
5 Deprivation, occupational class and mobility

Method

The short occupational classification of the Registrar General (1951) which employs five basic categories was used at both five years and 33 years. This classification has limitations as it depends upon the employment of the father or male wage-earner, and does not therefore provide for the classification of unmarried women or the unemployed.

Many research workers who have used the classification have divided Class III into manual and non-manual, but our samples were too small to use this device. We assigned men who had worked within the last year to the category appropriate to their last occupation.

Our families

In 1952, the mean age of mothers was 33.5 years and therefore almost the same as the female Red Spots in 1980. It was therefore considered reasonable to use a similar index to compare occupations at an equivalent point in the life cycle across the two generations. In 1952 there was little unemployment of skilled or able bodied men who wanted to work, and the Registrar General's classification was a broad indicator of status and of relative family incomes and ways of life. The unemployed were not included. The second classification was in 1980 when the Red Spots were in their thirty-third year, and all but 19 of the 264 had married and most were bringing up their own children. A few marriages had already failed and the partners had gone their own ways, either alone or with a new partner. The deaths of two husbands and one wife had broken three families. Three unmarried mothers were living alone with their children. In all, 14 Red Spots had divorced. The children of one family had been taken into care after their parents' divorce and remained there despite the fact that one parent remarried. In all, by

33 years of age, 244 of the 264 Red Spots had married, but some 10 per cent of these first marriages had already failed.

Findings

The distribution of occupational class at ages 15 and 33

The classification of social class (see Table 5.2) was not identical at five and 33 years. At five years, unemployment and absence of fathers were recorded as 'not classifiable', whereas at 33 years the unemployed were classified as category VI, and others, with absent fathers or without information, were grouped as not classifiable.

The figures for 1952 represent the occupations of the fathers in the original families, whereas those for 1980 represent the male Red Spots and partners of the female Red Spots. Noticeably more families (55 as against 19) were unemployed or not classifiable in 1980 compared with 1952. Nevertheless it is evident that there had been an upward movement into categories II, and III (occupations which demand skills) and a striking reduction in the numbers occupied in semi- and unskilled work.

Occupational class and deprivation

Table 5.1 shows the social class distribution of the study groups according to social class in 1952. While there are the expected significant differences between the groups, it is evident that deprived families were found in every occupational class but the greater the degree of deprivation, the greater the percentage of families in the lower occupational strata.

Since it is determined only by the one indicator, the Registrar General's classification hardly seems suitable to meet the social complexities which arise in families and which determine the environment into which children are born and spend their formative years. An alternative way of describing children living in the most seriously disadvantaged situations was devised by Wedge and Prosser (1973) in their book, *Born to Fail*. Their index comprised four factors: more than four children in the family; single-parent family; low income; and poor housing. They studied the 6 per cent of 11 year-old children in their sample who fulfilled all these conditions and thus they compared the

Table 5.1 Social class distribution of study groups according to social class in 1952

A. Occupational Classes of Men: England and Wales (1951 and 1971) (Ex Townsend 1979) '1000' Family Data (1952 and 1979-80)					
Occupational Class	National Sample 1951	Newcastle Total Group 1952	Newcastle Non-Deprived Group 1952	Newcastle Deprived Group 1952	Newcastle Multiply Deprived Group 1952
	%	%	%	%	%
I + II	17.5	10.3	16.2	2.5	0.9
III	53.4	53.0	61.8	41.4	26.7
IV + V	29.1	32.3	21.8	46.3	59.5
Unclassified	?	4.4	0.2	9.9	12.9
Total	14064	847	482	365	116

B. Second Generation as Adults (1979-80) Classified According to Deprivation in Family of Origin				
Occupational Class in 1952	National Sample ex 'Child Health and Education' 1977	Not Deprived Group 1952	Deprived Group 1952	Multiply Deprived Group 1952
	%	%	%	%
I + II	29.5	30.4	17.5	13.1
III	51.8	51.8	50.3	44.3
IV + V	18.7	16.1	20.3	14.8
Unclassified		1.8	11.9	27.9
Total	1917	56	143	61

C. Second Generation as Adults in 1980 Classified According to Deprivation in Family of Formation			
Occupational Class in 1980	Not Deprived Group 1979-80	Deprived Group 1979-80	Multiply Deprived Group 1979-80
	%	%	%
I + II	31.9	16.4	10.0
III	56.9	51.4	34.0
IV + V	9.7	30.7	24.0
Unclassified	1.4	1.4	32.0
Total	72	140	50

Note: Section A relates to 847 families; B and C to subsamples.

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most disadvantaged of the population with the 'normal' 94 per cent. With our index we were able to compare the multiply deprived (14 per cent) and the deprived (43 per cent) with both a random sample and the 57 per cent of families who did not present any of the indices of deprivation.

Our criteria provided measures when social class is not easily rated, covered situations of deprivation not necessarily tied to social class, and directly tapped adverse life experiences relevant to the development of children. Using them, we have shown that, in 1952, although multiple deprivation occurred mainly in families where the father was in semi-skilled or unskilled employment or was unemployed, a sizeable minority did come from artisan or other skilled occupational groups. In the non-deprived families, the gradient was the reverse of this. Thus, deprivation, according to our criteria, is related to, but not necessarily synonymous with, social class as defined by the Registrar General. This is simply demonstrated in Table 5.1, which shows that, when the Registrar General's social class alone is used, the number of deprived families in social classes IV and V may be underestimated because some are unclassifiable. Our method avoids this potential difficulty but depends upon the possession of information available only by special enquiry.

*Occupational mobility and deprivation
over generations*

Table 5.1 illustrates how Newcastle had lower percentages of families in the upper social strata when compared with the national distribution. This was partly because one of the suburbs was, until 1974, outside the municipal boundary.

The next question was the relationship between occupational class and severity of deprivation. In Generation I, occupational class was strongly related to deprivation, and this is well illustrated in relation to the national distribution (see Table 5.1). In the families of origin, it was only the non-deprived group which approximated to the national distribution of occupational class. This confirms the economic and occupational deprivation of Newcastle in the immediate post-war period, as compared to national 'norms'. Further, it highlights the social and economic disadvantages experienced by the multiply deprived families over 70 per cent of whom fall into the social classes of IV, V and unclassified.

The upward social mobility of our non-deprived group proved dramatic, with the percentage of families in occupational classes I and II almost doubling over the two decades. The distribution of this group is now almost identical to that of Osborn *et al.* (1984) in their National Study of Child Health and Education. However, the upward mobility of the deprived and multiply deprived was even more dramatic, the former increasing from under 3 per cent to over 17 per cent, and the latter from 1 per cent to 13 per cent. Nevertheless, deprivation in the previous generation still strongly influenced the occupational class of the next, and rather more than 40 per cent of the second-generation adults who came from multiply deprived families of origin were still in occupational class IV or V or were unclassified in 1980.

There was also a close relationship between the severity of deprivation in Generation I and occupational class for that generation. Almost three-quarters of the multiply deprived in Generation I fell into classes IV and V, but only one-quarter of the non-deprived did so. This indirectly supports Townsend's contention that, although occupational class is strongly correlated with poverty, the two are certainly not synonymous. When the 1980 families are classified according to deprivation in their families of origin and contemporary occupational class, they show a discrepancy which is even more marked; for instance, two-thirds of the deprived group do not then fall into social classes IV or V or unclassified, nor do over half of the multiply deprived. Further, twice the number of multiply deprived now fall into the unclassified category, a high proportion of these probably being unemployed. Thus, deprivation in one generation is an important indicator of the occupational class distribution in the next.

The next question is the relationship of deprivation defined according to contemporary family circumstances and contemporary occupational class. Almost all the non-deprived group and about two-thirds of the deprived group are contained within occupational classes I, II and III while 56 per cent of the multiply deprived are in classes IV and V.

Occupational mobility over generations

To this point, occupational mobility in families has been

considered various populations both within and without had previously upon Tyne

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Table 5.2

Occupational Class of Family of Origin
Class I + II
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IV + V
Unclassified
Total Distribution at 33 Years

Note: The fi horizo

considered by looking at the frequency distribution of the various populations. We also looked at occupational mobility both within and across generations. Mobility from 1947-54 had previously been described in *Growing Up in Newcastle upon Tyne* (Miller *et al.*, 1960).

To study intergeneration change we calculated whether the sons and sons-in-law of our population differed for each of the groups and we found few differences between the percentage distributions of occupational class of fathers in Generation I in 1952 and of their sons or their sons-in-law in Generation II. A minor trend was for sons-in-law in the non-deprived group to fall into higher occupational strata than sons. We therefore decided to combine the data for sons and sons-in-law and estimated the occupational class distribution within the original cohort (Table 5.2). When we look at occupational classes I and II in the families of origin we see, in the next generation, that two-thirds of these remain in the same categories; from occupational class III, just less than a half remain the same while about a quarter move up into classes I and II. From occupational classes IV

Table 5.2 Comparison of occupational class of 847 families across generations based on estimates using 264 families in first generation

Occupational Class of Family of Origin	Occupational Class of Families in 1980				Father Absent	Distribution at 5 Years Total
	Family of Formation			Unclassified		
	Class I + II	Class III	Class IV + V			
Class I + II	52(66)	11(14)	8(10)	0(0)	8(10)	79 9%
III	114(26)	204(46)	54(12)	20(4)	53(12)	445 52%
IV + V	17(6)	150(52)	80(27)	24(8)	20(7)	291 34%
Unclassified	6(18)	17(52)	2(6)	2(6)	6(18)	33 4%
Total Distribution at 33 Years	189(22)	382(45)	144(17)	46(5)	87(10)	848

Note: The figures in brackets are percentages of subtotals and may be summed horizontally.

and V, almost 60 per cent move up to classes III or I and II (although only a small percentage rose into the latter). When we look at the unclassified group we see, in the next generation, that almost a fifth fall into classes I and II and half fall into class III. One explanation is that the original unclassified category contained a proportion of students.

The numbers in the margins of the table confirm the fact of upward mobility. The estimated numbers in occupational classes I and II in 1952 were 79 (9 per cent) and in 1980 189 (22 per cent); and in III in 1952 they were 445 (52 per cent) and in 1980 382 (45 per cent). However, in 1952, the unclassified represented only 4 per cent of the sample but rose steeply to 15 per cent in 1980.

Occupational class and deprivation

Although we have examined the relationship between the degree of deprivation and occupational class in 1952 and 1980, we have not presented data in tabular form; this is, however, available on request to the authors. In the non-deprived group in occupational classes I and II in 1952, 25 per cent moved down; of those in class III, 31 per cent moved up and 14 per cent down; of those in classes IV and V, 71 per cent moved up. The numbers of the deprived group from occupational classes I and II are too small for analysis; of the families from occupational class III, 24 per cent moved up and 25 per cent moved down; and of those in IV and V, 60 per cent moved up. Finally, in the case of the multiply deprived, almost 50 per cent of those coming from occupational classes IV and V moved up. Overall, 77 per cent of the non-deprived families in 1952 and 76 per cent in 1980 were in occupational classes I, II or III while the same classes contained 41 per cent and 59 per cent of the deprived group respectively. This constituted considerable upward mobility. In the multiply deprived group it was 24 per cent and 45 per cent respectively. This suggests that a larger proportion of people moved upwards in the groups which were initially deprived. However, the most dramatic change was the numbers who fell into the unclassified categories in 1980, which range from 10 per cent of the non-deprived to 37 per cent of the multiply deprived.

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economic disadvantages experienced by Newcastle in the 1950s. Social mobility was estimated for the total original population of 847 and this provided evidence of upward occupational mobility across generations even with respect to the deprived and multiply deprived. Such analysis also reveals how deprivation in the families of origin in 1952 was significantly related to contemporary occupational status in 1980. Occupational class in 1980 was found to be significantly related to contemporary deprivation.

Finally, we turned to mobility across the generations in relation to the degree of deprivation. It was found that a larger percentage of deprived families were upwardly mobile compared with the non-deprived. On the other hand, there was a substantial increase in downward mobility with an increase in severity of deprivation. We conclude that 'averages' masked major movements in both directions.