it near my home, if anything happens I can come quickly and see my mum.’

(Bangladeshi woman, economically inactive)

Not all female respondents wanted to work locally. Some had travelled further to work in past jobs, and would be happy to travel away from their local area, for example, from Tower Hamlets to the West End of central London.

Differences in attitudes to travelling to work were far more stark between men and women than they were between those who were fluent in written and spoken English, and those who were not. However, language was certainly associated with not wanting to travel far from the areas where they lived for those who were not fluent in English, and particularly with lacking the confidence to travel. Attitudes to travel also varied by area to some extent. For example, car ownership appeared to be higher in Bradford than in other areas.

5.5 Employer discrimination

There were no differences in the views respondents expressed about discrimination between those interviewed on or after the London bombings on 7 July 2005, and those interviewed before 7 July 2005.
5.5.1 Bangladeshi respondents

Just over one-third of Bangladeshi respondents who discussed discrimination did not feel that they would be discriminated against by employers, and had not experienced discrimination in the past. This included a group of respondents who had only ever worked in Bangladeshi restaurants and did not have any experience of the wider labour market. Some respondents felt that they might experience discrimination as they had heard stories of people who had. The remaining Bangladeshi respondents did think that they would be discriminated against by employers, particularly in the recruitment process. Only one respondent had experience of discrimination that had occurred in the workplace:

‘It’s a big problem and people don’t get to upper management. If he or she complains against their line manager the next level manager will see the line manager, not him or her and they will be rebuffed.’

(Bangladeshi man, employed)

When asked what kind of discrimination they thought they would face, discrimination in the recruitment process on the basis of ethnicity was the biggest concern. There was a strong feeling amongst respondents that employers would discriminate against them because they were Bangladeshi, although they did not always have evidence that this was the case, as it was not possible to know for sure that they had not got a job because they were Bangladeshi. However, respondents said that it seemed very likely that discrimination on the basis of their ethnicity was occurring, when they had experience of submitting a lot of applications and not getting a response, or when they were not successful at interview and other less qualified candidates who were White got the job. For example:

‘If in an interview they get people with White skin, we’re last choice.’

(Bangladeshi man, employed)

‘I saw a vacancy and went, and the school was English people and the teachers were there, and when I went to ask for a job they said there wasn’t one, and the people there are all English and I thought they don’t like me because I’m Asian.’

(Bangladeshi woman, economically inactive)

‘I don’t know. When I feel I’ve matched all the criteria on the person specification, I feel it must be an ethnicity issue.’

(Bangladeshi woman, jobseeker)

‘When you go for an interview and every single person is White it is weird. It could be. You think the interview goes well then you get a letter saying they don’t accept you.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)
Bangladeshi respondents also felt that they might be discriminated against because of their religion. Respondents felt that having a religious appearance, including observing Hijab or having a beard, and having an Islamic name put employers off, and that they had to work hard to ‘get over’ the initial first impression given by having a religious appearance. One respondent had an interview in a Catholic school arranged through a training programme she was doing, and the interview was cancelled by the employer after being arranged. The employer did interview another student on the course who was Black, so the respondent felt she had not been interviewed because she was Muslim, rather than because of her ethnicity.

A number of Bangladeshi respondents felt that they were discriminated against by employers because they were not fluent in English, and felt that if they were fluent, then they would not be discriminated against. Older respondents also felt that employers wanted to employ younger people, and those who were older and also did not speak English thought that employers would discriminate against them. One respondent felt that they would be discriminated against by employers because of where they lived, as employers had a bad impression of the borough of Tower Hamlets.

**5.5.2 Pakistani respondents**

Just under one-third of Pakistani respondents who discussed discrimination did not feel that they would be discriminated against by employers, and had not experienced discrimination in the past. When asked what kind of discrimination respondents felt that they faced, the two-thirds of respondents who did feel that they would experience discrimination said that discrimination on the basis of ethnicity was by far the biggest concern. Being discriminated against because of their religion was the next biggest concern for Pakistani respondents, whilst some Pakistani respondents also thought that they might be discriminated against because of their age, health problems, gender, lack of language skills, or because of where they lived.

One issue that was brought up by Pakistani respondents was that they believed that employer discrimination had got worse since the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks. Whilst a few Bangladeshi respondents also brought this up during interviews, the issue was more commonly raised by Pakistani respondents. Respondents felt that having a Muslim name had made it more difficult to get a job since 11 September 2001, and that if employers thought that someone is Muslim they would not offer them a job. One respondent felt that a Sikh friend had got a job that they had both applied for because he was Sikh rather than Muslim. Another respondent left school shortly before ‘9/11’ and then found it very difficult to get a job after ‘9/11’. Respondents had experienced discrimination from the general public whilst out in public after ‘9/11’, with women recounting being stared at for observing Hijab and being called names. One respondent also recalled being called names during the Iraq war. This general experience of discrimination had led some respondents to feel that employers would be less likely to employ them after ‘9/11’. A few respondents who had been in work at the time of ‘9/11’ had been shocked by the change in employers’ and colleagues’ attitudes towards them since then and had been made to feel uncomfortable in the workplace.
Discrimination when looking for work

It was a common view amongst Pakistani respondents that they had experienced discrimination when looking for work. However, the nature of discrimination during the recruitment process meant that they did not always have proof that discrimination had occurred, but they saw discrimination as the most likely explanation for why they had been unsuccessful on multiple occasions when applying for jobs. It was common for respondents to cite how they never had any response from sending a large number of application forms, or had job interviews where they had been unsuccessful and had no feedback about why they had not got the job, or no further communication from the employer at all after the interview had taken place. There were a number of examples of respondents who had no proof that they had been discriminated against in the recruitment process, but felt that it was the most likely explanation:

‘I wish I could read an employer’s mind when they read my CV.’
(Pakistani man, economically inactive)

‘There are places where they don’t say it, but you do feel [it was discrimination].’
(Pakistani man, economically inactive)

‘Sometimes people can have very split personalities, they can be nice to your face but behind your back they’re saying other things. I feel as though that’s the way it is when you go for a job interview, they’ll be nice to your face but when you walk away they’ll be kind of like, “no chance”.’
(Pakistani woman, jobseeker)

‘I have no proof, but it’s what I believe. I can’t ask why I am not getting the job.’
(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

‘People don’t give the reason why, that’s the problem.’
(Pakistani man, employed)

Another group of Pakistani respondents were more certain that they were discriminated against in the recruitment process on the basis of their ethnicity. There was a perception that jobs had been given to someone else because they were Pakistani, or that employers might not employ them because they were Pakistani. A major concern of these respondents was that they were being discriminated against because of having an Asian name. In two cases, respondents felt that they would be discriminated against by Pakistani employers, in one case because the respondent was not from the dominant Mirpuri Pakistani community in that city, and in the other case because the female respondent felt that Pakistani male employers do not want women working in an Asian shop.
There were a number of examples of discrimination when looking for work that respondents attributed to being Pakistani. One respondent had passed the test and interview to become a bus conductor and had waited three years before the job started, when a White person in the same interview round who also got the job had started immediately. Another respondent had done well in tests and telephone interviews, but had a less positive reaction on meeting employers face-to-face. A third respondent had not been employed by a call centre as they said her English was not up to their standard. The Commission for Racial Equality in Scotland then took the employer to court and the company apologised. Other examples of discrimination due to ethnicity in the recruitment process included:

‘Well, you get some employers, they make it out to be like you’ve got the job and they tell you give us two, three days, we’ll ring back and let you know. A week goes by and I have to ring them. And then they say, “oh we forgot. We’ve got somebody else,” this and that or “we didn’t have the time”. It’s make me feel like they are discriminating against.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

‘Sometimes they interview a few people and rather than Pakistani, they’d rather choose English person and give them the job.’

(Pakistani woman jobseeker)

‘I’ve seen White and Indian people apply for the same job and get the job. Me being Pakistani, no chance.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

‘I think they look at the CV and think Pakistan, Asian.’

(Pakistani man, employed)

‘A friend of mine changed his name on the CV and applied and got more responses because it was a White name.’

(Pakistani woman, employed)

‘My first name Mahboul, my dad named me that. I hate that name. In school people used to take the mick out of that. It is, it’s a good one to take the mick out of. When I stopped used the name and used Alan [surname], I tell you what that made such a difference. Just that on it’s own. I’d go for a job interview and use Alan, if I put Mahboul, can’t pronounce that, in the bin. But Alan does make a difference.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)
‘They are racist, they don’t want to know once they hear a Muslim name like Ali or Rahman or something like that, they don’t want to know on the application form. If I put a White person’s name down, which I have done before, I have got the job. What’s the point me going in there with a White person’s name? Why not with my name, what’s wrong with my name?’

(Pakistani man, economically inactive)

As well as experiencing discrimination in the recruitment process due to being Pakistani, Pakistani respondents also believed that they were being discriminated against because of their religion. This was particularly the case where respondents wore religious dress. Female respondents felt that they were being discriminated against by employers because of their need to observe Hijab. Individuals observing Hijab thought that they had been stereotyped due to their clothes, and had been asked in interviews how their family would feel about them working, and whether they prayed. For example:

‘In Bradford I didn’t have a problem with employment but in Rochdale I did because of my dress code. I wore my headscarf. I was asked at one interview whether I had to wear it. It was for a shop assistant at [supermarket] and I didn’t get the job.’

(Pakistani women, economically inactive)

One respondent felt that they were discriminated against by Pakistani Muslim employers because they were a Pakistani Hindu.

Pakistani respondents also thought that they would be discriminated against when looking for work because of where they lived having a negative reputation, or because of their age or their health (these are discussed more fully in the sections above on age, health and area-based barriers to work). One Pakistani respondent felt that they would be discriminated against because of their lack of English language fluency. Another respondent felt the interaction between gender and ethnicity led to discrimination against her:

‘I think it’s more to do with being female and being Asian and the stereotypes that go with being female – you’re going to get married and have kids and won’t be 100 per cent for the job.’

(Pakistani woman, jobseeker)

Discrimination in the workplace

Whilst not all respondents had experienced discrimination in the workplace, a number of examples of workplace discrimination were mentioned. There were also a few respondents who had not experienced workplace discrimination, but felt that they would not get promoted as Pakistanis if they were in work. One respondent cited having left a job after 15 years working for the employer, with no progression.

For those Pakistani respondents who had experienced discrimination in the workplace, this was both from employers/managers, and from colleagues. In terms of
discrimination from employers/managers, it was common for these respondents to feel that it had been harder for them to get promoted because they were Pakistani. It was felt that it was harder to get promoted if you worked in a White environment, when applying for a senior position, because jobs had already been earmarked for White colleagues, or because of being an Asian woman. Some respondents had experienced discrimination but had not taken any action about it, as they did not know how to deal with it and did not want to lose their jobs. Others had taken action, with mixed results. Some examples of discrimination faced in the workplace by Pakistani respondents are shown in the quotations and box below:

‘I was the only Asian there. I ate separately and I felt a bit weird.’
(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

‘With me they see a man with a beard and straight away it’s a stereotype, especially since September 11th. I was made to feel that if I didn’t say hello to my colleagues, they wouldn’t say hello to me.’
(Pakistani man, employed)

‘The way he started telling me about my timekeeping. Sometimes I was a minute late, two minutes, five minutes late, and sometimes 30 seconds late, but someone started telling me “I don’t know how you people do things back in your country, but in this country…” and I found that very inflammatory. I didn’t really hear much of what else he said.’
(Pakistani man, employed)

‘Wherever I’ve worked, being from an ethnic minority as well, this is one thing that really cheesed me off. Promotion. You go for a job interview and: “this is what we do, we start you off at three months trial period or a month’s trial period and we start off at this salary and six months later we’ll put your salary up to this. After a year you’re entitled to promotion.” I worked in places two or three years and I haven’t seen jack. Nothing. Wages still the same. After a year it goes up like a pittance. And you’ve been there a year and the next man started two months ago, he’s younger than you as well, just because he’s blonde White guy and he gets the promotion.’
(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

‘In Ramadan I used to ask for my break to be at a set time and my evening tea time because that was when the fast used to open. They had a lady called Margaret who was in charge and she would say “so, what makes you special?”
(Pakistani woman, economically inactive)
Case example of perceived discrimination

One respondent could not get to work when there was heavy snow, and was told the next day he was dismissed. He felt that he had been dismissed so that he did not pass the time period when the employer would have to give him more benefits. He also experienced discrimination from another employer, who said that they were going out of business and made the respondent redundant. The respondent then discovered that the employer was taking more people on and was not closing down. He felt that in both cases he was treated unfairly, but does not know why.

One respondent had a very good track record with a company, went on holiday and discovered his father had died whilst he was away and had to then go straight to Pakistan. He sent a message to his employer via a colleague to tell them he needed to take an additional two weeks off work. A new manager was put in place whilst he was away, who dismissed him on his return. He appealed, and offered to start again at the most junior position, but the employer refused. He feels he was discriminated against because they did not understand his situation and needs.

One respondent had been working at an airport and had a good track record, but her contract was terminated, and the reason given was that the employer was not able to get her a permanent security pass that she needed to work at the airport. She felt that her employers were using this as an excuse to get rid of her, but was not sure why she had been discriminated against, and did not think it was because of her race or religion, as there were other Asian women who worked there. However, she had experienced problems with the employer not taking her religious needs seriously in the past.

One respondent worked as a care assistant where she experienced racism from one of her managers. The workplace was very segregated, with no mixing between White and Asian employees. She was sacked because White people on her shift had complained about her. A more senior manager withdrew the sacking, and she continued to work there, but when she left she was given a bad reference.

One respondent was laid off their first week at work. The person showing them how to do the job was aggressive so the respondent went to the manager about it, and was then laid off.

As well as experiencing discrimination from employers/managers, Pakistani respondents had also experienced discrimination from other members of staff. Conversations at work about religion made some respondents feel discriminated against, and they believed that because they were Pakistani, colleagues felt threatened or jealous if the respondent was good at their job, or was occupying their territory. One respondent had a hearing impairment and felt that he was discriminated against because of this as colleagues thought he was ignorant when he was unable to hear well despite his hearing aid. There were a number of examples of discrimination by colleagues:
‘I was a telephonist and doing the wages, an accounts job. I worked seven to eight years there and then I had a problem with the people. The person I was working with I think she didn’t like me, she was giving me a hard time, why is the Pakistani above me. Then I left the job because I couldn’t cope…I knew I wasn’t getting further with the job. I would stay as a cashier there. Everyone was good but I didn’t think I would have a chance for promotion.’

(Pakistani woman, economically inactive)

‘In the first year, the restroom, the White girls had dark hair, when there were hairs on the floor they said it was mine. I’d have to pick it up. When I walked into a room they’d go quiet and when you moved out they’d start whispering.’

(Pakistani woman, economically inactive)

‘I had two incidents of racial problems in the workplace, one was because I was 16 and on the same wage as the senior administrator and she didn’t like it. She had started at the bottom at 16 but I had quickly managed to work my way up. They used to plot a lot of things. I’d send out court summonses, they’d get the mail bag back and put it in my drawer to make out that I’d become so backlogged I couldn’t deal with it…I made some very good friends in the police force who told me what my rights were and took up my battle for me and ended up being my mouthpiece. I had been set up and the person was made to retire.’

Interviewer: ‘What was the second incident?’

‘They didn’t like me, they made comments about the smell of curry. They were old-school police and didn’t like having an Asian female. I made my own complaint then and they got dismissed. They disbanded the office and set it up again and everyone went for training on cultural awareness. That was nice but I did feel sad.’

(Pakistani woman, employed)

5.6 Other

5.6.1 Biggest barriers

Having discussed the range of potential barriers to work, respondents were asked which they felt was their biggest barrier to finding employment, or in the case of those in work, what had been their biggest barrier in the past.

Views of Bangladeshi respondents

Bangladeshi respondents most commonly cited proficiency in English language, age (being too old), and health concerns as their primary barriers to employment. Lack of educational qualifications and experience relevant to the opportunities available were also mentioned. Amongst younger respondents, by contrast, the biggest
barrier tended to be lack of experience to enter particular careers they had set their sights on, e.g. office and administrative work. Older respondents were more likely to cite lack of experience outside the industry in which they had worked, for example, there were a number of examples of Bangladeshi men who had only ever worked in restaurants, and lacked skills, experience and confidence to do anything else. Indeed, several respondents claimed that lack of work in Indian/Bangladeshi restaurants was their main barrier, however, implicit in this response was that a lack of proficiency in English language, together with a lack of other skills and experience prevented them from looking for other types of work:

‘My main barrier to finding work other than restaurant is my language.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

Others who were looking for a wider range of work felt that a lack of response or feedback from employers to whom they had applied for work was their biggest difficulty.

Turning to health concerns as the biggest barrier to work, chronic health conditions were cited as the main barrier to work by a number of the Bangladeshi respondents, to the extent that some felt that they would not be able to work again. There were several examples of older men who had worked for many years in this country but their health had deteriorated to a point which left them unable to work. For example, respondents reported that they had multiple health conditions, including breathing problems which left them unable to walk far. Although religion and caring responsibilities were cited less frequently than language, health, age or qualification/skills issues, a small minority of Bangladeshi respondents felt that they were their biggest barriers.

Views of Pakistani respondents

Amongst Pakistani respondents, family commitments, lack of relevant experience, qualifications, and in some cases, skills, such as being able to drive were raised as the biggest barriers to employment:

‘Not getting the chance to work. People in my situation aren’t given a chance. Everyone’s looking for people with experience and qualifications. Where do you get people like that from?’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

As was seen amongst the Bangladeshi respondents, language and health also emerged as the biggest barriers, but they were not mentioned by such large proportions. Pakistani respondents also cited a lack of particular kinds of work as their main barrier to employment. For example, in the Pakistani community in Birmingham, one of the biggest barriers was seen to be too many people all trying to get the same kind of work in the local area, typically, jobs which did not require English language proficiency or particular skills. Hence, there was high competition for a relatively small number of low-skilled jobs:
'Lack of experience and knowledge of English language are the main barriers to work. When I have applied for jobs, I am refused mostly for these reasons. This is very frustrating and disheartening as unless I was given job, how can I gain the experience?’

(Pakistani woman, jobseeker)

Others cited difficulties finding work that would pay enough to justify leaving benefits, and lack of affordable childcare. As was the case amongst Bangladeshi respondents, religion, ethnicity and culture were seldom mentioned as the biggest barriers, however, when they were cited, they were seen to be extremely significant:

‘The biggest barriers, most of my friends; husbands are taxi drivers and the wives are at home is because they don’t understand the culture and the women tend to wear the national costume. A lot of the men are like my brother and have a beard and are quiet. Because they’re quiet they tend to be looked upon as if they haven’t got much about them. My brother, there’s a lot more to him than meets the eye. Religion is the biggest barrier, they just see Asian, whether its Sikh, Hindu or Muslim, they instantly go to 9/11.’

(Pakistani women, employed)

Perceptions of barriers by gender, age and migration background for both the Bangladeshi and Pakistani respondents

Looking at the biggest barriers by gender; lack of experience, language, and caring responsibilities emerged as the biggest barriers for women. Health and age were raised to a lesser extent. Amongst men, health was the biggest barrier for a number of the male respondents, many felt that they would only be able to do very light work, while others felt that they would not realistically be able to work at all, despite the fact that some claimed Jobseeker’s Allowance.

‘My health problem is my biggest barrier. Even then, I will try, if I can get a light job.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

High competition for the same jobs, eg in restaurants, warehouses or factories, where proficiency in English was not required were also mentioned.

‘There is high competition for the same jobs – there are lots of Asians with little English living in this area, and they are all going for the same jobs that you don’t need to be able to speak English to do.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

With regard to age and migrational background, younger respondents talked of lack of experience, caring responsibilities, and discrimination due to ethnicity and/or religion. However, for some, language was also an issue. Health concerns were cited as the biggest barrier to work by the majority of older respondents, particularly those who were aged 50 and above. A lack of English language proficiency was also a key barrier for older respondents, who sometimes also mentioned their age as a barrier
to improving their English. Unsurprisingly, lack of proficiency in the English language, coupled with a lack of jobs available for those not fluent in English, was frequently cited as the main barrier by those respondents who were first generation migrants to the UK, whilst those who had been born in the UK spoke of lack of experience, lack of education and/or qualifications, caring responsibilities, bad luck, and discrimination due to their ethnicity or religion.

### 5.6.2 Other barriers

There were a number of additional barriers mentioned by respondents during the course of the interviews and these are presented here. Problems of demotivation and getting out of the habit of working were discussed by some respondents. It was felt that these, together with the stigma of long-term employment which put employers off, produced increasingly negative attitudes towards working, creating a cycle of unemployment, deprivation and unemployability:

‘...anyone that is really motivated will find work, they could find it in a month if they really look for it.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

‘Makes you lazy. It doesn’t make you find a job, I don’t like to look for a job. It makes me lazy money coming from Jobseeker’s Allowance. I just sleep, go outside.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

Others raised the issue of having had broken educational opportunities, due to visits back to the home country. For example, a visit to Bangladesh due to a death in the family meant that one respondent missed their GCSEs. For another, an extended stay in Pakistan resulted in difficulties at school when they returned to England:

‘My dad took us to Pakistan when we were five years old. Me and my younger brother. We came back when we were ten and by the time we came back we couldn’t speak English. We came back over here, came back to school we didn’t know nothing. And they put us in the bottom class, fair enough, but after we got into higher class when we were ten or 11 years old, we picked it all back up, but they still kept us in the bottom classes. So like from there that was it. By the time we came back, the damage had been done...Because my mother was English, I didn’t know anything and my father wanted me and my brother to spend some time over there. And it was hard. To learn your roots and to learn your family. Which is fair enough, we did. But when we came back it made a big difference to our education. It completely ruined it. So I wouldn’t do the same with my kids.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

Some respondents cited financial problems which prevented them from continuing their education, for example, they were unable to attend or finish college. Racism experienced at school was also mentioned. Other issues included specific family
problems, and domestic violence. One respondent spoke of a lack of guidance from parents who, when they arrived in the UK, were uneducated and unaware of how the education and employment systems operated. More specific barriers raised included the lack of a driving license, and dyslexia, which was undiagnosed at school.

One of the more frequently mentioned issues not already covered was that respondents felt pushed out, or priced out, of the work they had done in the past as a result of cheaper labour imported from abroad. For example, a number of Bangladeshi respondents who had worked in restaurants but were now unemployed spoke of new laws allowing restaurant owners to bring workers from Bangladesh, who were willing to work for very low wages. This has made it difficult for people who have been in the UK for some time to get work in restaurants:

‘You can bring restaurant workers from abroad now. And that’s what most of these restaurants are doing now. You know they advertise at the Jobcentre saying there’s vacancies, they need chefs, they need waiters, they need this, that and the other, but when you go, you’re not suitable...They’re bringing in people from abroad because they can do it now, and they’re paying them a lot less than they would have to pay me.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

Also raised was the impact of illegal workers and employers who exploit them – which in practice also undermines the opportunities and working conditions of those with legal working status:

‘Wherever I apply for work, they want me to either declare that I am working less hours than I actually am for their own gains or they want me to work at a minimum wage which is not much better than being on benefits. They have the upper hand, as with the growing number of asylum seekers and immigrants now living in this country, they are not short of human labour. As these people cannot legally work here, they, out of desperation, allow themselves to be exploited and work for ‘peanuts’ as long as it gives them cash in hand. The employers are happy with this as they have a labour force at half or less than that the normal cost. Unfortunately for people like me, this undermines us and we don’t have a choice because we can like it or lump it – it’s our loss, not theirs.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

A lack of knowledge of employment rights, and which organisations to turn to for help and support if being treated unfairly, appears to compound this problem.
6 Help needed and received to find work

6.1 Experience of Jobcentre Plus and its programmes

6.1.1 Jobseekers

Respondents were asked about any experience they had currently or in the past with Jobcentre Plus and its programmes. As would be expected, respondents claiming Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) had a lot more contact with Jobcentre Plus and its programmes than those who were economically inactive, or the employed. One group of jobseeker respondents had experience of Jobcentre Plus that had not extended further than signing-on for JSA every fortnight and using their local Jobcentre to look for jobs. They had not been involved with any New Deal programmes, having never claimed for long enough at any one time to be required to participate in mandatory programmes, and they were not always aware of New Deal. This was particularly the case amongst those not fluent in English who had not been on New Deal.

Another group of respondents had been referred by staff at their local Jobcentre to the ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) provision that they are entitled to under Skills for Life, but had not been on New Deal programmes. Some of these respondents reported negative experiences of ESOL provision, feeling that the ESOL training they had received had not been very good, having teachers who did not always turn up, having other learners who were disruptive, not feeling comfortable as a woman in an environment with men, or having done a course that was too high a level for their ability.

Whilst there was a group of jobseekers with no experience of New Deal programmes, there was a great deal of experience of New Deal programmes amongst other jobseeker respondents, some of whom had been on New Deal repeatedly. In the most part, but not in all cases (where it was clear to the researcher that provision described was part of New Deal), respondents were aware that the training or help that they had was part of a New Deal programme. In three of the case study areas
Employment Zones (EZs) were operating in these areas. EZs replace the New Deal for 25 Plus (ND25+). Jobseekers aged 18 to 24 who have already been on the New Deal for Young People (NDYP), known as New Deal returners, are also referred to the EZ instead of NDYP provision in their area, when they become eligible for a New Deal for a second or subsequent time.

The New Deal for Young People

A number of younger jobseeker respondents had been on the New Deal for Young People (NDYP). They described the Gateway phase of NDYP, getting help with CVs, application forms, interview techniques, and job search techniques helpful in most cases. During the Options phase of NDYP, respondents had a range of help, including:

- basic skills support;
- ESOL provision;
- confidence courses;
- training (including in IT, NVQs in childcare, customer service, beauty therapy);
- help getting a National Insurance card;
- financial support for clothes and travel to attend job interviews;
- work placements;
- voluntary work.

These activities are likely to have taken place mainly under the Full-Time Education and Training (FTET) option, the Employment (EMP) option (in the case of work placements), and the Voluntary Service (VS) option. There was no evidence of participation in the Environmental Task Force (ETF) option of NDYP.

Experiences of training included one respondent who did an NVQ Level 2 in childcare through NDYP and found it really helpful as it meant that she did not have to pay to get the qualification. She then got a job and came off benefits, but subsequently returned to claiming and was, when interviewed, back on NDYP and doing Level 3 in childcare. She was finding it very useful, because most childcare jobs in the area require Level 3. She was very satisfied with her experience:

‘They put in all the effort to help me. They tried their best to help me in any way.’

(Pakistani woman, jobseeker)

Another respondent did beauty therapy on NDYP but had really wanted to do art which NDYP did not offer. Her adviser told her beauty therapy included make-up art, but the respondent was disappointed as it was only a small element of the course. Other respondents had done work placements, which in some cases they had found very useful. For example:
‘The experience we got was a lot like actual work, which is the best thing you could ask for. Because, I mean, like attendance was viewed, we’re get our breaks legally, every three hours or something, 15 mins, so that was good because it was sort of like at-work sort of experience.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

Those who had done ESOL had found ESOL providers helpful and willing to give them extra help. Positive experiences included:

‘When I went on New Deal I couldn’t speak [English] at all. It was very helpful to improve my English.’

(Bangladeshi woman, jobseeker)

It was common for respondents to have had a good relationship with their New Deal adviser. One respondent described how when he lost his job he went back to his New Deal adviser to get some more help.

In terms of the experience of NDYP overall, respondents expressed some reservations about the programme. There was disappointment amongst some that NDYP did not lead to a job. This included respondents who felt frustrated because staff at their local Jobcentre had claimed to have employers lined up for New Dealers, but these employers did not materialise. Those who had completed work placements that they thought would lead to permanent employment (which had not), and those who had not been able to find suitable jobs also expressed disappointment. Respondents described how they would have liked more one-to-one support and less group activity, particularly in the Gateway stage. One respondent thought that they needed ESOL help before they could find a job, but their adviser had said it would take too much time to go to college for ESOL provision, whilst another was on ESOL provision but was concerned that they would still need more help with ESOL after the six month course ended. Another respondent had found the training they had done helpful, but wanted more training in a different subject area. One respondent had found NDYP helpful, suggesting that this was because he had a good adviser, and knew what he wanted to do:

‘The New Deal is very helpful for people who know what they want to do. People who don’t, it’s useless.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

A group of New Deal returners in EZ areas had been on an EZ after being unsuccessful in their first experience of NDYP. These respondents had done Gateway as part of the EZ, and had then gone on to do the FTET option (including fork-lift truck driving), the EMP option (including work placements at retail outlets), and the VS option. Respondents did not find repeating the Gateway helpful as they had ‘done it all before’, and were frustrated at having to repeat the same information to new advisers as they attended NDYP for a second or third time. One respondent who had attended an EZ felt that the EZ contractor was better than NDYP provided through Jobcentre Plus and its providers. They had a previous
negative experience with a New Deal provider where they had been sent on training as there was no proper supervision of trainees and ‘it was a waste of time’. Others felt that the help they had received through the EZ contractor was rushed, and had done work placements organised through the EZ contractor but had been disappointed not to get a job.

The New Deal for 25 Plus

Respondents in non-EZ areas (Bristol and Bradford) had found the Gateway stage of ND25+ helpful, doing job search, work preparation courses, getting help with CVs, meeting with advisers and in one case getting advice about self-employment. For example:

‘It was a good thing in a way because it gave me a basic idea of how to look for a job, certain tips which you pick up from there.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

As part of the Intensive Activity Period (IAP), these respondents had done training, been on ESOL provision and been on work placements. ND25+ had led to jobs for some but not others, and some had been on New Deal repeatedly. One respondent had found the training provider inflexible when his wife was ill and he needed to leave early to pick up his children from school, and another did not like being in mixed-age groups with people much younger than him, and did not like being forced to participate:

‘You shouldn’t be treated like children. When I went on the training last year they told me we would be treated like adults and we weren’t.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker, aged 36)

Respondents in EZ areas (Birmingham, Tower Hamlets and Glasgow) described having help with CVs and applications, seeing their adviser whilst on the Gateway, and doing the European Computer Driving License (ECDL), computer courses, customer care training and ESOL provision in the IAP stage. There was mixed feeling about how helpful ND25+ had been. Some liked having more intensive help and found the flexible financial support very helpful. For example, one respondent had financial support from the EZ contractor to pay for him to get a license for trading in market places and the insurance money for his pitch, and was hoping for more financial help to buy stock for his stall. Others had not been so satisfied. One respondent had wanted to apply for a job but found they needed a driving license, but the EZ contractor would not pay for them to have driving lessons. Others expressed their disappointment not to have found work through ND25+, with one respondent commenting that:

‘They’re always pushing you to jobs you’re not interested in, low wages.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)
6.1.2 The economically inactive

*Incapacity Benefit claimants*

Some respondents on Incapacity Benefit (IB) (or those on Income Support (IS) because of health problems who were not eligible for IB) were unaware of the services offered by Jobcentre Plus and had not been on any New Deal programmes, whilst others had heard of the Jobcentre or the New Deal, but had not used these services. One respondent had heard of services provided by Jobcentre Plus and knew they could get financial support if they chose to go back to work. Others knew where the Jobcentre building was but had not been there, whilst one respondent’s only contact with Jobcentre Plus was when appealing against a decision to stop their IB claim (which was then re-instatement).

Respondents on IB had experience of Jobcentre Plus’ services mainly from when they had been on JSA in the past. Some respondents had been on either the ND25+ or NDYP, variously describing attending sessions on job search and interview skills, having an adviser, and attending language classes. One respondent felt that a training course on plumbing or joinery would have been more useful for them than this more generic help, whilst respondents also mentioned not having the required skills or experience for the jobs advertised through their local Jobcentre. Only one respondent had received specific help for their health problem through their local Jobcentre. They had attended a course run by the Shaw Trust as part of the New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP), which they had heard about through a local newspaper. They had attended a course for eight weeks for people with arthritis to learn both how to manage their health problems and job search skills. The respondent found it really useful, particularly as they felt that the Shaw Trust were specialists.

*Income Support claimants*

Amongst respondents claiming IS for non-health related reasons, there was again a mixture of awareness of Jobcentre Plus’ services, with a group who were unaware of what was on offer, a group who had heard of services but had not used them, and a group who had been on New Deal programmes in the past (whilst claiming JSA or when claiming IS), and had found them helpful and found the advice that they had been given useful. One respondent had found the services of Sure Start more useful than her local Jobcentre. She had used Sure Start for mother and toddler groups and found that they also provided drop-in employment advice. She had also had a Work Focused Interview (WFI) through Jobcentre Plus but had not been on the New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP), and had negative views of her local Jobcentre:

‘I find it quite intimidating. I don’t want to stay there long.’

(Bangladeshi woman, economically inactive)

*Non-claimants*

Respondents who were not working and not claiming benefits when interviewed were recruited, for this study, in two different ways, and their experience of
Jobcentre Plus and its programmes reflects this. Those recruited through the experts interviewed in a previous stage of the research may not have had much contact with Jobcentre Plus and may not ever have claimed benefits. These respondents had often not heard of New Deal programmes and had not been to a Jobcentre. In contrast, the group of respondents who had been claiming benefits when the sample was drawn, but had since stopped claiming and were not working either, were also interviewed. These individuals had greater experience of Jobcentre Plus programmes from their period claiming benefits in the past.

The fact that they were no longer claiming benefits although they were not working, suggests that their experience of Jobcentre Plus and its programmes is more likely to be negative overall than, for example, those currently claiming JSA. It was clear that some respondents had stopped claiming because they did not want to take part in compulsory programmes. For example:

‘I hate claiming, I feel like a bum. I signed on for six months once and it was horrible. They put too much pressure on you. After six months you have to go on these courses.’

(Pakistani man, economically inactive)

One professional had started claiming benefits to access what he described as the Jobcentre’s job bank, but then realised they did not have the right kinds of jobs for him and signed off. He did not like having to provide proof of his right to recourse to public funds:

‘I go to see a Jobseeker’s Allowance. First of all I have to give them a million and one personal questions. Show me your passport, show me this. Why should I do this. I’m a taxpayer, I’ve worked all my life, now I am entitled to a service, I should get it. I don’t have to be treated like a criminal, that’s why I will not put up with it.’

(Pakistani man, economically inactive)

Another respondent recruited through an Ethnic Minority Outreach (EMO) provider, said that they preferred the EMO service to the local Jobcentre as they were offered more help by the EMO provider. One lone parent, who was claiming IS when the sample was drawn, reported that staff at the local Jobcentre had told her she could not work until her children were five years old (it was unclear whether this had in fact been advice after a better-off calculation that it would not be financially worthwhile for her to work until her children were older).

Alongside these general perceptions of Jobcentre Plus’ services, many of those who had been claiming benefits when the sample was drawn had experience of taking part in New Deal programmes when they had been claiming JSA in the past. A variety of experiences on NDYP were described by these respondents. One group of respondents had taken part in the Gateway in the past and had found it useful, had found work during the Gateway and had stopped claiming JSA (although they had since stopped working). Others had less positive experiences on NDYP, as shown in the box below:
Case examples of NDYP experiences

A young Pakistani woman attended a course leading to an NVQ2 in Childcare for six months, but did not like the childcare placement as she felt there was indirect discrimination by the tutor. She complained to her New Deal adviser but was told she had to keep attending or would be sanctioned. She refused to attend, was sanctioned, and was no longer receiving JSA when interviewed, and therefore did not complete the course. She felt this was unfair and that she had been ‘left in the lurch’.

A young Pakistani woman stayed on New Deal until the end of the programme and was unhappy that she was then left ‘on her own again’ to find work. Her benefits then stopped and she did not know why this had happened, and they were about to be re-instated when she was interviewed.

A young Pakistani woman had depression and stopped claiming JSA when she felt she was being pushed into work through NDYP when she was not well enough.

A young Pakistani man did a forklift truck placement as part of NDYP, and felt that as he was effectively doing a full-time job it should have paid. He felt that the full-time nature of the placement meant that there was no time for him to do job search to find a real job. He described how the army had come to give a talk by NDYP participants and showed footage of the UK army in Iraq and made racist remarks, which the respondent made a complaint about. These experiences led him to sign off JSA.

Some older respondents had taken part in ND25+ when they had claimed in the past. One Pakistani male respondent had attended a six month ESOL course through New Deal, but did not find it helpful as most attendees spoke in their own languages, and it was his spoken English he wanted to improve, as he was confident in reading and writing English. He would have preferred to have a work placement through New Deal. One Pakistani woman had attended an ESOL course through New Deal, and would have liked the course to have gone on for longer, but was told she had to look for work after the course ended. A Pakistani man had attended the Gateway, and gone on to the IAP stage of ND25+. He wanted to do a plumbing course which ND25+ could not pay for, and was instead told to do work experience in a charity shop, so he signed off JSA.

6.1.3 The employed

Employed respondents were, like non-claimants, recruited both through the experts interviewed in a previous stage of the research, and through having been claiming benefits when the sample was drawn and having since moved into work.

It was common for employed respondents to have experience of the regime of signing-on every two weeks whilst claiming JSA. Those whose experience of Jobcentre Plus had not extended further than signing-on for JSA, saw their local
Jobcentre primarily as a place to get benefits, rather than as a place to find work. The signing-on regime had not been a positive experience for them, and had not been useful to help them find work. For example:

‘It’s hard to get a job from the Jobcentre and easy to get benefits from the Jobcentre. They are more benefit oriented than putting people into jobs. They give you a form to fill in, ask a few questions and then sign for your benefit.’

(Pakistani man, employed)

‘You have to sit down and there’s such a queue and you have to give so many answers and they nag and they’re aggressive.’

(Bangladeshi man, employed)

Some employed respondents had used their local Jobcentre in the past to access jobs advertised through Jobcentre Plus, whether by looking at the cards displaying jobs, or more recently through using touch-screen Job points. However, using Jobcentre Plus in this way had not been useful for some. One respondent cited how he had gone in to a local Jobcentre once, but could not understand the print-outs from the Job points and was too embarrassed to ask a member of staff for help. Others felt that the jobs advertised through Jobcentre Plus were not suitable, for example, being recruitment agency jobs, or being the same jobs that were advertised in the local newspaper. For more qualified respondents, jobs were also unsuitable:

‘They didn’t have the level of jobs that I was looking for because I don’t think – they had more retail work and that. They said because my degree is too advanced they don’t have that sort of stuff available. They said they could but it wasn’t the stuff that I was looking for.’

(Pakistani woman, employed)

Few employed respondents had been on New Deal programmes, and many had not heard of them, or had heard of New Deal but had no knowledge of what it entailed. Those that had been on New Deal cited having had help from New Deal providers with CVs and job search skills which they found helpful in boosting their confidence and in getting jobs. For example:

‘I did see a disability adviser who was very helpful. She used to send me vacancies through the post.’

(Pakistani man, employed)

One respondent in Bradford was taking part in the StepUP pilot when interviewed and was finding it very useful. A number of employed respondents were recruited through EMO providers, and described how helpful they had found the EMO service. Respondents had particularly found job matching services very useful, as well as help with interview techniques and application forms. A number of different employed respondents described why they were attracted to the EMO provider, in many cases rather than the services of Jobcentre Plus:
‘It’s close to me, the people here are always happy to help. I get help and advice.’
(Pakistani man, employed)

‘My mates joined up so I thought I would.’
(Pakistani man, employed)

‘I think a lot of people that sign on is because they can’t do an application form, they haven’t got proper CVs and the Jobcentre don’t help with stuff like that, they leave it to you to get the job. I think that’s why [EMO provider] is so successful is because it helps those people.’
(Pakistani woman, employed)

‘I’ve found it better speaking to [EMO provider] than going through the Jobcentre.’

Interviewer: ‘What makes it easier?’
‘It’s a friendly environment. I know some of the people.’
(Pakistani man, employed)

Other employed respondents had never used the services of Jobcentre Plus or related services such as EMO providers. These respondents felt that it was ‘too much hassle’ to use the local Jobcentre and said they preferred to look for jobs by themselves. Some did not like going to the local Jobcentre, or did not like to claim benefits at all. For example, one young man who had financial support from his family when unemployed did not like claiming:

‘I don’t like the idea of being a burden on the state. I’d only do it when I really had to.’
(Pakistani man, employed)

6.2 Other help received in the past, or still needed

6.2.1 Other help to move into work received in the past
For most respondents, the local Jobcentre was the first port of call when needing help to move into work, and respondents had often not received any help in the past to find work except from Jobcentre Plus, often just looking for work themselves, or using local newspapers alongside help from Jobcentre Plus. Whilst there was not much evidence of help other than from Jobcentre Plus, there were some exceptions, most notably the use of recruitment agencies.
Respondents had mixed experiences of using recruitment agencies, with some having got jobs through agencies and finding them more helpful than Jobcentre Plus, whilst others expressed a range of dissatisfaction with recruitment agencies. These included feeling that agencies: focused on meeting employers’ needs rather than helping individuals get jobs; pushed individuals into jobs that they did not want to do; did not tell applicants why they had been rejected by employers; only offered short-term jobs; took a large cut of the wage paid by the ultimate employer; and gave applicants an expectation that they would get you a job (especially after applicants have provided them with references and proof of their right to work) when in reality they did not.

Other than recruitment agencies, a few respondents had used help from other sources to find work. These included:

- a group of respondents who had done ESOL through local schools, colleges or community centres (rather than being referred by staff at the local Jobcentre as is discussed above);
- local regeneration initiatives (including having mock interviews and getting help with job search and application forms);
- local careers services and Connexions’ personal advisers (including getting help with CVs and doing Life Skills courses);
- local colleges providing preparation for work courses (where respondents had not been referred by staff at the local Jobcentre);
- Bangladeshi centres and youth organisations (where respondents can meet Bangladeshi employers who go there to find workers for their businesses, and where respondents received help with filling in forms, and were directed to Business Link to get help starting their own business);
- local women’s groups (who provided advice and training);
- gingerbread advice line (who provide advice to lone parents about benefits and work);
- Sure Start (who provided advice about moving into work).

### 6.2.2 Help still needed to move into work

Respondents were also asked what help they felt they still needed to be able to move into work, or sustain work.

**Respondents who were not fluent in English**

Having more staff at the Jobcentre who spoke community languages was a very common request by respondents whose English was not fluent. Without such staff, these respondents could not use Job points or get help to find work. One of the biggest issues in terms of extra help amongst respondents was the need for ESOL training, with some respondents not knowing where to go to get this help, and
others having done some ESOL training, but needing more. One respondent suggested the need to have ESOL delivered alongside training as it would help motivate people to carry on with ESOL. Others felt that Jobcentre Plus did not advertise enough jobs that they could do without being fluent in English, or had done ESOL but now wanted training instead of being offered more ESOL, for example, training to start their own business or become a driving instructor.

Jobseekers

Jobseekers made a number of suggestions of how the services of Jobcentre Plus could be improved. One concern was the location and quality of Jobcentres. Respondents cited the need for Jobcentres to be nearer to where they live, and suggested that it would be better if they had Job points available locally, as it is expensive to get buses into the city centre to use Job Points at the Jobcentre. One respondent suggested that there should be more links between Jobcentre Plus and local mosques. They felt that there should be less queues in the Jobcentre and that it should be a more user-friendly environment. One jobseeker with a sight impairment was having difficulties using his local Jobcentre:

‘I went to the Jobcentre and before when you go in there were three desks on the right where you could go and sit down with the adviser and they’d look on the computer for me. Now there’s no one there. You have to go to the job points, print out the jobs and ring up yourself. I can’t read at the job points, I have to get my brother or someone to go with me. Sometimes people have their own lives to lead and can’t go with me. There should be a better understanding of people’s disabilities.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

In terms of the types of jobs advertised through Jobcentre Plus, respondents felt that it would be helpful if Jobcentre Plus advertised jobs in Indian and Bangladeshi restaurants, and two respondents also felt that there needed to be an investigation of Bangladeshi restaurant businesses which said they were bringing in workers from abroad and paying them less than the minimum wage. Some jobseekers said they needed help and advice from someone who really understood their circumstances, which they had not had from Jobcentre Plus, and others wanted Jobcentre Plus staff to talk directly to employers to find them a job.

Respondents felt that they still needed a range of provision to help them find a job. This included:

- more help with job search and interview techniques;
- preparation for tests that they have to take as part of employer selection processes;
- training for specific jobs;
- computer training;
- driving lessons;
• a driving instructor course;
• help to pay for CORGI registration and taxi registration;
• help getting set up as home-workers.

A major request from jobseekers was the need for work placements with employers to equip them with up-to-date experience and to get a chance to prove themselves with an employer. Relatively few jobseekers overall had that chance through New Deal. There was a feeling amongst some jobseekers that the help they had received under New Deal was helpful, but had not given them the work experience or qualifications that they needed in order to get a job.

The economically inactive and the employed

Respondents on IS who were lone parents requested help with budgeting, training, looking for work and childcare. A couple of female respondents said that they needed to be pushed more, as it was not in their culture for women to seek help, and was easier for a woman to say to her family that she had been contacted about an opportunity than to be proactive. Respondents on IB generally felt that they were not well enough to work so did not need any help to find work. Those who were not claiming benefits requested help to pay for childcare, work experience, skills training, a nursing course, advice about training for professions like social work, and help with confidence and CVs.

Employed respondents requested a range of help that they felt would have helped them when they were out of work. This included more staff at Jobcentres, more up-to-date information to be available from touch-screen Job points, help with CVs and job search, more help and guidance, and work placements to get more real work experience when unemployed.

6.3 Help needed and received for self-employment

Respondents were asked about whether self-employment was of interest to them, whether they would need any help to become self-employed, whether they had sought help and if so from whom, and whether they had heard of the services provided by Business Link which offers practical support and advice to small businesses or those thinking of starting one up. There was no major difference in attitudes to, or experience of, self-employment between those who were not fluent in English and those who were. However, for those who were not fluent, language was felt to be a barrier to becoming self-employed in some cases, as it would make dealing with the paperwork involved with self-employment difficult.

Two respondents were self-employed as taxi-drivers when interviewed, both of whom were Pakistani. These respondents liked working for themselves and not having to answer to a manager, liked meeting new people, and liked the flexibility of the work which allows them to fit work with family responsibilities and emergencies. In summary one felt that:
‘It is better to work hard and be self-employed.’

(Pakistani man, self-employed)

6.3.1 Bangladeshi respondents

A group of Bangladeshi respondents were not interested in being self-employed. Some felt that they did not want the financial risk, whilst others felt that they did not have the skills, knowledge or right experience to become self-employed. Another group of respondents would ideally like to have been self-employed, attracted by being their own boss and having a family business, but did not have the financial resources and, therefore, dismissed it as an option. However, self-employment was an active aspiration for some, whilst others had experience of trying to become self-employed in the past, or of successfully running their own businesses in the past. These type of businesses cited included grocery and confectionery shops, clothes shops/stalls, and takeaways.

Those Bangladeshi respondents who actively wanted to become self-employed often wanted to start their own business with family or friends, using their previous experience in that sector. Some had heard of the Business Link service and the support it provided, one respondent was currently using them to help with getting some financial support, whilst others had not yet started researching their ideas and had not heard of Business Link. Respondents also cited other sources of help, including the Prince’s Trust which one respondent knew could offer start-up funding, and a respondent who had received considerable help from their EZ contractor as part of ND25+ to set up a market stall. One respondent was doing a few hours work a week for a sales company whilst claiming JSA, and had been offered financial help and training from the company to set up his own branch. Another knew that she needed help with securing finance and premises to set up a fashion business, but did not know where to go for help.

Bangladeshi respondents had experience of trying to set up their own businesses in the past, all of whom had some support. One respondent had funding from the Prince’s Trust to do a hairdressing course as a first step to setting up a beauty salon/hairdressers, but could not get the funding to start the business. Another had used Business Link’s services but could not find partners to start the business with. One respondent had heard of Business Link after going to the Bangladesh centre for advice about starting a take-away restaurant, but had got no further. A respondent in Tower Hamlets had applied for grants to start a business but been unsuccessful, and the organisations he had contacted for help had not been able to help him secure premises as the business rates in the area are very high which puts them out of reach unless you have huge resources. Another respondent had registered a computer business with a friend but it did not take off because they could not get anyone to lend them the money as they were unemployed at the time. He had then started a business with links to Bangladesh selling telephones. He had UK suppliers and links abroad and got £25,000 in loans but it did not work out and failed after six months:
‘I managed to get everything ready but none of our community has experience in this type of business so we have a lack of information.’

(Bangladeshi man, jobseeker)

However, some Bangladeshi respondents had successfully run businesses in the past, which then had to be closed. One respondent had their own business for a long time until they developed health problems and had to close it. Another had a grocery shop for six years in partnership with a friend. The respondent went to Bangladesh for a year and on his return his partner said the business was not doing well and needed to close. Another respondent had a business for two years but it closed after a misunderstanding among the partners, whilst another had a take-away business for 18 years, until problems with VAT and the rising demand for take-away companies to deliver led to its closure. A couple of these respondents had awareness of Business Link.

6.3.2 Pakistani respondents

As with Bangladeshis, a group of Pakistani respondents were not interested in being self-employed, again because they did not want the financial risk, had not got the skills, knowledge or right experience, or that self-employment was ‘too much hassle’, often having experience of family businesses in the past. Self-employment was attractive to some, who felt that it would allow them to earn more money and be their own boss, but did not have the financial resources for it and, therefore, dismissed it as an option for them. In some cases, self-employment was seen as a final option if they could not get a job:

‘It’s coming to a point where I can’t get myself a job, it’s best I do something like that [self-employment].’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

There was more variation in the types of businesses that Pakistanis were interested in setting-up, or had experience of running in the past than amongst Bangladeshi respondents. They included: a computer shop, a barber shop, taxi-driving, a courier business, being an electrician, a snooker hall, an IT export business, being a driving instructor, a newsagents, a grocery shop, being a carpet fitter, being a soft furnishings decorator, a bookshop, a beauty salon, a clothes shop, and a ‘pound shop’. Whilst there was some knowledge of Business Link and other sources of help amongst Pakistani respondents, many said their first port of call for advice would be family and friends who had experience of running their own businesses.

Of those respondents who actively wanted to set up their own business, some had not got beyond the idea of what they had wanted to do, and had, therefore, in some cases not got as far as seeking help. Some were aware of Business Link’s services, whilst others did not know where they would go for advice and support when the time came. It was common for these respondents to have discussed their ideas with friends and families, or to be getting experience by working in that sector to prepare themselves to try and open a business, or to be waiting to see if they could build a
career in their current job before pursuing self-employment as an option. The importance of friends and family is shown in this example:

‘My second eldest brother has got a restaurant, my brother-in-law’s got a restaurant, my family’s been through [owning a business in] textiles, so there’s quite a lot of experience behind them so they know exactly what they’re doing.’

(Pakistani man, jobseeker)

Other respondents who actively wanted to set up their own business had got further than having the initial idea. One had been referred to a course on self-employment by staff at the local Jobcentre and had got a starter package and application form to apply for resources to finance their idea, another had talked to their New Deal adviser about their idea to open a shop, but had been referred to an unrelated NDYP Option and would have liked to have had more help (and had not heard of Business Link). One respondent who was not fluent in English was having help from his wife to get him started as a taxi-driver. She had telephoned the Inland Revenue, and was going to see an accountant with her husband, and they had also had help from family members. They had not heard of Business Link or other places to get help with self-employment. Another respondent had links with their former university’s business centre which could provide help with them setting up an IT export business to Pakistan. Another respondent wanted to open a fast food outlet and had been to a seminar organised by Business Link to encourage Asians to get into business, as well as having help from friends. He felt that he would need help with business planning and food and hygiene legislation which he did not know much about, and had also heard of Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and thought that they might be able to help. Another respondent was in talks with a courier business to see if he could take on a franchise, but needed partners to help raise the finance needed.

Pakistani respondents had a wide range of experience with trying to set up businesses in the past. Again, some of these respondents had not got further than thinking about the idea. One had put it on hold due to a family crisis, another had tried to start a soft furnishings business but had ended up getting no further than furnishing family’s and friend’s homes for free, and one had not had the information that they needed, did not know how to finance it and had not heard of Business Link. Others had got further with their ideas in the past and had sought help. One respondent had been referred by staff at the local Jobcentre to a course where they did a business plan, but they had not been able to raise the required finances. Another had done a business planning course and become an associate member of a West Yorkshire association for media companies to get information and to attend seminars, but put it on hold to get more experience. Another respondent wanted to open a take-away business and had done a business course, but had not found it very helpful as it gave them a list of what they needed to do rather than practical help. Another respondent received leaflets with information about Business Link, who he then approached. Business Link said that they could help him set up a market stall, but it did not get off the ground. He felt that he had needed more help at that time, and when asked what he needed said:
‘A business mentor, someone to guide me through this process but I never got that. I was told I would get that from Business Link but it never happened. Then I asked my brother-in-law. I needed some business and financial help.’

(Pakistani man, economically inactive)

A few respondents had successfully run businesses in the past. Again, these respondents had help from friends and family, and there was some awareness of Business Link. Some had then given up self-employment as they had not had the skills, experience and money to make it work. One respondent had given up his garage business to concentrate on the job he was also doing, and another had a corner shop but had gone bankrupt and lost everything and would not consider being self-employed again as he felt it was too risky.
7 Conclusions

This part of the research has focused on the barriers that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain face in finding employment, but from the perspectives of the individuals themselves. The conclusions presented here follow the report structure for the most part. In this way, the reader is aided by being provided a summary of the issues discussed in the chapter on which the conclusions are based. It is important to understand the background of the respondents, as it provides the context for further understanding of the barriers to employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain.

7.1 Migrational background

It was clear that almost all the households we looked at in this study, whether Pakistani or Bangladeshi, had children. Most households were large, containing on average between three and six children. The young age profile of most households meant it was also common to find young adults still living at home. Several households contained not the nuclear, but the extended family; so that it was common to see households of perhaps eight to ten people, including parents, in-laws, and married siblings and their children. Their composition in this way meant that it was common too to see several adults living in the same household; easily leading to the condition of workless households, where the adults were not in work. Bangladeshis lived mostly in local authority-owned flats, most of them with a maximum three bedrooms. Pakistanis on the other hand were more likely to live in houses, which were bigger and had more bedrooms. Given their large families, overcrowding was more prevalent in Bangladeshi households than in Pakistani households.

Respondents tended to live in the same area for lengthy periods. The young adults in particular had lived in their area all their lives. But most people had lived in the same area since their arrival in the UK. For the two ethnic groups, Pakistanis had lived in their areas, on average, between 15 and 30 years, with little movement outside where they first settled in the UK. Bangladeshis were more recent arrivals and, with few exceptions, had lived in their areas for only up to 15 years on average. For the most part, the Pakistani respondents had a history of long settlement in Bradford,
with some families resident there for 30 years or more. The same was true of Pakistanis living in Glasgow. Where people had moved from the areas they first settled, they had relocated to areas where other Pakistanis and Bangladeshis lived. For Pakistanis, this involved moving from West Yorkshire to Birmingham or London.

In terms of their migrational background, half the respondents were first generation migrants, i.e., they were born outside the UK, and migrated to the UK as adults of working age, or children. Pakistanis were more likely than Bangladeshis to be born in the UK, with their parents and grandparents the first to come here. Adults were often likely to marry and start a family in Pakistan before coming to the UK. The common practice was to send for their families to join them, when they were more stable financially. A sizeable number of respondents who came to the UK from the 1980s onwards, therefore, came to marry or to join a husband or wife already living here. In this respect, it was more common to find three generations of respondents in Pakistani households. The respondent Pakistanis came mostly from the predominantly rural communities of Kashmir and Mirpur in Pakistan. Only a few came from more urbanised areas such as Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Lahore or the Punjab, the only other areas respondents said they originated from. The respondent Bangladeshis came from a wide range of backgrounds. A sizeable number of respondent Bangladeshis were born in Bangladesh, and came to the UK with their parents and other siblings. Unlike Pakistanis, therefore, most arrived in the UK as babies, children or young adults. Consequently, most Bangladeshi households comprised only two generations, and only rarely three generations. The overwhelming majority of Bangladeshis originated from the Sylhet region of Bangladesh, also a predominantly rural area.

Only three out of five of all the Pakistanis and Bangladeshis interviewed spoke fluent English. The rest varied, from speaking broken English to speaking only few or no words of English. Many of those who came to the UK as adults or young adults were less fluent, even after lengthy residence here. Of course, the majority of those who arrived in the UK as children of school age or younger, as well as those born in the UK, were fluent English speakers. For everyday communication at home, almost all households spoke their original language: Urdu or Punjabi, in the case of Pakistanis, and for Bangladeshis, Bengali or Sylheti (a Bengali dialect). These were the languages most respondents felt most comfortable speaking at home; and for very practical reasons, as many of the older generation spoke little or no English. In any case, the younger generation of respondents, who were all bilingual, were equally happy to speak English or their community language, depending on who they were talking to.

Respondents’ education and qualification attainments were closely allied to their migrational backgrounds. Only a small number of Pakistanis who first came to the UK as adults, having had their formative education in Pakistan, attended school until the age of 16 or 17; with some gaining qualifications equivalent to GCSEs, or in an even smaller number of cases, ‘A’ levels. Otherwise, most of those who had any education at all attended school for only a few years, and no more. Women were most likely to fall in the latter category. On the whole, the majority of older Pakistani
respondents had no formal education and, therefore, no qualifications. Women in particular were unlikely to have any education at all. On the other hand, Pakistanis who came to the UK with their parents as children of school-going age and attended school here, often found it a difficult transition to make because of the language difficulties they encountered. Those among them who had arrived earlier in their education were better able to redress the language difficulty, and so gained some qualifications subsequently. The others who had arrived as older children (aged 13 or older) often did not continue their education because they either could not surmount the language difficulty, or were forced by necessity to find work immediately in order to help support their family. Those among this group who continued in education at secondary level often struggled at school, and often left with no qualifications.

The second generation of respondent Pakistanis had all or most of their formative education in the UK. They also had more varied experiences and outcomes. Almost all of them left school at 16, some with good passes at GCSE, and with some progressing to study for their ‘A’ levels or vocational qualifications, such as GNVQ. But a significant number of Pakistanis in this group also dropped out of school, or left with few or no qualifications. Some girls in this group had the added experience that a significant number married very early, some before they finished school, and the others immediately after. This means that for the Pakistani respondents in this study, post-16 education was a very rare experience.

The respondent Bangladeshis had similar educational histories and experiences to Pakistanis, at least for those who were born in Bangladesh and attended school there. However, in terms of education and qualifications as a whole, Bangladeshis were more polarised; between a majority with little or no education and a small number who were highly qualified, sometimes to degree level. The few who attended school in Bangladesh were often forced to leave school early (before the age of 15) in order to go and work to support their family. Among the men, it was common practice that the son would leave school to help on his father’s farm. Women were not expected to be educated at all; or if they did, they attended school for only a few years before they got married, sometimes well before they were 15 years old.

Bangladeshis who came to the UK as children and young adults shared a similar experience with Pakistanis. The slight difference was in the tendency of parents to send young Bangladeshi males back to Bangladesh to attend Islamic studies, some for between two and five years. This practice, to say the least, disrupted their education, with the result that they often ended up with no qualifications. Unlike Pakistanis, however, several first generation Bangladeshi migrants arrived in the UK with qualifications from higher education institutions in Bangladesh. However, very few of those qualifications were recognised in the UK at all, or had a UK equivalent. The last group of respondent Bangladeshis, who were born and brought up in the UK completed their formal, compulsory education here, with many gaining their GCSEs, and progressing on to do their ‘A’ levels, or other qualifications, such as BTEC and NVQ, and a few more going on to study at university.
Turning to their labour market history, the older respondent Pakistanis were more likely to have experience of working in Pakistan before they came to the UK. Most of them worked as farmers in their home villages. This was quite a different experience from what they did on arrival here. Most found work in factories in the West Midlands and in textile industries in West Yorkshire. While some stayed with the same employer for many years, others moved between factories in response to the demand for such unskilled labour. As manufacturing declined in the late 1980s and early 1990s, most of these older Pakistanis suffered periods of unemployment, interspersed with periods of work. The accelerated decline and demise of manufacturing in the 1990s resulted in large numbers of Pakistanis becoming unemployed for much longer periods. Away from factory work, the commonest type of employment for Pakistani men has been jobs in retail and warehousing, as packers, in driving taxis and delivery, and working in restaurants. Contrary to popular perception, very few of the respondent Pakistanis ever owned their business. While some of the respondent men became unemployed as a result of the closure of factories, an increasing number gave up work because of ill-health they suffered from their previous employment. Ill-health has become one of the defining characteristics of the labour market history of unemployed Pakistani men in their 40s and 50s. Only a few of the older respondent Pakistani women had ever worked, either back home in Pakistan or here in the UK. But those who did also found most of their jobs in manufacturing, usually in garment factories as machinists. Those women were also affected in the same way as men; plagued with long periods of unemployment and ill-health. On the whole, the younger Pakistanis had a much shorter labour market history. The majority had spent time in and out of employment, albeit with longer periods of unemployment. Unlike the older respondents, a significantly large proportion of young Pakistanis had never worked.

The work experience of older Bangladeshis who worked in Bangladesh before coming to the UK was, just like their Pakistani counterparts, as farmers in their home villages. On arrival in the UK, the majority of this group also found unskilled work in the textiles industry and in garment factories. But increasingly, many found jobs in the booming Indian restaurant sector of the 1980s and 90s, as porters, waiters and chefs. These two sectors account for the labour market history of the majority of respondent Bangladeshi men. The decline of the textiles sector in the UK in the 1990s also means that many Bangladeshi men have a broken history of work. Some enjoyed relatively long periods of employment, when work was plentiful and they could follow demand by moving from one factory or restaurant to another. Increasingly, though, they also experienced longer periods of unemployment following the accelerated decline of the garment industry, especially in London. Younger Bangladeshi men were attracted almost exclusively to the restaurant sector when they came to the UK. The fluctuations in the fortunes of businesses in the restaurant sector resulted in many losing their jobs. With little or no experience of any other occupations, and often little education, many young Bangladeshis have also suffered bouts of unemployment, even if shorter in duration compared with those who are older. Unlike Pakistani women, the majority of older Bangladeshi women respondents had never worked. But younger women who left school early
in order to get married, or who did not continue their education after 16, were in the same predicament, in the sense that most had also never worked.

The picture which emerges from the analysis of respondents’ background is that the poor labour market situation of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis has its antecedents in their migrational background and settlement patterns in the UK. The large majority of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis not born in the UK came from poor rural areas, and had no education or skills. Thus, they arrived in the UK with fewer qualifications and fewer skills relevant to the jobs in Britain. This was true of men, but it was especially true of women as well. Despite their continuous residence in the UK for 30 years or more, it is perhaps unrealistic to expect the two groups to transform themselves overnight from such poor socio-economic positions. While it is true there has been some upward mobility and progress among the younger generations, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis still reflect the class and occupational background that they came with, which was rural, and which was not having the qualifications and transferable skills for jobs in an industrial economy like Britain. This constitutes both the context and the backdrop for any assessment of the barriers to employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain.

7.2 Labour market status

The analysis of their labour market status showed one in three respondents were economically inactive, 70 per cent were in receipt of out-of-work benefits, and one in ten were not in work but were not claiming benefits. Another one in ten were in employment. Pakistanis were more likely to be inactive, with more than one-third receiving Income Support (IS) or Incapacity Benefit (IB). The difference was accounted for by the high proportion of Pakistanis who were claiming IB because of ill-health, often related to their previous employment.

Looking at those claiming benefits, it is clear that more women entered economic activity, at least to the extent that they claimed Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA), following changes in their family circumstances. What is interesting about women jobseekers, in this regard, is that they were more likely than men to take steps themselves to get back into the labour market, by seeking more qualifications and training. There was strong evidence that more women jobseekers than men were willing to improve their English language skills, for example, by enrolling on English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). By contrast, male jobseekers tended to disengage from the labour market more frequently, not least because of the long periods of time they spent away in Pakistan or Bangladesh. Thus, there appear to be the beginnings of polarisation, where women want to do well in the labour market; while at the same time, men are doing the opposite by disengaging from the labour market. This suggests that given the right type of support, it would be possible to encourage more Pakistani and Bangladeshi women to become economically active by entering the labour market for the first time, or re-enter after periods of absence.
It was not clear the extent to which the benefits system contributed to the disengagement of people from the labour market. There was certainly evidence to suggest that the operation of the benefits system sometimes discouraged some groups from becoming economically active, even if inadvertently. The fact that non-claimants (who are economically inactive) claimed they were put off engaging with Jobcentre Plus because of the attitudes of staff, is a case in point. In some cases too, women were officially classified as inactive and, therefore, not entitled to benefits because it was expected their husbands would support them; and irrespective of the fact that women wanted to be treated as individuals in their own rights if they wanted to work or were looking for work. This appeared to the women so affected to be double standards at play; that women could remain economically inactive as long as their husbands supported them. It could be argued that any woman actively looking for work is, de facto, economically active, irrespective of their spouse’s economic circumstances. It needs to be seen to what extent the very low economic activity rates of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women is partly explained by this process. It was equally clear that the benefits system itself is not sufficiently flexible to take jobseekers’ domestic circumstances into account when deciding how they should engage with Jobcentre Plus. The inflexibility of the system appeared to lead to jobseekers disengaging with the labour market by not claiming benefits altogether. While there was no direct evidence to suggest as such, it is not difficult to imagine that when people disengage with the benefits system, they also ‘improve’ the performance of Jobcentre Plus districts, even if only temporarily. But there is no doubt that frequent disengagement from the benefits system ultimately works to the detriment of jobseekers, in the sense that they are also deprived of the continuity of support that is necessary to help unemployed people get back into employment.

The status of respondents’ other household members provided a glimpse into the future labour market prospects of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain. The majority of children and siblings in most households were in full-time education. But given their parental background which we described earlier, it is perhaps surprising that a significant number of older children and siblings in households were in higher and further education. This was true of both genders, thus confirming a trend that was first noted of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the 1990s. But we saw another development which suggests the emergence of some clear differences between the two ethnic groups. There were more Bangladeshi young adults than Pakistanis at college or university. Not only that, but the Bangladeshi young adults were studying a broader range of subjects, and at more prestigious higher education institutions, compared with their Pakistani counterparts, who were studying a narrower range of subjects at further education colleges. Given the composition of households, it was not surprising to find some respondents living in workless households. These were more likely to be households where older children and siblings had left school early, or were without qualifications; or where young children were still at school.

The experience of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in employment suggests there are shifting attitudes to employment in their communities. The evidence shows that people are prepared to travel and work outside the areas they live. The fact that
personal contacts were the most successful method they used to find their jobs raises an interesting issue about whether Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are beginning to acquire the bridging social capital skills that the most successful ethnic minority groups in Britain have exploited to increase their labour market outcomes.

7.3 Attitudes to work

Notwithstanding their relatively poor socio-economic positions, or perhaps because of that, the majority of Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents wanted to work. However, the different motivations women and men had for wanting to work also posed an interesting dilemma for respondents. Women wanted to work in order to liberate themselves from their traditional positions and become more independent financially. Men, on the other hand, wanted to work so they could become more financially secure and thus resume their traditional positions as providers for their family. Herein lies the dilemma. All the evidence pointed to the fact that women, Bangladeshi women in particular, were more ambitious than men in their quest to work; and were more inclined to back their ambition through training, further education and other work-related strategies in order to get into employment. Women’s ambition extended to wanting jobs with good career prospects, i.e. non-manual, skilled jobs. By contrast, men wanted to go back to the jobs they knew best; to manual, unskilled jobs. They were less interested in training, education and qualifications. Consequently, men’s ambitions for the future were also modest.

While most respondents appeared to have a positive attitude towards working and a desire to do so, their approach to finding work appeared, on the whole, to be inconsistent and ineffective. A sizeable proportion of jobseekers appeared to go through the motions of job search, with weekly or fortnightly visits to the Jobcentre to sign on. There was not much evidence that a great deal of effort was expended both by jobseekers and Jobcentre Plus staff to address some of the fundamental problems most respondents faced when looking for jobs. There was not much evidence that the respondents who needed most help with their jobsearch were accessing the appropriate support, or that the existing Jobcentre Plus infrastructure encouraged them to do so in a meaningful way. For example, it was clear that most respondents did not have a really good understanding of the jobs available in their area. It was also clear there was little attempt to provide them with advice and guidance about the jobs that would suit them. We will look at this issue in more detail later, when we discuss the help respondents said they needed to find work.

There is no doubting the fundamental shift in attitudes towards Pakistani and Bangladeshi women working outside the home. There is no doubt too that there are differences between Pakistanis and Bangladeshis on this issue. Young Bangladeshi women, even those without much education and qualifications, when asked what they thought about working and whether it was something they wanted to do, took a positive view of women working; as a way to get some independence, and to get out of the home to earn some money. They were helped especially where they had role models in their family – of other female relatives who were in work, and in
prestigious occupations. The importance of family role models should not be underestimated, because family is still important, indeed more important than anything else. So even women with degree level qualifications were often grappling with balancing their desire for work with their desire to be a good mother; there was great peer pressure to stay at home and look after children. This is particularly true where women lived in an area where all their neighbours held similar beliefs. Although it was not always explicit, peer pressure was quite strong nevertheless. Hence, where young women have access to role models, they can be used to help the rest of the family see how women may be able to go out to work and still be a good mother. But it was noticeable that education and qualifications were important here, as it gave the women power and confidence to argue they should be able to go out to work. The evidence shows the change in attitude is happening much faster for Bangladeshi women. Where traditional attitudes persisted, this was often reinforced by parents and in-laws who come from an older generation, and where there was still strong gender division of labour.

The change in attitudes towards women working was much slower among Pakistanis. The evidence suggests that parental attitudes were stricter and less accommodating towards women working outside the home. This was often reinforced by the wider community, which had even stronger objections to women working. It was less clear how much of this was cultural and how much was influenced by religion. Certainly there appears to be greater polarisation among Pakistanis. Those families that objected most strongly to women working appeared to perpetuate this situation through the practice of sending their sons to Pakistan to marry there. It is not clear if the practice is a response to the fact that Pakistani women who are educated and better qualified are delaying getting married because they do not want to get tied down too soon. The highly qualified Pakistani women we interviewed were clear that they would get married and they would have children – that was almost taken for granted. But most of them also said they would make sure they married somebody who would allow them to work. Women who were less qualified, and in this case it was the young women who came from Pakistan after marriage, found it much harder to get into that negotiation. The other important factor then was who they married. Where they married someone from back home (ie Pakistan), he was likely to be more traditional and, therefore, more likely to object to women working.

What we are seeing in terms of attitudes to women working then is a polarisation; between young women wanting to do well in education, wanting to go into higher education, and wanting careers that come from higher education. At the same time, there were some young women who left school early, have low facility in the English language, and live in households where their parents are not happy for them to be in paid work.
7.4 Barriers to work

The evidence from the analysis of the interviews with individuals shows that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain face multiple barriers to employment. It was possible to group the range of barriers they were facing into five main categories, relating to: personal characteristics, households, human capital, area-based, and employer attitudes.

7.4.1 Personal characteristics

It was clear that respondents’ age represented a significant barrier to work. This was particularly true for men in their 40s and 50s. It is significant that at the age where most people of working age in Britain are at the height of their productive capability, a large number of Pakistani and Bangladeshi men had stopped working altogether. But in their case, age was only the outward embodiment of other disadvantages. By itself, their age excluded older men in particular from new forms of (skilled) employment, as the only skills they possessed were no longer relevant for the changed industrial economy. But age was also linked directly with people’s health. Pakistani and Bangladeshi men were likely to suffer multiple health problems, both physical and mental, which prevented them from working. As might be expected, ill-health was responsible for inactivity among people claiming health-related benefits; and in this case, mostly people in their 40s and 50s. What was surprising was that a large number of people not claiming health-related benefits, nevertheless, had health problems which made it difficult for them to work. What was more worrying was the fact that ill-health was common across all the age groups; from people in all the age groups except teenagers. In terms of labour market activity, a lot of older people in their 40s and 50s had given up any thought of ever working again because of their multiple health problems. But those younger were also restricted in the type of work they could do.

On the whole, people’s religion – in this case being Muslim – was not a significant barrier to their employment. In the few instances where religion was considered a barrier at all, it was only to the extent that the people affected could not contemplate working in a small number of job types. The main areas mentioned by women, in this respect, were places where alcohol was sold or served; or places where they could not observe Hijab (covering of the head and body); and gambling establishments, such as casinos and betting shops. Men were similarly unable to work in such establishments, in addition to jobs requiring handling of pork. Where religion was cited as a significant barrier, this was more from the standpoint of leading to discrimination against those who practised the faith, as we shall see later.

7.4.2 Household barriers

Respondents identified a number of household-level barriers, albeit with different degrees of importance attached to how significant they were for labour market outcomes. Although only a small number of respondents cited housing as a barrier to employment, its impact is quite severe for those affected. But it is the longer-term
impact that is perhaps of greater concern. Given the size of their households, a significant number of Bangladeshis lived in over-crowded conditions in local authority housing. Although the evidence is not direct, and certainly not as clear, there is some concern that in some inner city areas, young men in particular tend to spend more time outside their home in order to escape overcrowding. This is often at the expense of school work, which also has consequences for achievement at school. At its most extreme, young men who spend a lot of time outside the home tend to fall in with companionships where they develop a certain kind of aggressive masculinity, which tends to be anti-school. There was some evidence from young respondents of falling into bad company, dropping out of school altogether, or not doing well and so leaving school without qualifications.

Lone parenthood was not considered a significant barrier to work, if only because very few of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents were lone parents. Lone parenthood became a problem where women’s families could not help with childcare, forcing them to make the choice of using formal and affordable childcare, or staying at home to look after their child.

There is no doubt that childcare and other caring responsibilities are a significant barrier to employment for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. As we have noted elsewhere, most women grappled in one way or another with the issue of looking after their family. The problem was more acute where respondents had children of their own. Then, especially among women who were educated and highly qualified, the desire to work had to be balanced by the need to be a good mother by staying at home to look after their children. Almost without exception, women with children of their own viewed their primary responsibility as looking after their children, with work only a secondary priority. It is true to say that the close family relationships found among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis often constituted a network that provided childcare, where necessary. While such networks could be utilised by women with a first child, thus making it easier for them to combine working and a family life, this ceases after a second child is born. Given that we are dealing with groups where there is a high preponderance of women of childbearing and child rearing ages, as well as higher levels of fertility, which means that the mean number of children per woman is much higher than the rest of the population, then the problem of staying at home to look after the family is multiplied many times over. In other words, the more children women have, the longer the period of time they stay at home to look after their children. Consequently, it is not the cost of childcare per se that is a barrier to Pakistani and Bangladeshi women working, but what childcare arrangements are considered to be best for the children. The unwillingness to consider childcare arrangements outside the home, or rather, the desire to avoid formal childcare, is an important factor in the labour market situations of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. It is true that some women were prepared to look for some form of work once their children reached school age, but this means that most women are out of the labour market for at least five years, with all the implications this has for coping with the difficulties involved in rejoining the workforce. Of course, the problem is multiplied several-fold for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women because they have larger numbers of children.
The evidence on the extent to which respondents considered they were better off on benefits than in work, was rather mixed. As most respondents acknowledged they would be better off in work than on benefits, it is hard to consider how the so-called benefits trap could be considered as a significant barrier to employment. However, it is not just the bald amount of benefits they received that is important here. Rather, it is necessary to look at other extenuating factors which may combine to give some credence to the benefits trap as a possible barrier to employment. First, people who claim out-of-work benefits often also qualify to receive other entitlements, such as Housing Benefit. Second, because most Pakistanis and Bangladeshis also have large families, the combined household income from out-of-work, child and housing benefits could be significant. Given what we know about their level of education, qualification and skills, and the type of jobs they could do, it becomes quite clear that the combined benefits may exceed the wages most respondents in such situations are likely to earn. Although young people were also likely to say the amount of benefits was not sufficient to live on, we also know that most young people received additional financial support from their family. Of course, this is not to say that the majority of unemployed Pakistanis and Bangladeshis do not suffer severe poverty, despite what may appear to some observers to be a generous living off benefits. It is precisely because they live in poverty that the majority of Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents said they would like to work.

7.4.3 Human capital

It is true to say that, to some extent, the barriers to employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are in common with the rest of the minority population in Britain. But there are additional barriers on top of these, as we have described above. When we start looking at circumstantial barriers, particularly to do with health, housing, and childcare arrangements, we find there are multiple barriers. But the weight of evidence from the interviews with individual Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents suggests that by far the biggest barrier to employment for the two groups relate to their low levels of human capital. As far as human capital goes, the evidence shows that the Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents in this study had very low levels of education and qualifications, low levels of confidence, limited experience of different types of jobs, and a limited network of contacts in different employment sectors.

At the root of the low level of human capital they possessed was language; or to be more precise, the lack of linguistic competence in the English language, which characterised a sizeable proportion of the respondent Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. The significance of the lack of facility in the English language is that it sets the barriers to employment in many ways – directly and indirectly. It was clear from the evidence that the poor English language skills of respondents had a significant impact not only on their labour market achievement, but prior to that, on their ability to acquire human capital and determination – skills and qualifications, confidence, experience, and network of contacts. In other words, people who had language difficulties were more likely to face multiple barriers.
Women were more likely than men to suffer a lack of confidence, which also made it difficult for them to find work. Women gave several reasons for their lack of self-confidence, including their cultural upbringing, discrimination and domestic violence. But more often, their lack of confidence was precipitated by their poor language skills, which made it difficult for them to undertake effective job search. Young people were more likely to have reasonably good qualifications compared with the older age groups, most of whom had little or no education at all. Again, the evidence suggests that those without qualifications were unable to remedy their disadvantage because they could not read or write English in the first place. Looking at their experience of work, the evidence again showed that the work experience of older respondents was limited to unskilled or semi-skilled work in factories, restaurants and driving. They could not expand on their experience into the modern and growing sectors of industry because of their limited education and qualifications. Lastly, and closely related to experience, most respondents’ search for jobs was restricted because they had only limited contacts, concentrated to a narrow range of friends and family members, and in the declining sectors where they previously worked. In all these areas, which together define human capital, the clearly visible hand of facility in the English language was the key to success. Not surprisingly, therefore, a large proportion of respondents agreed that the biggest barrier they faced to get into employment was their poor language skills. Language was acknowledged by respondents as a significant barrier to getting a job at all, but also: it influences the types of jobs people could do; and forced job searches to be restricted to particular sectors and locations.

Of course, the problem of language was most acute among the older generation of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. In terms of addressing the human capital barrier to employment, it could be argued that this older generation of respondents is going to find it so difficult to acquire or develop human capital, for all sorts of reasons, that the amount of expenditure made to address the problems they face will have only a small return. On the other hand, there was evidence that things are starting to change for the younger generation, and it is perhaps for this group that policy interventions can more effectively be put into place.

7.4.4 Area-based barriers

There were mixed views on the extent to which the areas where respondents lived also represented a significant barrier to their getting into employment. While respondents in Bristol and Glasgow faced some skills mismatch, there was not a great deal of concern in those two areas about the volume of work available, even if they had some reservation about the quality. By contrast, area-based barriers were a much bigger issue for respondents in Tower Hamlets, Birmingham and Bradford. Their concern focused not on the overall volume of jobs, but the paucity of the low-skilled jobs; the only ones they had skill or experience in and could, therefore, do.

It could be argued that the impact of area-based barriers could be ameliorated if people are able to access opportunities within a region, although outside the area where people live. The extent to which this may happen would depend on people’s
attitudes to travel. It was evident from the analysis that men were, on the whole, more willing to travel further to work than women. How much further men were willing to travel, though, depended on the wage they expected to earn; the further away the job, the better it needed to pay in order to make travelling worthwhile. Women were encumbered primarily because they were personally unwilling to travel too far, but also because of pressure from their family to only work locally. Women were also more likely to rely on public transport to travel to work, and so jobs had to be accessible by this means.

7.5 Employer discrimination

Although only few respondents had experienced direct discrimination from employers, there was a strong perception among respondents, nevertheless, that employers would discriminate against them because of their ethnicity, and increasingly, because of their religion. Fewer still of the respondents had faced discrimination on the basis of gender or age. But it is also true to say that some forms of discrimination are very difficult to prove. Perceptions of possible discrimination by employers was often reinforced by the persistent lack of success experienced by respondents in the recruitment process. Respondents who suspected they were discriminated against because of their ethnicity were likely to mention their Asian name as a possible reason. An increasing number of Pakistani respondents also believed they were discriminated against because of their religion. In such cases, it was the outward appearance of men wearing religious dress, or women observing the Hijab. It was difficult to say how significant employers' policies and practices were in terms of the barriers which Pakistanis and Bangladeshis face. Indeed, we have nothing to support the idea that it is something of significance, and is somehow special to these two groups, as opposed to all the other ethnic minority groups. But while it was difficult to prove it, respondents still had strong perceptions of discrimination, which they believed made it harder for them to get a job.

7.6 Help needed to find work

Respondents' experiences of Jobcentre Plus and its programmes differed according to their labour market status. Respondents claiming JSA had the most contact with Jobcentre Plus. Even then the extent of the contact depended on whether or not they were involved with any New Deal programmes. Respondents who were economically inactive were less likely to, and those who were in employment the least likely to. Most of the younger people who were eligible, had been on the New Deal for Young People (NDYP), under which they had accessed a range of help, from basic skills support, to training work placements. While some young New Dealers had found the programmes helpful, they were nevertheless disappointed that their participation had not led to permanent jobs. Consequently, it was common to find respondents returning for a second or subsequent time. It was not surprising that respondents who had gone through such experiences became quickly disillusioned, and reverted to going through the motions as most others; signing on every fortnight for JSA and using the Jobcentre to look for work.
A number of respondents who were not fluent in English had also been referred to ESOL providers, but with rather uncertain results. This is perhaps the greatest criticism that could be levelled against the Jobcentre Plus programmes. Given the importance of English language on labour market achievements, it is surprising how little organisation appeared to go into the provision of the facility. The constant refrain of respondents who were asked about what help they needed to get back into work was the need for ESOL training. There was evidence to suggest that there is huge inflexibility on the supply side of ESOL provision. For example, it was not clear that there was any consideration given to the location of courses in relation to where people lived, ie the distance people were expected to travel to the course; or running courses at a time which suited potential students; nor of the duration of courses for people of different abilities. Consequently, although many respondents had accessed ESOL at one time or another, there was no evidence that their English had improved. This is perhaps one of the most important areas for policy, if any serious attempt is to be made to improve labour market outcomes for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.


8  Implications for policy

8.1  Introduction

This final chapter draws together the issues arising from the conclusions of the full findings from the research as a whole, and their implications for public policy. Where relevant, we also outline any policy recommendations. In order to identify the main areas for policy, it is important, sometimes, to look at some wider issues that were not necessarily covered by the research specification, but which nevertheless have relevance to any study into the barriers which Pakistanis and Bangladeshis face in the labour market.

The issue of high level unemployment among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis is widely known, and has been for a long time. That their situation is of concern to policymakers now is also pretty evident: from the (Cabinet Office) Strategy Unit’s investigation into the labour market achievements of ethnic minorities in Britain, the extensive recommendations and plans for action to tackle the barriers ethnic minorities face; to the subsequent establishment of the Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force to deliver the Government’s cross-departmental ethnic minority employment strategy. The Strategy Unit report was unequivocal in its view that there are distinctions within ethnic minority groups, such that it is not helpful to say that all ethnic minority groups are equally disadvantaged. On the contrary, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis stand out as particularly disadvantaged groups. Consequently, our suggestions for policy cover both the general, in terms of wider external actions to tackle the labour market disadvantage of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis; and the more specific, in terms of actions that deal with the barriers which individuals in the two groups face.

8.2  Targets for Pakistani and Bangladeshi unemployment

It might be expected that government policy, which has embraced targeting specific groups (eg targeting Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, African Caribbeans in education) would look at bringing similar action to deal with the most disadvantaged groups in the labour market, particularly where disadvantage seems intractable. In practice,
however, existing policy continues to treat ethnic minorities as a homogenous group; at least to the extent that the target for departmental action by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), contained in the Public Service Agreements (PSA), talks only about *increasing the employment rate of ethnic minorities, taking account of the economic cycle, and significantly reducing the difference between their employment rate and the overall rate*. It is not difficult to see that what is potentially wrong with a PSA like this is that it is very generous; since it concentrates on averages, it is relatively easy to get the overall (ethnic) minority rate to converge. In any case, the PSA does not say how much the rate should close down by. But even more serious is the fact that it does not add weight to the groups who start the process with the highest unemployment rates. The issue for policy is whether there is now a need for an additional PSA; not instead of the existing one, but an additional one specifically aimed at Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, as the lowest attaining groups in the labour market. It would be worthwhile considering at the same time, whether to concentrate in particular upon gender dis-aggregation within the two groups. In this way, DWP would be required to devote a disproportionate amount of its attention in this direction.

### 8.3 Childcare barriers

Childcare and other caring arrangements represent a significant barrier to employment for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. However, the unwillingness of women to consider childcare arrangements outside the home, and the desire to avoid formal childcare is not based solely on the (prohibitive) cost, although that would be the case if they considered such alternatives. The stronger evidence is that Pakistani and Bangladeshi women do not feel comfortable with the idea of somebody else caring for their child. In this regard, there does not appear to be the same acceptance of using childcare that is common among, say, Black African and Caribbean women or White women. It is less clear, however, to what extent this is a result of a socially acceptable norm in Pakistani and Bangladeshi culture; that mothers want to provide this care because they believe they are the best person to do so. Certainly, the fact that working women with children use their close family relationships as a network that provides childcare, suggests that it is not the use of childcare per se that is a barrier to Pakistani and Bangladeshi women working. Rather, it is the type of childcare arrangements which they consider as best for their children.

The evidence suggesting that a more important reason for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women not using formal childcare is that they would like their children to be cared for by people who reflect both their culture and values, has implications for policy.

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7 The authors are grateful to Professor Shamit Saggar of Sussex University for elucidating on some of the potential effects of the PSA for the DWP.
Certainly, it is possible to envisage the provision of ethnically sensitive childcare as an important step towards addressing the childcare barrier to employment for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women.

We will look at further childcare issues in relation to human capital barriers in the next section.

8.4 Human capital barriers

It is also clear that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis face very substantial human capital problems. Indeed, as far as human capital goes, the evidence shows that the biggest barrier to employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain is their low level of human capital. While education and qualifications are important in this regard, it is the lack of linguistic competence in the English language that characterises a large majority of Pakistani and Bangladeshi jobseekers and non-jobseekers, which is at the root of the human capital problem they face. It is lack of English that often results in low levels of confidence; and which restricts people’s experience to the declining sectors of industry and occupations, while preventing them from participation in the growing sectors.

The scale of their human capital deficit raises an important policy issue: whether the problem is too acute, especially among older Pakistanis and Bangladeshis that they can be helped in a significant way back into the labour market. The strength of this argument lies in the assumption that the older generation are going to find it so hard to change, for all sorts of reasons, but especially because of their restricted English, that the amount of expenditure required to remedy the problem will yield only a small return. Consequently, given the number of competing claims on limited resources, it is the younger generation that is likely to benefit more (in terms of returns on the investment) from policy interventions.

There is no doubt that in an ideal world, the second and subsequent generations of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis give policy makers more possibilities to design policies that engage them in the development of human capital, at least in the short-term. However, there is plenty of evidence from this research, and others too, to show that language makes a difference, particularly to parents first, and then to the wider community over the long-term. It is known, for example, that Bangladeshi mothers in East London who access English language for the first time are associated with children who have the highest increases in attainment gains in the schooling system. The reason for this is quite straightforward. Those parents can interact with and support the school, in terms of what the school wants the parent to do to support them and the child’s learning. In other words, the relationship becomes a three-way one, where previously it was a relationship between the school and the child. The missing link was always language. Thus, there is now a double benefit – the child’s attainment score, but also the future human capital potential starts rising. The human capital prospects of, typically, the mother also improve.
It is under such circumstances that the other major barrier to employment for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women – childcare – can be tackled, simultaneously. The starting point for policy in this area is the overwhelming evidence from the Pakistani and Bangladeshi women interviewed for this study that they would like to work. Certainly, this is a group for which childcare is very important, and the English language is important. It is possible to merge the desire and appetite for both in policy, whereby, one will be delivered if people signed up for the other. Of course, this raises a potential issue of contingency with welfare services. It is not suggested here that people’s entitlement to public welfare and public benefits, in general, would be contingent upon their learning English. However, it is possible to envisage a situation in which women have access to subsidised childcare, but to qualify for that need to show they are determined to acquire English language; in other words, taking up courses and classes. Such schemes are not completely unknown. Indeed, some community organisations run schemes on similar lines, on informal bases and on small scale. For example, in Bristol, the Bangladeshi Association Women’s Group runs crafts and sewing classes for Bangladeshi mothers, who have their children looked after at a crèche in the same building, at the same time as they are attending the class.

8.4.1 Improving ESOL

Given the significance of facility in English to labour market outcomes, it is quite surprising that the learning of English is not given a higher priority among the plethora of active labour market initiatives. The evidence shows there are problems in both the demand and supply sides. The supply side is quite well documented. The argument, essentially, is that not enough of these publicly-funded programmes are delivered in the right places and at the right time – taking account, for example, of the need for parents to interact with their children and staff at school, or picking-up their children from school. On top of these supply side bottlenecks, there are also issues about the lack of curriculum and quality monitoring systems, inadequate training for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers, and lack of provision for learners with a range of educational backgrounds (Barnes et al., 2005). These are all matters that require policy intervention. There are voluntary and community organisations that can provide ESOL services much more flexibly, and often more cheaply. Such organisations have the advantage of bilingual tutors, women-only provision, and being accessible to women needing childcare. They could be incorporated more formally in structures and initiatives to improve this critical area of English language provision for those within this group for whom a facility in English must be considered an absolute priority. In this way attention can be focused not only on their spoken English, but also on reading and writing English.

8.5 Getting people back into work

The evidence presented in this report suggests that very few people had benefited from Jobcentre Plus programmes; at least insofar as their participation in flagship programmes, such as New Deal had not led to permanent jobs. Indeed, the few people in employment who had been on the New Deal were finding jobs off their own bat, often with Asian employers or voluntary organisations. So even though they were getting the subsidies from the New Deal, they were getting jobs they felt they could have got anyway. This suggests, furthermore, that they were not accessing a new labour market; they were still working within their ‘enclave’ labour market.

8.5.1 Intermediate labour market arrangements

Given the circumstances and extent of the disadvantage Pakistani and Bangladeshi jobseekers face in the labour market, it is reasonable to ask what kinds of actions are needed to engage this part of the labour market. It is clear that if policy-makers continue to promote employment by the existing labour market programmes, they will get only limited traction, especially for those within this group who are very far away from the labour market, and need to build confidence, skills etc. From a policy point of view, priority must be given instead to building their intermediate labour market prospects. This could be done through a partnership between the public and voluntary sectors. There is some evidence that intermediate labour market arrangements work, although they are time-consuming, very difficult to co-ordinate, and very expensive. But, it is possible for Jobcentre Plus to co-ordinate a range of voluntary sector organisations whose job would be to raise awareness, raise confidence, and raise the dynamism of sub-groups (women, older generation, people not fluent in English, recent migrants etc.) who have never participated in the world of work. In this respect, it would be possible to replicate existing best practice in this area, such as the StepUp programme in Bradford.

8.5.2 New skills training

While intermediate labour market arrangements are appropriate for people who have little or no experience of work at all, that still leaves a large group of mainly older people for whom the problem is their possession of skills that are no longer relevant in the modern economy. It is mostly people in this group who also have less facility in English. For some in this group, there is a need for investment that will help them acquire skills and confidence to enter the labour market for the kinds of jobs now available. Others will have the skills, but still face problems with job opportunities and employer discrimination.

8.5.3 Support for self-employment

One of the ways that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have survived in Britain, despite the severe economic misfortunes that they have suffered, is through self-employment. The evidence in this report shows that a small but significant proportion of
jobseekers and non-jobseekers regard self-employment as a viable employment option. The evidence also shows the sectors they would like to go into are taxi driving, small retail shops and restaurants. This is not surprising, as they are the kind of businesses that Asian entrepreneurs have broken into, either because they require low amounts of capital investment, or because they rely on particular skills that those groups possess.

The relative advantages Pakistanis and Bangladeshis enjoy here present an opportunity for initiatives to support self-employment in a more systematic way than has been the case hitherto. From the policy point of view, there is a need to create training opportunities that would help people run those businesses better, or think about business growth. Business growth advice would be particularly useful. However, as ethnic minority businesses as a whole have a low propensity to use mainstream business support services, it is important that any such initiatives are rooted in their own communities. There is a need for local community contact, as people would be reluctant to come to something that they saw as quite outside their normal environment. In other words, business support would need to be offered in a local place where people are likely to go; and try and recruit them, using good, local contacts.

It is important to begin in a small way and then see how far one can go. Over the long-term, a successful business enclave will help create opportunities beyond the occupational core, in the form of suppliers to those businesses. Thus, if people become more skilful in business management they are more likely to think about business opportunities, and may well identify opportunities which they otherwise might not. Of course, there is no guarantee this will make a big difference in terms of numbers. But given the attractiveness of self-employment for a lot of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, any employment strategy which targets these groups cannot ignore the potential for self-employment to further the employment chances and the income growth of individuals. Certainly, this is an area for further research.

8.5.4 Bridging relationships

While a facility in the English language provides huge advantages, it is by no means the only way of overcoming the barriers to employment. Another important area to look at is general socialisation. The evidence in this report shows that a large number of the respondent individuals had only limited knowledge of what jobs were available in their local areas, and even lower knowledge on how the labour market works. It is also evident that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have high reserves of bonding social capital within their communities. Whilst this acts to strengthen people’s confidence, it is questionable whether that links into the wider world of work or mainstream society. Indeed, a lot of the jobs-search behaviour that people do, is through informal channels; through word of mouth, etc. In this respect, it could be argued that the stronger preference of Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups for living within cultural enclaves restricts their interaction with labour market opportunities outside their geographical areas.
The issue for policy makers is how to promote bridging relationships into places that can provide training and skills, as well as awareness and knowledge about employment and job opportunities on the one hand, without in any way threatening or being perceived to threaten people’s bonding relationships within their communities. Indeed, it could equally be argued that the fact that Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups live in such concentrations is actually an advantage. It means, in policy terms, that government could target resources in such areas and have a relatively ‘strong bang for your buck’.

Encouragement for greater socialisation for women, for example, could be through community centres, sewing clubs or other activities that will bring people together in order to then get to know about how the labour market works. Thus, if women were interested in work, they would be able to talk to other people about their interests, and find out about things from other people. It is important to remember we are dealing here with very deep-seated cultural questions where the norm is not just about the place of work, but where the actual role of women in the workplace is not particularly sustained. Of course, there is a lot of evidence to suggest there is a transition, with more and more Pakistani and Bangladeshi young women now accessing higher education. But those cultural factors can only really be dealt with, in policy terms, in conjunction with those communities. More particularly, it tends to be the voluntary organisations that work within those communities that have the highest levels of credibility and the best reputation, in terms of preserving the bonding social capital, and not letting that be threatened in the determination to build the bridging relationship needed to overcome these significant barriers to employment.

### 8.6 Employer practices

Of course, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are constrained at the moment by all the barriers to employment we have described so far – educational levels and so on. However, assuming they overcome all those barriers, and increase their human capital levels, the more ready solution for them is to get into employment just like everybody else; which means they need to get into jobs, particularly outside their communities. How do employers’ policies and practices help or hinder this process?

#### 8.6.1 Discrimination

Although only few of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi jobseekers and non-jobseekers reported direct discrimination from employers, their strong perception, nevertheless, was that employers discriminate against them because of their ethnicity, and increasingly, because of their religion. Respondents who suspected they were discriminated against because of their ethnicity often mentioned their Asian name as a possible reason. Those citing additional discrimination because of their religion, mentioned the outward appearance of men wearing religious dress, or women observing the Hijab. Certainly, once people signify something that clearly identifies them as Muslim, they add on an extra dimension to employers’ concerns as to what
that means in practice. Would they have to pray five times a day? And where? And what if employers do not want to abide by that? This is going to be an even greater issue after the London bombings on 7 July 2005.

8.6.2 Recruitment

It is true to say that some forms of discrimination are very difficult to prove. But the perception of possible discrimination was often reinforced by the persistent lack of success of the respondents in the recruitment process. It is the practices that underlie employers’ recruitment processes that present the greatest scope for policy initiatives.

The survey of employers showed it is establishments already with ethnic minority staff in post, that are more likely to have monitoring procedures in place; and also more likely to have taken active steps towards recruiting ethnic minorities. The evidence from the employers surveyed also showed that those who had recruited Pakistanis and Bangladeshis found hardly any difference in their performance, compared with White applicants. The major concern of employers was that ethnic minorities did not apply for jobs. It could be argued, of course, that employer’ attitudes, perspectives, policies and practices impact upon all minority groups in much the same way; and that applies to groups that are doing well in the labour market, as well as those that are doing quite poorly. This means that the impact is not one that could be distinguished, in terms of high and low attainers in the labour market. Nevertheless, the industries and sectors that the high attaining minority groups have managed to access – for example, the service and financial sectors in London – provide a useful template of what it is possible to achieve by taking active steps in this direction. It is those industries, sectors and geographical locations that are also most associated with being leaders in equal opportunities. Indeed, it could be argued that all things being equal, the industries that have created the opportunity structures that the high attaining groups have managed to take advantage of, are more likely to be at the leadership end of the equality spectrum. Their policies and practices would contrast with the firms that may be anxious, maybe even worried or frightened about taking forward equal opportunities for fear of backlash within the workplace.

The question that remains unanswered, though, is whether it is the experience of employing ethnic minorities which changes the attitudes of employers, or that it is employers with more positive attitudes who are more likely to employ people from non-White backgrounds. The question is even more pertinent for those areas with high concentrations of Pakistani and Bangladeshi populations; and where persistent high levels of unemployment endanger the very fabric of those communities. But, at least, it provides a useful starting point for policy.

As we have already seen, the areas where the Pakistani population settled in large numbers have had their industrial rationale taken away. This has had severe consequences for their labour market situation, in a way that is not true to the same extent of any other ethnic minority group, or even just the South Asian groups. The contrast with the Indian group is very sharp indeed; with the Indian population
heavily biased towards London and the Midlands. In general too, the aggregate level of demand for labour and the buoyancy, in terms of flexibility within labour markets, have been much greater in London and the South East. This is a point that cannot be ignored. If we look too at internal migration away from the areas of high concentrations (of ethnic minority groups), the migratory patterns of second and third generations have been to the buoyant towns that have grown up on the back of labour market buoyancy and labour market demand around the M25. This allows people to be close to the communities they are familiar with but, at the same time, stay close to the demand for labour. It could be argued that this has accounted for the almost win-win labour market situations of Indians and other ethnic minority groups, as opposed to the rather less buoyant prospects in some of the Northern mill towns and cities, where things are very different.

**Looking at employers as a whole, we believe the public sector should be one of the leaders in the recruitment of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.** In this regard, the local authorities that have argued for social cohesion, and do not want their communities growing apart, must look at their employment policy and practices to see if they have not contributed to the marginalisation in general, but of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in particular. It is noticeable that the cities where this has happened tend to have large Pakistani populations. Indeed, it could be argued that those organisations funded by public money should be setting an example about tackling racial inequality and racial discrimination in employment. Their own recruitment policies should be one of the top things on the agenda. They could learn from other employers who have taken a lead elsewhere in the country, and say in a much bolder way that they want to attract applicants from those two groups. If they employ hardly any Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, they need to go to the communities and neighbourhoods where those groups live, and have meetings. They need to put across strongly that they would welcome applications from those communities. They also need to advertise in places, and in newspapers, those groups they wish to target, are reading. They need to communicate that to their own workforce, and train them accordingly, because normal experience suggests that in such large organisations, there are many in the workforce who will be discriminatory. Such people need to be told this is something the council will not accept. But the workforce as a whole needs to be given training in identifying discrimination and learning about non-discriminatory policy.

It is not only local authorities that need to review their practices. The same applies to other public sector organisations, such as the National Health Service (NHS), educational authorities, further education colleges and community colleges, and the civil service, insofar as they have regional offices that may be operating in a less high-profile way in relation to equal opportunities.
Appendix A
Part C – Methodology

This section presents the findings from the Expert Interviews; a series of 48 interviews carried out with stakeholders and independent experts at both a national and case study level. The case studies comprise five local labour markets which provide a focus for the project as a whole. The case study areas are:

- Birmingham;
- Bradford;
- Bristol;
- Glasgow;
- Tower Hamlets (London).

The interviews with national experts and experts in the case study areas were conducted at the start of the research, and took place between November 2004 and the end of February 2005. The aim of these interviews was to scope the key issues for the rest of the study, to inform the discussion guides for the individual interviews, to inform the survey of employers, and to supplement the literature review and statistical analysis of the labour market. It was agreed with the Department for Work and Pensions that the expert interviews should include the following:

- central government policy specialists from relevant departments;
- The Commission for Racial Equality;
- Local Authority representatives;
- senior managers in Jobcentre Plus;
- academics with specialist knowledge of ethnic minority issues;
- employers organisations;
- staff involved in delivering Ethnic Minority Outreach (EMO) programmes for Jobcentre Plus;
• managers of local regeneration initiatives;
• ethnic minority community organisations.

Tables A.1 and A.2 show a breakdown of the 48 interviews conducted by type of interview, and by whether the interview was with a national or case study expert.

**Table A.1  Expert interviews, by type**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMO provider</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer/enterprise organisation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic minority community organisation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic minority employer organisation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic minority organisation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobcentre Plus</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local authority</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government/Policy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 48

Source: IES, 2005.

**Table A.2  Expert interviews – national and case study areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>National</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 48

Source: IES, 2005.

The topic guide used for the interviews was semi-structured and was adapted according to the particular interview to take into account the specialism of each expert. The main themes it included were:

• key policy issues;
• barriers to employment;
• employers’ policies and practices;
• activities and initiatives to overcome barriers;
• local labour market issues.

The majority of the interviews with experts were conducted face-to-face, although a small number were conducted by telephone. The interviews were recorded and transcribed, and the transcriptions were then analysed using Atlas.ti, a qualitative data analysis software package. The remainder of this section presents the key findings from the 48 interviews with experts, many of whom were themselves Pakistani or Bangladeshi. Many of the issues discussed are explored in more depth in the Literature Review.
Appendix B
Part D – Methodology

B.1 Details of the survey

B.1.1 Introduction

A survey of 1,000 employers was conducted, across five areas, to explore employer views on any skill gaps or other issues facing ethnic minority groups in general, and Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups in particular, in the UK labour market. This section presents the results of that survey and draws out the main trends across different employer characteristics.

B.1.2 Survey methodology

A telephone survey was conducted with employers in the five distinct geographical areas chosen as case-study areas for the main qualitative element of the project (Tower Hamlets, Bradford, Birmingham, Bristol and Glasgow). The survey was designed by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES), and the fieldwork was carried out by TNS. The analysis in this section was undertaken by IES. Questions were focused on measuring and assessing the policies, practices and attitudes of employers.

Interviews were conducted with employers during the period 29 June to 29 July 2005.

Sampling strategy

The target respondents were businesses operating within the five selected areas. Participants were selected from the Dun & Bradstreet Database.

A major issue for this study is to investigate potential indirect discrimination which occurs through the use of recruitment and selection procedures which make jobseeking more difficult for ethnic minority groups, and Pakistani and Bangladeshi
individuals in particular. This can happen either by discouraging applications from these sections of the community or by disadvantaging individuals through recruitment and selection processes. An important predictor of the techniques used to recruit and select is the size of the employer. The decision was, therefore, taken to construct the sample according to the size of employers within each of the areas.

The UK economy is dominated by small and medium sized employers. A random sampling approach would, therefore, have resulted in the inclusion of insufficient large employers for analytical purposes. Large employers were, therefore, ‘over sampled’ to allow their views to be included. The sample was originally structured to include 200 employers within each area and size band.

The size bands used were:

- micro-businesses (with one to five employees);
- small businesses (employing between six and 50 employees);
- medium sized employers (with 51 to 250 staff);
- large employers (with more than 250 staff).

In Tower Hamlets and Bradford, however, there are relatively few medium and large employers, therefore the entire sample for establishments with greater than 50 employees in these areas was used. In the other areas, 500 randomly selected large employers formed the sample frame, allowing ten times the number required for interview to be potentially contacted. Despite this, the number of eligible medium sized and large employers was insufficient to meet the original targets. The decision was therefore taken to broaden the quotas for the smaller organisations (one to five and six to 50) to 65 establishments each (Table B.1). As a result, Tower Hamlets and Bradford were underrepresented in the total sample. To compensate for this, the data was weighted to adjust for any discrepancies in size and sample.
### Table B.1 Target and achieved samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tower Hamlets</th>
<th>Bradford</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Bristol</th>
<th>Glasgow</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 to 250</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieved sample</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>63</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 to 50</td>
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<tr>
<td>51 to 250</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Dun & Bradstreet, 2005.

### Weighting

The data was weighted to be reflective of the number of businesses within the five geographical areas and then weighted within areas by size of business. The weighting matrix can be found in Appendix D. The weight has been applied throughout the analysis, but the unweighted bases are also provided.

### Table B.2 Population data for employers in five areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tower Hamlets</th>
<th>Bradford</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Bristol</th>
<th>Glasgow</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td>2,154</td>
<td>3,432</td>
<td>9,180</td>
<td>7,487</td>
<td>8,321</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 to 50</td>
<td>895</td>
<td>1,368</td>
<td>4,517</td>
<td>3,370</td>
<td>4,267</td>
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<tr>
<td>51 to 250</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3,155</td>
<td>5,013</td>
<td>14,420</td>
<td>11,335</td>
<td>13,268</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Dun & Bradstreet, 2005.

Whilst the re-weighting allows some generalisations to be made within and across these areas, the sample cannot be said to be a representative sample of the general population of establishments in the UK as a whole.

Despite a reasonable response rate (27 per cent) it is still possible that some response bias may have occurred. In interpreting the results, therefore, some consideration
needs to be given to the possibility that those employers who are better performing with respect to diversity could have been more willing to take part. Alternatively, employers with very strong views about minority ethnic individuals could also have been motivated to participate.

B.1.3 Response rates

A total of 1,001 interviews were conducted. The valid\(^9\) response rate was 27.2 per cent. The response rate varied by area; it was highest in Birmingham, at 35.2 per cent, and lowest in Bradford, at 25.9 per cent. The main reasons for refusing to participate were lack of time and a company policy not to take part in research.

Further details on how the response rate was calculated are provided in Appendix C.

B.1.4 Questionnaire details

All respondents were asked to complete a telephone survey which lasted an average of 15 minutes. The survey was targeted at the individual with ‘overall responsibility for human resources’ in this establishment.

The survey was piloted with over 20 employers prior to the main stage of employer interviews to test that the language used in the questionnaire was appropriate. The average interview length was also tested to ensure that this was no longer than 15 minutes in order to encourage response (our experience has shown that interviews with employers taking longer than this will normally suffer from a poorer response rate).

The final questionnaire covered the following areas:

- **Establishment details**: including, type of business (e.g. partnership, owned by one person), sector, the size of establishment, the financial turnover of the establishment, whether the establishment is part of a larger group, the size of the overall company, the type of establishment (e.g. branch, head office).

- **Staffing levels**: including, whether the company has grown in the last two years, whether the company is expected to grow in the next two years, the type of staff in post (casual workers, full- or part-time staff), whether any recruitment has been done, and if so where.

- **Recruitment policy and process**: including, where decisions about recruitment are made and who makes the decisions, how jobs are advertised, the process of recruitment (e.g. CVs, interviews), and what the company looks for in a candidate.

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\(^9\) Excludes unobtainables, those who did not meet the criteria, and duplicates.
• **Employment of ethnic minorities**: including, whether the company is owned by someone of ethnic minority origin, number of ethnic minority staff employed, positions ethnic minority staff are employed in, changes in recruitment of ethnic minorities over the past two years, perceptions on how ethnic minority applicants/candidates have compared with White applicants/candidates, and perceived reasons for any differences.

• **Non-employment of ethnic minorities**: including, perceptions on why they do not employ ethnic minorities, such as why they do not apply and why they are not successful in gaining employment.

• **Employment of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis**: including, number of Pakistani and Bangladeshi staff in the establishment, positions ethnic minority staff are employed in, whether the numbers have changed over the past two years, perceptions on how Pakistani and Bangladeshi applicants/candidates have compared with other ethnic minority applicants/candidates, and perceived reasons for any differences.

This section begins by outlining the representation of ethnic minorities and Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the workforce of the establishments in these five areas. It then moves on to consider the recruitment and Human Resources (HR) practises of the establishments, before considering their experience of recruiting ethnic minorities and Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, and finally their attitudes towards employing these groups.
Appendix C
Part D – Response rates and population information

The interviewing was conducted by telephone, by TNS, using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). The telephone interviews took place in July 2005. In total, 1,001 establishments were called.

The overall valid response rate was 27.2 per cent. The following table reports the total number of leads issued, the number of interviews achieved, the number of refusals and ineligible respondents, as well as the calculated adjusted response rate for each area.

As the table shows, there were relatively high proportions of bad/incorrect telephone numbers and people who had to be screened out due to not meeting the criteria (eg just outside the selected geographical area).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tower Hamlets</th>
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<th>Bristol</th>
<th>Glasgow</th>
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<td>1,568</td>
<td>1,361</td>
<td>1,501</td>
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<td>Refusals</td>
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<td>184</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quota fail (eg out of area)</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>1,973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplicate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not available during fieldwork period</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total valid sample</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>662</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>3,681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed interviews</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>1,001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted response rate (%)</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IES, 2005.
# Appendix D
## Part D – Weighting matrix

### Table D.1 Weighting matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>% of total</th>
<th>Target total</th>
<th>Target %</th>
<th>Target no</th>
<th>Achieved</th>
<th>Weighting factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tower Hamlets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>2,154</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.703732781</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6-50</td>
<td>895</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.292405218</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-250</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.101183928</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.075843333</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3,155</td>
<td>6.69</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>154</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bradford</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>3,432</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1.295887834</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-50</td>
<td>1,368</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>0.438278657</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-250</td>
<td>157</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.092215794</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.148015161</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>5,013</td>
<td>10.62</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>166</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Birmingham</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>9,180</td>
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<td>195</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>2.996991358</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6-50</td>
<td>4,517</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1.45232001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-250</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>0.191332621</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.089540273</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>14,420</td>
<td>30.56</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>233</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued
Table D.1  Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sample total</th>
<th>% of total</th>
<th>Target total</th>
<th>Target %</th>
<th>Target no</th>
<th>Achieved Total</th>
<th>Weighting factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>7,487</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
<td>218</td>
<td>2.438844966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-50</td>
<td>3,370</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.081124434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-250</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.117668327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.113196023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11,335</td>
<td>24.02</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>218</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>8,321</td>
<td>62.71</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
<td>281</td>
<td>2.797279288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-50</td>
<td>4,267</td>
<td>32.16</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.369239958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-250</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.17613682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250+</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.093496548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13,268</td>
<td>28.12</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>230</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand total</td>
<td>47,191</td>
<td>1,001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IES, 2005.
Appendix E
Part E – Methodology

This chapter discusses the methodology adopted to conduct interviews with 250 Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. It discusses the sampling criteria, how benefit samples were drawn from benefit records, how the software Nam Pehchan was used to identify those with South Asian names, and how the opt-out process was conducted. It then goes on to discuss the recruitment process including the use of Agroni to interview those who were not fluent in English, how both those not claiming benefits but not in work, and those in employment were recruited, and the difficulties of recruiting Pakistanis and Bangladeshis for these interviews. It outlines the characteristics of the achieved sample, the discussion guides that were used in the interviews, and finally, the analysis process that was carried out using Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS).

E.1 Sampling

E.1.1 Sampling criteria

Choice of areas

It is known that the Pakistani and Bangladeshi population are concentrated in particular areas of the country, albeit with Pakistani groups more widely dispersed geographically. Based on the locational categories suggested in the research specification and the population densities of Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups, five areas were selected from which to draw the sample of individuals to be included in our interviews. These are as follows:

- an area with a high concentration of ethnic minorities and close proximity to a large, vital labour market: Tower Hamlets;
- a relatively deprived English town/city with a high concentration of Pakistani/ Bangladeshi people: Bradford;
• an English city with a large minority ethnic population and buoyant local economy: Birmingham;
• an area with a low minority ethnic population as a proportion, but a high population: Bristol;
• an area outside England, but with a significantly large Asian population: Glasgow.

The aim was to conduct interviews with 50 individuals in each area.

**Ethnicity**

The balance between Pakistani and Bangladeshi interviews conducted in each area aimed to reflect the proportion of these ethnic groups in each area (see Table E.1). In Tower Hamlets, the overwhelming majority of interviews should, therefore, have been with Bangladeshis, whilst in Bradford, Birmingham, Bristol and Glasgow, the majority of interviews should have been with Pakistanis.

**Table E.1 Percentage of people of Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnicity in selected areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total population N</th>
<th>White British %</th>
<th>Bangladeshi %</th>
<th>Pakistani %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>49,138,831</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>196,113</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>467,659</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>977,099</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>380,596</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>5,062,011</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>0.0 (0.04)</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>577,869</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>0.0 (0.04)</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Current labour market status**

In terms of current labour market status, the aim was to interview a number of respondents in each area according to their different labour market status:

• **Ten in employment.** The aim was to recruit these interviews through information gained from the interviews with experts that were carried out at an earlier stage of the research. The aim was also to capture some individuals who had moved into work having previously been claiming benefits.

• **Twenty jobseekers** (claiming Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA)). The aim was to recruit these interviews through benefit records.
• **Twenty non-jobseekers.** Non-jobseekers included those claiming Incapacity Benefit (IB), Income Support (IS) and those not employed who were not claiming any benefits. The aim was to recruit those claiming IS and IB through benefit records, and to recruit non-claimants with help from those interviewed as experts, and by capturing those who had previously claimed benefits but were not currently claiming.

**Other sampling criteria**

The research also aimed to get an overall balance in terms of male and female respondents across the sample as a whole. It also aimed to get a range of ages that span the working age population by using benefit records to sample for age for those on benefits. The research was also designed to ensure that individuals with different levels of English language fluency were interviewed, by ensuring the recruitment process reached those whose first language was not English (discussed below). By using this variety of sampling criteria, the research also aimed to reach individuals from different generations in terms of migration to the UK, and with different levels of qualifications and skills.

**E.1.2 The benefits sample**

**Drawing the sample**

Within the five areas where the research was being conducted, 2001 local census data was used to identify postcode sectors with the highest concentrations of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. Once these postcode sectors were selected, full samples of those on IS, IB and JSA within those postcode sectors were requested. The samples included information on key characteristics and contact details including gender, age, ethnicity (where available), and telephone numbers. Table E.2 sets out the sample that was received from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

**Table E.2 Samples received from DWP (including five research areas and all postcode sectors)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Individuals in sample</th>
<th>Women %</th>
<th>% with phone numbers</th>
<th>% with ethnic markers (Pakistani or Bangladeshi)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JSA</td>
<td>14,703</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>25,486</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS</td>
<td>33,788</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table E.2 shows the variation in availability of telephone number information, and the low percentages of the population identified as Pakistani or Bangladeshi, particularly among the IB and IS samples.
Nam Pehchan

The software ‘Nam Pehchan’ is a computer programme for the identification of names which originate in the Indian subcontinent and Sri Lanka, collectively referred to as ‘South Asian’. It provides a way of identifying people belonging to South Asian and Other ethnic groups. It also identifies the religious and linguistic origins of names where possible (although the language or religious origin of a name does not necessarily mean that the individual speaks the language or practices the religion).

Nam Pehchan was originally developed by the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council and Bradford Health Authority in 1983 to analyse client groups within the local population, primarily for educational planning and ethnic monitoring purposes. It shows high levels of sensitivity, specificity and predictive value, each over 95 per cent. It is recommended to be used as a way of checking assumptions and results arrived at by other routes. The version used in this project was 1.2.2, the latest official release available.

The software acts as a non-intrusive way of assessing local populations. The programme has been used by epidemiologists studying correlations between population groups and disease frequencies. It has also been used on studies of cancer and heart disease to improve provision of preventative services at the community level. Examples of recent research using Nam Pehchan are (Parslow, R., El-Shimy, N.A., Cundall, D.B., McKinney, P.A., 2001; Hahne, S., Ramsay, M., Soldan, K., Balongun, K., Mortimer, P., 2003; Cummins, C., Winter, H., Cheng, K.K., Maric, R., Silcocks, P., Varhese, C., 1999; Horner, D., 2005; Harrison, M., Phillips, D., Chahal, K., Hunt, L., Perry, J., 2005).

Ethnic markers (or flags) are not comprehensively collected as part of IB or IS benefit records, so flags are likely to under-report Pakistanis and Bangladeshis within the samples. Samples received from DWP were, therefore, run through Nam Pehchan to identify South Asian names. The results were as follows:

- JSA sample: 53 per cent matched as South Asian (compared to 27 per cent with Pakistani or Bangladeshi flags);
- IB sample: 34 per cent matched as South Asian (compared to six per cent with Pakistani or Bangladeshi flags);
- IS sample: 43 per cent matched as South Asian (compared to seven per cent with Pakistani or Bangladeshi flags).

Whilst some of these individuals matched as South Asian will be of Indian or Sri Lankan origin, it is likely that the majority are Pakistani or Bangladeshi, given that postcode sectors were selected with high proportions of these two communities.

The opt-out process

From those shown by Nam Pehchan as having South Asian names, a sub-sample was selected for the opt-out process. This sample for the opt-out process was selected to
have a mix of gender and age, and only included those with telephone numbers who could be recruited by telephone. The opt-out sample consisted of 2,816 individuals (so it was around 20 times bigger than the number of interviews needed). This included:

- JSA: 1,837 individuals (to achieve 100 interviews);
- IB: 513 (to achieve approximately 25 interviews);
- IS: 466 (to achieve approximately 25 interviews).

Opt-out letters were sent (see Appendix A) to these 2,816 individuals, of whom 105 (four per cent) opted-out. Thirty-nine individuals contacted us to say that they would like to take part in the research, and these individuals were included where possible.

E.2 Recruitment

E.2.1 Telephone recruitment of the benefits sample

Whilst using telephone numbers to recruit respondents excludes those without telephones, there is no other practical way to recruit individuals from benefit records to take part in qualitative research of this kind and of this scale. Using the telephone to recruit also means that it is possible to ensure that an individual is of Pakistani or Bangladeshi origin before recruiting them (as some may have been mis-identified by Nam Pehchan as having South Asian names, or be of Indian or Sri Lankan origin). It also ensures that researchers are able to speak to family members where the respondent could not speak English, and arrange for interviews to be conducted by trained bilingual interviewers for those with English as a Second or Other Language. The telephone recruitment script used in the research is shown in Appendix G.

Incentives of £20 were used for those who were not in employment to encourage them to take part in the research. These incentives were outlined in both the opt-out letter and in the telephone recruitment script.

The extent to which interviewers and respondents in studies of ethnicity should be matched has been discussed in the literature\(^\text{10}\). For the purposes of this study, it was not possible to conduct matching on the basis of ethnicity and gender, nor would we argue that full matching of interviewer and respondent characteristics is either necessary or desirable. However, whilst being recruited, respondents were asked if they were happy with the gender of the interviewer and were asked if they would prefer an interviewer of their own gender.

\(^{10}\) Nazroo, J., Grewal, I. (2002), Qualitative Methods for Investigating Ethnic Inequalities: Lessons from a Study of Quality of Life among Older People. GO – Growing Older Programme Newsletter, Issue 4, Spring. ESRC.
E.2.2 Recruiting the non-benefits sample

To recruit the 50 individuals in employment, and the 50 individuals who were not employed and not claiming benefits, those interviewed as experts at an earlier stage of the research were contacted to help put us in touch with these individuals. These individuals were also recruited through the benefit samples, as although they were on benefits when the sample was drawn, they had moved into employment, or were no longer claiming benefits by the time of the interview.

E.2.3 The difficulties of recruitment

Interviews were, in general, very difficult to recruit, with one in 13 of those called leading to an interview taking place, and many deciding not to take part during the telephone recruitment process, including some who did not speak English who did not want to take part despite being offered bilingual interviewers. Thirty-three interviews that were arranged did not take place due to the respondent not being at the arranged meeting place (usually their home), or due to them cancelling the interview before or when the interviewer arrived, often due to ill-health or bereavement.

Recruiting in Bristol and Glasgow was particularly hard due to the much smaller Pakistani and Bangladeshi populations in these areas compared to populations in Tower Hamlets, Bradford and Birmingham. There were also some non-Pakistanis and non-Bangladeshis in the Bristol sample (incorrectly identified by the Nam Pehchan software), and in Glasgow many telephone numbers provided as part of the benefit records were incorrect. In contrast, in Tower Hamlets, more than the required number of respondents were recruited, to ensure we had enough Bangladeshis in the overall sample, and because recruiting was easier in this area.

Recruiting the employed was also difficult. Those interviewed as experts at an earlier stage of the research were contacted to help put us in touch with these individuals, and this often led to an interviewer spending a day in their premises (eg Ethnic Minority Outreach (EMO) providers) interviewing those who had found work through their services, who had agreed to come back into the provider’s premises to be interviewed.

Whilst it was initially possible to balance the overall sample by focusing on the sampling characteristics that were missing, struggling to get any respondents in Glasgow and Bristol meant that any respondent from those areas was recruited, regardless of whether they helped the balancing of the sample overall. Table E.3 shows the breakdown of how interviews were achieved in the recruitment process.
### Table E.3  Breakdown of recruitment statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Total sample size</th>
<th>Called</th>
<th>Declined</th>
<th>Removed</th>
<th>No response after 3+ attempts</th>
<th>IES interview</th>
<th>Arranged but cancelled</th>
<th>Passed to Agroni interview</th>
<th>Agroni interview</th>
<th>Total interviewed through experts</th>
<th>Total interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>838</td>
<td>838</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,951</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,951</strong></td>
<td><strong>315</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,282</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,116</strong></td>
<td><strong>145</strong></td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
<td><strong>61</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
<td><strong>195</strong></td>
<td><strong>231</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * Agroni's total for interviews completed is 51 but one was of Indian origin and is not included in the achieved sample.

Source: IES, 2005.
E.2.4 Achieved sample

The total number of interviews completed was 231. In addition, a further 33 were arranged but cancelled by respondents. The 231 completed interviews enabled us to get as close as was feasible to meeting the original sampling criteria, and ensured that we covered a very full range of issues facing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in terms of employment. Details of the achieved sample are listed below:

**Area**
- Birmingham: 54.
- Bradford: 53.
- Bristol: 35.
- Glasgow: 26.
- Tower Hamlets: 63.

**Gender**
- Men: 133.
- Women: 98.

**Age**
- 20s: 86.
- 30s: 54.
- 40s: 42.
- 50s: 30.
- 60s: six.

**Benefit status**
- JSA: 110.
- Economically Inactive: 80 (includes IB: 21; IS: 30; Not claiming: 28; Invalid Care Allowance: one).
- Employed: 41.

**Ethnicity**
- Pakistani: 127.
- Bangladeshi: 104.
Migration background

- First generation from family to come to UK was respondent: 121.
- First generation from family to come to UK was respondent's parents: 81.
- First generation from family to come to UK was respondent's grandparents: 29.

Level of English language fluency

- Fluent in written and spoken English: 140.
- Not fluent in written and spoken English: 91.

E.3 Discussion guide

Two discussion guides were developed: one for those not in employment and one for those in employment. Both guides covered the same issues in terms of the respondents background, education and work histories. The guide for those in employment collected a range of information about their current job, whilst the guide for those not in employment collected information on the range of barriers they faced.

Suggestions from the expert interviews conducted as part of this research fed into the development of the guides, and they were piloted in Tower Hamlets with two respondents (one on JSA and one in work), and amendments were then made. Appendices H and I show both discussion guides.

E.4 Conducting and analysing the interviews

Most interviews were conducted in the respondent’s home, although some were conducted in cafés, or in the premises of those interviewed as experts at an earlier stage of the research (eg EMOh providers). Some respondents, despite being offered a bilingual interview, chose to have a family member (usually a husband or wife) translate for them during the interview. Family members translated the questions for the respondent and translated their answers. It is worth noting that in these cases, family members were used to interpreting for the respondent; at the Jobcentre or benefits office, at the doctor’s and in other situations. Fifty interviews were also conducted using bilingual interviewers, who then wrote up full interview notes in English.

There were often family members present during the interview. Whilst the presence of others may influence the respondent, conducting a one-to-one interview was sometimes difficult, due to large family sizes and friends or family calling at the home. These normal hurdles in research are especially acute in complex households11.

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Interviewing was suspended during the general election campaign. A number of interviews were conducted around the time of the 7 July 2005 bombings in London. Eleven interviews were conducted on 7 July itself, whilst another 17 interviews were conducted between the 7 July bombings and the attempted bombings on 21 July. As these events may have impacted discussions that were had during interviews, we have looked at this group of respondents separately in the analysis process, especially when examining issues of religion and discrimination.

Interviews were all recorded where the respondent consented, otherwise notes were taken. Analysis of interview transcripts or interview notes was conducted using CAQDAS, in the form of ‘Atlas.ti’, enabling the organisation and rigorous analysis of the qualitative information.

Atlas.ti allows the user to code qualitative data under relevant thematic headings. For example, a code was ‘labour market history’. Any reference to this theme in all transcripts is then attached to this code, and then all information about it can be easily extracted at the stage of detailed analysis. Transcripts in Atlas.ti can also be grouped into any number of ‘Families’. For example, each transcript can be placed in one family according to ethnicity, one according to gender, and one according to geographical area. This makes it easy to retrieve information about a particular theme or code only relating to a particular group, for example, only for Pakistani respondents, or only for women.

Analysis in Atlas.ti was done by the interviewers, who analysed each others, as well as their own, transcripts. A code list was developed, with each code being carefully defined to ensure consistency of coding between the interviewers. The analysis involved further teamwork to develop interpretations and implications.

In this report, quotes from interviews are used to illustrate points made in the text. They are used to show both comments made by very many of those who took part in the research, as well as comments that were more unusual, but important in terms of the objectives of the research. All the names of respondents have been changed. Each quote indicates the ethnicity, gender, and labour market status of the respondent, and age or area where relevant (when these issues are being discussed).
Appendix F
Part E – Opt-out Letter

Dear

I am writing to ask for your help in some important research that is being carried out among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are amongst the most disadvantaged ethnic groups in terms of employment, and experience high unemployment rates. We are interested in finding out more about what makes it difficult for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis to move into employment. This will help the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to see what more it can do to reduce the disadvantages that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis face in terms of employment.

The Department has asked the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) to carry out a research study. IES is a research organisation that is completely independent of government. Your name has been randomly selected from DWP records, and your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. Your benefits will not be affected in any way. A researcher from IES may contact you in February or March to arrange a time, date and place to speak to you in person. The interview will last for about an hour and everyone who is interviewed will be given £20 as a small token of thanks for their help.

Anything you say to the researcher will be strictly confidential; your name and personal details will not be passed on to any government department or to anyone else. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to make it easier for you to take part. The person who contacts you will also be glad to talk about any requirements you may have, or arrangements that would be helpful. We are able to provide bilingual interviewers if you wish to be interviewed in a language other than English.
I do hope that you will take part in this important research study, as we value your views. But if you do not wish to take part, you can contact Jo Casebourne at IES, Mantell Building, University of Sussex, Brighton, BN1 9RF or on 01273 873582 before **Friday 18th February** giving the reference number from the top of this letter, and your name will be taken off the list of people we will contact. Please contact Jo Casebourne, or contact me, Stephen Munn, on 0114 209 8252 if you have any questions about the research.

Yours sincerely
Appendix G
Part E – Recruiting telephone script

Introduction
Hi, my name is Full name and I am phoning from the Institute for Employment Studies about the research that we are doing on Pakistanis and Bangladeshis and employment for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

What the research is about

For those on benefits: You will have been sent a letter from the Department for Work and Pensions telling you about this research.

Can I just check that you would describe your ethnic origin as Pakistani or Bangladeshi?

If no: Thank you for your time. Terminate call.

If yes: Are you Pakistani or Bangladeshi? (Record answer)

I’ll just briefly explain again what it is that we are doing. What we are doing is interviewing Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, to see what makes it difficult to move into employment. We have been asked to do this research as the Government wants to do more to reduce the disadvantages that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis face in terms of employment.
The interview

What it would involve is an interviewer visiting you at home, or at another place if you prefer, for about an hour to ask you about your experiences. The interviewer will ask about what you think makes it hard for you to move into employment, and what more you think the Government could do to help you.

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and whether or not you choose to participate will not affect your benefits.

Everything you tell the interviewer will be treated in complete confidence. Your views will be combined with those of other people, and the report of the research will not identify anyone in person.

If you would like to take part we will give you £20 as a thank you.

Arranging the interview

Are you willing to take part?

If no:

Thank you for your time. Terminate call.

If yes:

We would like to make sure we make this research accessible to everyone who would like to take part. Can I just check your needs:

• Do you need a language translator (if so, which language)?

• Where could we interview you? Is there a local community centre or place we could meet, or would you rather meet in your home?
  – If home, check address details.
  – If not home, agree alternative venue and check address details.

• Do you have any other needs we should be aware of? (use disability access form if appropriate)

A male/female interviewer NAME will be in your area on DATES.

• Are any of those dates suitable for you?

• Are you happy being interviewed by this person?

Is there a particular time of day that suits you best? (fix time and date of appointment).
If you need to cancel or re-arrange the interview for any reason, please let me know. My name is **Insert full name** and my number is **Insert phone number**. Please feel free to call if you have any more questions about the research.

**Confirm time and date of appointment and name of interviewer.** We will also be sending a letter to you confirming this.
Appendix H
Part E – Individual interviews discussion guide: in employment

Introduction

I would like to start by giving you a bit of background to the research.

IES have been commissioned by the Government’s Department for Work and Pensions to research the barriers to employment faced by Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain. The work is mainly being conducted in five case study areas (Tower Hamlets, Bristol, Birmingham, Bradford and Glasgow).

We know that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis currently do less well in terms of employment than some other ethnic groups. We need to understand more about the barriers that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis face that make it harder for them to enter employment.

Part of this research is talking to 250 Pakistani or Bangladeshi individuals in these five areas, so that we understand the things that make it difficult for individuals to move into work. The findings from the research will be used to make recommendations to the Government.

IES has been asked to conduct this research for the Government. IES is an independent research organisation and we are not part of the Government. Everything you say is confidential, including anything you say about benefits and work, and you will not be named in anything written or presented about this research. We are not part of the Jobcentre or Benefits office and will not pass on anything you say to them. We cannot offer you any advice about work or benefits – your local Jobcentre or Benefits office can help you if you would like advice.
• Agroni – explain that Agroni are conducting interview on behalf of IES.
• Interview will last around 45 minutes.
• We would like to record this interview, is that OK?
• Please let us know if you would rather not answer a question.
• You can stop the interview at any time.

Background

I would now like to ask some background questions about your household, how long you have lived in the UK and the languages you speak.

Household
• Who lives in your household?
• If you have other sister(s) and/or brother(s) living in household, how old are they?
• Do you have any children who live with you? If yes:
  – How many?
  – How old are they?
  – Do you have the main responsibility for caring for them?
• Are you a lone parent?
• Are you looking after family, partners or friends in need of help because they are ill, frail or have a disability? If yes:
  – Who are you helping in this way?
  – How many hours a week do you spend helping them?
  – Do you support them financially?
• How long have you lived in the area you live now?
• Do you live in a house or a flat?
• Do you live in rented accommodation? If yes: is it owned by the council, a housing association or a private landlord?
• Do you live in a house or flat owned by you or a member of your household? If yes: who owns it?
• How many bedrooms are there in your house/flat?
Ethnicity and migration

- What ethnic group would you describe yourself as belonging to?
- Were you born in the UK?

If not born in the UK:
- When did you first become resident in the UK?
- What is your country of origin?
- What made you decide to come to this country?

If born in the UK:
- When did your family first come to this country?
- Was it your parents or grandparents who first came to this country?

- What part of Pakistan/Bangladesh is your family from originally? (If people ask why we want to know, it is because we want to understand any issues faced by particular communities from Pakistan/Bangladesh).

- Do you have refugee status with permission to work?
- What languages do you speak?
- What language do you feel most comfortable using?
- What language do/did your parents speak most often at home?

Educational experience

I would like to ask a bit about your educational experience.

- Did you complete a formal, compulsory education?

If No:
- What were the reasons why you did not complete your formal, compulsory education?
- How well were you doing/did you do at school?

- How old were you when you finished your formal, compulsory education?
- Where did you complete your formal, compulsory education?
- Did you get any qualifications as part of your formal, compulsory education? If yes:
  - What are they?
  - Where did you obtain these qualifications (UK and/or another country?)
- Did you experience any language problems that caused you difficulty in completing your formal, compulsory education? If yes:
- What impact did that have?
- Were you offered any language support? (What was it?)

• Did you go on to further or higher education (College or University) after completing your formal compulsory education?

If yes:
- Details of what they did, at what institution, when and for how long.

If no:
- Why did you decide not to go on to further or higher education?

• Have you got any qualifications since completing your formal, compulsory education? If yes:
  - What are they?
  - Where did you obtain these qualifications (UK and/or another country?)

• If have any qualifications from abroad:
  - Do you know what UK equivalent is?
  - Do you know if your qualification is recognised in UK?
  - Have you done any conversion courses to convert a non-UK qualification into a qualification recognised in the UK? (If so, what was the course and when did you do it?)

• How long ago did you obtain your most recent qualification?

• Are you currently involved in any education or learning? (If so, what, where are they doing it?)

• If young person: if you have brothers and sisters, how well did they do at school?

• If young person: Did your brothers/sisters get any qualifications as part of their formal, compulsory education?

If yes:
  - What are they?
  - Where did they obtain these qualifications (UK and/or another country?)

Current employment situation

I would now like to ask a bit about what you are doing at the moment in terms of employment.

• What is your current job? (organisation, sector and job title)

• How far away is your work from where you live?
• How do you travel to work?
• How many hours a week are you doing this job?
• How much do you earn a week/month?
• Are you receiving the Working Tax Credit?
• How long have you been in this job?
• How did you first hear about this job?
• Do you enjoy your job?
• How does paid employment fit with your other priorities? (For example, looking after family or children.)
• Is it hard to fit employment around your other responsibilities? (If so, in what ways, how do you manage to balance work and other responsibilities?)
• Do you use childcare whilst you are at work? (If so: details of what childcare they use, where it is based, whether they get help from Working Tax Credit to pay for it.)
• Are you currently doing any paid work in your own home (home-working)? If yes:
  – What is your job?
  – Why have you chosen to do paid work at home?
  – How many hours a week are you doing it?
  – How much do you earn a week?
• Are you currently doing any voluntary work? If yes:
  – What is your job?
  – How many hours a week are you doing it?
• What are other people in your household doing at the moment (check ages of siblings):
  – Are they in paid employment? (Which household members?)
  – Are they in full-time education? (Which household members?)
  – Are they claiming out-of-work benefits? (Which household members? Which benefits are they claiming?)
• What would you like to be doing in five years time?
Labour market history

I would like to ask about any employment you have had before your current job.

• Have you ever been in paid employment before your current job?

   If no:
   – Just to check, that you have never done any work before your current job that was part-time, short-term, in family business, after school etc.?
   – Why not?

   If yes:
   – What kind of jobs have you done before? (occupation and industry)
   – How long ago were you in your last job?
   – How many hours a week were these jobs?
   – How long did you work in your last job?
   – Why did you stop working in your last job?
   – In the past, have you been in work steadily, or in and out of work?
   – Have you ever done any paid work in your own home? (what was it and when was it?)

• Have you ever been made redundant? If yes:
   – When was that?
   – What was your job at the time you were made redundant?
   – How many hours a week was the job?
   – Which industry was your job in?

• Have you ever worked in another country?
   – What kind of jobs did you do there? (occupation and industry)

• We would like to ask what your religion is, as we want to know whether it affects the type of jobs you can do. What is your religion? (none, or which religion)

• Are there certain jobs you feel you could not do because of your religion? (If so, why and what are they?)

• If not fluent in English: Have you ever had experience of language difficulties in finding or keeping a job?

• Do you think it is harder to get a job if you are Pakistani/Bangladeshi?

• Do you think it is harder to get promoted if you are Pakistani/Bangladeshi?
• Have you ever experienced discrimination from employers? If yes:
  – When was that?
  – Was it whilst in a job or when applying for a job?
  – What form did the discrimination take?
  – What happened?

Help to move into employment

*I would like to ask you about whether you have ever had any help to move into paid employment.*

• Before your current job, have you ever experienced anything that made it difficult for you to be in employment? If yes:
  – What made it difficult for you to be in employment?
  – How did you overcome these issues?
  – Did you need any help to overcome these issues?
  – Did you get any help to overcome these issues?

• Have you ever had any of the following help to help you move into employment:
  – If not fluent in English: Help with language skills?
  – Help with gaining more skills?
  – Help with getting more qualifications?
  – Help to become self-employed?
  – Help with home-working?
  – Help caring for an ill or disabled member of your household?
  – Help with finding childcare?
  – Other types of help? (ask for details)

• If you have had help to move into employment:
  – Which organisations helped you? (Ethnic minority community associations? Jobcentre? Other places?)
  – What help did they provide?
  – How useful did you find it?
Use of government programmes

I would like to ask if you’ve ever been on any government programmes to help you move into employment.

• Have you ever used the Jobcentre to help you find work? Why/why not?
  If yes:
  – Did you find the Jobcentre useful? (details)

• Do you know of any government programmes to help unemployed people get back into work?

• Have you ever been on any government programmes? If yes:
  – Can you describe what it was?
  – Do you know what it was called? (New Deal for Young People, New Deal for 25 Plus, New Deal for 50 Plus, New Deal for Lone Parents, New Deal for Disabled People, New Deal for Partners, Ethnic Minority Outreach, other?)
  – When were you on the programme?
  – How long were you on the programme?
  – What did you do on it?
  – How helpful was it?
  – Did it meet your needs?
  – Was there anything that would have improved the programme for you? (information in other languages, single-sex provision etc.)
  – Was there anything that made it difficult for you to take part?

Help with starting your own business

I would like to ask if you have thought about starting your own business or self-employment as an option.

• Have you ever considered starting your own business? If yes:
  – Why have you considered starting your own business? What are the benefits?
  – What type of business would you want to start?
  – Have you ever needed any help to start your own business?
  – What help did you need?

• Have you ever tried to get help with starting your own business? If yes:
  – Did you approach anyone for help?
  – Who did you approach for help?
– What help did you receive?
– Did you receive the help you needed?

• Have you ever heard of Business Link? If yes:
  – Have you ever used the advice and support services for small businesses provided by Business Link?

Personal details

*Finally, we would like to ask a few personal details.*

• How old are you?
• What is your marital status? (married, separated, divorced, living with partner, single?)

Thanks and close

• Is there anything else that we have not covered that you would like to add?
• Do you have any questions about the research?
• Thank you very much indeed for taking part.

**Note to interviewers for additions to database after interview:**

• please note down if anyone else present during interview; and if so who;
• please note down benefit status of person;
• please note down if they are Pakistani or Bangladeshi.
Appendix I
Part E – Individual interviews discussion guide: jobseekers and economically inactive

Introduction

I would like to start by giving you a bit of background to the research.

IES have been commissioned by the Government’s Department for Work and Pensions to research the barriers to employment faced by Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain. The work is mainly being conducted in five case study areas (Tower Hamlets, Bristol, Birmingham, Bradford and Glasgow).

We know that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis currently do less well in terms of employment than some other ethnic groups. We need to understand more about the barriers that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis face that make it harder for them to enter employment.

Part of this research is talking to 250 Pakistani or Bangladeshi individuals in these five areas, so that we understand the things that make it difficult for individuals to move into work. The findings from the research will be used to make recommendations to the Government.

IES has been asked to conduct this research for the Government. IES is an independent research organisation and we are not part of the Government. Everything you say is confidential, including anything you say about benefits and work, and you will not be named in anything written or presented about this research. We are not part of the Jobcentre or Benefits office and will not pass on anything you say to them. We cannot offer you any advice about work or benefits – your local Jobcentre or Benefits office can help you if you would like advice.
• Agroni – explain that Agroni are conducting interview on behalf of IES.
• Interview will last around 45 minutes.
• Incentive payment of £20 (remind respondent – pay it and collect receipt now or at the end of the interview).
• We would like to record this interview, is that OK?
• Please let us know if you would rather not answer a question.
• You can stop the interview at any time.

Background

I would now like to ask some background questions about your household, how long you have lived in the UK and the languages you speak.

Household

• Who lives in your household?
• If you have other sister(s) and/or brother(s) living in household, how old are they?
• Do you have any children who live with you? If yes:
  – How many?
  – How old are they?
  – Do you have the main responsibility for caring for them?
• Are you a lone parent?
• Are you looking after family, partners or friends in need of help because they are ill, frail or have a disability? If yes:
  – Who are you helping in this way?
  – How many hours a week do you spend helping them?
  – Do you support them financially?
• How long have you lived in the area you live now?
• Do you live in a house or a flat?
• Do you live in rented accommodation? If yes: is it owned by the council, a housing association or a private landlord?
• Do you live in a house or flat owned by you or a member of your household? If yes: who owns it?
• How many bedrooms are there in your house/flat?
Ethnicity and migration

- What ethnic group would you describe yourself as belonging to?
- Were you born in the UK?

If not born in the UK:
  - When did you first become resident in the UK?
  - What is your country of origin?
  - What made you decide to come to this country?

If born in the UK:
  - When did your family first come to this country?
  - Was it your parents or grandparents who first came to this country?

- Are you an asylum seeker without legal permission to work?
- Do you have refugee status with permission to work?

- What part of Pakistan/Bangladesh is your family from originally? (If people ask why we want to know, it is because we want to understand any issues faced by particular communities from Pakistan/Bangladesh).

- What languages do you speak?
- What language do you feel most comfortable using?
- What language do/did your parents speak most often at home?

Educational experience

I would like to ask a bit about your educational experience.

- Did you complete a formal, compulsory education?

If No:
  - What were the reasons why you did you not complete your formal, compulsory education?
  - How well were you doing/did you do at school?

- How old were you when you finished your formal, compulsory education?
- Where did you complete your formal, compulsory education?
- Did you get any qualifications as part of your formal, compulsory education? If yes:
  - What are they?
  - Where did you obtain these qualifications (UK and/or another country?)
• Did you experience any language problems that caused you difficulty in completing your formal, compulsory education? If yes:
  – What impact did that have?
  – Were you offered any language support? (Details)
• Did you go on to further or higher education (College or University) after completing your formal compulsory education?
  If yes:
  – Details of what they did, at what institution, when and for how long.
  If no:
  – Why did you decide not to go on to further or higher education?
• Have you got any qualifications since completing your formal, compulsory education? If yes:
  – What are they?
  – Where did you obtain these qualifications (UK and/or another country?)
• If have any qualifications from abroad:
  – Do you know what UK equivalent is?
  – Do you know if your qualification is recognised in UK?
  – Have you done any conversion courses to convert a non-UK qualification into a qualification recognised in the UK? (If so, what was the course and when did you do it?)
• How long ago did you obtain your most recent qualification?
• Are you currently involved in any education or learning? (If yes: what, where are they doing it, is it part of government programme/scheme?)
• If young person: if you have brothers and sisters, how well did they do at school?
• If young person: Did your brothers/sisters get any qualifications as part of their formal, compulsory education?
  If yes:
  – what are they?
  – where did they obtain these qualifications (UK and/or another country?)
Labour market history

**Employment history**

*I would like to ask about any employment history you have.*

- Have you ever been in paid employment?
  
  If no:
  - Just to check, that you have never done any work that was part-time, short-term, in family business, after school etc.?
  - Why not?

  If yes:
  - What kind of jobs have you done before? (occupation and industry)
  - How many hours a week were these jobs?
  - When were you last in paid employment?
  - How long did you work in your most recent job?
  - Why did you stop working in your most recent job?
  - Have you been in work steadily, or in and out of work?
  - Have you ever done any paid work in your own home? (what was it and when was it?)

- Have you ever been made redundant? If yes:
  - When was that?
  - What was your job at the time you were made redundant?
  - How many hours a week was the job?
  - Which industry was your job in?

- Have you ever worked in another country?
  - What kind of jobs did you do there? (occupation and industry)

**Current labour market status**

*I would now like to ask a bit about what you are doing at the moment in terms of employment or claiming out-of-work benefits.*

- Are you currently claiming out-of-work benefits (such as Jobseeker’s Allowance, Income Support or Incapacity Benefit)?

  If yes:
  - Which benefit are you claiming?
  - How long have you been claiming this benefit?
– What impact does being out of work have on your daily life?
– Before this current period claiming benefits, have you ever claimed out-of-work benefits before? (When was that? How long were you claiming for?)

If no:
– Why are you not claiming any benefits?
– What impact does being out of work have on your daily life?
– How are you managing financially? (Are your family supporting you?)
– Have you ever claimed out-of-work benefits before? (When was that? How long were you claiming for?)

[Interviewer instruction: we think that this person is not in employment, but below we check if they are doing any paid work, possibly in the informal economy, or are doing any home-working]

We would like to ask if you are currently doing any work.

• Are you currently doing any paid work? If yes:
  – What is your job?
  – How many hours a week are you doing it?
  – How much do you earn a week?

• Are you currently doing any paid work in your own home (home-working)? If yes:
  – What is your job?
  – Why have you chosen to do paid work at home?
  – How many hours a week are you doing it?
  – How much do you earn a week?

• Are you currently doing any voluntary work? If yes:
  – What is your job?
  – How many hours a week are you doing it?

• What are other people in your household doing at the moment:
  – Are they in paid employment? (Which household members?)
  – Are they in full-time education? (Which household members?)
  – Are they claiming out-of-work benefits? (Which household members? Which benefits are they claiming?)
Attitudes to work

Is work a goal?
I would like to ask you about your goals and aspirations.

• Do you want to work? Why/why not?
• Is gaining employment a major concern for you at the moment? Why/why not?
• Is gaining employment a major concern for you in the future? Why/why not?
• How does the idea of paid employment fit with your other priorities?
• Are other things more important demands on your time than employment? If so, what?
  – For example, is staying at home to bring up your children a higher priority than work?
• Does needing to stay at home because of responsibilities for other family members make it difficult for you to find employment? (If yes: in what ways, to what extent?)
• Are you looking for paid work at the moment? Why/why not? If yes:
  – Have you applied for any jobs (details of how many, what, when, what happened)
• Would you be prepared to do some training (or get help with language skills if English is not your first language) before finding work, or do you just want a job? Why?
• What would you like to be doing in five years time?

If female:

• What is your attitude towards women working outside the home?
• What is the attitude of your family towards women working outside the home?
  – Does that make it difficult for you to find employment? (in what ways, to what extent?)
• What is the attitude of your ethnic community towards women working outside the home?
  – Does that make it difficult for you to find employment? (in what ways, to what extent?)
Your requirements of a job

I would like to ask you about what kind of job you would want if you were looking for work.

- What type of job are you looking for at the moment/would you look for if you were seeking work?
- Why do you want this type of job?
- Do you think you could get this job? (why/why not. Prompt for whether they have the rights skills/experience to get this job)
- Do you feel you have a good understanding of what jobs are available in this city?
- Have you ever received any advice about the type of jobs that would suit you? (If so, from who, was it useful?)
- We would like to ask what is your religion, as we want to know whether it affects the type of jobs you can do. What is your religion? (none, or which religion)
- Are their certain jobs you feel you could not do because of your religion? (If so, why and what are they?)
- Would you need to find employers who would accommodate your religious needs?
  - If yes: what are your religious needs? (eg having a place to pray, prayer times etc.)
- Are there other things that restrict the types of work you could do? (ie times of day you would not want to work, working in a all-male or all-female environment?)
- How far away from home would you be prepared to work?
- **If individual wants to work locally**: Does not wanting to work outside the area where you live make it difficult for you to find work? (In what ways? To what extent?)
  - If yes: why don’t you want to work outside the area where you live?
  - If yes: what is the attitude of your family or ethnic community towards working outside the area where you live?
Barriers to work

I would like to ask a bit about the kinds of issues that might make it difficult for you to find and move into paid employment.

• What do you see as the main reasons that you are currently out of work? (details)

[Interviewer instruction: please use the sections 6.1–6.5 as prompts only where it is relevant to that person and where these issues have not already been covered]

Personal barriers

• Does your age make it difficult for you to find employment?
  – If yes: in what ways, to what extent? (eg age discrimination, peer pressure if young)

• Does a lack of confidence make it difficult for you to find employment? If yes: in what ways, to what extent?

• Do you have any health problems that make it difficult for you to find employment? If yes: in what ways, to what extent?

• If recently arrived in Britain: does having recently arrived in Britain make it difficult for you to find employment?
  – If yes: in what ways, to what extent? (having more immediate priorities such as finding a home, being newly married, settling into a new community etc.)

• If have refugee status: does having refugee status make it difficult for you to find employment? (in what ways, to what extent?)

• Do you think you would be better off financially in work? If no:
  – Is this because you feel you would be financially better off on out-of-work benefits?
  – Is this because other household members are also on out-of-work benefits?
  – Have you heard of the Working Tax Credit (formally called the Working Families’ Tax Credit)?

• Do you have a criminal record? If yes: does that make it difficult for you to find employment? (If yes: in what ways, to what extent?)

• Do you have any drug or alcohol dependencies? If yes: does that make it difficult for you to find employment? (If yes: in what ways, to what extent?)
Childcare barriers

If they have children:

- Does not wanting to use formal childcare (nurseries, childminders etc.) make it difficult for you to find employment?
  - If yes: why don’t you want to use formal childcare?
- Does a lack of available childcare make it difficult for you to find employment? (in what ways, to what extent)

If English is not their first language: Would you like to use a childcare provider that speaks your first language?

- Does the cost of childcare make it difficult for you to find employment?

Human capital barriers

- How fluent do you feel you are in English?
  - If not fluent: Does your level of fluency make it difficult for you to find work? (To what extent?)
- Have you ever had experience of language difficulties in finding or keeping a job? (details)
- Does having a lack of qualifications make it difficult for you to find work? (In what ways? To what extent?)

If have qualifications from abroad: Does having qualifications from abroad which are not recognised make it difficult for you to find work? (In what ways? To what extent?)

- Does having a lack of work experience in the UK make it difficult for you to find work? (In what ways? To what extent?)
- Does having skills and experience that are no longer relevant make it difficult for you to find work? (In what ways? To what extent?)
- Do you know many friends of family in employment? If no:
  - Does not knowing other people in work make it difficult for you to find work? (In what ways? To what extent?)

Area-based barriers

- Does a lack of jobs in your town make it difficult for you to find work? (In what ways? To what extent?)
- Do poor transport facilities make it difficult for you to find work? (In what ways? To what extent?)
- Does living in the area where you live make it difficult for you to find work? (In what ways? To what extent?)
Employer attitudes

• Do you think that employers will discriminate against you?
  – If yes: do you think you face discrimination because of your ethnicity?
  – If yes: do you think you face discrimination because of your religion?
  – If yes: do you think you face discrimination because of where you live?
  – If yes: do you think you face discrimination because of any other reason (eg age, gender, disability)?

• Have you ever experienced discrimination from employers? If yes:
  – When was that?
  – Was it whilst in a job or when applying for a job?
  – What happened?

Biggest barrier to work

• Are there any other issues that make it difficult for you to move into employment that we have not mentioned?
  – If yes: what are they?

• Thinking about all these issues, which is the issue that most prevents you from working at the moment?

Help to move into work

I would like to ask you about the help you think you might need to move into paid employment.

• What help do you think you need to be able to move into employment:
  – If not fluent in English: Help with language skills?
  – Help with gaining more skills?
  – More qualifications?
  – Help to become self-employed?
  – Help with home-working?
  – Help caring for an ill or disabled member of your household?
  – Help with finding childcare?
  – Other types of help? (ask for details)

• Do you know where you would go to get help to move into employment?
• Which of the following would you consider using:
  – Ethnic minority community associations?
  – Jobcentre?
  – Recruitment agencies?
  – Other places? (ask for details)

• Have you ever used any organisations to get help to move into employment? If yes:
  – What was the organisation called?
  – What help did they provide?
  – How useful did you find it?

**Use of government programmes**

* I would like to ask if you’ve been on any government programmes to help you move into employment.

• What do you think the Jobcentre can offer you?

• Do you know of any government programmes to help unemployed people get back into work?

• Have you ever been on any government programmes? If yes:
  – Can you describe what it was?
  – Do you know what it was called? (New Deal for Young People, New Deal for 25 Plus, New Deal for 50 Plus, New Deal for Lone Parents, New Deal for Disabled People, New Deal for Partners, Ethnic Minority Outreach, Working Neighbourhoods, other?)
  – What did you do on it?
  – How helpful was it?
  – Did it meet your needs?
  – Was there anything that would have improved the programme for you? (information in other languages, single-sex provision etc.)
  – Was there anything that made it difficult for you to participate? (details)

• Is there anything that would make the services of the Jobcentre or the benefits office easier for you to use?

• What more could the Jobcentre do to help you?
Help with starting your own business

I would like to ask if you have thought about starting your own business or being self-employed as an option.

• Have you ever considered starting your own business? If yes:
  – Why do you want to start your own business? What are the benefits?
  – What would you like to do?
  – Do you need any help to start your own business?
  – What help do you need?

• Have you ever tried to get help with starting your own business? If yes:
  – Who did you approach for help?
  – What help did you receive?
  – Did you receive the help you needed?

• Have you ever heard of Business Link? If yes:
  – Have you ever used the advice and support services for small businesses provided by Business Link?

Personal details

Finally, we would like to ask a few personal details.

• How old are you?

• What is your marital status? (married, separated, divorced, living with partner, single?)

Thanks and close

• Is there anything else that we have not covered that you would like to add?

• Do you have any questions about the research?

• Thank you very much indeed for taking part.

Note to interviewers for additions to database after interview:

• please note down if anyone else present during interview and if so who;

• please note down benefit status of person;

• please note down if they are Pakistani or Bangladeshi.
It can be seen below (Figure 34) that Pakistanis, and to a greater extent Bangladeshis, are very under-qualified compared to the national average. Just 19 per cent of Pakistanis and 12 per cent of Bangladeshis of working age have degree or higher degree level qualifications, compared to 27 per cent of all ethnic groups. Lower than average proportions of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are qualified to NVQ level 3 and 2. Conversely, considerably higher than average proportions of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have no qualifications: 28 per cent of Pakistanis and 40 per cent of Bangladeshis.

These figures indicate that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis will be at an extreme disadvantage when competing for jobs in labour markets with large proportions of highly skilled occupations.
2.1.3 Basic skills

Apart from looking at the qualifications gained by individuals, the quality of the labour supply can also be measured by the literacy and numeracy skill level of the population. A large-scale survey is conducted on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills that provides this information at a regional level for England. For both numeracy and literacy skills, the survey reports on the numbers who have these skills at Entry level, at level 1 and at level 2 and above. A description of these different levels is presented in Table 1.

London and the South West both have a high proportion of people with level 2 literacy (46 per cent), compared to 44 per cent across England (Figure 35). Unlike London, the South West also has less than average inhabitants with only Entry Level literacy (14 per cent compared to 16 per cent for England). The West Midlands regions have literacy skills levels 1 and 2 that are below the national average.
Table 1  Basic skills description for literacy and numeracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Literacy (reading)</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry level 1</td>
<td>An adult classified at this level…</td>
<td>Understands information given by numbers and symbols in simple graphical, numerical and written material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Understands short texts with repeated language patterns on familiar topics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Can obtain information from common signs and symbols</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry level 2</td>
<td>• Understands short straightforward texts on familiar topics</td>
<td>Understands information given by numbers, symbols, simple diagrams and charts in graphical, numerical and written material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Can obtain information from short documents, familiar sources and signs and symbols</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry level 3</td>
<td>• Understands short straightforward texts on familiar topics accurately and independently</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Can obtain information from everyday sources</td>
<td>Understands information given by numbers, symbols, diagrams and charts used for different purposes and in different ways in graphical, numerical and written material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>• Understands short straightforward texts of varying length on a variety of topics accurately and independently</td>
<td>Understands straightforward mathematical information used for different purposes and can independently select relevant information from given graphical, numerical and written material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Can obtain information from different sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 or above</td>
<td>• Understands a range of texts of varying complexity accurately and independently</td>
<td>Understands mathematical information used for different purposes and can independently select and compare relevant information from a variety of graphical, numerical and written material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Can obtain information of varying length and detail from different sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A different pattern emerges when looking at numeracy skill levels (Figure 36). London has average proportions of residents with level 2 numeracy (25 per cent). The South West has below average level 2 numeracy and above average Entry Level. West Midlands has level 2 numeracy (24 per cent), just behind that for England and average Entry Level numeracy. Yorkshire and Humberside can, however, be said to have relatively low levels of both numeracy and literacy.
2.2 Unemployment

In a healthy labour market, the processes to match individuals to jobs work well, and both individuals and employers receive good information and guidance about how to meet their needs. The result is that unemployment is low, and individuals do not remain out of work for long.

There are two alternative measures of unemployment: ILO unemployment rate and the claimant count. The former is based on an individual not currently working, having looked for work in the last four weeks and being able to start a job in the next two weeks. The claimant count is a by-product of the benefit administration system. In recent years, attention has shifted away from the claimant count, which is affected by changes in entitlement rules, toward the ILO definition.

Figure 37 compares the ILO unemployment rate and claimant rate in each of the case study areas, and also gives the national figures for comparison. Birmingham and Glasgow have ILO unemployment rates that are higher than average; nine and eight per cent respectively, compared to five per cent across Britain. Similarly, the proportion of working age residents who are claiming unemployment benefits in the two cities is twice the British rate of two per cent. Bristol has a low ILO unemployment rate (four per cent of the working population), and an average claimant rate (two per cent). Tower Hamlets has very high levels of unemployment for Britain; 13 per cent ILO rate and six per cent claimant rate. Bradford has average levels of unemployment, whether measured by the ILO definition or the claimant count.
In addition to the total numbers of claimants unemployed, an important characteristic is the duration of unemployment. Time away from the labour market can be associated with skills becoming out-dated, and loss of confidence. It is often perceived by employers that those who have been out of work the longest are least likely to possess the skills, experience and motivation required.

The duration of unemployment claims were shorter in both Bradford and Bristol than in Britain overall (see Chapter 4, Table 28). Birmingham and Tower Hamlets both have extremely worrying levels of long-term unemployment. Twenty-four per cent of unemployed people in Birmingham and 26 per cent in Tower Hamlets have been claiming benefits for over a year, compared to 16 per cent of unemployed people nationally. In Glasgow, four per cent more unemployed people claim job seeking benefits for over six and 12 months, than in Britain.

2.3 Equity in the labour market

The local labour markets have to be considered in terms of their efficiency. However, another important aspect is the extent to which they function equitably and fairly. An equitable labour market has been described as one where:
opportunities [are] available to all those in the labour market who are able to take them, irrespective of gender, ethnic origin, disability or other personal characteristics. It would be difficult, for example, to see a regional labour market as ‘healthy’, if the minority ethnic population, despite equal or higher levels of qualification than their White counterparts, exhibit persistently lower employment rates than are found among the majority White population\textsuperscript{13}.

To this end, the employment rates of males and females and Whites and non-Whites are compared in Figure 45 and Figure 38. The employment rate is used to compare the relative labour market position of the different groups as some are likely to be economically inactive, and hence, not be counted in unemployment figures, even though they would like to work (eg women with young children).

The disparity between employment rates is greatest for Tower Hamlets, where the male rate is 63 per cent and the female rate 47 per cent. There is also a substantial gap in the borough between White and non-White employment rates, with a non-white employment rate of just 39 per cent. Bristol stands out for the opposite reason; there is considerable equity in the labour market based on these two measures. The employment rate for non-whites is impressively high at 78 per cent (compared to 58 per cent nationally), and is actually fractionally higher than the rate for Whites. The difference between male and female employment in Bristol is average.

In Glasgow, there are similar employment rates for men and women, with just three percentage points separating them. The gap between White and non-White employment rates, although large, is the same as in Britain as a whole (18 per cent). In Bradford there is a larger than average disparity between White and non-White employment rates, with the former being 78 per cent and the latter 52 per cent. Birmingham has a similar non-White employment rate as Bradford, but the White employment rate is lower, making the difference between them smaller (20 per cent). The gap in Birmingham between male unemployment rate (71 per cent) and the female rate (59 per cent) is greater than average.

\textsuperscript{13} Williams, M., Tackey, N. (2004), South West Healthy Labour Market Review. Exeter: South West Regional Development Agency.
Figure 38  Working age employment rate, by gender


Figure 39  Working age employment rate, by ethnicity

Summary of supply characteristics:

- **Bristol** has very high economic activity rates and a well-qualified working population. In the wider region there are good levels of literacy but lower than average aggregate numeracy. Furthermore, in Bristol there is a low ILO unemployment rate and average claimant count. The duration of unemployment claims are shorter than average. The labour market appears to work fairly and equitably with a very high non-White employment rate for Britain, which is just higher than that for Whites.

- **Birmingham** appears to have structural problems in the labour supply. There are low economic activity rates and high unemployment rates, with a high percentage of unemployed people being long-term unemployed. The resident population are poorly qualified compared to the rest of Britain and have lower than average basic skills. There is a slightly larger than average disparity between the employment rates of men and women, and Whites and non-Whites.

- **Tower Hamlets** has low economic activity overall and particularly low rates for women. Qualifications and basic skill levels are polarised. High levels of resident unemployment exist alongside extremely high levels of long-term unemployment. There are substantial gaps between male and female employment rates and a 30 per cent difference in the employment rates of Whites and non-Whites. The labour market could not be said to function on an equitable basis.

- **Glasgow** has low economic activity rates, high unemployment rates with levels of long-term unemployment well above average. A higher than average proportion of people have degree level qualifications, but also a higher than average proportion have no qualifications. There is near parity between male and female employment rates and an average gap between Whites and non-Whites.

- **Bradford**, males activity rates are only a little below average but female rates are very low. The city’s population is poorly qualified relative to Britain and basic skill levels are also relatively low. However, Bradford has only average levels of unemployment and a low proportion of people in long-term unemployment. In terms of gender, the labour market is fairly equitable, but there is a very large gap between the working age employment rate of Whites and non-Whites, with the latter faring worse.
3 Match between supply and demand

This chapter examines the volume of job vacancies along with the proportions of hard to fill and skill shortage vacancies. The aim is to help determine whether the needs of employers are met by the available labour supply. Unfortunately, data relating to vacancies is often unavailable at a local area level.

3.1 Vacancies and skills shortages and gaps

The existence of vacancies in establishments may be considered to provide an indication of the rate at which jobs are created by businesses. In a strong labour market, vacancies are filled quickly and represent a relatively small proportion of all employment. Consequently, employers face relatively few recruitment difficulties. The indicator vacancies, as a proportion of total employment, would, in this case, be low. However, a small overall proportion of vacancies could be hiding other difficulties, for example, vacancies that are difficult to fill or that relate to crucial skills required by employers to operate effectively. A range of other indicators are, therefore, also investigated. Most of the data comes from the National Employers Skills Survey (NESS) carried out on behalf of the Learning and Skills Councils and relates only to England and its regions.

In 2003, vacancies as a proportion of total employment in all four regions were a little above those in England, which lay at three per cent (Figure 40). Birmingham and Solihull had the highest rate of vacancies at 3.3 per cent. It could be inferred that overall vacancies are filled relatively slowly in all the case study areas.
Figure 40  Vacancies as a proportion of total employment, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West of England</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham and Solihull</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London East</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Yorkshire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: LSC National Employers Skills Survey, 2003 (weighted by employment)

Figure 41 represents the proportion of employers who have vacancies in each of the four regions, and gives a sense of the flow of job vacancies, with a high proportion implying dynamism in the labour market. It also gives an occupational break down of those vacancies. Overall, the West of England had high levels of employers with vacancies. Twenty-six per cent of vacancies were reported to be in sales and customer services, well above the national figure of 20 per cent. However, it had below average vacancies for managers, professionals, administration staff, skilled trades people and machine operatives. In Birmingham and Solihull, fewer employers than average had overall vacancies and in most occupations. A notable exception is that there were high proportions of sales and customer services vacancies in the area (25 per cent).

London East had vacancy levels that are below average (13 per cent compared to 18 per cent in England). There were, however, above average levels of vacancies in professional, associate professional and sales and customer service occupations. In West Yorkshire there was a high proportion of vacancies (20 per cent) and a higher than average concentration in machine operational (ten per cent), elementary (18 per cent) and managerial positions (11 per cent).
Figure 41  Skills shortage vacancies as a proportion of total vacancies, 2003

The next indicator, illustrated in Figure 43, measures the proportion of vacancies that were hard to fill for a variety of reasons, including: too much competition in the labour market, low number of applicants, and lack of applicants with suitable skills and experience. The figure for England was 38 per cent; the West of England, and Birmingham and Solihull have similar proportions. Hard to fill vacancies in West Yorkshire represent 39 per cent of vacancies in the region, just over the national average. London East performed very well on this indicator, with only 22 per cent of vacancies being hard to fill.

Most of the hard to fill vacancies in the West of England were for sales and customer services staff, which made up 29 per cent of the total. In Birmingham and Solihull sales and customer service jobs were also the hardest to fill (30 per cent), followed by personal services jobs (20 per cent). Most of the hard to fill vacancies in the London East area were in skilled trades occupations (22 per cent), but there was also a significant proportion in sales (21 per cent). In West Yorkshire, the hardest to fill vacancies are for skilled trades, in line with shortages in Britain. A higher than average proportion of hard to fill vacancies were for associate professionals (15 per cent) and personal services staff (17 per cent).
A sub-set of the hard to fill vacancies are skill shortage vacancies. These are measured by the number of employers who report having a low number of job applicants with either the required skills, work experience or qualifications. The NESS indicated that 20 per cent of vacancies in England are due to skills shortages in the external labour market. Birmingham and the West of England performed well on this score, with skills shortage vacancies accounting for only one in six (16 per cent) of vacancies. London East had overall levels of hard to fill vacancies that were well below average, and also performed better than England in terms of skills shortages vacancies, with 18 per cent of vacancies being due to skills shortages. Skills shortages accounted for 19 per cent of vacancies in West Yorkshire, just below the national average.

The NESS also asks employers about internal skills gaps, ie skills deficiencies arising from existing employees within businesses who are deemed to significantly lack the requisite skills for their jobs. There was some variation between the regions in which the case study areas are located. In West Yorkshire, ten per cent of staff were not proficient, compared to nine per cent in England (Figure 43). Although in 2003, Birmingham had below average proportions of skill shortage vacancies, it had above average levels (ten per cent) of staff who were not deemed proficient in their job. The West of England and London East both had average skills gap densities.
Figure 43  Skills gap density amongst all staff (percentage of staff that are not proficient)


Figure 44  Proportion of employers that have vacancies with occupational details (England)

Figure 45  Proportion of employers that have vacancies with occupational details (West of England)

- Proportion that have vacancies
- Managers
- Professionals
- Associate professionals
- Administrative/clerical staff
- Skilled trades occupations
- Personal services staff
- Sales and customer services staff
- Machine operatives
- Elementary staff

Figure 46  Proportion of employers that have vacancies with occupational details (Birmingham and Solihull)

Proportion that have vacancies
Managers
Professionals
Associate professionals
Administrative/clerical staff
Skilled trades occupations
Personal services staff
Sales and customer services staff
Machine operatives
Elementary staff

Figure 47  Proportion of employers that have vacancies with occupational details (London East)

Figure 48  Proportion of employers that have vacancies with occupational details (West Yorkshire)

Proportion that have vacancies
Managers
Professionals
Associate professionals
Administrative/clerical staff
Skilled trades occupations
Personal services staff
Sales and customer services staff
Machine operatives
Elementary staff

Per cent
0  5  10  15  20  25

Another measure that relates to levels of vacancies is provided by Jobcentre Plus. Data is derived from their vacancies databases across Britain. A limitation of this source of information is that only about one-third of employers choose to recruit through Jobcentre Plus, and there is a bias toward lower skilled occupations. Vacancies for elementary occupations account for one-third of all Jobcentre Plus vacancies in Britain (Figure 50). All case study areas roughly follow the national distribution of Jobcentre Plus vacancies, although a few exceptions stand out. In Glasgow, levels of sales and customer service (26 per cent) and elementary
occupations vacancies (36 per cent) far exceed those for Britain (18 per cent and 30 per cent respectively). Conversely, there are lower than average vacancies for process, plant and machine operatives (six per cent). In the City and East London there are low levels of sales and customer service occupations (14 per cent).

Figure 50  Jobcentre Plus vacancies, by occupation and Jobcentre Plus district

Warning: The numbers of notified vacancies since April 2003 appear to have been affected by a drive by Jobcentre Plus to increase notifications from many employers in chosen sectors.

Summary of match between supply and demand:

- The **West of England** region, where Bristol is situated, has skills shortages that are well below national averages, which is a good indication of match between labour supply and demand. It has average skill gap densities within businesses and organisations and a good flow of vacancies. There are above average levels of vacancies in sales and customer service occupations, which are also found to be hard to fill.

- **Birmingham and Solihull** have vacancies as a proportion of employment that is above average, implying that some employers may have recruitment difficulties. That said, the rate of vacancies that are due to skill shortages in the labour market are well below average. There are just above average levels of skill gap densities among staff in Birmingham and Solihull. A high proportion of vacancies are in sales and customer service, which are also the hardest group of vacancies to fill in the region.

- **London East** seemed to have a low flow of vacancies, but with above average levels in professional, associate professional and sales and client services. Taken on its own, the low flow could indicate lack of dynamism within the labour market. It could also indicate that vacancies are concentrated amongst a relatively small number of employers. There are very low levels of hard to fill vacancies, of which, below average proportions are skill shortage vacancies. Skills gap densities are average. These indicators suggest a good match between supply and demand. The hardest to fill vacancies are for skilled trades people and sales and customer service, although compared to Britain the latter make up a low proportion of Jobcentre Plus vacancies.

- **West Yorkshire** has a rate of vacancies as a proportion of employment that is above average, which could imply some recruitment difficulties. Furthermore, levels of hard to fill vacancies are just above average, but only an average proportion are due to skills shortages. A higher than average proportion of hard to fill vacancies are in associate professional and personal services occupations. Above average proportions of staff are deemed to lack proficiency in their jobs. There may be some mismatch between labour supply and demand in the region, although on the plus side there is a high flow of jobs.

- The only data provided for **Glasgow** related to Jobcentre Plus vacancies. Largely following the sectoral and occupational patterns already observed, levels of sales and customer service, and elementary occupations vacancies far exceed those for Britain. Conversely, there are lower than average vacancies for process, plant and machine operatives.
4 Additional tables

4.1 Chapter 2

Table 2 Employment rate of working age residents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>People in employment (N)</th>
<th>Working age population (N)</th>
<th>Employment rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>26,123,000</td>
<td>35,163,000</td>
<td>74.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>189,000</td>
<td>243,000</td>
<td>77.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>383,000</td>
<td>591,000</td>
<td>64.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>73,000</td>
<td>132,000</td>
<td>55.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>202,000</td>
<td>284,000</td>
<td>71.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>238,000</td>
<td>370,000</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 3 Total jobs and jobs density, by area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Total jobs (N)</th>
<th>Jobs density (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>29,431,000</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>274,000</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>536,000</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>160,000</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>219,000</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>414,000</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4**  Change in employees in employment, 2002-2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2002 (N)</th>
<th>2003 (N)</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>25,589,747</td>
<td>25,716,246</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>247,264</td>
<td>231,092</td>
<td>-6.5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>483,815</td>
<td>490,677</td>
<td>1.4*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>147,527</td>
<td>150,141</td>
<td>1.8*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>194,957</td>
<td>195,396</td>
<td>0.2*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>385,801</td>
<td>385,302</td>
<td>-0.1*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These figures are aggregates from which agriculture class 0100 (1992 SIC) have been excluded.

Warning: It should be noted that the 2003 ABI data for aggregate areas is based on 2003 CAS wards which differs from previous years’ ABI data, which was built from 1991 census wards. This will give rise to discontinuities when comparing 2003 data with previous years.

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, via Nomis.

**Table 5**  Change in employees in employment, 1998 to 2003 (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>-6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>-4.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, via Nomis.

**Table 6**  Out- and in-commuting, by area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>In-commuters as % of workers</th>
<th>Out-commuters as % of employed residents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>65.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>24.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ONS, 2001 Census data (IES calculations)
### Table 7  Employment, by sector, 2003 (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Great Britain</th>
<th>Bristol</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Tower Hamlets</th>
<th>Bradford</th>
<th>Glasgow City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and fishing*</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy and water</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution, hotels and restaurants</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and communications</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking, finance and insurance etc.</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration, education and health</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These figures are aggregates from which agriculture class 0100 (1992 SIC) have been excluded.

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, Employee Analysis 2003, via Nomis.

### Table 8  Employment change by sector, 2002-2003 (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Great Britain</th>
<th>Bristol</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Tower Hamlets</th>
<th>Bradford</th>
<th>Glasgow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and fishing*</td>
<td>-4.5</td>
<td>-6.9</td>
<td>-26.7</td>
<td>-10.0</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td>-35.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy and water</td>
<td>-5.2</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
<td>-10.0</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>-6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
<td>-3.1</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>-7.7</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution, hotels and restaurants</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>-5.0</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
<td>-7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and communications</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
<td>-31.8</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>-6.1</td>
<td>-10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking, finance and insurance etc.</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>-3.0</td>
<td>-7.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration, education and health</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>-5.9</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td>-2.8</td>
<td>-7.1</td>
<td>-22.6</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total | 0.5 | -6.5 | 1.4 | 1.8 | 0.2 | -0.1 |

Note: Where figures are missing they have been excluded due to reasons of confidentiality. Figures for agriculture and fishing are aggregates from which agriculture class 0100 (1992 SIC) have been excluded.

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, via Nomis.
Table 9  
Industry of main job, by ethnic group for Great Britain (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry (main job)</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Pakistani</th>
<th>Bangladeshi</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and fishing</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy and water</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels and restaurants</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, storage and communication</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking, finance and insurance, etc.</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration, education and health</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Denotes that the sample in this cell is less than 10,000 so cannot be considered reliable.


Table 10  
Employment, by sector in London (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>London</th>
<th>Tower Hamlets</th>
<th>Great Britain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and fishing</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy and water</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution, hotels and restaurants</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and communications</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking, finance and insurance, etc.</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration, education and health</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, Employee Analysis 2003, via Nomis.
Table 11  Distribution of employment, by occupation
(percentage of total jobs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Great Britain</th>
<th>Bristol</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Tower Hamlets</th>
<th>Bradford</th>
<th>Glasgow City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managers and senior officials</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional occupations</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate professional and technical</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and secretarial occupations</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled trades occupations</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal service occupations</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and customer services occupations</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process plant and machine operatives</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary occupations</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 12  Occupation, by ethnicity for Great Britain (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major occupation group (main job)</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Pakistani</th>
<th>Bangladeshi</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managers and senior officials</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional occupations</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate professional and technical</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and secretarial occupations</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled trades occupations</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal service occupations</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and customer services occupations</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process plant and machine operatives</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary occupations</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13  Distribution of employee jobs by size of workplace (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1-10 employees</th>
<th>11-49 employees</th>
<th>50-199 employees</th>
<th>200 or more employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 14  Distribution of workplaces, by size (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>1-10 employees</th>
<th>11-49 employees</th>
<th>50-199 employees</th>
<th>200 or more employees</th>
<th>Total (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>2,213,793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16,724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31,746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>84.3</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>10,033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>14,428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>20,192</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The dataset excludes farm-based agriculture data contained in SIC92 class 0100.

Table 15  Earnings of residents, by employment status (£)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Full-time workers</th>
<th>Part-time workers</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residence based</td>
<td>Workplace based</td>
<td>Residence based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>475.78</td>
<td>152.44</td>
<td>394.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>438.18</td>
<td>154.02</td>
<td>361.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>432.63</td>
<td>147.43</td>
<td>364.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>607.89</td>
<td>136.08</td>
<td>529.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>404.26</td>
<td>145.31</td>
<td>339.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>408.70</td>
<td>143.71</td>
<td>348.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Denotes that figures are either based on a sample of less than 30 or their coefficient of variation exceeds five per cent. They cannot be shown as they are not reliable.
### Table 16  Employee and self-employment rates (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Employees</th>
<th>Self-employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>90.7</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>84.7</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Resident persons in employment of working age.

### Table 17  Self-employment rates (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Local Area Labour Force Survey, via Nomis.

### Table 18  Employment status of employees (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
<th>Non-permanent*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes temporary employees whose actual job is not permanent, not the respondent's intentions about that job. Reasons include seasonal work, fixed-term contracts, agency temping and casual type of work.
### Table 19  Self-employment rate, by ethnicity in Great Britain (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Employee</th>
<th>Self-employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>*11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Figure denoted * is only based on 7,806 cases and so must be treated with caution.


### Table 20  Hours worked (percentage of all in employment)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>74.9</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>74.9</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Table 21  Level of home working, by region (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Home work</th>
<th>Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>88.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>86.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands Metropolitan</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>91.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner London (not central)</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>91.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Yorkshire</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>91.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strathclyde</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>93.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Chapter 3

**Table 22** Economic activity rates (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>83.4</td>
<td>72.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>64.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>81.9</td>
<td>67.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>74.4</td>
<td>65.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Working age resident population.

**Table 23** Highest qualification level, by unitary authority (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification level</th>
<th>Great Britain</th>
<th>Bristol</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Tower Hamlets</th>
<th>Bradford</th>
<th>Glasgow City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NVQ level 4+</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVQ level 3</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade apprenticeships</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVQ level 2</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVQ level 1</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other qualifications</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No qualifications</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Resident working age population.

**Table 24** Highest qualification, by ethnicity (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification level</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Pakistani</th>
<th>Bangladeshi</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NVQ level 5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.9*</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVQ level 4</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVQ level 3</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVQ level 2</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVQ level 1</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No qualifications</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Resident working age population.
* The sample in this cell is less than 10,000 so cannot be considered reliable.

### Table 25  Literacy skill level, by region, 2002 to 2003 (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Entry level</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yorks &amp; Humber</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Table 26  Numeracy skill level, by region, 2002 to 2003 (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Entry level</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yorks &amp; Humber</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Table 27  ILO Unemployment rate, by gender (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Unemployment rate working age</th>
<th>Unemployment rate working age (males)</th>
<th>Unemployment rate working age (females)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 28  Claimant count rates and duration of claim (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Total claimants (N)</th>
<th>Rate*</th>
<th>Percentage claiming for over six months</th>
<th>Percentage claiming for over 12 months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>777,607</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>5,196</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>29,679</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>7,933</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>15,259</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>7,775</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Resident working age population.

Source: ONS Claimant Count, October 2004.

Table 29  Working age employment rate, by gender (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>74.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>77.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>70.7</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>64.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>55.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>71.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>62.9</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 30  Working age employment rate (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Non-white</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>58.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>78.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>47.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.3 Chapter 4

#### Table 31 Vacancies as a proportion of total employment, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West of England</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham and Solihull</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London East</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Yorkshire</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


#### Table 32 Proportion of employers that have vacancies with occupational details (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>England</th>
<th>West of England</th>
<th>Birmingham and Solihull</th>
<th>London East</th>
<th>West Yorkshire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion that have vacancies</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate professionals</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative/clerical staff</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled trades occupations</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal services staff</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and customer services staff</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machine operatives</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary staff</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


#### Table 33 Hard-to-fill vacancies as proportion of total vacancies, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>37.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West of England</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham and Solihull</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London East</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Yorkshire</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 34  Skills shortage vacancies as a proportion of total vacancies, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West of England</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham and Solihull</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London East</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Yorkshire</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The number of skills shortage vacancies are only asked for randomly selected hard to fill vacancies.


Table 35  Skills gap density amongst all staff (percentage of staff that are not proficient)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West of England</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham and Solihull</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London East</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Yorkshire</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 36  Distribution of hard to fill vacancies, by occupation (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>England</th>
<th>West of England</th>
<th>Birmingham and Solihull</th>
<th>London East</th>
<th>West Yorkshire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate professionals</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative/clerical staff</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled trades occupations</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal services staff</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and customer services staff</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machine operatives</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary staff</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total                  | 100     | 100             | 100                     | 100         | 100            |

### Table 37  Jobcentre Plus vacancies, by occupation and Jobcentre Plus district (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Great Britain</th>
<th>West of England</th>
<th>Birmingham and Solihull</th>
<th>City and East London</th>
<th>Bradford</th>
<th>Glasgow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managers and senior officials</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional occupations</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate professional and technical occupations</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and secretarial occupations</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled trades occupations</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal service occupations</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and customer service occupations</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process, plant and machine operatives</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary occupations</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (N)</strong></td>
<td>3,383,667</td>
<td>61,938</td>
<td>86,604</td>
<td>30,200</td>
<td>32,538</td>
<td>63,925</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Warning: The numbers of notified vacancies since April 2003 appear to have been affected by a drive by Jobcentre Plus to increase notifications from many employers in chosen sectors.

Source: ONS, JCP Vacancies March 2003 – February 20.
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Annex 1
Labour market review of five case study areas
1 Labour market demand

In this chapter, the performance of the five case study areas are presented in terms of the strength of labour demand. This is achieved by describing the character and volume of employment in the areas, assessing the balance and quality of that employment and finally, by looking at working patterns and job types.

1.1 Employment

The proportion of the working age resident population in employment, recent trends in the number of employee jobs in the areas and the ratio of jobs to working age residents provide an overview of the strength of labour demand. Commuting flows into and out of the areas are also examined to determine the degree of self-containment.

1.1.1 Employment rate

The employment rate is defined as the proportion of the working age population who are in employment and comes from data on the resident population and labour force. From March 2003 to February 2004, the employment rate for Bristol was a very healthy 78 per cent, four percentage points higher than for Britain as a whole (see Figure 1). Birmingham, Tower Hamlets, Bradford and Glasgow all had lower than average employment rates. The employment rates in Birmingham and Glasgow were 65 and 64 per cent respectively. Tower Hamlets had an employment rate of 55 per cent, well below the national employment rate of 74 per cent. Bradford, on the other hand, has an employment rate just three percentage points below that of Britain. One disadvantage of this measure is that it may reflect the strength of labour demand, not only in the five case study areas, but in adjacent regions, if significant numbers commute to work in jobs outside the area.
1.1.2 Jobs density

The jobs density indicator illustrates the number of jobs compared to the local working age population. Figure 2 shows that in Great Britain there were 0.83 jobs for every working age resident in 2002. In Bristol, Tower Hamlets and Glasgow there were more jobs than local residents, suggesting a degree of in-commuting and a high demand for labour. It is striking that in Tower Hamlets, even though there is an extremely low employment rate amongst working age residents, the jobs density is 1.15 jobs per resident.


Figure 2  Total jobs and jobs density, by area

In Birmingham there was less than one job per person (0.89), but the jobs density was above the national average. Bradford fared badly, with a jobs density of 0.76, below the national average. This could imply a high unemployment rate, or that a high proportion of people living in Bradford commute to work in other areas.

**Employment growth**

An alternative indicator to consider is the number of employee jobs in the region, and trends over time. This indicator (which is derived from data from employers) suffers from the converse of the problem associated with the employment rate, in that jobs in the local area might be filled by commuters coming in to work from other areas.

Between 2002 and 2003, the number of employee jobs in Britain increased by half of one per cent (Figure 3). The South West region experienced the largest fall in jobs in the country that year, and in Bristol the number of employee jobs fell by seven per cent. Birmingham (one per cent) and Tower Hamlets (two per cent) had above average percentage increases in employee jobs, suggesting an expanding demand for labour. Bradford had a small increase of 0.2 per cent in the number of jobs, just below the figure for Britain. Glasgow had a slight fall of 0.1 per cent in the number of employee jobs between 2002 and 2003.

![Figure 3 Change in employees in employment, 2002-2003](image)

Although in the most recent results Bristol performed considerably worse than the national average, when looking over a longer time frame, since 1998, Bristol has out-performed Great Britain as a whole (Figure 4). Glasgow saw considerable increases in jobs from 1998 to 2001; the final year had an increase of 6.5 per cent.
However, job losses have occurred since 2001. Between 1998 and 1999, and 2000 to 2001, the number of employees in Tower Hamlets increased by 11 and ten per cent respectively, increases far above those for Britain. From 2001 to 2002, however, employee jobs fell by four per cent.

**Figure 4  Change in employees in employment, 1998 to 2003**

![Graph showing percentage change in employees 1998-2003](image)

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, via Nomis.

In Britain, between 2002 and 2003, the agriculture and fishing, energy and water, manufacturing, construction and other service sectors all contracted (Figure 5). The largest increase in employment was in the public administration, education and health sectors, which expanded by four per cent. Employment also increased in distribution, hotels and restaurants (by one per cent), and financial mediation (by two per cent). In the case study areas, patterns of employment changed considerably during this period. Figures 5 to 10 show the changes in employment across the different labour markets under review.

The majority of sectors contracted in Bristol between 2002 and 2003. The manufacturing, transport and communications sectors were the most severely affected by job cuts, shrinking by 27 and 32 per cent respectively. The only exception to the trend was in distribution, hotels and restaurants, where employment increased by three per cent.

Birmingham experienced substantial decreases in employment in the manufacturing and financial mediation sectors and in other services. The remaining sectors increased their share of employment, with public administration, education and health increasing by 17 per cent.
Tower Hamlets had a 30 per cent rise in employee jobs in the transport and communications sector between 2002 and 2003. There was also a large increase in the manufacturing industry (22 per cent). However, losses were found in other services, and the distribution, hotel and restaurant sector, which contracted by 23 per cent and five per cent respectively.

In Bradford, there were large changes in employment levels in the agriculture, fishing, energy and water sectors, although the absolute numbers were small. Going against the trend in Britain and the other case study areas, employment in manufacturing expanded in Bradford from 2002 to 2003, by three per cent, and in banking, finance and insurance, by five per cent. However, the construction, distribution, hotel and restaurant, transport and communication and other service sectors all contracted.

In Glasgow, which had a net decrease in employee jobs overall, hefty job cuts were seen in: transport and communications (11 per cent), energy and water (eight per cent), distribution, hotels and restaurants (seven per cent), and manufacturing (seven per cent). There was considerable growth in construction employment (by 16 per cent), and employment in public administration, health and education increased by five per cent.

**Figure 5   Employment change by sector, 2002-2003 (Great Britain)**

Note: Where figures are missing they have been excluded due to reasons of confidentiality. Figures for agriculture and fishing are aggregates from which agriculture class 0100 (1992 SIC) have been excluded.

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, via Nomis.
Figure 6  Employment change by sector, 2002-2003 (Bristol)

Note: Where figures are missing they have been excluded due to reasons of confidentiality. Figures for agriculture and fishing are aggregates from which agriculture class 0100 (1992 SIC) have been excluded.

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, via Nomis.
Figure 7  Employment change by sector, 2002-2003 (Birmingham)

Note:  Where figures are missing they have been excluded due to reasons of confidentiality. Figures for agriculture and fishing are aggregates from which agriculture class 0100 (1992 SIC) have been excluded.

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, via Nomis.
Figure 8  Employment change by sector, 2002-2003
(Tower Hamlets)

Note: Where figures are missing they have been excluded due to reasons of confidentiality. Figures for agriculture and fishing are aggregates from which agriculture class 0100 (1992 SIC) have been excluded.

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, via Nomis.
Figure 9  Employment change by sector, 2002-2003 (Bradford)

Note: Where figures are missing they have been excluded due to reasons of confidentiality. Figures for agriculture and fishing are aggregates from which agriculture class 0100 (1992 SIC) have been excluded.

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, via Nomis.
The employment rate and jobs density indicators examined residents in employment and the number of jobs in the different areas. But they have problems associated with them in that the former include residents who work outside the area, and the latter include jobs that are filled by people who live outside the area. Local Authorities data provided by the 2001 Census allows analysis of where residents work and where workers live. The self-containment indicator gauges the size of commuting flows into and out of an area, and the extent to which it may be influenced by the economies of neighbouring areas.

Figure 11 shows that Bradford is a very self-contained labour market, which is perhaps surprising given its close proximity to the larger city of Leeds. Just over a quarter of jobs are filled by people from out-lying areas and a similar proportion of residents work outside of the city. In contrast, only 15 per cent of the people who work in Tower Hamlets actually live there, and 65 per cent of residents commute to jobs outside of the area. To some extent this is expected, as commuting rates are higher within and into London than the rest of the country, due to the high demand for labour. The geographical area of Tower Hamlets is relatively small, so commuting distances into and out of the borough are not huge, and transport links are good. It will be interesting, nonetheless, to see if there is a skills mismatch between local...
residents, often living in deprived areas, and a demand for highly skilled, qualified labour in the banking and finance industries situated on the edge of the city and Docklands areas.

Bristol, Birmingham and Glasgow all attract proportionally more in-commuters than there are residents going to work outside the cities; suggesting that these labour markets have a pull factor for wider areas, and can be considered travel to work areas.

**Figure 11  Out- and in-commuting, by area**

In summary:

- **Bristol** has a high employment rate for residents, a high jobs density and attracts workers from outside its boundaries; evidence of a strong demand for labour. Between 2002 and 2003 there was a sharp fall in the number of jobs, although this was from a high base. Distribution, hotels and restaurants were the only sectors to have expanded in that year.

- **Birmingham** has a relatively low employment rate, an average jobs density and attracts workers who live in other areas. It could be said to have a fairly healthy or average demand for labour. In the last seven years there has mostly been an annual increase in the number of jobs and since 2000, the demand for labour has been increasing. The largest growth from 2002 to 2003 was in public administration, health and education.
• **Tower Hamlets** has an extremely low resident employment rate and yet a very high jobs density. There are very high rates of inflow and outflow of workers to and from the London borough. While the demand for labour is very strong, the resident population does not appear to be benefiting. That said, a high proportion of residents benefit from neighbouring labour markets. Apart from a dip between 2001 and 2002, the percentage change in the number of employee jobs has been positive since the late 1990s.

• **Bradford** has slightly lower than average employment rates and jobs density, and is a relatively self-contained labour market. It does not seem to have a particularly strong demand for labour. From 2001 to 2003 there was growth in the number of employee jobs, although in the latter year the growth was at a rate below the national average.

• **Glasgow** has a low employment rate but a very high jobs density. Half its workers commute from outside its boundaries, confirming that it has a good demand for labour. From 1998 to 2001 there were substantial increases in the number of jobs; however, from 2001 there has been a decrease in the number of jobs.

1.2 **Balance and quality of employment**

Having looked at the overall level of labour demand in the five case study areas, the next measures to be considered are the balance and quality of employment. These will include employment by sector and by size of establishment, average earnings levels based on data from employers, and employment by occupation based on data from people in employment who are resident in the areas.

1.2.1 **Employment by sector**

The health of a labour market could be judged by the balance of employment across all sectors to provide a range of working opportunities to its residents and to help ensure it is not overly vulnerable to any external shocks or slow-downs in particular sectors. It could also be judged by whether it has a relative concentration in a number of growth sectors, which would be a key element of competitive advantage over other areas.

An additional consideration for this review is the sectoral distribution of employment of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain. In particular, it is important to compare the distribution of jobs in sectors in the case study areas with the known pattern of Bangladeshi and Pakistani employment. Bangladeshi and Pakistani residents could be at a disadvantage in the case study areas if the sectors in which they normally work are not well represented in those areas. However, this is perhaps oversimplistic and other questions arise:

• Are the sectors that Bangladeshis and Pakistanis concentrated in nationally, a reflection of the opportunities available in the spatial areas in which they are concentrated?
• How far are the distributions of sector and occupation a reflection of Bangladeshi and Pakistani employment preferences?

These are complex issues that cannot be resolved here, but are worth highlighting. Skills and qualifications will be discussed later in Section 2.1.2 and may make the situation clearer.

Looking at the sectoral distribution spread across all sectors (Figure 12), the jobs in Bristol are reasonably well-balanced and roughly follow the national pattern of employment. However, there is some bias toward higher growth sectors, which can be viewed positively. In the city there is a lower than average proportion of manufacturing jobs and a higher than average proportion of employment in the banking and finance industries. Employment in the distribution, hospitality and catering sectors accounts for 22 per cent of the total, just below the national proportion of 25 per cent.

Birmingham also has a reasonable spread of employment by sector. It has a higher than average proportion of jobs in manufacturing (by two percentage points) and in public administration, education and health (by four percentage points). There is lower than average employment in distribution, hospitality and catering, with just one-fifth of employment being in that industry.

Tower Hamlets is heavily reliant on one sector, banking/finance, which accounts for 43 per cent of employment. As already observed, this means it is vulnerable to slowdowns in that sector (note the dip in employee jobs after the 11 September 2001 disaster, shown in Figure 4). On the other hand, it is generally a well-paid, growing sector. In the borough, there is a lower than average proportion of manufacturing jobs (by three percentage points), public administration (by nine percentage points), and distribution, hotels and restaurants (by ten percentage points).
Figure 12  Employment, by sector, 2003 (Great Britain)

* These figures are aggregates from which agriculture class 0100 (1992 SIC) have been excluded.

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, Employee Analysis 2003, via Nomis.
Figure 13  Employment, by sector, 2003 (Bristol)

* These figures are aggregates from which agriculture class 0100 (1992 SIC) have been excluded.

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, Employee Analysis 2003, via Nomis.
Figure 14  Employment, by sector, 2003 (Birmingham)

* These figures are aggregates from which agriculture class 0100 (1992 SIC) have been excluded.

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, Employee Analysis 2003, via Nomis.
Figure 15  Employment, by sector, 2003 (Tower Hamlets)

* These figures are aggregates from which agriculture class 0100 (1992 SIC) have been excluded.

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, Employee Analysis 2003, via Nomis.
Figure 16  Employment, by sector, 2003 (Bradford)

* These figures are aggregates from which agriculture class 0100 (1992 SIC) have been excluded.

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, Employee Analysis 2003, via Nomis.
Bradford has a fairly balanced spread of employment across sectors with a range of high and low wage sectors. There is proportionally more employment in public administration, education and health (29 per cent) than in Britain as a whole (26 per cent). Manufacturing jobs account for 18 per cent of employment compared to a national average of 13 per cent. Whilst manufacturing has the advantage of providing opportunities for people with low qualifications and skills, the sector is declining in Britain and Europe generally. This trend could, therefore, disproportionately impact upon Bradford’s labour market in the future.

Finally, employment in Glasgow is biased toward employment in banking and finance (24 per cent) and public administration (32 per cent). There is low representation of the manufacturing industry, which accounts for just seven per cent of employment in the city.

According to the Labour Force Survey, people of Pakistani ethnic origin in Britain are noticeably over-represented in the distribution and transport, and storage and communication sectors, and under-represented in public administration, education and health (see Figure 18). Pakistanis may, therefore, have more difficulty finding employment in labour markets with lower than average employment in distribution sectors.
and transport; in this case Tower Hamlets, Birmingham, Glasgow and Bristol. They may also be at a disadvantage in those areas with higher than average public administration, education and health sectors, which in this study applies to Bristol, Birmingham, Bradford and Glasgow.

People of Bangladeshi ethnic origin are heavily concentrated in the hotel and restaurant industries (40 per cent). With the exception of distribution and transport, Bangladeshis are under-represented in all other sectors. Bangladeshis may not be well placed to take advantage of opportunities in areas which have a higher than average concentration of banking, finance and insurance, ie Bristol, Tower Hamlets and Glasgow City. They may be at a disadvantage in those areas where there are lower than average jobs in the restaurant and hotel sector, ie Birmingham, Tower Hamlets and Glasgow.

Figure 18 Industry of main job, by ethnic group for Great Britain (White)


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12 The number of Bangladeshis in working in banking, finance and insurance is too small to be considered reliable, so cannot be reported.
Figure 19  Industry of main job, by ethnic group for Great Britain (Other)

Figure 20  Industry of main job, by ethnic group for Great Britain (Pakistani)

Note: Missing figures cannot be reported as sample sizes are too small.

Figure 21  Industry of main job, by ethnic group for Great Britain (Bangladeshi)

Note:  Missing figures cannot be reported as sample sizes are too small.

Looking at this indicator, there seems to be a mismatch between the sectors represented in Tower Hamlets (and to a lesser extent in Glasgow) and the sectors the Bangladeshi population are concentrated in nationally. However, as seen in the previous section, there is a great deal of commuting in and out of Tower Hamlets and residents could, theoretically, take advantage of opportunities in other boroughs. Therefore, the whole of London could be viewed as a travel to work area.

Generally, the Tower Hamlets labour market follows a similar pattern to London (see Chapter 4, Table 4.8). Similarly, London has far higher than average employment in banking and finance (32 per cent), although not as high as Tower Hamlets (43 per cent). London has levels of employment in manufacturing (six per cent) that are under half that of Britain. The figures show that the sectors in which the Bangladeshi residents of Tower Hamlets are most likely to be working, are not well-represented within their wider travel to work area. In contrast to Tower Hamlets, however, London has close to average employment levels in distribution, catering and hospitality (23 per cent).
1.2.2 Employment by occupation

Another measure of balance and quality of jobs is the range of occupations available in the labour market (Figure 23). As with employment by sector, there are alternative ways to view this indicator. Thus, it may be important for the labour market to have a large proportion of highly skilled jobs, but also that it has a sufficient range of skills in the workplace, including jobs for the lower skilled members of the workforce.

In Britain overall, employment is slightly skewed towards the occupations requiring higher qualifications levels. Fourteen per cent of employment is in associate professional and technical occupations and 13 per cent in administrative and secretarial occupations. The biggest single group of occupations is managers and senior officials (14.4 per cent); this group generally includes self-employed workers.

The distribution of employment by occupation in Bristol is pretty close to that of Great Britain. There is a slight bias towards the highly skilled occupations, for example, 15 per cent of employment is in professional occupations compared to 12 per cent in Britain. The proportion of employment in skilled trades and plant and machine operatives are below average, whereas, employment in elementary occupations is about average.

Birmingham has lower than average proportions of managers and senior officials (11 per cent), (suggesting low levels of self-employment), associate professional and technical occupations (12 per cent), and administrative and secretarial occupations (12 per cent). It has higher than average skilled trades occupations, plant and machine operatives, and elementary occupations. Lower paid occupations are, therefore, slightly over-represented in Birmingham.

Tower Hamlets has a higher proportion of managers and senior professionals (17 per cent), professional (19 per cent), and associate professional and technical occupations (16 per cent) than found nationally. This is associated with the preponderance of the banking and finance sectors in the area. All other occupations are under-represented in the borough. Bradford (in contrast to Tower Hamlets) has an over-representation of elementary occupations, plant and machine operatives and a lower than average distribution of professionals, associate professionals and managers. Overall, however, the employment is quite well balanced between occupations in Bradford.

In Glasgow, perhaps reflecting the large public administration, education and health sector, there is higher than average employment levels in administrative and secretarial occupations. There is higher than average sales and elementary occupations, and lower than average managers and skilled trades occupations. Whilst the pattern of employment diverges from the national one, there is, nonetheless, a good spread of high and low skilled occupations.
Figure 23  Distribution of employment, by occupation
(percentage of total jobs)

Source: Annual Local Area Labour Force Survey.
Turning to occupation by ethnicity, it can be seen again that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have very different patterns of employment from the White majority (Figure 24). There are also considerable variations between the two minority ethnic groups. While Pakistanis have just below average employment in managerial and senior official occupations (14 per cent), Bangladeshis have relatively high levels of employment in those occupations (17 per cent); managers are found in all sectors and include proprietors. Above average proportions of Pakistanis are in professional occupations (14 per cent). In contrast, Bangladeshis have levels of employment in professional occupations that are half the national average (six per cent).

Both Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have levels of employment in sales and customer services that are well above those of the White majority. This is to be expected, as Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were shown to be relatively concentrated in distribution, with includes retail and trades. One-fifth of Pakistanis work as process, plant and machine operatives, compared to eight per cent of Bangladeshis and Whites. This occupational group includes drivers, and the figure mirrors the fact that Pakistanis are well-represented in the transport and manufacturing sectors.

High proportions of Bangladeshis (17 per cent), and Pakistanis (14 per cent), work in elementary occupations, compared to all people in Britain (12 per cent). As already seen, 40 per cent of Bangladeshi workers are employed in the hotel and restaurant sector. It is, therefore, congruous that a large proportion work in elementary occupations that include waiting staff. The Pakistani and Bangladeshi working populations have low levels of employment in the following sectors: associate professional and technical; administrative and secretarial; and personal service occupations.
Figure 24  Occupation, by ethnicity for Great Britain

1.2.3 Employment by size of business

Distribution of employment across establishments of different sizes is a further balance and quality theme to examine. As is often the case, there are a number of ways of interpreting the information. On the one hand, a high proportion of employment in small firms might indicate a dynamic labour market with a high rate of new job generation and new firm generation. On the other hand, a labour market with a small proportion of employment in large firms, who are more likely to engage in workforce development, might not be considered healthy.

The Bristol and Bradford labour markets have well-balanced distributions of employee jobs by size of workplace, which are similar to the national distribution (Figure 10). In both areas, 42 per cent of employment is in establishments with under 49 employees, compared to 46 per cent in Britain.

Birmingham, Glasgow and Tower Hamlets have below average proportions of employment in smaller organisations. In Britain, 21 per cent of employee jobs are in companies of ten or less people; in Glasgow the figure is 14 per cent, and in Tower Hamlets and Birmingham it is 16 per cent. Tower Hamlets and Glasgow both have very high levels of employment in establishments with over 200 employees (see Figure 25).

Figure 25 Distribution of employee jobs, by workplace size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Great Britain</th>
<th>Bristol</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Tower Hamlets</th>
<th>Bradford</th>
<th>Glasgow City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-10 employees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-49 employees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-199 employees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 or more employees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The dataset excludes farm-based agriculture data contained in SIC92 class 0100.

1.2.4 Distribution of earnings

The final dimension of balance and job quality relates to the level of pay and earnings in the labour market. In 2003, average weekly earnings for full-time employees in Bristol (£462.87), Birmingham (£432.63), Bradford (£404.26), and Glasgow (£408.70), are all below the British figure of £475.78 (see Chapter 4, Table 4.17). However, the national average is skewed by very high earnings in London and the South East. In Tower Hamlets, the full-time workplace pay is 70 per cent higher than the national average.

Bradford has the lowest wages of the case study areas and reflects the earlier observation that the Yorkshire city has a higher concentration of occupations that are generally lower paid than in Great Britain as a whole.

In Bristol, full-time workers, which include in-commuters, are only just under-compensated compared to Britain, receiving an average of £462.87 per week. Part-time workers in Bristol, who earn an average of £154.02 per week, and working residents, who earn an average of £163.30, are actually paid above the national part-time wage (£152.44).

In all cases, the workplace gross pay is higher than residence-based earnings showing that a significant proportion of higher paid jobs go to in-commuters living beyond area boundaries. The difference is most marked in Tower Hamlets, where the total average workplace pay is £761.28 per week, compared to residence earnings of £529.31.

Summary of balance and quality of work:

- **Bristol** has a well balanced labour demand, with a slight bias toward growth sectors, meeting both our original criteria for a healthy labour market. Nationally, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are under-represented in banking and finance. Therefore, they may not be well placed to take advantage of those opportunities in Bristol. The city has a similar distribution of occupations to Britain, although with higher than average proportions of employment in professional occupations and lower than average proportions of elementary occupations, reflecting the sectoral pattern. Full-time workplace earnings are not far behind those for Britain. Part-time work in Bristol is well paid.

- **Birmingham** has a reasonable spread of employment across the different sectors, with higher than average employment in public administration, health and education. The distribution, hotels and restaurants sector provides less than average employment in Birmingham, which may affect unemployment levels of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis living there. Lower paid occupations, such as plant operatives and elementary occupations, are slightly over-represented in Birmingham, while there is lower than average employment of managers. Hence, earnings are below average. The labour market is slightly skewed toward larger firms.
• Employment in **Tower Hamlets** is dominated by the highly paid banking and finance sectors and, therefore, vulnerable to shocks in those sectors. Employment is, consequently, concentrated in large organisations and professional, higher skilled occupations. It is likely that there is a lack of employment opportunities for lower skilled workers. Earnings are substantially higher in Tower Hamlets than in Britain overall. The highest paid jobs are taken by in-commuters but the pay of working residents is also much better than average.

• **Bradford** has a fair balance of employment by sector, occupation and size, and largely follows the national pattern. There is a marginally higher proportion of employment in manufacturing and public administration, and subsequent over-representation of plant and machine operatives. There are average levels of employment in distribution, restaurants and transport, which is to the benefit of Pakistani and Bangladeshi residents. Full- and part-time work is paid at below the average for Britain.

• **Glasgow's** distribution of employment diverges from the national pattern, but there is still a good balance of high and low skilled occupations in the city. Large public administration, health and education sectors in Glasgow mean that there is a high proportion of employment in administration occupations. There is also a substantial banking and finance sector, but occupationally, employment in professional jobs is balanced by a large proportion of employment in elementary jobs. Small firms are under-represented in the Scottish city. Earnings are well below average for Britain but likely to be influenced by differences in the cost of living between Scotland and South East England.

### 1.3 Working patterns and job types

This section will examine the balance of working patterns and job types in the labour market, in terms of:

- employee jobs compared to self-employment;
- permanent compared to temporary/non-permanent employment;
- full-time compared to part-time employment;
- office(factory) based employment compared to homeworking/teleworking.

From the point of view of investigating the health of the labour market, there is no clear sense in which one particular pattern of job types and working patterns would be preferable to another. However, there is a general presumption that a good labour market would be one in which there was a variety of working patterns and contractual arrangements, to meet the needs of the workforce and also employers. At the extreme end of the scale, a labour market with only full-time, permanent, employee jobs could not be considered healthy in the modern economy.
1.3.1 Self-employment

In 2004, 12 per cent of working people in Britain were self-employed (Figure 26). In the same year, Tower Hamlets had a very healthy self-employment rate of 13 per cent. Bristol and Bradford both had self-employment rates a little below average at 11 per cent. In contrast, Birmingham had low (nine per cent) and Glasgow very low (six per cent) rates of self-employment.

Between 1999 and 2004, the self-employment rate of Great Britain remained quite constant, at around 12 per cent (Figure 27). However, there was variation between the case study areas. The longer-term trends highlight fluctuating self-employment rates in Tower Hamlets. The borough started the period with a self-employment rate two percentage points below average, rose the following year and then fell between 2001 and 2003. There was a sharp increase in self-employment from 2003 to 2004, to overtake levels in Britain.

Self-employment rates in Bradford were well behind those for Britain in 1999. Subsequently, there were yearly increases, with Bradford reaching average levels of self-employment in 2003. In 2004, however, self-employment fell to 11 per cent. Bristol’s self-employment rate in 1999 was equal to the national average. Since then it fluctuated annually, dipping to ten per cent in 2002/03 and rising again in 2004. Birmingham’s self-employment rate has not risen above ten per cent since 1999. Even at its peak in 2003 it was two percentage points below Britain, before falling to lower levels the following year (nine per cent). The self-employment rate has been declining since 1999 and culminated in a rate which is half that of Britain.

Figure 26  Self-employment rates, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Resident persons in employment of working age.
The self-employment rate for Pakistani workers in Britain, as illustrated in Figure 28, is 23 per cent, nearly twice that of all workers (12 per cent). The equivalent figure for Bangladeshis is marginally below average but this is not a reliable figure as there are not sufficiently large numbers of Bangladeshi participants in the Labour Force Survey. It could be argued that Pakistani entrepreneurs may find less opportunity in labour markets with below average rates of self-employment, ie Birmingham and Glasgow.
Figure 28  Self-employment rate, by ethnicity in Great Britain

Note: Bangladeshi figure is only based on 7,806 cases and so must be treated with caution.


Figure 29  Proportion of temporary employees

Note: Includes temporary employees whose actual job is not permanent, not the respondent’s intentions about that job. Reasons include seasonal work, fixed-term contracts, agency temping and casual type of work.

In Britain, five per cent of employees are either seasonal, agency or casual workers, or have fixed term contracts, while 95 per cent of employees have permanent contracts. It is the case that working without a permanent contract could be viewed as a source of insecurity for employees, but it could also be a route into permanent employment. A labour market with a deal of opportunities for temporary working can be considered flexible and dynamic. Tower Hamlets has the highest level of temporary working at eight per cent, with Birmingham and Bristol, both at seven per cent, not far behind. Glasgow had just above average rates of temporary working (six per cent) and Bradford average rates (five per cent).

Both Bristol and Bradford have levels of part-time working that match those for Britain, with a quarter of employees stating that they worked part-time (Figure 30). Levels of part-time working are close to average in Glasgow (24 per cent). Birmingham (22 per cent) and Tower Hamlets (20 per cent) have lower than average proportions of part-time workers.

**Figure 30  Part-time compared to full-time**

Data relating to home and office working is only available at a regional level. The South West has a high level of home working at 14 per cent, compared to 11 per cent in Britain (see Figure 31). West Midlands (Birmingham), Inner London (Tower Hamlets), West Yorkshire (Bradford), and Strathclyde (Glasgow) all have levels of home-working well below average.
**Summary:**

- **Bristol** has self-employment rates that are just below average. There is evidence of the availability of flexible working in the Bristol labour market with relatively high levels of non-permanent work statuses, part-time working and home working. This can be considered a positive sign for the condition of the labour market.

- **Birmingham** presents a mixed picture in terms of working patterns and job types. It has had low levels of self-employment since 1999. The labour market is slightly skewed toward full-time working and there are low levels of home working. Birmingham, however, has above average proportions of employees with non-permanent work contracts.

- **Tower Hamlets** currently has good levels of self-employment and a high percentage of workers with fixed term contracts or casual working arrangements. Simultaneously, there are below average levels of part-time and home working in the borough, suggesting that the workforce may have higher insecurity of job tenure without the benefits of flexible working.

- **Bradford** has levels of self-employment just below average. While patterns of part-time working employment status mirror the national picture, levels of home working are low. This, perhaps, reflects Bradford’s sectoral bias towards manufacturing, which is less well suited to home working.

- **Glasgow**, when judged on working patterns, does not present a particularly diverse, healthy picture in a modern economy. There are very low levels of self-employment in the city, below average levels of part-time working and low occurrence of home working.
2 Labour market supply

This chapter will examine the size and characteristics of the pool of labour supply in each of the case study areas. It is necessary to consider not just the volume of labour supply in the case study but the proportion of people who are actually economically active in the labour force.

2.1 Supply characteristics

2.1.1 Economic activity

Figure 32 shows the proportion of working age residents who are economically active in the labour force, that is, either working or looking for work and available to start. In Britain in 2004, the total economic activity rate was 78 per cent. The rate varies considerably by gender with men having a higher rate at 83 per cent, than women at 73 per cent. Bristol has very high activity rates for men and women, 81 per cent overall. The economic activity rate in Bradford is 75 per cent, three percentage points below average. Birmingham and Glasgow have low activity rates, which are below the national average. The activity rates in Tower Hamlets are considerably below the national average, at 63 per cent overall, and particularly low for women, whose activity rate is just 51 per cent of the working age population.
The level of qualifications held by people of working age in the population provides an indication of the quality of labour supply. It can be surmised that a healthy labour market is one with a high proportion of workforce qualified to a high level, and fewer people with lower qualification levels, or no qualifications at all.

Data from the Labour Force Survey shows that Bristol has a well-qualified working population (Figure 33). One-third of people living in Bristol have degree level qualifications compared to a quarter in Britain as a whole. Furthermore, only 12 per cent of residents have no qualifications compared to 15 per cent in Britain. The distribution of qualifications amongst working age residents of Tower Hamlets is very polarised; there are higher than average people with degrees and higher degrees (NVQ level 4+) and people with no qualifications. The same pattern is seen in Glasgow, although to a lesser extent.

Birmingham and Bradford have poorly-qualified working populations relative to Britain. Just over one-fifth of Bradford’s working age residents have degree level qualifications. Thirteen per cent have NVQ level 3 qualifications (such as ‘A’ levels), compared to 15 per cent nationally. Birmingham and Bradford have 22 per cent and 21 per cent respectively of residents with no formal qualifications.