

Social Stratification Research Seminar 2023

30-31 August 2023, University of Stirling

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS, PAPER ABSTRACTS AND VENUE INFO

[edited 29/8/2023, Paul Lambert]

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PAPER ABSTRACTS

Stella Chatzitheochari (University of Warwick) (<i>paper withdrawn 28/Aug</i>)	
<i>Educational Pathways of Disabled Young People in England: A Mixed-Methods Study</i>	
	<p>This paper presents findings from the 3-year Leverhulme Trust Research Project Grant “Educational Pathways and Work Outcomes of Disabled Young People in England” (2020-2023). We present evidence surrounding disability differentials in educational and occupational attainment in England, using data from the Next Steps cohort. We then proceed to discuss findings from a longitudinal qualitative study of 35 disabled young people, acknowledging heterogeneity of experiences among this group. Our findings demonstrate the importance of social class in influencing young people’s educational experiences and trajectories. At the same time, we find that different conditions/impairments are subject to different structural and stigmas, suggesting that diverse outcomes among disabled young people may be due to different impairment-specific mechanisms. We discuss implications for disability studies and longitudinal data collection.</p>
Jenny Chesters (University of Melbourne)	
<i>Highlighting inequality in Australia: COVID-19 and financial stress</i>	
	<p>Although the social and economic restrictions implemented to control the spread of the COVID-19 Pandemic during 2020-2021 impacted on everyone, the financial stress associated with these restrictions was less evenly distributed. Not only were employees who were deemed essential workers able to continue working throughout the pandemic, many were able to increase their hours and, consequently, their incomes. Office workers and those employed in many professional occupations were able to keep working remotely from home, saving time and money by avoiding the commute to work. On the other hand, employees engaged in jobs that were neither deemed to be essential nor able to be conducted remotely from their homes fared less well. In this paper, I draw on data from the Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia [HILDA] project collected between 2018 and 2022 to examine how the financial impact of the pandemic varied across occupational groups and levels of occupation status. To control for the effects employment associated with post-school study and the effects of transitions into retirement, I focus on prime age workers aged between 25 and 54 years in 2018. Analysis indicates that being engaged in low status jobs was positively associated with levels of financial stress in that these workers were more likely to report withdrawing funds from their superannuation accounts and more likely to report being unable to pay their regular household bills during 2020 and 2021.</p>
Robert de Vries [†] (Univ. Kent)	
<i>Falling sideways? Social status and the true nature of elite downward mobility in Britain</i>	
	<p>Downward mobility is an essential, but commonly overlooked component of social mobility. Such mobility is routinely measured solely in terms of occupational class. However, occupational class represents only one narrow dimension of advantage. For example, one might be 'downwardly mobile' from a traditionally professional background into a highly paid job in a creative field.</p> <p>I will present findings from a detailed quantitative investigation of downward mobility in Britain, looking multidimensionally at the social destinations of those who are downwardly mobile from elite backgrounds. Does downward mobility in terms of occupational class necessarily involve a loss of status and material comforts? Or do many of those who are 'downwardly mobile' in fact occupy coveted, prestigious jobs, and enjoy comfortably elite lifestyles?</p>

Harry Ganzeboom* and Vivian Baars (VU Amsterdam)

The Intergenerational Transfer of Occupational Status and Gender-Type, Netherlands 1970-2020. A Replication and Extension.

Recent research has pressed for the inclusion of mothers in intergenerational occupational mobility / reproduction research, as it has long been established that mother's occupation contribute substantially to the occupational attainment of both men and women, independently of father's occupation. However, including mother's occupation in occupational mobility models is not without technical and substantive challenges. One important challenge is how to cope with the different occupational distributions of men and women, which are only more prominent in parental occupations: men (fathers) tend to work in male-typed occupations and women (mothers) in female typed-occupations (and due to the unequal participation of men and women in the labour market these patterns are NOT symmetrical).

Some two decades ago Korupp et al. (2000, 2002) proposed a two-dimensional linear model of intergenerational occupational reproduction, in which men's and women's occupations are associated with father's and mother's occupations both with respect to socio-economic status and gender-composition (male/female dominance). Using two datasets collected in the Netherlands in the 1990's (N=5100). Korupp et al. found independent reproduction in both dimensions. However, they did not find confirmation of their hypotheses (A) that part of intergenerational occupational status reproduction is spurious, because offspring tends to enter occupations with a similar gender-type rather than a similar socio-economic status; (B) intergenerational reproduction of occupational gender-type is historically diminishing and this is confounding established trends toward decreasing intergenerational reproduction of occupations status.

In this contribution we seek to reconstruct and replicate the analysis of Korupp et al. on a much extended database from the ISMF-NL that now includes 20 datafiles (N=20000), collected between 1990 and 2020. The model extends the SEM reciprocal effects model proposed by Korupp et al. by including both first and most recent occupation, and father's and mother's occupations as instrumental variables. Provisional results indicate that the socio-economic status of the occupation dominates the gender-type if the occupation, and that these reciprocal effects are virtually the same for men and women.

Korupp, Sylvia E, Karin Sanders, and Harry BG Ganzeboom. 2000. "Intergenerationele Overdracht van Status En Sekse-Typering van Beroepen: De Invloed van Vader En Moeder Op Hun Dochters En Zonen." *Mens En Maatschappij* 75 (1): 22-39.

Korupp, Sylvia E, Karin Sanders, and Harry BG Ganzeboom. 2002. "The Intergenerational Transmission of Occupational Status and Sex Typing at Children's Labor Market Entry." *European Journal of Women's Studies* 9 (1): 7-29.

Presentation is based on Baars, Vivian (2019). *Zo moeder, zo dochter... en zoon? Intergenerationele overdracht van beroepsstatus en gendersegregatie bij intrede op de arbeidsmarkt: Een replicatie.* Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit [BA thesis Opleiding Sociologie].

Dave Griffiths (Univ. Stirling)

The impact of university attendance on household income for modestly-paid workers (title tbc)

Steffen Hillmert and Silvia Kopecny (Univ. Tuebingen)

Digital divides among secondary school students: a comparative perspective

During the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic, differences in the access to information and communication technologies (ICT), the use of ICT, and in corresponding competencies have gained attention in the research community, the public, and among policy makers. In times of homeschooling, distance learning, and remote teaching, such 'digital divides' have obviously become more important for social disparities in educational success.

Research has already shown that socio-demographic characteristics traditionally prominent in social stratification processes matter also for differences in ICT use, but that the relevance of these characteristics varies across countries. At the country level, the population's digital usage behaviour is significantly affected by the availability of digital infrastructure and the costs of usage.

In this paper, we have a closer look at the multi-level determinants of ICT competencies. In particular, we are interested in an international comparison of

- (1) how digital competencies are distributed among secondary school students with respect to various socio-demographic characteristics,
- (2) how these patterns are linked with institutional and organisational conditions in education, and
- (3) whether country-specific distributions can be associated with different policies regarding both education and digitalisation.

To examine our research questions, we utilise data from the International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS) 2013 and 2018, conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). This project gathered information about young people's ability to use ICT in several areas of life from approximately 60,000 and 46,000 grade 8 (or equivalent) students in 21 and 12 countries respectively. By connecting our results on digital competencies with research on general competencies, we can contribute to the broader question of whether digitalisation in education enables privileged groups to accumulate further advantage or whether it compensates traditional disadvantage.

Nick Jones, Sahil Loomba, Johannes Happenhofer*, Sumeet Agarwal , and Till Hoffmann (Imperial College London (1-3), Indian Inst.Tech., Delhi (4), U. Harvard (5))

A "Social Gini" index: social connectivity and segregation inferred from large-scale social networks

Our research is a contribution to understanding and quantifying differential association in different countries. We develop a methodology which enables us to learn social connectivity (or segregation) patterns from large-scale social network data, like Facebook's Social Connectedness Index. Our Bayesian model, which is based on an Intervening Opportunities approach, incorporates physical distance between pairs of individuals and their socio-demographic attributes like age, income, education, and ethnicity as determinants of social connectivity and reveals, amongst others, strong homophily patterns for age and income in the US. We further show that the inferred probabilistic connectivity kernel rationally defines an inequality index mediated by social networks: quantifying the "surprisal" of a connection between any two individuals. This index reduces to the special case of the Gini index used to measure income inequality; hence, we term it the "social Gini" index.

Paul Lambert (Univ. Stirling)

Comparison of social interaction distance structures when measured by data on intergenerational associations and data on homogamy in the UK

In this paper I revisit the enduring question of which forms of data and analytical methods most usefully characterise the structure of social distance between occupations when using the methods associated with the CAMSIS project ('Cambridge Social Interaction and Stratification Scales', www.camsis.stir.ac.uk). Previous studies have applied comparable strategies to at least four types of social distance data, studying the volumes of social connections between occupations when connections are defined by friendships, partnerships, parent-child combinations, and career transitions. When analysing empirical patterns within such social distance data, previous studies have also varied in other consequential ways, such as by using occupational units at a more and less aggregated level, and by making different choices about adjustments for other structural features of the occupational distribution such as the impact of occupational gender segregation.

Using UK data, I focus in particular upon the contrast between data on intergenerational associations and data on homogamy, since the results are relevant to theories about the nature of social inequality. Notwithstanding interesting observations in the journey to get there, the end point becomes the situation of having multiple candidate measures (occupation-based stratification scales) which are based upon different forms of data (on homogamy or on intergenerational associations), and which are very similar, yet potentially different. In board terms, comparisons based upon traditional sociological approaches to comparing alternative occupation-based measures are inconclusive: alternative measures based on different forms of data and/or methodology are not identical, but are very similar, and for example they perform comparably in evaluations of construct or criterion validity. As a consequence, it proves hard to evaluate whether the small empirical differences between them are meaningful or artefactual. Results presented here expand upon previous findings in three ways: they (a) report on further sensitivity analyses to evaluate the differences between measures; (b) make comparisons of the residuals between measures in a manner that seeks to take account of appropriate standard errors on those residuals; and (c) assesses the contribution of different measures within formal measurement models.

Stacey McNicol (Univ. Stirling)

"The long arm of the job" – exploring whether pre-retirement occupation is associated with volunteering in English older adults.

The phrase "the long arm of the job" highlights the way in which the influence of working life can spill over into other aspects – in this case volunteering. Literature suggests that those who work in more highly skilled, more prestigious, and less physically demanding jobs will be more likely to participate in voluntary work. However, work to date mostly focussed on current occupation, or focusses on the US/German context. This analysis seeks to explore whether pre-retirement occupation is associated with volunteering in retirement for a cohort of English older adults.

Scott Oatley (Univ. Edinburgh)

Using Shiny as a teaching tool? Construction of the GBCS, NS-SEC, and Wright's Neo-Marxian Schema as an open-source class calculator application

This presentation explores the possibility of using Shiny in R as a viable teaching tool for sociology students both through teaching the social theory behind constructs of social class and as a methodological tool for survey construction. This presentation begins with a simple reconstruction of the GBCS survey and adds to this two other social class schema – NS-SEC and Wright's Neo-Marxian schema. These class schemas form a 'class calculator' that is completely open source. The purpose of this is to provide a detailed open format for students to engage in concepts of social class whilst also gaining experience in coding strategies using Shiny. To move beyond textbooks, this class calculator offers a practical, hands-on approach to teaching about social class. The open-source format of this applications generation however allows for complete versatility in teaching – the app can be added to or completely reconstructed to teach different concepts. On top of this, this presentation demonstrates that Shiny is a viable tool for survey construction and offers an alternative to established tools in the methodological teaching toolbox. Shiny's versatility provides greater power in the hands of students and researchers compared to 'ready-made' survey construction tools such as Qualtrics. This presentation thus promotes hands on teaching tools to aid students understanding of social class, presents an open-source format for teaching discretion, and offers a viable alternative to methods courses teaching survey construction.

Kate O'Hara (Univ. Stirling)

Breastfeeding in socio-experiential context – a multilevel and intersectional analysis of the early breastfeeding experience in Scotland

Policy action in Scotland has been associated with an increase in the initiation and duration of breastfeeding, but many women still do not manage to breastfeed for as long as they intended. Not meeting feeding goals is distressing for women, who must balance the competing expectations of those around with them, with public health messaging, and their own desire to do the best for their baby.

Breastfeeding uptake varies between social groups, meaning that resources of support, such as encouragement and technical expertise, may be unevenly spread. Additionally, socio-economic differences may affect the accessibility of NHS-provided professional support intended to stop such gaps. Once breastfeeding has been initiated, it may be more difficult to maintain in some social contexts than others. Monitoring that inequality is important to ensure policymaking does not set up disadvantaged groups to fail.

I will present a multilevel descriptive analysis of data from the Scottish Maternal Infant and Nutrition Study of 2017 which attempts to characterise how intersecting social and experiential positions may constitute more or less risky contexts for establishing breastfeeding.

Marina Shapira* and Mark Priestley (Univ. Stirling)

Breadth of the secondary school curriculum at 15 and global competencies: Evidence from the linkage of Scottish administrative education data with Scotland's PISA data

The Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), implemented in Scotland since 2011, aimed to better equip young people for the challenges of the modern world (Scottish Government, 2009). However, our recently completed Nuffield-funded study (Shapira et al., 2023) reveals that CfE has resulted in a decrease in the number of subjects studied during the senior phase of secondary education. This reduction has had a disproportionate impact on schools located in socially and economically disadvantaged areas. Exposure to a limited curriculum can have detrimental effects on educational attainments and broader set of outcomes of young people. For students from disadvantaged backgrounds who heavily rely on school resources, a restricted ability to explore diverse subjects and acquire a broad knowledge base can have a more negative impact.

We linked between the Scottish Government's administrative education data and the 2018 PISA data for Scotland using a source code that facilitated matching between the school ID variable in the PISA dataset and the school ID variable in the administrative education data. Our analysis provided several insights into the relationship between individual-level outcomes of 15-year-old students, as measured by the 2018 PISA math, science, and language test scores, the measures of global competences, and the average number of subject entries for National 5 qualifications in S4, based on the schools attended by the students. The findings confirmed our expectations that being able to enrol in a broader range of subjects at age 15 is associated with the development of various competences in young people.

Amanda Valldor[†] and Karin Kristensson (Univ. Stockholm)

50 years of class inequality in Sweden

This paper investigates social-class inequalities 1968-2010 in Sweden, building on the argument that increased understanding of class division sheds light on both social change and the endurance of hierarchies in contemporary society. As multiple dimensions work together in perpetuating class inequalities, we take a multifaceted approach and include economic conditions, work conditions, cultural consumption, and civil society participation. We employ data from the detailed and high-quality level of living Surveys (LNU), and include 22,011 observations. The results indicate that the middle class is better off than the working class in all dimensions at all-time points. Economic standard improved on average for all and the working class partly caught up with the middle classes but inequality remains. Over time, inequality in work conditioned increased. In particular, non-manual and low-skilled workers have experienced worsening work conditions, suggesting that in some respects there is a non-manual proletariat. Cultural consumption and civil society participation improved for all classes and inequality decreased until around 1991, but since then there has been a negative trend for all classes, which is especially detrimental for the working class who already scored low in these respects. We conclude that there is a complex pattern of class inequalities over time. The single clear improvement for the working class is economic conditions, in all other aspects there is a problematic societal development.

Jiayang Wang (Univ. Edinburgh)	
<i>Social mobility in transitional China: the role of political power and state vs. private sector of employment</i>	
	<p>As a socialist country that has experienced market transition and rapid industrialization, China has attracted substantial scholarly attention with regard to its social mobility dynamics. Previous literature has found a rising trend of absolute mobility attributed to the upgrading of occupational structures, while social fluidity was shown to follow a trendless pattern. This paper contributes to the research in this field by considering important features of China’s market transition—most notably a gradual reform which preserved political power and retained an influential state sector—into the analysis of social mobility. Using pooled data from the latest 7 waves of Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS) (year 2010-2021, N=33295), and including individuals from four cohorts who experienced different stages of market transition, this paper specifically explores how the political power and the ownership-based labour market segmentation shape patterns of social mobility. The analysis confirms the increasing trend of absolute upward mobility found in previous research, and further suggests that this trend is mainly driven by the expansion of mobility opportunities in the private sector. Turning to social fluidity, analysis based on log-linear models provides evidence that the inclusion of the ownership distinction in the analysis improves the fit of the social mobility models and, hence, it should not be ignored. The results show that people who experienced the early stage of market transition saw an increase in social fluidity compared to the ones who entered the labour market prior to the transition. However, this trend reversed among younger individuals. This paper also examines the pattern of social fluidity in greater detail than before by using various topological models and testing a series of hypotheses. One key finding is that power elites took some advantages in the private sector. The results also show that patterns of social mobility differ between the state and private sector, with individuals potentially facing barriers to achieving upward mobility in the state sector. Finally, men and women exhibit distinct patterns and trends in social mobility, where the dynamics of female social mobility patterns lag behind those of males. While women start from a lower point in terms of initial social mobility, they are rapidly catching up. Taken together the results show insightful dynamics into the social mobility process in a rapidly changing society, which as opposed to the market transition of European post-communist countries, has largely preserved its political power during the gradual economic reform.</p>
Johan Westerman[†] and Charlotta Magnusson (Univ. Stockholm)	
<i>A Status Triad? Exploring the Multi-dimensionality of Occupational Structure using Swedish Registry Data</i>	
	<p>Recent studies of the occupational structure for individual mobility have provided fragmented representations of the occupational structure. The number of categories in the occupational structure generally exceeds the number of classes in commonly applied schemes. Our contribution lies in adopting a methodology that allows for the continuous differentiation of occupations across multiple dimensions, as opposed to grouping them into discrete clusters. We anticipate that the occupational structure is governed by two dimensions, strongly associated with status and gender. A nationally encompassing database for the majority of occupational changes in the Swedish labour market between 2001 and 2013 is used to construct a distance matrix which is reduced using Multi-Dimensional Scaling (MDS). The analysis reveals a more complex pattern than expected. Through statistical and graphical assessment, we determine that a three-dimensional configuration provides a more accurate representation of the data.</p>

**Denotes presenting author; [†] denotes presenting online via Teams--*

Additional venue information

Seminar venue

Iris Murdoch Building, Maitland room, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Stirling (Wednesday)

Iris Murdoch Building, Seminar room, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Stirling (Thursday)

Location: The IMB is a white building on the easterly end of the Cottrell building. The Maitland room is accessed by taking the stairway up from the building entrance area, then following the upstairs corridor to the far end of the building. The seminar room is accessed by turning left from the building entrance area, then seminar rooms are on the right, after toilets.

Access routes:

- from the bus station and adjacent Stirling Court Hotel: turn right to walk in an easterly direction (Wallace monument on your right, signs for University entrance and Cottrell building on your left). The IMB will be on your left at the end of the cluster of buildings, after passing around 3 areas of car parking.
- Outdoor route from 'campus central' area (e.g. library, atrium, McRobert centre, coop): turn left from the central square to walk underneath link bridge, following an access road in an easterly direction (Cottrell building on your right, lakes and mountains on your left). The access road loops round to the right, passing the IMB as it does – stay on the road and turn right when available, the IMB then being the first building on your right.
- Indoor route from bus station or campus central: Enter the Cottrell building near bus station/campus central, thereafter follow signs for Faculty of Social Sciences involving walking along 'A' corridor of the Cottrell building for approx 5 blocks, going up 1 flight of stairs to enter FSS, continuing along corridors to an exit area which then immediately faces the IMB main entrance

Travel note: Bus tickets can be bought as walk-on fares with cash or card. The majority of busses are run by McGills East of Scotland. An app is available to buy tickets and includes live bus tracker facility. Services UL and 54 link Stirling and the city centre. Services 51 & 52 also come close to the campus. An unlimited day ticket for Zone B busses (covering Stirling) is available via the app or as a walk-on purchase (£5.95).

Online participation via MS Teams:

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_OGYxMzU0MWEtOWU4MS00Y2Y2LTgyMiQtZWZlZmJmZkdODM3%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%224e8d09f7-cc79-4ccb-9149-a4238dd17422%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2248ce5938-9fbb-408c-8796-6c13dbe3c503%22%7d

Meeting ID: 383 925 767 739

Passcode: dVWuX7

Toll number: +44 131 460 4091

Conference ID: 221 449 732#

Local Number : <https://dialin.teams.microsoft.com/1527ff80-ccf9-40fa-b6de-02ba24680550?id=221449732>

Reset Pin : <https://dialin.teams.microsoft.com/usp/pstnconferencing>

Lunch/breaks

Lunch is left to your own arrangements (comments below).

During breaks, limited facilities for accessing water, instant coffee, tea etc are available in the Faculty of Social Sciences common room, room 3S15 of the Colin Bell building. Alternatively coffee vendors are available in nearby outlets (comments below). Toilets are available adjacent to the IMB seminar room as well as in the Colin Bell building adjacent to the IMB.

For food/drinks outlets, we recommend the following catering options for participants.

- Innovation park café. Closest to the seminar venue (2 mins from seminar venue). Exit the IMB and walk due south, cross the road and approach the Scion house' building (car park on left, building wing on right). Enter that building through glass doors, café is located on your right.
- Scran and SUP! (5 mins). Two outlets in the 'Atrium' area. Available for coffees, sandwiches, selected hot foods. Exit the IMB and enter the Colin Bell building. Follow the corridor to the right for approximately 5 blocks as it goes downstairs and through the Cottrell building. Follow signs for the McRobert café involving leaving the Cottrell building, crossing the 'link bridge' over the Queen's Court square. At the end of the bridge, both outlets should be visible in the atrium area directly in front.
- Atrium Coop supermarket (5 mins). Includes sandwiches, snacks, self-service coffee machine. Located adjacent to 'Scran', see above.
- McRobert café (5 mins). Includes cooked food and coffee/bar items (<https://www.macrobotartscentre.org/venue/food--drink>). Located directly below the 'Atrium' area. Exit the IMB and enter the Colin Bell building. Follow the corridor to the right for approximately 5 blocks as it goes downstairs and through the Cottrell building. Follow signs for the McRobert involving leaving the Cottrell building, crossing the Queen's Court square, the re-entering the building – café-bar should be visible on your left after passing the reception desk.
- Stirling court hotel café (5 mins). Available for coffees and bar food but may not always be open to public if hosting other events. Café/bar is adjacent to the lobby – ask at reception if open. Exit the IMB and walk to the road. Turn right at the road and follow on the right of the road until it passes the bus station on your right. Turn left to cross the road when the path ends; the main entrance to the hotel is immediately in front of you, across the car park.
- Sports centre café (8 mins). Large café area with coffees etc and variety of snacks and sandwiches. Exit the IMB and walk to the road. Turn right at the road and follow on the right of the road until it passes the bus station on your right. At this point, continue in the direction of the path walking Westwards along the road for a brief period until a further footpath is available. Follow that path forwards then cross the road at the zebra crossing, turning right at the first opportunity to follow the path through the woods and down the hill with the road on your right. The next building after 300m is the sports centre, the café is through the barriers after turning left entering the centre.
- Wallace monument visitor café (8 mins). Exit the IMB and turn left to leave the campus. Turn right at T junction, proceed past two roads then turn right onto the main road (B998). Walk westwards, towards the monument, for approx 400m. The café is located through the Wallace monument car park.