Evolving family structures, roles and relationships in light of ethnic and social change

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Summary

This report is divided into two sections. In the first half, I provide an overview of the nature of change in family structures and relationships over the last few decades and up to the current 2000-2025 period, highlighting the major issues and challenges concerning black and minority ethnic families in the UK. In the second half, I indicate the role of science and technology in shaping the potential futures of majority and minority ethnic family relations in the period 2025-2050. Throughout the review, reference is made to education, and the report ends by outlining the possible future implications of changing families for education and learning.

Keywords: family, ethnicity, relationships, ageing

Introduction: Ethnic diversification in the UK

The 1950s and 1960s saw the emergence of a number of now well known community studies of family life in Britain. Two particularly influential studies included Michael Young and Peter Wilmott's (1957) classic study of family and kinship in a working class area of East London, and Colin Rosser and Christopher Harris' (1965) study of family and social change in Swansea. These studies, amongst others (Firth, 1956; Townsend, 1957) were extremely influential, revealing as they did the continuing significance of extended kinship networks in the daily life of families. As a testament to their continued importance, both studies were revisited in the early 21st century, promising, in so doing, to shed light on half a century of social and community change (Dench et al, 2006; Charles et al ,2008). What is of particular significance, however, is how in undertaking these restudies, the researchers were faced with the challenge of "returning" to communities which had undergone considerable ethnic diversification. Thus Dench et al's work *Family and Kinship in East London* becomes *The New East End: Kinship, Race and Conflict*. Charles et al's restudy also had to incorporate Swansea's minority ethnic population. These two particular case studies merely indicate that it is increasingly difficult to truly consider the nature of diversity and change in families in Britain without

placing questions of ethnicity and multiculturalism at the centre. It can be argued that the framework of class and community has been replaced by the framework of ethnicity and multiculturalism. Either way, they provide local illustrations of how ethnic diversification resulting from international migration has become a major feature of social structure and personal relationships both in Britain and across the world.

Over a period of two decades after the Second World War, people from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and the Caribbean migrated to Britain in large numbers as a result of postwar labour shortages. Later, during the 1970s, people of South Asian origin came from Africa in response to the Ugandan and Kenyan governments' Africanization policies. Since then, the legal entry of unskilled, non-white people has been limited to the dependents or spouses of these earlier immigrants. There has also been significant immigration of Black Africans since the 1980s. According to the 2001 census, the UK has a non-white minority ethnic population of 4.6 million, representing 7.9% of the total population. Those categorized as "Asian or Asian British" (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and other Asian) numbered 2.3 million, comprising 4% of the UK population, whilst those termed "Black or Black British" (including Black Caribbean, Black African and Black Other) comprised 1.1 million. Not insignificant proportions (15%) of non-whites are classified as "Mixed", around a third of whom are from white and Black Caribbean backgrounds.

The focus in this paper will be on Britain's Asian and Black Caribbean populations making up as they do around two-thirds of the minority population. However, it is important to note that the 'white' category comprising 92.1% of the population also contains ethnic differences, for example, white Irish and Poles who have also migrated in large numbers over the course of the 20th century. Rarely, for instance, do the Irish community appear in ethnically sensitive monitoring, despite evidence of their acute disadvantage. To some extent this is captured via recently added distinctions between White British, White Irish and White Other. This is likely to have added significance given the arrival of Eastern European labour migrants to the UK since EU enlargement, some of whom are becoming parents in the UK, whose children are currently attending primary schools, and who may be joined by other family members. Thus minority ethnic people should not be simply equated with non-white people.

Certain urban areas across the UK have become commonly, perhaps pejoratively, associated within the popular imagination with a strong minority presence – African Caribbeans in Brixton, South London; Punjabi Sikhs in Southall, West London; Bangladeshis in parts of East London; as well as distinctive Black and South Asian communities in the Midlands and North of England. Other ports, such as Cardiff, Liverpool, and Bristol have had notable Black populations since at least the mid 19th century as a result of the enforced migration of Black people as part of the slave trade. It has been argued that the housing and settlement patterns of ethnic minorities have served to maintain or reproduce their sense of ethnic solidarity vis-a-vis the wider society. Community-based solidarities emerge as forms of protection against their experience of structural disadvantage, exclusion and racism. These communities, as well as voluntary organizations within them, form an important social resource for minority ethnic families; for example, offering valuable support for parents who have arrived in Britain but who have no network of support among their own family or friends living nearby. A crucial issue for policy and research is whether and how recent migrants of African or Asian background, including those who have migrated later in life, are tapping into these built-up networks. Despite the relatively younger age structure of Britain's minority ethnic population, the generation of Black Caribbean and South Asian post-war migrants to Britain is now moving into retirement age and this raises further important social policy questions about their informal support networks, and the capacity of care and service providers to be culturally sensitive to their needs in old age (Blakemore and Boneham, 1994; Nazroo, 2006).

The presence of these communities has challenged (and continues to challenge) conventional notions of British national belonging, identity and culture and have, to some extent, contributed to a greater understanding of multicultural citizenship in the UK (Parekh, 1999). Most British-born children and grandchildren of Caribbean and South Asian migrants would consider themselves to a greater or lesser degree as British, whilst still maintaining an attachment to their parents'/grandparents' country or region of origin. Consequently, as young adults, they may adopt and actively maintain a trans-national meaning of family, which extends beyond those residing in Britain. What is of importance is to consider how their family values and relationships reflect both their ethno-cultural background, as well as their adoption of 'westernized' British values. "Minoritised families" in which there has been a history of migration leading to trans-national networks thus constitute a key point of differentiation within British families. However, many of the changes occurring in minority ethnic families are also happening to varying degrees within all families, and thus are not simply specific "ethnic" features. The notion of families as exhibiting *ethnic* differences which are distinct from the majority entails both accurate representations and misrepresentations of reality. As a result, and before turning directly to this, it is first necessary to provide a general background to the patterns of change and diversity that are affecting all families.

Changing Families: The General Picture

In recent decades, Britain, like many countries across the developed world, has witnessed an evolving pattern of change in the nature of family structures, roles and relationships. In particular, there are significant demographic changes taking place that are having a direct influence on patterns of family formation, as well as on relationships between family members. These include shifts towards fewer marriages, more cohabitation and more births outside marriage; increases in divorce, remarriage and reconstituted families; and an increase in the proportion of lone parent and smaller families. In addition to these broad trends, population ageing and the extension of the life course, point to a renewal of multi-generational family relationships, particular with regard to the role of grandparents.

It can be argued that *the* major trend in current 21st century families has been a transformation in relation to marriage. Today's family picture reflects a shift away from the married couple family that dominated for much of the 20th century. While it remains the case that over half of adults still live as married couples, their percentage is declining. Census figures over the second half of the 20th century show marked declines from 68% in 1971 to just over 50% in 2001. Alongside this, and as in many European countries, the average age of marriage has increased. Parenthood is also occurring later. Kiernan (2004, p118) has shown that in the mid 1970s, the average age of first time brides in Britain was clustered in the 22-24 years old range, whereby by the year 2000 they are clustered in the late 20s, predominantly at age 27. It should also be noted that this masks considerable variation in the age of first time mothers defined by social class and education.

One of the important drivers behind these trends is the concomitant rise in cohabitation, which doubled between the 1991 and 2001 censuses. While men and women living together outside marriage is certainly not new, there are clear rises in incidence, since the 1980s, of young people living together for sustained periods either as a precursor to, or instead of, marriage. A proportion of cohabiting couples are same sex couples. Since the Civil Partnership Act came into force in January 2005, there have been over 20,000 such partnerships. The number of people living alone has also more than doubled between 1971 and 2005, from 3 to 7 million (Social Trends, 2007).

One change which has received much political and media attention, and which also forms a central aspect of arguments around family breakdown, relates to patterns of divorce. In Britain, rates of divorce have increased steadily since the 1970s, culminating in the current disbanding of around 40% of marriages (Harper, 2003). Although, as Harper

(2003) goes on to state, this is counterbalanced by the fact that those marriages that do not end in divorce will be longer because of increased life expectancy for both women and men. Accordingly, divorce, along with the greater number of children born outside marriage, has contributed significantly to changes in household and family composition. On one hand, the proportion of children living in lone parent families in Britain more than tripled between 1972 and 2006 to 24% (Social Trends, 2007). On the other hand is the rise in the number of step- and reconstituted families. Although precise figures are difficult to come by, there is little doubt that numbers have been growing as a consequence of divorce and remarriage (Allan and Crow, 2001).

Demographic changes, along with new family forms, are also impacting upon the position of older people within families. It is increasingly argued that families will be increasingly characterized by multi-generational bonds beyond the household, particularly between grandparents and grandchildren. Recent UK figures suggest that around a third of the population are grandparents and will remain so for an average of 25 years (Harper, 2005). Moreover, three-quarters of the UK population will at some stage attain grandparenthood (Dench and Ogg, 2002). With the expansion of the grandparent role across the span of an individual's life, it is likely to occur while people are still engaged in numerous other social roles including work, associational and other family roles. In the United Kingdom, this context is reflected by current policy concerns over the role of grandparents (Dench and Ogg, 2002), particularly around childcare (Wheelock and Jones, 2002) and as a resource allowing lone mothers greater participation in the labour market (Harper et al, 2004).

Taken as a whole, these trends illustrate the point that fewer people live in a household characterized in terms of a "simple" nuclear family comprising a heterosexual couple and their two dependent children. In attempting to make sense of the increased diversity and fluidity in family relations, at least two key ideas from family sociology emerge – "individualization" (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002) and "negotiation" (Finch and Mason, 1995). According to the individualization thesis, individuals, over the latter half of the 20th century have been gradually emancipated from traditional norms and, as a result, are able to exert a greater degree of control over their lives. This may be reflected in changing normative understandings about when is the "right" age to marry, about greater sexual freedom, challenging gender norms, and increased opportunities for educational, labour market and social mobility for women. Evidently there is much more flexibility in becoming a couple and whether people co-reside. Younger people are marrying less and are doing so at older ages. There also appear to be more choices around family and work, albeit choices which are gendered. People are far more able to choose the kinds of intimate relationships that are important to them, and are more likely to end them if they no longer accord with their personal preferences and objectives.

Coupled with the notion of "individualization" is the idea of "negotiation". Relationships between men and women, parents and children, to a greater degree, involve negotiation. Families are not simply "givens" but need to be worked at, particularly when the issue of who is and who is not "family" is fluid and subject to change over time. In addition, relations between parents and (adult) children are increasingly characterized by democratization, mutual agreement, respect and reciprocity, and disclosure of information. Like individualization, the breakdown of ascribed social norms provides a degree of space within which to negotiate. This point is particularly evident when we consider the role of grandparents. As alluded to above, research evidence points to considerable solidarity between the generations within families, and this is reflected in high levels of support provided by grandparents to their children as parents. The current generation of grandparents is healthier and wealthier in their later life. This provides opportunities for them to develop meaningful and reciprocal relationships with their children and grandchildren, not least around education and learning. However, these bonds, whilst strong, still require negotiation. Most grandparents want to help out, but

they do not necessarily want to provide child care on a full time basis. This is exemplified in recent debates around grandparents' rights as well as grandparent support groups offering advice as to how establish ground rules with parents around childcare (see, for example, Hill, 2008). Grandparents can no longer be taken as "door mats". Thus we see the emphasis upon continuing family responsibilities but in the context of negotiation and choices with other work and leisure roles.

Changing Minority Ethnic Families: Challenges and Trends

Are these changes in family life also impacting upon minority families? Is their influence more or less similar or different to that identified within majority families? Indeed, survey research has identified both similarities and differences in these patterns across ethnic groups. In the 2001 census, among all families, those headed by a person of a non-white ethnic background are much more likely than white families to have children living with them. Nearly 80% of Bangladeshi families had dependent children compared to just 40% of white families. Bangladeshi and Pakistani families tend to be larger than families of any other ethnic group. Mixed, Black Caribbean and White families with dependent children had the largest proportion of cohabiting couples, but cohabitation is less usual amongst Asian and Chinese populations. In turn, over 45% of Black Caribbean, Black African and mixed families were headed by a lone parent, compared with 25% of white families. According to the 4th National Survey of Ethnic Minorities in Britain (Modood et al, 1997; Berthoud, 2005), only 39% of Caribbean adults under the age of 60 are in formal marriages compared to 60% of white adults under 60. Conversely, South Asians are characterized by higher rates of marriage with around three-quarters of Pakistani women in partnerships by the age of 25, compared with about two-thirds of Indian women and just about half of African-Asian and White women (Berthoud, 2005).

The most common method to help understand and explain ethnic differences in family formation has been to compare the degree to which minority ethnic families are following the path of "individualization" (as illustrated above by, amongst other things, rising patterns of cohabitation, divorce, less children, lone parenting) that is seen to be characterizing white majority families (see Beishon, 1995; Berthoud, 2001, 2005; Modood et al, 1997; Shaw, 2004).

Berthoud (2005), for example, posits a single scale running from "old fashioned values" to "modern individualism" as a way of interpreting ethnic variations with Pakistanis and Bangladeshis at the traditionalistic end and Caribbeans at the individualistic end and ahead of whites. Berthoud goes as far as to say that "the Caribbean family, in the traditional sense of a Caribbean man married to a Caribbean woman, may be dying out" (2005, p249). In contrast, South Asians remain strongly adhered to "old-fashioned values" with very few people cohabiting from an Asian ethnic background. This said, whilst South Asian adults are less likely to be living outside marriage, there is and has been a good number of Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis living alone temporarily due to migration processes which go unreported in surveys. For instance, men may be separated from their families by lengthy immigration procedures and in these cases women may become *de facto* lone parents for several years and, as a result, not in receipt of the support and benefits available to them.

Ethnic minority families also differ in relation to norms of responsibity towards older family members. As the American Sociologist Talcott Parsons noted some 50 years ago, in white families, an adult's responsibilities towards partner and children are given precedence over existing obligations towards other kin. This tendency, however, is not so evident in minority ethnic families. Among some of Britain's Asian population in particular, greater priority is given to parental ties in adulthood. There is much more sharing of the home across three generations, often in the form of common housekeeping. Multi-generational ties, both within and beyond households, have particular resonance amongst South Asian families, and to an extent Chinese families, in

which couples continue to live with their parents after starting their own families. For example, around two-thirds of British resident Indian elders live with one of their adult children, compared with just 15% of white elders (Berthoud, 2005). However, young Asian families tend to live more often with the father's rather than the mother's family, meaning that, unlike the dominance of maternal grandparents commonly observed amongst whites, it is the widowed paternal grandmother who is most likely to live with the family.

Despite the differences between them, all ethnic groups, including South Asians, are viewed as moving towards the "modern individualism" end of the continuum, with lower rates of marriage and higher rates of cohabitation and single parenthood, albeit at different rates. Berrington (1994), over a decade ago, finds that whilst almost all Asians do get married, the second generation are marrying later than their parents, suggesting some assimilation in patterns towards those of the white population. Arranged marriage is a common form of marriage amongst South Asian groups. However, these patterns are also impacted upon by "western" notions of individual choice, with the individuals who are marrying being given more opportunities to influence partner selection than previously (Crow and Allan, 2001, p60).

It may be too simplistic however to view different ethnic groups in terms of their position on a continuity between modern individualism and traditionalism, but which are all shifting inevitably in the same direction. The result is a tendency to consider minority ethnic families in terms of their deviation from the "norm" or from the "standard white model" with Muslims as the most "culturally different" and resistant to change (see Smart and Shipman, 2004 for a critical discussion). In order to understand the significance of ethnic differences, a deeper understanding of the social and cultural context underlying these trends, of how distinctive cultural traditions and socio-economic pressures are shaping family patterns, is needed.

Shaw (2004) has identified how the family forms and relationships of Caribbeans and South Asians continue to reflect issues and concerns that relate to their respective regions of origin. For instances, Black Caribbean families in Britain reflect similarities with changing patterns of kinship in the Caribbean itself, with high rates of single motherhood, significant grandmother care, and a large proportion of children born outside marriage. Given the cultural continuity of these patterns between Britain and the Caribbean, it is difficult to see how they arise from the pressures of "modern individualism". Of course, these trends have all appeared in debates surrounding the "problematic" nature of Black single motherhood. However, such a focus also overlooks the importance of ties beyond the household, both in the UK and trans-nationally. Reynolds (2006) has also criticized the stereotypical view of African Caribbean families as reflecting heightened individualism, indicated by weak kinship ties and a fragmented family structure, leading to youth crime, educational under-achievement and high youth unemployment. In fact, Caribbean families continue to demonstrate strong reciprocal ties and bonding both within local communities and across transnational networks (see also Gouldbourne, 2008). Trans-national kinship links continue to be significant for young people. In addition, family roles and relationships may be an important source of identity for young Caribbean men, who may be more likely to be unemployed and suffer ill-health. There is some evidence that family roles such as fatherhood gives these men a sense of purpose and value that is otherwise not available to them. Similarly, Shaw (2004) explores the differences between South Asian families, particular around marriage patterns, suggesting that attempts to group these populations together are unhelpful and overlook internal contradictions.

Certainties and Uncertainties in the Evolving Patterns of Change in Families

The conclusion of many scholars is that characterizations of current and future generations of minority families as moving towards "modern individualism", and

assimilating to the norms and values of the host society, may be misplaced. As has been noted, close trans-national links may actually be increasingly sustained by both the greater social mobility of young Caribbeans and South Asians in Britain, as well as by further developments in communication technology.

If these trends around the globalising of family relationships continue, then one would expect individuals and families to be less rooted around local place and in relation to the communities in which we were born or grew up. They will involve the maintenance of ties across greater distances between Britain, Europe and the World. But there are contradictory trends and we should be careful not to over-generalize about the impact of globalization. There has also been a parallel rise in the importance of the local, the increase in ethnic group solidarity, and different forms of project identity. This will emphasize active family and community togetherness, not free floating individualism. In this sense, physical contact may become even more, rather than less, salient in the form of family gatherings, celebrations and the passing on of traditions and rituals. The global fascination with genealogy and family trees may stem from the need for self-understanding and belonging in a globalizing world where identities can become easily blurred and where choices seem overwhelming.

It would also be erroneous to view the changes referred to above, as often happens in debates about the family, as evidence of instability or as a decline in the importance of family. That family responsibilities based on ascribed traditional norms of responsibility can no longer be assumed is only one side of the story. All the research evidence shows the considerable hard work, time and effort that people put into maintaining their connections to other family members across boundaries and differences and who may live in other countries. Rather than changes driving people apart, making the family more fragile and people more self-focused, we see people continuing to invest considerable energy and value into their personal relationships. As the boundaries of family life become more complicated, we see a greater emphasis upon the communication and "display" (Finch, 2007) of familyness, as the means by which families are established. We also see more attempts to seek out family histories through genealogical software and historical societies, and an interest in resemblances and heritability (Mason, 2008).

All this said, previous misplaced claims about how the family will look today, such as those around family breakdown and fragmentation also serve as warnings against the pitfalls of over-generalisation and unwarranted extrapolation of current trends into the future. Inevitably, visions of possible futures will draw selectively from the range of evidence available. Any predictions around the particular direction that families will take are questionable to the extent that they overlook the scope for diversity. Furthermore, the degree to which current trends represent sharp qualitative breaks with the past is highly questionable. In focusing primarily upon change, we risk overlooking significant consistencies and continuities that would be equally important in understanding how families in the future will unfold. For example, there remains a degree of uniformity in families because of the persistence of structural factors, such as the labour market. There is also little change in gender relations in the household, despite the growth of married women's paid work. This relates to normative constraints, but also to other issues such as labour market differentials between men and women, as well as gendered assumptions implicit within welfare policies (eg parental leave), which continue to reinforce rational decision making between couples regarding who does what.

The Role of Science and Communication Technology in Shaping Contemporary and Future Family Relations

Developments in communication networks and information technology are already shaping family relations, not least amongst minoritised families dispersed by international migration. The rising availability (and affordability) of air travel, telecommunications and other new digital forms of communication are further

encouraging the development of trans-national ties on a global scale. This is occurring, however, not just amongst those with a history of migration, but among a wider range of families whose children, siblings, parents and/or grandparents are living and working for varying amounts of time abroad.

In some families, we will see the internet and other new and advanced telecommunication systems acting as the principal means by which family members and friends establish frequent and regular contact. Recent developments such as SKYPE and VONAGE may be responding to, as well as normalizing, these demands. SKYPE claims to have 309 million registered members worldwide and 12 million users at peak times (BBC News, 2005). Like SMS messaging previously, SKYPE is becoming part of the everyday terminology of family and friends. Again, the availability and affordability of this software is key. Increasingly these facilities will be used by both children and parents to contact each other. However, while we know that these will form an increasingly important role in how family members communicate, there remain uncertainties as to the extent of this change, how it will affect the nature of relations and the meanings people ascribe to family life. There are at least three areas where the effects of technology are already evident and which have particular salience for the future:

Resolving work and family conflict?

One tangible impact of technology on family life is the shift in the work-home relationship. For example, as a result of digital forms of communication people are increasingly able to take their work home, and to combine working from both office and home to suit their family and caring obligations. This has become a particular trend within dual earner families. Conversely this may lead to a colonization of family space and time by work space and time, for example, in "mum is working" times or working during the post-bedtime shift. At certain moments, the space between working and not working becomes blurred, for example, internet searching, and reading newspapers and magazines. Work and family domains are also blurred by the expectation, generated by these technologies that individuals are, and should, be available all the time. Thus, there remain several unanswered questions around how these developments in flexible working conditions will impact upon family life. On one hand, they may provide people with choices in order to resolve work and family conflicts, allowing more and more people work from home and in locations that allow them to combine responsibilities. On the other hand, they may encourage employers to put even more pressure on workers to work further away and spend more time away from home. These developments will undoubtedly impact upon domestic gender divisions and decision making processes within the family. Time pressures can lead to stress for working parents and how people negotiate work and family roles becomes an increasingly important issue.

"Intimacy at a distance"?

There will also be transformations in the relationship between emotional closeness and physical contact. Family members scattered across continents will view themselves as emotionally close because they are making the effort to stay in touch despite their considerable spatial barriers. In turn, the possibility of video calls, which already account for a quarter of all traffic on SKYPE, could change the way in which family members perceive and understand intimacy and the link between physical contact and emotional closeness. It is interesting to note that people who use these facilities regularly will use terms and phrases like 'intimate', 'close', 'just like being in the same room' to describe these forms of communication. What role do they play in how people form relationships? Do they produce necessarily more fragile relationships? Will they enable people to sustain relationships that would otherwise break down and end? Families are creating a 'networked' sense of connectedness, for example, by making and sending videotapes and emailing distant relatives, family histories are recorded and distributed across the globe. These are already occurring, but we see them happening on a much grander scale, leading to more fundamental shifts in what being intimate and being close means.

Parenting and children: More or less control?
The rise of more democratic forms of parent-child relationships means that children are taking an even greater interest in, and having an input in decision making. New forms of digital communication will represent a key medium through which these decisions are made. For example, parents may already be encouraging the purchase and use of mobile phones by their children at a young age to the extent that they allow them greater control and monitoring of the children's activities and whereabouts. They may allow parents to act as "virtual chaperones", monitoring activity and safety within an increasingly "risky" environment. On one hand this implies more equal partnerships. On the other, the control and monitoring of children's behaviours may be extended, beyond the physical, at the virtual level. How will potential technological developments by Google around live satellite pictures at street level shape this? How are new forms of communication shaping the democratic openness of how monitoring and supervision works in families?

Education, Ethnicity, Changing Families and Intergenerational learning
As outlined above, demographic changes as well as changing family forms, such as dual income and lone parent families, place a greater emphasis upon the intergenerational relationship between children and their grandparents. The increasing amounts of time children spend with their grandparents raises direct questions about education and its relationship to intergenerational learning that takes place within families as well as in schools (see also Gregory et al, 2007; Kenner et al, 2007). The role of grandparents can often alleviate the time pressures faced by working parents, and in certain situations may substitute parents' time investments in promoting children's education. While intergenerational transfers of time, care and money tend to work downward – from grandparents to grandchildren – the nature of intergenerational learning is a reciprocal one. There has been anecdotal evidence for some time regarding how children teach their grandparents to use computers, internet and other technological developments.

We know that the family provides opportunities for frequent interaction between young and old, and this has become an important aspect within debates about age segmentation and segregation. A key area to consider is the role of schools in fostering this. Evidence from intergenerational programmes also suggests that schools need to be more aware of the opportunities available for mutual learning between children and older people, and the wider societal benefits this provides. Changing attitudes towards older people, including grandparents, need to be recognized within educational and learning paradigms – not as conveyors of out-dated traditional forms of knowledge but as agents with skills and knowledge that compliment children's formal education.

Intergenerational learning also has particular implications for minority ethnic families and citizenship. Previous conventional understandings of citizenship had assumed that acculturation of minorities to the host society values was an inevitable process. The orientations of 2nd and 3rd generation migrants would be firmly orientated to the host society as opposed to the country of origin. Most of the UK research evidence has shown this to not be the case. The mutual learning that occurs between grandchildren and grandparents can also act to promote citizenship amongst older people. The current government has initiated a number of policies aimed at citizenship education and the better integration of new citizens to the UK.

Schools represent the key domain through which the state is able to actively foster national values to its citizenry. Yet as patterns of migration change (for example, people migrating during middle and later life), citizenship education needs to be broadened in order to form part of lifelong learning. To what extent will previous migrants, such as those who came during the 1950s and 1960s, act as role models for more recent migrants of a similar age group? The adaptation of new migrants also requires a much

broader notion of citizenship education – not simply with regard to civic values, democracy and Britishness – but also with less abstract forms of knowledge which impact directly upon their mobility, eg qualifications, labour market issues, entitlements and service provision, and issues to do with intercultural communication.

Globalization has extended and intensified the flows of migration between societies and this has been met with concerns over the integration and needs of the new and diverse migrants. A good deal of their societal adaptation can be learned from previous and existing migrants, thus there need to be spaces for mutual learning within civil society, for example, through community and adult education centres.

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