

Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research and Data, and Department for Work and Pensions Areas of Research Interest (ARI) Workshop 23 and 25 March 2021

Spotlight Presentations: Poverty, Disability and Homelessness

Title	Session highlights	Slides
<p><i>In-work poverty: On transitions in and out of working poverty and the anti-poverty effects of Tax Credits.</i></p> <p>Dr Rod Hick (Reader, School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University).</p> <p>HickR@cardiff.ac.uk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings from a Nuffield Foundation-funded project on in-work poverty in the UK, based on analysis of data from the Households Below Average Income and Understanding Society surveys. • Focus on two aspects of project; the extent of transitions in and out of in-work poverty between years and the economic and household events associated with these transitions and, second, on findings from an analysis of the efficacy of Child and Working Tax Credits in reducing in-work poverty. • Advocated a whole household approach and recognition of housing – most recent in-work poverty seen in private rented sector. Reflecting wider tenure change. • Found TC effective in reducing poverty among large households, has this factor been lost in discussion of UC? In-work poverty pre-Covid was increasing. • Reiterated importance of social security in in-work poverty analysis, importance of household analysis where increases in NLW/minimum wage can be quickly eaten up by housing costs. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Link</p>
<p><i>The implications of welfare state reform for single mothers: a case study from the South Wales Valleys.</i></p> <p>Dr Helen Blakely (Research Associate, WISERD, Cardiff University).</p> <p>BlakelyH1@cardiff.ac.uk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A qualitative ethnographic study explored the lives of a group of young women who were the targets of welfare state reform and considered ways in which reforms have repositioned welfare support in a new set of material and symbolic constraints and opportunities. • Examined the views of respondents, single women on a housing estate in South Wales Valleys, on the impacts of welfare reforms including the extension of the employment imperative for parents with younger children. • Looked at views of the combination of state (Jobcentre), third sector and private sector support. Included direct quotes from participants. Examined experience of ‘Life Support’ project – range of funders including Welsh Government and ESF - promoted Level 2 qualifications in Maths, English and IT, plus a crèche and support worker approach, examining potential career paths in e.g. caring professions. • Contrasted women’s experience of JCP Lone Parent Adviser with interviewed Life Support workers – latter identified with cohort – saw positive interactions with single parents. Saw need for support providing 	<p style="text-align: center;">Link</p>

	<p>a foothold on the path to social mobility with a view to good quality, well paid and child friendly work as optimal.</p>	
<p>Disability and the UK labour market.</p> <p>Prof Melanie Jones (Professor of Economics, Cardiff Business School, Cardiff University).</p> <p>JonesM116@cardiff.ac.uk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing on studies using secondary data to explore the scale and drivers of the disability employment gap, the disability pay gap and the broader experience of work for disabled people in the UK. Recent research has focussed on the relationship between disability onset and employment/welfare benefits. • While gender pay gap well known, less attention paid to disability pay gap. • Project looked at transitions in and out of disability using longitudinal data over 4 years to examine probability of employment and hourly pay. Following same individual over time found negative employment effects. • US and Australia data over longer term looks at type of disability and chronicity. Used propensity score matching to compare disabled individuals and matched non-disabled individuals with similar characteristics. WERS derived job satisfaction index for disability and experience of work including view of management, job satisfaction, pay, etc. shows consistent negative results for disabled people. • Probability of being temporarily away from work likely to increase for disabled people post-Covid. • Longitudinal data underused – academics create using LFS/APS rather than ONS release. 	<p>Link</p>
<p>Exploring the potentially transformative role of linked benefits data in evaluating what works to end homelessness.</p> <p>Dr Peter Mackie (Reader, School of Geography and Planning, Cardiff University).</p> <p>Dr Ian Thomas (ADRC Wales Research Support Officer, WISERD, Cardiff University).</p> <p>MackieP@cardiff.ac.uk</p> <p>ThomasIR2@cardiff.ac.uk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This presentation drew upon a programme of exploratory research using linked administrative homelessness data, and pioneering trials research in the homelessness field, to illustrate the potentially transformative role linked housing benefit data could play in evaluating what works to end homelessness in the UK. • Access to single Local Authority data set - Swansea 2012-17, 17k cases, applications for support – 12k individuals. Categorized service users as transient, episodic and chronic. Episodic representing a failure of homelessness prevention. • Linked homelessness data to education data National Pupil Dataset for Wales – persistent school absenteeism linked to homelessness. And linked to prevalence of substance misuse. • Huge opportunities in linked data, HB and homelessness to better understand stability, tenure, childhood and homelessness – while housing is devolved, LAs don't generally know middle term and longer term housing outcomes. Data linking offers a cost effective and less intrusive research instrument. • Cost of homelessness hard to estimate – relies on aggregated figures – reaches across health, police, criminal justice etc. Most homelessness analysis traditionally quali – opportunity to improve understanding via quant and RCTs. 	<p>Link</p>

Spotlight Presentations: Employment, Progression & the Future of Work

Title & Speaker	Session highlights	Slides
<p><i>Labour Market Insights: The Added Value of the Skills and Employment Survey</i></p> <p>Prof Alan Felstead (Research Professor, School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University).</p> <p>AlanFelstead@Cardiff.ac.uk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Skills and Employment Survey is a well-established and well used data resource. The 2017 survey has provided new insights into: patterns of skills use; trends in training quality; the role of employees in driving up productivity; and how job quality is changing. This talk outlined some of these findings. Maintaining a long running data series can fill gaps left by official surveys. • Relevant to DWP ARI question on understanding how the Labour Market is changing. SES consists of 7 surveys over 30 years, planning next one for 2023 potential coverage of MH, WB, home working, job location. Goes beyond LFS/APS, 4 themes in 2017 – skills, training & learning, productivity and insecurity. • Can chart nature of jobs since 1980s and chart supply and demand for jobs – e.g. clear there are more graduates than graduate jobs. Allows analysis of skills used in work, not just qualifications. Includes worker wellbeing as well as number of training activities, training duration, outcomes and quality. Training trends papers published by LLAKES – training quality appears to hold up despite shorter durations. • 2017 SES looked at productivity from worker perspective, workers i.d. small changes that could improve efficiency - importance of engaged workers and High Performance Working. • Job quality quiz had 50k responses – shows appetite to discuss Covid, Brexit and uncertain labour market. 	<p>Link</p>
<p><i>The Prospects for Skills and Employment in an Age of Digital</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing on research on skill formation and the future of work considered the need to gain a better understanding of the impact of new technologies. The relationship between education and the labour market, as prescribed by Human Capital theory, no longer works in the way that it has done in the past. In understanding how the labour market is evolving, including the demand for, and the supply of skills, the impact of new technologies has significant implications for individuals and the labour market. 	<p>Link</p>

<p>Transformation: A Cautionary Note.</p> <p>Prof Phillip Brown (Research Professor, School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University).</p> <p>BrownP1@cardiff.ac.uk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pertinent to DWP ARI question – how LM is evolving and how DWP responds. On demand side - press stories on robots leading to mass unemployment exaggerate the position. AI may change high and lower skilled jobs. On supply – involves more than an alignment to acquired digital skills, wider questions include graduate under-employment, growth of precarious work for skilled workers. • If role of HE no longer promoted as primary post-compulsory education route, what are the implications for any increased focus on applied education and what does life-long learning mean? • Pandemic has highlighted inequalities. Debate can usefully be reframed about how companies use tech, for e.g. how employers screen job applications. • Basic income questions arise and the need for experiments – however some systems, e.g. China involve social credits and behavioural elements, UK should avoid. 	
<p>Understanding the origins of labour market disadvantage: the career aspirations of FSM eligible pupils in Wales.</p> <p>Rhys Davies (Co-Director, WISERD, Cardiff University)</p> <p>DaviesOR@cardiff.ac.uk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overview of research into Welsh school pupil aspirations with data linking and potential further work linking to later life outcomes, building on choices relating to transitions following compulsory education. A population level linkage study that combines information from the Careers Wales Career Check Survey with information from the National Pupil Database, current work highlights early relative difficulties of pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). • Careers Wales adviser data includes a Career Check diagnostic at KS4, Y10, pre-GCSE. 90% coverage for 2018/19. 4 cohorts 2015/16 – 2018/19 – 90k pupils. Can compare to education records in National Pupil Database. Finds pupils on Free School Meals express concerns early on e.g. lower confidence in decision making and lower family support, than non-FSM pupils. • Gendered and sectoral career aspirations exacerbated for FSM pupils – FSM pupils more likely to cite hair and beauty. Male pupils at KS4, 3 times more likely to show interest in apprenticeships. With FMS pupils 20% less likely to express interest in apprenticeships than non-FSM. • Policy and research question - can careers guidance have a positive influence on subsequent transitions? • Next steps to link to Census 2011 and would be good to link to DWP data. 	<p>Link</p>

***Explainable to whom?
Why audience matters
when building AI systems
that can explain
themselves.***

[Prof Alun Preece](#) (Professor
of Intelligent Systems, Co-
Director of the Crime and
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- Recent high-profile cases have highlighted the need for artificial intelligence (AI) systems to explain their outputs, to assure users that these systems are functioning appropriately, including being free from harmful biases. There is a large and active multidisciplinary research and development community attempting to address this problem, but one issue that has been neglected is consideration of the audiences for AI system explanations. This talk looked at different roles that humans play in relation to AI systems, and how explanations need to be crafted differently for different kinds of recipients.
- Interested in human + human + machine. Good for labour market experts and AI to interact. AI periodically comes up as a topic of interest – 2020s a case in point. Tranche of headlines covering AI and sewage, sport, GCHQ, virus modelling and health care.
- Explainability is important – new mantra of ‘fairness, accountability and transparency’ covers big issues. Know that explaining biases in AI is important – we don’t know how to do it well. Consideration of specific audiences important - ask to whom it is explainable?
- Whose responsibility is transparency? Govt, industry or a bit of both?
- Recent tech developments enable relooking at data sets previously collected, language processing has been transformed in last 2-3 years – possibilities for DWP and Jobcentre data.

Link