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Destination Integration: Third Country Nationals in the North of England

Final Report

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Integration up North

Training and Development in the North of England



Migration Yorkshire
Strategic leadership, local support



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Contents

Acknowledgements.....	1
1. Introduction.....	2
2. Policy context.....	4
3. Research approach	8
4. Belonging, home and integration.....	12
5. Social relations.....	18
6. Paid and unpaid work: experiences and aspirations	22
7. The experiences of women migrants.....	28
8. The role of support services in integration	34
9. Reflections and future intentions	40
10. Conclusions and recommendations	44
References.....	48
Appendix 1: Overview of sample	50

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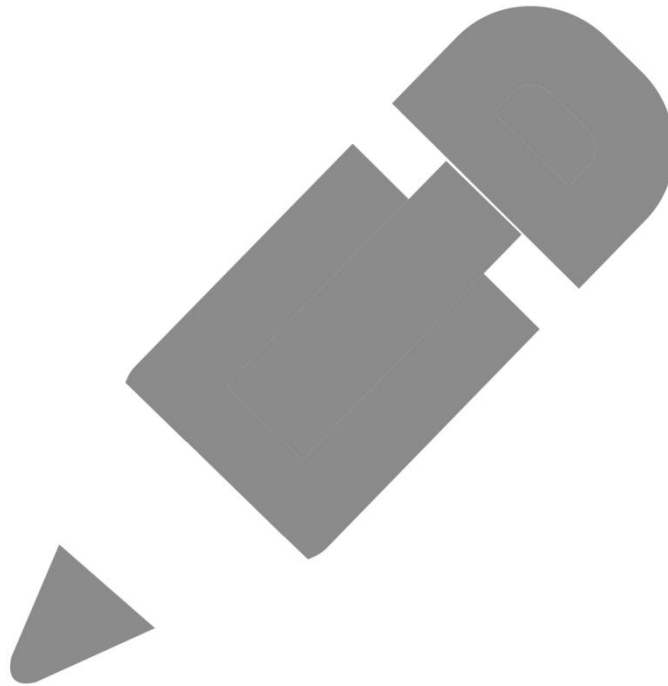
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1. Introduction



This report is based on a study of Third Country Nationals and their experiences of living and working in the North of England. It was undertaken during 2014 and 2015 as part of the Integration Up North project (luN). The luN project is managed by Migration Yorkshire, the Regional Strategic Migration Partnership for the Yorkshire and Humber region based within Leeds City Council. In 2014, Migration Yorkshire, in partnership with Migration Works and the University of Salford, received funding under the European Integration Fund (EIF). The collective activities of luN aimed to:

Improve and mainstream the integration of Third Country Nationals through a comprehensive and co-ordinated programme of research, training, guidance, strategic support and migrant participation for Local Authorities, key policy-makers and practitioners.

The research element of the project was undertaken by the Sustainable Housing and Urban Studies Unit (SHUSU) at the University of Salford.

Acknowledging that there is a lack of empirical, theoretical and policy literature focusing specifically on the lived experiences of Third Country Nationals living in the UK, this study attempted to fill these important gaps. Focusing primarily on the Yorkshire and Humber region, with some focus on Greater Manchester, the research sought to explore the experiences of different types of migrants who had arrived in the United Kingdom (UK) as Third Country Nationals. In order to meaningfully explore the diverse experiences of Third Country Nationals it was decided to focus upon specific Third Country National groups. These were: (1) Highly Skilled Migrants; (2) Family Joiners; and (3) former asylum seekers who had been subject to the Home Office Case Resolution process since 2007. A key focus of the study was to document the diversity of experiences among these groups and assess if the particular 'route' through which migrants enter the UK has implications for integration (both in terms of their relationships with wider society and how they are able to engage with services).

The overarching aim of the research was to contribute to knowledge about settlement and integration experiences through bringing the voices of different types of migrant to the fore and help those designing and delivering policies and services make better informed decisions. Within this aim, there were four research questions:

- 1 What are the settlement and integration experiences of Third Country Nationals and how they differ according to gender, route in, and vulnerability?
- 2 How and in what ways particular actors - such as services, employers and communities - assist in the process of integration?
- 3 What is the nature and context of social relations between new migrants and local community members?
- 4 What local authorities and other services can do to enhance positive experiences of settlement and integration in the future?

Outline of this report

This report is intended to assist private, public, voluntary and community organisations in furthering understanding of the lives of Third Country Nationals living in the UK. This report presents the findings from empirical research focusing upon a number of issues. More specifically, [Chapter 2](#) outlines the policy context within which this research and the wider luN project were based. [Chapter 3](#) outlines the research approach and the methods adopted for the research. [Chapters 4 – 9](#) then go on to discuss the findings arising from the analysis of the interviews. [Chapter 4](#) focuses on issues around belonging, the significance of home and the meaning integration has for migrants. [Chapter 5](#) illustrates a number of issues in relation to the social relations Third Country Nationals have whilst in the UK. [Chapter 6](#) focuses on paid and unpaid work and their role in migrants' settlement in the UK. [Chapter 7](#) considers the specific issues faced by women migrants in the UK. [Chapter 8](#) looks at the range of services Third Country Nationals access and how these contribute to integration within the UK. [Chapter 9](#) explores the reflections migrants have about their time in the UK and their aspirations for their future. Finally [Chapter 10](#) provides some conclusions and recommendations arising from this research.

2. Policy context



Introduction

Over the last decade, the issue of immigration has remained at the forefront of UK and European policy debates. This has often been framed in terms of the challenges migration poses for host communities - whether in terms of pressure on public service provision and competition for jobs and housing - or socio-cultural differences, often termed 'cohesion' issues. An alternative discourse places the emphasis on migrants themselves - how they adjust to the society and its value systems - commonly characterised as 'integration' factors. These perspectives are not, however, mutually exclusive, and often co-exist in policy documents (see, for example, Department of Communities and Local Government, 2012).

In general, government migration policy since the mid-1990s has been characterised by a continual drift

towards a more protectionist stance, particularly since the start of the global recession. Current Home Office priorities, for example, include "controlling migration to limit non-EU economic migrants" (Migration Advisory Committee, 2014: 15). Indeed, in a speech to Home Office staff in May 2015, the Prime Minister announced that further powers would be introduced to tackle illegal working and expand the scheme requiring landlords to check the residency status of their tenants (Cameron, 2015). These powers would largely apply to Third Country Nationals as EU migrants do not require time limited visas. However, as Spencer (2011a: 201) suggests:

The intense political debates on migrant numbers are fuelled by perceptions of their impacts after arrival. Yet policy relating to what happens to those who come to work, study or join family in the UK has been neglected and marginal to those debates. That requires some explanation.

The relationship between migration and integration remains problematic, not least because of a lack of clarity about what integration actually 'is' (Spencer, 2011a; 2011b). In addition, the lack of an overall policy on the integration of migrants has led to an uneven, piecemeal application across different migration groups.

Within the literature which seeks to explore the process of integration, or more specifically acculturation where integration is a possible outcome, there is also a lack of clarity about how to conceptualise the settlement of migrants into new national contexts. While various assumptions about the process of acculturation exist, it is currently understood that acculturation is not a uniform or linear process, and individuals range from 'unacculturated' to biased in favour of the dominant culture. As Doná and Berry (1999: 172) note:

Acculturation is now seen as a multidimensional phenomenon that includes one's orientation towards one's ethnic group, towards the larger society and possibly towards other ethnic cultures.

Furthermore, a range of work has stressed the need to be mindful of the complexity of the settlement experience of migrants (Hermans and Kempen, 1998; Sonn and Fisher, 2005; Brown, 2005). Traditional models of acculturation/integration tend to oversimplify the process of cultural transition and often fail to take into account crucial contextual factors and material resources available to migrants when negotiating intergroup relations (Sonn and Fisher, 2005).

Third Country Nationals in the UK

Shortly before the 2010 general election, David Cameron, then leader of the opposition, pledged to reduce net levels of overall immigration to 'the tens of thousands' by the end of the next parliamentary term. This goal was restated in May 2015 (Cameron, 2015) after the most recent general election in the UK. This commitment, combined with legal obligations to permit the free movement of migrant workers from the EU, has meant that freedom of action to curb immigration has been largely limited to the asylum process and short term visa application routes (including students, skilled workers and Family Joiners), which only apply to Third Country Nationals. Yet despite the pressure to reduce the numbers, recent data (ONS, 2015) suggest that the overall numbers of Third Country Nationals continues to rise.

In relation to Highly Skilled Migrants, successive governments have adopted policies which have stressed the need to prioritise skilled over unskilled migration and to attract the 'brightest and best' (Cerna, 2011; Rienzo and Vargas-Silva, 2014). As Cerna (2011: 2) states "attracting highly skilled workers is a key policy objective in many high-income countries including the UK". However, other policy objectives, in particular a political desire to reduce the overall number of migrants coming to the UK, have had the effect of penalising highly skilled Third Country Nationals. The introduction of the Points Based System (PBS) in 2008 for migrants from outside the European Economic Area (EEA), followed by a 'migrant cap' of 20,000 in 2011 and the closure of certain work visa pathways, have undoubtedly played a part in the reduction of Highly Skilled Migrants coming to the UK (Rienzo & Vargas-Silva, 2014).

There are large gaps in the literature on the experiences of Third Country Nationals in the UK (Jones, 2012). An added limitation of much of the literature that is available is the general categories used to describe Third Country Nationals - such as 'non EEA', 'foreign nationals', or 'foreign born' - which makes it difficult to identify specific sub groups, whether geographical or by particular visa type. In addition, the literature tends to focus primarily on the labour market, marginalising other aspects of Third Country Nationals' experiences. This focus on employment in both qualitative and quantitative research may well be due to the fact that, as Dustmann and Frattini (2014: 593) have observed:

Much of the economic literature over the last two decades, responding to concerns about the impact of immigration on labour markets, has focussed on immigration's possible impact on native workers' wages and their employment.

Rienzo and Vargas-Silva (2014: 2) note that "there is little existing analysis of how highly skilled migration to the UK has changed over the last several years". Their report on highly skilled migration to the UK - including, but not limited to, Third Country Nationals - covers the period 2007 – 2013 and used Labour Force Survey (LFS) data to show that the total number of highly skilled Third Country National workers had actually decreased by a third over the six year period. Significantly, this was also compounded by the closure of the Tier 1 (General) visa to new applicants from overseas in April 2011. Furthermore, those Third Country Nationals granted work visas of one type or another in 2007, received them before the financial crisis commenced, and also prior to the introduction of the PBS and restrictions since 2010.

Despite this decline in the absolute numbers of highly skilled migrant workers, there was an increase in the proportion of all migrant workers who were highly skilled, and a decrease in the proportion of non-skilled workers being granted visas. Nevertheless, it is clear that from 2008 onwards the overall numbers of Third Country National workers, newly arriving in the UK, dropped dramatically. It should be noted, however, that this does not necessarily imply a decrease in the number of highly skilled migrants resident in the UK, only in the numbers arriving between those dates on official visas.

Campbell et al., (2014) looked at employment and skills trends among UK and foreign nationals over the decade between 2003 and 2013. Their analysis showed that the UK's higher-skilled employment sector had grown notably for workers from within and outside the EU. Growth occurred among foreign nationals, "the majority of (which) is attributable to non-EU nationals" (ibid.: 7), but the proportion of highly skilled migrant workers from outside the EU dropped over the decade, although remaining just under 50% in 2013. Stirling (2015) investigated employment outcomes for both EU and non EU nationals using data from the 2012 EU Labour Market Survey (Eurostat, 2013), finding that in the UK there were low employment rates among non-EU migrants, and that this was largely attributable to the under employment of women. It was also concluded that overall, the employment of non EU migrants "appeared to have come at the cost of higher proportions of tertiary-educated migrants in these nationality groups being employed in lower-skill jobs" (ibid.: 1), most markedly among men who acquired residency before 2007.

In terms of family migration among Third Country Nationals, Charsley and colleagues (2012) completed an extensive overview of numerical trends, noting an overall upwards drift in grants of settlement to spouses, while highlighting methodological issues with variable definitions and patchy data. The most common region of origin for non-EEA family migrants to the UK is Asia (Charsley, et al, 2012). Based on the available literature, Family Joiners are predominantly female, with around 70% of migrants entering as spouses in 2011 being women. Indeed, Blinder (2013: 2) concluded that:

A majority of non-EEA family unification migrants are women [and] more than 90% of non-EEA migrants with permission to enter the UK as spouses or fiancé(e)s are spouses (i.e. already married before they arrive).

Qualitative data focussed upon Third Country Nationals is extremely limited. Available examples of research include surveys of employers' and recruiters' attitudes and beliefs (see, for example, Scullion & Pemberton, 2015; Bach 2010) and research surrounding particular categories of working migrants, such as nurses from India and the Philippines (for example, O'Brien, 2007). Qualitative research into the family re-union process, its role, impact or influence on integration is also very limited but much needed. As Charsley and colleagues (2012: 22) argue:

...[the] lack of a more complete and balanced evidence base on this diverse form of immigration may increase the risk of further unforeseen consequences resulting from new legislation. Substantial new empirical research in this numerically important and dynamic field is thus urgently needed.

Finally, despite the copious literature on asylum seekers and the asylum process, quantitative and qualitative research focussed upon individuals who have experienced the 'Case Resolution' process in the UK is also largely notable by its absence. A backlog of unprocessed asylum claims led to a new five year strategy - The New Asylum Model - being introduced in 2007. This presented a new 'fast track' approach including a new system of case management. Within this, a Case Resolution Directorate was established to handle claims dating back to before 2007, and mainly included individuals who had exhausted all avenues of appeal. Research on case resolution principally concentrates on the practical issues associated with the delivery of the process (see, for example, Banki and Katz, 2009). Although the lack of research attention may well be partly explained by methodological challenges of locating people who have ceased to be linked to specific services coupled with the relatively little-known policy. However, the significant length of time people have been in the UK, as asylum seekers, before being granted status and access to key services presents interesting questions about how the integration process is experienced by those for which it was effectively suspended whilst their asylum claim was processed (Brown, 2005).

A clear integration policy?

Various commentators (Finch and Goodhart, 2011; Spencer 2011a, 2011b; Sajrada and Griffith, 2014) have characterised the policy responses towards the settlement of migrants in the UK over the last two

decades as lacking in coherence and effectiveness and reflected in the ambivalence of official attitudes, which have alternatively categorised it either as 'problematic' or as 'good for the economy'. For example, in 2008, the Department for Communities and Local Government conducted a review of migrant integration policy - based on the earlier Commission for Integration and Cohesion's (CiC) report, 'Our Shared Future' (2007) - which posed the question, does the government have an integration policy for migrants? The review concluded that: "There remain some gaps around, for example, new arrivals who are not refugees or EEA nationals" (i.e. Third Country Nationals), and indicated that a 'Cross-Government Migration Impacts Plan' would examine what "additional work may be needed to make the path to integration smoother for all groups of new migrants" (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008: 9).

Within this context a number of central funding streams specifically targeting Third Country Nationals - for example, the Migration Impact Fund (MIF) and the European Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals (EIF) - have been explicit in identifying integration as core objectives (DCLG, 2009; Home Office, 2014). Indeed, strategic priority 1a for the EIF 2012 and 2013 was to "prepare third-country nationals for their integration into host society in a better way". It is noted that the integration of refugees had previously been addressed through the Challenge Fund and European Refugee Fund (ERF).

After the 2010 election, the Coalition Government increasingly sought to devolve responsibility for integration measures to local areas, and the policy direction has become less explicit. Their overall integration strategy - 'Creating the conditions for integration' (DCLG, 2012) - did include some discussion of migration but this was limited. The issue was largely perceived in the context of "fresh challenges" (ibid.: 3) and the main proposals were to:

strengthen the requirements on those who want to settle. Those coming to the UK to work, study or marry are required to demonstrate an appropriate level of English, and those wishing to remain permanently or seek British citizenship are required to demonstrate their knowledge of language and life within the UK (ibid.: 11).

In general, however, the strategy adopted a non-prescriptive approach, and did not provide any substantial detail as to how this would be achieved. For those migrants subject to the variety of family re-union visas, the last decade has seen an emphasis on policy

which has increasingly underlined the need for them to 'prove' their integration credentials with tougher language and citizenship tests, and reduced access to welfare provision and services. Despite such initiatives, Spencer (2011b: 5) argues that:

Family migrants have still not been identified as a target for integration, nor labour migrants or students. This may reflect an unspoken assumption that families, employers and education providers respectively are filling this void.

The absence of these categories of migrant in academic and policy literature, which many researchers comment on, means the veracity of such assumptions are hard to establish. However as Charsley and colleagues (2012: 1) note, "spouses form the largest single category of migrant settlement in the UK, but research and policy making on marriage-related migration to Britain provides incomplete coverage of the phenomenon".

Summary

As discussed above, to a large extent, policy remains focused on migration in general and as such attention upon specific groups rarely feature. As Gidley (2015) suggests in a recent blog post:

A more multi-dimensional picture of integration as it happens is vital for a more healthy integration debate, just as a more evidence-based picture of family migration and of competition in the labour market is vital for a more healthy debate on immigration restriction.

It is striking that compared to asylum seekers and refugees, the voices of Highly Skilled migrants and Family Joiners are comparatively infrequent in the literature on Third Country National migrants. Studies based on the first hand perspectives of such migrants constitute a very small proportion of the total. The overwhelming majority of policy briefings, journal articles and reports are largely summaries of statistical trends. The growth of more sophisticated population datasets has provided significant opportunities for in depth quantitative analyses of particular categories of migrants. However, such analysis largely involves examinations of statistical trends and data, and Office for National Statistics and Home Office publications, for example, are, unsurprisingly, largely statistical in nature (see, for example, Migration Statistics Quarterly Report and Home Office Occasional Reports Passim). There remains a limited number of qualitative analysis documenting the experiences of Third Country Nationals.

3. Research approach



Introduction

In order to help fill the gap in the literature, a qualitative approach, using semi-structured interviews, was designed in order to capture the experiences of Third Country Nationals in respect of their integration within the UK. The initial phase of the research included a comprehensive review of available datasets on Third Country Nationals in the UK and the Yorkshire and Humber region in particular in order to determine the sample frame for the research.

Sample

As the people who qualify as a Third Country National include a wide array of individuals it was necessary to take a pragmatic approach in order to say something meaningful about their settlement in the UK. Therefore, drawing on some of the major 'routes in' to the UK, the research team sought to engage with Third Country Nationals who fit within three specific groups: (1) Highly

Skilled Migrants; (2) Family Joiners; and (3) former asylum seekers who had been through the UK Home Office's Case Resolution Programme since 2007 (hereafter referred to as Case Resolution migrants). The inclusion criteria for respondents within these groups were as follows:

- **Highly Skilled Migrants (HSM)** who possessed Tier 2 work visas (or equivalent) and have arrived in the UK ideally within the last two years. Due to the analysis of the demographic profile within Yorkshire and the Humber, we particularly sought citizens of India, China, Philippines, South/South East Asian countries and West African nations;
- **Family Joiners (FJ)** who have arrived in the UK ideally within the last two years to join family members already residing in the UK. Due to the demographic profile within Yorkshire and the Humber, we sought individuals from South Asian countries (mainly Pakistani and Bangladeshi nationals); and

- **Case Resolution migrants (CR)** who were former asylum seekers now living in Yorkshire and Humber, whose cases were handled as part of the UK government's legacy framework to resolve outstanding applications from before March 2007.

An exhaustive approach to recruiting participants was undertaken during late 2014. A wide range of private, statutory, voluntary and community organisations were contacted, via phone and email, on multiple occasions where required. This was predominantly within the Yorkshire and the Humber region. Generally speaking, recruitment of respondents was challenging due to a number of reasons, in particular: (1) available timescales; (2) the relatively hidden nature of the population; and (3) general suspicion by gatekeeping agencies, and migrants themselves, of taking part in research projects looking at migration and settlement issues.

Methods

Fieldwork commenced in September 2014 and was completed in May 2015. A two-stage methodology was employed which combined semi-structured interviewing and, with a smaller sub-sample, interviews led by participant generated images.

A total of 52 individuals across all three groups were interviewed during the first round (September 2014 - February 2015) and a total of 34 were interviewed a second time (February 2015 - May 2015) with an additional 7 interviews conducted with people following the photo-survey element. Table 1 below details the breakdown of the sample by their participation in the three points of data collection:

Table 1: Number of respondents by migrant type engaged in interviews and photo element

Group	Interview 1	Interview 2	Photo element
HSM	13	6	4
FJ	30	21	1
CR	9	7	2
Total	52	34	7

From the 52 respondents, 41 were female and 11 were male. The countries of origin of respondents were diverse and included: Pakistan (22 respondents); India (7 respondents); Guinea (4 respondents); China (4 respondents); Indonesia (3 respondents); Cameroon (2 respondents); Russia (2 respondents); followed by

individual respondents from Afghanistan, Argentina, Bangladesh, Iran, Ivory Coast, Syria and Zimbabwe. One respondent declined to confirm his country of origin but instead reported that he was from Asia. A table is included in Appendix 1 which offers the breakdown of the sample in more detail.

Whilst the first interview looked at specifics of their settlement - that is, engagement with services and relations with local community members, for example - in the UK, the second set of interviews asked respondents to reflect on issues such as the concept of integration, their reflections on settlement and their aspirations. In addition, a cross section of interviewees was approached to participate in a photo survey element. This element involved asking people to document 'a day in your life', by taking pictures of the places, people or even objects that they considered to be important to them in the context of their settlement in the UK. A total of 7 people took part. These images formed the basis for a semi-structured interview which was respondent-led (Banks, 2007). All interviews were audio recorded for the purposes of verbatim transcription and took place in a range of venues including, community centres, respondents' homes and workplaces, and cafes. Where English language was an issue, an interpreter was present to help support both the respondent and interviewer. In a minority of instances, interviews were undertaken with two people simultaneously, this was a particular eventuality where respondents required some emotional support. As a token of appreciation for their time each interviewee was given a £10 shopping voucher upon completion of each interview they took part in.

The issues highlighted in this report are complex and the opinions represented diverse. The research therefore does not attempt to make definitive statements about the situation and views of all Third Country Nationals or indeed all Highly Skilled Migrants, Family Joiners and Case Resolution migrants. Such claims lie beyond the remit of qualitative research and would ignore the very real differences of opinion that often exist within communities. Rather, this is exploratory research which aims to provide contextualised understandings of key issues and concerns of migrants settling within a number of cities and towns within the North of England. This report, therefore, offers important grounded insights that are of wider relevance for all those interested in developing a deeper understanding about the contemporary settlement experiences of migrants within the UK.

Analysis and ethical issues

The qualitative data generated in the interviews were coded and thematically analysed by the research team using a QSR NVivo software package to aid storage and retrieval of data. An individual team member took a lead on particular core themes, and following initial analysis of these themes, analytical meetings were held by the research team to present this analysis to one another and seek feedback and comments. Themes were then further expanded and refined in an iterative process of continuous discussion, critique and collaboration.

The research team took ethical issues extremely seriously and were guided by a number of principles, namely: respecting the dignity, rights, welfare and safety of research participants; ensuring informed consent and voluntary participation; protecting anonymity; and doing no harm. The study was subject to the procedures required by the Ethical Approval Panel at the University of Salford, UK.

Conventions used in this report

Two conventions are followed in this report and these are worth elaborating to ensure clarity of understanding for the reader:

- ‘Quotes’ included from respondents are distinguished by being in italic type and usually inset. These were derived from audio recordings. Although we have attempted to ensure these are edited for clarity, the cited data also reflects the characteristics of everyday conversation; and
- Where quotes are used we have attributed them to individuals who took part in the interviews but coded to ensure we protect the anonymity of those who participated. For example HSM1 equates to the first Highly Skilled Migrant interviewed when the fieldwork was undertaken, or FJ6 equates to the sixth Family Joiner we spoke to. We have also added the gender and country of origin in order to help contextualise the speaker.

We use the terms Highly Skilled Migrant, Family Joiner migrants and Case Resolution migrants to reflect the abbreviated acronyms.

A photograph of a covered shopping arcade, likely the Victoria Arcade in Manchester. The arcade features a high, vaulted ceiling with a colorful stained glass design in shades of blue, red, orange, and yellow. The structure is supported by white columns and a network of white metal beams. The ground floor is lined with shops and has large arched windows. In the foreground, there are flower boxes filled with colorful flowers. A few people are walking through the arcade.

“

This city gives me a different identity, this city gives me a house...
this city gives me so many opportunities, because I was a victim of
domestic violence first, so I have gained so many things.

4. Belonging, home and integration



Introduction

The focus of this chapter is on Third Country Nationals' experiences of belonging, home and integration in the UK. In order to fully understand this, and to provide important contextual information, it is first necessary to explore their lives before migration. The focus then shifts to migrants' perceptions of the welcome they received on arrival to the UK, and the reasons for choosing particular residential locales. The concept of integration and what it means to the study participants is then unravelled, before notions of belonging and home are explored.

Migrants' lives before moving to the UK

Arguably all migration - whether economic, forced or for a different lifestyle - involves a combination of push and pull factors and the intention to improve one's quality of life in some way. For the Third Country Nationals in this study, the lives lived before migration had some bearing on the route of entry to the UK and also on their experiences once there. For example, Case Resolution migrants were often experiencing difficult, sometimes dangerous, circumstances in their country of origin, and this precipitated them leaving and their subsequent claims for asylum in the UK, as the following comment illustrates:

Yes, since 2003 I was politically involved in matters back home, which made me flee because there was instability back home (CR9, male, Guinea).

The majority of Case Resolution migrants in this study were educated, some to Higher Education level. Some participants were previously employed as teachers and in the fields of law and economics in their country of origin.

Of the Family Joiners, the majority were women, located in rural areas and undertaking domestic duties with their families, and not engaged in paid employment (although some were educated). Family Joiners from rural areas in the main depicted a highly restricted life characterised by poverty before migration, with very limited freedom and opportunities:

I was helping at home because when I lived in Pakistan it was a little bit strict, so that's why every time no going out...lots of time at home helping my mummy (FJ14A, female, Pakistan).

Restrictions could be imposed upon women by the filial family as suggested by the comments above, or if they were married, by the husband (for more on this see Chapter 7). Family Joiners also described cultural expectations of women and restrictions to their freedom:

In Pakistan...they force you to marry and they ...don't let you go work, and ladies are not safe there you know (FJ6, female, Pakistan).

India does not allow girls to do jobs...you're not allowed to go far out (FJ3, female, India).

However, several respondents - across the Family Joiner and Case Resolution groups - acknowledged the differences between rural and urban areas in their countries or origin, with city living being associated with enhanced freedom and less traditional cultural expectations imposed upon women:

In Pakistan...[there are] so many kinds of people over there living...some are advanced and educated, which they don't care about ... hijab - and this is okay - but many people, villagers, they just cover their faces, just ladies...they don't allow to go outside alone without men or husband and brother (FJ25, male, Pakistan).

Two female Family Joiners were from large cities and both were employed in high status professions (in academia) and their lives before migration were far less restricted than their rural counterparts, as the comment below suggests:

I'm from Islamabad; it's the capital of Pakistan. So, it's a very modern city, everything [that] I'm wearing over here [is] what I used to wear over there as well (FJ13, female, Pakistan).

Several Family Joiner and Case Resolution respondents talked about high levels of corruption and feeling unprotected by law enforcement agencies in their country of origin, as the quote below illustrates:

Yes, the police are really bad there, to be honest. Whoever gives them money, they go on to their side. Yes, they don't care who's telling the truth, who's lying; it's just more about the money (FJ9, female, Pakistan).

For Highly Skilled Migrants, their lives before migration differed from Case Resolution and Family Joiner migrants in several significant ways. In the main they came from more affluent families, lived in urban rather than rural areas, were not experiencing persecution or restrictions and were highly educated, irrespective of gender. Several came to the UK to study for postgraduate qualifications (masters and PhDs), others came to take up employment opportunities in a variety of fields, and some moved to the UK through being transferred by their employer. Highly Skilled Migrants talked about their lives before migration in terms of their educational and employment experiences and aspirations, as the following excerpt illustrates (for more on employment see Chapter 6):

I had just graduated from my first degree and then I did a few months internship and then came to the UK (HSM10, female, Indonesia).

Welcome received in the UK

The interpretation of the welcome received by Third Country Nationals to the UK in this study again varied across migration groups. Family Joiners did not talk about their welcome to the UK as such and were in different ways absorbed into their new extended families' lives, becoming familiar with the UK this way. However, some Family Joiners were disappointed to find that their lives once in the UK were as restricted as life in the country of origin (see Chapter 7). Significantly too, Family Joiners often arrived to the UK with limited English language skills. Highly Skilled Migrants appeared to have felt the 'most' welcome when they arrived to the UK as there were mechanisms in place to assist them, whether they arrived as students or as employees:

I used what's called an education agency back home and they helped me with accommodation, registering and everything and introduced me to other Indonesian students and the university (HSM10, female, Indonesia).

They helped me settle, explained everything. The university helped me with accommodation. The international society helped me to register and do all that stuff. And then my friends helped me too (HSM11, female, Indonesia).

I came and then two of my colleagues picked me up at the airport. The company arranged a hotel for me ... so everything was smooth (HSM13, female, China).

Yes, so the employer, so they provided some information for looking for housing, temporary housing, or a flat/apartment (HSM1, male, Asia).

The Highly Skilled Migrants also had high levels of English language proficiency.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Case Resolution migrants appeared to have experienced the most difficulties on arrival in the UK (as asylum seekers), and arguably needed the most support, given their previous circumstances, lack of social networks and ability to engage in the labour market, and often low levels of English language skill. Many Case Resolution migrants talked about how isolated they felt on arrival and how this affected them in terms of restriction:

I found myself like being left by myself, like basically nowhere, no one to help me out. Feeling abandoned, basically...It took me a while, for my first I would say, six months, up to a year I felt really, really secluded (CR2, male, Guinea).

No, when I arrive in England, believe me, we do not have a social worker. We go nowhere; we don't do anything (CR4, female, Cameroon).

Choosing a place to live in the UK

Initially, all the Family Joiners moved to the locale where their spouse and extended family were established and already lived, as the quote below illustrates:

Because I've got family in [name of place]. My husband's brother and sister, they are [there], so that's why we decided to live [here] (FJ19, female, Guinea).

Over time however, a number of Family Joiners left their spouse (due to domestic abuse, as explored in Chapter 7) and had to move away for safety reasons. Reasons for

settling in the new area were largely influenced by available support services and by assistance from law enforcement authorities, as the comment below indicates:

So, when I came to [name of place] ... a lady, she was a support worker over there, she suggested me to go [there], 'People are good over there, you will feel good' (FJ13, female, Pakistan).

For Case Resolution migrants, the ability to exercise choice about where to live was also circumscribed, and the reasons for living somewhere often dictated by dispersal policy:

I claim asylum in the airport, at Heathrow. And then we spent that night there. The following day they took us to [a hotel] in London, spend one night, the following day, early morning they took us to [name of place]. So mainly I claim asylum and they send me to [name of place] (CR9, male, Guinea).

For Highly Skilled Migrants, the main reasons for choosing an area to live in were related to place of study or employment:

This is a global company and it has offices in different places. So in the [name of place] office, they needed a software tester so they sent this requirement global-wide, and so I've taken this chance (HSM13, female, China).

This could also be compounded by the presence of established networks, either on a personal level or more broadly in terms of community support:

Okay, so why the UK is, to be honest with you, my boyfriend then was studying or working here in [name of place], so we decided that we'll be together and I could come here and study (HSM12, female, India).

It's a home of the South Asian community, and I found some cultural support as well. And a couple of my friends and some relatives who are there (HSM2, male, Pakistan).

For Family Joiners, initially family and social networks were important factors influencing where they lived. However, for those who left their spouses as a result of domestic abuse, moving to the new area was shaped by the existence of culturally (and linguistically) appropriate support services and police interventions. In this way, Family Joiners were able to exercise a very limited amount of choice over where they lived. Similarly, Case Resolution migrants had also been constrained in terms of the degree to which they could choose a residential locale since this was shaped by their experience of the wider Home Office dispersal policy for asylum seekers.

The meaning of 'integration'

In the first round of interviews, participants in the study talked about their experiences of integration in the UK and their involvement with their own communities/ethnic group and across ethnic groups since they arrived (see Chapter 5 for discussion of these issues). In the second round of interviews we asked explicitly what people understood by the concept 'integration', given its prominence in policy and its centrality to the study as a whole. Again, responses across migration groups varied somewhat, with Case Resolution migrants in particular appearing to have a detailed and considered take on what integration meant:

For me, integration ... is because when you arrive in England, you have to have a state to open the door for the work, for everything but, for me, integration from the beginning before this day, before they help you, you have to put in your mind I need to be, being like I have to work, I have to learn, I have to go to school (CR4, female, Cameroon).

This heightened understanding of integration by Case Resolution migrants could be due to their experiences with the asylum and citizenship process. For this category of migrant, integration meant speaking English, being educated, participating in British social life, being able to work, mixing with other ethnic groups, adapting to and adopting British 'values', taking responsibility for oneself and making contributions as citizens:

My friend [name], he says you can't regroup the village in the city, like you can't come from let's say Guinea and then just hang out with Guinean people in the UK, you can't integrate with that kind of mentality, you can't go forward with that. So, you have to mix with the people and kind of embrace the whole thing (CR1, female, Guinea).

I would say it's the way people interact within themselves and with others. Whenever you say integration, it's not like us versus others... So the way you interact within your community and the way you see other communities and interact with them. That's how I understand integration (CR2, male, Guinea).

Well, it means to me, integration, by that first of all to speak the English language as you are living in England because before anything else you have to be able to communicate with people in order to get any kind of help. So integration is what I mean and then to know the values of the country, to know the people and then, well, you take it from there (CR9, male, Guinea).

You're supposed to pay your tax, you're supposed to pay your bills (CR5, female, Cameroon).

Highly Skilled Migrants also demonstrated an understanding of the concept of integration:

Integration means to be a part of where you are, to adjust well, to be accepting, to be tolerant, yes (HSM12, female, India).

When asked whether he felt integrated or wanted to integrate, one Highly Skilled Migrant responded:

Yes, to both questions. I think especially I feel it a lot at work because I am now in a semi-management role so it's obvious that I am going to get different treatment. I got to where I am now because of hard work as well, similar to other people. So there's no discrimination or anything like that...So I feel very positive at work (HSM10, female, Indonesia).

For Highly Skilled Migrants, being employed in an occupation in which they were highly qualified and skilled, could lead to feeling integrated, particularly if they felt they could progress on merit.

Family Joiners appeared to be less sure about what integration meant, for many it was an unfamiliar and therefore a meaningless concept. However, for those who were aware of the concept, English language skills and employment also featured, as the excerpt below illustrates:

It's probably [being able to speak] English and having a good job (FJ11, female, Pakistan).

The barriers to integration were identified primarily as not being able to speak English:

I can't speak fluent English...If you can't really speak fluently then that is one of the barriers [to integration] (FJ26, female, India).

Religion was also highlighted as a potential barrier to integration, although one which was possible to overcome:

Obviously with some people, religion may come as a barrier. I would say that we should be able to live and meet everybody in a good manner (FJ14A, female, Pakistan).

One respondent gave an example of religious teaching as a way to embrace the UK and overcome any barriers to integrating, while another talked about the need for migrants to accept British culture and educate their children in this manner to promote integration:

The message from the community leaders, it is a part of your faith to love the country in which you live. So you have a lot of blessing by the country. They are favouring us, and definitely you have to return that in whatever you can do (FJ27, female, Afghanistan).

Now I'm in this country so I have to live like their people live, they are living their life we have to accept their lifestyle, their general religion. If they can accept us, so we have to accept the religion, the culture, the festival and everything... You have to participate. I think if we change our children's thinking, like we will change the company or whole community so we can change their mind if we tell our children (FJ19, female, Guinea).

Belonging and home

Research participants talked about the UK as being home for them and also highlighted the ambivalence which characterises being 'from' one place and 'of' another:

Because I wasn't born here, but I've lived here so long, you do feel like, you kind of feel like you belong and not belong, if that makes sense (HSM12, female, India).

Some respondents initially found being away from and missing family in their country of origin an obstacle to settling and feeling at home in the UK, although for many this changed over time:

I have actually been able to go back [to country of origin], yes in March. I found that quite interesting because I felt being here for long and then kind of at some point I felt like lost... not like I don't know where I'm coming from or stuff, but lost touch with my culture a little bit. So going there brought everything, you know I feel like I'm very, very well-balanced now (CR1, female, Guinea).

For some, belonging and feeling at home was fostered through having British citizenship:

Wherever I go, the Lake District or Yorkshire or London or Staffordshire, I feel that that's my country now... (CR6, female, Russia).

While for others, such feelings arose through close social networks and ties through work:

Basically, my best friends here are some of my work colleagues, and it gives me sense of like home, family... I'm kind of settled here (HSM4, female, Iran).

Employment also provided security and integration for Highly Skilled Migrants:

You know when you go to conferences and things like that sometimes you forget that you look a bit different compared to the others when there are no other Asians or something like that, but they don't treat people badly so actually you feel no there is no problem. You don't feel like you are in a foreign country (HSM10, female, Indonesia).

A sense of belonging and feeling of being at home was generated for some migrants, Family Joiners in particular who had experienced domestic violence and abuse from their husbands and families, through the help and support they were given by organisations and services:

I love this country, I love the UK ... This city gave me a different identity, lots of opportunities. I met so many people over here. The city gave me so much - a different life, new life you can say. So, ... I'm making an emotional attachment with the city as well (FJ13, female, Pakistan).

Key points

This chapter raised a number of key issues in relation to how Third Country National respondents across differing groups understood their experiences and lives in terms of belonging and integration. A summary of these issues are as follows:

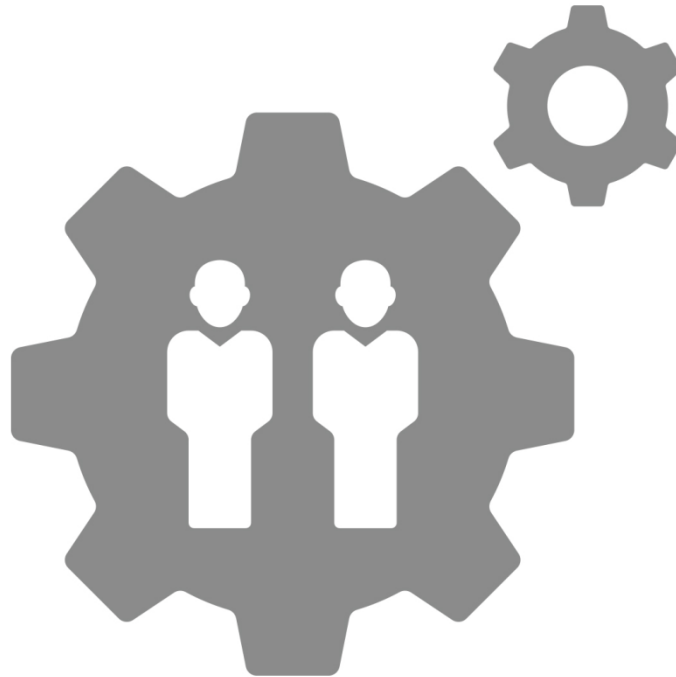
- For all groups of migrant, whether Highly Skilled, Family Joiners or Case Resolution, moving to the UK involved push and pull factors and hopes to improve quality of life;
- The lives lived before migration had some bearing on the route of entry to the UK and also on migrants' experiences once there;
- Highly Skilled Migrants were able to exercise the most autonomy once in the UK, in terms of where they chose to live and the freedoms associated with being employed/studying, while Case Resolution migrants experienced significant difficulties on arrival and needed support given their previous circumstances;
- The Case Resolution migrants appeared to have a nuanced understanding of the concept 'integration', strongly associating this with citizenship and British values, possibly due to their experiences of the asylum process; and
- All Third Country Nationals were positive about the UK and to varying degrees described it as 'home'. The majority planned to stay indefinitely.



“

Chinese people also drink a lot of teas but most of them are green teas even though the red tea, you call it black tea, we don't put milk into it. Yes, the British people spill some milk into it and you just brew tea for a couple of minutes like three to five minutes and then they pour the tea out of it but Chinese people, so brew, sink the tea into the teapot or the cup in the whole time. Quite different. Here, the teahouse is quite casual but in China, it's something quite traditional and serious...There are so many steps you have to follow and, finally, you can have a small cup of tea.

5. Social relations



Introduction

Within existing research, very little attention has been given to looking at how new migrants, particularly Third Country Nationals, enact their informal and everyday relations within the communities they are joining, and also how they manage relationships with networks in countries of origin. A key aim of the study was to uncover such details of 'lives lived'. By asking about their daily interactions, it was hoped that we would be able to explore the potentially complex and diverse relationships that may exist between the respondents and those they live and work alongside. Three key themes emerged from the discussions with respondents: the first surrounded the contact respondents had with members of their particular diaspora; the second focused on the social relations migrants had with people from other backgrounds, where such interactions took place and the role these were seen to play in the integration process; finally, a set of interesting issues were raised around the enduring presence of family in the lives of Third Country Nationals living in the UK.

Contact with diaspora

A number of people reported having positive interactions with people who had also arrived in the UK from the same country of origin. Such relationships were often discussed in terms of providing a sense of security and belonging through association with people from the same ethnic/national background:

I love to see the persons from my country because it helps me to think about my culture (CR5, female, Cameroon).

When you meet you talk a lot of things, of course some common things you know, maybe back home people that they used to know or places that they used to know and then you refresh this memory, which makes you feel good (CR9, male, Guinea).

In the circumstances where such people were family members or old friends, networks with people from the same ethnic/national background appeared to provide migrants with a crucial safety net when they first arrived in the UK, or when they needed help:

Yes, so I had this friend of mine, we'd gone to the same high school, now she lives in France, like she's got double nationality and French and Guinean. So she was living here so she asked me to come down to Leeds and then you know, I would be able to work or get on with it, that's right (CR1, female, Guinea).

Actually, my auntie, she was living in London. So in the first instance I came to their house. From there, I adopted a culture with her. I lived with them for about two months, so to do shopping over here, she taught me about shopping and all of those things over here so that it becomes very comfortable for me to be living on my own in Sheffield, so that sort of thing (HSM7, male, Pakistan).

Actually, I left him at that time, I went to London. One of my aunts, she lived in London and I thought, she must be over there but she was not, she went to Pakistan. So, I called one of my friends, she lived in [name of place]. She came to [name of station] and she picked me up from there. I went to her place and then we went to the police station (FJ13, female, Pakistan).

Perhaps surprisingly, however, very few respondents reported actually seeking out social networks with members of their country of origin. Indeed, some respondents indicated that they actively avoided contact with those who had come from their home country or had shared language in common. The comments from below reflect the views of some Highly Skilled Migrants regarding the need to look beyond one's own ethnic/national group for social contact since they were all keen to engage and make friends with a wide range of people:

I never wanted to go on trying to find a group of Argentineans or a group of Latin American people, and only staying with them and not communicating with the rest ... if I'm living here I want to be like the people here ... so the only way that I can do that is by integrating (HSM6, female, Argentina).

I just want to make friends with different people (HSM13, female, China).

They're a kind of close-minded society and when you go the gossip starts and I didn't want there to be any gossip around me, so that's why I kept my distance. Later on, when I joined, maybe two or three years later I decided, okay, I like only these types of events, so I only attend those (HSM4, female, Iran).

Similarly, for some Family Joiners, being among people from the same country of origin could be problematic, since this could feel intrusive. This was a strong theme within some of the interviews with Family Joiners from South Asian communities. Many were living with other people from India and Pakistan but they aspired to living in more multi-cultural areas that were more inclusive.

The quote from FJ23 below is illustrative of many other examples across the sample:

[The area I live in] is multicultural, but I don't like it because of that. I prefer to live in a predominantly white area because at least they just look at you, smile at you and just leave you to your own business. They don't trouble you, but if I live in a more Asian area they'll trouble you. They won't even smile at you, so I prefer to live in a more non-Pakistani/Asian area (FJ23, female, Pakistan).

Social relations across ethnic groups

When asked about the levels and types of social relations across ethnic groups, respondents from all migration categories indicated that they had friends, colleagues, neighbours and acquaintances from a range of ethnic backgrounds. Highly Skilled Migrants all had the opportunity to engage and socialise with people from other ethnic groups, primarily through the workplace, and some made close and enduring friendships through their work:

Well yes, because the kind of company I work for, I mean we've got people from all over the world in a small office, we have about like 20-odd nationalities...so, yes, it's a very diverse culture and I treat a lot of them as my friends, we go out and everything (HSM12, female, India).

There are like three of us that, - we are very, very close, both at work and outside work, - and we go and have a drink, and I think having drinks is a part of like not only release the stress and we can get everything out of the system, but it's an occasion that we can catch up with each other, we can talk, and again I think it's another part of integration (HSM4, female, Iran).

The positive benefits of having networks with a range of ethnic groups and people from different backgrounds was recognised by all research participants since, as the respondent below suggests, a certain insularity emerges if there are few relationships across groups:

If you stay within your community you cannot take anything positive from the others. All the time being negative, criticise, criticise. You come in the country, I'm not saying don't approach your community, but try to open your hand and try and open your heart to other cultures as well (CR2, male, Guinea).

As well as in the work place, which was common for Highly Skilled Migrants but also to a lesser extent with Case Resolution migrants who were working, positive social relations across ethnic or national groups were embedded in the context of the neighbourhood. Here a range of relationships were described, from the cordial

to the meaningful, embracing a sense of 'sharedness', as CR4 describes in relations to the relationships between her children:

We are neighbours and we are so friendly. At the moment, my neighbour at the front, on the 29th my children are going to sleep over there and her sons come into my home. They are English, but they are so friendly (CR4, female, Cameroon).

Another Case Resolution migrant provided an example which illustrates how people were content with the mundane relationships in their residential locale:

... it's really, really, really quiet. A really quiet neighbourhood, mostly White and stuff. I like it because it's really, really peaceful and people don't trouble you at all...we get on great. [Laughs] I live in a block of six flats; so three downstairs and three upstairs. So yes, most of them apart from one grumpy old lady, but yes, I get on great with them yes (CR1, female, Guinea).

Out of the three migrant groups involved in this research it was Highly Skilled Migrants who reported least contact with people in their local areas which tended to be mostly attributable to working long hours:

We rarely see them because we leave very early and we are back quite late, but they are nice people (HSM6, female, Argentina).

All respondents acknowledged - and celebrated in the main - that the UK is a multicultural country, home to a wide range of people:

Yes, I meet different kinds of people: Sikh, Muslim, Hindu. And all types of people (FJ19, female, Guinea).

It's multi [cultural] Black people, Chinese people, Pakistani, English, Iraqi people. It's multi, it's nice. All the people are nice. Afghanistan, Pakistan as well (FJ3, female, India).

I think [name of place] is quite a multicultural place, so that's a good thing. I think a lot of people that do come here maybe tend to be more involved within their local communities. Like they come and maybe say an Asian person comes and straightaway gets into an Asian community, which is great, but maybe it's better to be in more multicultural places, but I don't know if there's anything the council can do about it or something like that. In general, if there's more like mixing around, it might help different cultures get more integrated (HSM12, female, India).

In the main, Third Country Nationals indicated that they felt little if any discrimination from the host population; there were notably few incidences of harassment or pejorative practices on the basis of their ethnicity, faith or migrant status. Although some did acknowledge that not everyone in the UK was positive about immigration:

I think I've got a sense that some people don't like foreigners coming here now but some people are very warm, very welcoming (HSM11, female, Indonesia).

Family Joiners, particularly those extricated from acutely restricted personal situations, in particular expressed appreciation of the welcome they received from the host population and also of available support services:

British people are very friendly, very good and they are very cooperative. Like if you try to speak English, even if it's like a broken English, they will listen to our conversation very calmly and carefully and they will not kind of like put you off (FJ6, female, Pakistan).

Relationships with family

The relationships respondents had with their family differed across the sample. At the most extreme and negative end, a particular section of the sample of Family Joiners had experienced traumatic abuse from their new spouse and their new extended family. Such relationships not only resulted in physical and psychological abuse but also inhibited the respondent's ability to get to know their new environment, as they were often prevented from leaving the family home or immediate vicinity (see Chapters 7 and 8 for more detail). However, there were a similar number of occasions where their new spouse and family had performed vital functions in their process of integration into the new surroundings:

Yes, because my family was very good. They are very supportive my in-laws so they can always have one person with me all the time for the first six months. So in the supermarket or bank or anything, so many people face many problems but I haven't (FJ18, female, Pakistan).

My sister-in-law and my brother-in-law, they are very kind, and they put everything in my house, and they decorated and everything. My husband, he told me how to go to the surgery and how to say something. When we went first time to a surgery, he said you can understand, you have to do by your own. You have to make your appointment and you have to do everything for yourself. And this is the school, and you can go by yourself. It was not easy. And I started my English classes as well (FJ19, female, Guinea).

On some occasions having members of their extended families (like uncles, aunts and cousins, for example) was particularly useful especially in the early stages of settling in the UK but also in challenging times:

Socially I can say it was my uncle and his wife because they used to come and pick me up on a Friday and drop me again on a Monday morning and because they have got kids it was so good to go with them to different places (HSM4, female, Iran).

Leaving the filial family behind was, for some, an important significant component of their experience of migration. This was often spoken about as a sense of loss which was upsetting for many people we spoke to. This was particularly the case for Family Joiners whose experience often involved significant personal changes (such as marriage), some traumatic experiences (such as abuse) and also potentially a lack of means to either return to their country to visit family members, or the ability to maintain regular contact via phone or social media. The following excerpts illustrate the effects of leaving their family behind:

At first it was very difficult, very, very difficult. Every night I used to cry; every night. Obviously I was missing my family, I was missing my parents, everybody. I have nobody over here, nobody. Every night I used to cry, thinking how was I going to manage this? At first it was very difficult but slowly and gradually you can say that time teaches you a lot. Time heals as well, so slow and gradually - now I'm used to it. Now I'm used to it. So, even now, so many times I miss my family, like every time when I talk to my mum I just have tears in my eyes, that obviously I want to see her, how she is and everything. But slowly and gradually, now I'm used to it (FJ13, female, Pakistan).

I feel scared about my family, because I miss my family too much. I came alone here with my husband, and then I missed my family too much (FJ21, female, Pakistan).

In contrast to the experience of Family Joiners, for Highly Skilled Migrants and some Case Resolution respondents, social media was identified as playing a role in their lives by helping to facilitate continuing relationships with those left in their country of origin or elsewhere. Websites such as Facebook were used as well as applications such as Skype:

Yes, I have actually been able to go back, yes in March. I found that quite interesting because I felt being here for long and then kind of at some point I felt like lost, I don't know if that makes sense. Not like I don't know where I'm coming from or stuff, but lost touch with my culture a little bit. So going there brought everything, you know I feel like I'm very, very well-balanced now and it actually gave me the boost to go back to study the first year, my education. Yes, I am in regular contact with my mum. I kind of showed her how to use Skype and all those things. So yes, we do, we are in contact on a regular basis (CR1, female, Guinea).

Yes, mostly my wife, I've got regular contact with her. We talk through Skype, we talk through Facebook, whatever, telephone, email, everything (CR9, male, Guinea).

Yes, Skype mainly. I'll just phone my mum and my sister through Skype, and it makes it easier (HSM6, female, Argentina).

Yes, I am always in touch to my family via Skype and WhatsApp. It's quite easy, no problem here (HSM8, female, Pakistan).

For others this was still an area that was unfamiliar to them, but was something they hoped to use in due course:

Yes. I need somebody to help me to use a computer. I don't know how to use the computer. I see the computer and I know I need to do it but I don't know how. The children are learning how to do it, but not I (CR5, female, Cameroon).

Key points

This chapter raised a number of key issues in relation to the nature of social relations between Third Country National respondents and members of the local communities, their families and members of other ethnic groups. A summary of these issues are as follows:

- Contact with diaspora communities was minimal. Most people preferred to develop relationships with people outside of their national or ethnic group. However, diaspora played a key role for some in the initial stages of settlement and when migrants faced times of particular vulnerability;
- Family Joiners, embedded in extended family networks, often found themselves in restrictive circumstances; many experienced domestic abuse and bullying by their spouses' family. They were ultimately able to exercise freedom by leaving their spouse with the support of the police and other services;
- All groups of migrant were keen to integrate with the host population and with other ethnic groups;
- Third Country Nationals tended to describe the UK as providing a welcoming environment, and reported very few incidents of harassment or discrimination; and
- Maintaining relationships with family were key issues for Third Country Nationals. Some Case Resolution migrants and Family Joiners talked about the sense of loss they had experienced by leaving their family. Highly Skilled Migrants were more able to visit their country of origin to see their families as well as use social media to keep in touch.

6. Paid and unpaid work: experiences and aspirations



Introduction

In this chapter the paid and unpaid work experiences and aspirations of Third Country Nationals across the three migrant groups are discussed. Across all these groups, employment was identified as a central issue: Highly Skilled Migrants often came to the UK to pursue professional careers; Family Joiners expressed the desire to secure paid work as soon as they were able; and the Case Resolution migrants, who initially were not permitted to work, were now in a position to engage in employment. Within employment three themes emerged from the interviews: (1) the central role paid work had in peoples' lives; (2) the routes into work; and (3) the obstacles experienced by respondents in securing paid work opportunities. The chapter concludes with an overview of the aspirations and expectations of respondents towards paid and unpaid work.

Importance of paid work

This research found that employment is very important to all three groups of Third Country Nationals interviewed. Family Joiners mostly saw it as a route to independence, the Case Resolution migrants wished to pursue their careers in the UK as their home country was not safe, whilst Highly Skilled Migrants entered the country to study for higher qualifications or for work reasons:

I'm on a long-term assignment here, so my company sent me here. I'm a software quality engineer. My previous project was boring, so I was looking for a new chance, and apart from that I can experience a different style (HSM13, female, China).

Because my background is in engineering and I was interested in manufacturing and then the UK is quite popular with that sort of stuff. So I came to Wolverhampton to do my Masters and then moved to Leeds for work in manufacturing. I was lucky with career progression and now I'm planning to do a PhD and I'm thinking of lecturing. My career progressed quite well within this company. I'm a manager now (HSM10, female, Indonesia).

It is evident that many of the respondents across the three groups, regardless of their route into the country, felt that employment was vital to their integration and settlement. For the majority of the Family Joiners and Case Resolution migrants, paid work symbolised independence and stability and it meant that they would be able to look after themselves without being reliant on anyone else or the welfare state:

No, I want work when my English is good a little bit, because now some people don't understand my English. It's hard. I'd like a job. I want, I don't want to bother another person. I don't want the jobcentre. Now it's my problem because I don't have English. Maybe next year I try for a job. My divorce finishes, I apply for a home, and then I do work. I do job and learn driving, maybe just to pass and apply for UK as well. Then I stand up on my feet and make a nice life (FJ3, female, India).

The thing that attracted me the most was like from a very young age, you would be able to work and make money, be independent and that's what I always wanted (CR1, female, Guinea).

Some respondents, particularly Case Resolution migrants and Family Joiners, felt strongly about being able to 'give back' and making contributions perhaps in return for the support they received in the UK. As the quotation below suggests, they perceived paid work to be a route to independence:

I need a job. Yes, I need a job, to work and to take care by myself because I think I don't take care of myself. I need to work. I need to be independent, yes. (...) You're supposed to work to improve yourself for tomorrow to help other people, yes (CR5, female, Cameroon).

For some, like CR5 below, work was regarded as a meaningful activity which could foster the feeling of having a purpose which then contributes to well-being:

Yes. I would like to get involved in working. If you're working you're happy you go out... So now I'm not happy. I see my son and he's working and he's happy. He is doing a good thing. I too need to do the same. (...) I need to improve my English, reading, writing and then working. I have in my mind to improve that. After I improve my English, I will find myself a good job (CR5, female, Cameroon).

It was found that many respondents perceived paid work to be a route to integration. Participants saw it as a way to improve themselves and learn about British culture. At the same time migrants perceived work as an opportunity to develop social networks which ultimately would increase the feeling of being 'at home' in the UK. Whilst some felt they needed to work on their English before undertaking paid work, others thought of work as an opportunity to improve their language skills. Employment, in the long run, was considered as a way to increase confidence levels:

Yes, I do want to change my future. I want to work, have my own place because I'm living in shared accommodation, have a house, have some money, yes so my ex in-laws would find out that I'm actually living stable rather than I'm crumbled and gone back home. (...) Three years I worked as a beautician in India. I wanted to actually carry on with that, but not given opportunities (FJ12, female, Pakistan).

Additionally, Case Resolution migrants who had been through the asylum system expressed their wish to secure paid employment in order to be able to bring their other family members to the UK. Thus, work was also a route to family reunion:

I did a few interviews where I was thinking that I did very well but every time the reply wasn't always, I mean they give you a positive response. So, finding a job, that one is a major problem. So, I'm planning to get my wife over in order to settle. Job comes first and then after that, if I've got the job I will try my best in order to get my wife over in order to settle (CR9, male, Guinea).

For many of the respondents, employment seemed to be beneficial for the obvious financial reasons on the one hand, and social reasons on the other. Several respondents talked of making friends through work, developing their social networks and improving their social life which resulted in them feeling more 'at home' in the UK:

I mix with my colleagues from work (CR1, female, Guinea).

When I'm socialising it's basically people from work. My friends are my work colleagues. My family here are my workmates... (HSM4, female, Iran).

Some respondents perceived the UK to be more equal with regards to work opportunities for men and women:

They want to all work. In my country ladies sit at home and just men go for work, not here. All people are becoming independent so I like it. That's why I like it here. Everyone has the chance to go outside and work (FJ18, female, Pakistan).

For Highly Skilled Migrants, paid work and the employer seemed to play a vital role with regard to migrants' integration. The interviewees talked of how helpful their employers had been in assisting them with settling in the UK. Employers were often the first people that they went to for advice, for instance:

I think a big part of my integration, and maybe a big part of my life now, is my work, and the people I work with, and they're kind of my family here; that's why it's very, very important for me. Basically, my best friends here are some of my work colleagues, and it gives me sense of like home, family. Also whenever I have an issue, no matter what type of issue, I've always found a solution here at work. Either my colleagues help me out, or basically the university opens a door (HSM4, female, Iran).

Routes into employment

In addition to those Highly Skilled Migrant respondents whose settlement in the UK was contingent on securing employment, a number of Family Joiner and Case Resolution respondents recognised the value of unpaid work as a way to improve their English language skills and gain work experience prior to securing paid employment. The latter was seen as particularly important as several respondents were required to be able to show work experience from the UK in order to secure a position in line with their education from their country of origin. Others were at the start of their working lives and needed to gain experience:

I've got a good relationship with my mum. My mum is very supportive. She's very supportive and told me that, 'Go and get some voluntary work. Work in shops voluntarily just at the local superstore. Just go there. Stack shelves, go on the till, speak to customers and improve your outlook on life'. That's how I'm doing to gain skills to get a job (FJ2, female, Pakistan).

For others unpaid work allowed respondents to develop social networks, foster feelings of belonging as well as help develop self-esteem. This latter issue seemed to be particularly important to those who had formally been asylum seekers:

The main thing for me, and then the other thing is having, I don't know, a social life. It could be like work, it could be volunteering, it could be anything, just to know what goes on around you and being sociable with your community kind of thing (CR1, female, Guinea).

Some respondents recognised that voluntary opportunities would also eliminate gaps in employment which could be seen negatively by potential employers:

Because this voluntary [work] gives you an opportunity...to look, advise your case and language because when you need to renew, even though renew, when they need to give you this, they will ask you first thing, 'What do you do in England in the past, since you come to now?' (CR4, female, Cameroon).

However, as some participants found out, unpaid work could be as difficult to secure as paid work. One of the Highly Skilled Migrant respondents, a qualified GP, experienced some difficulty in applying for unpaid positions:

Initially, I tried for unpaid work, but the dilemma was, wherever I went they refused even unpaid work. Everyone was saying, 'You are overqualified!' [Laughs] And if I went to some GP's surgery, they said, 'We cannot let you work'. (...) At that time, to find my clinical attachment, which was unpaid, I had to contact too many people, to request that and send my CVs, and after too much effort, I just found two clinical attachments, which were unpaid, obviously. But to get that unpaid work, I had to really struggle a lot as well (HSM2, male, Pakistan).

Obstacles to employment

Mostly Family Joiners and Case Resolution migrants referred to their limited English as the factor that impeded them from working. Many perceived themselves to be in a disadvantaged position due to the fact that they are foreign and thus need to undergo further training in order to secure a decent job. The respondent below assumed that his immigration status could be negatively perceived and influence his employment opportunities:

Even though I obtained, like, permission for work in a couple of years, I think, and tried to apply for different jobs, but I wasn't successful. Though I had good feedback, but kind of wasn't successful in being employed. So that was the first time when I started being suspicious that maybe the immigration case, that's what put people off employing me (CR7, male, Russia).

Other Case Resolution migrants seemed to be frustrated about having had to wait for a considerable amount of time to be able to work:

Yes, through work here because yes, even myself now I want to even start and I realised I've been told in a way that I'm not going to be helped to start, so for me, when I came here, I was 28. I have now wasted more than ten years not doing anything, not improving my life. When I want to improve now, it seems like all the doors are shut again, so I've not been working. I wonder, how am I going to pay now? (CR8, female, Zimbabwe).

The majority of Family Joiners, as acknowledged above, wished to work but due to childcare responsibilities they were unable to search for or secure a job. For some this was impeding their opportunities, for others they were waiting until their children were older:

When my baby becomes [older] - then I would like to do a job (FJ20, female, India).

Yes, I would like that when the kids are a bit older and my husband could look after them, yes I would like to work (FJ22, female, Pakistan).

Other participants talked of a difficult situation in the paid labour market and how frustrating it was to search for and not be able to secure a desired position despite the fact that they were highly skilled and underwent appropriate training in the UK in order for their qualifications to be recognised here:

I found it a bit frustrating. Because that was high time for international medical graduates to quit the UK, because they were not finding jobs. In 2005, a few doctors even committed suicide as well, just because of lack of jobs and opportunities (...) I had some idea that I could work, you know, somewhere in GPs' surgeries or somewhere in hospitals, just to get an idea how the system works while working on my exams. But I think that was, again, you know, only with luck - you know, some of the doctors I knew managed to get these type of roles in other cities, but I could not get anything (HSM2, male, Pakistan).

Whilst a number of respondents claimed they had no preference as to what type of work they would like to secure, it was evident that some respondents - mostly Case Resolution migrants - were rather anxious that the skills and qualifications acquired in their countries of origin may be lost in the UK:

Yes, I did have a career in economics, yes, finals I did. I didn't achieve everything there but I did two years at uni and then due to the political instability I left. As I pointed it out at the beginning saying that most of us come here with skills but if they don't believe that we can do something it will be very, very hard to get a job and the more you stay out there, the more you keep forgetting your knowledge, above all your skills and everything. So, you might find some people here from back home, well experienced but they stay here for many years and they lose all their skills (CR9, male, Guinea).

At the same time, Case Resolution migrants (and some well-educated Family Joiners) seemed to be aware of the fact that they may need to attend some further courses or training in order for their education to be applicable to the new setting in the UK. However, this was not straightforward as some non-UK qualifications are not easily transferable, as explained by one respondent below:

One company, they were a very good firm. I liked that one, and they called me, I went to a face-to-face interview as well with the technical team. They asked me what local education you have, for technical, because you have different requirements for technical departments. So I could not find guidance from anyone from here. There is UK NARIC in London. I just showed it to them, they can advise on my education in England, qualifications in Pakistan. So I have their letter as well for these things, but still I am lacking in these things, what further education or short courses should I have before I work in the local systems, because I am an engineer by profession in industrial electronics. So I worked for seven years in Pakistan and the last seven years in Bahrain. I worked with a US company over there, but here in the UK you definitely have different criteria and they have different rules and regulations, but this is information that I am still lacking (FJ29, male, Pakistan).

An important factor that seemed to prevent some migrants, particularly Family Joiners and some Case Resolution migrants, from looking for a job was a lack of confidence. This was often related to limited, or what they perceived to be inadequate, English language proficiency. Several respondents wished to work on these skills first in order to increase their chances of securing a job. The quote below from FJ19 is illustrative of many such respondents:

Yes, I would like to work as a teaching assistant, so I have to practice my English. Yes, I will definitely start my job when I finish my course, when I feel more confident (FJ19, female, Guinea).

Employment aspirations and expectations

The majority of the Highly Skilled Migrants can be seen to have been proactive in their decision-making regarding their migration. Most respondents had researched potential opportunities in the UK and other countries before arriving. They actively sought opportunities and experience that would increase their employability, as the following respondent illustrates:

I came with the mind that in Iran if you have a qualification from a prestigious country like the UK or America or Australia you've got much better job opportunities. So, that one was the first plan but then when they offered me the job, I got the confidence, okay, I may be good enough to work here. I like it and, again, it's basically because of the training opportunities I get here, I won't get them in Iran (HSM4, female, Iran).

Many of the Highly Skilled Migrants originally came to the UK as students but then either remained after finishing their degrees or returned to work after gaining some work experience in other countries:

I did my Masters at Glasgow University and then moved to [name of city] to work, the job was here and I had some friends here too. I wanted to stay to gain some experience. First I want to gain more experience and qualifications and then we'll see (HSM11, female, Indonesia)

Okay, so I'm an academic so before working in [name of city] I was studying in the UK as well, in Cambridge. Then I moved somewhere to do some research, my PhD, and then I tried to find academic positions. One of the positions that was open at the time was in [name of city]. So I applied, I got an interview, after the interview I got the offer, and after some consideration I decided to come. Yes, I will give it a try for a couple of years. I want to see how my career develops over these five years (HSM1, male, Asia).

I did my MA for a year and then I was offered a job but at that time we had the category of post-study work, so for two years I was on a post-study work visa, working at the university and in a language school. Then I just switched my visa to a Tier 2 visa and that's how I ended up staying here (HSM4, female, Iran).

Many respondents, across all three groups, had clear plans with regards to their professional careers and their migration to the UK was often seen as central to realising these goals:

Yes, I was working in a school. Teacher of English and Spanish in a secondary school. But as for professional kind of identity, I imagined myself to re-qualify here as a teacher and continue in this way (CR7, male, Russia).

I was a lecturer in college, I was teaching to students. I want to work as a science teacher (FJ26, female, India).

Key points

This chapter raised a number of key issues in relation to the role paid and unpaid work had in the lives of Third Country National respondents. A summary of these issues are as follows:

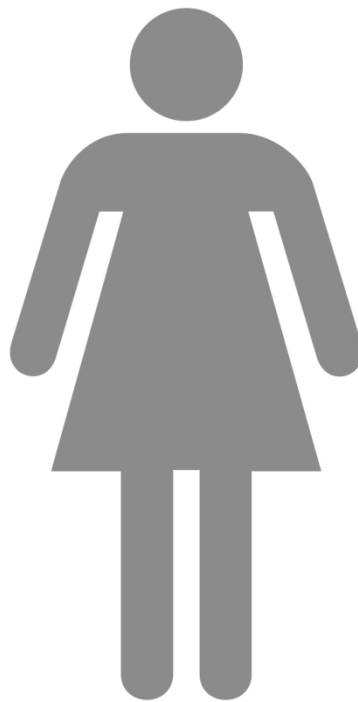
- All groups of migrants regarded paid work as both important and essential in the long term;
- Family Joiners and Case Resolution migrants considered employment to be a route to independence and security. However, many of them felt they need to improve their language skills first;
- The Case Resolution migrants, having initially been not permitted to undertake paid work, wished to pursue new careers or those they had started in their countries of origin;
- Highly Skilled Migrants, the majority of whom came to the UK for work purposes, were highly motivated to gain more experience and develop further skills. Their future plans often depended on when and where the next job becomes available; and
- Overall, work, whether paid or unpaid, was perceived to be instrumental in migrants' future lives. It was seen as a way to gain experience, improve English, develop social networks and learn about the UK. Ultimately, employment was recognised by many as a route to integration.

A scenic mountain landscape with snow-dusted peaks and a cloudy sky. The foreground shows a grassy slope with patches of snow. In the background, there are more mountain ranges under a sky filled with large, white clouds.

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This country gave me some amazing opportunities of practising outdoor activities which I didn't think about before...

7. The experiences of women migrants



Introduction

In this chapter the experiences of women migrants are explored. The majority of the respondents in the research were women (see Appendix 1 for details) and thus it is vital to consider their experiences of integration and settlement in the UK. While Family Joiners predominantly originate in Asia and the majority of them are women (Charsley, et al., 2012), they are rarely a target for integration (Spencer, 2011b). Many of them, as was confirmed in this research, are already married upon arrival in the UK (Blinder, 2013). However, underemployment among them is widespread (Stirling, 2015). Therefore, it is important to explore their integration experiences in order to be able to better understand their needs. Firstly, women's experiences in home and host country are outlined. This is followed by the influence of extended families and familial responsibilities. Finally, given some of the experiences respondents had, the issue of domestic abuse is discussed.

Women's experiences in their home and host country

As illustrated earlier in Chapter 4, most of the Family Joiners that were interviewed grew up in traditional patriarchal families. FJ13 below illustrates the sacrifices that women were obligated to make in traditionally patriarchal societies once they become wives. It also shows the shift in responsibilities and roles after getting married. Many women, particularly Family Joiners, seemed to exchange domestic labour in their filial family for conjugal domestic labour:

We have a lot, a lot, a lot of opportunities. In my country there's not that much opportunity, you can say, being a girl. Over here being a girl you have loads of options. Still they have opportunity, people are doing - like when I was lecturer over there I was very good - 'Oh she's in the job of a lecturer. She's teaching in a university'. Once you get married you have to leave, you have to leave everything. Women are sitting in their houses,

they're just doing the house jobs and men are earning and they're bringing the money home. Over here, my husband, he never ever gave me any money (FJ13, female, Pakistan).

Many of the respondents recognised the UK to be more equal with regards to gender roles in comparison to their countries of origin. Respondents mostly talked of greater freedom to undertake paid work and the increased independence that this brings:

They want to all work. In my country ladies sit at home and just men go for work, not here. All people are becoming independent so I like it (FJ18, female, Pakistan).

There's a lot of freedom here. There's particularly a lot more freedom for women because in Pakistan it's not that free for women. It's more open to find jobs and move on with your life (FJ2, female, Pakistan).

No, it's different. India does not allow girls to do jobs. Here, you go for any job. Here it doesn't matter. In India if you like you can go for a job as a teacher, sewing in the home, and here it doesn't matter. In India, you're not allowed to go far out (FJ3, female, India).

It was not only the Family Joiners that observed and appreciated greater gender equality in the UK, some of the female Highly Skilled migrants noted this too:

In Iran it's first you need a connection to get that job and then the age and being a female is a very determining kind of factor. Not in everything but here I'm working in a team that's all men, there is no female in the two programmes that I'm working with. Here if I say, 'We should do this,' or 'What about this?' they'll accept it, they don't say, 'Oh, it comes from a female,' or 'It comes from a male' (HSM4, female, Iran).

This was also related to the way relationships were organised as well as how well supported women felt and how easy, or in fact not easy at all, it was for them to end unsatisfactory relationships:

It's very difficult for like a single woman to stay in Pakistan. In this country there are facilities and you struggle in the beginning but then you can manage, you can stay on your own, but it's not the same in Pakistan, so that's why I chose to stay here (FJ12, female, Pakistan).

Influence of extended families and familial responsibilities

Extended families and familial responsibilities often played a huge role in the lives of women in this study. Those women Family Joiners who were well educated

were often expected to give up their careers upon arrival in the UK and attend to their husbands' and extended families' needs:

When I came over here I asked him, 'Can I pursue my career, what I was doing over there? Can I pursue it over here as well?' He said, 'No. Now, you can't do anything...Now I'm your boss'. So, it would make me laugh, 'Now, I'm your boss and now you don't have any choice. What I'm going to say you have to listen. This is my business, this is a grocery store, you've got to run this. That's it, that's your lot. You're not going to work for anybody. You're going to work only for me' (FJ13, female, Pakistan).

Arranged marriages were commonly mentioned among Family Joiners and a familiar practice amongst some Case Resolution migrants. British men of Asian descent often sought spouses from South Asian countries. Marriages were often arranged by extended family members and it was common for women to marry members of their extended family. Most of the time women had little control over whom or when they marry:

...even over there I raised this point, that I think that forced marriage should be criminalised because it's not my husband, I think his dad forced him to marry me (FJ13, female, Pakistan).

Additionally, respondents explained that separation or divorce remains an uncommon practice in India or Pakistan. Indeed, there is stigma attached to those who divorce. As the respondents clarified, women divorcees are looked down on and perceived as less valuable:

If I had known the way when they bring the girls over from abroad, from India, the way they treat them, I wouldn't have come. Once when my parents find out the way I was being treated here they actually asked me to come back to India, but you know what it's like that once you are married and then you go back to your parents' house, you don't have that same honour, or you don't have the same value as what you had before you were married, so they did ask me to come back, but then when I found that there is help available [in the UK] and you can live on your own as well, that's why I decided to stay here (FJ12, female, Pakistan).

Yes, because we came here for marriage, so we can't go back. Like for visit, yes, it's okay, for visit and not for living. The people - like relatives don't like that you leave your husband, why - culture (FJ14B, female, Pakistan).

Women's familial networks, namely their husbands and parents-in-law often acted as control systems. They exerted control over the way women dressed and whether they were allowed to be out of the house, and if so, with whom:

My family not permission me, yes, you wear only simple dress (FJ11, female, Pakistan).

I wasn't allowed out of the house when I got married. I had been here like one and a half years, I was only kept indoors. The only time I used to go out was like going shopping. It was a totally different environment (FJ12, female, Pakistan).

When I came here for the whole eighteen months that I was at my in-laws house, they never let me out of the house alone. I was always accompanied by somebody, even to a corner shop (FJ24, female, Pakistan).

The spouses of Family Joiners, being British-born, were clearly in a privileged position with regards to their knowledge about the British system and thus they could use this to their advantage, as the respondent's experience below illustrates:

My husband did tell me about the benefits I can receive but he put them in his name (FJ28, female, India).

It was evident that many of the female research respondents - mainly Family Joiners and the Case Resolution migrants - were somewhat constrained by certain family responsibilities. These were mostly related to traditional gender roles and the need to provide care to older family members and/or relatives or their own children:

No, because... for Africa. If your father is old, you're supposed to take care of your father, you understand, because your father has spent too much time to take care of you. You're supposed to wash clothes, feed him but I'm still here, it's not just him... (CR5, female, Cameroon)

While for some respondents, certain family responsibilities enabled people to feel more settled and a part of British society:

They are my cousins, and I think, a big part of my integration, a big part of understanding about British culture, a big part of knowing about different things that they do were these two kids, because I had to go with them to many different places, to go to their school, and to plays, and then when they have birthdays, and when they had their friends over for a sleepover and stuff like that, I mean it kind of step-by-step it made me familiar with the whole culture and what is basically happening in England, and I think it's a big advantage for me now (HSM4, female, Iran).

Experiences of domestic abuse

Due to many respondents being accessed through a supported housing project in the region, some of the women interviewed - predominantly Family Joiners -

were found to have experienced domestic abuse. The poor treatment these women had experienced often included not being allowed to leave the house, being treated as domestic servants and instances of psychological and physical domestic abuse:

My first experience is not that good because I am separated from my husband at the moment and that was not good. His behaviour towards me was unreasonable and I didn't enjoy that thing, that all the time he never used to let me go out of the house and - basically living in Pakistan I did my Masters in mass communication and I was a lecturer over there. When I came over here my whole life changed, suddenly. Everything changed, he just wanted to run his business over here. He doesn't want me to make any friends, nothing like this (FJ13, female, Pakistan).

They have all got together and then they've come back, they beat me up and kicked me out the house and then I contacted the police (FJ12, female, Pakistan).

Overall, it can be said that the male partners of the Family Joiners who were interviewed were controlling and manipulative at times which went beyond patriarchal cultural norms:

My prescription, he [husband] was throwing in the bin, sometimes ripping from my room and I'm a diabetic patient as well. This was very hard for me, to don't take tablet. Diabetic and also the stomach ulcer and I was just crying, what I have to do with my health. If I was asking something, can I have this thing for children or for myself like yoga, maybe something? He was saying, 'No money with me. Go and do a job and earn money'. Otherwise, we just cry at home me and my children, no food, no anything. This was very horrible time for me and for my children (FJ27, female, Afghanistan).

He [her husband] beat me because he brought the girl in the same place where I was living, in my house and he said 'this girl is going to live with us now'. I said 'you have gone stupid, you have gone mad. I am your wife' (FJ13, female, Pakistan).

Here one respondent describes how she was confined to living a solitary life for a number of years:

I had three years of living with my husband, three-and-a-half years. Then, my husband and me, domestic violence now in my case. I'm separated now. Now I live alone. I don't go out too much. For three-and-a-half years I lived in the house, don't go out, don't go to neighbours, not going shopping (FJ3, female, India).

It is interesting but perhaps not surprising that women were not aware of their rights upon arrival in the UK and as a result their new extended family had significant influence which compounded their vulnerability:

My mother-in-law said you go inside, because his grandmother is old and sometimes the doctor came to check her. My mother said you go in the bedroom and lock the door. It's not allowed, because she said you have no English and that's why you go inside. I go inside. Of course, I don't have idea. I don't have this culture. Now I know (FJ3, female, India).

Why you talk with her, why are you listening her? Somebody come to my house, why you not go to kitchen, why you sit here? It's no good, the first two months he's happy with my family. After two months, my mum is never ringing my [sic. his] mum. I said to my mum, 'Ring me.' They said, 'She's very busy.' My mother-in-law she said, 'She go out with husband.' I said 'I'm here'. She said 'You're not allowed. Maybe there is something they ask you'. I said 'Just to talk with my mum' They said it's not allowed (FJ5, female, Pakistan).

As the account by the respondent below shows, a lack of knowledge about rights and social norms means women were vulnerable to manipulation:

When I miss my family when there is nobody helping me, not giving me proper food. Then I was scared to call the police. My mother-in-law, when you call the police my father-in-law will shoot me and shoot my family in India. I was scared (FJ3, female, India).

While most of the interviewed women were not allowed to pursue paid work and were confined to working in the domestic sphere, several women did engage in employment. However, this was mostly for their relatives' benefit as women were asked to hand in their earnings and were still controlled very closely:

'No, it's law'. That's what he used to say, 'It's law over here. The girl comes in this country, she has to give money to her husband'. I said, 'I never ever heard about this law, never ever' (FJ13, female, Pakistan).

Others described situations of servitude:

I start working there, before they were not happy I work, but after that they take my money, all my money. Every week, when I get my money, I get paid like this, they give me in envelope and my mother-in-law takes all my money. He never gave me anything. If I need some money, I have to ask her, to request her, 'Please give me this money'. If I go work 8:00 morning, I came back 6:00 or five minutes past, she said, 'Where are you going? Maybe you are go out with someone, that's why you are back late'. If I was paid less money, they always say, 'You have been work all the week, why are you giving me less money?' It's no good because the money is mine, but I never say anything, not any single word to them because I respect them. Before he was saying he married me, when I came here he said, 'I just married you because you have to look after my mum' (FJ6, female, Pakistan).

Life after escaping domestic abuse

In many cases women had developed mental health issues and their levels of confidence were understandably low after leaving the abusive situation. The accounts from the respondents we spoke to represent a spectrum from those who were still coming to terms with their post-abusive past to those who were aspirational about their future, like these two respondents:

I am very happy here because there's every kind of opportunity, everything is available here. I have been here between four to five years; I knew nothing. I was also like pressurised not to leave the house, I was actually very scared to leave the house, so now I have forgotten everything about the past and now I feel that my life has just started now. It's a fresh start. It's all opportunities, everything, every facility is available here, so it's a fresh start, and I'm happy. It is good to speak to other people, to become like a part of them. Now I am more confidence that I can stand up on my own feet, like look after myself, and it does feel good; it gives me more encouragement (FJ15, female, Pakistan).

Now I'm living my life for myself. Now I'm looking for so many opportunities over here, now I can do everything for myself and for my parents as well. Not for me, my family as well. So, many things have changed now, so many things. Now, I'm not that much depressed, you can say. I'm just getting out of that thing (FJ13, female, Pakistan).

Several women developed further interests after they left their abusive partners. When their minds were no longer preoccupied with their unsuccessful relationships, they were finally free to pursue other goals. At the same time, their new UK setting enabled those as they were no longer confined to remain in the domestic sphere:

Now, I like being separate, now I'm standing on my feet. I do job, I make my nice life here. Now I'm happy, I like. People are nice. If you ask any person for help, they will quickly help. English people are really nice. First, I was sitting in the room, bedroom. Now I go out. I want a job, and before I didn't want. Before I had no interest in English classes, then it's too much a depression. Now I want to learn and learn (FJ3, female, India).

Women also talked about gaining independence and being no longer reliant on their spouses or their families for information and advice after gaining a better understanding about where such knowledge could be found. At the same time, however, several women admitted that if they had known how their lives were going to unfold in the UK, they would never have come in the first place:

When you're ill here it's like I'm all on my own; nobody comes to look after you. So they [parents/family] don't talk to me now as well so I lost out on parents because of the way my husband was with me. If I had known that he would have done this and left me, my situation would have been like this, I wouldn't have come. If I had known he was going to be like this, who would come to live in this situation? (FJ9, female, Pakistan).

Key points

This chapter raised a number of key issues mostly in relation to the experiences of a very specific group of women who experienced domestic abuse whilst in the UK. A summary of these issues are as follows:

- The majority of female respondents, regardless of migration group, seemed to appreciate greater freedom and gender equality in the UK in comparison to their countries of origin;
- Most of the female research participants originated from countries where traditional highly patriarchal values are prevalent. Most of them observed more flexible gender roles in the UK in comparison to their home countries (for example, around clothing, work opportunities and family control);
- Many Family Joiners recruited into this study had experienced domestic abuse. Most of the women from this group were controlled very closely by their immediate new family members (their spouses and their parents);
- Among Family Joiners, and some Case Resolution migrants, arranged, and sometimes forced, marriages were common;
- The Case Resolution migrants were aware of the fact that in order to be reunited with their family members who remained in the home country there are specific criteria they need to fulfil; and
- Traditional gender roles, control from the families and some familial responsibilities were found to be constraints on integration. At the same time, the UK setting with new, comparatively more flexible gender relations appeared to foster positive settlement experiences.



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Wherever I go, the Lake District or Yorkshire or London or Staffordshire, I feel that that's my country now...

8. The role of support services in integration



Introduction

The focus of this chapter is on the experience of Third Country Nationals in relation to a wide range of services, mostly publicly provided, but also those from the voluntary and community and private sectors. Almost the full range of service areas had been accessed and experienced by Third Country National respondents since their arrival in the UK. These include: adult training; advice and guidance; child care; education; employment; healthcare; housing and related support; language services; police; and social care. There were some notable subtle differences arising between the three migrant groups involved in the study: for instance, it was common for Case Resolution migrants to talk about their experiences of seeking or receiving advice and guidance and their engagement with education; Highly Skilled Migrants tended to cite healthcare as the main service area they were accessing; and Family Joiners were most keen to look for ways to improve their employability, so

ESOL classes in particular, and education more generally, were key areas being accessed along with seeking employment advice. This chapter provides an overview of the ways Third Country Nationals engaged with these services and, in particular, examines the role such services have played in the integration experiences of migrants in the region.

Healthcare and emergency services

Engagement with healthcare was a service area experienced - to a greater or lesser extent - across the majority of respondents irrespective of their migration group. Respondents tended to be positive about their experience of the healthcare system in the UK, although negative views tended to centre on paying for 'expensive' medication (noted by a handful of respondents) and long waits to see either a GP or

specialist. In terms of other emergency service areas, although no one mentioned having had experience of fire and rescue services, a large number of respondents - particularly Family Joiner and Case Resolution migrants but also some Highly Skilled Migrants - talked about their contact with the police. Without exception, their interactions with the police were reported positively by those who had contact with them:

The police over here are very friendly. Sometimes when we see a policeman we're scared, but over here the policemen are like we met somewhere, or something like that [laughter]. They're very friendly; they're really, really, very friendly so I must appreciate that thing (HSM7, male, Pakistan).

The police were often talked about as one of the core services migrants felt comfortable in approaching and who would provide valuable advice. This was often framed as a total contrast to the behaviour of police in their country of origin where they were regarded as engaging in numerous pejorative practices:

...lots of times police have helped me but my home, has dropped me my home and I'm hospital, ambulance drop my home, take me home. That is good, in Pakistan it's not like that (FJ5, female, Pakistan).

For Case Resolution migrants, the police had played a vital role in safeguarding at a time of vulnerability:

When I arrived here he just left me at the police station, and they took me to the hospital when I was sick. They took me to the hospital, got me a solicitor, everything (CR4, female, Cameroon).

I came to the UK because I had a problem in my country and somebody helped me to come to the UK. He left me at the police station, and the police took me to social services (CR5, female, Cameroon).

For those respondents who had experienced domestic abuse, it was clear that in the majority of occasions it had been the police who had been instrumental in supporting them when leaving the abusive situation. As the interpreter present with FJ8 reveals:

Through the police, they transferred her from [name of place], they [the police] checked for hostels in different places and this was where they sent her (FJ8, female, India).

Advisory services

Across all the service areas it was those specialist organisations which provided advice for refugees that Case Resolution migrants tended to draw upon most heavily. Although organisations which offered general

advice were mentioned (such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, the library or the local authority), this was far outweighed by presentations to specialist organisations. Respondents tended to report going to these organisations to seek advice on issues such as paying bills, housing and the bureaucracy associated with migration status. These organisations also appeared to be serving a vital role in ensuring that people obtained access to education, training and employment. As CR1 and CR9 recount:

Yes, I think it's one of the organisations like [name of organisation] ...they had this programme and many of the companies like take part in including M&S. Like what they do is just, initially for a job experience kind of thing for a two week period, which I took part in, and then I got called back again for December, like the Christmas period, as a temp, and then after that I got the permanent position (CR1, female, Guinea).

I got a very, very big help from [name of organisation]. They've been so helpful as I said, integrating me, giving me some advice about education, which was my priority now. So, through education, through some advice...it helps me a lot (CR9, male, Guinea).

It was not unusual to find that Case Resolution migrants had later gone on to volunteer for these organisations in order to support other migrants settling in the area.

Social welfare

In terms of peoples' engagement with social care and welfare, only Case Resolution respondents made any comment regarding social care services and this was, in all cases, a product of a social worker or key worker supporting them once they had received their current status.

Although access, rights and responsibilities in relation to the welfare system is a hotly debated topic in the public sphere, there was very little mention of the welfare system by respondents. There were some issues faced by Family Joiners with regard to benefits but these tended to revolve more around ensuring benefit payments were obtained in a timely fashion after a separation from their spouse in order for them to support independent living. However, there were some views expressed by a handful of Highly Skilled Migrants which pointed to a sense of inequality around the welfare system and their contribution to taxation and National Insurance. Firstly people reported not being able to understand what the different payments were for, as HSM1 explains:

I wanted to know because we had a two-year-old son. I just wanted to know what kinds of benefits I could apply for or what kinds of things I can't apply for. So as I understood from my visa, you are not entitled for public benefits.... Here you have to pay for national insurance so from that insurance, what you can get from there for example. So I know that there is national insurance and then you pay for your pension as well, it has to be clearly explained...So why should you pay national insurance, why is it different from the tax, for example? Why is it different from the pension, for example? I think it has to be clearly elaborated and communicated (HSM1, male, Asia).

And, secondly, a sense of injustice about being excluded from benefiting from the welfare system even though they were required to pay into it, as HSM7 illustrates:

I'm also paying tax actually. They should use that tax for me, not for other people, but I am paying tax. So I would think that okay, I should get a benefit from that. Why can't I get a benefit from my tax? (HSM7, male, Pakistan).

A minority of respondents spoke about their experience of housing in the UK. Most of those who commented on housing were now accommodated by a specific housing association that provided accommodation for those respondents who had fled domestic abuse. All were positive about the service they were receiving. In addition, a very small minority commented on the poor conditions of the accommodation they had lived in, these again were mostly Case Resolution respondents who had been supported as asylum seekers in the past. Here people reflected on their time in the asylum system and the standard of housing provided by the agencies responsible was seen as particularly poor which resulted in inhibiting the ability to make positive relationships in the community, as CR2 explains:

Accommodation, maybe they should do a little bit more for asylum seekers, because when you see the conditions, the way some people live as asylum seekers, it's really... It's not good, it's not nice. When they give you a house, you don't pay anything as an asylum seeker...I'm not asking for them to put a 50-inch TV or something like that, but the basics. Try to do the wallpaper and stuff, and make it a bit presentable, because as an asylum seeker you would make friends at college, wherever you go. On top of that you are a human being, because sometimes you feel as an asylum seeker, even if you meet somebody, you make friends, you are reluctant really to invite them in, especially because of those conditions you live in. Sometimes it's terrible. Not in general, but there's some particular situation, to be honest, it's really deplorable. It is (CR2, male, Guinea).

Similarly, a small number of people commented about some of the poor conditions they had experienced in the private rented sector and described poor practices by

landlords. The interpreter present during an interview with FJ15 illustrates one of the issues:

...she isn't happy because the house isn't private and is too dirty a house. She's talking to the landlord, and he hasn't helped, not given any - because the carpet is too dirty (FJ15, female, Pakistan).

It should be acknowledged that a large number of Family Joiner respondents were living in supported housing at the time of the interviews. A number of these people had not been in the country long and had low levels of English language and some had lower levels of education generally. In addition to the role played by learning English in their attempts to integrate, the majority cited the positive and enabling work undertaken by the support workers attached to the supported housing project. Here support workers made vital links to health care, colleges and a range of other services in order to support a return to independence:

Yes, I go to the people who are supporting me, the organisation office. I just go over there and ask my support worker. If there's anything, if there's a letter, I don't know where I'm going to go, from where this letter has come, I just go there and they guide me, 'Do this and do that' (FJ13, female, Pakistan).

... they [housing organisation] are very good at understanding. They check my English, they said I don't need a basic English course, but you need only the training for the interviews. So they helped me a lot, so these are very good things for me, for helping to find a doctor, finding a bank account or things like this, so they were very good things. So I was not expecting that, but they helped me a lot (FJ27, female, Afghanistan).

Support workers know everything for me. He knows my file and does everything for me. That's why. Because he knows everything it's teaching me well. If he knows something's wrong for me, he tells me. All the girls like me have no idea. I don't have an idea for England. Every girl goes to the support worker (FJ3, female, India).

Only a very small number of people had children and there were very few discussions linked to use of schools or childcare services.

Education and training

The Case Resolution and Family Joiner respondents interviewed as part of this study tended to have a relatively low level of English language ability prior to arriving in the UK. Once in the UK, the acquisition of improved English language skills was a key area that tended to occupy much of their time. The motivations

for attending English courses were numerous, but tended to centre on: (1) how this would help their integration into British society more generally; (2) allow them to support their children; (3) enable them to communicate in the local community more easily; and (4) provide a pathway to further education or employment. This is illustrated by the following quotes:

Yes, definitely it would have been a lot more easier for me to integrate with different parts of society if I was able to speak English, express myself like now, because I told you I couldn't speak, but I realised, to a degree, the British society, I really need to go to college to study (CR2, male, Guinea).

But the problem was, if you don't speak the language, you can't do the language you can't understand anything. You can't read, you need somebody to explain it to you. Somebody to read it for you, somebody to explain it (CR3, female, Ivory Coast).

Yes, just we're going for English classes. We're thinking that when our English is good then we'll take a job or something like that. At the moment, we just need good English because it's important in England, when you live in England (FJ14A, female, Pakistan).

I need more English because now I don't understand too much. I need more because I need to help my kids and that's why. I feel sad sometimes when my kids - one, sometimes he needs, 'Mum, I need help'. I don't understand anything. I feel sad, but I need more practice in English, which I get outside as well, shopping or something like that. I don't understand anything, that's why. Some people talk to me, and I don't understand what is said, that's why (FJ15, female, Pakistan).

Because I am doing English class first, because my English is not too much good. First I do everything with my class, and work at everything, the test, UK test, Life in the UK. Then I go find work (FJ7, female, Pakistan).

Attendance at English classes was seen as the crucial ingredient in support of integration. Once people arrived with low levels of English ability, people found it extremely difficult to communicate with others, which served as a major barrier to understanding how systems worked in the UK. A repeated message from respondents was the need to encourage new arrivals to enrol on English courses:

Now we're attending like English classes and we're looking for the jobs, and with their help that's bought us a lot of happiness because we have left our family behind. It's given us like an opportunity to progress ourselves and to do things for ourselves, that's what good, better change. Before we were so frightened to go out, we were wondering what will happen. Now, since we've like come out, now we've got more confidence.

We are able to do things for ourselves and that's the change (FJ6, female, Pakistan).

I think that we should improve on the ESOL classes and the amount of times they get; they should get more classes. Plus they should be more organised because this scheme, when it came to the class, was quite a bit of a downfall, like losing a teacher, getting another teacher, then losing that teacher, getting another teacher and different times, so they weren't as organised. I would have preferred more of a strict routine for English classes (FJ11, female, Pakistan).

In addition, for some, attending English classes was seen as a social event in its own right:

Yes, it gives us an opportunity to come out of the house, to meet with friends, and we do English course, and this is an opportunity to chat together and that makes us really good (FJ12, female, Pakistan).

In a similar vein, a small number of Case Resolution respondents talked about the value of volunteering in their process of integration into the wider community (see Chapter 6 for more detail on the role of unpaid work). Not only was this seen as a way to help others, but also served to improve their working English language skills, improve their knowledge of systems and network with other migrants:

This was the first organisation who, in relation to my re-qualification they supported me with IELTS [International English Language Testing System], they funded the IELTS test for me, and organised some sort of activities, and small trainings, and involved me in volunteering, going to schools, and with different projects (CR7, male, Russia).

The majority of Highly Skilled Migrants had good English language abilities. However, the issue for some Highly Skilled Migrants was that the regional accents which were predominant in their daily lives were significantly different from that which they had previously experienced, and that the jokes and cultural references indigenous populations made presented challenges to feeling integrated. The issue here was mainly having time to be immersed in dialogue with people from other communities:

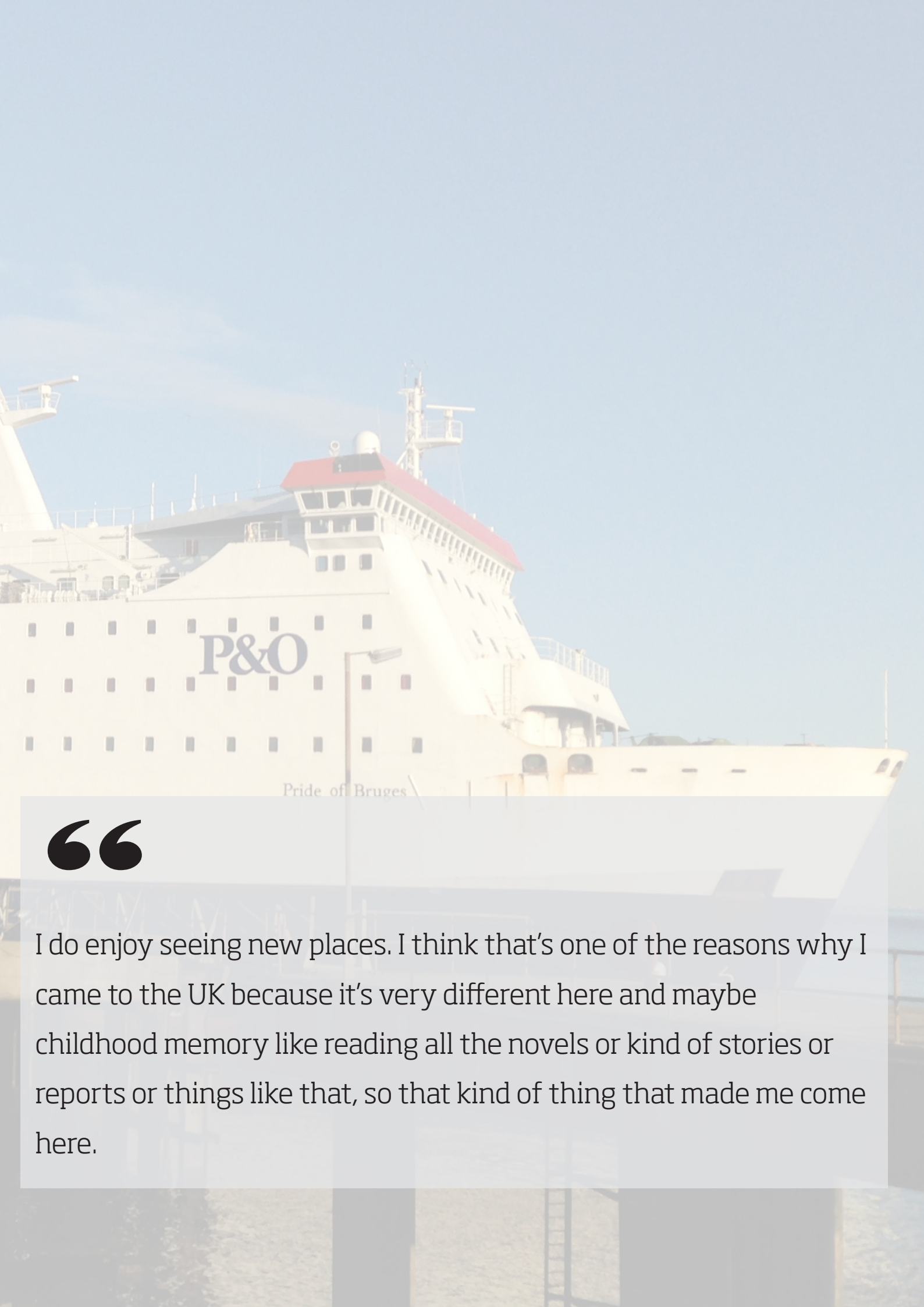
I think it doesn't matter how long you've lived here. The problem is when you move to a different city, very likely you don't understand the accent or you don't understand the jokes. You don't understand the slang words. I think language will always be a barrier. I've moved cities a few times so every time I moved I've thought I've actually lived in the UK for a few years but I still don't understand. So a thing like language it doesn't matter how long you've lived here there will always be a challenge with language (HSM10, female, Indonesia).

Yes, so the people in this country have a different accent, so we learnt the standard English accent, like on the BBC, but actually there are so many different accents. You need time to get used to (HSM13, female, China).

Key points

This chapter has raised a number of key issues in relation to the access and use of various service areas by Third Country National respondents and the role that these play for integration. A summary of these issues are as follows:

- Although most migrants drew upon the full range of services, the sorts of services that were used most extensively depended on their routes in and their individual circumstances;
- Case Resolution respondents had drawn heavily upon specialist advisory services and often gone on to volunteer for these services at a later date;
- There was a desire for increasing the opportunities to study English as people tended to see this as a key foundation for integration;
- The police were seen in a particular positive light by those Third Country Nationals who had direct contact; and
- Out of the three groups, Highly Skilled Migrants tended to draw less upon services, their experiences mostly confined to using the internet for guidance or healthcare when needed.



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I do enjoy seeing new places. I think that's one of the reasons why I came to the UK because it's very different here and maybe childhood memory like reading all the novels or kind of stories or reports or things like that, so that kind of thing that made me come here.

9. Reflections and future intentions



Introduction

In this chapter, Third Country Nationals' reflections on their migratory experiences and future intentions are considered. The chapter begins with a focus on Third Country Nationals' pre-migration imaginings and expectations of life in the UK and then shifts to how perceptions have changed over time. Respondents' future intentions and aspirations are then examined.

Pre-migration imaginings and expectations of life in the UK

The expectations of migrants across all groups were shaped to a degree by depictions of the UK on television and through other media. Generally speaking, for all Third Country Nationals in this study, the 'pull factors' in migration to the UK included a perceived increased

freedom and independence, and opportunities for employment and education. In other words, an enhanced quality of life and improved lifestyle:

I'd seen like some programmes on the French TV when I was at home ... and the thing that attracted me the most was like from a very young age, like you would be able to work and make money, like be independent and that's what I always wanted. So yes, I think that was very, very appealing (CR1, female, Guinea).

For some, living in a developed country meant that expectations centred on a stable infrastructure and an open-minded, tolerant population:

Then what I [thought] is that the UK should be a developed country ... you will interact with the technologies that are advanced and systems that have already been developed.... I would expect many people will ... have an open mind, like an advanced kind of thinking, forward-looking (HSM1, male, Asia).

Some migrants were prepared for differences in culture and lifestyle:

I was imagining that there must be ... some differences, cultural differences that I was already imagining and lifestyle (HSM8, female, Pakistan).

While others were less so, particularly in terms of the UK's diverse population:

The very - kind of shock of multiculturalism, side of London... So it was very surprising. I just never thought about this side of Britain (CR7, male, Russia).

For some Case Resolution migrants who had escaped difficult circumstances in their country of origin, safety and security were highlighted as high priorities in terms of what they hoped the UK could offer:

I knew anyway from back home any country in Europe is better than Africa anyway, according to the lifespan, the security and everything... So my first thought was my safety really (CR2, male, Guinea).

All of the Family Joiners involved in the study had come to the UK to marry a British citizen or had followed their spouses, and they were optimistic about a future life in the UK. They were initially hopeful about their marriage and the freedom and independence that they would be able to enjoy:

I was thinking how excited, how I'm going to live [with] my husband (FJ14B, female, Pakistan).

I imagined like freedom, atmosphere; everything is good compared to Pakistan (FJ16, female, India).

I thought that I'd come here and be able to get a good job and stuff, work and earn money easily, earn more money and have a better, stable life. I thought I'd have a peaceful life here (FJ8, female, India).

Changed perceptions over time

Over time respondents adjusted to life in the UK and many also adjusted their initial expectations and perceptions. Some migrants commented that the British weather was a challenge, while others enjoyed the cooler climate. Migrants across the different groups talked about how they had managed to adapt to a diverse environment:

I became more tolerant, definitely. Tolerant in terms of accepting different views, different opinions. Understanding points of different people (CR7, male, Russia).

When I arrived here immediately I thought the culture was so different and the people were so different how can I manage? Compared with other people I was a little bit scared, but now time passed and now I can manage everything (FJ18, female, Pakistan).

Some found the demands of their studies more challenging than they originally envisaged:

It was a very different life. I thought I'm going to have fun as well as studying... but then it was so demanding that I didn't have fun for a year at all... it was a nightmare (HSM4, female, Iran).

While others commented on the shortage of available employment opportunities:

I think there's no more jobs than before, the jobs are hard to find... it wasn't like that before (CR3, female, Ivory Coast)

Some respondents felt that being in the UK meant that they now viewed their country of origin differently and would no longer 'fit in' there since their perceptions had altered:

I think the change is, in many, many aspects now. Firstly how we think ... and how interact with people will be changed. I mean we have become more critical once we live outside our country and maybe it will be hard for us to be suitable in our home country because we've lived too long here (FJ1, female, Indonesia).

The Family Joiners who came to the UK were initially hopeful about their new lives - and new families - but many experienced difficulties and had readjusted their early expectations of what life in the UK would be like:

It's a really stressful life for me at the moment, because obviously when I first came here I just knew only my wife and my in-laws. I thought I'd live with them, earn money, have a stable life with them, but since that has basically broken off I've just been from pillar to post, going everywhere and being signposted around. No stability, and that's what's changed my view about England (FJ23, female, Pakistan).

Future intentions and aspirations

All of the Third Country Nationals who participated in the study intended to stay in the UK long-term, although some Case Resolution and Highly Skilled Migrant respondents planned to return to their country of origin when they were older. Most respondents also planned to stay in their current location, although some Highly Skilled Migrants indicated that if employment

opportunities arose elsewhere in the UK, they would take them. Some research participants talked about visiting their country of origin for holidays:

I will be returning back to Pakistan just for a few weeks' holidays, four weeks, maybe three weeks, two weeks, but I will not be going back as permanently (FJ12, female, Pakistan).

Others were keen to pursue employment and educational opportunities, for themselves or their children:

I also see my future here because I would like to get a job and make my future very bright, which I will not be able to do that in Pakistan (FJ6, female, Pakistan).

At least for when I finish a PhD, I'll stay in Leeds until then. I might one day go back to Indonesia but I don't know when (HSM10, female, Indonesia).

I might stay there until my kids get their hands on to the universities and then I might move [back to country of origin] (HSM2, male, Pakistan).

One Highly Skilled Migrant planned to return to his country of origin to set up a business:

My long-term plan is to go back to China and be able to have a business (HSM3, male, China).

For Family Joiners, aspirations included the intention to improve English language abilities, to find employment, find permanent accommodation (if in temporary accommodation) and generally to feel secure and settled in the UK:

Maybe next year to get my house, then set up my house and then redo the baby's room setup (FJ10, female, Pakistan).

It's a very nice area where we live, and we are now actually trying to get a council house, which would be nice to have your own space, your own property, so we are trying to get that and that would be very helpful (FJ14A, female, Pakistan).

I'll make myself independent, I'll make my career, I will definitely start looking for a - ask the government to give me a house as well if they can. So, I will ask them to help me and then definitely - I'll make myself with me everything and then I'll marry (FJ13, female, Pakistan).

Key points

This chapter raised a number of key issues in relation to the perception of the UK prior to arriving, how these perceptions have changed over time and their aspirations and intentions for the future. A summary of these issues are as follows:

- Migrants' initial expectations of life in the UK were shaped to a degree by depictions on television and other media;
- All Third Country Nationals hoped that the UK would offer them increased freedom and independence, and opportunities for employment and education: in other words, an enhanced quality of life and improved lifestyle;
- Case Resolution respondents hoped for a place of safety and security, and Family Joiners were optimistic about their new spouses and families;
- Other expectations centred on a stable infrastructure and an open-minded, tolerant population;
- Over time, Third Country Nationals adjusted to life in the UK and many also recalibrated their initial expectations and perceptions;
- Family Joiners emphasised the importance of acquiring English language skills to secure employment; and
- For all, aspirations remained focused on securing employment, feeling settled and being independent.



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We say Islamabad is like the UK. You can't predict when it rains, when it's sun, you can say anything, so it's the same like over there as well.

10. Conclusions and recommendations



This report has explored the views and experiences of a number of Third Country Nationals who have settled in the North of England. All have arrived under different 'routes in' either as Highly Skilled Migrants, Family Joiners or as asylum seekers whose cases have since been resolved. By bringing the voices of migrants to the fore, this research aimed to explore a number of issues:

- This report has explored the views and experiences of a number of Third Country Nationals who have settled in the North of England. All have arrived under different 'routes in' either as Highly Skilled Migrants, Family Joiners or as asylum seekers whose cases have since been resolved. By bringing the voices of migrants to the fore, this research aimed to explore a number of issues:
- The settlement and integration experiences of Third Country Nationals and how they are different according to gender, routes in and vulnerability;
 - How particular actors - such as services, employers and communities, assist in the process of integration;
 - The nature and context of social relations between new migrants and local community members; and
 - What can local authorities and other services do to enhance positive experiences of settlement and integration in the future.
- This report does not attempt to make definitive statements about the situation and views of all Third Country Nationals. Rather it highlights a number of key concerns and perceptions that emerged in the interviews and, as such, help fill the gaps identified by Spencer (2011a) and Gidley (2015). The following provides a brief

This report does not attempt to make definitive statements about the situation and views of all Third Country Nationals. Rather it highlights a number of key concerns and perceptions that emerged in the interviews and, as such, help fill the gaps identified by Spencer (2011a) and Gidley (2015). The following provides a brief summary of the key issues emerging from the research.

Belonging, home and integration

Respondents' accounts further underline the dynamics of migration which involve a combination of push and pull factors coupled with the intention to improve their quality of life. Significantly, understanding migrants' experiences pre-migration, their ongoing relationships within their country of origin, and their 'routes in', is essential for ensuring positive integration in the UK. Those migrants who were previously seeking asylum generally experienced difficulties in their country of origin, or previous home, and this acted as a 'push' factor in moving to the UK for safety and a better life. Family Joiners, mainly women, who married British citizens, predominantly came from rural areas, had not had access to education, and often came from poor families. This group were able to exercise limited control over marriage and migration decision-making processes (since these would have been brokered by their families). Highly Skilled Migrants, on the other hand, came to the UK in more advantaged positions, 'pulled' by available educational and employment opportunities and unsurprisingly were able to exercise the most autonomy once in the UK. Family Joiners often found themselves restricted by extended families, and a number of respondents involved in the interviews also experienced domestic abuse. Case Resolution migrants were the group with the least support on arrival and arguably they had high support needs given their previous circumstances. These 'routes in' also shaped Third Country Nationals' settlement experiences, understandings and experiences of integration and their opportunities to gain access to employment, education, social networks, and their ability to exercise mobility. Third Country Nationals' ambiguity surrounding the precise meaning of integration could be understood to reflect the general lack of clarity on what integration is in policy circles, and also explains how understandings differ across migration groups (Spencer, 2011). Yet despite the ambiguity surrounding integration as a concept, Third Country Nationals were keen to mix with the host population and with other ethnic groups and recognised the importance of being able to speak fluent English. All research participants talked about the UK as representing 'home', and also highlighted the ambivalence which characterises being 'from' one place and 'of' another.

Social relations

The interviews revealed that social relations between Third Country Nationals and their local communities were mostly positive. Although some people maintained relationships with members of their own ethnic or national group, others chose not to prioritise such social networks. There appeared to be a willingness to develop relationships across ethnic and national groups, with many people looking to network with White British community members. However, diaspora members played key roles in the settlement experience of some Third Country Nationals, particularly upon first arrival and at times of vulnerability. The family could be seen to act as both a source of social support but equally could be a source of control and potentially isolating. The enduring presence of 'home' and of those left behind in their countries of origin were significant factors in the lives of many Third Country Nationals, particularly Family Joiners and Case Resolution migrants, who tended to describe leaving their families in terms of loss and dislocation. This was seemingly less so for Highly Skilled Migrants who had both the financial capacity and ability to visit to their countries, and whose migration to the UK was potentially temporary when compared to the other groups.

Paid and unpaid work

Third Country Nationals across all groups valued employment opportunities in the UK. Highly Skilled Migrants arrived in the country for work purposes; they researched various opportunities beforehand and intended to remain mobile depending on the availability of jobs. Family Joiners had more complex issues revolving around English language proficiency, childcare responsibilities, and a lack of experience and confidence that prevented them from easily securing access to paid or unpaid work. This, in part, may explain the findings of Eurostat (2013) in relation to the underemployment of women in the UK. For Case Resolution migrants, the time spent in the asylum system created the biggest obstacle, leading to prohibition from the labour market and an inability to access Higher Education. Many had benefited from undertaking unpaid work and were now seeking more stable paid positions, some in the same field in which they had previously worked. Those Third Country Nationals who were in employment, mainly Highly Skilled

Migrants, acknowledged that their employers regularly assisted them to integrate by helping them access key services such as housing and advice. Many Highly Skilled Migrants felt integrated into the workplace and had considered their colleagues to be friends.

The experiences of women migrants

The majority of female Family Joiners who took part in this research were found to be particularly vulnerable and prone to exploitation. The vast majority of them arrived in the UK as the spouses of British Citizens. In their cases, their status as Family Joiners and the fact that they were women had a considerable impact on their experiences once in the UK. Those women were often subjected to control by their new extended families and many instances of domestic abuse were recounted. The needs of women Family Joiners revolved around knowing their rights and entitlements, mental health services provision, English language proficiency and life in the UK classes. Law enforcement services and non-governmental organisations played a vital role in their settlement in the UK.

The role of support services in integration

It is clear, as Spencer (2011b) argues, that families, employers and education providers are currently the key institutions responsible for the integration of new migrants in the UK. Accessing adequate language training was seen as the key ingredient to allow for effective integration into the local community, and which allowed for access to the labour market. This was one of the main uses of services for both Case Resolution and Family Joiner respondents, but not for Highly Skilled Migrant respondents. Among Highly Skilled Migrants there was a desire to better understand the nuances of regional dialect and specific cultural references, in order to more effectively communicate with colleagues. The interviews also underlined the ways in which services supported, or indeed hindered, the integration of Third Country Nationals. Views varied across the sample, and differed according to the 'routes in' and the background of particular individuals. For instance, those Highly Skilled Migrants who were engaged in employment cited how they used the internet or spoke to work colleagues if they were unsure about particular systems, processes or practices. For others, however, a diversity of service provision

made up by specialist advice centres and organisations, with support workers often from a migrant background themselves, were crucial components in the fabric of service provision. Such services helped to build trust, and pro-actively support and signpost Third Country Nationals to the agencies that provided the foundation for long-term integration.

Reflections and future intentions

It is clear that migrants' initial expectations of life in the UK were shaped to a degree by views within their family network and depictions on television and other media. All Third Country Nationals hoped that the UK would offer them increased freedom and independence, and greater opportunities for employment and education: in other words, an enhanced quality of life and improved lifestyle. For many respondents, such ambitions were realised: Case Resolution migrants hoped for a place which offered safety and security, and Family Joiners were initially optimistic about their new spouses and families. Other expectations centred on the benefits of being in a country with a stable infrastructure and an open-minded, tolerant population. Over time, Third Country Nationals adjusted to life in the UK and many also recalibrated their initial expectations and perceptions. For all, aspirations remained focused on employment, feeling settled, and being independent. All of the Third Country Nationals who participated in the study intended to stay in the UK long-term, although a small number of Case Resolution and Highly Skilled Migrants planned to return to their country origin to live at some point in the future.

Closing comments

This report offers insights into the perceptions and experiences of migrants which are grounded in the everyday lives. Whilst it might be convenient to think of the integration of migrants as something to be supported solely by information and education, the picture is far more complex. How 'integrated' someone is - or feels to be - cannot be easily captured or measured without understanding the lived experiences of the people concerned. This research asserts that integration is not just about developing proficiency in the dominant host language, or being full citizens in the labour market; it is also crucially about the intimacy of relationships: how people choose to spend time together, where they mix, and the sorts of experiences they share. Integration is not universal and it is a

continual two-way process. 'Successful integration', will depend as much on those in the receiving community as those who have migrated. Often people who are employed in high status sectors often live isolated lives, whereas those who are not in the labour market can enjoy the mundane and reciprocal relationships that occur in neighbourhoods. Some people need to feel fully integrated whilst others are content to integrate only certain components of their lives. Factors such as wealth, power and class largely determine the routes by which people travel to the UK, and these are factors which continue to determine how people exercise their agency once here. This report has focused on how integration plays out among a mosaic of structural and individual factors which combine to provide the context within which the lives of Third Country National respondents are understood and experienced.

Recommendations

Drawing on the findings a number of recommendations are made:

- 1 Third Country Nationals want to learn English. There is therefore a need to ensure that there are enough places available on ESOL classes, at all levels, to meet demand. There was a distinct desire for more intensive (i.e. daily) provision. Furthermore, such provision needs to be sensitive to the level of education people may have achieved in their own country.
- 2 There is a distinct desire by Third Country Nationals, who are not already engaged in the labour market, to enter paid work. There should also be more opportunities provided at a variety of levels, and across a range of settings, for people to engage in unpaid work as a route to the paid labour market.
- 3 Specialist services such as community advice and supported housing are playing an important role in facilitating integration. These organisations provide tailored advice and information and can help provide crucial integration opportunities. As a result of their long-standing networks and trust within communities, such services should continue to be funded and their capacity built where required.
- 4 Female Family Joiners who experienced domestic violence and abuse were very positive about the interventions from the Police as well as the support services available. However, these women often reported challenges to integration as their resettlement was often within communities with large numbers of people from their own national or ethnic group. Whilst such approaches provided initial support there was some concern that this was leading to longer-term segregation from other communities. In light of this, a range of locations and strategies to rehouse migrants Joiners should be considered to help ensure people are not isolated within communities.
- 5 It needs to be acknowledged that the experience of integration is nuanced and depends on a range of factors. For example, for Highly Skilled Migrants, a degree of integration occurs 'naturally' in the workplace; similarly the family plays an important role for some Family Joiners. However, this does not mean that 'full' integration automatically follows in all other aspects of an individuals' life. It is important therefore, to seek ways to develop appropriate services that respond to these nuances to ensure support is provided as widely as possible.
- 6 Since the ability of Third Country Nationals to communicate in English is variable across groups, with Family Joiners in particular reporting the need to acquire fluent English language skills, it is important to use a variety of media networks; for example, radio and other audio resources to spread information about services, opportunities, rights, responsibilities and entitlements.
- 7 Achieving a secure settlement relies to a certain extent on being connected to a wider support network. Digital media offer opportunities for people to transcend traditional borders, in order to connect with networks both in the host country and in their country of origin. However, among migrants, user-competence with digital media is variable therefore, opportunities to foster and develop digital skills should be prioritised.
- 8 This research has focused on Third Country Nationals and their reflections on integration. As the broader social world plays an important role in the integration of all migrants there is a need for further research to understand the perspectives, experiences and insights of others key players; such as neighbours, colleagues, employers, service providers and family members.
- 9 This research has shown that the majority of Third Country Nationals are positive about their ability to integrate into UK society. However, there are differences in people's ability to fully participate. It is therefore important to understand and work within and towards peoples' aspirations in terms of integration and to facilitate opportunities for migrants to mix with others.

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Appendix 1: Overview of sample

Identifier	Gender	Length of time in UK	Location of interview	Nationality	Type of migrant
CR1	Female	more than 5 yrs	Yorkshire	Guinea	Case resolution
CR2	Male	more than 5 yrs	Yorkshire	Guinea	Case Resolution
CR3	Female	more than 5 yrs	Yorkshire	Ivory Coast	Case Resolution
CR4	Female	more than 5 yrs	Yorkshire	Cameroon	Case Resolution
CR5	Female	more than 5 yrs	Yorkshire	Cameroon	Case Resolution
CR6	Female	more than 5 yrs	Yorkshire	Russia	Case Resolution
CR7	Male	more than 5 yrs	Yorkshire	Russia	Case Resolution
CR8	Female	more than 5 yrs	Yorkshire	Zimbabwe	Case Resolution
CR9	Male	more than 5 yrs	Yorkshire	Guinea	Case Resolution
FJ1	Female	Less than 1 yr	Yorkshire	Indonesia	Family Joiner
FJ2	Female	Less than 1 yr	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ3	Female	3yrs to 5yrs	Yorkshire	India	Family Joiner
FJ4	Female	3yrs to 5yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ5	Female	more than 5 yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ6	Female	3yrs to 5yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ7	Female	more than 5 yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ8	Female	1 yr to 3 yrs	Yorkshire	India	Family Joiner
FJ9	Female	3yrs to 5yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ10	Female	Less than 1 yr	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ11	Female	1 yr to 3 yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ12	Female	1 yr to 3 yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ13	Female	more than 5 yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ14A	Female	1 yr to 3 yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ14B	Female	1 yr to 3 yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ15	Female	3yrs to 5yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ16	Female	3yrs to 5yrs	Yorkshire	India	Family Joiner
FJ17	Female	Less than 1 yr	Yorkshire	Syria	Family Joiner
FJ18	Female	Less than 1 yr	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ19	Female	1 yr to 3 yrs	Yorkshire	Guinea	Family Joiner
FJ20	Female	Less than 1 yr	Yorkshire	India	Family Joiner
FJ21	Female	3yrs to 5yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ22	Female	1 yr to 3 yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ23	Female	1 yr to 3 yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ24	Female	3yrs to 5yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ25	Male	1 yr to 3 yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ26	Female	1 yr to 3 yrs	Yorkshire	India	Family Joiner
FJ27	Female	more than 5 yrs	Yorkshire	Afghanistan	Family Joiner

Identifier	Gender	Length of time in UK	Location of interview	Nationality	Type of migrant
FJ28	Female	1 yr to 3 yrs	Yorkshire	India	Family Joiner
FJ29	Male	Less than 1 yr	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Family Joiner
FJ30	Female	1 yr to 3 yrs	Yorkshire	Bangladesh	Family Joiner
HSM1	Male	Less than 1 yr	Yorkshire	'Asia'	Highly Skilled Migrant
HSM2	Male	more than 5 yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Highly Skilled Migrant
HSM3	Male	3yrs to 5yrs	Greater Manchester	China	Highly Skilled Migrant
HSM4	Female	more than 5 yrs	Greater Manchester	Iran	Highly Skilled Migrant
HSM5	Male	more than 5 yrs	Greater Manchester	China	Highly Skilled Migrant
HSM6	Female	more than 5 yrs	Greater Manchester	Argentina	Highly Skilled Migrant
HSM7	Male	3yrs to 5yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Highly Skilled Migrant
HSM8	Female	1 yr to 3 yrs	Yorkshire	Pakistan	Highly Skilled Migrant
HSM9	Male	3yrs to 5yrs	Greater Manchester	China	Highly Skilled Migrant
HSM10	Female	more than 5 yrs	Yorkshire	Indonesia	Highly Skilled Migrant
HSM11	Female	3yrs to 5yrs	Yorkshire	Indonesia	Highly Skilled Migrant
HSM12	Female	more than 5 yrs	Yorkshire	India	Highly Skilled Migrant
HSM13	Female	Less than 1 yr	Greater Manchester	China	Highly Skilled Migrant

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