New Migration and Community Change

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□ **AHRC - Connected Communities Scoping Study: New Migration, Neighbourhood Effects and Community Change** (Robinson and Walshaw)
http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/FundingOpportunities/Documents/CC%20scoping%20studies/Robinson.pdf

□ **JRF - The Housing Pathways of New Immigrants** (Robinson, Reeve and Casey). http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/housing-pathways-new-immigrants

□ **JRF - Neighbourhood, Community and Housing in Bradford** (Phillips, Athwal, Harrison, Robinson, Bashir and Atkinson).
http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/neighbourhood-community-housing-bradford

Conclusions....

1. **Limits of the evidence base** - ambiguity and confusion regarding the impacts of migration

2. **Glimpses into local impacts** - limited evidence base points to different impacts in different places

3. **Explaining local experiences** - little understanding of variable impacts but place appears to be important

4. **Interventions to mediate local challenges** - little known about what works

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1. Limits of the Evidence Base

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Impacts of the New Migration

- **immigration as "the most worrying issue facing the UK"**

- <5% in the mid-1990s

- 44% in 2006 (IPSOS MORI, 2006)

- 24% in February 2012 (IPSOS MORI, 2012)

- **replaying of well worn debates about threat to economic and social well-being, national identity and security**

- **BUT....what's the evidence?**

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An ambiguous and contradictory picture

- migration has only a small impact on *national GDP and suppresses wages*....BUT also creates new businesses and jobs, fills labour market gaps and encourages growth in average wages

- can exacerbate *deprivation and further concentrate poverty*....BUT can also serve as a driver of neighbourhood regeneration and renewal

- migrants are *utilising public services*....BUT not, apparently, in the numbers or with the consequences presumed in popular debate

- *tensions and conflict* can arise between new and settled residents....BUT are not an inevitability

- population change and increasing diversity has caused resource and planning problems for *service providers*....BUT many agencies have adapted with relative ease to change

My argument......

- ambiguities and contradictions = reflection of different experiences and outcomes in different places

- ....for new and settled residents and the places where they live

- **result** = a ***variable geography*** of experiences, impacts and consequences

2. Glimpses into Local Impacts

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- evidence tends to focuses on **national context** at the expense of local geographies of change

- fails to consider how consequences might be manifest and managed in **different ways in different contexts**

- fragmentary glimpses emerging into experiences at the local level

- two key themes.......

New Migration, Poverty and Deprivation

Place impacting on migrant experiences

- new migrants often live in deprived neighbourhoods - characterised by poor housing, high unemployment, restricted service provision/local amenities

- …. situations likely to have long-term impact on life experiences

Potential for migration to impact on places

- reinforcing existing geographies of deprivation and exclusion

- intensification of forms of social exclusion associated with living in physically and socially deprived neighbourhoods, such as barriers to labour market engagement and civic participation

- strain on services - e.g. additional demands on scarce resources in local schools already under pressure, resulting in tensions among parents and pupils

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perhaps not surprising that settled residents commonly perceive 'immigrants' as unwanted outsiders adding to the burden of deprivation and contributing nothing (Hickman et al., 2008)

BUT

❑ migrants have, in some locations, filled voids in the housing system

❑ helped tackle the blight of vacant properties (Robinson et al., 2007)

❑ provided a settled population in neighbourhoods characterised by high turnover (Pemberton, 2009)

❑ raised the educational and skill levels within the local population (Thorp, 2008)

❑ underpinned the viability of local services, amenities and facilities in neighbourhoods suffering population decline (Hickman et al., 2008)

Cohesion challenges of Migration

- damage to cohesion in deprived communities with little experience of diversity - disruption of everyday life and challenge to bounded/place-specific identities

- less able to capitalise on the possibilities presented by new migration, particularly when unsupported by interventions aimed at mediating the challenges raised by this process of change

- the capacity and infrastructure that can exist in established areas of minority ethnic settlement results in these areas often having more to offer new arrivals than many other deprived neighbourhoods

- competition over scarce resources - potential to promote conflict between new arrivals and settled residents, to promote racist sentiments and undermine community well-being (e.g. housing in 'tight' markets, such as London)

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Polish and Pakistani migrants in Sheffield

•living in cosmopolitan landscapes around Sheffield city centre, which had a long history of accommodating diversity and difference

•Pakistani respondents talked about the invaluable advice and assistance received from family and friends and community-led services that helped them negotiate their way through various bureaucratic procedures and access key services such as health care

•Polish migrant workers insisted where they lived was not a concern and that they did not seek out areas where other Polish people were living

•but pointed to benefits associated with living close to other Polish migrants, including the help and assistance finding work and accommodation

•new migrants spoke positively about their White British neighbours in a way that respondents living in neighbourhoods with little history of accommodating diversity and difference rarely did

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establi

Somali   (11)
Polish   (14)

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Liberian and Somali refugees in Sheffield

• stories of neighbourliness and positive interactions with fellow residents largely absent from the settlement stories of respondents, who had been allocated to social housing on peripheral estates

• talked about having few friends living nearby, of little contact with neighbours and feeling alone and out of place

• sense of isolation that was compounded by the corrosive affect of harassment – verbal abuse and graffiti, attacks to property and in some instances physical violence by neighbours and other local residents

• reported to be commonplace in and around the home

• alienating affect, leaving people fearing for their safety and feeling unwelcome in their local neighbourhood, the city and the UK more generally

Pakistani (16)
Somali (11)
Polish (14)

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3. Explaining Local Experiences

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	Contact Theory	Conflict Theory
Modelling	• diversity increases contact opportunities • +ve contact promotes mutual understanding • +ve impact of living in more diverse neighbourhoods	• area deprivation has stronger -ve effect on cohesion than diversity • diversity blamed because of strong association with poverty • social disorganisation can undermine inter-group relations
Qualitative	• diverse places better at adapting to new migration, more inclusive, foster more +ve integration experience	• material underpinnings to tensions that take a racialised form • conflict more likely where change = challenge to local identities • more likely when lack of interaction and -ve media portrayals
Caveats	• interventions can promote +ve interactions...but certain conditions have to be satisfied • unpredictability of contact • is prejudice always rooted in ignorance?	• struggles over resources do not inevitably result in hostility • interventions can help mediate challenges raised by the process of change

Hints at what is important to attitudes and relations:

- composition of the population (new and settled)
- material context
- local resources
- institutional infrastructure
- local political culture and actions
- identities, belongings and sense of place

- i.e. **place** - the 3Cs - *composition, context, collective*

At the Neighbourhood Level (Robinson et al., 2007)

Established Contact Zones

New Contact Zones

+

Reception - Interactions - Relations

-

Cosmopolitan places

Parochial places

❑recent history of different cultures meeting / colliding / negotiating a settlement
❑more at ease with diversity and difference
❑relevant service provision
❑outward looking identities

❑little recent history of accommodating diversity and difference
❑bounded identities
❑perceived threats and stranger-danger
❑insensitivity of service provision

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At the City Level (Glick Schiller and Caglar, 2009)

Top Scale Cities

Down Scale Cities

Reception - Opportunities - Relations

+ ⟷ **-**

Cosmopolitan places

Parochial places

❑post-industrial
❑offer the broadest range of possibilities for migrant incorporation
❑migrants more highly valued
❑history of diversity
❑greater wealth and well-being

❑former industrial
❑reduced range of possibilities for migrant incorporation
❑migrants not highly valued
❑variable history of diversity
❑higher levels of deprivation

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- useful organising devices

- point to some of the ways in which geography matters for the experiences and impacts of new migration

BUT

- how to understand the interaction between these factors?

4. Mediating Local Challenges

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- policy slow to recognise potential of migration to be a driver of community change

- little guidance issued about how to understand and respond to associated challenges

- local initiatives have sprung up (statutory and VCS) often under the guise of the community cohesion agenda

- typically reactive

- priorities included: community development, promoting understanding, improving service response, promoting integration, managing tensions

BUT

□difficult to glean insights from evidence base re: what works

□interventions rarely subject to evaluation

□info takes the form of short vignettes - describing but not evaluating

□little analysis of context, inputs, strategies or methodologies of initiatives

□little analysis of outputs and associated costs and benefits

□no evidence to substantiate claims of 'good practice'

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Summing Up

- analysis of the impacts of new migration has largely ignored local geographies of change

- available evidence hints at some of the drivers of community change and associated challenges

- but little known about the relationship between places, experiences and impacts

- local interventions not subject to evaluation

- therefore difficult to provide policy with options for managing change

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