

Family building intentions in England and Wales: trends, outcomes and interpretations

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INTRODUCTION

Information about the number of children that married women of childbearing age intend to have has been collected in Great Britain for over 30 years.¹ Since 1979 the General Household Survey (GHS) has collected the birth intentions of unmarried as well as married women, and it is these data that are analysed here.

Data on fertility intentions may be used to consider two key questions. First, have women actually had the number of children that they expected to have, and, if not, is that an indication of women not having, or being able to have the number of children they wanted (hereafter referred to as unmet fertility need)? Second, can analysis of current intentions, together with an understanding of how expectations and actual fertility have varied in the past, be used to help inform assumptions of future fertility? The GHS data were used through the 1970s to the mid-1990s as evidence to help determine the fertility assumptions for the United Kingdom national population projections², although they have not been used to inform more recent projections. The lack of analysis of the expectations data collected in the GHS has recently been criticised.³ This article presents results from the 21 surveys carried out from 1979 to 2001.

DATA USED

This article uses data from the 1979 to 1996, 1998, 2000 and 2001 GHS. Over this period, the questions asked in the GHS and to whom they have been asked have changed (Annex A describes the questions and changes in more detail). Surveys prior to 1986 only collected information for

This article presents and analyses women's childbearing intentions collected in the General Household Survey (GHS). Data from the 21 surveys from 1979 to 2001 show that over that period there has been a fall in women's intended numbers of births. However the latest data (from the 1998, 2000 and 2001 surveys) show that the average number of children intended is still around two, somewhat higher than the average number of children current fertility rates suggest women will have.

The questions of whether this difference can be interpreted as possible unmet need for children, whether past intentions have been good predictors of fertility, and how current intentions may be used to inform projections assumptions are discussed. In relation to the last question, fertility intentions by ethnic group are also presented.

women under 18 if they were married and only collected information up to age 44, subsequent surveys collected data to age 49. It should be noted that surveys up to 1987 were calendar year based, while those from 1988 onwards are financial year based. These surveys are labelled to the year in which the majority of the survey occurred.

There are two key differences between this analysis and previous analyses published. The first is that where a woman is pregnant, the 'potential' live birth is counted here as a child achieved. Thus any births above the number 'achieved' are children yet to be conceived. On average around three and a half per cent of women aged 16–49 in the GHS sample are pregnant each year. Second, the analysis is for England and Wales only, which enables comparisons with estimates from fertility data of the number of children women have had.

What is measured in the GHS?

The questions asked in the GHS are designed to measure fertility intentions. They ask:

"Do you *think you* will have any (more) children (after the one you are expecting)?" [our italics], and

"How many children do you *think you* will have born to you in all (including those you already have/and the one you are expecting)?" [our italics]

The questions are designed to be grounded in reality by asking women whether they *think* they will have any more children rather than, say, whether women would *like* to. Thus the answer should take account of a woman's circumstances rather than just expressing her desires. Also the questions are personal – they refer to the woman's own fertility rather than referring to the number of children a woman thinks women should ideally have. However, it has been argued that even when questions are framed in such a way, answers may only provide women's perception of an acceptable family size rather than relating to any personal reproductive target.⁴

In the 1979 to 1985 surveys, the answer to the question 'Do you think you will have any (more) children at all?' was either, 'yes', 'no' or 'don't know'. Only those that answered 'yes' were then asked further questions on the total number of children they would have and age at next birth. From 1986 to 1990 those that answered 'don't know' were also asked further questions. Previous analysis of the 1979 to 1983 GHS data by Werner¹ has shown that those who answer 'yes' or 'no' to the question on having more children had a higher average achieved family size than those who answered 'don't know'. Werner also found that younger women tend to overestimate the number of children they will have. The change in procedure in the 1986 GHS resulted in information being obtained from around two-thirds of women who would not have been asked for their intentions in previous surveys.

A major change occurred in 1991, when the question on having more children was expanded to include the categories 'probably yes' and 'probably no'. Also, those that answered 'don't know' were asked a further question: 'On the whole do you think you will probably have/probably not have any (more) children?' This virtually removed the problem of non-response and allows analysis of the fertility intentions of 'certain' and 'uncertain' women. Analysis of the 1991 to 1996 GHS data suggests that those who answer 'don't know' are more likely to swing towards 'probably yes' when further prompted, perhaps leading to an overestimation of positive fertility intentions among those who are very uncertain.³

Women who say they intend to have more children are also asked at what age they intend to have their next child (if pregnant, the child after the one they are expecting).

A minor complication in interpreting the data is that the question on the number of children a woman thinks she will have has been prefaced with a question asking about the number of children she has had who are still alive, which could have been interpreted by the respondent as meaning that only live children should be included in the total number of children a woman thinks she will have. In previous analysis, and also here, no adjustment has been made to the total number of children women intend to allow for the small number of children born that were no longer alive by the date of interview. If an adjustment were made, intended family sizes for older women would be likely to increase slightly, since older women will have been exposed for longer to the risk of experiencing the death of a child.

BIRTH INTENTIONS BY WOMEN'S AGE AND GHS SURVEY YEAR

Table 1 shows intended family size by age and year of survey. The data are grouped into three-year age groups and three survey-years to give reasonable sample sizes in each cell. Table 1 also shows the level of non-response to the question of intended family size.

Table 2 shows the family sizes achieved by the same groups of women at the time of survey, counting all the babies they have had and any they are pregnant with. Comparison of the GHS birth history data in Table 2 with data compiled from birth registrations (see Annex B) show slightly larger family sizes, particularly at younger ages, in the GHS. Of course, the two sources are different. Estimates derived from registrations are effectively synthetic: they give the average number of children a woman would have if she experienced the age specific fertility rates appropriate to her cohort that occurred through her lifetime. Accumulating period rates over time is not quite the same as the actual fertility history of women interviewed because of the effects of migration and mortality. GHS birth histories give the number of children women have actually had, at the point they are interviewed. The inclusion of pregnancies, the different time periods and age definitions further complicate any comparison. There may also be response biases at different points in a woman's life cycle that, for example, make younger women with children more likely to respond in the GHS than those without. Finally, childless younger women are less likely to provide an intention, another reason birth history data for women who provide an intention may be higher than estimates from registration data.

The latest data

The data from the latest three General Household Surveys (1998, 2000 and 2001) show an intended family size of around 2.0 children for almost all the age ranges shown (Table 1). The exceptions are women aged 21–23 with an intended size of over 2.1, and women aged 36–38 who have an intended family size of a little over 1.9. The latter group is, of course, much closer to completing their childbearing. Although all the age groups shown have a remarkable uniformity in average intended family size the distribution of intended family size clearly varies by age. In general, the older the woman the more likely she is to express the intention for fewer than two or more than two children, with the consequence that a smaller proportion express the intention for exactly two. Women aged 21–23 have by far the lowest proportion of women expressing an intention for either no child or one child. However, the 24–26 age group have the lowest proportion of women expressing the intention of having more than two children. This move away from the intention of two children at older ages may be an indication that older women are giving answers that are based more on their own lives and less on social norms. It will also be a reflection of their fertility experience, with some women having yet to start their childbearing shifting down their intentions and perhaps others who have embarked

Table 1 Birth intentions by age and GHS survey, and comparison with achieved family size

England and Wales

Women aged	GHS survey year	Intended parity (percentages)					Average intended family size	Number who stated an intention	Number who did not state an intention	Percentage who did not state an intention
		0	1	2	3	4+				
18–20	1979–81	5	3	59	20	13	2.35	1,261	325	20
	1982–84	6	5	58	21	11	2.29	1,128	244	18
	1985–87	6	8	57	20	9	2.21	1,179	162	12
	1988–90	5	7	58	20	10	2.25	1,176	83	7
	1991–93	9	8	58	17	8	2.11	949	76	7
	1994–96	9	8	57	19	7	2.08	769	25	3
	1998, 2000–01	9	12	54	18	7	2.05	727	34	4
21–23	1979–81	5	6	59	21	9	2.23	1,326	286	18
	1982–84	5	6	58	23	8	2.25	1,108	264	19
	1985–87	6	6	58	21	10	2.24	1,343	136	9
	1988–90	5	8	57	21	9	2.23	1,265	83	6
	1991–93	7	8	56	19	10	2.18	1,161	73	6
	1994–96	8	9	54	20	9	2.13	944	23	2
	1998, 2000–01	7	10	57	17	9	2.14	719	25	3
24–26	1979–81	6	8	59	18	7	2.12	1,272	337	21
	1982–84	6	8	58	21	7	2.15	1,172	292	20
	1985–87	5	9	58	18	10	2.20	1,330	166	11
	1988–90	5	10	55	22	8	2.19	1,394	111	7
	1991–93	7	9	53	22	9	2.21	1,367	67	5
	1994–96	9	11	52	21	8	2.10	1,221	27	2
	1998, 2000–01	10	11	55	18	5	1.99	851	23	3
27–29	1979–81	7	11	55	19	8	2.12	1,322	316	19
	1982–84	8	10	52	21	9	2.16	1,109	270	20
	1985–87	7	10	54	20	8	2.16	1,308	169	11
	1988–90	6	11	51	23	8	2.20	1,395	80	5
	1991–93	9	11	51	21	8	2.09	1,475	67	4
	1994–96	8	11	50	22	9	2.14	1,315	23	2
	1998, 2000–01	8	14	52	18	7	2.04	1,059	22	2
30–32	1979–81	7	11	52	21	10	2.19	1,506	342	19
	1982–84	8	12	51	20	8	2.12	1,177	251	18
	1985–87	9	11	48	23	8	2.12	1,314	143	10
	1988–90	9	13	47	22	10	2.14	1,301	89	6
	1991–93	8	11	51	20	9	2.12	1,484	83	5
	1994–96	10	13	50	20	7	2.03	1,563	25	2
	1998, 2000–01	10	14	50	19	7	2.01	1,180	31	3
33–35	1979–81	7	13	49	21	10	2.19	1,644	205	11
	1982–84	8	12	47	23	10	2.19	1,342	219	14
	1985–87	9	15	48	18	10	2.10	1,398	131	9
	1988–90	10	12	45	22	11	2.13	1,271	79	6
	1991–93	9	11	48	22	10	2.17	1,280	52	4
	1994–96	11	12	46	21	11	2.13	1,432	17	1
	1998, 2000–01	13	13	46	19	9	2.01	1,325	18	1
36–38	1979–81	8	12	42	24	14	2.32	1,420	132	9
	1982–84	9	12	46	23	10	2.18	1,379	118	8
	1985–87	9	14	47	20	10	2.11	1,453	74	5
	1988–90	10	13	46	21	11	2.14	1,250	55	4
	1991–93	13	14	46	19	9	2.04	1,298	35	3
	1994–96	12	13	44	21	10	2.07	1,338	17	1
	1998, 2000–01	15	17	40	19	9	1.93	1,264	15	1

on having children shifting their intentions upwards or having already had more than two children.

Looking at the numbers achieved for women in the 1998, 2000 and 2001 surveys (Table 2), the 18–20 year olds appear to have achieved a higher level of fertility than found in previous surveys or shown in national fertility data. Achieved fertility among all other age groups in these surveys is broadly in line with national fertility data and earlier GHS data. Table 3 compares achieved fertility with intended fertility and shows that with the exception of the 18–20 year olds, all age groups have achieved a smaller proportion of their intended fertility than those of similar age in earlier GHS surveys, which is consistent with the postponement of fertility. However, women under age 27 in the more recent GHS surveys are actually, in absolute terms, closer to their

intended family size than women of the same age interviewed in the mid- to late-1980s.

Around 20 per cent of women aged 36–38 were childless in the 1998, 2000 and 2001 surveys, but only 15 per cent of women were intending to remain childless, thus one in four childless women at this age were still intending to have a first birth.

All age groups have seen a fall in intended family size over time, although it is noticeable that the 21–23 groups interviewed in 1998–2001, and over the periods 1994–1996 and 1988–1990, have intended family sizes higher than those they provided when aged 18–20 in earlier surveys. Ages 21–23 may be the time when most women have finished education and started employment and we speculate that then women

Table 2 Children achieved for those who stated an intention, by age and GHS survey year

England and Wales

Women aged	GHS survey year	Percentage distribution by parity					Average family size	Number who stated an intention
		0	1	2	3	4+		
18–20	1979–81	86	11	3	0	0	0.18	1,261
	1982–84	85	12	2	0	0	0.18	1,128
	1985–87	85	11	3	1	0	0.19	1,179
	1988–90	84	13	3	0	0	0.19	1,176
	1991–93	86	11	2	1	0	0.17	949
	1994–96	86	11	2	0	0	0.16	769
	1998, 2000–01	80	17	2	0	0	0.23	727
21–23	1979–81	60	23	13	3	0	0.59	1,326
	1982–84	65	19	12	3	1	0.56	1,108
	1985–87	70	17	11	2	0	0.47	1,343
	1988–90	67	22	9	2	1	0.48	1,265
	1991–93	69	18	10	2	1	0.46	1,161
	1994–96	70	18	9	3	0	0.45	944
	1998, 2000–01	72	17	9	2	0	0.42	719
24–26	1979–81	39	26	25	7	2	1.07	1,272
	1982–84	43	24	24	7	2	1.00	1,172
	1985–87	50	24	19	5	2	0.87	1,330
	1988–90	51	24	19	5	2	0.82	1,394
	1991–93	51	24	17	5	2	0.85	1,367
	1994–96	55	22	16	5	2	0.79	1,221
	1998, 2000–01	59	20	15	5	1	0.69	851
27–29	1979–81	22	25	36	13	5	1.55	1,322
	1982–84	27	20	35	13	5	1.50	1,109
	1985–87	31	23	32	9	4	1.34	1,308
	1988–90	34	22	28	12	4	1.33	1,395
	1991–93	36	24	28	10	3	1.22	1,475
	1994–96	37	25	25	9	4	1.22	1,315
	1998, 2000–01	43	23	21	9	3	1.07	1,059
30–32	1979–81	12	18	45	18	8	1.96	1,506
	1982–84	15	20	40	18	7	1.83	1,177
	1985–87	20	18	39	17	6	1.71	1,314
	1988–90	23	20	35	16	6	1.65	1,301
	1991–93	23	20	36	14	6	1.62	1,484
	1994–96	29	21	34	13	4	1.45	1,563
	1998, 2000–01	33	22	29	11	5	1.35	1,180
33–35	1979–81	9	14	47	20	10	2.12	1,644
	1982–84	10	15	44	22	9	2.10	1,342
	1985–87	15	17	43	17	8	1.91	1,398
	1988–90	18	17	39	17	8	1.83	1,271
	1991–93	17	14	43	19	8	1.91	1,280
	1994–96	18	17	39	19	8	1.85	1,432
	1998, 2000–01	24	18	36	15	7	1.65	1,325
36–38	1979–81	9	13	41	24	14	2.29	1,420
	1982–84	9	13	45	23	10	2.15	1,379
	1985–87	12	14	46	19	9	2.04	1,453
	1988–90	13	15	43	19	10	2.03	1,250
	1991–93	16	14	43	18	8	1.94	1,298
	1994–96	16	14	41	20	9	1.96	1,338
	1998, 2000–01	20	17	36	18	9	1.80	1,264

may think most positively about future fertility prospects. This may lead to the slight drop in intended childlessness and increase in intentions for large families seen in the data.

Time trends and the 'uncertainty' issue

Over time there have been changes in the distribution of intended number of children (parity) underlying the intended average family size. In particular there appears to have been a small increase in intentions to remain childless or have one child among all age groups.

As mentioned previously, from 1991 women were able to give an indication of uncertainty in their answers. During the period 1979 to 1986, around one in five women answered 'don't know' when asked how many children they thought they would have. Thus around four in

five gave a 'certain' answer. Werner¹, when looking at 1979 to 1983 GHS data, noted that women who did not respond had achieved lower actual average family size than respondents of the same age. He concluded that as the non-respondents seemed to be starting their family building later and were less certain of their intentions, their completed family sizes were likely to be lower. Thus overall expected family size might be lower, had this group been included.

Over the period 1987–1990 those that answered 'don't know' were prompted to provide a number of expected children, and around half did so. In addition, the introduction in 1991 of the possibility of saying 'probably yes' or 'probably no', as well as definitely 'yes' or 'no', meant that at younger ages 'don't know' replies fell to around one in twenty, and for older ages to one in a hundred. However, from 1991,

Table 3 Comparison of the number of children intended and achieved by age and GHS survey

England and Wales

Women aged	GHS survey year	Average intended family size	Average achieved family size	Percentage of intended average family size achieved at survey	Average number of further children intended	Number who stated an intention
18–20	1979–81	2.35	0.18	8	2.17	1,261
	1982–84	2.29	0.18	8	2.11	1,128
	1985–87	2.21	0.19	8	2.02	1,179
	1988–90	2.25	0.19	9	2.06	1,176
	1991–93	2.11	0.17	8	1.94	949
	1994–96	2.08	0.16	8	1.92	769
	1998, 2000–01	2.05	0.23	11	1.82	727
21–23	1979–81	2.23	0.59	27	1.64	1,326
	1982–84	2.25	0.56	25	1.69	1,108
	1985–87	2.24	0.47	21	1.77	1,343
	1988–90	2.23	0.48	21	1.75	1,265
	1991–93	2.18	0.46	21	1.72	1,161
	1994–96	2.13	0.45	21	1.69	944
	1998, 2000–01	2.14	0.42	20	1.72	719
24–26	1979–81	2.12	1.07	50	1.05	1,272
	1982–84	2.15	1.00	47	1.15	1,172
	1985–87	2.20	0.87	39	1.34	1,330
	1988–90	2.19	0.82	37	1.37	1,394
	1991–93	2.21	0.85	38	1.36	1,367
	1994–96	2.10	0.79	38	1.31	1,221
	1998, 2000–01	1.99	0.69	35	1.30	851
27–29	1979–81	2.12	1.55	73	0.57	1,322
	1982–84	2.16	1.50	69	0.66	1,109
	1985–87	2.16	1.34	62	0.81	1,308
	1988–90	2.20	1.33	60	0.87	1,395
	1991–93	2.09	1.22	58	0.87	1,475
	1994–96	2.14	1.22	57	0.92	1,315
	1998, 2000–01	2.04	1.07	53	0.97	1,059
30–32	1979–81	2.19	1.96	89	0.24	1,506
	1982–84	2.12	1.83	87	0.28	1,177
	1985–87	2.12	1.71	81	0.41	1,314
	1988–90	2.14	1.65	77	0.49	1,301
	1991–93	2.12	1.62	76	0.51	1,484
	1994–96	2.03	1.45	72	0.57	1,563
	1998, 2000–01	2.01	1.35	67	0.66	1,180
33–35	1979–81	2.19	2.12	97	0.07	1,644
	1982–84	2.19	2.10	96	0.09	1,342
	1985–87	2.10	1.91	91	0.20	1,398
	1988–90	2.13	1.83	86	0.30	1,271
	1991–93	2.17	1.91	88	0.26	1,280
	1994–96	2.13	1.85	87	0.28	1,432
	1998, 2000–01	2.01	1.65	82	0.36	1,325
36–38	1979–81	2.32	2.29	99	0.03	1,420
	1982–84	2.18	2.15	99	0.03	1,379
	1985–87	2.11	2.04	97	0.06	1,453
	1988–90	2.14	2.03	95	0.11	1,250
	1991–93	2.04	1.94	95	0.10	1,298
	1994–96	2.07	1.96	94	0.12	1,338
	1998, 2000–01	1.93	1.80	94	0.12	1,264

only around three in five women gave a 'certain' answer, except for the oldest age groups. The implication is that care should be taken in interpreting the results from earlier surveys. Not only is there the issue of high non-response, but also those that did respond may not have been 'certain' in the answers they gave. It may be that in surveys before 1991, a number of the women who responded 'don't know' would have chosen 'probably yes' or 'probably no' had these options been available.

Table 4 compares fertility intentions given in the 1990s surveys for women who were 'certain' or 'not certain' in their answers. Those that were 'not certain' have an intended family size of, on average, around

0.3 children lower than those who give a 'certain' answer. This confirms Werner's view; he assumed that this would be the case where women were not sure of their intentions. 'Uncertain' women are also more likely to intend to be childless, are less likely to give the answer of two children, except at young ages, and are less likely to intend a larger family at all ages than 'certain' women. When analysing the 1979–83 data, Werner proposed that childless women who answered 'don't know' should either be assumed to have an intention of having no children (option a) or to be split between having no children and only one child in the same proportion as similar women who did reply (option b). In the 1986–1990 surveys, two-thirds of the childless

Table 4

Family intentions by certainty and age of woman, 1991–2001 GHS

England and Wales

Women aged	'Certain' (Definite yes/no)								'Uncertain' (probably yes/no)								Difference (i)–(ii)
	GHS survey year	Intended parity (percentage)					Average intended family size (i)	Sample n	Intended parity (percentage)					Average intended family size (ii)	Sample n		
		0	1	2	3	4+			0	1	2	3	4+				
18–20	1991–93	6	6	56	21	11	2.27	580	10	12	59	14	6	1.95	369	0.32	
	1994–96	6	5	56	23	10	2.28	480	13	14	54	14	4	1.83	289	0.46	
	1998, 2000–01	8	10	52	22	8	2.15	473	11	12	60	11	6	1.91	254	0.24	
21–23	1991–93	5	6	56	22	11	2.29	743	10	12	55	15	8	2.03	418	0.26	
	1994–96	6	6	53	23	12	2.30	540	11	15	54	16	5	1.89	404	0.41	
	1998, 2000–01	4	9	55	20	12	2.30	451	15	13	58	12	3	1.75	268	0.55	
24–26	1991–93	5	7	53	25	10	2.29	862	11	10	51	20	7	2.03	505	0.26	
	1994–96	8	8	51	24	10	2.23	727	11	14	50	18	6	1.96	494	0.27	
	1998, 2000–01	7	9	56	21	7	2.14	518	11	17	52	16	4	1.85	333	0.29	
27–29	1991–93	7	11	52	22	8	2.15	945	9	14	53	18	6	2.02	530	0.13	
	1994–96	6	9	51	25	10	2.25	807	12	17	48	18	5	1.90	508	0.36	
	1998, 2000–01	7	13	53	19	9	2.13	663	14	16	48	17	6	1.90	396	0.23	
30–32	1991–93	8	10	52	21	9	2.18	960	12	17	46	19	8	1.98	524	0.20	
	1994–96	9	10	52	21	8	2.12	939	12	18	47	16	7	1.88	624	0.24	
	1998, 2000–01	9	12	51	21	8	2.09	705	13	17	47	15	7	1.90	475	0.19	
33–35	1991–93	9	9	48	24	11	2.23	906	13	20	43	16	9	1.90	374	0.33	
	1994–96	9	10	47	23	11	2.23	965	22	16	36	16	10	1.81	467	0.42	
	1998, 2000–01	12	11	47	21	9	2.09	879	17	22	42	13	6	1.72	446	0.36	
36–38	1991–93	10	13	48	19	10	2.12	1,027	31	17	28	16	6	1.56	271	0.56	
	1994–96	10	11	46	23	11	2.19	1,019	23	24	33	11	9	1.64	319	0.55	
	1998, 2000–01	14	14	41	21	10	2.04	977	25	28	31	11	5	1.47	287	0.56	

women whose initial response was 'don't know' stated an intention after prompting. These women expected an average of around two children, similar to that for women who gave an initial response. Even if the remainder who were childless and provided a 'don't know' answer (both initially and when further prompted) were assumed not to want a child, intended family size for this group would still be well above one, considerably higher than either of Werner's options. Although Werner's adjustment was necessarily arbitrary,⁵ and appears not to have been a good approximation of that subgroup's intentions, it provided a reasonably good estimation of both the levels of actual fertility and the proportion childless for cohorts born around 1960–64. (Werner option a: average 1.9 children and 21 per cent childless, Werner option b: 2.0 children/16 per cent childless, compared with registration data [assuming current rates for ages not yet experienced] of 1.93 children /20 per cent childless). We could therefore consider the possibility that those who gave an 'uncertain' answer in the surveys since 1990 are less likely to realise their intentions than those giving a 'certain' answer. As an extension of Werner's adjustment, intended family sizes have been recalculated assuming that childless women who were 'uncertain' either remain childless or go on to have only one child. 'Uncertain' women with previous children were assigned expectations in the same proportions as those who were 'certain' according to the number already born. This latter assumption counterbalances the rather extreme nature of the former assumption. The adjustment clearly has most effect for younger women who have yet to begin their child-bearing and for whom a slightly greater proportion are not 'certain'. The results are shown in Table 5.

For younger women (aged under 26) option (a) gives a level of childlessness of about one in three women and a level of intended fertility of between 1.4 to 1.8 children per woman. These figures are not inconsistent with the assumed low variant in the latest set of England

and Wales variant fertility assumptions for the 2000-based national population projections of 1.55 children per woman⁶, but perhaps indicate that a variant much lower would not be warranted. While mentioning the width of the fertility variants, the higher variant of 1.95 is only a little below the intended completed family size for younger cohorts shown in Table 1. Given the evidence that intentions data has almost always overstated fertility⁷, the higher variant can also be considered a reasonable scenario, being just a little below the intended family size.

Further evidence of the increasing uncertainty over time in the reported expectations of younger women is seen in the lengthening of time expected to next birth. Table 6 shows by age the proportions of women expecting that their next birth would be within 3 years or within 5 years. Some caution is required when using the data for age at next birth, as there is some evidence of a bias towards ages ending in 0 or 5. This may make comparisons between age groups more difficult but will not invalidate comparisons within age groups over time.

Even in the earliest surveys, only a minority of women under 24 reported that they expected to have a birth within three years. Before 1994 well over 50 per cent of women aged 21–23 reported that they would have a birth within five years. By the latest surveys this had fallen to below 40 per cent. A time horizon of more than five years ahead for more than three in five young women who expect to have a further birth indicates how uncertain the expectations data for those women must be. The changes in time until next birth are clearly also indicative of the postponement of births that has taken place over the past 20 years. Table 6 shows that at older ages there may be some evidence that postponement may be slowing or have stopped, in that the proportions reporting that they will have a child within five years and within three years have been steady over the past decade. One

Table 5 Alternative options for interpreting GHS intentions data adjusting for 'uncertain' answers (see below)

England and Wales

Women aged	GHS year	Average intended family size		Percentage childless	
		Option (a)	Option (b)	Option (a)	Option (b)
18–20	1991–93	1.51	1.62	38	27
	1994–96	1.58	1.70	36	25
	1998, 2000–01	1.56	1.65	33	23
21–23	1991–93	1.76	1.86	28	18
	1994–96	1.66	1.73	33	26
	1998, 2000–01	1.72	1.85	29	16
24–26	1991–93	1.90	1.94	23	18
	1994–96	1.79	1.85	27	20
	1998, 2000–01	1.66	1.75	28	19
27–29	1991–93	1.87	1.91	20	16
	1994–96	1.91	1.94	20	17
	1998, 2000–01	1.81	1.86	21	16
30–32	1991–93	1.96	1.98	15	14
	1994–96	1.81	1.84	20	18
	1998, 2000–01	1.78	1.81	22	18
33–35	1991–93	2.07	2.07	14	13
	1994–96	2.00	2.01	15	14
	1998, 2000–01	1.86	1.87	19	19
36–38	1991–93	1.97	1.97	15	15
	1994–96	2.00	2.00	14	15
	1998, 2000–01	1.88	1.88	19	18

Option (a) assumes that childless 'uncertain' women will not have children; option (b) assumes that they will either have no child or one child split by the proportion of no child/one child answers from the certain women who have yet to have a child. In both options 'uncertain' women who have had a child are assumed to have the intended fertility of the 'certain' women for their parity.

exception is the 36–38 age group who show a smaller proportion reporting an intention of less than three years in more recent surveys.

HAVE BIRTH INTENTIONS BEEN GOOD PREDICTORS OF FERTILITY BEHAVIOUR IN THE PAST?

At the individual level, even those with certain intentions may not realise those intentions due to unintended or unachieved births. Indeed, Bongaarts⁸ has suggested that the odds of a couple with very specific fertility goals (two children, one boy and one girl spaced at three year intervals after marriage) achieving their goals are only 6.2 per centⁱ. At the aggregate level it is possible that unintended and unachieved births may cancel out. Shaw concluded that fertility expectations from the early 1970s surveys provided a good indication *in aggregate* of completed family size of the same cohorts in the late 1980s.⁹ We now have the opportunity to look at the performance of birth intentions data collected in the GHS during the 1980s.

From Table 1, we can see that women aged 21–23 in the 1980s thought they would have around 2.25 children per woman. Figure 1 examines, using birth registration data, how many children per woman different birth cohorts aged 21–23 in the 1980s actually had. The earliest cohorts shown are women born from 1957 to 1959. These women are likely to finish their childbearing with a completed family size some 0.2 to 0.3 lower than their intended family size at age 21–23. The latest age group for which there are data to allow comparisons across all four cohort groups is 30–32. At this age the youngest cohorts, those women born

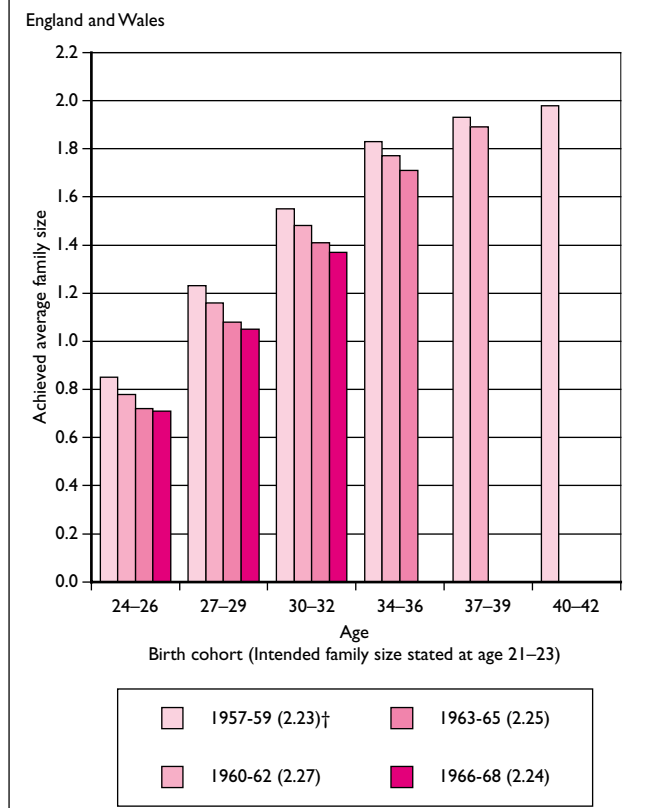
i. This work is rather dated and better contraception may have improved the odds, however increased risk of marital dissolution would have the converse effect.

Table 6 Of those intending to have another birth, percentage who report it will be within a) 3 years or b) 5 years.

England and Wales

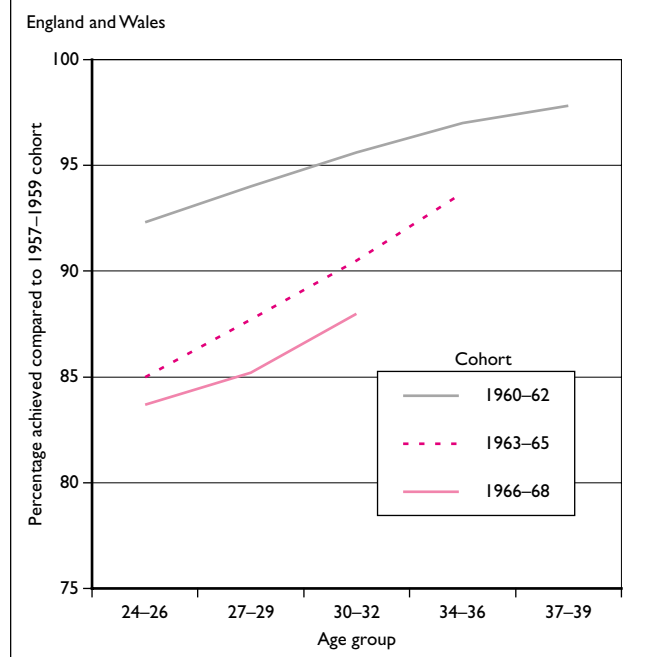
Women aged	GHS Year	Percentage reporting intention for a birth		Sample n
		within 3 years	within 5 years	
18–20	1979–81	12	34	1,103
	1982–84	11	32	978
	1985–87	11	30	1,009
	1988–90	9	27	1,026
	1991–93	6	22	789
	1994–96	7	19	659
	1998, 2000–01	6	19	590
21–23	1979–81	31	71	994
	1982–84	28	66	857
	1985–87	23	60	1,044
	1988–90	21	56	1,012
	1991–93	19	51	878
	1994–96	15	44	722
	1998, 2000–01	12	39	572
24–26	1979–81	50	86	689
	1982–84	44	81	684
	1985–87	40	79	883
	1988–90	37	74	949
	1991–93	33	75	912
	1994–96	31	69	821
	1998, 2000–01	28	71	590
27–29	1979–81	67	95	430
	1982–84	57	94	432
	1985–87	55	89	581
	1988–90	51	85	669
	1991–93	47	85	694
	1994–96	47	81	673
	1998, 2000–01	48	79	530
30–32	1979–81	68	94	231
	1982–84	69	95	212
	1985–87	58	91	328
	1988–90	53	90	385
	1991–93	56	88	447
	1994–96	53	90	558
	1998, 2000–01	56	91	416
33–35	1979–81	88	94	78
	1982–84	87	99	84
	1985–87	83	96	179
	1988–90	75	95	224
	1991–93	77	96	195
	1994–96	74	95	267
	1998, 2000–01	79	97	194
36–38	1979–81	90	100	30
	1982–84	84	94	32
	1985–87	85	97	67
	1988–90	82	100	87
	1991–93	86	99	81
	1994–96	82	100	100
	1998, 2000–01	75	99	80

from 1966 to 1968, have achieved an average number of children almost 0.2 lower than that of the earliest cohorts shown. Although each later cohort is likely to have successively lower fertility, there is some evidence that the younger cohorts exhibit some recovery of fertility at older ages (recuperation). Figure 2 shows the percentage of actual fertility achieved by the three younger cohorts compared to the 1957 to 1959 cohort by age. For example, by age 30–32 the 1960 to 1962 cohorts had achieved only 95.5 per cent of the fertility achieved by the 1957 to 1959 cohorts at that age. By age 37–39 they had achieved 97.5 per cent. This latter finding is consistent with postponement of births in

Figure 1 Achieved family size by birth cohort and age

Notes: Before the 1982 survey only the woman's age was recorded, not her year of birth, therefore for the 1979 to 1981 surveys, year of birth has been assumed to be year of survey minus age.

† The intended family size for the 1957 to 1959 cohorts does not include intentions for those born in 1957 aged 21.

Figure 2 A comparison of achieved fertility of later-born cohorts as a percentage of achieved fertility of the 1957-1959 birth cohort by age

England and Wales in the 1980s and 1990s.¹⁰ It is unlikely, however, that recuperation will be sufficient to reach the fertility level of the 1957 to 1959 cohort group, particularly for the youngest cohorts.

So the correlation between the intentions of young women in the 1980s and their subsequent fertility looks weak in two respects. First, the level of intended fertility overestimated actual fertility by at least 10 per cent for the cohorts in their early twenties at the beginning of the 1980s. Second, although they have yet to complete their childbearing, it is likely that the later cohorts have overestimated their fertility by greater than 10 per cent, thus the intentions data have failed to predict the trend of lower family sizes. This may be the result of preferences for children being slow to change.¹¹ There may be a time lag between the decline in actual family size and any decline in intended family size, since a cohort's intentions may not be modified until it is clear that smaller families are more prevalent in reality. One reason that women in the latter half of the 1980s may have been even less 'accurate' in their intentions is that far fewer were married or in partnership at ages 21-23. In the GHS data over half of women (52 per cent) aged 21-23 in 1979-1981 were married compared to a little over a quarter (28 per cent) aged 21-23 in 1988-1990. Although 15 per cent of this latter group were cohabiting, compared to 3 per cent in the earlier group, intentions given outside a partnership, or within an unmarried partnership are likely to be more uncertain in outcome.

Ideally, it would be good to compare the subsequent fertility of the actual women who provided their intentions rather than just using aggregate data. A recent study by Noack and Østby was able to look at fertility outcomes for Norwegian women who had expressed their fertility preferences in two surveys in 1977 and 1988, using data from the Norwegian Central Population Register.^{13,14} Their study found that at the individual level there was only a weak relationship between intentions and subsequent births. As with other studies, they found that both short-term and long-term expectations overestimated future childbearing. Both data sets showed that those that did not expect to have children in the five years following interview were highly reliable in their forecasting, confirming earlier studies by others.^{13,14} This finding held for young women, childless women and women with one child. However, other recent work by Schoen *et al*¹⁵ has shown that for white American men and women there was a strong relationship between stated intentions and a percentage having a birth within five years. The study also, not unexpectedly, showed that the married were more likely to realise their intention than the unmarried. Modelling the likelihood of having a birth, they found fertility intentions to be the strongest predictor, followed by marital status.

IS THE DISPARITY BETWEEN INTENTIONS AND ACHIEVED FAMILY SIZE AN INDICATION OF UNMET NEED FOR CHILDREN?

It is clear that fertility intentions tell us something about women's attitudes to future childbearing. However, a key question raised is whether the disparity between intentions collected at survey and subsequent fertility levels is an indication of an unmet need for children, or whether stated fertility intentions, while valid at the time they are collected, may be modified by subsequent life events. The GHS data in Table 4 suggest that for a large minority of women the intentions collected are uncertain. It is also clear from looking at cohorts as they age in successive surveys that fertility intentions change over the life course in terms of both the average intended family size and its parity distribution. Westoff and Ryder¹³ noted that at the individual level positive intentions are revised downwards more often than negative intentions revised upwards. There are a number of reasons why intentions may change. Many of those relate to societal

changes, but also the experience of childbearing and parenthood may modify intended fertility.

One major factor in changed fertility intentions is relationship formation and dissolution. In Britain, the trend has been for co-resident partnership formation to be at a later age, with partnership most often in the form of cohabitation that may or may not be a precursor to marriage.¹⁶ Many of the intentions given at young ages are not certain, and certainty 'lessened' during the 1980s and 1990s when marriage became less prevalent at young ages. Correspondingly the length of time expected before the next birth increased with the numbers expecting to have a birth within five years falling from 71 per cent to 39 per cent (age 21–23). It is clear that birth intentions change over time for a cohort: as women get older they adjust their future intentions to their current situation. For example, older women are much more likely to give their intention as no child or one child than younger women. However, older women's aggregate intention is still around two children. At some point in a woman's life course, perhaps at the point of finding a life partner, her intentions are likely to become more certain. However, her intentions would need to be matched to her partner's, so at that time her intentions may be modified, leading to a different outcome. In a study of intentions of Swedish couples, actual childbearing was found to be lower where couples disagreed over childbearing decisions.¹⁷ Partnership dissolution and re-formation may further complicate the path to achieving former intentions and is likely to have an impact on current intentions³. MacDonald¹⁸, reviewing evidence for fertility preferences in low fertility countries (countries with a TFR of less than 1.5) concluded that "While there is much debate about the meaning of different measures of fertility intentions or preferences, the message is clear, that in most low fertility countries there appears to be a latent demand for children". However, he also points out from his own and other's work that Australian evidence shows that the family size preferences of Australian women tend to be realised or remain intact when the relationship they are in at Time 1 remains intact at Time 2. This is also true for those not in relationships at both Times 1 and 2, however where relationships change between Time 1 and Time 2, intentions are not met and preferences change.

Other social changes that may affect intentions are increases in the numbers of women going into higher education and participating in the work force.¹⁹ It has been noted that in most fertility surveys that ask for *desired* family size, a small proportion of women who have not attained their *desired* family size do not intend a further child. Bongaarts²⁰ suggests that a plausible explanation for this is competing preferences. He gives career, income, and freedom from childcare as examples of preferences that may ultimately over-ride the desired number of children. If this is so, even when a woman provides the number of children she *thinks* she will have rather than desires, she may not be able to anticipate the competing preferences in her future life. It cannot be inferred, therefore, that the aggregate deficit between reported intentions at younger ages and subsequent fertility is necessarily an indication of unmet fertility need. Equally, it cannot be inferred that unmet need does not exist where there is no disparity between intended and actual fertility, since women may adjust their intentions downwards to meet societal constraints and competing preferences, despite having a desire for (further) children.

However, the further apart intentions and outcome become, the more likely it is that unmet need exists. Very low fertility outcomes have implications beyond the realm of the individual. Macdonald¹⁸ has recently argued that the 'free market' favours flexible childless people averse to risk, and treats children as a 'merely private and personal pleasure'. Macdonald argues, children are a social good, both in terms of the future of society, and also for the 'health' of society now. He

suggests that wealthy societies should pursue policies that counteract the perceived indirect or opportunity cost (lost earnings) of having children.

CAN THE LATEST FERTILITY INTENTIONS DATA BE USED AS AN INDICATION OF FUTURE FERTILITY?

It is clear that the fertility intentions of younger women are subject to a huge amount of uncertainty. In the past, it is to the youngest cohorts that projection makers have looked to inform the projection assumptions. However, here evidence shows that neither levels nor trends in actual fertility are predicted well by intentions at younger ages. There are only two useful pieces of information that come out of the data at ages under 24 to inform projections. The first is that there does appear to be some evidence of more women intending to have fewer than two children, indicating a greater acceptance of having a one-child family or remaining childless. However, this has not reduced average intended family size very much. The second useful piece of information is that, although the outcome is highly uncertain, young women still think in terms of having, on average, slightly more than two children. As women are unlikely to think that they will have more births than they desire, the fact that the average intended family size still exceeds two children is, at least, an indication of desire for children and therefore a counterbalance to projecting forwards current downwards trends in fertility (both period and cohort). It will be worthwhile therefore to monitor results from future surveys to see if this desire is maintained.

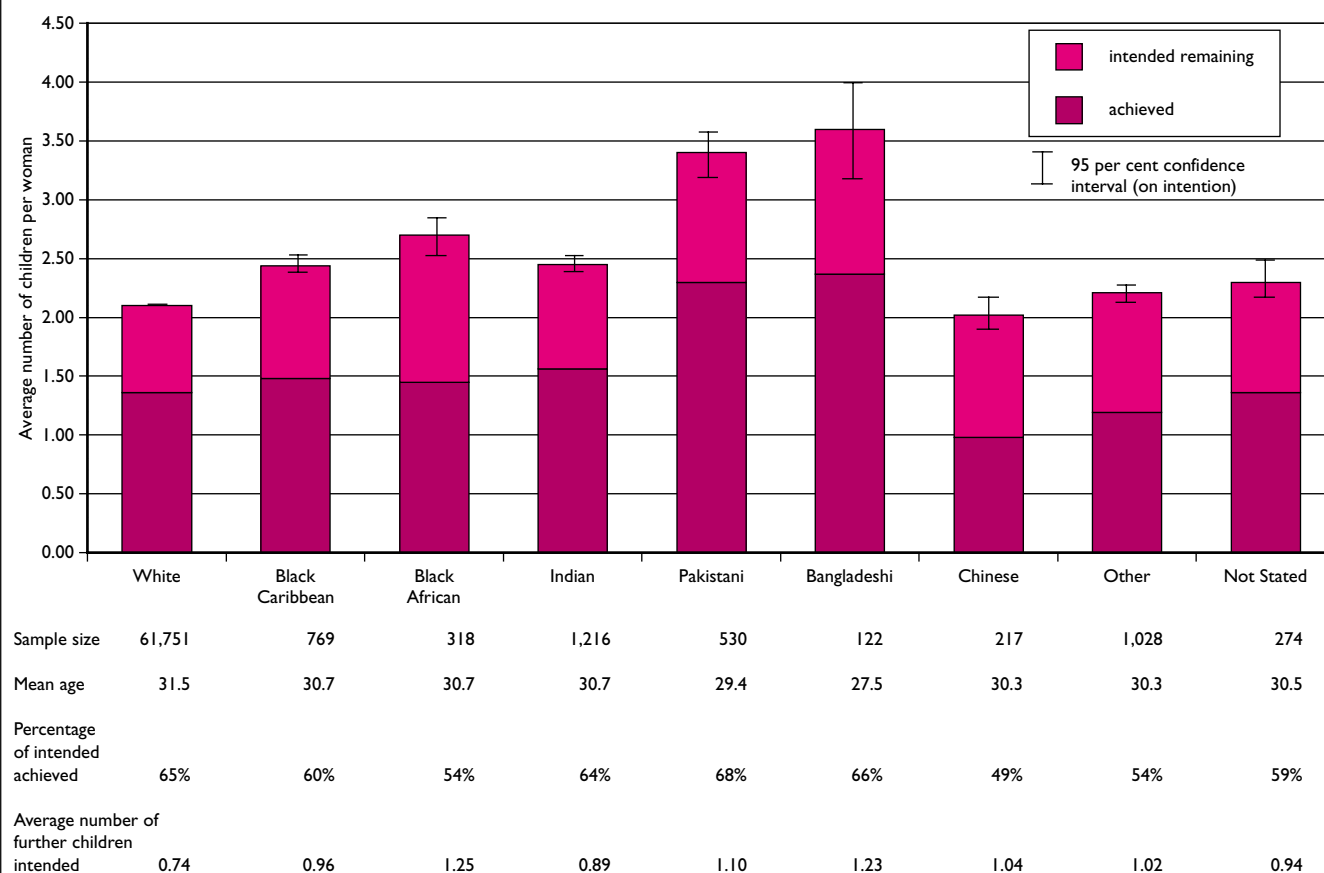
There is more value in looking at fertility intentions at ages above 23. Although these show intentions only a little lower than at younger ages they do show some important differences. Table 1 shows increasing proportions intending to have fewer than two children. Women aged 24–29 have average intentions around 0.1 lower in the 1998–2001 surveys, compared to the 1994–1996 surveys. There is therefore some evidence of a downward adjustment of intentions for women at ages where childbearing is becoming more prevalent. These intentions, however, are still at or above the level of fertility for cohorts who have recently completed their fertility, and the 24–29 year olds are further behind in their childbearing than those completed cohorts were at that age. While there is some evidence of recuperation, it is unlikely that these cohorts will reach their intended average. The crude adjustments in Table 4 can be taken as an indication of how 'uncertainty' in women's intentions may affect childbearing. We can see that women around the peak of their childbearing years have an adjusted intended family size of about 1.8. Although this is the result of a crude assumption, it is an indicative level of average fertility that can be judged realistic and achievable. While setting of the fertility assumption for projections should ultimately be based on an empirical study of age and parity specific fertility rates, the GHS data can be used to provide some support for the level of assumption made.

EXPECTATIONS BY ETHNIC GROUP

As previously stated, one of the main reasons for collecting data on fertility intentions is to help inform the making of projection assumptions. Last year the Office for National Statistics published a feasibility study of the possibility of making population projections by ethnic group²¹, and work on these projections is now underway. Figures 3 and 4 present data on intentions by ethnic group. The data have been limited to ages 16–44, as 44 is the highest age available in the early surveys (1979–1985). It should be noted that most 16–17 year olds are also missing from these earlier surveys as they are unmarried, but the

Figure 3 Intended and achieved average family size by ethnic group, 1979–2001 GHS

England and Wales



data have not been adjusted for this. Small sample sizes for most ethnic groups means that only a very broad analysis can take place. Figure 3 amalgamates data from all the survey-years included in this study and shows the sample number and mean age for each ethnic group. There are clearly strong differences in intended family size by ethnic group, with Pakistani and Indian women showing the largest intended family size. There are currently no official fertility rates published by ethnic group, but recent work by David Coleman and Martin Smith shows similar variations by ethnicity in actual fertility.²² Figure 3 also shows that the women in each ethnic group had achieved on average a similar proportion of their intended fertility, the exceptions being the Chinese, Black African and 'other' categories, who proportionately are a little behind. In absolute terms, the group closest to achieving their intended family size is the white population, although this is partly because the white sample is the oldest population, with a mean age around one year higher than the other categories.

Figure 4 splits the expectations data into two groups using the first 11 surveys, 1979–1989, and the last 10 surveys, 1990–2001. This gives a broad comparison of changes in expectations between the 1980s and the 1990s by ethnic group. Small sample sizes mean that the differences found are not all significant at the 95 per cent confidence interval level, but the fact that every one of the categories shows a fall between the 1980s and the 1990s suggests that intentions have fallen across all ethnic groups. It should be remembered that the lack of intended numbers of children from the 'don't know' categories in the 1980s surveys may mean that the intended family sizes are slightly inflated, compared to the later surveys.

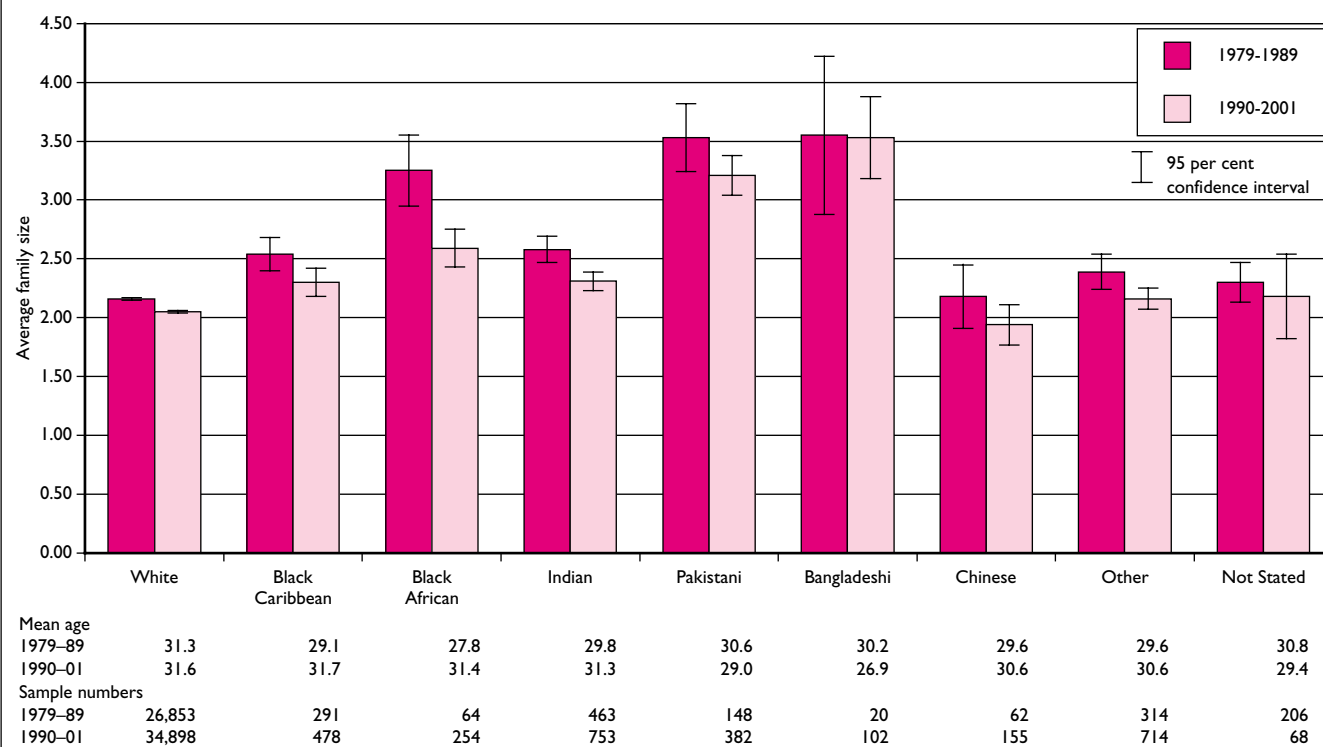
With the exception of the Bangladeshi group, which in the 1980s only had a very small sample, intended average family size in all other groups has fallen proportionately more than in the white group. However, this may in part be due to the relative ageing of the samples between the two periods. We can tentatively conclude that intended family size has fallen for the ethnic groups described here, and may have fallen slightly faster than for the white population. This would support a move towards converging levels of fertility, although for some groups it may take some time, as intentions are higher than in the white group.

CONCLUSION

The article began with two questions that birth intentions data might be used to consider. First, do women actually have the number of children that they intend to have? The intentions given by young women in the 1980s appear to have been poor indicators of their final levels of fertility, substantially overestimating the average number of children per woman. However, this should not necessarily be interpreted as an unmet need for fertility. The disparity is as likely to be a result of the uncertain nature of many women's intentions and the tendency of intentions to be modified according to circumstances. Continued postponement of fertility is ultimately likely to lead to lower fertility than intended at a younger age.¹⁰ However, other data sources would be needed to quantify and analyse the extent to which this disparity may represent unmet fertility needs. Ideally information would be needed on

Figure 4 Intended average family size 1979–1989 GHS and 1990–2001 GHS

England and Wales



whether births that had happened were desired (which is difficult to measure post event as women tend to later rationalise unwanted births as wanted). Also we may need to develop measures that capture more information about the context of fertility intentions and ‘competing preferences’ to having children.¹¹

Second, given that intentions may be uncertain and subject to change, do the intentions data recorded in the GHS have any value in helping to determine assumptions for future fertility? It is clear that the data collected cannot be taken at face value. Thus, it would be wrong to set a long-term completed family size assumption at the intended level of fertility given by younger women. Further, not only are the levels given unreliable, but data collected on intentions from young women during the 1980s is proving a poor predictor of trends. The data do, however, send some important messages. One is that most young women do desire to have children, something that can be lost amidst the messages of current low fertility. More importantly, a careful examination of the data and understanding of the uncertainties involved may help in providing both a plausible level for the assumption of completed family size and a plausible range for alternative scenarios. It may also help provide evidence for fertility assumptions by different population groups, as shown by the presentation of ethnic group data in this article. The information on intentions also provides evidence against extreme views of very low future fertility. Further research is required to find a more robust way of adjusting the intentions data for levels of uncertainty, both in terms of the women’s confidence or certainty in the answer given and in relating to the woman’s partnership, current parity and socio-economic characteristics.

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Key findings

- Latest results from the General Household Surveys in 1998, 2000 and 2001 suggest that women intend to have, on average, around 2.0 children. The exceptions are women aged 21–23 with an intended size of over 2.1, and women aged 36–38 who have an intended family size of a little over 1.9.
- Around 20 per cent of women aged 36–38 were childless in the latest surveys, but only 15 per cent of this age group were intending to remain childless, thus one in four childless women aged 36–38 were still intending to have a first birth.
- Over time, there have been falls in average intended family size for all age groups.
- In recent years there has been evidence that younger women are postponing fertility. Before 1994 well over 50 per cent of women aged 21–23 reported that they would have a birth within five years. By the latest surveys this had fallen to below 40 per cent.
- Intentions given during the 1980s by women aged in their early 20s do not appear to be proving good predictors of their actual fertility, both in terms of level and trend.
- Making an adjustment for women who are uncertain in their response suggests that for women in their mid to late 20s an intended family size of around 1.8 might be more plausible as a base for projections than the stated intention of around 2.0.
- The difference between intentions data and subsequent childbearing should not necessarily be interpreted as a measure of unmet fertility need. Some intentions given are not certain and also intentions may be modified through women's life experiences.

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ANNEX A GHS QUESTIONS ON CHILDBEARING INTENTIONS 1979–2001

The following table shows the questions asked of women's fertility intentions in each General Household Survey since 1979. The questions are asked in the Family Information section of the survey.

Survey years	Question number [†]	Exact question asked	Possible answers	Asked of:	
				Marital status	Age
1979–1985	Q1	Do you think that you will have any (more) children at all (after the one you are expecting)?	Yes No Don't know	Single Ever married	18–44 16–44
	Q2	<i>If 'Yes' at Q1</i> (a) (Can I just check, you have ... children still alive.) How many children do you think you will have born to you in all [including those you already have (and the one you are expecting)]? (b) How old do you think you will be when you have your first/next baby (after the one you are expecting)?	Number Don't know Age Don't know		
1986–1990	Q1	Do you think that you will have any (more) children at all (after the one you are expecting)?	Yes No Don't know	All	16–49
	Q2	<i>If 'Yes' or 'Don't Know' at Q1</i> (a) (Can I just check, you have ... children still alive.) How many children do you think you will have born to you in all [including those you have already who are still alive (and the one you are expecting)]? (b) How old do you think you will be when you have your first/next baby (after the one you are expecting)?	Number Don't know Age Don't know		
1991–1998, 2000–2001	Q1	Do you think that you will have any* (more) children at all (after the one you are expecting)? Could you choose your answers from this card.	Yes Probably yes Probably not No Don't know <i>(Possible answers, with the exception of 'don't know', shown to respondent on a card)</i>	All	16–49
	Q2	<i>If 'Don't know' at Q1</i> On the whole do you think you will probably have any/more children or you will probably not have any/more children?	Have more Not have more Don't know		
	Q3	<i>If 'Yes' or 'Probably yes' at Q1, or 'Have more' at Q2</i> (a) (Can I just check, you have ... children still alive.) How many children do you think you will have born to you in all [including those you have had** already who are still alive (and the one you are expecting)]? (b) How old do you think you will be when you have your first/next baby (after the one you are expecting)? * "any" omitted in 1995 & 1996. ** "had" included in 1996	Number Don't know Age Don't know		

Notes: The parts of questions shown in brackets are only asked if the respondent has stated that she is pregnant or has already had a child. Alternative wordings according to these previous answers are separated by a /.

Refusals to answer any of the questions above are identified by a separate code.

For the surveys of 1998, 2000 and 2001, weighting factors are available which can be used to gross up counts to national totals. They have been found to make very little difference to the calculations in this article and have therefore not been used.

†. This number is purely for reference within this table, it is not the number on the questionnaire.

ANNEX B NUMBER OF CHILDREN ACHIEVED BY AGE AND PERIOD, DERIVED FROM TRUE BIRTH ORDER ESTIMATES TO 2001

The following table provides an approximate comparison to Table 2 from the England and Wales estimates of female population by parity, derived using estimates of births by true birth order. The births data is derived from registration data adjusted with factors derived from the General Household Survey birth history data.²³ The data in this table are presented on an age definition that is different from that in Table 2. The population numbers derived from the true birth order estimates are the number by parity who reach the age shown. For example the number at age 19 refers to those who reach age 19, thus only includes births up to completed age 18. This would overstate the level of births compared to Table 2, except that Table 2 also includes pregnancies. Thus the cells two tables are broadly comparable, with, for example, Table 2 age 18–20 being broadly comparable with the annex table age attained 19–21.

Table Number of children achieved by age and period, derived from true birth order estimates to 2001

England and Wales

Women age attained	Year	Percentage by parity					Average family size
		0	1	2	3	4+	
19–21	1979–81	87	10	2	0	0	0.16
	1982–84	88	9	2	0	0	0.15
	1985–87	89	9	2	0	0	0.14
	1988–90	87	10	2	0	0	0.15
	1991–93	87	11	2	0	0	0.16
	1994–96	87	10	2	0	0	0.15
	1998, 2000–01	87	11	2	0	0	0.16
22–24	1979–81	69	18	11	2	0	0.49
	1982–84	71	16	10	2	0	0.44
	1985–87	74	15	8	2	0	0.40
	1988–90	74	15	8	2	0	0.39
	1991–93	73	16	8	2	0	0.40
	1994–96	74	16	8	2	0	0.38
	1998, 2000–01	76	15	7	1	1	0.37
25–27	1979–81	47	22	22	6	2	0.94
	1982–84	51	21	20	6	2	0.87
	1985–87	55	19	18	6	2	0.80
	1988–90	58	19	16	5	2	0.74
	1991–93	59	19	15	5	2	0.72
	1994–96	60	19	14	5	2	0.70
	1998, 2000–01	64	18	13	3	3	0.65
28–30	1979–81	29	22	34	11	4	1.41
	1982–84	33	21	32	11	4	1.33
	1985–87	37	20	29	10	4	1.26
	1988–90	41	20	26	9	4	1.18
	1991–93	43	20	24	9	4	1.11
	1994–96	45	21	22	9	3	1.06
	1998, 2000–01	48	21	20	5	6	1.02
31–33	1979–81	18	18	42	16	7	1.79
	1982–84	21	18	40	15	6	1.71
	1985–87	24	18	38	14	6	1.64
	1988–90	27	18	35	14	6	1.57
	1991–93	30	18	32	14	6	1.51
	1994–96	33	18	31	13	5	1.43
	1998, 2000–01	34	21	28	8	9	1.41
34–36	1979–81	12	16	43	19	10	2.05
	1982–84	14	15	44	18	8	1.96
	1985–87	17	15	42	18	8	1.89
	1988–90	20	15	40	17	8	1.83
	1991–93	22	15	38	17	8	1.79
	1994–96	24	15	36	17	8	1.73
	1998, 2000–01	26	17	34	10	12	1.71
37–39	1979–81	12	14	39	22	15	2.21
	1982–84	11	15	43	20	11	2.13
	1985–87	13	14	44	19	10	2.04
	1988–90	15	13	43	19	9	1.98
	1991–93	17	14	41	19	9	1.95
	1994–96	19	14	39	19	10	1.91
	1998, 2000–01	22	13	38	12	15	1.92