

Thematic guide: labour market (using qualitative data)

More and more people coming to depend on labour markets

Introduction

Labour markets are an important concern for sociological enquiry. Industrialisation and capitalism have resulted in more and more people coming to depend on labour markets.

In turn, this has impacted significantly on patterns of migration from less-industrialised to more-industrialised countries.

Social scientists researching in this area are often interested in the macro functioning and dynamics of the labour market, the micro-relations between employers and workers, and how the struggles between them result in specific patterns of wages, employment contracts and various forms of inequality.

The theme of the labour market is strongly represented by recent research that has been added to our online catalogue.

This includes collections such as:

- Connell Davidson and Anderson's Market for Migrant Domestic and Sex Workers
- Maguire and Huddlestone's Young People in Jobs without Training
- Eade and Garapich's Class and Ethnicity: Polish Migrant Workers in London

Searching for related materials

The [UK Data Service catalogue](#) can be searched for data on labour markets studies using subject terms such as:

- Employment
- Education
- trade unions
- human resources
- management
- training

Every data collection is accompanied by comprehensive documentation. These are open access and available to the public from the website and it is not necessary to be a registered user to access and download them.

The content of the documentation varies by collection, but usually includes information such as the initial proposal, interview schedule, description of methodology, end of award report, and so on.

In some cases more details are provided, such as the coding schemes of the original researchers or examples of the consent forms used.

Other resources on the labour market

Summary of selected qualitative studies on the labour market

Study name

[SN 6619 Young People in Jobs Without Training, 2007](#)

Maguire, S. and Huddleston, P.

This research aimed to provide a greater understanding of young people who leave full-time education and who are characterised as having entered jobs without training.

Coverage

Sample: young people aged 16-18 years old who were in jobs without training in Warwickshire and Middlesbrough, 2007

Data: 36 interviews

Topics

- employment
- training
- education
- youth
- career development

Study name

[SN 6109 Market for Migrant Domestic and Sex Workers, 2002-2006](#)

O'Connell Davidson, J. and Anderson, B.

The study explored attitudes towards, and experience of, the markets for migrant domestic and sex workers in the UK and Spain through a combination of interview and survey research. It aimed to examine continuities and discontinuities between domestic work and sex work, paying particular attention to the role of the social/cultural imagination in constructing a market for migrant workers.

Coverage

Sample: People with experience of buying commercial sexual services. Control sample: employers of domestic workers; students; tourists

Data: 446 quantitative interviews; 68 qualitative interviews

Topics

- domestic workers
- employment relations
- commercial sex

- gender
- sexuality
- migration
- sex workers

Study name

[SN 6056 Class and Ethnicity: Polish Migrant Workers in London, 1996-2006](#)

Eade J. and Garapich, M.

The study examined recent Polish migrations to London and the socio-cultural consequences for Poland and the UK as well as individual narratives about ethnicity, class, migration and multicultural Britain.

Coverage

Sample: Polish nationals living in London at the time of the research

Data: 57 interviews, 1 fieldwork note

Topics

- ethnicity
- work
- migration
- culture
- class

Study name

[SN 4739 Qualitative Investigation of the Lives and Labour Market Experiences of People with Multiple Problems and Needs, 2001-2002](#)

Dean, H.

This study investigated the labour market experiences of people with multiple and complex problems and needs. A key research focus of the project questioned how well conventional welfare provision met their requirements. It was argued that those who are most disadvantaged in the labour market tend also to be those who experience other disadvantages and the solutions that such multiple needs require are more complex than those on offer under the government's existing welfare-to-work policies.

Coverage

Sample: residents of Luton or Sheffield in 2001, (aged 17 to 64) suffering from no less than three specific problems/needs

Data: 50 interviews

Topics

- criminal justice system
- employment
- family
- homelessness
- multiple problems
- health
- unemployment

Study name

[SN 6099 'Brain Drain' Debate in the United Kingdom, c.1950-1970](#)

Balmer, B., Gregory, J. and Godwin, M.

This qualitative project sought to provide an analysis of the 'brain drain' debate of the 1950s and 1960s as a social phenomenon. The term 'brain drain' was adopted in the 1960s in the context of concerns the United Kingdom was losing skilled scientific and engineering personnel to other countries.

Coverage

Sample: scientists and civil servants in the debate concerning skilled migration in the 1960s

Data: 19 semi structured oral history interviews; witness seminar - 4 participants

Topics

- education
- employment
- history
- migration
- brain drain
- cold war

Study name

[SN 5041 Changing Organisational Forms and the Re-shaping of Work: Case Study Interviews, 1999-2002](#)

Marchington, M., Rubery, J. and Willmott, H.

The project collected data, via in-depth qualitative case studies of inter-organisational networks, on the role of employment relations and how these new organisational forms operate in practice. They examined the increasing fragmentation of organisations, and evidence that human resources (HR) policies are unable to resolve the potential conflicts and contradictions inherent in the employment relationship.

Coverage

Sample: organisations in England and Scotland between 1999 and 2002

Data: 161 interview transcripts and 146 interview summaries from 8 case studies; focus group interview transcripts, summaries and interview notes

Topics

- trade unions
- employment
- management
- labour force
- human resources