



The social mobility of ethnic minorities in Britain in the last 50 years (1972-2019)

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Social Progress

The Social Mobility of Ethnic Minorities in Britain in the Last Fifty Years (1972-2019)

A Report for the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities

Yaojun Li

Yaojun.Li@manchester.ac.uk

School of Social Sciences

Manchester University

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(Draft report, comments and suggestions warmly welcome)

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Main findings

- The occupational structures have been continually upgraded in Britain, for the majority and, to a lesser extent, for the ethnic minority populations as well.
- Ethnic minorities' parental class positions were somewhat higher than for White fathers in the earlier period, hence they were 'positively selected'.
- Ethnic minority men were less likely to find a professional-managerial (salaried) job in the earlier period but ethnic minority women's differences with White women were smaller.
- The first generation's class was depressed but the second generation have been making rapid progress and have caught up with, and in some cases, surpassed, Whites.
- Absolute mobility rates remain high, with more upward than downward mobility, for Whites and, to a smaller extent, for the ethnic minorities in the more recent decades.
- As ethnic minorities' family positions were higher than Whites' in the earlier period, they had lower levels of long-range upward and higher levels of long-range downward mobility than did Whites but the rates became similar in the more recent decades. No evidence of excessive perverse fluidity is found in Britain blocking ethnic minority stability in professional-managerial positions as was found for African Americans in the USA in the 1960s.
- For both men and women, there were more differences among ethnic minority groupings than between them and the majority, in terms of upward, downward, and long-range upward and downward mobility rates, with Chinese, Indians, Black Caribbeans making the most salient progress over time.
- Relative social mobility is increasing at the societal level, for Whites and for ethnic minorities, over the fifty year period

- Several groups are making notable progress in terms of access to the professional-managerial salariat positions and in gaining university level education. Apart from Black Caribbean and Pakistani/Bangladeshi men, most other groups have generally achieved parity with Whites. The first generation men and women are exceptionally 'self-selected' in terms of education and the second generation have generally outperformed Whites, with Chinese and Indians well ahead.
- In terms of the overall class competition (trying to gain a better job and avoiding a more disadvantaged job) and for access to the most advantaged professional-managerial salariat position, there is still net ethnic disadvantage, especially for the first generation.
- Unemployment, especially the hyper-cyclical unemployment during the recessions, is an ethnic 'fate', particularly for Black and Pakistani/Bangladeshi groups, and this holds true even for the second generation who hold degree-level qualifications obtained in the UK universities.
- Worklessness (unemployment and economic inactivity) for the majority of the working-age population may well be a combination of factors such as frustration, discouragement and discrimination. Ethnic minorities are highly vulnerable to worklessness and this holds true for first and second generations alike. But once in employment, they generally fare well with several groupings outperforming Whites.
- In sum, the ethnic social mobility in Britain is not a wholly sad story. There are many happy episodes but as a society, removing the first hurdle (worklessness) is of paramount importance in order to create a genuinely equal, fair, meritocratic and dynamic society.

Ethno-generational-gender specific findings

Whites

- The occupational structures have been upgrading for both fathers and respondents, with the proportions in professional-managerial positions increasing from 17.9 to 37.5 percent for fathers, and from 19.3 to 46.5 percent for respondents (or from 22.3 to 48.0 percent for men and from 14.4 to 44.9 percent for women). The rate of increase is faster for respondents than for fathers, and for female than for male respondents.
- Given the continual upgrading of the occupational structure with ‘more room at the top’, there was more upward than downward mobility, with the total mobility rates remaining high, at around 70 percent, with around 40 percent upward and 30 percent downward mobility. White men’s upward mobility was fairly stable at around 35-40 percent but white women’s upward mobility rates, whilst higher than White men’s upward mobility rates, showed a trend of decline, from around 51 percent at the beginning of the period to around 42 percent at the end of the period.
- Because of the enlarged size of the salariat, there were increasing rates of long-range upward mobility from lower origins to the top (salariat) destinations for both men (from 15.6 to 26.4 percent) and women (from 9.7 to 25.1 percent).
- The increasing competition from lower origins, from women and, perhaps most importantly for our purposes, from members of ethnic minority heritages, would mean increasing relative mobility, or in other words, greater social fluidity. The class structure became less stringent and there was clear and visible social progress, for all, for Whites and, more saliently, for ethnic minorities.

Black Caribbean

- Black Caribbeans came to the ‘motherland’ as voluntary migrant workers, in response to advertisements in newspapers, shop windows, and word of mouth (the *Empire Windrush* brought nearly 500 passengers mostly from Jamaica on 22 June 1948 and docked in Tilbury, Essex, which marked the beginning of large-scale immigration of Black Caribbeans since the end of the Second World War). They tended to reside in inner city areas of London, Manchester and Birmingham, with men working as bus or tube drivers on the Public Transport and women as NHS nurses. Their educational qualifications were lower than those of Whites. Thus, in each of the last five decades, Black Caribbean men’s class positions were lower than White men’s. Yet at least in the earlier decades, from 1970s to 1990s, Black Caribbean women’s class positions were higher than White women’s (being nurses in the NHS, they were more likely situated in Class II of our schema whilst White women were predominantly working as routine non-manual clerical workers and in personal services, or Class III as shown in Panel 2 of Figure 3 of the report). Unemployment for men in this group, especially during the mid-1980s, early-1990s and around 2008, were very high.
- Black Caribbean men had a low start in terms of class position and were much behind white men in occupational advancement or in access to the salariat for most of the period. However, there are also signs that they were catching up, with the second-generation men being little different from White men and second-generation women surpassing White women.

Black African

- Black Africans who came early such as from Nigeria were largely ‘students who stayed’ and were very highly educated. They were much more likely to occupy professional-managerial positions in the earlier decades from the 1970s to the 1990s. In the last two decades, their occupancy of salariat position was similar to the White British, possibly

due to the influx of recent arrivals escaping war and poverty in countries like Somali or Sudan.

- Even though they have high education, at the net level, they were still much behind Whites in gaining access to the salariat and there is little improvement in this regard. As variously shown in the analyses below, there were clear signs that their positions were deteriorating and they were highly vulnerable to unemployment during recession years.
- In terms of the overall distance from Whites, men in this group had the greatest distance, especially among the younger cohorts.

Indian

- Indians in Britain also came from diverse backgrounds, many from India after first degree but there were also large numbers who came from Africa in the 1960s when some of the newly independent countries were implementing policies of Africanisation by use of forcible expulsion of foreigners. Many Indians had been working with British companies in Kenya, Uganda and South Africa for decades or even generations, and had secured positions in government or were skilled business managers or professionals. They could not or did not want to go back to India, and were allowed to come to Britain. The younger generation are also very highly educated and highly skilled, forming a prominent part of the NHS doctors. Overall, Indian men were making very good progress in terms of occupancy of salariat positions, from being behind White men in the 1970s to being well ahead of White men at the current time. Indian women's occupational profile was little different from that of White women.
- In most aspects, Indians were very close to Whites and, in some regards, they are outperforming Whites, for men and women alike.

Pakistani/Bangladeshi

- Pakistanis/Bangladeshis in Britain tend to come from rural areas (some had worked on British merchant fleets as chefs). They were recruited to work as shift workers in textile industries. Pakistanis tend to live in the Midlands and northern cities whereas Bangladeshis tend to settle in London such as Tower Hamlet. When the textile factories declined, Pakistanis tended to become taxi drivers or catering workers in restaurants. They had low education and their occupational position was very low, in fact the lowest among the main ethnic minority groups. Yet, in recent years, the second generation are making rapid progress in educational and occupational attainment.
- Among the first generation, the Pakistani/Bangladeshi men's chances of getting a professional managerial job were declining over the decades. They, together with the two black groups, were the most vulnerable to hyper-cyclical unemployment and to ethnic penalty.
- Women in this group tend to have persistent disadvantages relative to White women in terms of overall labour market positions combining employment status and class position. Three quarters of the first generation and around half of the second-generation women in this group were economically inactive although the situation was slowly improving in the current decade.

Chinese

- The Chinese in Britain are the smallest group among the main ethnic groups. The earlier arrivals tend to come from the 'New Territories' of Hong Kong in the 1950s who were rather poorly educated and they opened take-aways and restaurants not only in cities but also even in small towns and villages in Britain. The later arrivals tend to come from mainland China after the reforms policy and these tend to have very high educational levels (otherwise they could not have stayed). Around 60 percent of the first and second generation men have a first degree or above, and around 55 percent of Chinese women

in both generations are similarly qualified in the recent two decades, which is twice as high as for the Whites. The Chinese are the best-educated group in Britain, and this is the case amongst school students too. Therefore, we could find that even though in the three earlier decades, their occupational attainment was not conspicuously high, yet in the last two decades, they have the highest rates of salariat occupancy amongst all main ethnic groups. This momentum is kept by second-generation men of Chinese heritages who continue to have the highest salariat rate; the second-generation women are also doing very well, but Indian and Black African second-generation women are also doing very well. They are doing equally well.

Overall, in spite of the variations, there were more signs of social progress than social regress. We have witnessed a dynamic society in the last fifty years, with some ethnic minority groups like Indians and Chinese now doing very well and even better than Whites, and with other groups catching up. The greatest barrier facing both first and second generations is the first hurdle: gaining employment, and disadvantages are greater during recession years, especially for men in the black and Pakistani/Bangladeshi communities.

Introduction

This report presents findings on patterns and trends of social mobility by members of ethnic minority heritages in British society for the last fifty years using the most authoritative national representative surveys conducted by Government departments and academic communities. It aims to address the overall question of whether or not there has been social progress in Britain in terms of ethnic integration into the British social structure over time. More specifically, we ask whether members of ethnic minorities enjoy opportunities to a similar extent as do the majority population, or whether they are persistently disadvantaged in the labour market in terms of finding a job and gaining career advancement. In other words, we seek to understand whether parental class (and respondents' own education) plays a similarly important role for members of ethnic minority heritages as for the White majority, whether the first generation experience particular barriers in their labour market positions, whether the second generation who were born in the UK or who arrived in their childhood continue to suffer disadvantages as did their parental (first-generation) generation, or whether they have achieved parity with their White peers in education and the labour market, and are increasingly integrated into the British social structure.

It is widely believed that social mobility is important. It is important for individuals, families, communities and wider society. A socially mobile and meritocratic society is morally justifiable, economically profitable, and politically desirable. A rigid society where ascriptive factors such as family origin, skin colour or gender play the most decisive role will keep the poor at the bottom of society with no hope for advancement. An immobile society is also one where creative talents are wasted, making everyone poorer. Politically, a liberal-democratic society cannot keep a section of the population marginalised and deprived forever or even for a substantial length of time. There are many discussions on the merits of having a mobile rather than a rigid society (Goldthorpe 1996, 2007; Li and Heath 2016, 2018; Heath 2018; Li 2021).

There has been a tremendous amount of research on social mobility in Britain in the past few decades (Goldthorpe 1980/1987; Heath 1981; Marshall et al 1988; Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992; Bukodi and Goldthorpe, 2019; Blanden 2004; Li and Devine 2011; Savage et al 2013; Li et al 2015; Li and Heath 2016; Laurison and Friedman 2016; Buscha and Sturgis 2018). Most of the studies as conducted by social scientists who are concerned with whether social mobility is declining in Britain. Economists tend to hold that the social structure in Britain is getting more rigid, with the life chances of children from the rich and the poor families becoming increasingly unequal, especially in terms of getting higher education (Blanden 2004; Blanden et al 2005). Comparing the degree-level education obtained by people at the age of 23 between those from the lowest 20% and the highest 20% of family incomes in 1981 and 1999 using the National Child Development Study (NCDS) and the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS), Blanden and her colleagues find that the proportions having degree-level education increased only from 6% to 9% for children from the poorest families but from 20% to 46% for those from the richest families, with the gap widening from 14 to 37 percentage points (Blanden et al 2005: 112, Table 6.3). They hold this as evidence of declining social mobility in Britain. Sociologists tend to differentiate between absolute and relative mobility, and believe that the economists' approach is relativised from the start. They show that social mobility in Britain in terms of intergenerational class movement between parents and children is generally high and stable, with a trendless fluctuation but not an obvious sign of decline (Goldthorpe and Mills 2004, 2008; Goldthorpe 2016). There are also sociologists who hold that while pronounced social inequalities do exist, there are clear signs of progress, with increasing relative mobility in Britain (Heath and Payne 2000; Lambert et al 2003; Li and Devine 2011; Li and Heath 2016), which forms a clear contrast to increasing rigidity such as found in China (Li 2020).

Yet, a close look at existing mobility studies in Britain also shows that they are almost exclusively concerned with patterns and trends of social mobility for the whole population,

with only a few analyses on mobility patterns of ethnic minority groups (Heath and Ridge 1983; Platt 2005; Heath and McMahon 2005). A related feature of these studies is that they tend to use one or a small number of datasets, whether cross-sectional or cohort or linked census records (Goldthorpe 1987; Bukodi et al 2015; Buscha and Sturgis 2018). Both features are due to the difficulty of finding datasets with sufficiently large samples of ethnic minority members amenable to statistical analysis, yet this issue has to be addressed for both substantive and methodological reasons. Substantively, the proportion of ethnic minority members in the country has increased substantially, from around 3% in the 1950s (Heath and Cheung 2007) to over 15% at the current time, hence constituting an increasingly important section of our society. Their increasing integration into the social fabric or continued marginalisation and exclusion from the mainstream will determine how Britain will develop in socio-economic and political life in the decades to come and how it will compare and compete with other major powers in the world. Methodologically, most large-scale government or academic surveys in the last two decades have included ethnicity and some of them also have information on parental class position whilst almost all social surveys have information on respondents' own class position measured in terms of the Goldthorpe class schema or its new instantiation, the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NSSeC) (Rose and Pevalin 2003). Data necessary for intergenerational mobility analysis are also available from previous surveys dating several decades earlier, although harmonising variables on class origins and destinations (converting the Socio-Economic Groups, SEGs, into the Goldthorpe class) in a consistent-over-time (COT) manner for statistical analysis requires painstaking efforts and meticulous attention to detail. Yet given the importance of the project, the efforts are worth it. In the following, I will give a brief account of the data sources, the structure of the present analysis, and the main findings, followed by a brief summary.

Data and structure

A detailed account of the data is shown in the Appendix. Here it suffices to say that in comparison to existing studies, the present study is based on the largest collection of datasets ever assembled for intergenerational social mobility research in Britain which covers the longest span of nearly 50 consecutive years and which has a particular perspective on patterns of intergenerational social mobility (origins-destinations associations) of the detailed ethnic minority groupings as in the standard practice of British ethnic studies. At the inception of the project, it was decided that a study of social class mobility patterns and trends for the detailed ethnic minority groupings rather than a mere contrast between the majority and the minority was needed. A growing body of research findings indicate more intra- than inter- ethnic differences, namely, there are more differences among ethnic minority groupings than between them and the White majority.

We have earlier observed that most mobility studies in Britain have tended to ignore the ethnic dimension. One reason for this may be that as members of ethnic minority heritages constituted only a small proportion in the population in the past, their sample sizes in the social surveys were also too small for statistical analysis. Thus, the lack of attention in this respect was due to data shortage. Yet the continued inattention to the ethnic domain in mobility research in spite of the growing availability of ethnic minority data in social surveys cannot be attributed to reasons of data shortage, but perhaps to inertia or an implicit assumption that similar (or the same) processes of social reproduction would underline the patterns and trends of social mobility by members of ethnic minority heritages as they do for the White majority. Hence mainstream mobility researchers may have found little need for conducting separate analysis for ethnic minorities.

Yet there are powerful arguments that the processes of social mobility do not operate in exactly the same way or to a similar extent for members of ethnic minority heritages. Migration, especially that of a long-distance kind, is a costly and disruptive process. People's socio-economic and cultural capitals (resources) are usually weakened in the wake of a long-distance and permanent migration. Migrants do not have much money in the first place and international travel costs a lot. People's social networks lose value as sources of social capital. Their kin are left behind and are too far away to be of immediate help. Their friendship networks are hard to maintain and will gradually dissipate through disuse. Immigrants tend to come from developing countries with poorer educational facilities and lower educational standards than found in highly developed countries like Britain. Educational qualifications obtained in the country of origin are frequently unrecognised or discounted by employers in the destination country, and immigrants have little knowledge of the local labour market and do not know where to turn to for help. Those for whom English is not their mother tongue would face extra difficulties. Discrimination of a direct, indirect or statistical nature may manifest itself in overt or covert manners in spite of Government's Race Relations Acts, as has been amply demonstrated by field studies from the early years of large-scale immigration to the current time (Heath and Di Stasio 2019). On the positive side, immigrants, especially labour migrants, are also different from the majority of the population in their country of origin. They tend to be younger, healthier, better educated, and more aspiring. They choose to come to the western 'developed' countries for a better life for themselves and their children. They are, in a sense, 'self-selected' (Borjas, 1987; Feliciano, 2005; Ichou, 2014). Some of them succeed but many find themselves in the lower or lowest strata of society, having a suppressed class position, namely, doing a lower job that they might not be willing to do if they had stayed in their country of origin. They try to imbue their children with a sense of ambition, determination, perseverance and resilience. Their children acquire these aspirations and make determined efforts at education. In spite of family

poverty, they attain impressive performance and many of them even make ‘bolder choices’ at educational transitions than their equally-performing majority peers (Jackson 2012, 2013). Yet it has also been shown that their educational success does not lead to commensurate returns in the labour market (Crawford and Greeves 2015; Li, 2018a; 2021).

These and other factors suggest that we need to conduct a systematic study to trace the patterns and trends of social mobility by members of ethnic minority heritages from earlier times to the present day and compare their mobility trajectories with those of the mainstream population in order to assess whether social progress has been achieved in Britain. If yes, for the first or the second generation, for all or some of the groups, for men or women ethnic minorities? If no verifiable patterns of progress can be established, has the situation become worse? Which ethnic minority group or groups suffer the most persisting disadvantages?

Although some information on ethnicity is available in the earlier datasets such as the 1958 National Child Development Study (NCDS), the 1970 British Cohort Study (BCS) and the 1972 Oxford Social Mobility Inquiry (SMI), rather little effort was made to analyse the mobility patterns of the ethnic mobility respondents in the samples (see Heath and Ridge 1983, though, for analysis of the undifferentiated men of ‘colour’ in the SMI, N=262, or 2.55%, of the sample). The General Household Survey starting from 1972 to 1992 (and then in 2005, see Goldthorpe and Mills 2008; Li and Devine 2011) also contains information on ethnicity but the information is rather opaque, masked in different variable names, and difficult to harmonise. Most mobility studies have failed to include ethnicity using the GHS data (Li and Heath 2016).

It was the 1991 Census of the Population that set the standard for systematic collection of ethnic minority data and paved the way for large-scale analysis of their socio-economic lives in Britain. The most important feature of the 1991 Census is that, for the first time in the UK census history, it contained an ethnicity question with a categorisation of ethnic groupings that

has become a 'standard' in academic and government research: White, Black Caribbean, Black African, Indian, Pakistani/Bangladeshi, Chinese, Other. More detailed ethnic classifications have become available in later censuses and surveys but in published papers, most scholars tend to follow the seven-way classification. There are, of course, shortcomings of this seven-way ethnic schema as it is not detailed enough: critics may say that there are too many differences among 'Black Africans' for this category to be meaningful. This is true to some extent, as members from this broad group tend to vary quite much in terms of origin countries and time of arrival to the UK: they came from different countries in Africa, and their time of arrival has spanned across several decades. Some came quite early and, as 'students that stayed' (Daley 1996), and were quite privileged but others came later, from war-torn and poverty-ridden countries as asylum seekers and refugees. Difficulties of another kind may emerge, such as with people of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origins. Respondents of these heritages may have been born in 'India' before their current origin country became independent but they may self-identify as Pakistani or Bangladeshi. Similarly, Bangladeshis may have been born in 'Eastern Pakistan' before Bangladesh became independent; and Indians may have been born in Pakistan or in African countries or other regions such as Uganda or South Africa, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong or Singapore. Other respondents, such as Chinese, may have diversities of a different nature: they may have come from mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore or other areas, being of the same cultural heritage but having rather different life experiences. Yet, from a practical perspective, the seven-way schema is fairly neat and reasonable, being neither too undifferentiated as constructed in previous work with only a binary structure, nor too diversified to be amenable to statistical analysis, especially when multivariate analyses are conducted, as done in some of the present report. Readers wishing to see the social mobility profiles of more detailed ethnic groupings could conduct the analysis themselves or request bespoke analysis using more recent data where 16 ethnic categories are

available in the USoc or LFS data. Using the seven-way ethnic schema is thus our preferred choice, a choice ensuing from the 1991 Census of the Population and the concomitant Samples of Anonymised Records (SARs) which has generated a lot of research on ethnic disadvantages in the labour market although not of intergenerational social mobility (Li 2004).

Many studies using the SARs or social surveys have documented marked disadvantages faced by Black and Pakistani/Bangladeshi groupings, with particular regard to unemployment, educational and occupational attainment, health, housing and social deprivation (Karn 1997; Heath and McMahon 1997; Berthoud 2000; Connor et al 2004; Modood 2005; Li and Heath 2010; Li 2010a; Rafferty 2012; Zwysen and Longhi 2018). Yet, as most of the government surveys and the census data do not contain information on father's occupation, it is almost impossible to investigate social mobility. Datasets good for assessing ethnic disadvantages but not ethnic social mobility range from the Home Office Citizenship Survey (HOCS, 2001-2011), the Community Life Survey (CLS, 2011-2019), the General Household Survey (GHS, 1993-2004) to the Labour Force Survey (LFS, 1983-2013). Some scholars have used the linked census records from 1971 onwards (the Longitudinal Study, LS) to conduct mobility analysis for ethnic minority groups, such as Platt (2005) and Buscha and Surgis (2018). The advantage of this approach is the large sample size but the weakness of this approach may be the attenuated social differences. Ordinary people may not be able to provide information on the employment/supervisory status and occupational titles that is as detailed for class coding as that in social surveys by professional coders. This may result in much weaker associations between origins and destinations based on the LS data than based on social surveys conducted by professional interviewers. We can see this quite clearly if we compare the findings by Platt (2005) with Goldthorpe (1987) or Bukodi and Goldthorpe (2019). For instance, Platt (2005: 452, Table 2) shows an odds ratio of around 3.5 for competitions involving the professional-managerial salariat class and the manual working class as origins and as destinations, but if

we use the General Household Survey or the British Household Survey and restrict the respondents to the same demographic attributes as Platt used for analysis in her paper, we would find the odds ratios to be around twice as big, at around 7. Thus social surveys provide a stronger association between origins and destinations and a more accurate picture of the social advantages and disadvantages in Britain. We need to find social surveys that contain origin (father's or parental) and destination (current or last main job) class information for ethnic minority groups that preferably also contain data on country of birth and time of arrival to the UK for differentiation of first and second generation and that also have large sample sizes to permit statistical analyses.

In the present study, we avail ourselves of the best data sources currently available which are all large-scaled national representative surveys conducted by Government organisations or academic communities. The surveys contain required information for social mobility research on ethnic minority in Britain, with detailed ethnic categories as per the 1991 Census of the Population, social class for respondents and their parents, and generational status. In the earlier years such as the GHS, it is father's occupation (class) that is available, but in the later years, both parents' class variables are available in which case we adopt the 'dominance' approach as advocated by Erikson (1984). Some surveys, such as the LFS (2014-2019)¹, contains information on the 'main earner's class positions' during the respondent's adolescent years. As women are increasingly employed in the labour market, a rising proportion of families are 'mother-dominant', with mothers having a higher class position than fathers (Li and Devine 2011). We therefore need to bring mothers into intergenerational social mobility (Beller 2009), which we do where possible.

¹ LFS (2020) became available in mid-November 2020, and was not included in the present project.

For both parental and respondent's class, we adopt a five-class schema (the Goldthorpe class notation is placed in bracket after each class label: (1) higher- and lower-grade professional-managerial salariat (I+II); (2) the intermediate or routine-non-manual workers in clerical and personal service occupations (IIIab), (3) own-account workers in industry, commerce and agriculture (IVabc), (4) manual supervisors/forepersons, lower technicians and skilled workers (V-VI), and (5) semi/unskilled routine manual workers and agricultural labourers (VIIab). The GHS (1972-1992) has information on father's and respondent's Socio-Economic Groups (SEG) which could be converted into the Goldthorpe class following Heath and McDonald (1987), and the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) has direct Goldthorpe schemas for parents and respondents. So, from 1972 to 2008 containing the GHS (1972-1992, and then 2005) and the BHPS (1991-2008), we use this collapsed version of the Goldthorpe class. For the UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS), commonly known as Understanding Society² (USoc) that started in 2008 and that has nine waves available at the time of analysis, the Labour Force Survey (LFS 2014-2019 for the autumn quarter), and the Taking Part survey of 2005/2006, the NSSEC schema is used. We have thus amassed around 50 consecutive years (1972-2019) of data from high-quality and large-scale government and academic surveys, the best available for analysing ethnic social mobility in Britain. As shown in Appendix Table 4, there is no one-to-one matching between the categories in the Goldthorpe and the NSSEC schemas. Rose and O'Reilly (1998: 135) also show that there is only a 77.9% match between the Goldthorpe class and the NSSEC. This creates some 'creases' in the data series as can be seen in the class distributions over time. Yet as our main interest is in the ethno-mobility relations rather than in the smoothness of the data points, it is hoped that these will not pose too much of a problem for present purposes. To illustrate where data series are conjoined, 'vertical' lines are shown in Panel (1) of Figure 1.

² Data for Wave 10 of the USoc were released on 30/11/2020, also too late for inclusion in the present project.

As our overriding concern is with social progress in Britain as illustrated by patterns and trends of social mobility experienced by ethnic minority members in the last fifty years, we have nearly fifty years of data points and many main ethnic minority groupings for each year. To make the matters more complicated, we know that men and women's mobility chances are different, as are those between the first and the second generations. This makes it difficult to present the findings in a systematic and simultaneously orderly way, as mobility researchers are usually concerned with a few time points or dimensions. Furthermore, the ethnic samples in earlier years are not large enough for statistical analysis. Therefore, after some explorations, we decided to present findings on the majority-minority contrasts on an annual basis and detailed findings between different ethnic minority groupings using a decadal approach, that is, by coding the fifty years into five decades (1972 to 1979; 1980 to 1989; 1990 to 1999; 2000 to 2009 and 2010 to 2019), which gives large sample sizes for ethno-generational groupings for each sex and retains the possibility for trend analysis.

For ethno-generational analysis, we treat those born in the UK or arriving before age 13 as the second generation on the assumption that they have received all or most of their education in the UK and do not speak English with a foreign accent as typical of adult immigrants, which has important implications for access to and advancement in the labour market, hence their class position. Note that the first generation thus delineated are not necessarily the parental generation, as they could be those arriving in the UK during their adolescence. Some scholars, such as Rumbaut (2004) make much more refined categorisations such as 1st, 1.25th, 1.5th, 1.75th, 2nd generations, and Lessard-Phillips and Li (2017) differentiate up to four generations in their study of educational attainment in the UK. While such detailed categorisations are amenable to analysis for one time-point/dataset or for one or two groups, it would prove exceedingly cumbersome when we have around fifty years of data and wish to conduct analysis for so many ethno-generational groupings. Another point worthy of notice is

that social mobility analysis usually contains ‘mobility tables’, be they on absolute or relative mobility or loglinear or other kinds of modelling coefficients. Such tables would be manageable with one or a few years’ data but would be almost impossible to read when we have fifty years of different kinds of data for a particular domain of analysis. Therefore, we shall use ‘graphs’ as much as possible for readers to capture the ‘shapes’ of mobility patterns and trends that the British society has witnessed in the last fifty years, for the whole population, for the majority (White) population, for ethnic minority, for men and women, and for detailed ethno-generational groupings, and in the absolute and relative mobility rates. ‘A picture is as good as one thousand words’, as the saying goes. Where appropriate and as far as possible, we have turned the complex modelling coefficients into percentage points and arranged them in graphic representations for intuitive understanding.

Sociological analysis of social mobility tends, as noted above, to differentiate between absolute and relative mobility. Absolute mobility is what we can directly observe between father’s (or parents’) class position and sons’ (or daughters’) class position and this is usually expressed in percentage terms (Li 2022). Absolute mobility can be further differentiated into total mobility rates (the sum off the diagonal in a mobility table), upward mobility rates (the proportion of children who have better jobs than did fathers), and downward mobility rates (the proportion of children who have lower jobs than did parents). Some scholars also differentiate horizontal mobility where positions are of no clear advantage or desirability such as among the intermediate positions of routine non-manual, own-account or manual supervisory/lower technical workers (Goldthorpe and Jackson 2007), but we do not make such a distinction in the present analysis as we are operating with only five classes for parents and respondents and our Classes V and VI are combined. Also different from common practices of mobility research is that we have created categories of long-range upward and long-range downward mobility, with the former referring to people from low class origins who reach top (professional-managerial)

destinations, and vice versa for the latter, namely, those who originate from top (professional-managerial) origins but who end up in low destinations. This, particularly the long-range downward mobility, is of considerable importance for present purposes. American sociologists have alerted us to the possibility that social fluidity in terms of long-range downward mobility may not necessarily be a sign of social justice or social progress when race or ethnicity enters into the picture. Duncan (1968) shows that many African Americans are poor not because they were born poor but because they were born black. Their fathers may be in professional or managerial positions but due to racial discrimination prevalent in American society at that time, they could not follow in their father's footsteps. Hout (1984) says that this lack of upper class inheritance for African Americans constitutes a 'perverse fluidity'. For our present purposes, we would like to see whether any ethnic minority group in Britain has experienced particularly high rates of long-range downward mobility and if yes, whether the pattern is persistent as indicating social stagnation/regress or whether some kind of social progress can be detected.

With regard to relative mobility, sociologists usually talk about class competitions, namely, people from certain origin classes trying to obtain more advantaged positions and to avoid disadvantaged positions relative to people from other backgrounds in similar competitions. These competitions are expressed as odds ratios or log of odds ratios. An odds ratio of one indicates complete equality, and the higher an odds ratio rises above one, the more unequal a society becomes; and vice versa. Imagine a society with two classes: middle class and working class. If the children from the two origin classes had the same chances of landing themselves on a middle-class and a working-class job, the odds ratio would be unity. Li (2020) shows that the Chinese society was fairly equal in terms of mobility chances from the 1950s to the 1970s, but with the implementation of the reforms policy in 1978 and the rapid economic development that followed, social inequality has been rising, with odds ratios increasing rapidly. We shall see whether the British society is becoming more, or less, equal, whether the

ethnic minority groups are getting closer to or more distant from the majority population in the trend and, if more distant, whether the odds ratios are rising above or below the white line as indicating more, or less, unequal life chances they are having relative to those of the Whites.

We have indicated above that class is measured by current or last main job. Yet, for most of us in the working-age population, having a job is of great importance, not only for economic benefits, but for our psychological wellbeing and for the perception of self-worth, actualisation of one's creative potential, social-capital building, and a whole range of other factors (Marsh 1988). Worklessness (unemployment and economic inactivity) as characteristic of ethnic minority groups' working lives therefore needs to be brought into serious consideration when we discuss ethnic social mobility and ethnic penalty. Hence, in the latter part of our analysis we shall bring worklessness into analysis as part of the labour market position, and hence mobility trajectory.

We start the analysis by looking at the overall patterns and trends, and then move to more detailed explorations. Our central question is whether and to what extent there is social progress as indicated by ethnic social mobility in Britain in the last fifty years.

Analysis

Class distributions of respondents by parental class and ethnicity

We begin the analysis by looking at the overall class distributions of fathers and respondents, distinguishing men and women, white and first- and second- generation 'visible' minorities, pooling together all five decades' data (Table 1). We also show in this table the dissimilarity index (DI) and Lieberman's (1975) net difference index (NDI). The DI indicates the percentages of cases that would have to be reallocated to make the two distributions identical and is thus a measure of the overall difference between any two distributions. As the DI is insensitive to the

ordering of class categories and does not provide directional statements about the differences between father's and respondent's classes, we also use the NDI as an indication of net class decline or advancement.³

Table 1 Parental (usually fathers' (F)), and men (M) and women (W) respondents' class distribution by ethno-generational status

	Whites			Ethnic minorities					
				1 st generation			2 nd generation		
	F	M	W	F	M	W	F	M	W
Salariat (I-II)	30.2	37.5	32.7	36.0	35.2	38.0	30.5	37.3	37.4
Intermediate (III)	12.3	8.8	33.0	15.9	7.6	17.4	11.4	12.6	33.4
Own-account (IV)	10.7	12.0	5.3	21.9	15.0	6.6	11.3	11.4	4.4
Foremen&skilled (V-VI)	29.6	26.2	14.6	15.1	25.8	21.9	26.5	23.4	13.8
Unskilled (VII)	17.2	15.6	14.4	11.0	16.4	16.1	20.4	15.3	11.0
Dissimilarity index (DI)		7.3	22.6		15.7	14.8		7.4	27.7
Net difference index (NDI)		5.6	14.0		-10.6	-4.3		8.5	20.9

Notes:

1. The two indices compare men's and women's classes with those of fathers' respectively. The net difference index (NDI) is usually taken as ranging from -1 to 1 but the values are here reversed and multiplied by 100 for ease of comparison with the dissimilarity index (DI). Positive values in the NDI indicate an advancement for the respondent's relative to the father's class.
2. N= 433,274, 27,091, 21,120 for white, first- and second- generation men; and 436,902, 23,505 and 17,787 for white, first- and second- generation women. Unweighted Ns and weighted analysis throughout the report.

Source: The General Household Survey (GHS 1972-1992, 2005), the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS 1991-2008), The UK Household Longitudinal Study (also known as Understanding Society, USoc, 2008-2016), The Taking Part survey (TP 2005/6), and the Labour Force Survey (LFS 2014-2019). The same below.

Looking first at the white respondents (the first three columns of Table 1), we find that a larger proportion of male respondents (sons) than their fathers were in the salariat class (37.5

³ The NDI is defined as $ND_{xy} = \text{pr}(X > Y) - \text{pr}(Y > X)$ and further defined as $\sum_{i=2}^n \chi_i (\sum_{j=1}^{n-i-1} \gamma_j) - \sum_{i=2}^n \gamma_i (\sum_{j=1}^{n-i-1} \chi_j)$ where, in our case, X indicates the class position of fathers and Y that of respondents. It is noted here that we reversed the class order in calculating the NDI with 1 referring to the unskilled working class and 5 to the higher salariat.

and 30.2 percent respectively), reflecting the changing occupational structure and increasing ‘room at the top’ in the post-war period. Women were slightly less likely to reach salariat positions than men, at 32.7 percent. Furthermore, women were more concentrated than men into the routine white-collar (intermediate) positions.

The distributions in the three middle columns of Table 1, pertaining to the first-generation ethnic minorities (that is, immigrants), are rather different. Overall, we find that the fathers of the first generation were not in low positions. In fact, they were more likely than White fathers to be in the salariat (at 36 percent) and were twice as likely to be in the ‘self-employed/farmer’ positions (21.9 as compared with 10.7 percent for White fathers). They were less likely to be in the blue-collar positions than White fathers. This partly reflects the occupational structures of the source countries, although it also reflects the degree of positive selection of some migrant groups. We shall have more analysis in the following with regard to the variation between ethnic minority groups on parental class. Here it can be seen that the sons and daughters (the migrants themselves) also have fairly high proportions in the salariat, similar to (and for women, notably higher than) the proportions among white sons and daughters, but immigrant women also have higher proportions in the blue-collar positions than White women. The last three columns of Table 1 show that, in the case of the second generation, the distributions for fathers, sons and daughters are more similar than are the first generation to those of the White population.

Turning to the indices of dissimilarity at the foot of the table, we see that overall scores for the DI are reasonably comparable for White, first- and second- generation, respondents, with women in all three cases showing much higher scores than men (reflecting the fact that women tend to occupy rather different occupations from their fathers or brothers). However, the NDI shows that the picture for the first generation is very different both from that for White

respondents and from that of the second generation. The negative values for the first generation (-10.6 for sons and -4.3 for daughters) show that they experienced markedly net downward mobility, unlike the upward mobility experienced both by the White respondents and by the second generation. As would be expected, these conclusions based on comparisons of fathers' and sons'/daughters' class distributions are mirrored when we compute absolute mobility rates for the ethno-generational groupings, which are shown in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2 Class distribution of respondents by parental class and ethnicity (row percent): 1972-2019

(1) All (Whites and ethnic minorities)

Father's class	Respondent's class					N
	1	2	3	4	5	
1 Salariat (I-II)	54.2	18.6	7.9	12.9	6.4	229,334
2 Intermediate (III)	40.7	21.6	9.0	18.4	10.4	95,119
3 Own-account (IV)	33.1	17.6	15.9	20.1	13.3	85,366
4 Foremen & skilled (V-VI)	28.4	21.4	8.0	25.0	17.2	211,646
5 Unskilled (VII)	22.7	20.6	8.1	25.2	23.4	125,978
All	37.4	20.0	9.0	20.0	13.7	747,443

(2) All Whites

Father's class	Respondent's class					N
	1	2	3	4	5	
1 Salariat (I-II)	54.1	19.0	8.0	12.6	6.3	196,064
2 Intermediate (III)	41.0	22.3	8.7	17.8	10.1	80,160
3 Own-account (IV)	32.9	18.4	16.4	19.5	12.8	68,765
4 Foremen & skilled (V-VI)	27.8	21.9	7.9	24.9	17.5	188,311
5 Unskilled (VII)	22.0	21.0	8.0	25.0	24.0	109,458
All	37.0	20.5	8.9	19.7	13.8	642,758

(3) All ethnic minorities

Father's class	Respondent's class					N
	1	2	3	4	5	
1 Salariat (I-II)	54.4	15.8	7.2	15.1	7.4	33,270
2 Intermediate (III)	38.4	17.0	10.8	22.1	11.7	14,959
3 Own-account (IV)	34.6	13.3	13.4	22.9	15.8	16,601
4 Foremen & skilled (V-VI)	34.2	16.3	8.9	26.5	14.2	23,335
5 Unskilled (VII)	28.2	17.2	9.2	26.7	18.7	16,520
All	40.5	15.9	9.4	21.6	12.6	104,685

(4) All first-generation ethnic minorities

Father's class	Respondent's class					N
	1	2	3	4	5	
1 Salariat (I-II)	52.9	13.8	8.2	16.6	8.6	13,504
2 Intermediate (III)	36.1	12.8	11.5	25.4	14.2	5,805
3 Own-account (IV)	29.9	11.2	14.1	24.7	20.1	8,359
4 Foremen & skilled (V-VI)	30.7	10.7	12.2	28.9	17.5	5,743
5 Unskilled (VII)	24.8	11.2	12.9	26.7	24.3	4,044
All	39.1	12.3	11.1	22.6	14.9	37,455

(5) All second-generation ethnic minorities

Father's class	Respondent's class					N
	1	2	3	4	5	
1 Salarial (I-II)	52.7	20.8	6.4	11.4	8.8	8,196
2 Intermediate (III)	37.1	27.6	6.7	16.9	11.7	3,270
3 Own-account (IV)	37.7	19.6	14.9	15.6	12.3	3,124
4 Foremen & skilled (V-VI)	32.5	21.8	7.4	24.0	14.3	7,108
5 Unskilled (VII)	28.3	23.0	7.7	23.5	17.6	5,272
All	38.8	22.1	7.9	18.3	12.8	26,970

As we have very rich data, we thought it advisable to split the class distribution tables by the overall and the more detailed patterns.⁴ Table 2 shows the data for the overall situation and for the majority and the minority. As can be seen in Panel (1), we have 37.4 percent of the respondents in professional-managerial salariat, and around 14 percent in the routine (semi and unskilled manual) positions. We can immediately capture a glimpse of the class differences in British society: for people from salariat families, over half (54.2 percent) are themselves situated in professional and managerial salariat positions, and only a tiny portion (6.4 percent) have travelled all the way downward to the unskilled routine manual positions. Yet, for people from unskilled families, their life chances are much less favourable, with less than half a chance to gain access to the salariat positions (22.7 percent) as compared with the salariat children (at 54.2 percent) and around four times the chances ending up in the most disadvantaged routine position (23.4 and 6.4 percent respectively). If we do a simple calculation of the life chances as experienced by children from the salariat and the routine manual families in terms of competition in reaching the top and avoiding the bottom destination classes (called 'odds ratio'), it is $(54.2/6.4)/(22.7/23.4)=8.7$. This suggests that, taking the fifty-year period as a whole,

⁴ Prior analysis shows no significant differences in the ethno-class associations among the three datasets in 2005: GHS, BHPS and TP. The unidiff parameters are 0.157 for the BHPS and 0.893 for the TP relative to the GHS set at zero. Given this, the data in all three sources for this year are included.

people from advantaged professional-managerial origins are around nine times as likely to find themselves in equally advantaged professional-managerial destinations rather than in disadvantaged routine manual jobs as are those from routine manual families who are engaged in the same kind of completion, namely, for access to salariat and avoidance of routine manual jobs. This is far from the principles of social justice as enshrined in the law or from academic ideals concerning choices behind the ‘veil of ignorance’ (Rawls 1971). Moving to Panel 2 for Whites, we see similar patterns, which is not surprising as Whites constitute the greatest proportion of the population, with the corresponding odds ratios being 9.4, but in Panel 3 for minorities, we find that distributions from unskilled families are quite different: children from these families are more likely to achieve long-range upward mobility and less likely to follow in their father’s footsteps as compared with their White peers, with the odds ratios being 4.9.

Why are the patterns different between immigrants and Whites? There could be many reasons. One is that immigrants are more ‘self-selected’ but suffer from lack of resources and from racial discrimination, leading to the first generation having a suppressed class position but second-generation bouncing back.

Much research has documented the hardships faced by immigrants in the British labour market (Berthoud 2000; Carmichael and Woods 2000; Li and Heath 2008, 2010, 2018). Due to deficiencies in socio-economic-human capitals and to racial discrimination, first generation immigrants tend to have high rates of unemployment and even if they manage to find work, their class position is not in keeping with their human capital. That means that they tend to have a lower class position than in the absence of such deficiencies/discrimination. In other words, their nominal class position is lower than their class potential, as in the case of a taxi driver in New York who is an immigrant from Poland and who possesses a PhD in physics (Write 1997). There were many similar stories of highly-educated Eastern Europeans from A8 or A12 countries coming to Britain to pick vegetables or do other kinds of routine jobs (Clark

et al 2019; Ryan et al 2009). Many first generation immigrants could be highly educated but could not find a job commensurate with their skills due to lack of English proficiency and relevant social-cultural capitals. For these people, their productive potential would be higher than what their class label would suggest, also higher than what may be expected among the majority population situated in similar class positions. Even if they would come to terms with their current situation as a fact of life or as an immigrant's fate, they would not be as fatalistic for their children but would rather encourage their children to aim higher, work harder and achieve more (Li 2018a, 2021). If this line of thinking is valid, we would expect their children to have a higher probability of educational success which may, or may not be successfully converted into a more advantaged class position than that obtained by their peers from similar origin classes among the White population.

To test this, we differentiate the first and the second generations as defined above, and present the class distributions in Panels (4) and (5). What we find, comparing the outflow distributions of those from Class VII origins among the second generation with those from the first generation and also from the white group, is that the first generation do suffer suppressed class positions, with proportions being found in salariat and intermediate positions being 24.8 and 11.2 percent respectively (or 36 percent in 'white-collar' jobs), but for the second generation, the proportions are 28.3 and 23.0 percent (or 51.3 percent in 'white-collar' jobs, 15 percentage points higher than among the first generation). The second-generation from Class VII origins are also more likely to reach salariat and intermediate jobs than whites, at 22 and 21 percent (43 percent in 'white-collar' jobs). And second-generation from Class VII origins are least likely to stay in Class VII positions as compared with first generation or white peers. In this case, it might be said that some of the second-generation's parents in Class VII positions (namely, first-generation routine workers) were unfortunately 'sunken' into routine manual

jobs: they might have obtained higher positions had they not been handicapped by poor English and/or other socio-cultural deficiencies/discriminatory practices at the hand of employers.

Table 3 Class distribution of respondents by parental class and the main ethnic minority groups (row percent): 1972-2019

(1) Black Caribbean						
Father's class	Respondent's class					N
	1	2	3	4	5	
1 Salarial (I-II)	49.4	16.7	4.1	19.5	10.3	1,653
2 Intermediate (III)	36.3	21.4	5.8	21.5	15.0	783
3 Own-account (IV)	23.9	16.6	8.5	24.2	26.8	1,291
4 Foremen & skilled (V-VI)	33.1	20.1	7.4	24.2	15.3	2,299
5 Unskilled (VII)	31.1	20.3	4.1	24.2	20.3	1,632
All	34.6	18.9	6.0	23.0	17.6	7,658

(2) Black African						
Father's class	Respondent's class					N
	1	2	3	4	5	
1 Salarial (I-II)	50.2	17.6	5.6	18.9	7.7	3,583
2 Intermediate (III)	36.8	16.0	8.6	28.0	10.7	1,333
3 Own-account (IV)	35.5	15.7	9.4	25.8	13.6	1,266
4 Foremen & skilled (V-VI)	32.6	15.2	6.0	33.0	13.2	1,161
5 Unskilled (VII)	28.3	11.8	10.6	28.2	21.1	686
All	41.3	16.2	7.1	24.4	11.1	8,029

(3) Indian						
Father's class	Respondent's class					N
	1	2	3	4	5	
1 Salarial (I-II)	56.2	16.9	6.4	11.5	8.9	4,917
2 Intermediate (III)	45.4	17.4	7.2	18.8	11.2	1,928
3 Own-account (IV)	35.4	13.2	11.6	20.2	19.5	3,563
4 Foremen & skilled (V-VI)	36.4	18.9	8.4	21.8	14.5	3,658
5 Unskilled (VII)	30.4	21.0	7.4	22.8	18.4	2,367
All	42.9	17.2	8.1	17.9	13.9	16,433

(4) Pakistani/Bangladeshi						
Father's class	Respondent's class					N
	1	2	3	4	5	
1 Salarial (I-II)	43.9	17.0	11.4	18.6	9.2	2,047
2 Intermediate (III)	28.0	16.0	17.6	26.2	12.2	949
3 Own-account (IV)	26.5	13.1	19.2	25.4	15.8	1,993
4 Foremen & skilled (V-VI)	30.7	13.8	15.4	27.8	12.4	2,266
5 Unskilled (VII)	23.2	17.5	16.8	24.4	18.1	2,659

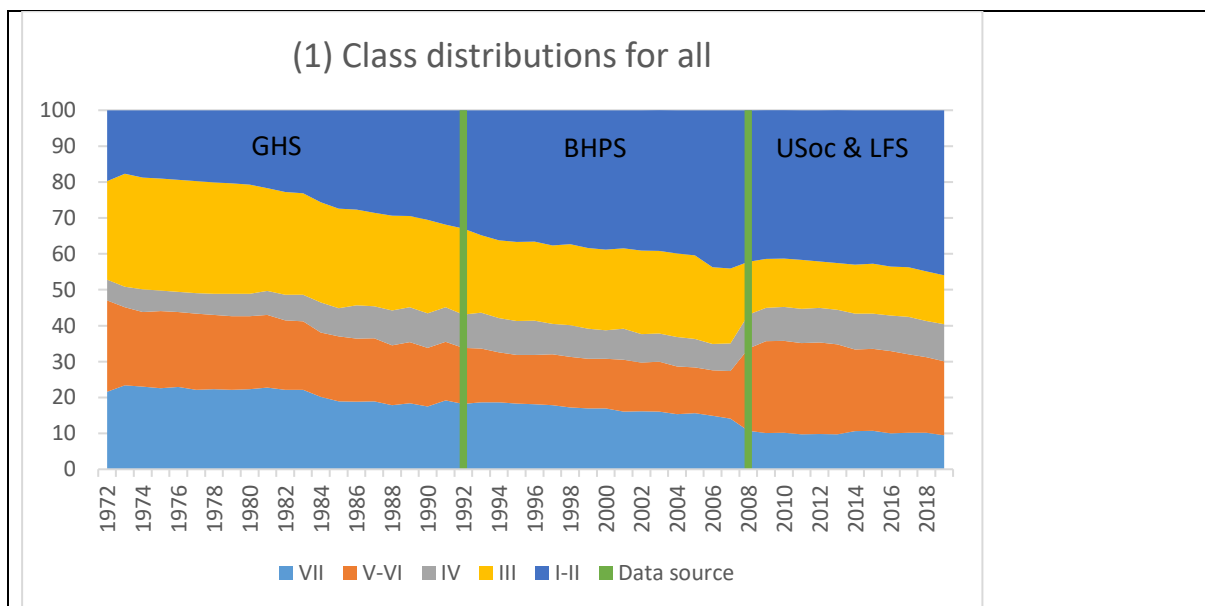
All	30.6	15.6	15.8	24.2	13.8	9,914
(5) Chinese						
Father's class	Respondent's class					N
	1	2	3	4	5	
1 Salarial (I-II)	65.4	17.1	6.6	6.7	4.1	941
2 Intermediate (III)	50.5	13.6	12.8	14.9	8.2	309
3 Own-account (IV)	51.1	12.5	15.6	14.6	6.1	451
4 Foremen & skilled (V-VI)	46.4	11.6	19.3	16.0	6.7	443
5 Unskilled (VII)	38.4	13.7	14.0	28.8	5.1	203
All	54.6	14.4	12.3	13.1	5.7	2,347

We have seen the overall patterns for all the respondents, for the Whites and the ethnic minorities as a whole, and for the first and second-generation ethnic minority groups in Table 2. Moving to the main ethnic minority groupings as in standard practice (except for the ‘Other’ which is too diverse to have sociological interest for our current purposes), we find notable differences. Take intergenerational salariat inheritance for example (both parents and respondents in professional and managerial positions, or cell 1:1 in technical jargons). We find that people of Pakistani/Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean, Black African heritages have lower rates (at 44, 49 and 50 percent respectively) than do Whites (at 54 percent), but the rates for Indians and Chinese at 56 and 65 percent are higher than for Whites. With regard to the intergenerational stability in the routine positions (cell 5:5), we find that all of the main ethnic minority groups have lower stability rates than do the Whites, with the Chinese having only 5 percent as compared with Whites’ 24 percent. Indeed, whatever their family origins, the Chinese are unlikely to find themselves in routine manual positions, at around 4 to 8 percent, and there is no clear origin class gradient in terms of distributions to the most disadvantaged destination class. If there are exceptions to the ‘rules’ of mobility regimes, then Chinese in Britain are clear examples (see also Cheng 1994; Li, 2010b).

Overall, there is more variation among ethnic minority groupings than between them and the majority. Furthermore, there are distinct features of intergenerational social mobility by ethnic minority groups that merit detailed investigation. We try to trace the patterns and changes over time and across the groups in the analysis that follows.

Changing class distributions of respondents and parents at a glance

Social mobility takes place within the confines of the occupational structure of the society at given times. In the 1970s for example when the economy was buoyant as shown in the Oxford Social Mobility Inquiry of 1972, there were many professional and managerial positions created, with ‘more room at the top’, enabling large-scale upward mobility. In the more recent period, the rate of increase has declined and for men, there is even evidence of growing downward mobility (Goldthorpe and Mills 2004, 2008; Goldthorpe and Jackson 2007; Goldthorpe 2016), causing concerns to Government and wider society. Now, if we extend our gaze from 1972 for a consecutive fifty years, what shall we find?



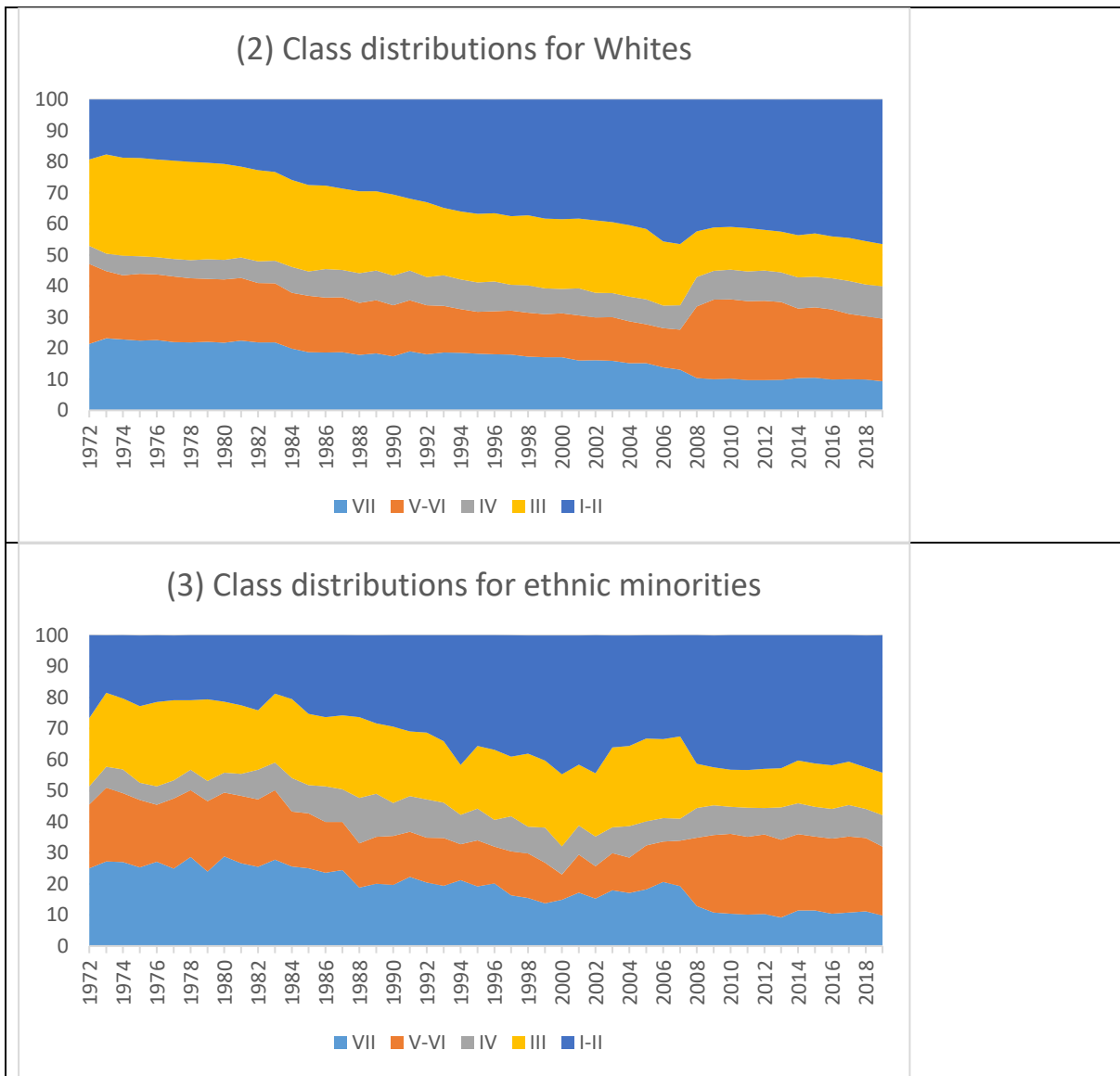


Figure 1 Class distributions of respondents: all, White, and ethnic minorities, cumulative percentage, 1972-2019, with timelines for main data sources illustrated in Panel (1)

Figure 1 presents the class distributions from 1972 to 2019 for nearly fifty years in a consecutive manner, with three panels for all, Whites and ethnic minorities respectively. The vertical lines in Panel (1) show the data time points in an approximate but not exact manner due to some overlapping in the data series. For instance, the GHS data cover a period from 1972 to 1992 (the GHS2005 and TP2005 are not used in this part, as they use the NSSEC schema which, as seen in the USoc/LFS part, shows inconsistent coding for classes III and V-VI) and the BHPS covers the period from 1991 to 2008. For 2008 to 2016, we use the USoc

for the nine waves available at the time of analysis but from 2014 to 2019, we use the LFS. To place vertical lines on all those conjunctures would make the graph rather messy. The profile for the professional-managerial salariat (I-II), and that for the own-account (otherwise called ‘small employers’ or ‘petty bourgeoisie’, IV) are, however, fairly consistent in spite of the different data sources and schemas used.

From Panel (1) of the data in Figure 1 for all respondents, we can see that the class structure has been continually upgrading, with the salariat increasing from around 20 percent in 1972 to 46 percent in 2019. Before we enter into details, it is reassuring that the findings we report here are almost identical to those reported in Goldthorpe (1987) on the ‘golden’ measure of social mobility in the 1972 Social Mobility Inquiry (SMI). Thus, if we had confined the analysis to men aged 20-64 and resident in England and Wales as he did, we would find the salariat being 24.7 percent in the GHS1972 used here as against 25.1 percent as he reported (Goldthorpe 1987: 49). The 1972 SMI study contains men only and we have included men and women in the present analysis of the GHS. With this reassurance and moving from 1972 onwards, we find that the salariat has increased steadily from 1972 to 2019. The proportion engaged in routine positions (semi or unskilled manual workers including agricultural labourers) declined from 21.6 to 9.5 percent.

Comparing the occupational distributions between the majority and the minority in Panels 2 and 3 of Figure 1, we find, as can be expected, that Whites were more likely to have ‘white-collar’ (salariat and intermediate) jobs and ethnic minorities are more likely to find themselves in own account and routine jobs, especially in the earlier period. In the last few years, Whites were only around three percentage points more likely to engage in salariat work and ethnic minorities around two to three percentage points more likely to find themselves in routine work. There are some pan-ethnic minority disadvantages but not a huge amount. This,

of course, refers to the ethnic minorities as a whole, not about the intra-minority grouping differences, which we shall come to address in the following.

It goes without saying that when we discuss social mobility, we are measuring mobility between parents' and respondents' social class positions, and hence changes in class positions are an important consideration. As frequently observed, social mobility is getting more difficult for young people. This is due to the fact that more and more families are in salariat positions, hence enlarging the pool 'at risk' of downward mobility, forcing, to some extent, growing numbers of middle-class children to fall out of parents' class positions, increasing the worry and anxiety of middle-class parents and intensifying class competitions (Goldthorpe 2016; Bukodi and Goldthorpe 2019). As more people are joining in the competition for a limited number of advantaged positions, and as young people from ethnic minority heritages are becoming increasingly more competitive than before (thanks to their educational performance) and, to some extent, also more competitive than their white peers in transition probabilities from GCSE to A-Levels and from A-Levels to tertiary education (Jackson 2012; Li 2018b, 2021), White middle-class parents' worry about their intergenerational stability of class position is set to increase, which is highly understandably given people's acute awareness of and defensive strategy for 'loss aversion' (Kahneman 2001).

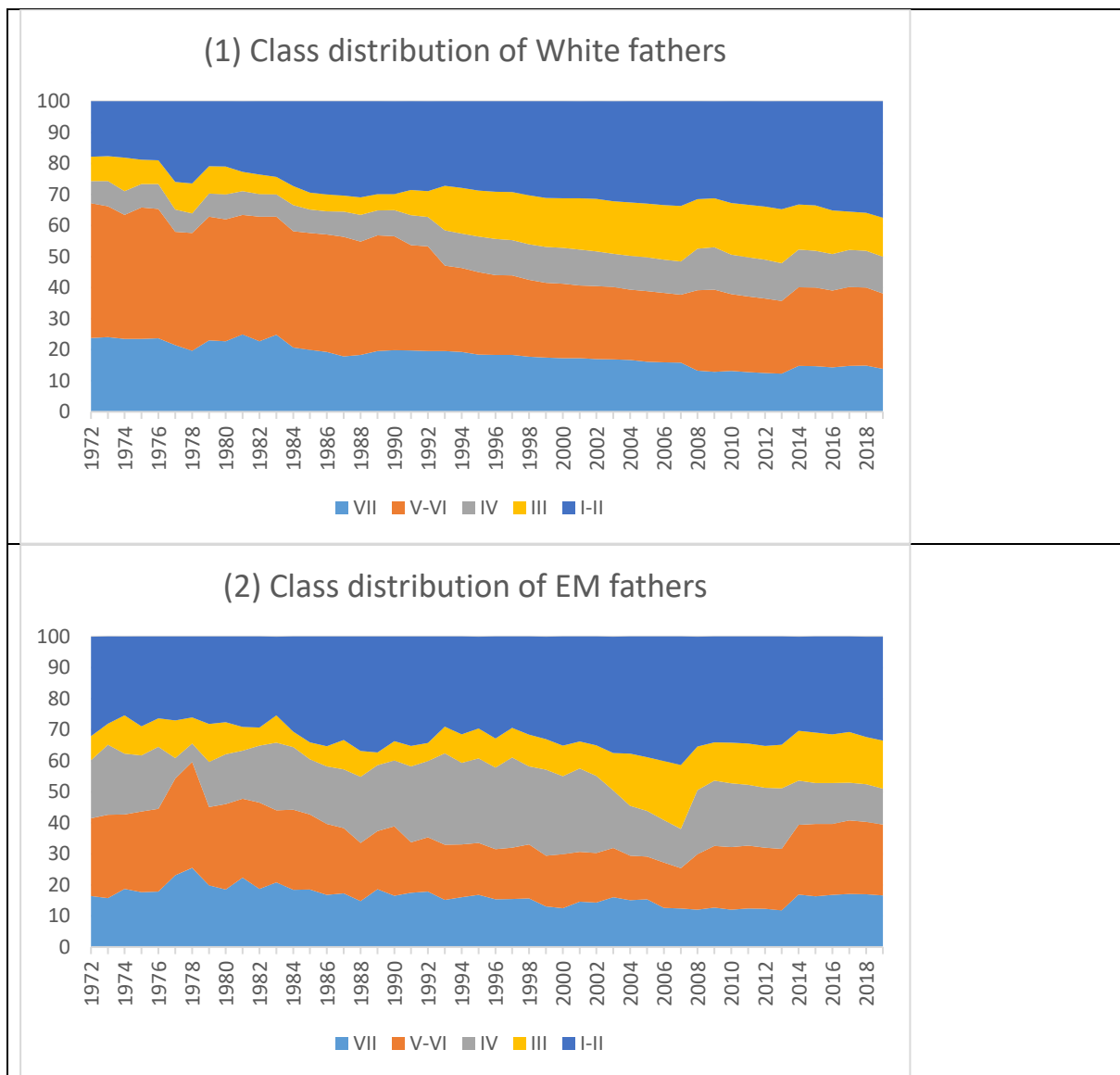


Figure 2 Class distributions of White and ethnic minority respondents' fathers, cumulative percentage, 1972-2019

Note: Class origins refer to fathers' class in the GHS (1972-1992), or the higher of either parent's class if both were available using the dominance approach or father's or mother's position if only one was available in the other datasets (BHPS, USoc, TP and LFS 1991-2019).

Having looked at the respondents' class distributions, we also need to look at father's class distributions. If, for instance, father's class distributions (origin class) had been downgrading over time with more and more families moving down the class hierarchy, it would directly affect the class competition and social fluidity as well. The data on changing parental

class distributions are shown in Figure 2, with those for White fathers in Panel (1) and those for ethnic minority fathers in Panel (2).

The patterns for White fathers' class positions are very smooth, in fact even smoother than for White respondents, particularly with respect to manual supervisor/skilled manual positions in the USoc/LFS data where the NSSeC codings are applied. What immediately captures our attention is that fathers' class structures are, as can be expected, also upgraded, with the salariat proportions increasing from 17.9 percent in 1972 to 37.5 percent in 2019. The proportion of salariat families more than doubled during the fifty-year period. The proportions of fathers engaged in own-account work also increased notably, from seven to twelve percent, leaving the skilled and unskilled manual positions in sharp contraction.

When we come to the ethnic minority fathers' class positions, we find, to our surprise, that they were not behind White fathers in terms of having salariat positions. As a matter of fact, for much of the period covered, ethnic minority fathers were more likely to be in salariat and own-account positions and less likely to be in manual working-class positions, attesting to the 'positive selection' thesis of the immigrants (Borjas 1987; Feliciano 2006).

The data in 1977 and 1978 on skilled manual positions were, as further exploration revealed (details available on request), related to first generations' father's positions in this class, but not to the second generation's fathers' positions. Thus ethnic minorities are 'positively selected' not only in terms of educational qualifications they possess relative to the majority of the population in their country of origin, their father's class positions must also be higher than those in the country of origin. We can test this to the real data. Li (2020) shows that in the Chinese General Social Surveys (2010-2015) covering all 31 provinces and municipalities in China with a sample of 38,002 respondents, only 14 percent of the parents were in professional and managerial positions, yet the data used here confined to the same

period show that 41.5 percent of the Chinese fathers were in salariat positions. The Chinese in Britain were around three times as advantaged as the compatriots they have left behind in terms of parental resources. This could be true of some of the other ethnic minority groups such as Indians. Another point worth noting is that some researchers have left out GHS 1977 and 1978 in their mobility analysis due to some data problems in the two years (Goldthorpe and Mills 2008). We are here concerned with the overall patterning of class distributions of White and ethnic minority fathers and we thought that it would be better to provide a more comprehensive profile than to leave the two years out even if there are some ‘creases’ on White father’s salariat and ethnic minority father’s skilled manual positions.

Social mobility research in Britain tends to focus on men partly due to data limitations (the SMI of 1972 only contains male respondents) and partly due to women’s lesser involvement in the labour market, especially in the earlier period. Yet the situation has changed since the 1970s. In 1972, 90 percent of the men were employed as compared with only 54 percent of women but in 2019, the proportions were 80 and 73 percent respectively. Thus men’s decline and women’s increase in labour market position goes hand in hand in Britain. The social changes support the claim that women’s labour market participation makes a difference for mobility research in the sense that we are now increasingly drawing on mother’s and female respondent’s own positions in class analysis (Heath and Britten 1984). Given the increasing importance of women’s class position, we are taking an ‘intersectional’ perspective in this report and we show, in Figure 3, the class distributions for White and ethnic minority (EM) men and women separately. The data follow a well-expected pattern, namely, that White and ethnic minority women alike are quickly catching up with their male peers in terms of salariat occupancy and that they are more likely to be found in the intermediate (office clerical) and less likely to be found in the own-account and the skilled manual positions. Further analysis also shows that, if we use a seven-class schema for respondents, women are still behind men

in access to Class 1, the high-grade professional-managerial positions and are concentrated in Class 2 (low-grade professional-managerial) positions in the NSSEc schema. In 2019, 21.5 and 25.6 percent of men are in Classes 1 and 2 respectively, and the proportions for women are 12.8 and 32.0 percent respectively. Men's advantage in having an edge of 9.9 percentage points in Class 1 positions over women in 1972 (11.4 and 1.5 for men and women respectively) seems remarkably unchanged nearly fifty years later! Another feature in Figure 3 is that for both men and women, ethnic minorities are more likely to be found in routine manual (Class VII) jobs than White men and women, which is not surprising either.

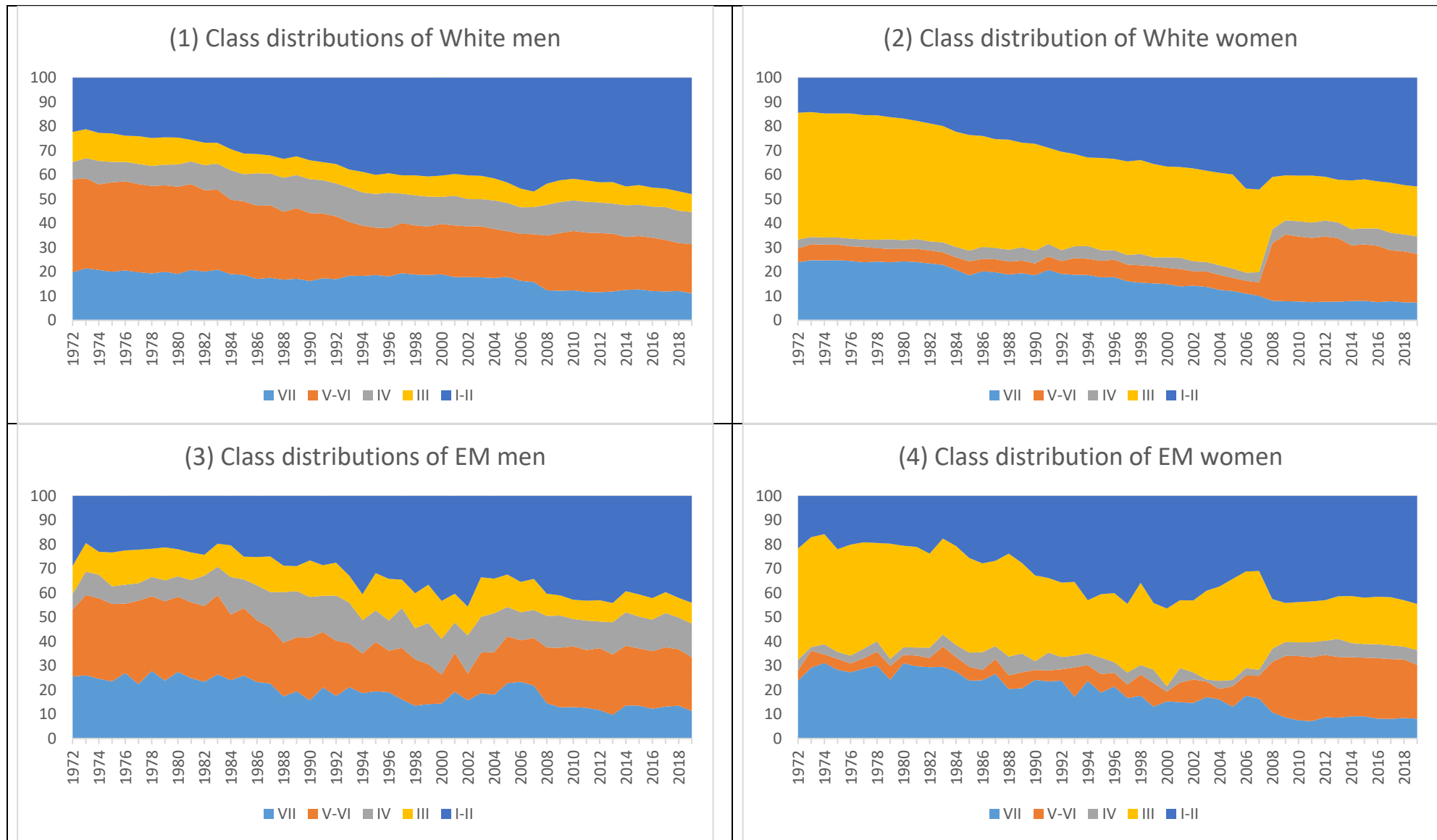


Figure 3 Class distributions by sex and ethnicity: cumulative percentage, 1972-2019

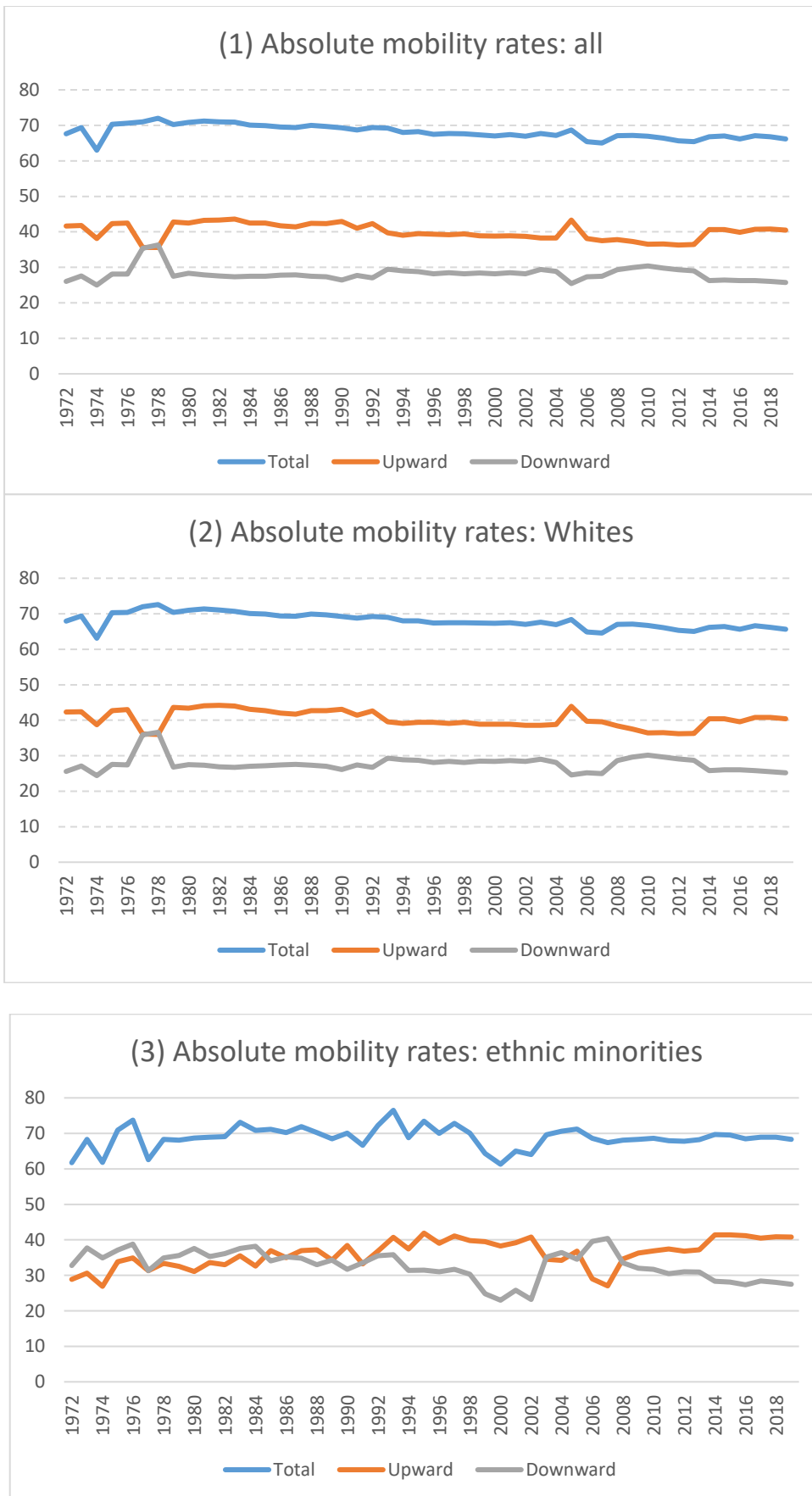


Figure 4 Absolute mobility rates: all, white and ethnicity minority

Absolute mobility at the overall level

Having looked at the changing profiles of respondents' and fathers' class distributions, we can now turn to absolute mobility rates as shown in Figure 4, again for all, and for White and ethnic minority, respondents in three panels.

With regard firstly to the overall patterns as shown in Panel 1 of Figure 4, we find a familiar picture to existing findings (Goldthorpe and Mills 2004, 2008), namely, that the overall mobility rates are fairly high and stable, at around 70 percent, with signs of a small degree of decline, and that there are more upward than downward mobility rates (by around 10 percentage points) in British society in most of the period covered. As earlier noted, here we can safely ignore 1977 and 1978 with regard to upward and downward rates due to the data problems in the two years, but the total mobility rates in the two years were not affected. With respect to Panel 2 of Figure 4 for Whites, we can see that, as Whites comprise the greatest portion of the population, their data are similar to the overall pattern in Panel 1 of the figure. The ethnic minorities as shown in Panel 3 have similar levels of total mobility but their upward mobility rates are lower and downward mobility rates are higher than for the Whites, suggesting possible set-backs they have encountered in the labour market on the one hand and their higher starting points on the other, namely, that their fathers' relatively high positions may have also made it difficult for them to achieve similar amounts of upward mobility as compared with Whites whose fathers had somewhat lower positions.

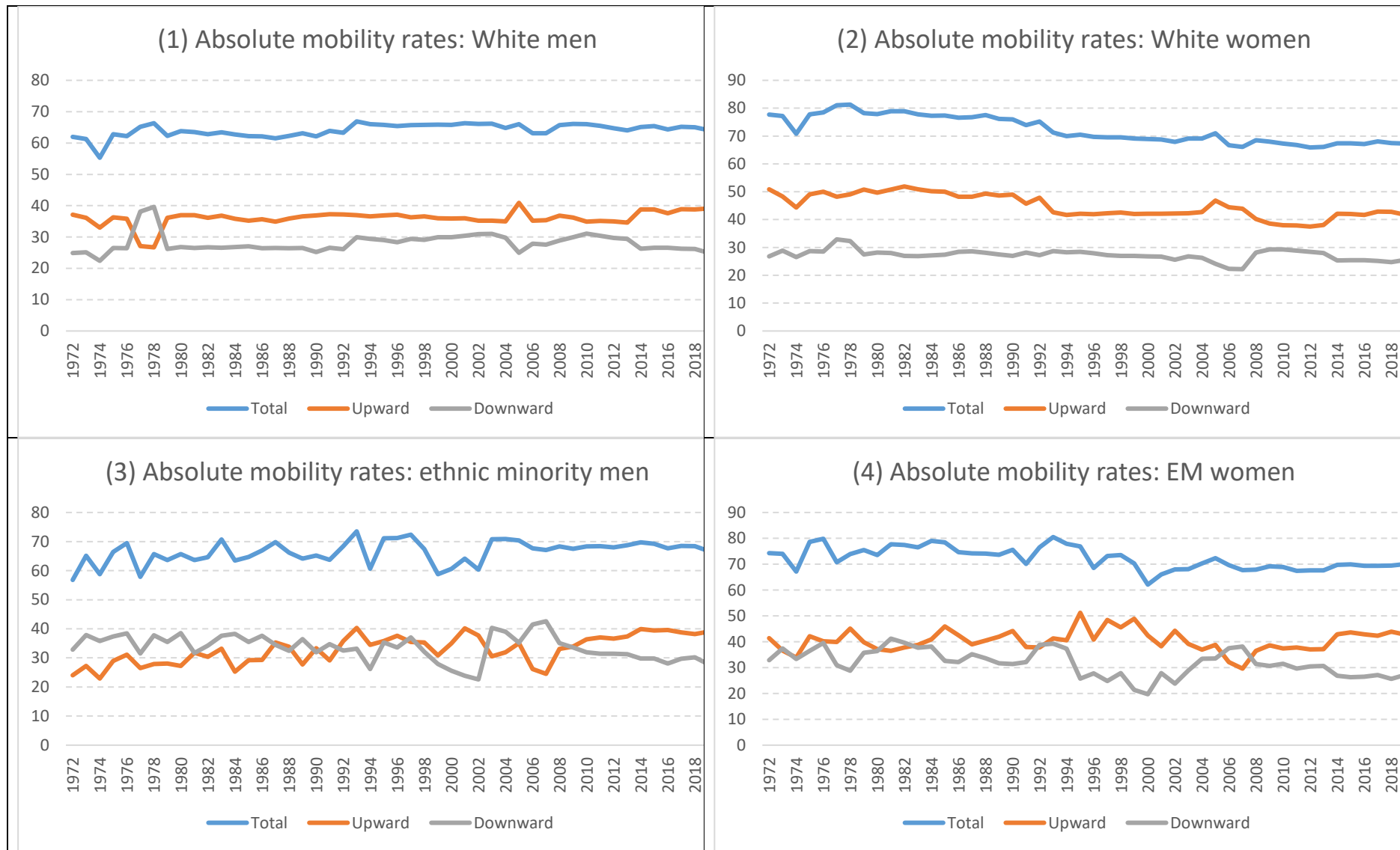


Figure 5 Absolute mobility by ethnicity and sex

Pursuing trends of absolute mobility rates in greater detail by ethno-gender relations, as shown in Figure 5, we find, for White and ethnic minorities alike, a trend of small increase in total and upward mobility rates for men and a somewhat salient feature of downward mobility for women. As most of the White fathers were engaged in blue-collar work in the earlier period (see Panel 1 of Figure 2) but were increasingly withdrawing from such work, and as women were largely engaged in white-collar, routine non-manual and personal service work, the combination of these factors would suggest greater room for women's upward mobility than for their brothers but, over time, this advantage would decline as men's occupational structures were also being upgraded in the wake of post-industrialism, which is exactly what is shown for the White men and women's data. Ethnic minorities follow the White patterns fairly closely but with some 'hiccups' in the patterns.

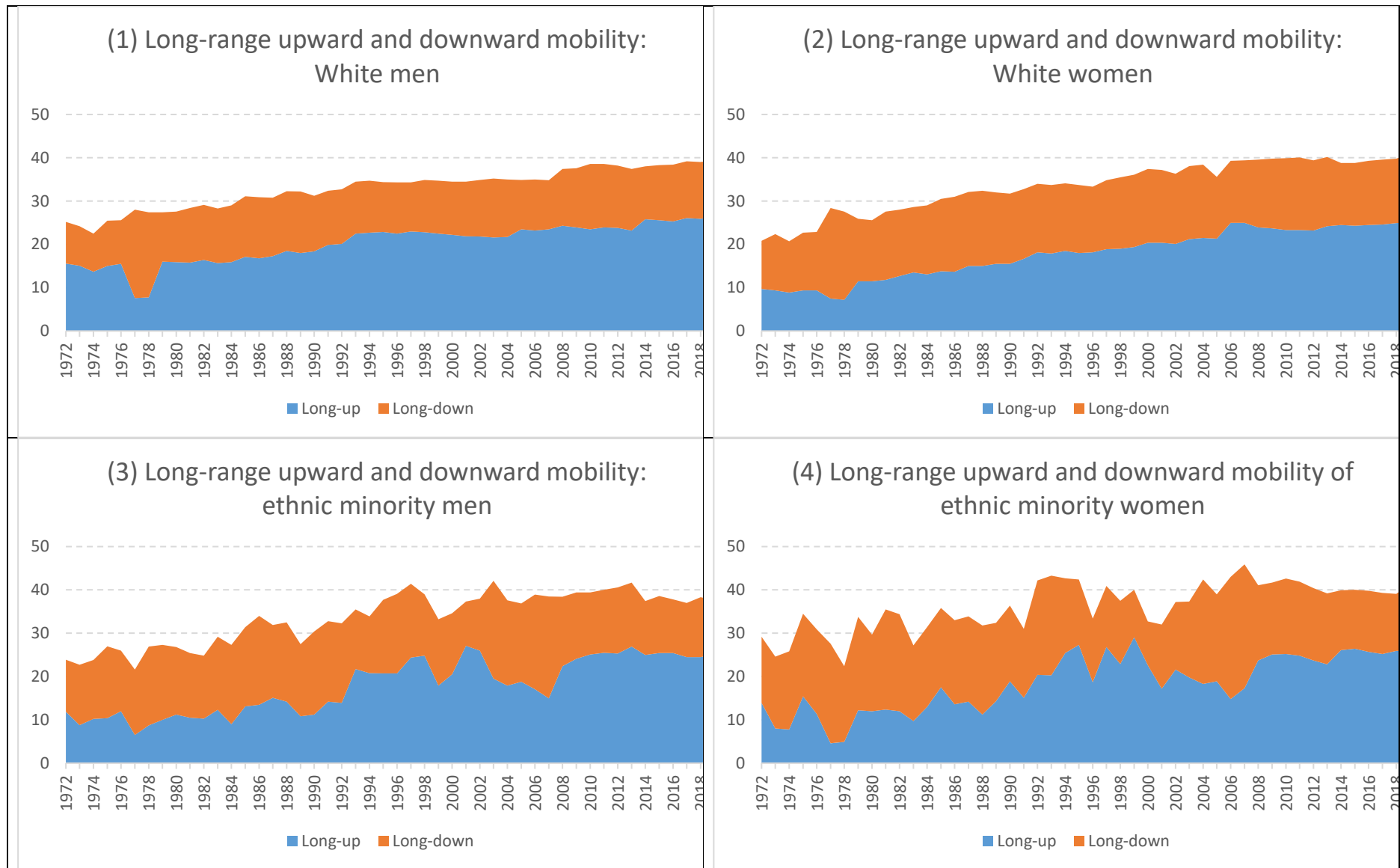


Figure 6 Long-range upward and downward mobility rates by ethnicity and sex

Does Britain treat ethnic minorities especially harshly by preventing them from achieving long-range upward mobility (from lower origins to salariat destinations) and pushing them into long-range downward mobility (from salariat origins to non-salariat destinations)? We have previously noted early US research by Duncan (1968) claiming that African Americans were poor not because they were born in poverty but because they were born black: even those among them with successful fathers in professional and managerial positions were still lagging behind whites. We also found that the ethnic minorities' parental class positions in Britain were on the whole higher than white parents. If there was a 'perverse fluidity' in Britain as severe as that in the USA in the 1960s, we would expect large-scale long-range downward mobility and little long-range upward mobility for the ethnic minorities, or at least for those of Black Caribbean and Black African heritages. And, in the British context, those of Muslim religion (chiefly those from Pakistani and Bangladeshi origins) may suffer a similar perverse fluidity.

The data in Figure 6 are designed to answer this question. Before we look at the data, we could expect that the sample sizes involved in long-range downward mobility would be fairly small in spite of the very big sizes of samples that we have assembled for this analysis, and thus we need to look at annual data in this regard with some caution, but the overall picture would be informative.

A close scrutiny of the graphs shows that Britain was neither as discriminative against the ethnic minority groups as the USA was in the 1960s in the treatment of the African Americans, nor is it as free of prejudice and discrimination as the various Race Relations Acts would have led us to expect. The ethnic minority men were less likely than their White peers to achieve long-range upward mobility in the first twenty years of the period under discussion, and they were more likely to experience long-range downward than long-range upward mobility from around 1972 to 1992, which occurred for men and women alike. Yet, in the next thirty years or so, they were catching up with White men and women although their long-range upward rates were still

lower than for Whites. For much of the period, long-range downward mobility rates were higher for the ethnic minorities than for whites but there were also signs of convergence with Whites in more recent years. There is no evidence that long-range downward mobility took the upper hand of long-range upward mobility for the ethnic minorities just as there is no evidence that it occurred for the majority population. Perverse fluidity, in its strict sense, did not occur in Britain as it did for the African Americans in the USA.

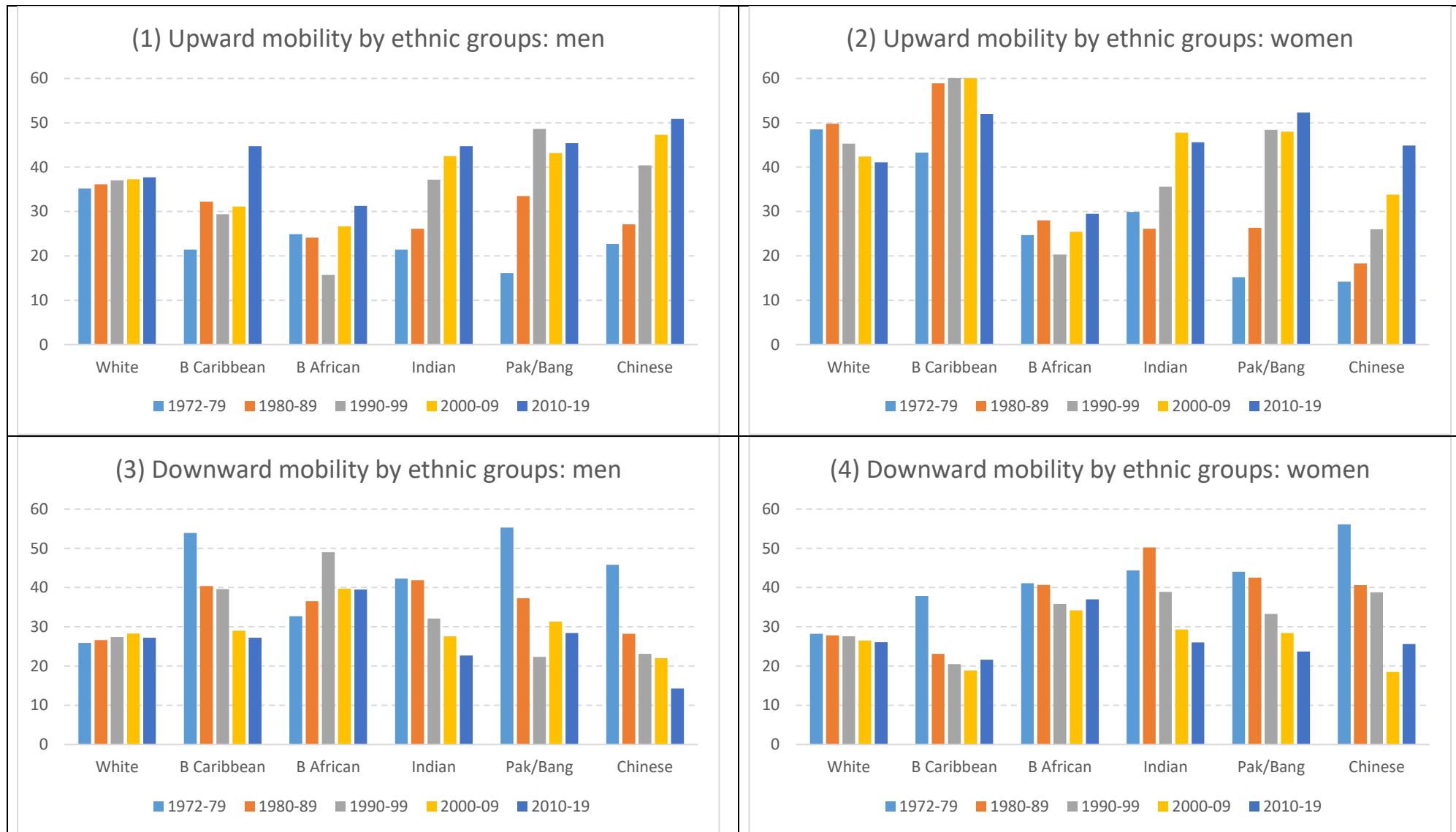


Figure 7: Upward and downward mobility rates by ethnic groups, sex and period

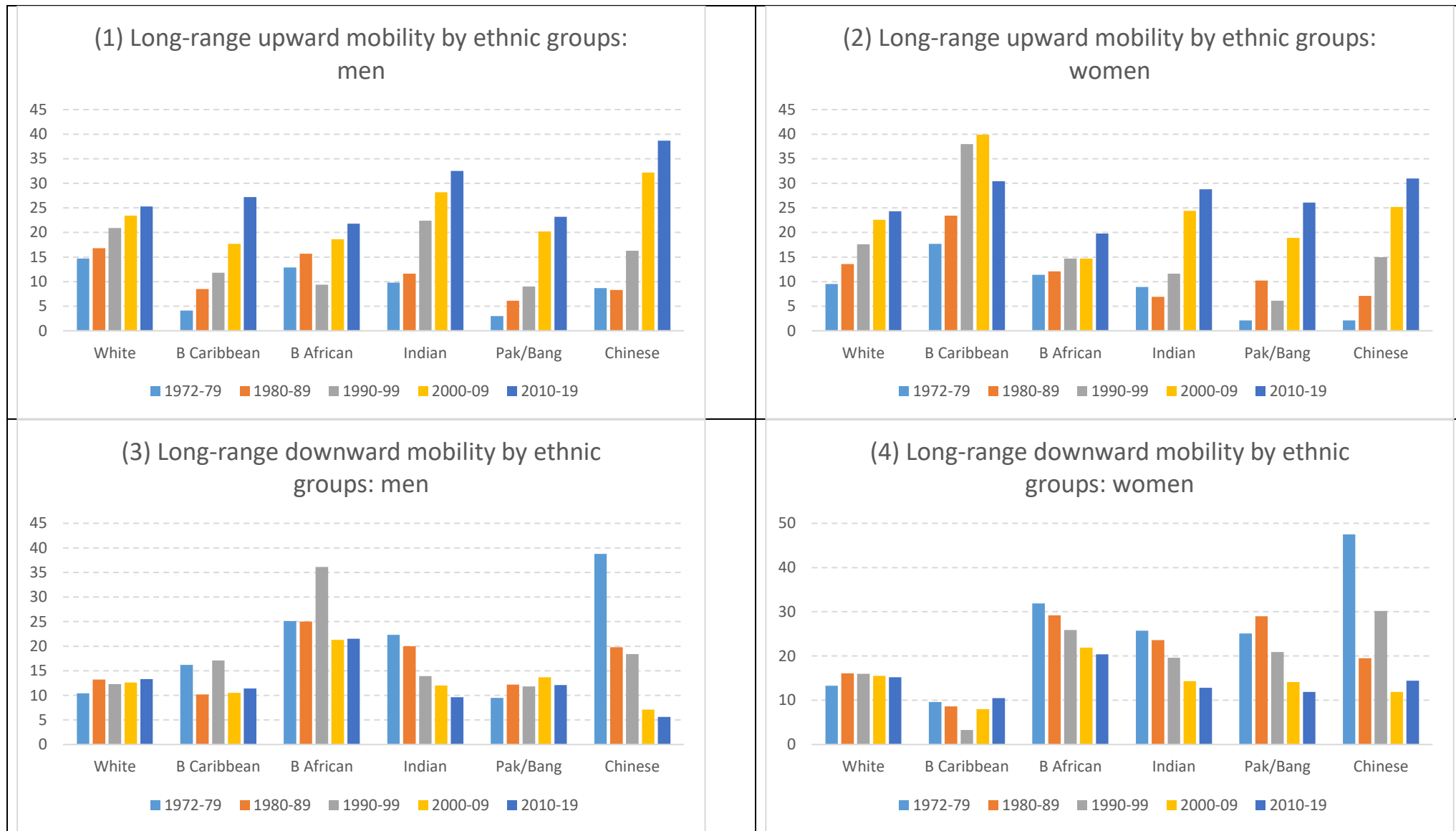


Figure 8: Long-range upward (from low to salariat) and long-range downward (from salariat to non-salariat) mobility by sex, ethnicity and period

Absolute mobility by the main ethnic minority groups

Having looked at the general patterns and trends between the majority and the ethnic minority at some length, we now move to the upward, downward, and long-range upward and long-range downward mobility rates by the main ethnic minority groups across the five decades. Existing research shows that not all ethnic minority groups are equally disadvantaged and that there are more differences among the main ethnic minority groups than between them and the majority as a whole. Yet, existing analysis based on one or a few datasets could not address the questions of trends of social mobility among the different ethnic minority groups relative to the Whites, let alone conducting the simultaneous analyses by gender and generational status. Even with our data with over one million records, we cannot analyse ethno-generational and gender analysis of ethnic minority groups' social mobility by year but we can do it by decade.

The data in Figures 7 and 8 show the upward and downward, and the long-range upward and long-range downward mobility rates for men and women in each of the six ethnic groups (excluding the 'Other') and in each of the five decades from the 1970s to the 2010s respectively.

With regard first to upward and downward mobility rates as shown in Figure 7, we find that White men's rates were most stable, exhibiting least variation, with the upward mobility rates growing at a small pace, from 35.2 percent in the 1970s to 37.7 percent in the 2010s, and the downward mobility rates remaining at around 26-28 percentage points. White women's upward mobility rates declined from around 50 percent in the 1970s to around 40 percent in the 2010s. Men and women of ethnic minority heritages exhibited much greater variation than for Whites. For most of the time, ethnic minority groups were behind Whites in terms of upward mobility, especially during the earlier decades, yet most of them were also making fast progress so that in the most recent decade, all ethnic minority men and women were actually having higher rates of upward mobility with the exception of Black Africans who, as shown in Panel 2 of Table

3, had higher starting positions, with nearly a half coming from professional-managerial salariat positions ($3583/8029=44.6\%$). The picture of downward mobility is just the mirror image of upward mobility.

With respect to long-range upward and downward mobility rates as shown in Figure 8, we find even more rapid progress by ethnic minority men and women relative to their White peers. Most notable progress was being made by Chinese men and Black Caribbean women. Even Pakistani/Bangladeshi men and women were achieving similar long-range upward mobility rates to their White peers in the most recent decade.

The pace of upward, especially long-range upward mobility rates in the fifty years by the ethnic minority groups attests to social progress in Britain, at least in gross terms.

Relative mobility

The above has covered large grounds of absolute mobility and we now move to relative mobility. Relative mobility refers to class competition and social fluidity, namely, people from one origin class trying to obtain more advantaged and avoid more disadvantaged class positions relative to those from another origin in the same kind of competition. The competition is usually measured by odds ratios which are insensitive to marginal changes. The strength of association between origins and destinations indicates the severity of class competition or, in other words, the rigidity of the social structure. Using such measures, we can assess whether the competition is becoming stronger or weaker over time, for one group relative to another, or in one place or another. The over-time change is called Constant Social Fluidity (CnSF) and the over-space (group) change is called Common Social Fluidity (CmSF). We fit log-multiplicative layer effects (also called uniform difference, or UNIDIFF) models (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992; Xie 1992) to assess the extent to which the social structure is becoming more or less fluid over the fifty-year period under

discussion, or the extent of differences between ethnic minority groups and Whites in the origins-destinations associations (expressed as odds ratios or the log of odds ratios).⁵ The coefficients of the loglinear and UNIDIFF models, which are quite complicated and may be of interest only to mobility researchers, are not presented in the report (but are available on request). We only present the substantive storylines.

In Panel 1 of Figure 9 we show the results of the UNIDIFF models for the whole sample and for the White and the ethnic minority subsamples over the fifty-year period, using 1972 as the starting (reference) point. The data are presented in the form of log odd ratios with the result for 1972 set as zero. If the estimate for any of the subsequent year rises above zero, that would suggest a stronger origins-destinations association for that year relative to that for the reference year of 1972, or a growing social inequality in plain English, pending on whether that particular outcome is statistically significant or not. We thus provide results of significance tests for the whole sample. The results for the Whites are very close to those for the whole sample making it unnecessary to include separate results of significance tests. The samples for ethnic minorities are relatively small for yearly analysis making the results of significance tests unstable. In the

⁵ The models can be written as:

1 Baseline model (conditional independence)

$$\log F_{ijk} = \mu + \lambda_i^O + \lambda_j^D + \lambda_k^G + \lambda_{ik}^{OG} + \lambda_{jk}^{DG}$$

2: Common (Constant) social fluidity model (CmSF/CnSF)

$$\log F_{ijk} = \mu + \lambda_i^O + \lambda_j^D + \lambda_k^G + \lambda_{ik}^{OG} + \lambda_{jk}^{DG} + \lambda_{ij}^{OD}$$

3: Log multiplicative or UNIDIFF model

$$\log F_{ijk} = \mu + \lambda_i^O + \lambda_j^D + \lambda_k^G + \lambda_{ik}^{OG} + \lambda_{jk}^{DG} + \beta_k X_{ij}$$

where O stands for class origin, D for class destination and G for different ethnic/gender groups or generational status for the CmSF models, or the five decades for the CnSF models; X_{ij} represents the general pattern of the origins-destinations association and β_k the relative strength of this association relative to a particular reference group or time point. Details of the modelling results are not shown in the text as they are too complicated and not intuitive (available on request) but the UNIDIFF parameters are shown in graphic forms for ease of exposition.

latter respect, we are more interested in the overall pattern than in specific points of deviation from the Whites or from the population average.

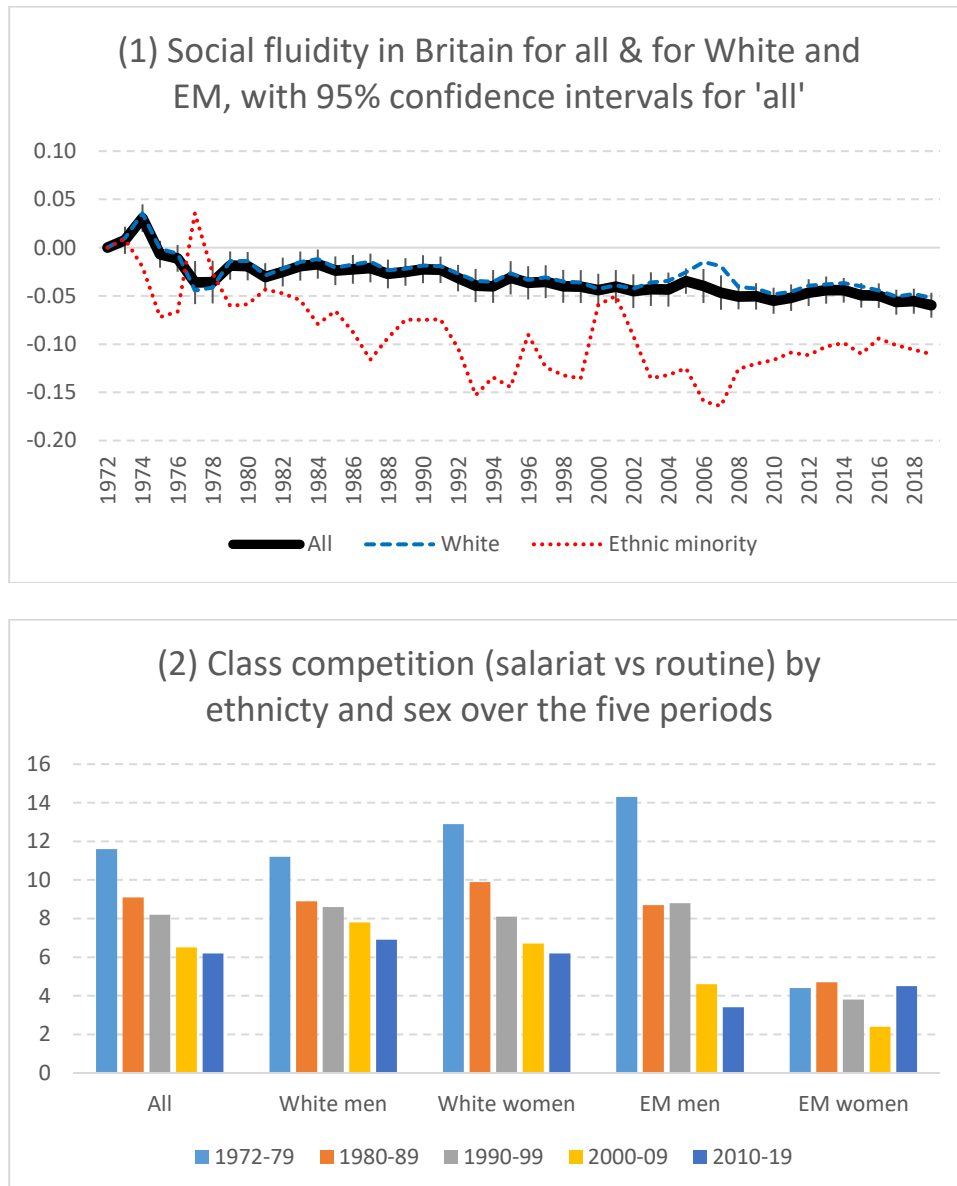


Figure 9 Trends of relative social mobility (log odds ratios) by year in Panel 1, and of social distance (salarial versus routine class competitions as origins-destinations odds ratios) by decades in Panel 2

We also find that, for most of the years covered, the data points for all three groups (overall sample, and the White and the ethnic minority sub-samples) are below the zero-point line and that the 95 percent confidence intervals for the overall sample do not touch the zero-point line.

This suggests that relative mobility is increasing and that there is even greater social fluidity for ethnic minorities than for Whites.⁶ The latter means that the origins-destinations associations are weaker for ethnic minorities than for the Whites, confirming our previous discussions on lesser upward and greater downward, and on lesser long-range upward and greater long-range downward mobility for ethnic minorities than for Whites (Figures 7 and 8). The patterns and trends as shown in Figure 9 give further support to Li and Heath (2016) and are in general agreement with findings by Goldthorpe and Mills (2004, 2008), with special regard to what they call ‘complete tables’, namely, on the strength of association between the class positions of male origins and those of conjugal partners. The greater fluidity of ethnic social mobility suggests that their destinations are not as strongly linked to their origins as compared with Whites. This might also mean that the ethnic minorities could have less upward mobility than whites, or that regardless of family origins, they could be less likely to fall into the most disadvantaged destinations as we have seen in the case of Chinese. If the former were true, they were not doing as well as their White peers and we may term this ‘ethnic penalty’ in class competition. If the latter were true, this would be called ‘ethnic premia’. We need to go to more details to determine which scenario is true and for which of the ethnic minority groupings.

⁶ Assuming there are only two origin (middle and working) classes and two destination (middle and working) classes in a society, the odds ratio would, technically, be written as $(f_{11}/f_{12})/(f_{21}/f_{22})$. Assuming we have four periods. Let us pretend that, in period 1, 50% of the middle-class children get middle-class jobs, and 50% of them get working-class jobs, and the working-class children have the same chances of getting middle- and working- class jobs, then the odds ratio would be $((50/50)/(50/50)) = 1$, and the log of odds ratio would be 0, being a completely equal society. In period 2, 60% of middle-class children and 40% of the working-class children get middle-class jobs; in Period 3, the proportions become 70% and 30% respectively getting middle-class jobs; and in Period 4, the proportions become 80% and 20%. The odds ratios increase from 1 to 2.25, 5.44 to 16, and the log odds increase from 0 to 0.81 to 1.69 to 2.77. Social rigidity increases and social fluidity decreases in such a society. Using the 1972 SMI, Goldthorpe (1987: 112) shows that the class competitions between the higher salariat (Class I) and the unskilled working class (Class VII) reach a staggering odds ratio of 35.86. Using the China General Social Surveys (2010-2015), Li (2020) finds that the salariat vs peasant origins-destinations competition increased from the 11.28 for men born between 1945 and 1957 to 34.69 for men born after 1981, which constitutes a highly significant increase in social rigidity.

The UNIDIFF models are technically nuanced as they take into account all the class competitions (namely, all the possible odds ratios in a mobility table) but on deeper reflection, one may say that they are not sociologically that thrusting. For instance, most people would be interested in the issue of social inequality as shown in the class competitions between bank managers and cleaners as origins and destinations, but less interested in the competitions between office clerks, taxi drivers and machine operators. Some people might prefer white-collar work environment over pay, others might attach greater importance to work flexibility and still others might lay more emphasis on higher earnings. Sociologists tend to look at employment security, income stability and career prospect as a whole in determining the order of social positions along the class hierarchy (Goldthorpe and McKnight 2006), and would in turn place the professional-managerial salariat in chief contrast to routine manual workers, leaving routine non-manual, petty-bourgeois and lower-technical as ‘intermediate’ positions the movement within which are called ‘horizontal mobility’ (Goldthorpe and Jackson 2007). Given this, it is the examination of class competition between the top (professional and managerial salariat) and the bottom (routine manual workers) as origins and destinations that would offer the greatest insight into the extent of social inequality in British society, and the change over time and between groups. It is with these considerations in mind that we present data on class competitions between the top and the bottom in our schema $(f_{11}/f_{15})/(f_{51}/f_{55})$ and see how they change over the decades and between the ethnic and gender groups.

The data in Panel 2 of Figure 9 show that, at the overall level (for the whole sample), odds ratios have declined by around a half (from 11.6 in the 1970s to 6.2 in the 2010s, suggesting increasing social fluidity over time at the overall level). The greatest decline occurs for ethnic minority men, from 14.3 in the earliest decade to 3.4 in the latest decade. The class differences are smallest for ethnic minority women, but for a rather different reason. Further analysis shows that ethnic minority women from routine origins in Britain became increasingly aspiring and

increasingly successful in defying their ‘class fates’. Their rate of access to privileged professional-managerial salariat positions changed from 16.1 percent in the 1970s to 35.3 percent in the 2010s, even though their counterparts from salariat origins were able to maintain their advantages in securing salariat and in avoiding routine manual positions. It is the challenge from the bottom that has reduced the class disparity in the case of ethnic minority women.

Ethnic profiles of social progress at a glance

We have, in the above, covered topics of class distributions of respondents and fathers, and of absolute and relative mobility by ethnicity, gender and period in as much detail as the data allow. Before we proceed to processes of ethnic social mobility, we need to have a brief look at the profiles of ethnic social progress. Progress, by definition, implies changes over time, with changes exhibiting from a less desirable to a more desirable state. Here we focus on access to the salariat and having first or higher degrees. We do this for the main ethnic minority groups by generational status, by sex, and over the five decades. This will tell us which of the ethnic minority groupings is becoming more, or less, advantaged in terms of access to the salariat and having degree positions, and which is making the most salient progress over time. At least for the second generation who were born or arrived in the UK at an early age, and who received most or all of their education in the country, we would know that they are more comparable with the majority group than are their first generation peers in terms of the attributes for the competition.

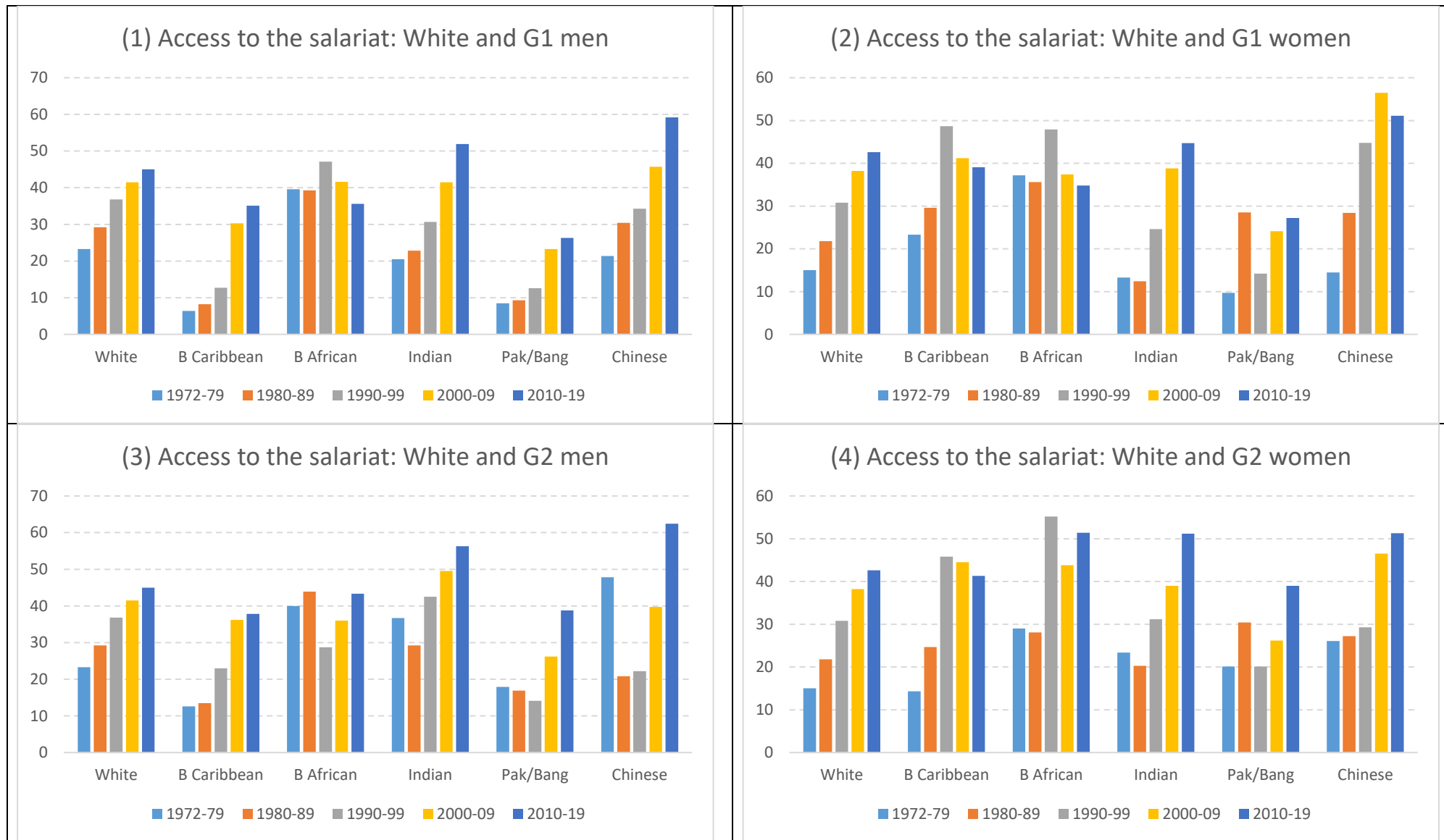


Figure 10 Access to the salariat by ethno-generational status and sex over the five periods

The data in Figure 10 shows the percentages found in salariat positions by the first (G1) and the second (G2) generation men and women as compared with their White counterparts (we did not differentiate the generational statuses for Whites many of whom could be multiple generational). As has been noted previously, the occupational structures have been continually upgraded, which is most clearly reflected in the growth of salariat occupancy by White men and women (from 23 percent in the 1970s to 45 percent in the 2010s for White men, and from 15 percent to 43 percent for White women respectively). For the first generation, we see that Pakistani/Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean men are lagging behind White men in each of the five decades. Black African men are doing very well but Indian and Chinese men are making the fastest progress, from behind White men in the first decade to being well ahead of White men in the last decade. The picture is similar for women although Black Caribbean women are found as doing better than White women in most of the decades. Again, the women of Chinese origins are making the most impressive progress over time, being well ahead of all other women.

The experience of the second generation in trying to gain a foothold in the most advantaged salariat positions offers a more telling story about breaking the 'ethnic barrier'. Here we find that Black Caribbean men, and men and women of Pakistani/Bangladeshi origins are behind but all other groups; Indians, Chinese, and women of the two black groups are doing at least as well as their White peers. At least for the last decade, 2010-2019, men and women of Indian and Chinese heritages in both first and second generations were doing at least as well as their White counterparts.

Do the salariat profiles by ethnic minority groupings reflect their human capital investment and thus fair treatment in the labour market? At least for the second generation, we can measure this by their levels of education. As a matter of fact, many in the first generation as we have defined (foreign born and arriving in the UK after age 13) may also have received some or even the bulk of education in the UK or other developed countries such as the USA, Canada, Australia,

New Zealand and western European countries. For instance, a check of the LFS shows that 21 percent of the first generation have UK qualifications. Here we need to remind the reader that we are focusing on the ‘grand’ picture but we could conduct more granular analysis to address particular questions within the remit of data allowance.

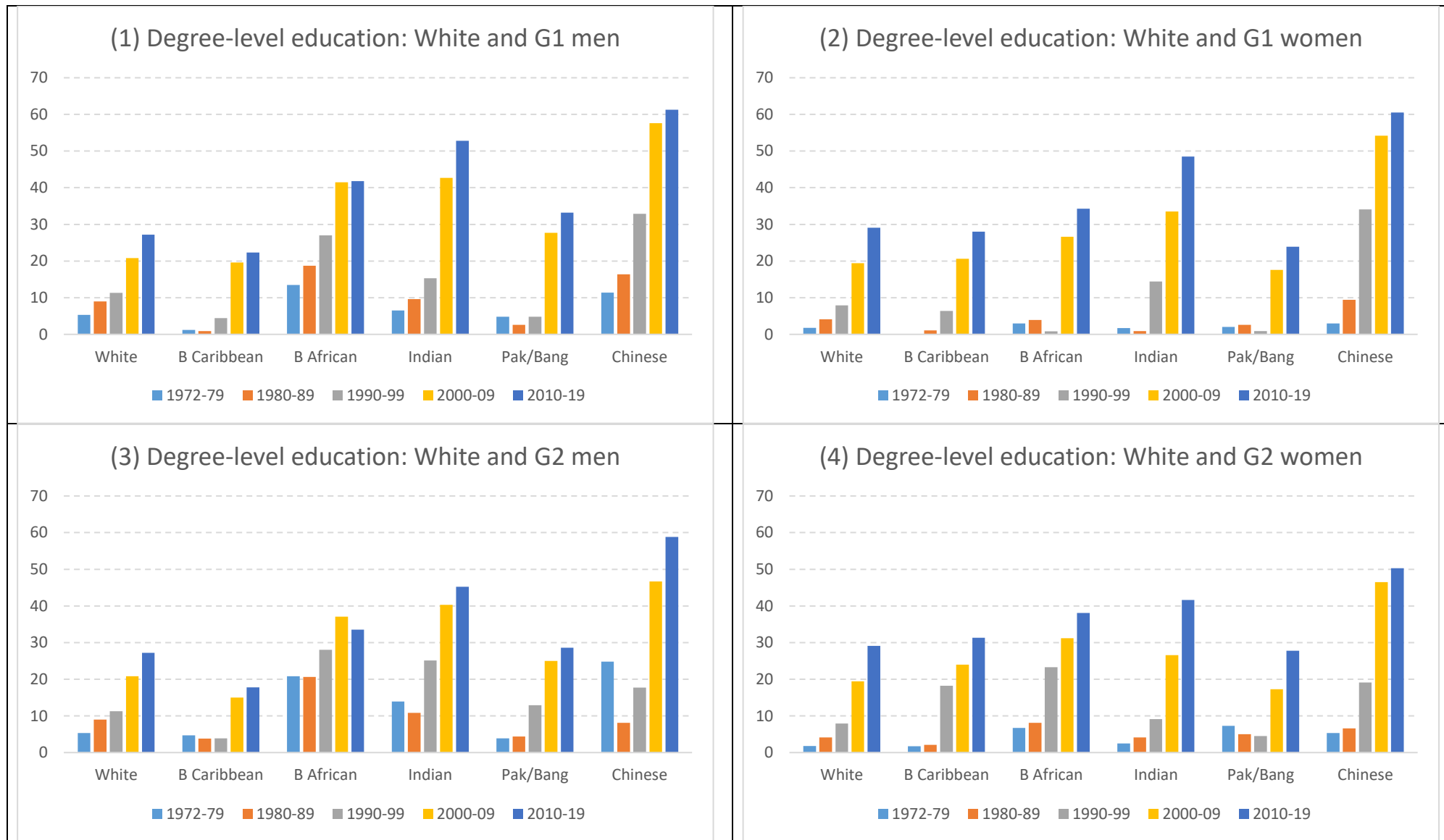


Figure 11 Degree-level qualification by ethno-generational status and sex over the five periods

The data on degree-level qualifications are shown in Figure 11, with the same structure as on salariat access. For the first generation, the degree level education tends to be obtained abroad but for those born in the UK or who arrived as children, their degree level qualifications are mostly obtained in the UK higher educational institutions.

For the first generation, men and women of Chinese, Indian and Black African origins are very well qualified, especially in the last two decades, showing very high levels of ‘self-selection’. Even people of Pakistani/Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean origins are not too far behind Whites. For the second generation, we find, as earlier suggested, that parental aspirations are passed onto children who maintain a strong competitive edge. With the exception of Black Caribbean men, all other ethnic minority groups are doing similarly well to Whites and some groups are doing much better. For instance, in the current decade (2010-2019), second-generation men of Chinese origins are over twice as likely to have a degree as White men (58.8 and 27.2 percent respectively), and second-generation Chinese women are 60% above White women in having a degree (29.1 and 50.3 percent). Men and women of Indian and Black African origins are also doing very well. The implication of educational qualifications for labour market attainment is that even though we cannot compare like with like for the first generation, we can be more certain for comparing the fortunes of the second generation in the labour market. The first generation may have obtained their qualifications in their country of origin, which may be of a different (or lower) quality not readily recognised by employers in Britain as being equivalent to UK qualifications, and they may have little English upon arrival in the UK, poor knowledge of the local labour market, and little social capital, especially that of a ‘bridging’ type for labour market access and advancement (Putnam 2000; Li et al 2003, 2005). All these and other factors may constitute barriers to their labour market success, but it can be assumed that the barriers will have been largely removed for the second generation who will have developed similar socio-economic-cultural capitals to those of the majority group. Relating the findings on access to the

salariat and on degree attainment as shown in Figures 10 and 11, we can see that ethnic minorities have fairly similar access to the salariat in spite of their having much better education. In other words, the educational attainment they have achieved is not giving them the same kind of returns to the labour market position as in the case of the majority population. The British educational system provides more equal opportunities for ethnic minorities to strive and thrive than does the labour market (Li and Heath 2016).

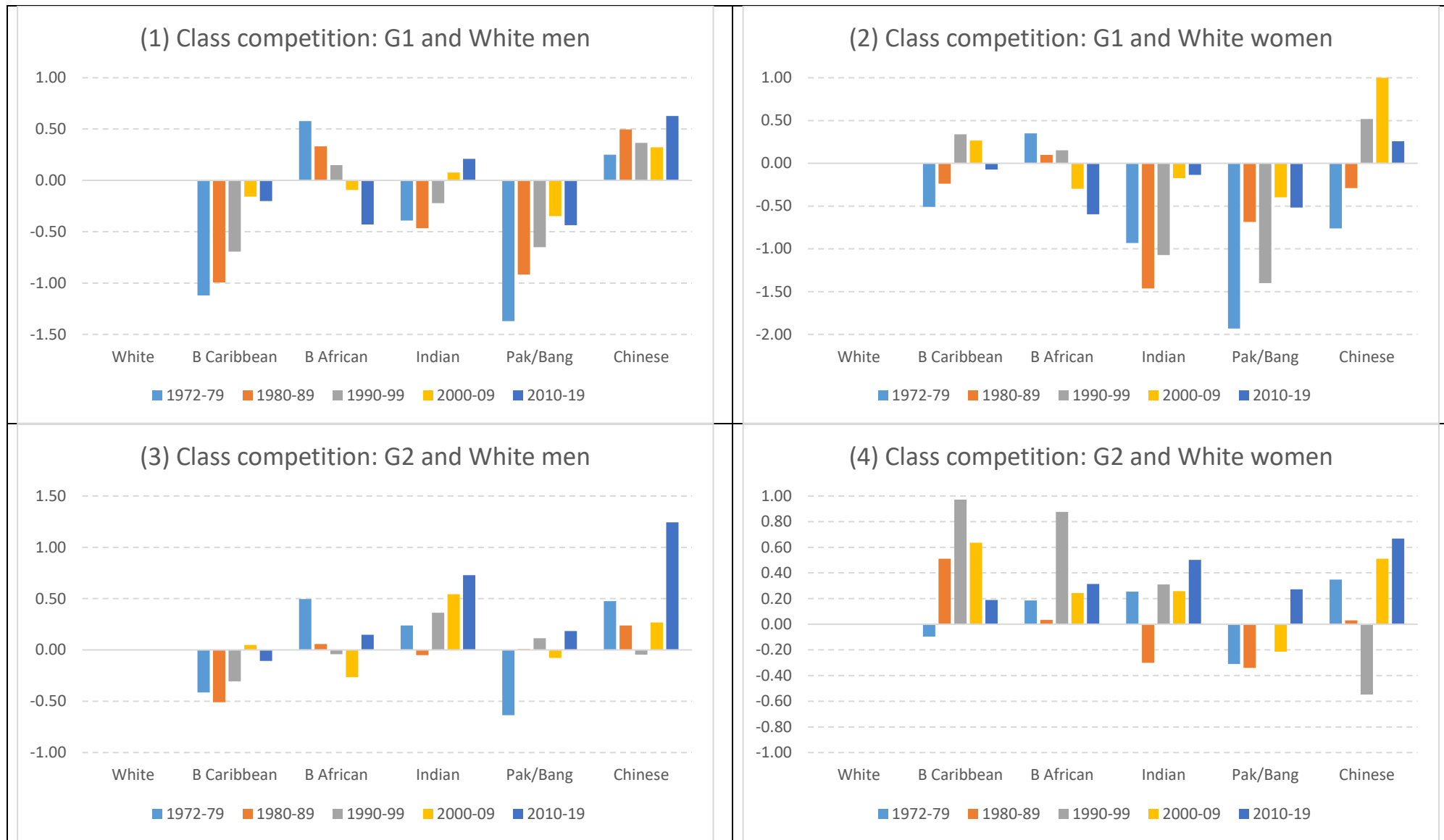
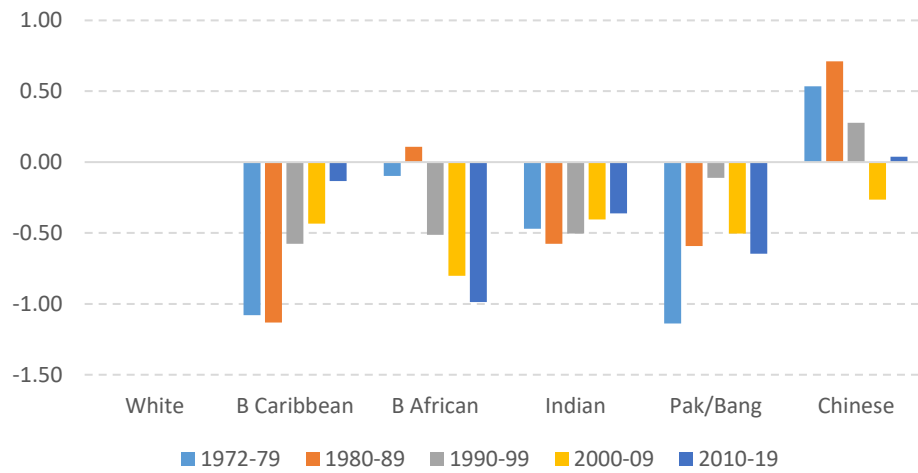
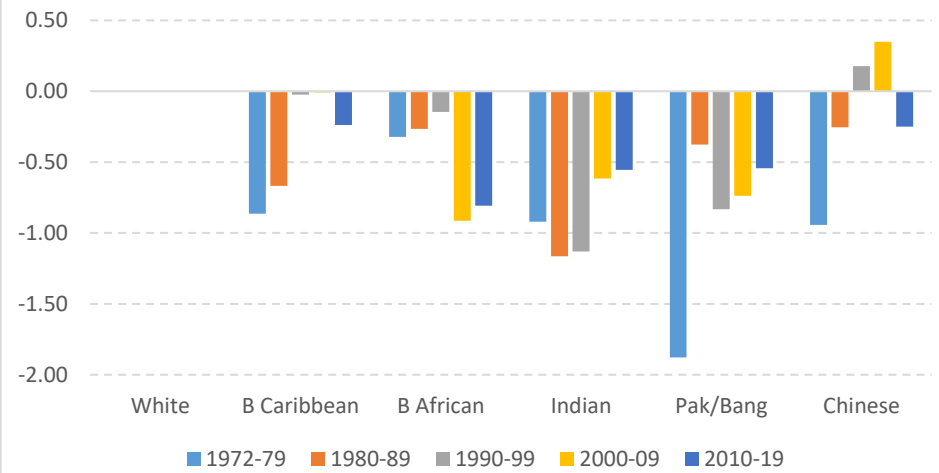


Figure 12 Gross differences in class competition, controlling only for father's class, by ethno-generational status and sex over the five periods

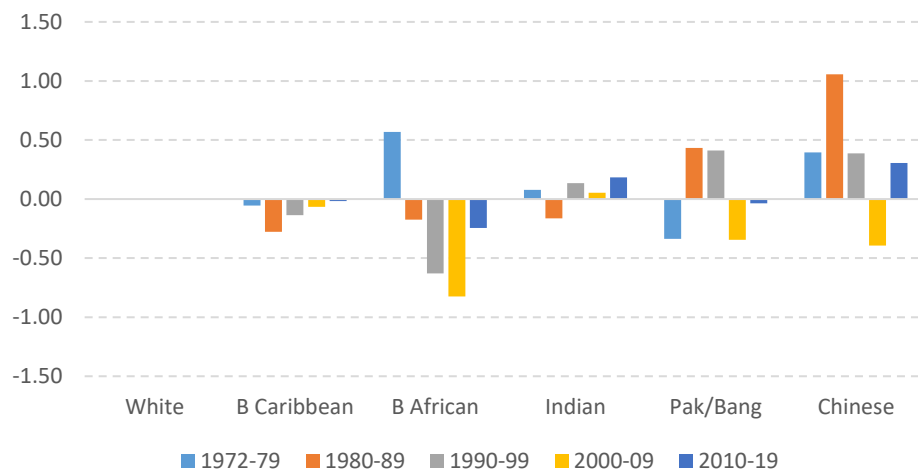
(1) Net effects of competition: G1 and White men



(2) Net effects of competition: G1&White women



(3) Net effects of competition: G2 and White men



(4) Net effects of competition: G2&White women

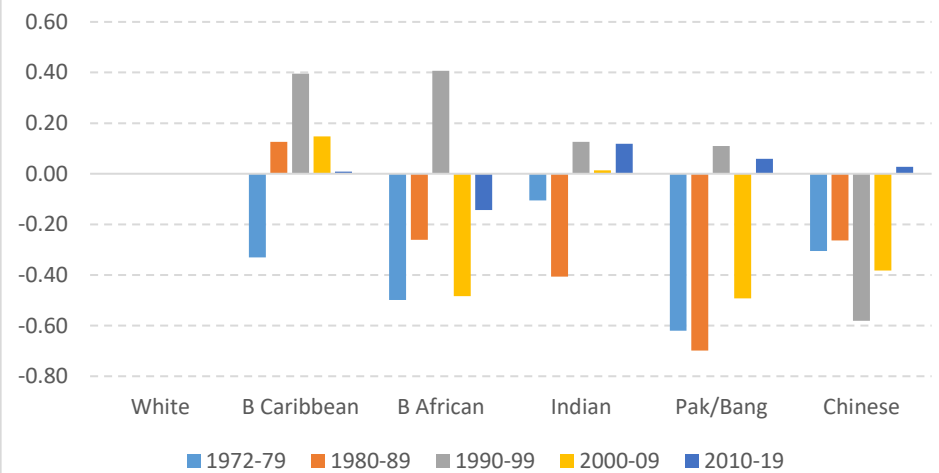


Figure 13 Net effects in class competition, controlling for family class, age, marital status, region, education and health, by ethno-generational status and sex over the five periods

Ethnic social mobility: class competitions

We have, in the above, had a brief look at the returns of education to access to salariat positions. We now return to the processes of social mobility by bringing parental class and other socio-demographic and contextual factors into analysis of class attainment. We assess the overall class competition in terms of trying to gain advantaged and avoid disadvantaged positions, treating our five-class schema as an ordinal measure, namely, salariat in a higher order than the intermediate which is in turn in a higher order than the own-account which is higher than skilled manual, with the routine as the lowest class position. Methodologically, this is assessed via ordered logit regression following Breen et al (2009). We analyse ‘gross’ and ‘net’ effects on competing for more advantaged and avoiding less advantaged positions. The former is assessed using only parental class as the explanatory variable and the latter is assessed using control variables including individual and contextual influences such as age, age squared, marital status, region (as different regions in the UK have different levels of economic development, hence different labour market opportunities), limiting long-term illness, and educational qualifications. This arrangement is to attenuate the so-called ‘atomistic’ and ‘ecological’ fallacies when only individual or contextual level covariates are used (Li et al 2003). For each of these, we analyse ethno-generational and gender differences for each of the main ethnic groups over the five decades. The data are presented in Figures 12 and 13 for the gross and the net effects of class competitions respectively.

With regard to class competition at the ‘gross’ level (controlling only for parental class), we find, in Figure 12, that most ethnic groups in the first generation are behind whites. Only Black African and Chinese men, and Black Caribbean and Chinese women are doing slightly better than Whites. Overall, the first-generation experience is a rather sad one. For the second-generation men and women as shown in Panels 3 and 4 of the figure, we find much reduced ethnic difference, with Indian and Chinese men doing better than White men, and most ethnic

minority women doing better than White women. Yet, if we look closely, we find that it is not all gloomy story and that there are actually encouraging signs in the trends if not in the patterns. With the exception of first-generation of Black African men and women, all other groups in the first generation were catching up with Whites. The clearest examples were Black Caribbean men and Pakistani/Bangladeshi men and women. As shown in Panel 1 of Figure 12, the log odds for Black Caribbean men relative to White men were reduced from -1.12 in the first decade (1972-1979) to -0.202 in the last one (2010-2019). A similar magnitude of reduction was found for Pakistani/Bangladeshi men, from -1.371 to -0.437. For Pakistani/Bangladeshi and Chinese women in the first generation, the rate of reduction was even more remarkable, from -1.931 to -0.537 in the former, and -0.761 to 0.259 in the latter case. Among the second generation men and women, the gross disadvantages relative to the Whites were largely absent except for Black Caribbean men. Yet we can still see that most other groups were having a more salient advantage in achieving better and avoiding more disadvantaged jobs as compared with Whites and that for most of the time. Furthermore, we also find overtime progress exhibited most clearly by men and women from Indian, Pakistani/Bangladeshi and Chinese heritages.

Turning to net effects controlling for the important personal and contextual influences, we find, in Figure 13, that almost all ethnic minority men and women in the first and the second generations became more distant from Whites than in the gross profiles as shown in Figure 12. They are much behind their White peers in the class competitions given the same level of education, age, health condition, regional socio-economic development and other attributes. The evidence here shows considerable stubbornness of ethnic penalty. Yet, if one looks very closely, one could also find a similar pattern to the one on gross differences, namely, that even though there are pronounced ethnic disadvantages, there are also signs of progress over time, with reducing social distances from the Whites' class positions, such as with first-generation men and women of Black Caribbean, Indian and Pakistani/Bangladeshi origins. Taken as a whole, second-

generation men were not much disadvantaged in class attainment as compared with Whites although second-generation women, especially those of Black African, Pakistani/Bangladeshi and Chinese origins, were still quite disadvantaged, especially in the earlier periods.

Competing for top jobs

Having looked at the overall picture of class competition, it is also of importance to look at the competition for the most advantaged salariat position, which we do in Figures 14 and 15. The layout is the same as for overall class competition in Figures 12 and 13, with gross and net effects respectively. The only difference is that as we use logit regression for analysis of access to the salariat, we can turn the logit coefficients into percentage points using a technique called ‘average marginal effects’ (AME) which can help ease exposition, with White men and women set as reference groups.



Figure 14 AME gross effects on access rates (%) to the salariat, controlling for father's class only, by ethno-generational status and sex over the five periods

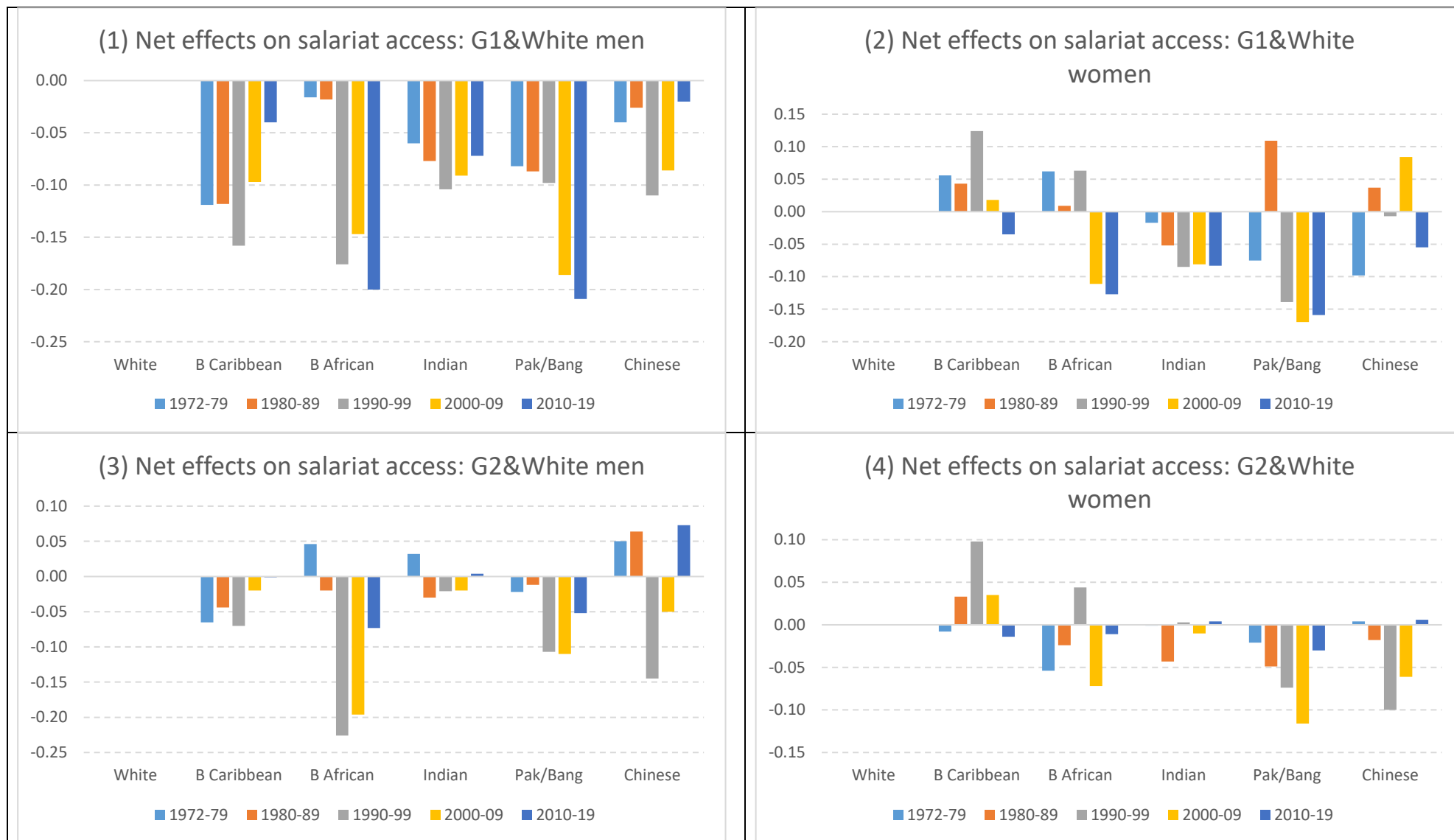


Figure 15 AME net effects on access rates (%) to the salariat, controlling for father's class, age, age squared, marital status, region, education and limiting long-term illness by ethno-generational status and sex over the five periods

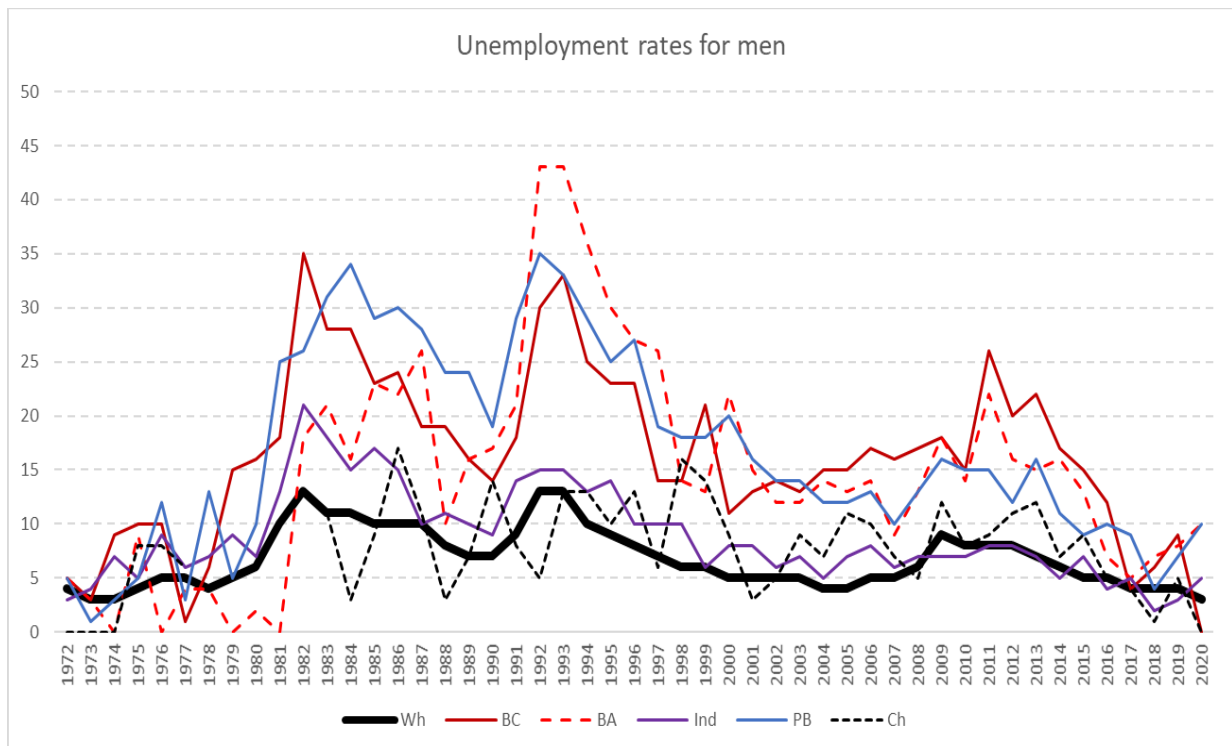
As for the gross effects on access to the salariat as shown in Figure 14, we find that most first-generation men are behind White men. The Black African and Pakistani/Bangladeshi first-generation men in the 1990s were around 20 percentage points behind White men in gaining access to the salariat. The first generation women were less disadvantaged than their male counterparts, with the two black groups and the Chinese faring better than their white counterparts but Pakistani/Bangladeshi women well behind White women. The second generation were making notable progress in reducing distances from the Whites and second-generation women were actually mostly outperforming White women.

When the important socio-cultural and contextual factors are controlled for, we see, in Figure 15, a rather depressing story. With the possible exception of Black Caribbean women, almost all other groups of both generations are lagging behind. The first-generational men were, with no exception, way behind White men in access to the salariat. The second generation were by and large behind their White peers, even for the educationally higher-performing Indian and Chinese women. Yet it is also the case that in the more recent decades second-generation men and women of Chinese and Indian origins were quickly catching up with their White peers in the net effects on access to the salariat. Second-generation Chinese men were, in the last decade, around seven percentage points ahead of their White peers in access to the salariat.

Surmounting the double hurdles: access to the labour market and achieving class advancement

The analysis above on social mobility of ethnic minority groups proceeded in a way as is usually done in the social mobility tradition for the overall population. Yet, we know that for ethnic minorities, especially for immigrants, having a job is of paramount importance, as there are mouths to feed and bills to pay, and not many social networks to resort to. Existing research has demonstrated pronounced inequalities in unemployment, hyper-cyclical unemployment, and

ethnic penalties in this regard (Berthoud 2000; Li 2017, 2018c; Li and Heath 2007 2008 2010 2018; Heath and Li 2008; Heath and Cheung 2007). Rather little has been done combining research on ethnic unemployment and class attainment, let alone for all main ethnic minority groups across different generational statuses and over a long period of time. This is a rather difficult enterprise but given the importance in assessing ethnic progress in British society, it is worth the effort.



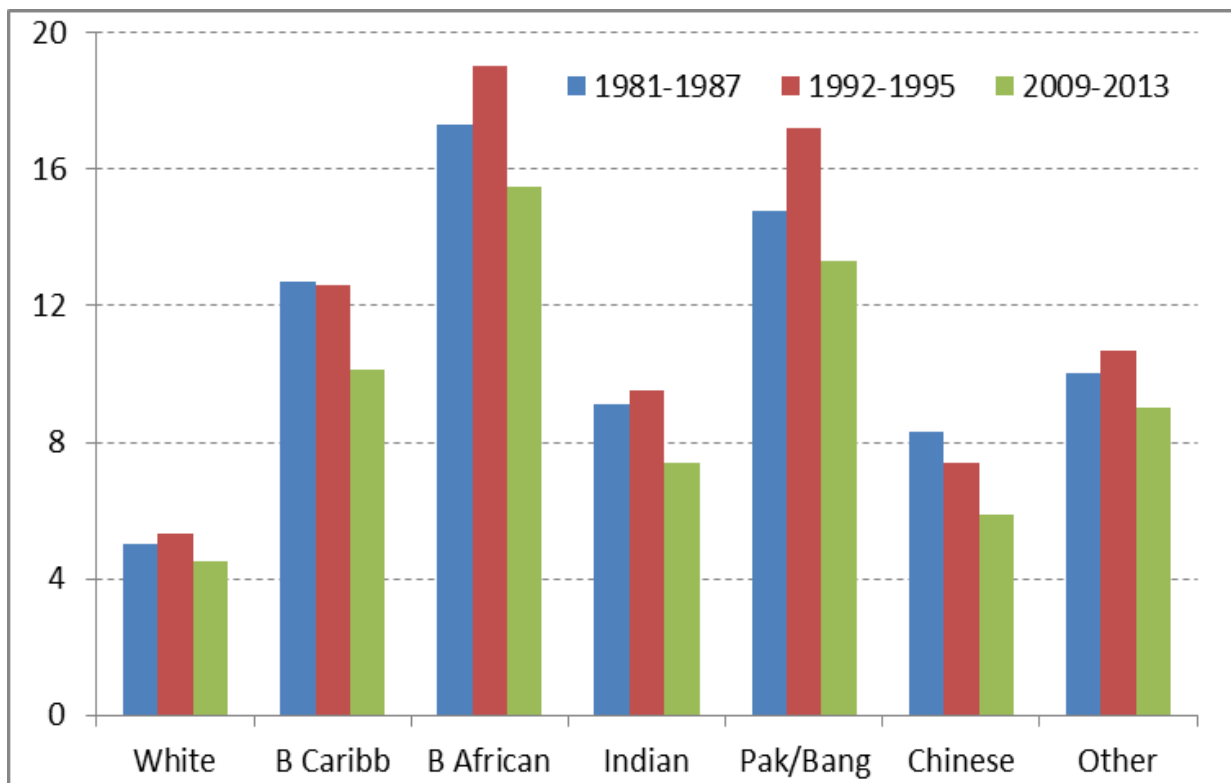


Figure 16 Hypercyclical male unemployment (Panel 1) and unemployment for second-generation ethnic minority men with UK education at the degree levels or above (Panel 2)

Before we go into details, we show a profile of male unemployment in the British labour market in the last fifty years. The data, drawn from the GHS (1972-2005) and the LFS (1983-2019), are shown in Panel 1 of Figure 16. We can see that in the mid-1980s, early 1990s and starting in 2008, there were three tidal waves of and huge differences in ethnic unemployment, with men from the black and Pakistani/Bangladeshi origins bearing the brunt. Their unemployment started much earlier, remained much higher and stayed much longer than for Whites. Even when the overall economy returned to normal, they were still much more likely to be unemployed than White men. We call this ‘hyper-cyclical’ ethnic unemployment. In Panel 2 of the figure, we show that even second-generation men with UK degree-level education who had no lack of human capital and no foreign accent were still much vulnerable to the ethnic penalty, with Black African men being around four times and Pakistani/Bangladeshi men being around three times as likely

to be unemployed as their White peers in each of the recessions, suggesting a scarring effect of a statistical kind.⁷

It is with this in mind that we combine employment status with class position in the following analysis. The data in Panels 1 and 2 of Figure 17 show the labour market position for the different ethnic groups of both genders excluding full-time students. Take men in Panel 1 of the figure for example. We see that the Chinese men are least likely to be unemployed but most likely to be in the salariat, followed by Indian, Black African and White men in the salariat. Black Caribbean and Pakistani/Bangladeshi men are in the poorest labour market positions having a low presence in the salariat and high likelihood of worklessness. For our working-age groups included in the analysis, being out of the labour market may suggest, at least for men, repeated failures at job seeking, culminating in being ‘discouraged’ or ‘frustrated workers’.

Women’s overall profile is generally similar to that of men although women tend to be more likely to be ‘inactive’, but even in this regard, we see that Chinese women tend to be most likely to occupy professional-managerial positions and Pakistani/Bangladeshi women having exceptionally high inactivity rates.

The analysis of avoiding worklessness and gaining access to the salariat upon employment in Panel 3 of Figure 17 may not be easy to understand. Basically, we assume that people, ethnic minorities in particular, have to cross two hurdles: finding a job (or avoiding unemployment and inactivity) and once in employment, trying to get a high-status and well-paid (salariat) rather than a low job. We used the ‘Heckprobit’ models for this (we first fitted class positions in the

⁷ We remind the readers that since we are using cross-sectional data, we are not talking about scarring effects in a strict sense, which could only be assessed using panel data, namely the effects of previous unemployment experiences upon subsequent unemployment. We are using the term on the assumption of scarring effects operating at a societal level, in the sense of ‘statistical discrimination’. For analysis of the Markovian effects using panel data tracing how people’s prior unemployment history could impact on their subsequent employment status from one year to another, see Li and Heath, 2018.

regression model and worklessness in the selection models, and then saved the results for access to the salariat in the regression model and for the worklessness in the selection models, and then obtained the average marginal effects (percentage point differences with the Whites) for both parts. In both regression and selection parts, we controlled for class origin, own education, age and age squared, marital status and, in the selection model, we further controlled for limiting long-term illness. Full-time students are omitted from the analysis. The data show a grim story of net effects, with ethnic minority men and women mostly behind their White peers and with little over time progress.

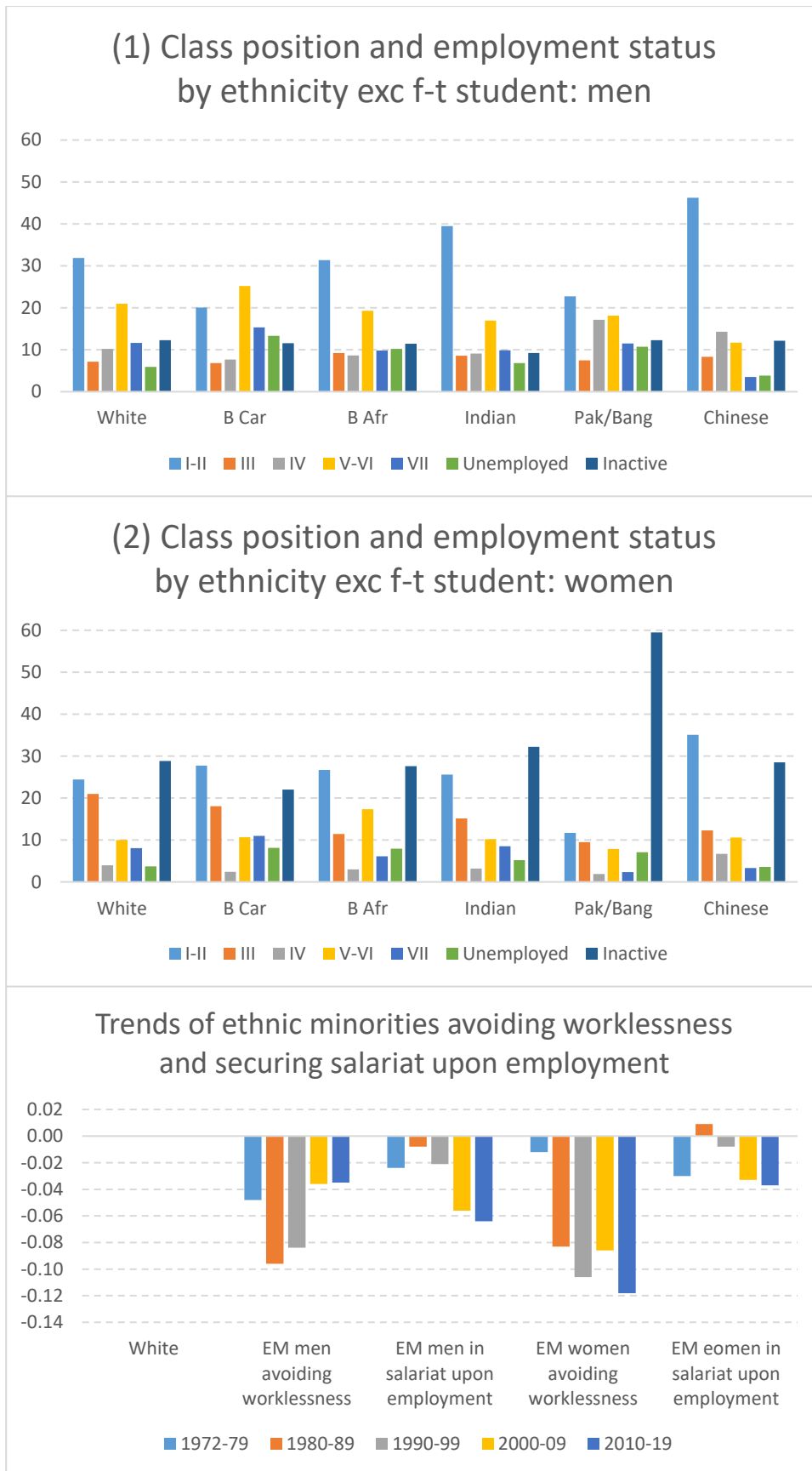


Figure 17 Labour market position by sex and ethnicity

Note: Panel 3 shows net effects (%) obtained from Heckman's probit models. See text for further explanations.

Table 4
Average marginal effects (AME) on avoidance of worklessness and on access to the salariat conditional upon employment (N=339,938 for men and 377,267 for women)

	Avoidance of worklessness		Access to the salariat conditional on employment	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Ethnicity (white=ref)				
Black Caribbean	-0.042***	-0.010	-0.037***	0.020*
Black African	-0.156***	-0.131***	-0.106***	-0.071***
Indian	-0.054***	-0.083***	-0.026***	-0.042***
Pak/Bang	-0.109***	-0.324***	-0.065***	0.030
Chinese	-0.137***	-0.150***	0.053***	0.022
F class (routine=ref)				
Salariat	0.004	-0.000	0.161***	0.110***
Intermediate	0.019***	0.022***	0.084***	0.058***
Own-account	0.017***	0.017***	0.061***	0.024***
Foremen & skilled	0.008***	0.017***	0.039***	0.029***

Note: The effects of the covariates (education, age, age squared, marital status, and the identifying variable' for the selection model, health) are not shown. * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001.

To gain a deeper understanding of how access to paid employment (or avoidance of worklessness) and career advancement (or avoidance of disadvantaged class position) may jointly affect ethnic minorities' life chances, Table 4 shows an illustration of whether people can find a job and a good one. The first hurdle is thus to surmount the workless barrier and the second hurdle is to find a job with employment security, income stability and embedded career advancement, that is, a professional-managerial job. For brevity, only the ethnic and family origin effects are presented, with the effects of the covariates omitted. Although crossing the two hurdles is a formidable task to accomplish, our results are rendered very easy to understand: they are all percentage points. For instance, other things being equal, a man of Black African origin would be 15.6 percentage points behind White men in avoidance of worklessness. As our samples are restricted to working-age populations, this would in essence mean that Black African men are around 16 percentage points more likely not to have a job than a White man.

In this example, we find that controlling for all the covariates, Black African men were most disadvantaged in finding a job, at 15.6 percentage points behind White men with the same

attributes, followed by Chinese men, at 13.7 points, and Pakistani/Bangladeshi men, at 11 points. Father's class plays a significant albeit weaker role in helping people avoid worklessness but a more notable role in helping children gain access to the salariat. People with salariat parents have a 16 percentage-point advantage in themselves being found in salariat positions. Again we find that all ethnic minority men except Chinese were less likely to find a salariat job even when they are lucky enough to have a job. Black African men are double disadvantaged to the most pronounced extent, being 15.6 percentage points behind White men with the same socio-cultural attributes on the job queue and, for those among the lucky to have secured a job, yet another 11 percentage points behind White men in getting a salariat position, with a total disadvantage of 26.6 points.

Having gained an understanding of the modelling procedures and how to interpret the results, we now move to more substantive matters on how men and women of ethnic minority heritages across generational statuses achieved their social mobility in British society over the last fifty years and whether clear social progress or stagnation is a more accurate depiction of their trajectory. We do it for the pooled data with first and second generations combined (Figure 18) and for the two generations separately (Figures 19 and 20).

With respect to the overall situation, the data in Figure 18 show that for both men and women, ethnic minorities faced a big hurdle in gaining employment, and the situation is particularly hard for Black African, Pakistani/Bangladeshi and Chinese men, and for Pakistani/Bangladeshi women. During the 1990s, Black African men were around 34 percentage points behind White men in terms of employment rates, and Pakistani/Bangladeshi and Chinese men were 20 and 26 points respectively. For all the five decades covered, Pakistani/Bangladeshi women were around 25-35 percentage points behind White women in finding a job. Once they have a job, they are not too much behind their White peers, and some groupings such as Chinese men and women were actually somewhat ahead of Whites.

The first-generation's experience as shown in Figure 19 tell a basically similar story although with a harsher reality than shown in Figure 18. In the 1990s, first-generation Black African men were around 45 percentage points behind White men in finding a job. This is probably due to the large number of refugees and asylum seekers escaping the war-torn countries in Africa at that time. We cannot explore this further in the present analysis but this is certainly a point worthy of further analysis. First-generation Pakistani/Bangladeshi women are found to be forty to fifty percentage points behind White women in employment rates, with little sign of relative progress (they may have been more likely to gain employment, so too were White women as we have seen earlier, see NEP 2007).

The second generation's worklessness is an even more painful story than that of the first generation. As compared with the first generation's experience as shown in Figure 19, we find that for both men and women, the second-generation were actually more likely to be workless, which appears surprising, as they were educated in the UK. One possible reason, as Heath and Li (2008) suggest, is that the second generation may have experienced a 'revolution of aspiration': they wished to find a job commensurate with their educational qualifications just like their White peers but employers seemed to be lagging behind the aspirational revolution: they were still paying more attention to the colour of skin than to the productive potential as indicated in their educational qualifications (Heath and Di Satio 2019). On the other hand, Indian, Pakistani/Bangladeshi and Chinese men were making some progress in narrowing down their differences from White men, as were Indian and Chinese women. Once in employment, most second generation men and women were doing similarly well to, and some groups were doing slightly better than, Whites.

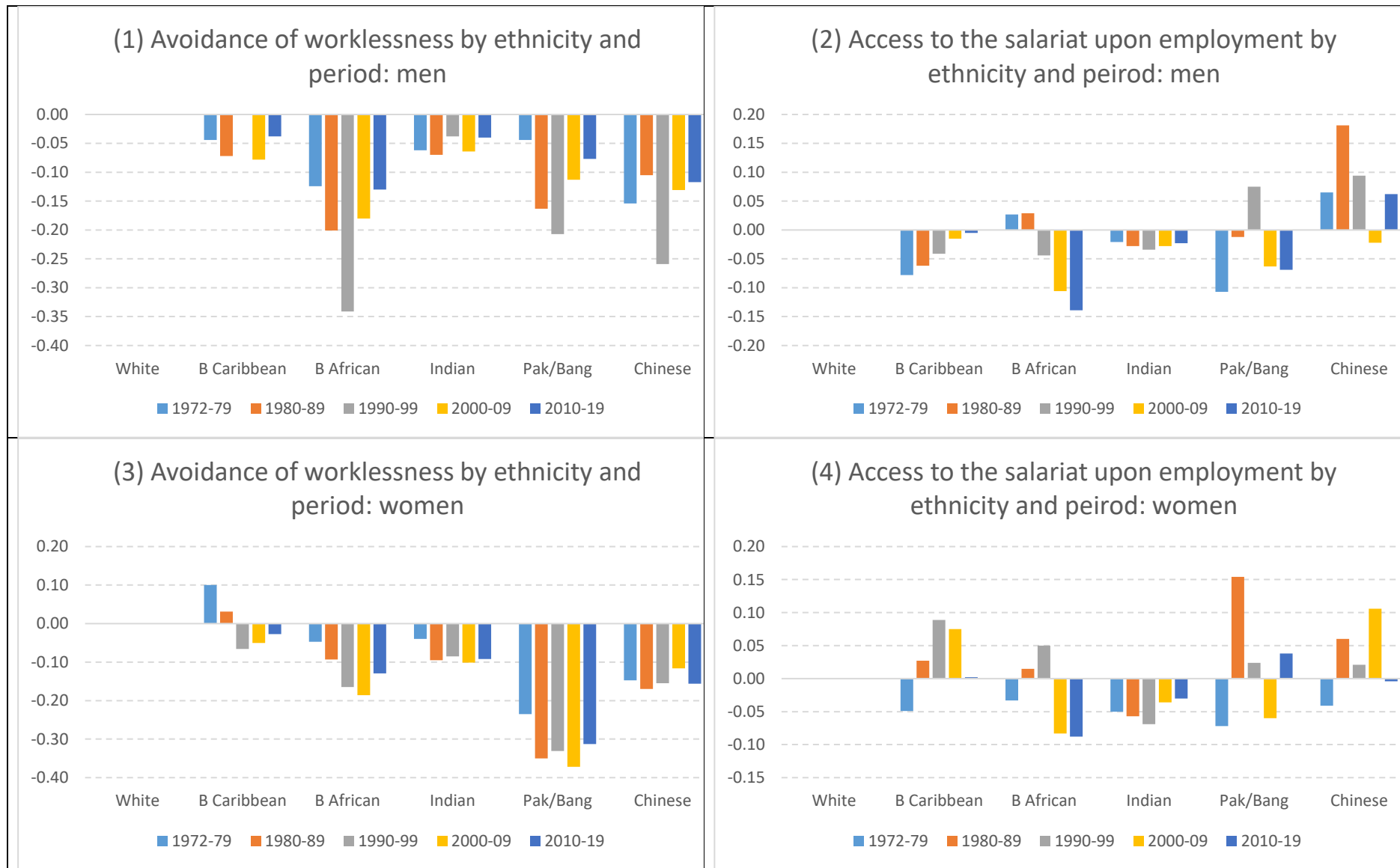


Figure 18 Avoidance of worklessness and gaining access to the salariat upon employment by sex, ethnicity and period

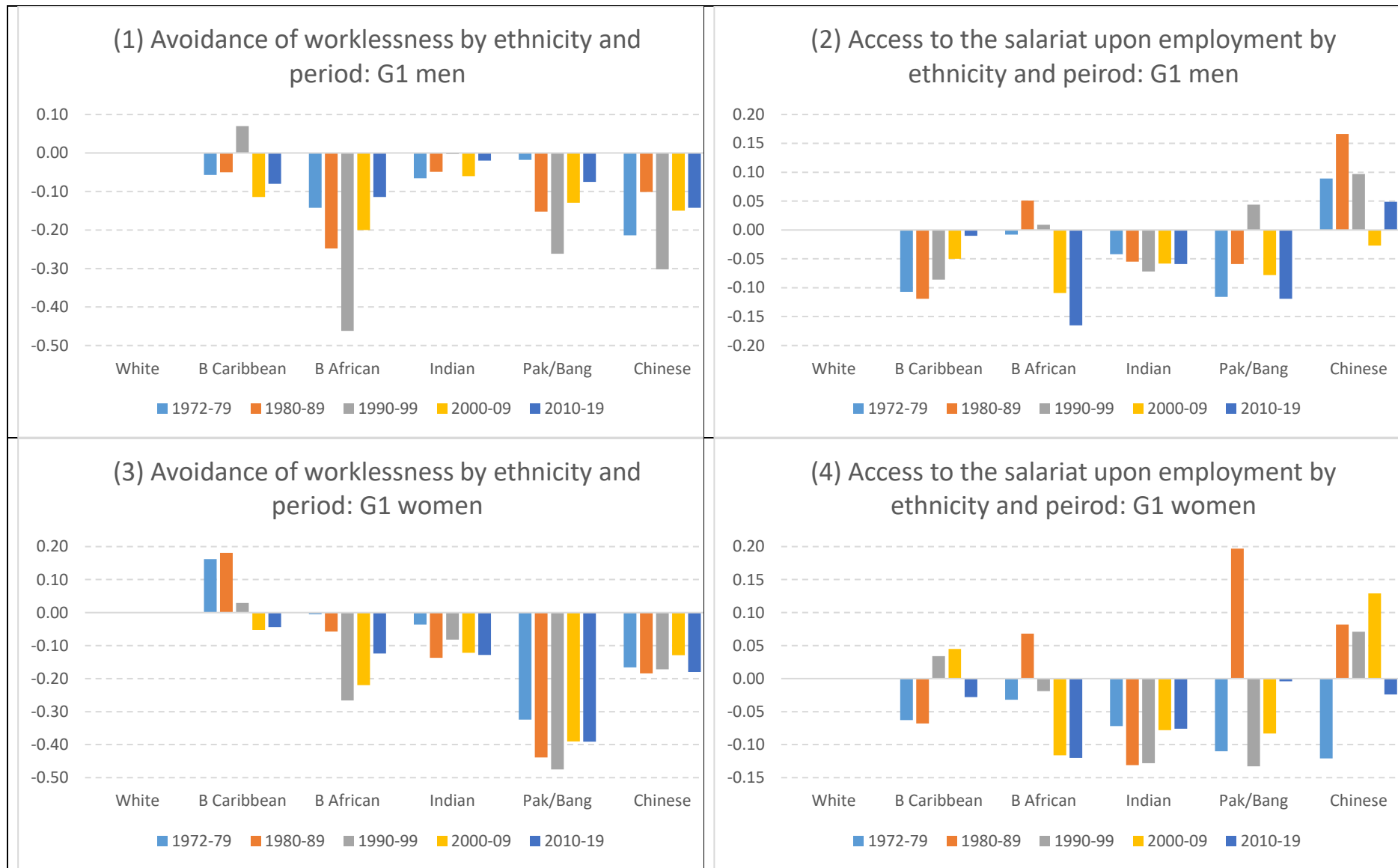


Figure 19 Avoidance of worklessness and gaining access to the salariat upon employment by first-generation (G1) men and women over time

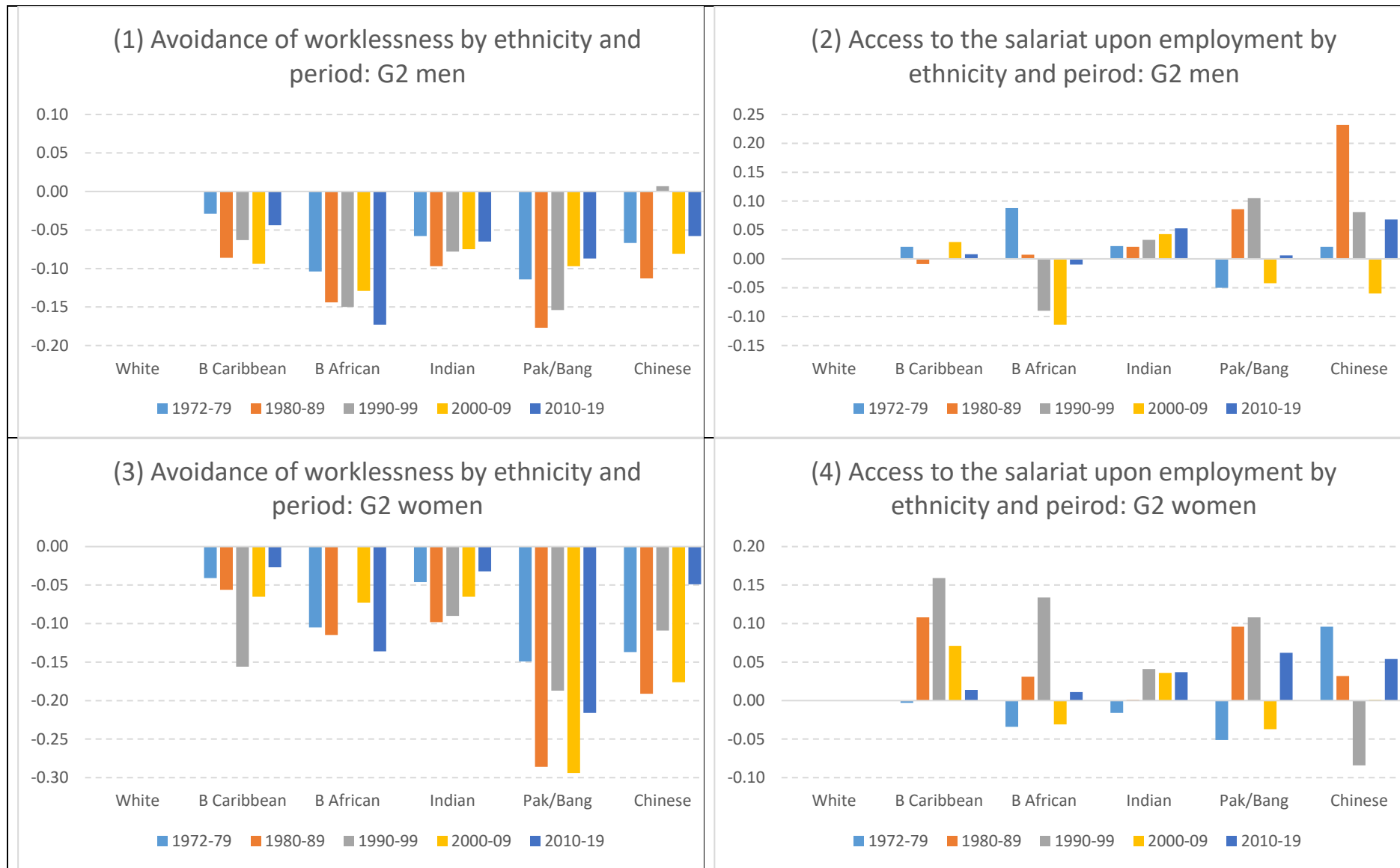


Figure 20 Avoidance of worklessness and gaining access to the salariat upon employment by second-generation (G2) men and women over time

A panoramic view

We have looked at the ethnic employment patterns and trends in close detail focusing on several important domains. We now have an overall, panoramic, view. In the following, we use the combined class and employment status as the labour market situation (the five class categories for those employment plus the two categories for unemployment and inactivity, excluding full-time student). The categories were reversed in the modelling with data below the White (set as zero) line indicating disadvantaged positions, controlling for the key socio-demographic and contextual factors that are most likely to affect people's labour market position. The data in Figure 21 show that for both men and women, ethnic minorities are, on the whole, disadvantaged. We can also see, more clearly for men than for women, the effects of the economic recessions referred to above, in the mid-1980s, early 1990s and starting again in 2008. When recession comes, ethnic minorities are hard hit.

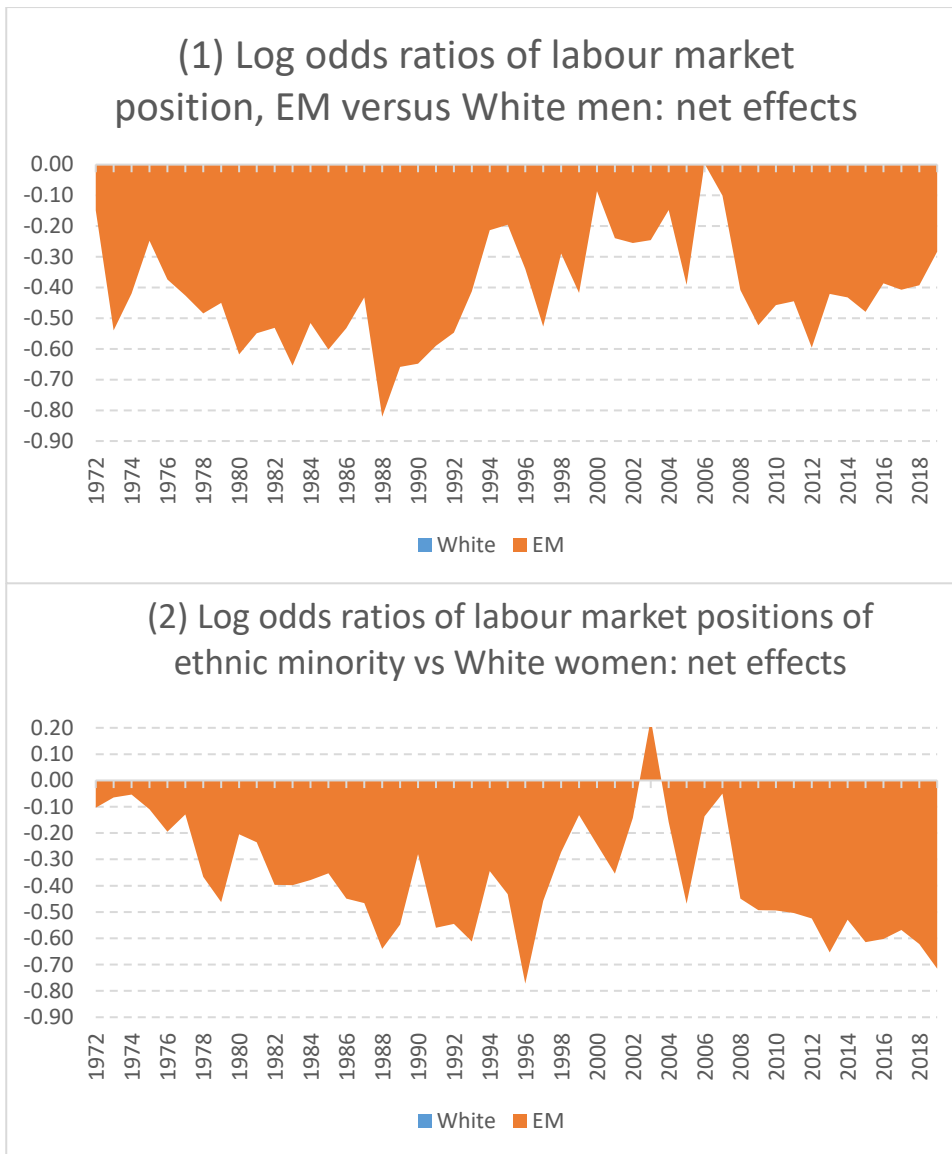


Figure 21 Ordered logit models for labour market position for ethnic minority men and women relative to their White peers

Notes: The dependent variable is the labour market position ranging from (1) inactive, (2) unemployed, (3) unskilled routine manual; (4) foremen, supervisor, low technician, skilled manual, (5) own-account, (6) clerical and (7) salariat. The values for Whites are set at zero for each year. Control variables are parental class, own education, age and age squared, marital status, health condition and region. Full-time students are excluded.

The data in Figure 22 show that profiles for ethnic men and women in main groups over the five decades, controlling for the same attributes. We find, in Panel 1 for men, that Black African and Pakistani/Bangladeshi men are hit harder than others, and that there is clear sign of progress for Black Caribbean and Indian men. Other things being equal, Chinese men are not too far behind White men.

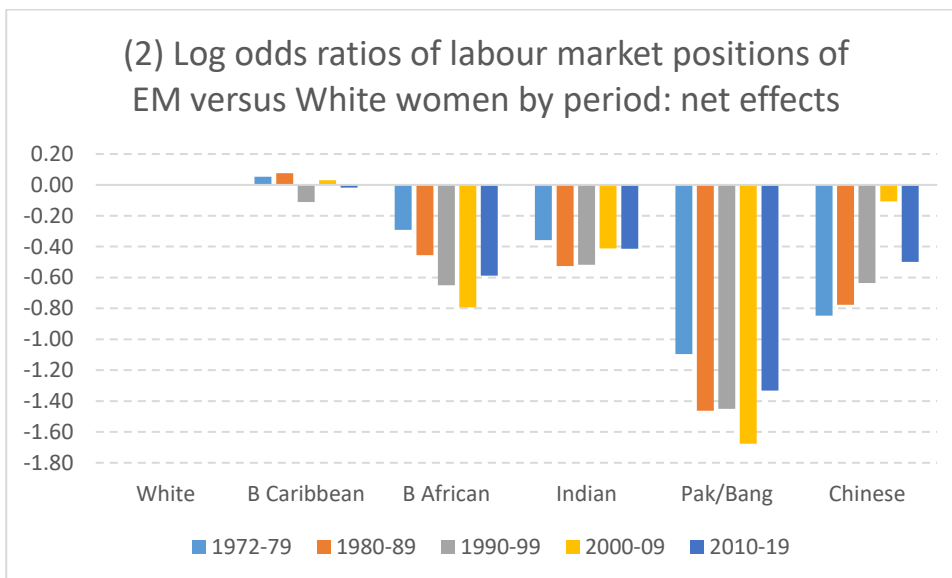
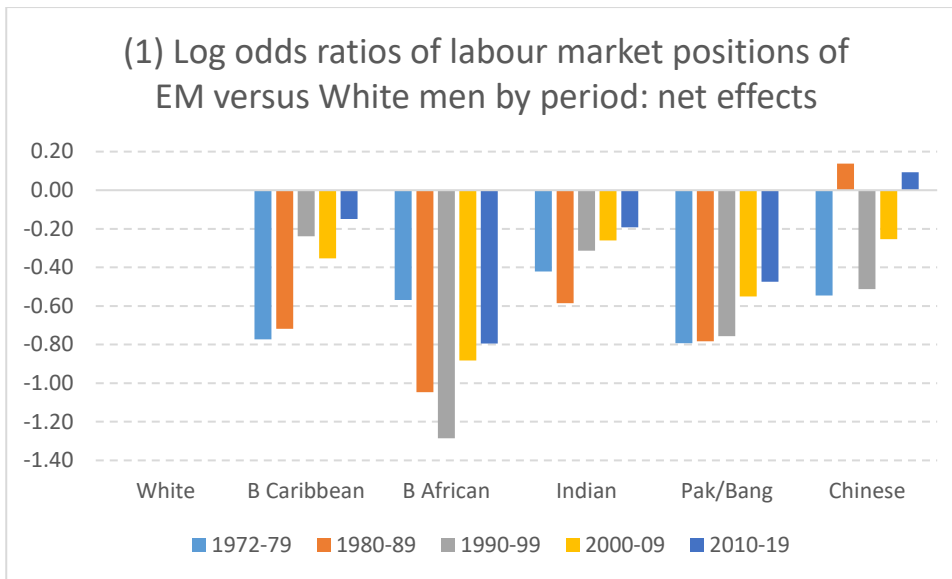


Figure 22 Ordered logit models for labour market position for men and women in different major ethnic minority groups relative to their White peers, by period

Notes: The dependent variable is the labour market position ranging from (1) inactive, (2) unemployed, (3) unskilled routine manual; (4) foremen, supervisor, low technician, skilled manual, (5) own-account, (6) clerical and (7) salariat. The values for Whites are set at zero for each year. Control variables are parental class, own education, age and age squared, marital status, health condition, region and year of survey. There are considerable year-by-year variations within a decade due to economic cycles which affect the demand for labour and the interethnic competitions for labour market positions. Full-time students are dropped from the analysis.

With regard to women as shown in Panel 2, we find Pakistanis/Bangladeshis being most behind, Indian, Black African and Chinese women being in similar situation, and Black Caribbean women being closest to White women.

Another perspective

For most of the analysis above, we have used decades as indicating trends, which is from a period perspective. Some researchers, such as Breen et al (2009), use birth cohorts as trend indicators. We have had a go, with the data shown in Figure 23 where we can see that, for men, the Chinese are closest to the Whites with Indians, Black Caribbeans and Pakistanis/Bangladeshis making the clearest progress whereas Black Africans appearing to be falling further apart from White men as the time went on. For women, the clearest differences are shown between Pakistani/Bangladeshi and White women, followed by Black African and White women. As Pakistani/Bangladeshi women are mostly of Muslim religion, it would be interesting to explore, using more recent data, whether there are significant religious differences between Christians and Muslims among Black Africans in the likelihood to face unemployment and to lag behind in class advancement.

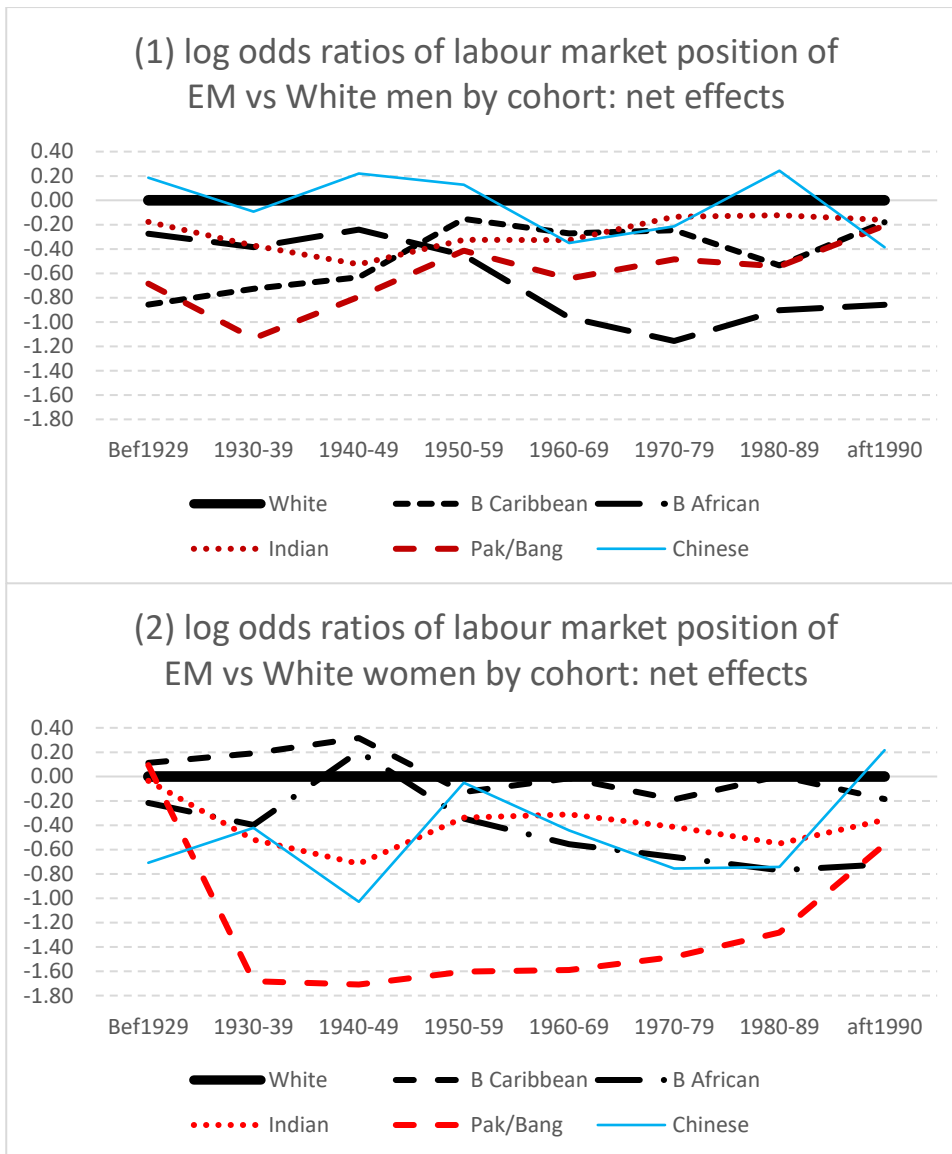
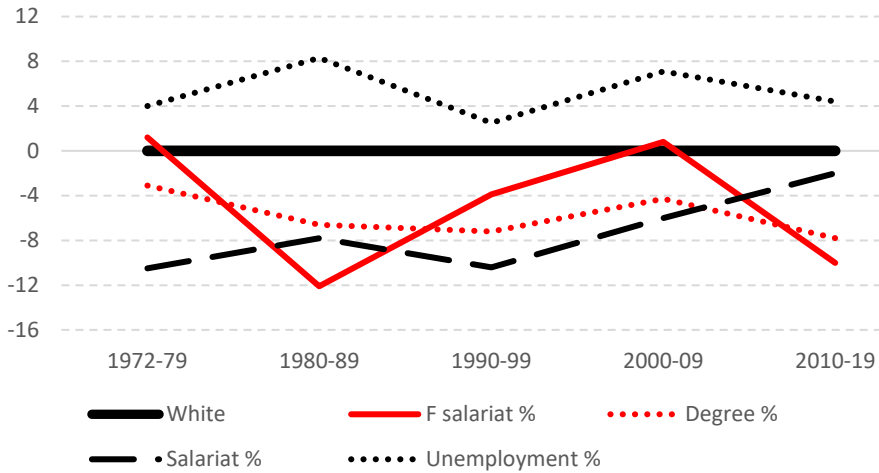


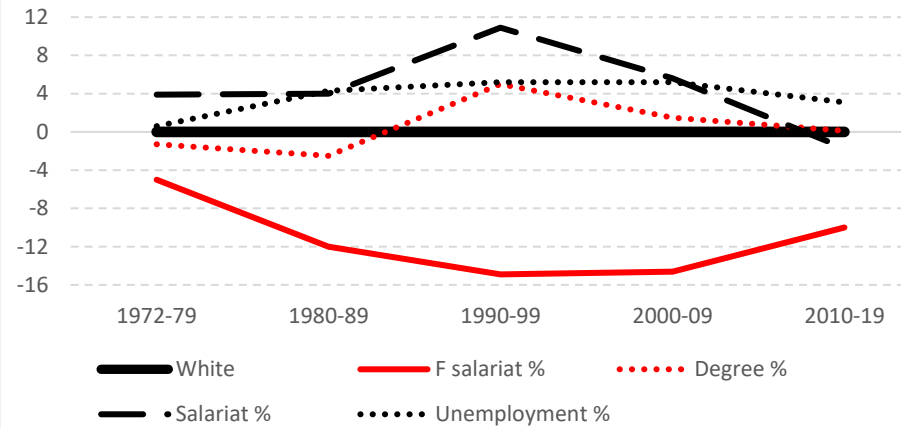
Figure 23 Ordered logit models for labour market position for men and women in different major ethnic minority groups relative to their White peers, by birth cohort

Notes: The dependent variable is the labour market position ranging from (1) inactive, (2) unemployed, (3) unskilled routine manual; (4) foremen, supervisor, low technician, skilled manual, (5) own-account, (6) clerical and (7) salariat. The values for Whites are set at zero for each cohort. Control variables are parental class, own education, age and age squared, marital status, health condition, region and year of survey. Full-time students are omitted from the analysis.

(1a) Social mobility trajectories: BC vs White men



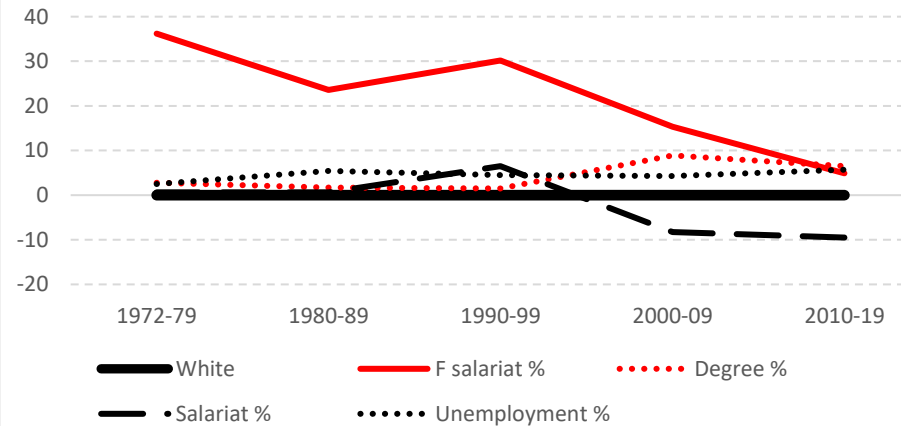
(1b) Social mobility trajectories: BC vs White women



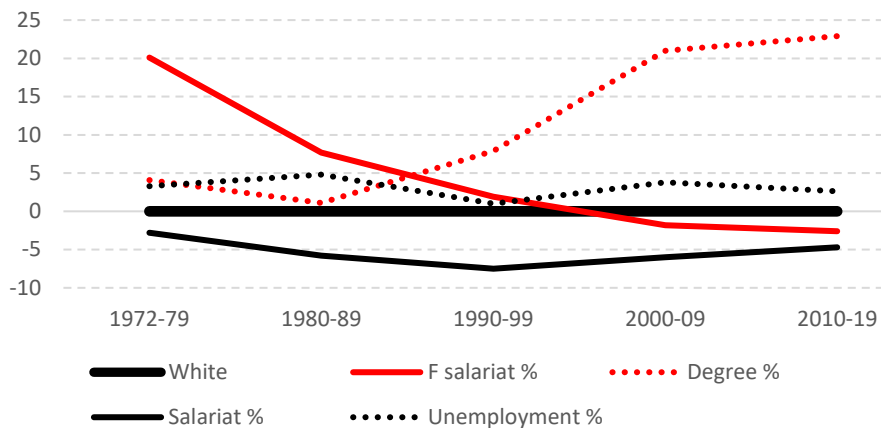
(2a) Social mobility trajectories: BA vs White men



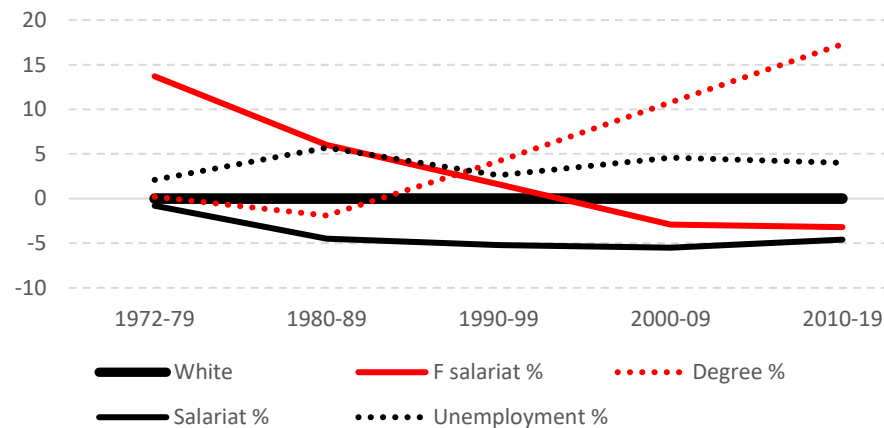
(2b) Social mobility trajectories: BA vs White women



(3a) Social mobility trajectories: Indian vs White men



(3b) Social mobility trajectories: Indian vs White women



(4a) Social mobility trajectories: Pakistani/Bangladeshi vs White men



(4b) Social mobility trajectories: Pakistani/Bangladeshi vs White women

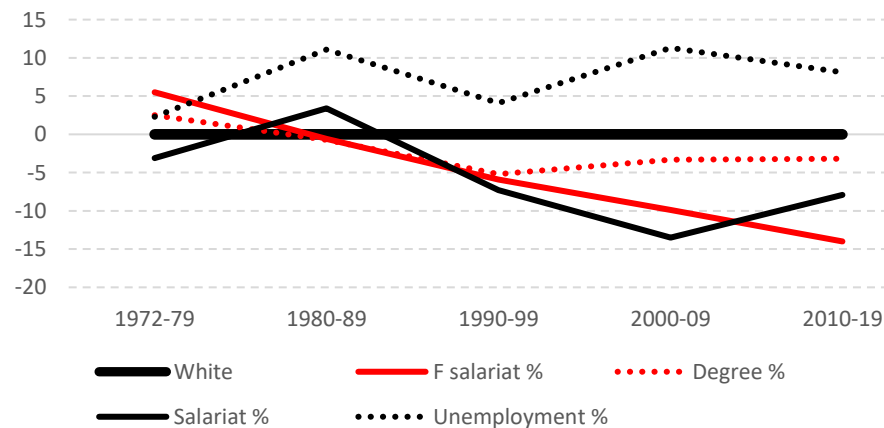




Figure 24 Social mobility trajectory by the main ethnic minority groups, sex and period

Notes: The values for Whites are set at zero in each graph. “F salariat %” and “Degree %” denote percentage point differences of an ethnic minority group’s parental salariat position and their own degree-level education relative to Whites. “Salariat %” and “Unemployment %” refer to the net percentage point differences from Whites in access to salariat position and in unemployment, controlling for parental class, own education, age and age squared, marital status, health condition, region and year of survey, excluding full-time students. The net effects (relative to Whites) are obtained from average marginal effects (AME) after conducting the logit models.

Social mobility trajectory

Finally, in this section, we construct a summary profiling of each of the main ethnic minority groups by men and women in their mobility trajectory over the five decades. Following Li (2018b), we show the origin class differences and own educational differences between the minority groups with Whites, using descriptive data subtracted from the Whites' data, and AME results from modelling on access to the salariat and unemployment controlling for the socio-demographic and contextual factors relative to Whites at each of the five decades. As all the data points are simplified as differences from Whites in percentage points, it should be easy to understand.

The data in Panel 1a and 1b are for Black Caribbean men and women relative to White men and women. We can clearly see that Black Caribbean men were always more likely to be unemployed than white men, their father's positions and their own education were below White men but they were approaching White men in gaining access to the salariat. Black Caribbean women had a much lower starting position (in terms of father's salariat position) than their brothers.

Black Africans in Panels 2a and 2b had a huge advantage in terms of class origins in the earlier periods and were more educated than White men but their fortunes in gaining salariat positions were deteriorating over time. Women of Black African origins had a similar profile to Black African men although their disadvantages were less marked than those faced by Black African men.

Indians and Chinese are fairly similar in having advantaged origin positions for the earlier arrivals but in the more recent decades they were increasingly gaining their cutting edge in education. Their salariat and unemployment positions, net of all confounders controlled for, were similar to Whites. The basic equity is based on their much higher educational levels.

Pakistanis and Bangladeshis come from lower backgrounds but are making steady progress in education. They are lagging behind in terms of salariat access and unemployment. For men, their distance from Whites in salariat position seems further apart with the passage of time.

Summary

So how do we summarise the huge amount of the data analysis? To be very brief, we could say that ethnic minorities in both generations have fared generally well, if they manage to find a job. They are close to the mainstream and are not held back to a huge extent. Progress is visible especially for Indians, Chinese and somewhat for Black Caribbeans. Black Africans and Pakistani/Bangladeshis are highly vulnerable to unemployment and inactively. On the whole, Britain did not have excessive perverse fluidity as the USA did in the 1960s in the treatment of African Americans as shown by Duncan (1968), but there is still some way to go before we can truly say, with candour and confidence, that Britain is a genuinely equal and meritocratic society. First and foremost, we need a determined and concerted effort to bring equal opportunity for employment to all: 'No talent should be wasted'! Only when people have a job can they bring their creative talent into full play. Government, employers and wider society should adopt measures to eliminate direct, indirect and statistical discrimination in recruitment, retention, promotion and training.

As has been amply shown in mobility research, family origin plays a very important part in people's education, and in their destination even controlling for education. Origin effects manifest themselves in terms of economic, social and cultural differences via parental education, class, income and social capital. While perhaps not much can be done by public policy to influence parental education, cultural participation and social networking, something could be done about parental class and income if effective measures are taken to reduce ethnic-related unemployment gaps, promote training and enhance equality of occupational attainment, which will bring about a more equal

situation among family origins, especially family incomes. At the moment, there are vast differences in family poverty, with Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black African families being around 56, 49 and 36 percent being in poverty as compared with 17 percent for the national mean (Heath, Li and Woerner-Powell 2018). Reducing class- and ethnic- lined inequality of condition will help the future generations to have a more equal start in life as more and more members of ethnic minority heritages will be UK born, especially after the full implementation of the Brexit.

Ethnic minority children are found to have ‘reinvigorated aspirations’. Their family economic conditions are poorer and they are more likely to have free school meals, and then tend to have lower GCSE scores. Yet, in spite of this, they are more determined not to repeat their parental hardships. They aim higher, work harder and make bolder choices in transitioning to A-Level and university, including Russell-Group university studies, as shown by Jackson (2014) and Li (2018a; 2021).

A crucial barrier to ethnic integration lies in the first step onto the labour market. As mentioned above, Heath and Di Stasio (2019) show systematic discrimination by employers against members of ethnic minority heritages in the last few decades. Field studies using hypothetical job applicants with the same level of education and other attributes except names show that, from the 1960s to the present day, applicants with ethnic minority names would need to write around twice as many application letters as does a White applicant to get a chance of interview, hence persisting discrimination. Once in jobs, as we have seen, ethnic minorities are making progress in terms of getting closer to Whites’ class positions over the decades even though for some groups, they still lag behind in terms of gaining access to the professional-managerial salariat. The latest research using data from the Longitudinal Study of Young Persons in England (LSYPE) shows that the second-generation born between September 1989 and August 1990 had lower GCSE scores due to family poverty but tended to outperform the majority group in transition to A-Level and university studies and achieved much higher levels of educational qualifications. Yet when they entered the labour market, they still met more barriers in finding a job, and their incomes, whether in terms of wages/salaries from paid

employment or in terms of continuous weekly take-home pay, were below those of their peers in the majority population in spite of their educational attainment (Li 2021). This suggests continuing disadvantages for the second generation. If they had not worked so hard in education, their outcomes in the labour market would have been much worse.

The persisting barriers to employment by members of the second generation who have no language deficiencies and no relative disadvantage in terms of human capital give even more compelling reason to reinforce the implementation of the equal opportunity laws in the Race Relations Acts. An enhanced aspiration is a commendable attribute which needs to be matched by government and employer actions. Some groups, such as second-generation Indian and Chinese, are doing very well in both education and occupation. Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are quickly catching up. Black Africans perform very well in education but they tend to suffer particular hardships in unemployment. Black Caribbeans used to have poor education but are also catching up. For the black groups and for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, unemployment, especially during recession years, becomes 'hyper-cyclical', meriting special attention from policy-makers.

Overall, there were hardships, tears and struggles by ethnic minority members but almost all groups were also making progress in one area or another in terms of education, employment and occupational attainment. There are still difficulties lying ahead but as a society, we can make it better!

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Appendix 1

Data Structure

This research is aimed at exploring the patterns and trends of social mobility by ethnic minority groups in the UK in the last fifty years relative to the mainstream population and, in so doing, in assessing whether and to what extent social progress has been made, which, if any, of the ethnic minority groups is making the most rapid progress, and which is facing the greatest barriers. In order to achieve this aim, we need to have nationally representative data that cover as long a time span as possible and that contain the vital ingredients for our research purposes: parental class, respondent's class, and ethnicity, along with other important attributes such as gender, age, generational status, region, education etc. After a thorough checking and harmonisation effort, we pooled together 57 datasets ranging from 1972 to 2019 covering nearly fifty consecutive years, namely, the GHS (1972-2005), BHPS (1991-2008), USoc (2008-2016), Take Part (2005/6) and the Labour Force Survey (2014-2019). They are all national representative social surveys, with large sample sizes, and have key variables on parental (father's or mother's) occupation at the respondent's age around 14-16, respondent's current or last main job, education, gender, age, ethnicity and region together with other covariates needed for analysis.

The General Household Survey (GHS) is the longest-standing annual government survey (with breaks in some years) which started in 1971 (but the data for this year cannot be used). From 1972 to 1992, there are data in most years on father's class, respondent's class and ethnicity but the information on father's class was not collected in the subsequent 12 years (1993-2004)⁸. Furthermore, the Social

⁸ In 1977 and 1978, the number of respondents with valid father's class was much smaller than in adjacent years, being 2,714 and 2,803 respectively in the analytic sample (men aged 16-65 and women aged 16-63), which is about one fourth that of 1979. Since the number of respondents with valid class information in the two years is not affected and since this forms important information on the ethnic distribution of social class in the fifty years, we decided not to drop the two years which will leave a gap in the data series. It is noted here that we did not analyse the social mobility for any particular ethnic group in either of these two years. Thus including the two years will have more

Economic Groups (SEGs) from which the Goldthorpe class is derived has, in the case of father's jobs, the salariat and small employers combined (*paseg*), making it impossible to differentiate between the higher and the lower professional-managerial (salariat) positions, and between the salariat and the small employers. However, in 1972, 1982, and from 1985-1992, a detailed 19-category SEG for father's jobs (*paseg2*) is also available, allowing us to code a more detailed, seven-class, schema for more refined analysis. We did conduct quite a bit of analysis using the seven-class schema for origins-destinations associations but found that the shape of the associations was quite similar to that from the five-by-five analyses. Hence the results from the seven-class schema are not reported (available on request).

The constraint of having to use *paseg* in the GHS means that for all the whole analysis, we can only code a class schema for fathers (chief earners) and for respondents alike, with the higher and the lower professional-managerial positions combined. We adopted a five-class schema: (1) professional-managerial salariat; (2) routine-non-manual, (3) own-account, (4) manual supervisor/skilled worker, and (5) semi/unskilled worker. Thus, in 1973-1981, the 'salariat' part for parental class includes Class IVa, the smaller employer with employees due to the constraint of *paseg*, but for the rest, IVa was coded as part of Class IV, namely, together with IVb and IVc in the GHS and in all other datasets. In 2005, as the integration into the GHS of the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions Survey (EU-SILC), information on parental occupation was collected again, and in sufficient detail to allow

benefit than harm for our purposes. When we analyse the mobility patterns or trends for detailed ethnic groups, we used 'decades' rather than individual years. It is also noted here that parental class information was collected for respondents of different ages in the GHS such as ages 16-49 from 1978 to 1988, and from 16 to 59 from 1989 to 1992. We use all available parental class information within the confines of our analysis. Some researchers tend to use information for respondents aged 25 above, ignoring information for those aged under 24. We use information for the working-age groups, namely, people aged 16 to 65 for men and 16-63 for women. Young people aged 16-24 are particularly vulnerable when they come to the labour market and this vulnerability is clearly related to parental class and ethnicity. For instance, during the recession years of 1982 to 1987, young people of this age range were twice as likely to be unemployed if they were from working class families as compared with their peers from salariat families (26.2% vs 13.7%) and young men from Black Caribbean heritages were twice as likely to face unemployment as their white counterparts (42.4% vs 21.2%).

for a direct comparison with the previous years of GHS and with the other datasets used where parental and respondents' NS-SeC class, a new instantiation of the well-known Goldthorpe class schema, is used. In all these years, parental and respondent's class positions are coded in a consistent over time (COT) manner as much as is feasible. The class variables in the BHPS come in the form of the Goldthorpe class (11-class version); in the USoc and the TP05, the class variables are in the form of National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NSSeC). The conversion of the SEG (and *paseg* and *paseg2* in similar manner) into the Goldthorpe class follows Heath and McDonald (1987); the conversion between the Goldthorpe and the NSSeC follows Rose and Pevalin (2005). It is noted that even though the NSSeC is a new instantiation of the Goldthorpe class schema, there is no exact match-coding. Our interest is, however, in the strength of association between parental and respondent's own class position and change thereof, and in the difference, and direction and magnitude of change between the majority and the ethnic minority groups in the span of the last fifty years in British society.

The British Household Panel Survey started in 1991 with around 5000 households and 10000 respondents. Every year, the respondents were re-interviewed, until wave 18. Children become eligible for interview when they reach the age of 16 (rising 16s) and original sample members continue to be interviewed when they leave the household to form partnerships. Overtime, new samples from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were added (from wave 11 onwards; see the BHPS website has all the details). Altogether, 32,380 respondents were interviewed in the 18 waves, representing 238,996 person/years. From Wave 19 onwards, the BHPS respondents were 'rolled-into' the USoc survey. Wave 1 of the BHPS comprises only 31.7% of all respondents (10264/32380) ever interviewed in the main samples of the 18 waves. In this sense, each wave could be used as a cross-sectional survey, especially when the cross-sectional weight is used in the analysis, which we do in the analysis, and the same is done for the USoc and other cross-sectional files for consistency.

AT1 Sample distributions by year and data source

| Data: GHS72-05; BHPS91-08 (W1-18); USoc08-16 (W1-9);

year	TP05/6; LFS14-19 (July-Sept)					Total
	GHS72-05	BHPS91-08	USoc08-16	TP05/6	LFS14-19	
1972	18,185	0	0	0	0	18,185 ^a
1973	36,532	0	0	0	0	36,532
1974	33,879	0	0	0	0	33,879
1975	36,845	0	0	0	0	36,845
1976	36,709	0	0	0	0	36,709
1977	32,446	0	0	0	0	32,446
1978	32,045	0	0	0	0	32,045
1979	30,705	0	0	0	0	30,705
1980	31,443	0	0	0	0	31,443
1981	32,410	0	0	0	0	32,410
1982	27,160	0	0	0	0	27,160
1983	30,276	0	0	0	0	30,276
1984	27,994	0	0	0	0	27,994
1985	29,282	0	0	0	0	29,282
1986	29,593	0	0	0	0	29,593
1987	29,830	0	0	0	0	29,830
1988	28,684	0	0	0	0	28,684
1989	28,631	0	0	0	0	28,631
1990	26,881	0	0	0	0	26,881
1991	27,944	10,264	0	0	0	38,208
1992	27,953	9,845	0	0	0	37,798
1993	0	9,600	0	0	0	9,600
1994	0	9,481	0	0	0	9,481
1995	0	9,249	0	0	0	9,249
1996	0	9,438	0	0	0	9,438
1997	0	11,193	0	0	0	11,193
1998	0	10,906	0	0	0	10,906
1999	0	15,623	0	0	0	15,623
2000	0	15,603	0	0	0	15,603
2001	0	18,867	0	0	0	18,867
2002	0	16,597	0	0	0	16,597
2003	0	16,238	0	0	0	16,238
2004	0	15,791	0	0	0	15,791
2005	30,069	15,617	0	28,117	0	73,803
2006	0	15,392	0	0	0	15,392
2007	0	14,873	0	0	0	14,873
2008	0	14,419	50,994	0	0	65,413
2009	0	0	54,569	0	0	54,569
2010	0	0	49,692	0	0	49,692
2011	0	0	47,071	0	0	47,071
2012	0	0	44,832	0	0	44,832
2013	0	0	45,188	0	0	45,188
2014	0	0	42,168	0	95,950	138,118
2015	0	0	39,293	0	92,784	132,077
2016	0	0	36,055	0	88,465	124,520
2017	0	0	0	0	87,899	87,899
2018	0	0	0	0	87,633	87,633
2019	0	0	0	0	85,342	85,342
Total	665,496	238,996	409,862	28,117	538,073	1,880,544

Note: ^a in 1972, only those interviewed between 26 June and 26 Dec are used.

The UK Household Longitudinal Panel Study (UKHLS, commonly called Understanding Society, or USoc) started in 2008. At the time of analysis, nine waves are available. COT variables for parental, own class, education, ethnicity and other covariates are coded. As can be seen in AT2 and in comparison with AT1, There were 409,862 person/years in the nine waves combined representing 86,094 respondents. Only 17.4% of the first wave respondents stayed in all the nine waves and only 50994 (or 59.23%) of all respondents are initial (wave 1) entrants. Therefore, each wave of the USoc

can also be viewed as constituting a cross-sectional survey when the cross-sectional weight is used, which we do.

The Taking Part (2005/6) survey is for England only but it has all the key variables that can be COT-coded (apart from nativity and year of arrival). Given this, we decide to use this.

The Labour Force Survey from 2014 to 2019 in the third quarter also contains parental and own class, ethnicity and all other crucial variables that can be COT-coded. It is noted that from the second quarter onwards in the LFS, the ethnic categories were coded in three ways: *etheweul* for England and Wales (with differentiations between Black Caribbean and Black African), *ethgbeul* (the two black groups combined) and *ethukeul* also with the two black groups combined. Thus in the LFS, the data covers only England and Wales.

AT2 Panel structure of the BHPS and the USoc

BHPS				USoc			
Freq.	Percent	Cum.	Pattern	Freq.	Percent	Cum.	Pattern
4098	12.66	12.66	111111111111111111	14980	17.40	17.40	111111111
2559	7.90	20.561111111111	9838	11.43	28.83	1.....
1871	5.78	26.3411111111	6096	7.08	35.91	.11111111
1224	3.78	30.1211111.....	5300	6.16	42.06	11.....
964	2.98	33.09	1.....	2862	3.32	45.39	111.....
840	2.59	35.691.....	2412	2.80	48.19	11111.....
632	1.95	37.641.....	2319	2.69	50.88	.1.....
593	1.83	39.47	11.....	2209	2.57	53.451111
505	1.56	41.031	1926	2.24	55.69	11111111.
488	1.51	42.5411	1803	2.09	57.78	1111.....
18606	57.46	100.00	(other patterns)	36349	42.22	100.00	(other patterns)
32380	100.00		xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	86094	100.00		xxxxxxxxxx

For ethnicity, we coded a seven-category version as per the 1991 Census of the Population. In the earlier datasets, this is the only thing that could be attempted. The seven ethnic categories are: White, Black Caribbean, Black African, Indian, Pakistani/Bangladeshi, Chinese, and Other. In the main (non-ethnic-differentiated) analysis, the ‘Other’ group is included. In the group-specific analysis, the ‘Other’ is omitted, as it does not have a distinct meaning. Details are available for later years for more

nuanced ethnic categories but that would constitute bespoke analysis, together with more detailed analysis for parental and own class such as using the seven-class categories.

Many other datasets were checked for availability of key variables. Altogether, over 100 datasets were checked but the others do not meet the criteria for inclusion due to one or another (or combined) reasons. For example, the sample sizes in the British General Election Studies series (BGES) are too small for our detailed analysis. The Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities (FNSE1993/4) has good sample sizes but contains no information on father's job. The Family and Working Life Survey (FWLS 1996/7) has father's class but it is coded in Social Grades A-E which is incompatible with that used in social mobility research. The sample sizes in the British component of the European Social Survey (ESS) are too small for yearly analysis, as are those in the Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion survey of 2003/4. In addition, we have checked the data in the Citizenship Survey series (2001-2011), the Community Life Survey series (2012-2019) and the rest of the Taking Part series (2006-2013), and found that they do not have parental class variables, nor do the datasets in the LFS (1983-2013).

In short, we have pooled together and harmonised the key variables for what is the best and most comprehensive data source currently available and suitable for mobility research covering around 50 years, yielding a sample of 1,880,554 respondents. The agreement for inclusion of the datasets for analysis was reached with Richard Laux and Lynsey at the Cabinet Office on 02/10/2020.

As members of ethnic minority heritages tend to be younger than the mainstream population, we could have two ways for dealing with this. The first is to confine the analysis to a common age structure, such as men aged 16 to 65 and women aged 16 to 63 for all ethnic groups, dropping those whose age is outside this range, and the second is to use a method for age adjusted weight, as applied in Li and Heath (2006). Basically, what the second procedure does is to create a variable that takes into account whites' greater age dispersion by using the following Stata syntax: gen

$wtage = weight * \ln(age)$, so $wtage$, $gen\ agewt = (_N/r(sum)) * wtage$, where $agewt$ is age-adjusted weight and “weight” was the original cross-sectional probability weight for each year that is either directly provided in the source files or converted by me from the population weight variable that is available in the LFS. The use of age-adjusted weight ($agewt$) as against the original probability weight ($weight$) for white and Pakistani/Bangladeshi respondents shrank the age dispersion – the coefficients of variation (standard deviation/mean) – for the two groups by 20% and 11%, suggesting efficacy of using this measure. After some careful prior analysis, I decided to keep the working age groups and also use the age adjusted weight. We use the respondent’s current or last main job as an indicator of class. Respondents under the age of 16 are, of course, ineligible for mobility research as they do not have their own occupation, and are therefore omitted from analysis. We use the age-adjusted weight in all descriptive analyses and modelling exercises throughout the project. It is also noted here that, even with the best measures we could get, the BHPS as a panel survey suffers from attrition and ageing effects. Thus those who remain in the later stages of the survey tend to be more advantaged than those who have dropped out, and older people also tend to have higher social positions than younger people, as can be seen in AT 3 and in Figure 1. Here we can see that that the BHPS respondents are more likely to be in salariat and routine-non-manual positions and less likely to be in manual working-class positions than in the GHS or the Taking Part. Attrition and different source coding (BHPS using the Goldthorpe schema and GHS/TP using the NSSEC might both contribute to the observed differences). Even though the BHPS also has a form of NSSEC ($wjbsec$), it is in the long form, with forty categories, and it is not possible to code that into the Goldthorpe class. The two schemas have some incompatibilities, mismatching by around 20% (Rose and Pevalin 2003; see also AT 4). This explains some oddities in the later years of the data series where only the NSSEC codes are available. For the same reason, in analysing the distributions of the class positions over time, GHS and TP 2005 were not used as they used NSSEC. Yet, there is no difference in the ethno-class

associations between the three datasets in 2005 as shown in the note to Table 1. Thus, in analysing relative mobility, all datasets are used.

AT 3: Respondent's class distribution by data source in 2005 (% by row)

	Respondent's class					Total
	I-II	III	IV	V-VI	VII	
GHS	34.9	13.4	8.2	19.2	24.4	100.0
BHPS	40.2	23.3	8.2	12.6	15.7	100.0
Taking Part	32.5	12.5	8.7	27.5	18.8	100.0
Total	34.2	13.8	8.4	22.7	20.9	100.0

Finally, we need to notice that in the GHS, father's class was asked of respondents age 16–49 in 1982–1988, 16–59 in 1989–92, 25–65 in 2005, and 16 and over in the other years, and in the other data sets used. Previous research shows that using age bands 20–49 or 20–59 in GHS 1989–92 yields similar patterns (Goldthorpe and Mills 2004).

For more details on data characteristics, see introductions to the various datasets available in the Data Archive's website at <https://www.data-archive.ac.uk/> and the data and methods sections in Li and Devine (2011), Li and Heath (2016, 2018), Li (2018a b).

AT 4 NSSEC and Goldthorpe class in BHPS 2008

Socio-Economic Class: current job	Goldthorpe Social Class: present job											Total
	1. Servic	2. Servic	3. Routin	4. Person	5. Sml pr	6. Sml pr	7. Farmer	8. Forema	9. Skille	10. Semi,	11. Agric	
10. Employers large o	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
20. Higher managerial	279	15	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	295
31. Higher prof tradn	249	39	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	291
32. Higher prof new e	85	58	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	143
33. High prof trad s.	85	5	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	91
34. High prof new s.e	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
41. Lower Prof trad e	298	711	81	0	0	0	0	19	5	1	0	1,115
42. Lower Prof new em	8	37	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	77
43. Lwr Prof trad s.e	43	47	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	91
44. Lower Prof new s.	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	10
50. Lower manag occup	164	440	2	0	0	0	3	17	0	1	0	627
60. Hgher supervis oc	2	121	14	2	0	0	1	19	0	0	1	160
71. Intrmd cleri & ad	10	81	449	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	541
72. Intermd sales & s	4	80	220	49	0	0	0	32	9	0	0	394
73. Intermed techn &	5	58	0	37	0	0	0	1	0	13	0	114
74. Intermed engineer	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	19	0	0	31
81. Emp,small (non-pr	13	9	0	0	107	1	0	6	0	0	0	136
82. Emp,small (agricu	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	16
91. Own acct wkrs(n.p	20	61	0	2	0	377	0	1	11	6	0	478
92. Own acct wkrs(agr	0	0	0	0	0	5	42	0	0	0	0	47
100. Lwr supervis occ	0	17	48	10	0	0	0	275	4	2	2	358
111. Lwr technical cr	3	31	7	0	0	0	0	3	176	20	1	241
112. Lwr tech process	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	37	0	38
121. Semi-routine sal	0	14	21	346	0	0	0	0	0	40	0	421
122. Semi-routine ser	1	23	34	19	0	0	0	43	31	278	0	429
123. Semi-routine tec	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	51	23	0	75
124. Semi-routine op	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	95	0	105
125. Semi-routine agr	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	20	21
126. Semi-routine cle	0	13	27	55	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	97
127. Semi-rtne childc	2	2	7	126	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	137
131. Routine sales&se	0	1	4	36	0	0	0	5	24	136	0	206
132. Routine producti	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	49	0	54
133. Routine technica	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	144	159	0	309
134. Routine operativ	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	237	0	241
135. Routine agricult	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	9
Total	1,294	1,876	949	682	108	393	64	435	484	1,100	33	7,418