

Integration of Immigrants A British Perspective

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- Forging a successful society from a collection of diverse cultures is a question that troubles many contemporary societies
 - Is there a clash of civilizations?
 - Should active steps be taken to assimilate immigrants
- This talk will aim to give some British perspective on these questions
- Will focus on Muslim communities in Britain though research also discusses other communities

Some Background

- In 1966 the Home Secretary (Interior Minister) argued “I do not regard [integration] as meaning the loss, by immigrants, of their own national characteristics and culture. I do not think that we need in this country a ‘melting pot’, which will turn everybody out in a common mould, as one of a series of carbon copies of someone’s misplaced vision of the stereotyped Englishman... I define integration, therefore, not a flattening process of assimilation but as equal opportunity, accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance”

Some More Background

- This became the dominant idea in policy towards immigrants – though policy suggests a degree of strategy that was largely absent
- By 1990s there was a certain feeling of smug self-satisfaction that Britain had been relatively successful in creating a multicultural society
- But this mood has changed in recent years

Why the change?

- “your democratically elected governments continuously perpetuate atrocities against my people and your support of them makes you directly responsible, just as I am directly responsible for protecting and avenging my Muslim brothers and sisters” (one of the London bombers)
- Trevor Phillips (Head of Commission for Racial Equality) “too many public authorities [are] taking diversity to a point where they [are] saying, ‘we're going to reward you for being different, we're going to give you a community centre only if you are Pakistani or African Caribbean and so on, but we're not going to encourage you to be part of the community of our town”

What are the fears?

- a growing fraction of those who live (and were perhaps born) in Britain
 - do not think of themselves as British and have no aspiration to do so
 - Have values and behaviour very different from the British
- Here I report evidence on whether these fears are justified
- Much of current concern relates to Muslims – I will focus on them but I will say something about other groups

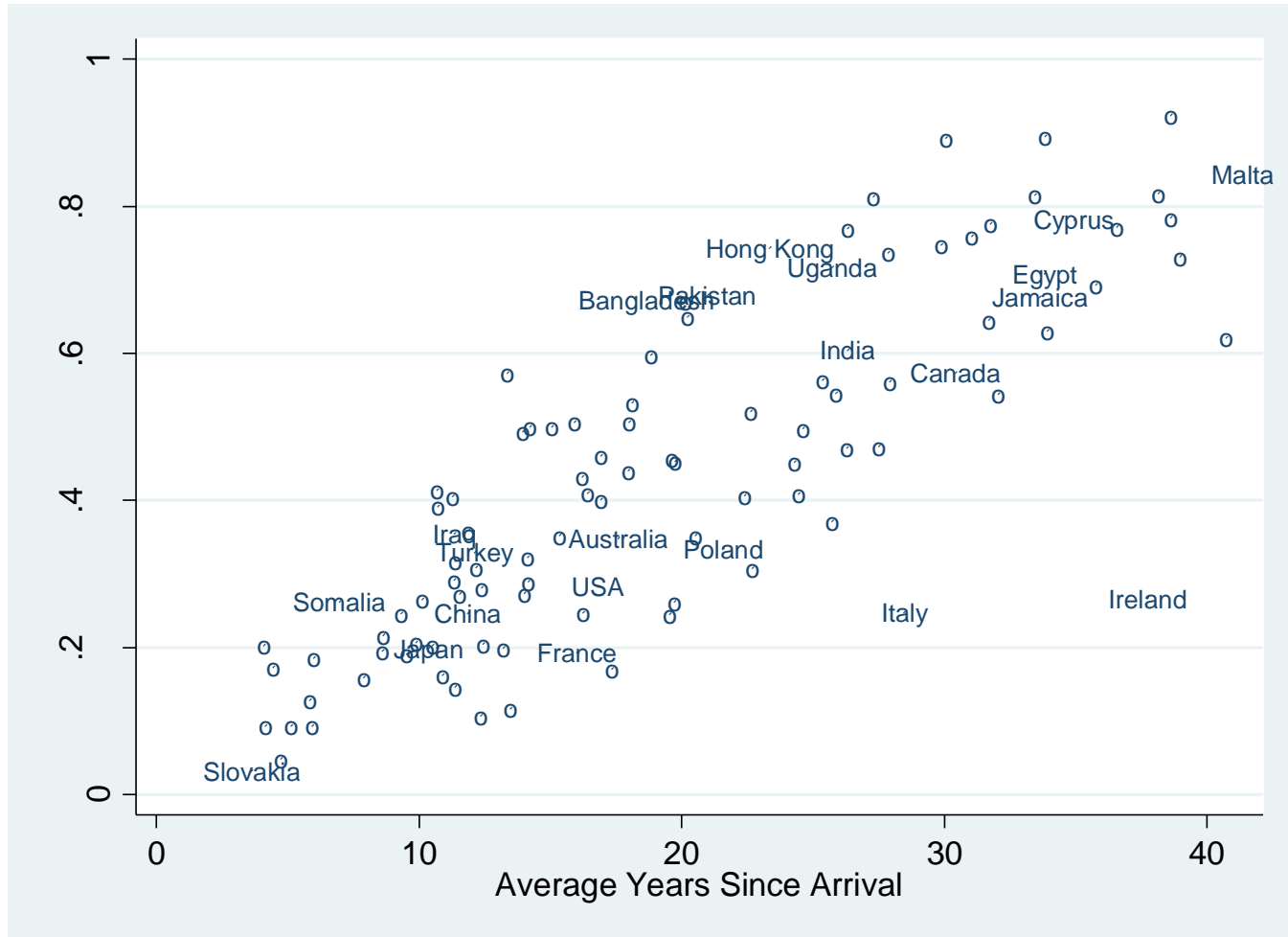
The Main Ethnic Groups in the UK

- Main ethnic minority groups in the UK are:
 - Indian
 - Pakistani
 - Bangladeshi
 - Black Caribbean
 - Black African
 - Chinese
- The main Muslim groups are generally from very poor socio-economic backgrounds – villages in Kashmir, Pakistan and Sylhet, Bangladesh

British Identity

- Who thinks of themselves as British?
- Among the UK-born, British identity is unrelated to religion (except for Catholics from Northern Ireland)
- It is related to ethnicity – non-whites have lower levels of British identity
- This seems to be second-generation effect
- Living in enclaves makes no difference

British identity among immigrants



A Summary

- Recent immigrants never think of themselves as British
- About 75% do after 40 years
- The rate of assimilation is fastest for those from poorer, less democratic countries
- Unrelated to religion
- Perhaps not surprising e.g. Creation of Bangladesh was triumph of ethnicity over religion
- But perhaps national identity means very little

Values

- Not as much difference as commonly perceived
- Very widespread support for democracy, free speech etc
- Ethnic minorities are more strongly in favour of ant-discrimination policies than white natives

Behaviours

- Fear is that some Muslim immigrant groups are not following path of assimilation to British norms and behaviours
- We look at a number of measures:
 - Gender gap in education
 - Female employment
 - Age at marriage
 - Fertility

Looking at Averages Across Communities

	Average age left full-time education in 2006		Proportion of people who Left full-time education by the age of thirteen in 2006	
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
Pakistani	18.3	16.11	0.038	0.12
Bangladeshi	17.48	15.3	0.047	0.16
Indians	19.73	18.82	0.023	0.035
Black Caribbeans	17.26	17.41	0.013	0.01
Chinese	20.64	19.84	0.012	0.018

- These figures do seem to make the point that the Muslim communities are different
- But it would be quite wrong to see the communities as static
- Lets look at the gender gap in education by birth decade and country of birth

Gender Gap in Education

	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Indian	Black	Chinese
<i>UK-born</i>					
Born before 1970	1.55**	1.41*	0.7**	-0.24**	-0.16
Born after 1970	1.08**	0.72*	0.66**	0.09	0.43
<i>Foreign-born</i>					
Born before 1940	6.93**	4.92**	3.94**	-0.43**	1.47**
Born in 1940s	5.54**	4.98**	2.26**	-0.22**	0.85**
Born in 1950s	3.69**	3.73**	1.46**	-0.06	0.99**
Born in 1960s	3.54**	2.48**	1.28**	0.04	0.93**
Born after 1970	2.13**	1.49**	1.00**	-0.53*	0.98**

- Big differences between UK- and foreign-born
- Falling gender gap in education among later cohorts for both UK- and foreign-born
- There is change – all in the direction of gender equality
- Is this change fast or slow? – hard to form a judgment on this

Female Employment Rates

	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Indian	Black	Chinese	US 1950
All Women	24.8%	15.9%	64.3%	70.4%	61.6%	27.7%
<i>UK-born</i>						
All	45.0%	48.2%	75.6%	71.7%	74.4%	27.7%
Single	68.3%	68.7%*	80.6%	67.3%	72.6%	73.0%
Married	41.9%	40.4%	74.7%	81.2%	75.5%	20.2%
Married – dependent children under 16	35.7%	33.7%	69.2%	77.4%	70.7%	16.7%
<i>Foreign-born</i>						
All	18.4%	12.2%	60.8%	68.5%	59.7%	
Single	32.5%	64.1%*	76.6%	64.0%	62.7%	
Married	19.1%	11.8%	61.2%	74.2%	59.3%	
Married – dependent children under 16	16.1%	10.7%	61.7%	72.6%	59.8%	

- Again, there are large differences
- But there is also rapid change – following the same path as Western countries?
- Education seems to be an important driver
- We see similar patterns of assimilation for:
 - Age at marriage
 - Fertility
- One other factor worth noting
 - Very high rate of taking spouse from country of origin

Economic deprivation – log wage differentials from white natives

	Men		Women	
	Foreign-Born	UK-born	Foreign-Born	UK-born
Black Caribbean	-0.207	-0.131	-0.087	-0.026
Black African	-0.429	-0.316	-0.317	-0.167
Indian	-0.262	-0.049	-0.228	-0.050
Pakistani	-0.352	-0.111	-0.212	-0.035
Bangladeshi	-0.530	-0.132	-0.183	-0.043
Chinese	-0.270	-0.102	-0.181	-0.025

How do these changes relate to religion?

- These communities remain very religious
- And their religion is very important to them
- Little sign of declining religiosity
- Similar, though less marked pattern for Hindus and Sikhs
- So all the behavioural changes are occurring among people who continue to consider themselves devout Muslims
- Islam is not an uncompromising implacable religion

Conclusions

- Muslims in Britain are different but becoming less so.
- They differ not just in religion but also in low socio-economic status of background
- They are most definitely moving towards Western norms not in the opposite direction

But there are problems

- A small minority of Muslims are adopting extreme views
 - These are attention-seekers who want to exaggerate their importance within their own communities – we should not concede that to them
- The views of white British about Islam often seem inaccurate
- A segment of the white British feel neglected and ignored
- But I remain up-beat about the future – the principles laid out in 1966 can continue to serve us well as long as we do not become too complacent.