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| Institution: University of Bristol | | |
| Unit of Assessment: 21) Sociology | | |
| Title of case study: Family Migration and Integration: improving immigration legislation, integration policy and service provision in the UK | | |
| Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2009-present | | |
| Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit: | | |
| Name(s): Katharine Charsley | Role(s) (e.g. job title): Professor of Migration Studies | Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 2/1997-8/1999; 4/2009-present |
| Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2015-31 December 2020 | | |
| Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N | | |

1. Summary of the impact

Charsley's research in the fields of migrant integration and family migration (the largest category of settlement migration to the UK) has underpinned wide-ranging impacts. Her work influenced the 2020 EU withdrawal Immigration Bill debate and the 2017 revisions to UK family immigration legislation and its implementation, creating new possibilities for families to unite or remain together in the UK. In the wider field of integration, Charsley's research has informed review of UK integration policy; provided a model for UK national and city-level integration policy, practice and evaluation; and improved local integration support in the UK and Pakistan through community organisation capacity-building.

2. Underpinning research

Charsley's research focusses on family immigration – including family (re)union – the largest source of permanent migration to the UK. In the past decade, integration concerns have increasingly been used by UK policymakers to justify restrictions to family immigration, including English language and income requirements. The evidence base to support assumptions of problematic integration has, however, been limited. As a result of these restrictions, the volume of grants of settlement to partners and dependants has reduced from over 134,000 in 2010 to c.40,000 in 2018 (spouses/partners accounting for c.24,000), with serious consequences for those whose family members are refused visas or are unable to meet the application requirements. Professor Charsley's pioneering research initially focussed on Pakistani spousal immigration (A), before broadening to include investigation of relationships between family migration and integration (B), and developing a new conceptual model of integration for more general use beyond the field of family migration (C).

A. Pakistani spousal immigration

Charsley's ethnographic work with Pakistanis [3.1, ii] (until recently the largest nationality group of spousal immigrants) was among the first on ethnic minority homeland marriages, the topic of much political debate in the UK and Europe. First to highlight challenges faced by migrant husbands specifically (a substantial but frequently overlooked minority of marriage migrants to Britain), she has continued to explore issues of masculinity and migration in relation to integration [3.2].

B. Family migration and integration

Charsley's research developed to include a comparative exploration of marriage-related migration [3.3]. From 2013-2016, she was PI on the ESRC project 'Marriage Migration and Integration' (MMI), with team members from the Universities of Oxford (S Spencer, H Jayaweera and E Ersanilli) and Bristol (M Bolognani) [iii]. The project examined the complex relationships between marriage-related migration and aspects of integration, problematising common sense

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assertions underlying policy discourses and immigration restrictions, and identifying policy recommendations [3.5, iii]. In addition to critiquing the prevailing integration rationale for recent restrictions, this research flagged two key issues: the crucial role of lifecourse in influencing integration opportunities, and the importance of timing of integration initiatives in relation to migration and lifestage [3.5]. Two co-produced ESRC Impact Acceleration projects added further insights on structural and cultural barriers for migrant husbands, and the timing of integration training under the current visa regime (characterised by lengthy delays and high refusal rates) [3.2, iv, v]. A further follow-on project – ‘Kept Apart’ – explored the dis-integrating impact on couples and families separated by the UK immigration rules [3.4, vi].

C. Conceptual model of integration

Through the MMI project, Charsley and Spencer developed a conceptual model of integration processes suitable for general use beyond the field of family migration, designed to promote systematic and holistic approaches to integration policy, research and practice [3.6]. The model allows integration to be understood as: involving the whole of society and therefore requiring the involvement of a range of actors; influenced by factors at individual, family, societal, policy and transnational levels; taking place largely at the local level, but also influenced by national and transnational effectors; consisting of not one but multiple processes taking place across a range of domains, and that processes within and between these domains may be separate or interacting.

3. References to the research

- 3.1 **Charsley K** (2013), *Transnational Pakistani Connections: Marrying ‘Back Home’*, Routledge <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315886435> [Hard copy available on request]
- 3.2 **Charsley K** and Ersanilli E (2019). The Mangetar Trap? Work, Family and Pakistani Migrant Husbands, *NORMA: International Journal for Masculinity Studies*, **14.2**, pp.128-145 <https://doi.org/10.1080/18902138.2018.1533272>
- 3.3 **Charsley K**, Storer-Church B, Benson MC, Van Hear N (2012). Marriage-related migration to the UK, *International Migration Review*, **46.4**, pp.861-890 <https://doi.org/10.1111/imre.12003> (also published as Home Office Research Paper 94: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115898/occ96.pdf)
- 3.4 **Charsley K**, Mohabir R, Coombs C, Ballmi P, Agusita E & Wray H (2020), *Kept Apart*, e-book <https://online.fliphtml5.com/lnobi/fugm/#p=1>
- 3.5 **Charsley K**, Bolognani M, Ersanilli E & Spencer S (2020), *Marriage Migration and Integration*, Palgrave [Available on request]
- 3.6 Spencer S, **Charsley K** (2016). Conceptualising integration: a framework for empirical research, taking marriage migration as a case study, *Comparative Migration Research*, **4.18**, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-016-0035-x>

Research Grants

- i. [Text removed for publication]
- ii. **Charsley K** (PI), University of Bristol Research Fellowship, 2011-12, GBP11,588
- iii. **Charsley K** (PI), [Marriage Migration and Integration](#), ESRC, ES/K006495/12013-16, GBP261,996
- iv. **Charsley K** (PI), *Establishing demand for pre-entry integration preparation for Pakistani migrant husbands*, ESRC Impact Acceleration Exploratory Award, 2016, GBP2,935
- v. **Charsley K** (PI), [Pre-entry Integration and Language training for Pakistani migrant husbands](#), ESRC Impact Acceleration Award, 2016-18, GBP19,991
- vi. **Charsley K** (PI), [Kept Apart – making prose-poetry with people separated from families by the UK immigration system](#), Brigstow Institute, 2020, GBP6,925

4. Details of the impact

Charsley's research has had significant impact in the fields of integration and immigration, at national, multi-city and local levels. Her research has: (a) informed review of UK integration policy; (b) influenced debate, and reformed legislation and implementation in the UK family immigration system; (c) enhanced city-level and UK national integration policy, practice, and evaluation; and (d) improved local integration support in the UK and Pakistan.

A. Informed review of UK integration policy

Charsley's policy impact is based on long-term engagement with UK policy makers [i, 3.3]. In this REF period that includes: government representation on the MMI project stakeholder group; invitations to speak to the Home Office, DFID, and the Foreign Office, including in preparation for the Casey Review on integration (2016). The independent Casey Review – a review into integration and opportunity, commissioned by then-Prime Minister David Cameron – cites the MMI project report and echoes the report's key recommendations for integration assistance before migration and at the point of arrival [5.1, Recommendation 5, p17 and p168]. Responding to Casey, the Government's Integrated Communities Green Paper [5.2] also cites the MMI report. It highlights gendered lifecourse responsibilities as a constraint on time for language learning [5.2, p37], promises a new national English learning strategy, and proposes providing integration packages before and soon after arrival [5.2, p14] – key issues raised in the MMI report. The government's Integrated Communities Action Plan (Feb 2019) commits to trialling information packs for recent migrants in the Integration Areas Programme [5.2, p9].

B. UK Family Immigration Legislation: influenced debate, reformed legislation and implementation

Charsley's work on marriage migration and integration informed **reform** of the UK family immigration system. Charsley wrote part of an Expert Report for the Judicial Review of English language requirement for spousal immigration cited in the *Ali & Bibi* Case [5.3]. This new requirement had been justified as promoting integration. Charsley's contribution pointed to the limited evidence underpinning arguments that such migrants present integration problems, and likely negative effects of the language requirements [5.3]. The 2015 Supreme Court ruling on this case cited the Expert Report, and Charsley's contribution, demanding revisions to how exceptional circumstances were handled [5.3]. This judgement was then amplified by its use in the judgement on a subsequent Supreme Court case concerning income requirements [see MM Case, 5.3]. As a result, the Government **changed the immigration rules governing not just spousal but all family migrants** by inserting para GEN3.1 & 3.2 to Appendix FM of the immigration rules, to provide a new exceptional route for those who could not meet the requirements, addressing the court's concern that rigid application could breach human rights (under ECHR Article 8) [5.3, Simic's report]. This change applied to all visa requirements rather than just the language rules. As a result of this impact on UK immigration law (legislative change), **more such cases are given the opportunity to succeed**, making it easier for applicants to (re)unite with their family members, and such cases can be decided within the immigration rules [5.3].

Between 10th August 2017 (when the new rules were introduced) and 8th November 2019 (when data collection to establish this impact was undertaken), 94 Cases in the UK's Upper Tribunal for immigration and asylum appeals made use of the new provisions [5.3, Simic's report]. It is likely that a much larger number of decisions on initial visa applications and appeals to the First-tier Tribunal have employed the new rules, but this data is not available. Illustrative examples of Upper Tribunal cases of individuals and families whose **wellbeing, welfare, opportunities and quality of life** have benefitted include: a Pakistani national who had the initial refusal of his application for leave to remain in the UK with his British citizen wife set aside by the upper tribunal, and an Algerian man permitted to stay in the UK to maintain his relationship with his refugee son [5.3].

Charsley's work continues to influence debate on immigration legislation. The 'Kept Apart' project [3.4] was cited in the House of Lords in support of Amendment 11 to the Immigration and Social Security Coordination bill (EU Withdrawal Bill) 19-20, allowing UK citizens within the scope of the EU Withdrawal Agreement (EEA separation or Swiss citizen's rights agreement) to

return to the UK accompanied by (non-UK) family members [5.4] (passed in the Lords but later defeated).

C. Enhanced city-level and national integration policy, practice and evaluation, through a new conceptual model of integration

Charsley and Spencer's model of integration [3.6] has become an important resource for UK policy approaches at city and national levels.

City-level

The model was adopted as the theoretical foundation for a major Knowledge Exchange project: 'Inclusive Cities' (COMPAS, University of Oxford, 2017-2022) [5.5]. As a result, Bristol, Glasgow, Cardiff, Liverpool, Peterborough and London have developed new city integration strategies, designed to benefit newcomers and existing residents [5.6]. Cardiff, for example, set out its ambition to become a multilingual smart city equipping new arrivals with language skills, using the Inclusive Cities planning process and securing Welsh Government funding for language training (REACH) [5.6]. Six further cities have joined the project (Belfast, Birmingham, Brighton, Newry, Mourne and Down, Newport, Sheffield). Charsley also works directly with the Greater London Authority (GLA). The Principal Social Policy Analyst at the GLA writes: *'the inclusion [in the Charsley-Spencer model] of a structural/equality and an identity dimension is distinct from other more mainstream approaches to social integration, such as those used regularly in central government. Separately, our email exchange and conversations we have had in person have been useful in refining how we develop our social integration approach into something that can be used operationally here at the GLA'* [5.7]. The model has informed measures used in the GLA's new Survey of Londoners and its analysis, as well as evaluation of GLA integration programmes (e.g. being aware of potential negative interactions between employment and social integration). He concludes: *'These findings are now being used to provide the evidence base for policy development here at the GLA such as the London Families Fund, which supports organisations bringing together communities in London, grants for volunteering provision to tackle social isolation and loneliness, and funding for ESOL [English as second language] provision, among others'* [5.7].

National

The 2019 Home Office publication 'What works in the integration of refugees' [5.8] cites Charsley and Spencer's conceptual model [3.6] to highlight the importance of social – as well as individual – level factors affecting integration and the multi-dimensional, domain-interacting nature of integration. The document forms part of the national 'Indicators of Integration Toolkit' and 'Theory of Change for Achieving Integration' – giving service providers 'practical ways to design more effective strategies, monitor services and evaluate integration interventions' – distributed through a Home Office launch event (June 2019, London, 140+ invitees) and the Home Office website [5.8].

Since September 2018, Charsley has been a member of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) for the Evaluation of UK government integration programmes (the Integration Areas Fund and the integration wing of the Controlling Migration Fund). The Ministry for Communities, Housing and Local Government's Principal Research Officer writes: *'Dr Charsley has contributed to the steering group by sharing her extensive subject matter expertise and also drawing on her experience in conducting research in this area. For example, in the July TAG meeting Dr Charsley noted that the Theory of Change (a conceptual model explaining how policies/ interventions are supposed to work) developed by the contractors was missing a key element (social mixing) for migrants. This enabled the contractors to strengthen the Theory of Change, to the benefit of the evaluation'* [5.9].

D. Improved local integration support in the UK and Pakistan through community organisation capacity-building

Since 2013, Charsley has collaborated with QED Foundation, a Bradford-based charity. Building on MMI project findings [3.5] and her research with migrant Pakistani husbands [3.1-3.3], two co-produced ESRC Impact Acceleration projects allowed QED to undertake market research,

and design and run pilot language and integration courses for men in Pakistan applying to join wives in the UK (24 participants). Follow-up evaluation in Pakistan and Britain demonstrated **enhanced language ability and knowledge of the UK**, and the ability to undertake practical and bureaucratic tasks independently (benefitting participants and their UK families) [v, 5.10]. This work has also contributed to QED's capacity-building in three main ways: **extending their services to migrant husbands**, providing a case study for discussions with policy makers, and a basis for **new funding applications in the area of integration** more generally (i.e. not restricted to migrant husbands). As the project highlighted the challenges of pre-migration training, QED's subsequent Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) (EU/Home Office) application for funding focussed on tailored integration support post-migration. The application was successful – the three-year project will benefit over 900 migrants from a range of backgrounds, in several locations in England (2019-2022, c. GBP850,000). QED write: *'Working with Dr Charsley has therefore been highly useful for QED as an organisation, allowing us to expand our services to pilot a pre-departure integration project (benefiting 24 Pakistani prospective migrant husbands and their UK families). This then informed the development of a successful AMIF funding application which will benefit the integration of over 900 third country nationals in the UK'* [5.10].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

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- 5.1 [Case Review: A review into opportunity and integration](#) (December 2016)
 - 5.2 i) [Integrated Communities Integration Strategy Green Paper](#) (March 2018); ii) [Integrated Communities Action Plan](#) (February 2019); iii) [Summary of Consultation Processes and Government Response](#) (February 2019)
 - 5.3 i) Ali & Bibi Case Supreme Court Judgement; ii) MM Case Supreme Court Judgement; iii) Simic, Agnes, 2020: 'Integration and Marriage-related Migration: Impact from Expert Report for Supreme Court case on language requirement for spousal immigration'.
 - 5.4 House of Lords Debate on 2019-20 Immigration and Social Security Co-operation Bill: Available at <https://www.theyworkforyou.com/lords/?id=2020-09-30a.245.2&s=%22university+of+bristol%22#g250.0> [Accessed 11 December 2020]
 - 5.5 Research underpinnings of Inclusive Cities Project slide, provided by PI
 - 5.6 Inclusive Cities Project – Background Paper (October 2017). See also: <https://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/project/inclusive-cities/> (Outputs > City Action Plans)
 - 5.7 Greater London Authority – Impact Statement Letter (August 2019), Principal Social Policy Analyst
 - 5.8 [Home Office Indicators of Integration framework](#) (2019 third edition), including i) Indicators of Integration Toolkit (2019); ii) Integrating refugees: What works? What can work? What does not work? A summary of the evidence, second edition (June 2019); iii) Theory of Change for achieving integration (interactive document, 2019)
 - 5.9 Ministry for Communities, Housing and Local Government – Impact Statement Letter (October 2019)
 - 5.10 QED – Impact Statement Letter (August 2019), Founder and Chief Executive