

The Role of Family in Social Mobility



Impact of Family Resources on
Young People's Progression

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Foreward	4
About Us	4
Introduction	5
The Youth Labour market Today	6
The Evidence	7
What Do We Already Know About The Family	8
Trust In Families	8
Parent Capital And Young People's Work Values	11
Parent Social Capital And Good Paying Jobs	16
Conclusion	19
Policy recommendations	20
Economic Support	20
Advice and Guidance	20
Building Good Quality Networks	20
Appendix	22

Executive Summary

We have always known that the family matters. The environment young people grow up in has an impact on their future. Young people's progress and social mobility is connected with their family status and the values and resources available within the family. There is a concentration of wealth in some families contributing to inequalities among the young generation.

These inequalities have existed for a long time; we do not all start from the same point. We might not have the same goals, but not all young people are reaching their potential. The labour market they enter is unfriendly; zero hour contracts, the gig economy and low wages are real obstacles for young people. The present generation of young people are worse off than their parents. As a result, young people today are more reliant on their family to provide financial support and are also often hidden from official labour market statistics. Any inequalities in the parental generation become amplified among their children. For the first time, the younger generation faces downward social mobility compared to their parents and transitions from education to employment are taking longer.

In this report, we focus on the role the family has in supporting young people as they transition between school and work. Whilst it has long been established that family is important, we drill in to the question how the family supports young people. Drawing on unique empirical data of 18-35 year olds from the Cultural Pathways to Economic Self-Sufficiency and Entrepreneurship (CUPESSSE) project, we focus especially on the capital available in the family, looking not only at economic capital but also cultural (education) and social capital (trust and networks), and how this affects the prospects of young people in Britain today. We also look more closely at the work and educational values that are transmitted in the family and how these affect both the ambition and achievements of young people. Young people are more reliant on their family than previous generations; we can see the direct link in how family resources impact both young people's self-sufficiency, but their ambition too. This research better identifies why and how the family matters more than ever for the prospects of social mobility. By understanding family dynamics in terms of the location of its resources, we can identify some risks for young people and their potential for social mobility. The greater reliance on family to provide more support in the school to work transition comes with great risks, including: not enough support, too much support, and risks that emerge if parental support is withdrawn.

Whilst family does matter, it is not the only thing

The main findings from this research are:

- The current generation of young people is more likely to rely on parents for financial support than the parental generation.
- Young people whose families had economic and cultural capital were more likely to be dependant and less ambitious, whilst young people who received less family support were more independent.
- Parental capital is transformed in the family. Parental economic capital is transformed into young people's cultural capital by the parents paying for education. Where parents have social capital (trust and good quality networks), this is transformed to economic capital among their children who have more money available than those whose parents do not have social capital.
- Parental attitudes towards the value of work affects young people's ambitions. Young people whose parents showed them that work and money are connected had a clearer and more concrete ambition to become economically independent of their parents compared with those whose parents did not make this direct link.

that matters for the progress of young people. Educators, careers advisors, government policy, employability support organisations also have an influence, especially when the family cannot help. The deeper understanding of how family matters can bring clarity to what can be done by other actors in the field, to compensate when the family support is missing. By exploring the family's role in supporting young people, we can gain a deeper understanding of what youth unemployment data isn't telling us about those who are being supported by their family. From this, we can infer implications for the services offered (if any) and where services can be provided for those who do not have family support.

In our recommendations, we turn to the other support providers and make suggestions for what to do, and where to focus their efforts to fill the gaps in family support. Our primary recommendation is that all services engaging with young people must look at an individual level and deliver tailored support to each young person as it is needed. A key element to that individual support is to understand both the young person and their family's individual circumstances in terms of capital and values.

Foreword

The research presented in this report is important. We believe that it can help us advance policies and services to create better chances for all young people. If we don't pursue and develop policies and services that ensure every young person has the same life chances, we will never see an end to the inequalities we have today. In fact, evidence suggests that those inequalities will widen.

To realise the vision we have of a productive Britain, we must take bold action. That action must be taken by all actors; government, educators, employers and the third sector. This report highlights key recommendations to bring about real and lasting change.

Young people deserve the chance to fulfil their potential. We are at a critical juncture, despite 20 years' of programmes and investment in social mobility, we have not seen much progress. Evidence shows that intergenerational inequalities are very high, and that young people today are more likely to experience downward mobility compared to their parents.

We must come together to support young people. This generation is facing a future it is not prepared for; with worrying figures on loneliness, unhappiness and rising mental health issues in addition to an uncertain labour market, the rise of the gig economy and zero hour contracts. As the community around our young people, we must take greater responsibility to ease their transition into adulthood and independence.

The role of the family matters. By better understanding where the gaps are in a young person's home life, we can build better services to support those gaps. We should be committed to making bold financial and social decisions so that every young person has an equal chance of fulfilling their potential.

I am extremely proud that Youth Employment UK has been able to get involved in the CUPESSE research and support Newcastle University with this report. I hope that our extensive networks will find value in the work and find ways in which we can better improve our services to ensure the right support for as many young people as possible.

Laura Jane Rawlings, Chief Executive Youth Employment UK

About Us

Dr Emily Rainsford is a Research Associate in the Politics and International Relations Department at Newcastle University. Over the past four years she has worked on the CUPESSE project (www.cupesse.eu), looking at the role of the family in transmitting values and capital, and the effect this has on young people's economic self-sufficiency. During February and March 2017, she has been on secondment to Youth Employment UK (YEUK) funded by the Economic Social Research Council National Productivity Investment Fund Impact Accelerator Account Early Career Researcher Secondment to do a skills exchange and work on this report.

Youth Employment UK is a not-for-profit Community Interest Company and is the leading membership body specialising in youth employment. We support more than 15,000 young people aged 14-24 with free skills and careers guidance. We also assist over 350 employers, providers and youth organisation members with best practice, policy development, training and networking opportunities, so that they can support more young people into employment. As a specialist youth-led organisation, we have a unique insight into the needs and challenges young people from around the UK face, and we support policymakers and MPs to improve their understanding of this demographic to create a Youth Friendly UK.

Introduction

Young people today are facing an unfriendly labour market. Even if the official youth unemployment statistics are down, challenges remain for young people to get a good quality job and progress in society. Not only are the youth unemployment rates still higher than the overall workforce figures, we also know that a substantial number of young people are hidden from labour market figures as well as, support.² We know that there are issues with the quality of jobs available to young people, with zero hour contracts and the gig economy, or over qualification in the graduate labour market leading to low wages and precarious conditions.³ The effect on the economy of this mismatch in resources is only slightly less concerning than the effect it has on the health and wellbeing of young people who just want to get a job. In this context, it has been warned that we see an increased risk of downward social mobility, where young people today will end up in a lower socio-economic situation than their parents.⁴

Young people are especially vulnerable in the labour market and in society. They are in the transitional period between childhood and adulthood; between dependency and independency from the family; between school and work. In today's society, these transitions have become more fragmented, less straightforward and are taking longer.⁵ In this context, parents have the means to support their children; to put up "financial and practical scaffolding"⁶ for children struggling to get a job; financing their education costs; letting them move back in to the family home or even creating jobs for them. The family takes a hands-on role in smoothing the transition from school to work and we are interested in the consequences of this increased importance of the family. On one hand, for those who have parents who can help them out, this continued reliance on parents contributes and reinforces the delayed progression into stable work, independent living and other markers of adulthood. On the other hand, we also know that many young people do not have this support. With a greater reliance on the family to provide financial support, the inequalities in the parental generation become exacerbated among their children.

In this report, we focus on the role of the family in supporting young people as they make the transition between school and work. We focus especially on the capital (economic, social and cultural)⁷ available in the family and the values placed on work and education, and how this affects the prospects of young people. We use both quantitative and qualitative data from CUPESSSE, a multidisciplinary EU funded project. The quantitative data comes from a representative sample of young adults aged 18-35, as well as a subsample of parent-child pairs. Our qualitative data comes from in-depth interviews with three members of the same family in Northeast England. As such, we will provide detailed data on how family matters for the prospects of social mobility for young people in the UK. Based on these findings, we propose recommendations for stakeholders involved in the field of youth employment.

² London Youth "Hidden in Plain Sight" <http://londonyouth.org/quality-and-impact/hidden-in-plain-sight/>

³ The RSA "Good Gigs" https://www.thersa.org/globalassets/pdfs/reports/rsa_good-gigs-fairer-gig-economy-report.pdf

⁴ Bukodi, E., Goldthorpe, J. H., Waller, L. and Kuha, J. (2015), 'The mobility problem in Britain: new findings from the analysis of birth cohort data.' *The British Journal of Sociology*, 66: 93-117. doi:10.1111/1468-4446.12096

⁵ Heinz, W.R. (2009) 'Youth transitions in an age of uncertainty', in A. Furlong (ed.), *Handbook of youth and young adulthood: New perspectives and agendas*, Oxon: Routledge, pp.3-13

⁶ Swartz, T.T. and O'Brien, K.B. (2017) 'Intergenerational support during the transition to adulthood.' in A. Furlong (ed.), *Handbook of youth and young adulthood: New perspectives and agendas*, Oxon: Routledge pp.217-225.

⁷ Bourdieu, P (1986) 'The Forms of Capital'. In Richardson, J., (eds) *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, New York: Greenwood, pp. 241-258

The Main Findings

- There is an increased transmission of economic capital now compared to previous generations. The current generation of young people is more likely to rely on their parents for financial support than the parental generation.
- Young people whose families had economic and cultural capital were more likely to be dependant and less ambitious, whilst young people who received less family support were more independent.
- Parental capital is transformed in the family. Parental economic capital is transformed into young people's cultural capital by the parents paying for education. Where parents have social capital (trust and good quality networks), this is transformed to economic capital among their children who have more money available than those whose parents do not have social capital.
- The values attributed by parents to work affects young people's ambitions. Young people whose parents showed them that work and money are connected had a clearer and more concrete ambition to become economically independent than young people whose parents did not make this direct link.

Youth Labour Market Today

The UK labour market is still recovering from the economic crisis of 2008. While the overall unemployment figures are low and have been declining, youth unemployment remains stubbornly higher. We also see a high NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) rate of 11.1%. This is particularly important because it includes those who have not continued in education, thus they have no daily activity. A recent report by London Youth⁸ highlighted a substantial number of hidden NEETs who do not show up in labour market statistics, so even if we are moving in the right direction, the problem is not solved.

Quality of work in today's labour market is concerning. The gig economy and zero hour contracts have received a lot of media attention,⁹ contributing to the precarisation of work in the UK today. The CUPESSE survey asked a representative sample of working 18-35 year olds what kind of contract they had. 11% said they had a fixed term contract and 11% had a zero hour or no contract at all. These figures are much higher than the 2.8% of the total labour force on zero hour contracts estimated by the Office of National Statistics (ONS),¹⁰ indicating that official statistics tend to underestimate the real figures for young people.

With increased numbers of people attending university, there is greater competition for graduate jobs. We have seen the development of an 'hourglass economy', with plenty of jobs at the top and bottom skills levels, but fewer at the middle,¹¹ i.e. at an appropriate entry level for educated young people. Our survey indicated that nearly 30% felt they were overqualified for their job.

In this context, it is questionable whether young people get a wage they can live independently on. The Sutton Trust found that unpaid internships are a barrier to a sustainable career and social mobility, because these are only open to those who have the resources to work for free¹². In our sample, 38% of young people still live with their parents and 47% had previously moved out of the family home but had moved back home. The family clearly provides the scaffolding and support for young people in their transition to adulthood.

4.2%

UK unemployment

12.5%

Youth unemployment
(16-25years old)

11.1%

NEET Rate

Source: ONS Labourmarket statistics Feb 2018



29.5% Overqualified

11% Fixed term contract

11% 0-hour or no contract

Source: CUPESSE Survey

47% have
moved back in
with parents



38%
still live with
parents



Source: CUPESSE Survey

⁸ London Youth "Hidden in Plain Sight" <http://londonyouth.org/quality-and-impact/hidden-in-plain-sight/>

⁹ "Sometimes you don't feel human" Guardian, accessed 06/03/2018 <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/oct/17/sometimes-you-dont-feel-human-how-the-gig-economy-chews-up-and-spits-out-millennials>

¹⁰ "People in employment on a zero-hours contract: Mar 2017", ONS, Last accessed on 06/03/2018, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/articles/contractsthatdonotguaranteeaminimumnumberofhours/mar2017>

¹¹ Sissons, P. (2011) The hourglass and the escalator: Labour market change and mobility (London: The Work Foundation).

¹² Montacute, R., (2018) "Internships- Unpaid, Unadvertised, Unfair", The Sutton Trust, <https://www.suttontrust.com/research-paper/internships-unpaid-unadvertised-unfair/>

The Evidence

The evidence we draw on in this report comes from CUPESSE, a four year multidisciplinary research project in 11 European countries funded by the European Commission (FP7). The project generated two unique datasets; one nationally representative quantitative dataset of 3000 young adults aged 18-35, including a subsample of 450 parent and child pairs; and a second qualitative dataset with in-depth interviews of three members of the same family in Northeast England. Here, we ensured variation amongst the youngest generation with regard to occupational status (employed, self-employed, employed in family business, unemployed and in education) as well as a gender balance and an even split between urban and rural communities. Each country collected both kinds of data, allowing us to not only make national-level comparisons, but also to achieve the greater statistical reliance enabled by large datasets.

All of our research was concerned with the transmission of capital and values within the family and the effects this had on young people's economic self-sufficiency. Capital comes in many forms, but following the work of Bourdieu¹³ economic, social and cultural capital are often referred to as the main categories. **Economic capital** means the amount of **money** someone has; this can be in terms of salary, savings, assets or other things that have economic value. In this report, we focus mostly on the availability of money. **Social capital** is a widely used concept that has many definitions and uses. It is often seen to have two components; norms and networks. **Norms are the values of trust and reciprocity that develop in good quality networks, but social capital can also be seen as the extent of networks.** **Cultural capital** is often measured as the **level of education** someone has, but also has to do with the values and attitudes that come with higher levels of education.

Here, we define **economic self-sufficiency** as being able to **live on the wage they get from work**, i.e. pay for decent housing, bills, save and have some money left over for a hobby or trips. Importantly, it is to be **independent from state or parental support**. We focus on economic self-sufficiency because we know that the greatest challenge for many young people today may not be simply to get a job, but to get a job that enables sustainability, in terms of pay, hours worked, and career prospects. **Just looking at employment or unemployment is not enough**; we need to also look at what people are paid and what they can actually afford to do with that salary.

Definitions

- **Economic capital:** money
- **Social capital:** connections and trust
- **Cultural capital:** education and values from education
- **Economic self-sufficiency:** ability to live on wage from work, independent of family, state or other sources

We know that families transmit capital and values already; **what we bring to the discussion is how values and capital are reproduced in families.** Further research is required, but the analysis conducted so far has focused on the transmission of all three types of capital; cultural, economic and social, and the effects this has on the transmission of work values and development of economic self-sufficiency. In this section, we summarise the findings from three sets of analysis.

1: Evidence from the UK quantitative parent-child sample on the transmission of social capital

2: Evidence from the UK qualitative three generational in-depth interviews on transmission of capital and work values

3: Evidence from the 11 country parent-child dataset looking at the effect of parental social capital on young people's economic self-sufficiency

¹³ Bourdieu, P (1986) 'The Forms of Capital'. In Richardson, J, (eds) Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education, New York: Greenwood, pp. 241-258

What Do We Know About The Family

Family matters in both positive and negative ways. Family background is the first thing we look at when we want to explain why a young person isn't doing well at school, in employment, or is going down a criminal path. It is the first thing we look at when we want to know why things go right for someone; what conditions did the parents give the young person to succeed? Did they defeat the odds or were they set up for success from the outset? We know that family matters in development of political attitudes,¹⁴ educational attainment,¹⁵ socioeconomic status and employment.¹⁶ Family is the first place a child gets socialisation cues. These can be positive or negative, but they matter.

Family is a resource, but can also be hindrance for the young person to gain independence. Young people today are experiencing elongated transitions into work and the family increasingly has to step in where previously the welfare state did. With a greater reliance on family, inequalities at the parental level are exacerbated among their children. Equality of opportunity is hindered by inequalities between families. In this report, we are interested in understanding the role of the family in social mobility. Or more accurately, the potential for social mobility, since young people are still transitioning between school and work, childhood and adulthood, which is a time that matters greatly for their progress in society.

First, we want to focus on families and understand how the resources available in the family affect the progress made by the young person. Second, we want to discuss the effects of this on social mobility both for those who have the family as a resource and those who do not. In the latter case, we want to make some suggestions for what the rest of society can do when we come across a young person without family support to compensate for a lack of family resources.

Trust In Families

Headline Findings ¹⁷

- The family is more effective than organisations to foster trust among young people
- Trust is important as a fundamental for a well-functioning society

Background

Trust is a fundamental value in well-functioning societies. People and societies with higher levels of trust are more successful. For example, societies where trust is high also tend to have higher levels of GDP and higher levels of employment.¹⁸ On an individual, level trust is associated with better employment prospects as well as wellbeing.¹⁹ Trust is an experiential value; higher of experience of people trusting you and of you trusting people will deepen your trust. Trust is also important for employment, because employers hire people whom they trust will do what they say. Prospective employees seek employer whom they trust will give the opportunities they promise.²⁰

¹⁴ Jennings, M.K., Stoker, L. and Bowers, J., 2009. Politics across generations: Family transmission reexamined. *The Journal of Politics*, 71(3), pp.782-799

¹⁵ Blanden, J. and Gregg, P., 2004. Family income and educational attainment: a review of approaches and evidence for Britain. *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 20(2), pp.245-263

¹⁶ O'Neill, D. and Sweetman, O., 1998. Intergenerational mobility in Britain: evidence from unemployment patterns. *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and statistics*, 60(4), pp.431-447

¹⁷ Rainsford, E. and Maloney W.A.M., "Family Matters: Intergenerational Social Capital Transmission in the UK.", Working paper

¹⁸ Knack, S. and Keefer, P., 1997. Does social capital have an economic payoff? A cross-country investigation. *The Quarterly journal of economics*, 112(4), pp.1251-1288.

¹⁹ Bjørnskov, C., 2003. The happy few: Cross-country evidence on social capital and life satisfaction. *Kyklos*, 56(1), pp.3-16.

²⁰ Granovetter, M., 1995. Getting a job: A study of contacts and careers. University of Chicago press.

So how do we develop trust? Hundreds of studies have tested Putnam's²¹ claim that social capital is generated in civil society organisations through face to face interactions.²² Social capital is understood as the density of connections between people and the norms of trust and reciprocity that come from those close connections. Links between organisations and trust have been questioned recently due to already trusting people being more likely to join organisations.²³ The question of how trust is generated is back on the table.

The role of organisations can also be questioned when researching young people. ²⁴Young people spend more time in places other than 'organisations', e.g. at school or with family, that are likely to have a more direct and stronger influence on their attitudes and values.²⁵ This is an intuitive argument, but has not yet been fully investigated empirically. Here, we will explore the role of the family in comparison to organisations in developing trust, to find the comparative influence of organisations and parents, i.e. to understand the extent of parental influence whilst also controlling for organisational involvement.

We focus specifically on generalised trust; levels of trust in people in general in society. This is the normative component of social capital, which is a well-established and widely used measure. It makes sense in this context because values and norms are more likely to be transmitted in the family than the structural component of social capital, which is defined by density of networks.

Methodology

We analysed the CUPESSE data in two ways. First we looked at the correlation and then we ran a regression model. For both analyses, we used the paired data set where we have data on both the parent and child. Because of the self-selection of the parent, there is a risk of this sample being biased. Consequently, we ran a quality check on this paired sample to see if it was significantly different from the overall youth sample. Checking for educational level, migration status and main occupation did not find any significant differences between the overall youth sample and the parent-child sample.

Findings

Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the findings from this analysis. Table 2 is abbreviated, removing the control variables of age, gender, occupation, migration background, disposable income and UK regions.²⁶ The important story we are interested in here is the relationship between the young person's trust and organisational involvement or parent's trust.

Table 1 Parent-child social capital correlation

List wise correlation	Parent generalised trust	Child generalised trust	Child organisation involvement
Parent generalised trust	1		
Child generalised trust	0.43	1	
Child organisational involvement	0.08	0.12	1

Table 1 already gives us a hint about the importance of the family. We see that the correlation between the parent's trust and the child's trust is much higher than the correlation between child's trust and organisational involvement (0.43 versus 0.12). This analysis is limited to the relationship between the two variables and to fully understand the parental influence, we also need to control for other variables that might affect young people's trust.

²¹ Putnam, R.D., 2000. Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. In Culture and politics (pp. 223-234). Palgrave Macmillan, New York

²² Baggetta, M. (2009). Civic opportunities in associations: Interpersonal interaction, governance experience and institutional relationships. Social Forces, 88(1), 175-199

²³ Van Ingen, E. and Van der Meer, T., 2016. Schools or pools of democracy? A longitudinal test of the relation between civic participation and political socialization. Political Behavior, 38(1), pp.83-103

²⁴ Stolle, D. and Hooghe, M., 2004. The roots of social capital: Attitudinal and network mechanisms in the relation between youth and adult indicators of social capital. Acta Politica, 39(4), pp.422-441.

²⁵ Newton, K., 1999. Social and political trust. In The Oxford Handbook of Social and Political Trust

²⁶ The full table is available in the appendix.

Table 2 only reports the key variables from the regression analysis. Here, we see that on its own (Model 1), organisational involvement has a significant positive effect only if the respondent is involved for 1-3 hours compared to not being involved at all. This effect holds even after we include parent trust in Model 3, but the effect is reduced. This suggests that some of the variation in young people's trust that was attributed to organisational involvement actually comes from parental trust. We also see that parental trust has a significant positive effect on the young person's trust, both on its own (Model 2) and maintains both size and significance when we also control for organisational involvement. This indicates that parental trust is more robust in its effect than organisational involvement.

Table 2 Tobit model for young person generalised trust, robust standard errors

	Model 1 YP organisational involvement	Model 2 parent trust	Model 3 combined model
Organisational involvement			
Not involved	Reference	Reference	Reference
Less than an hour	0.24 (0.27)		0.02 (0.24)
1-3 hours	0.75*** (0.23)		0.6** (0.21)
4-7 hours	0.03 (0.38)		0.07 (0.35)
8 or more hours	0.65 (0.6)		-0.04 (0.56)
Parent trust		0.38*** (0.04)	0.37*** (0.04)
constant	5.22***	3.62***	3.59***
/sigma	1.85	1.76	1.68
Number of observations	447	447	447
Note: * = $p \leq 0.05$ ** = $p \leq 0.01$ *** = $p \leq 0.001$			

Conclusion

Overall, we can see that parental trust has a significant effect on young people's trust, even when controlling for the young person's own organisational involvement. As we know that there are self-selection effects in organisations, and it could be argued that family influence chronologically comes before external socialisation forces, we can conclude that trust is transmitted from parents to children. Whilst this may not be surprising anecdotally, we have provided the empirical evidence to back up the claim that social capital is reproduced in the family. What is concerning about this finding is the intergenerational inequalities this concentration of trust in families gives rise to. Not only do we risk seeing increased intergenerational differences in trust levels, but also in the positive things that come with trust, like sustainable high quality jobs. We therefore see that trust needs to be built elsewhere than in the family and elsewhere than in organisations. Young people today need to experience trust outside the family, and learn the value of trusting networks.

27 See appendix for full analysis. The results are not surprising, most other variables are not significant, apart from being unemployed, having 'other' occupation, being born in other country and living in the north, these all have a significant negative effect on young person's trust. These are not surprising findings.

Parent Capital and Young People's Work Values

Headline Findings²⁸

- The younger generation was more reliant (financially and other support) on their parents than older generations had been on their parents.
- There is a clear difference in achievement and aspiration to become economically independent from parents between families with different levels and kinds of capital:
 - Families with economic and cultural capital who had supported their children directly fostered more dependent and less ambitious children.
 - Families with some economic but less cultural capital who had supported children to some extent fostered less dependent and more ambitious children.
 - Families where there was little family support fostered the most independent children.
- Economic capital in the family was transformed into cultural capital (education) among the children.
- In families where the value of work was directly linked to earning money, the children were more concerned with becoming financially independent from their parents. All families emphasised working hard, but a distinction was found between working hard in education or in employment.

Background

The second step is to explore how capital is transmitted in the family and how values are developed. We analysed our qualitative dataset of in-depth interviews with three generations in the same family in Northeast England. We were particularly interested in how capital and work values were transmitted between generations and the effect this had on the youngest generation's economic self-sufficiency. This analysis explores the detail of the mechanisms in families that produce the concentration of trust we saw above, as well as other forms of capital (shown below), giving us an insight into what works.

Achievement And Aspiration

Our analysis found not only a difference in the achievement of economic self-sufficiency among young respondents, but also a difference in their attitude to becoming economically self-sufficient. Or in other words, a difference in their achievement of and aspiration to become economically self-sufficient. This perspective is important to acknowledge, as we are researching young people who are in transition from childhood to adulthood, between school and work, so where we capture them is not necessarily where they end up. Their ambitions indicate least where they might end up. We therefore classified our respondents according to whether they had achieved economic self-sufficiency and to what extent they had the ambition to become economically self-sufficient. The distribution between these categories is seen in table 3 below.

Table 3 Distribution of participants across categories²⁹

	Economically self-sufficient	Less economically self-sufficient
Focussed on gaining economic self-sufficiency	<u>Entrepreneurs</u> Chris (self-employed) Victoria (self-employed)	<u>Ambitious</u> Jack (unemployed) Nick (In education)
Less focussed on gaining economic self-sufficiency	<u>Gradual Progressors</u> John (employed) Helen (employed) Peter (family business) Lucie (family business)	<u>Voluntary Dependents</u> Rose (in education) Andrew (in education) Philip (in education)

²⁸ Rainsford E., and Wambach A., (Forthcoming) "Cash and Class: intergenerational transmission of values and capital in the UK" In eds. Tosun, J., Pauknerová, D., Kittel, B, (Eds.) Family Matters: Intergenerational Transmission of values and capital, Palgrave

²⁹ Pseudonyms have been used to protect the identity of the participants.

Findings

Interview analysis yielded four main findings. First, we saw an intergenerational difference in how long they had had to rely on parents for support. Second, the level of economic and cultural capital available in the family strongly influenced the drive to become economically self-sufficient among the youngest generation. Third, we saw a clear transformation of economic capital among parents to cultural capital (education) among their children. Lastly, there was a marked difference in the values attributed to work held between those who had had direct experience of their parents' work and those who had not.

Intergenerational Difference

In line with general societal trends of elongated transitions into adulthood³⁰ and the decline in upward social mobility in the UK,³¹ our research shows clear intergenerational differences in the achievement of economic self-sufficiency. The older generations became economically self-sufficient more quickly than subsequent generations. Grandparents had the least economic support from their family, whilst young people are often still dependent. The parent generation takes a median position, having been less reliant on their parents than their children are on them. This fundamental intergenerational difference in economic reliance on the family across the generations is most likely to be a reflection of the economic conditions present when each generation made the transition from school to work; when the parents joined the labour market, there were more well-paid jobs available than there are for young people today. This difference illustrates the aggravated challenge someone might have if their family does not have capital to provide the financial scaffolding in the transition from school to work.

Transforming Capital, Achieving Independence

The level of primarily economic and cultural capital within the family strongly influenced young people's ambition to achieve economic self-sufficiency. While all families clearly demonstrated a willingness to support their children financially, there was a difference in their ability to do so. In our data there are many instances where older generations financially supported the young respondents through higher education or training, or helping them buy their own home. Among Gradual Progressors and the Ambitious, transmission of economic capital did not always take the form of cash transfers. Instead, parents let the children move back home (even if they were employed), or created a job in the family business. In contrast, transmission of economic capital is most direct in the category of Voluntary Dependents.

“ My parents [...] are backing me at university, financially... I consider myself as an investment to them, so they are funding me. ”

>> **Rosa** (Voluntary dependent)

Rosa also expresses a transformation of economic capital into cultural capital, i.e. her parents have the financial means to pay for her to gain higher education and cultivate her cultural capital. This transformation sets the Voluntary Dependents up for a smoother transition from school to work or adulthood, through sponsoring gap years to promote employability or helping with deposits for a house. However, this financial support breaks the link between hard work and earning money.

³⁰ Walther, A. (2006) 'Regimes of youth transitions: choice, flexibility and security in young people's experiences across different European contexts' *Young*, 14(2):120-239

³¹ Bukodi, E., Goldthorpe, J.H., Waller, L. and Kuha, J., 2015. The mobility problem in Britain: new findings from the analysis of birth cohort data. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 66(1), pp.93-117.

“ I think they [his parents] were worried about putting too much pressure on you and I did know people who didn't have the support that I did, who had to work a lot and I think that did put an awful lot of pressure on them. ”

>> **Andrew** (Voluntary dependent)

Andrew illustrates that the support provided from his parents saved him from having to find employment whilst at university and this decreased his desire to achieve his own economic self-sufficiency. The primary focus for their family was to make sure the child got a good education, not necessarily to earn money. As such, we see evidence that when there is economic capital in the family, the link to economic self-sufficiency is weaker.

In contrast, in families where there was less economic capital and less cultural capital, young people had a stronger ambition to achieve economic independence from their parents. Among the Entrepreneurs' families, financial support was scarcer. Nevertheless, the lack of transmission of economic capital still influenced economic self-sufficiency. Independence was not only encouraged by the families of Entrepreneurs, but it was also necessary. In contrast to Swartz and O'Brien's suggestion that inequalities in resources at the parental level³² are reproduced at the child level, we see here that lack of money at the parental level has produced the most economically self-sufficient children.

Although the Ambitious respondents also received some financial support from their parents, there was a difference in the expected outcome. Cultural capital (valuing education) and economic capital (financial support) are more directly transformed into economic capital (to assist in getting a job). Nick and his mother display a similar attitude regarding his educational choices focusing on its utility rather than its intrinsic value:

“ I went for geography and planning because I was interested in property a little bit, and planning is good for that. ”

>> **Nick** (Ambitious)

“ No, the children all had to go to university. We were very much/ my husband went to university, and ... we knew, in this day and age, that they had to go to university, to get a degree, to get a job. So they have all known that. ”

>> **Nick's mother**

³² Swartz, T.T. and O'Brien, K.B. (2009) 'Intergenerational support during the transition to adulthood.' in A. Furlong (ed.), *Handbook of youth and young adulthood: New perspectives and agendas*, Oxon: Routledge pp. 217-225.

It may be the combination of this attitude to education and a strong transmission of the extrinsic work values that has given the Ambitious a stronger drive to become financially independent of their parents. Whilst all respondents were taught the importance of working hard, the Ambitious respondents clearly linked this to earning money.

Jack's experience of previous unemployment needs to be considered as well. He was left disappointed by the Job Centre services and felt punished for asking for help. He clearly tried to avoid another experience like this, which contributed to his efforts of finding employment.

“ I mean if I'm struggling in a couple of months' time for money, I'll go and see them [at the job centre] again but I'd rather not because, like I say, the environment, it's really unpleasant. I feel like by going to see them I've done something wrong, which again, it's really bad [...]

>>Jack (Ambitious)

Learning The Value Of Work

The models parents and grandparents provide with regard to work ethic and work centrality have a strong influence on these values among their children. We see this transmission of values especially among Gradual Progressors and the Ambitious, whilst results for Entrepreneurs in this regard are mixed and there is little evidence of this mechanism for Voluntary Dependents.

The key difference that generated this strong transmission among the Gradual Progressors was that they had a more direct transmission of work values.³³ They were aware that the parents had to work hard and were involved with their parents' working lives, having experienced it first-hand more frequently. This was also something their parents had experienced.

“ I've always been in the workshop since I was a little kid. My grandma must have hundreds of pictures of me with my filthy oily hands when I'm six or something, covered in oil. You just watch. You help a bit; you get spanners and get that oil can and tighten that up

>>Peter (Gradual Progressor)

³³ Lim, V.K. and Loo, G.L. (2003) 'Effects of parental job insecurity and parenting behaviors on youth's self-efficacy and work attitudes.' Journal of Vocational Behavior, 63 (1): 86-98.

“ I probably started work here when I was about nine or 10. I started driving the tractor when I was about 11 and then I was here all the time. One of the worst things that I can remember is that the school is only over there and when we had maths, I could see what was going on over here. ”

>>Peter's Father

Through this direct experience, parents appear to have become a positive role model to their children with regard to work centrality and work ethics, possibly resulting in the Gradual Progressors prioritising economic self-sufficiency and having part-time jobs during their teenage years. For other respondents, especially Voluntary Dependents, work was not part of their childhood everyday experience; they were not encouraged to take on part-time jobs and their work values differ more strongly from their parents.

Role modelling and a consequent awareness of working life also contributed to transmission of work values among the Ambitious respondents. In Jack's case, he was taken along to his father's workplace and experienced how his parents managed their work-life balance. As a result, Jack was very concerned with earning money from the work that he did. I probably talked about what we were doing. I took him into work. I think on a Saturday I'd previously taken him on to construction sites and shown him around it. Jack's (Ambitious) father

“ I probably talked about what we were doing. I took him into work. I think on a Saturday I'd previously taken him on to construction sites and shown him around it. ”

>>Jack's (Ambitious) Father

Conclusion

Overall, we see that there is not only a transmission of economic capital from parents to children, but also a transformation of economic capital to cultural capital. The parents and grandparents did not need or receive this kind of support from their family as much as the young people today do. We also saw that those young people who had the highest ambition to become economically independent from their parents had parents who talked about work with them, or even took them into work. It is also clear that the parents with more 'hands on' occupations were able to do this more easily than those who had more abstract occupations. In line with the general trend in the UK today,³⁴ we see in this data the potential for a limited upward social mobility; both in families where there is support because the ambition to become economically self-sufficient is not fostered and in the families where there is less support because despite having the ambition to become economically self-sufficient, there are fewer opportunities for extracurricular CV building activities. The analysis also highlights that when families provide the financial scaffolding for their children, the children become dependent on their parents. This generates the risk of a downward social mobility if the family support is retracted. This risk is especially concerning, as we saw that the economic capital available in the family influenced the young person's ambition to become economically self-sufficient.

³³ Bukodi, E., Goldthorpe, J.H., Waller, L. and Kuha, J., 2015. 'The mobility problem in Britain: new findings from the analysis of birth cohort data.' *The British Journal of Sociology*, 66(1), pp.93-117

Parent Social Capital And Well-paying Jobs.

Headline Findings ³⁵

- Parental social capital has a positive effect on their child's economic self-sufficiency.
- The strongest effect is from parents having employed friends.

Background

So far, we have seen that social capital is reproduced in the family and that economic and cultural capital available in the family influence young people's economic position and prospects. Finally, we explore the effect of parental social capital on their children's economic self-sufficiency. Social capital has been defined in many ways in different fields. In the political domain, generalised trust is the main focus, whilst in the employability field, networks and connections have received more attention. Following Granovetter,³⁶ we combine these different meanings of social capital to argue that it is not just contacts that matter in getting a job, but having good quality and trusting contacts enables people to get a better job. We argue that when people speak of young people's social capital for employment they forget three important things: First, young people's social capital is intertwined with the social capital of their parents. The family is an important resource to draw from. Second, social capital is not just about networks; we need to also understand the quality of those networks. Lastly, most of the literature speaks about the importance of networks for employability. We argue that this is not enough; what really matters is if the networks can get you a high quality job.

Methodology And Definitions

To understand the effect of parental social capital on the economic situation of their children, we analysed the full CUPESSE parent-child dataset and conducted path models. A path model allows us to understand the direct and indirect relationship between parental social capital, young person's social capital and young person's economic self-sufficiency. In this analysis we use definition of economic self-sufficiency meaning being able to afford to save money, have a hobby or go on trips. We focus on the ability to afford these 'extras' because we are interested in whether social capital helps you get a better job; in this case, better in terms of money earned. This also depends on the lifestyle and financial responsibilities of the young person, but that will always be a subjective measure depending on multiple factors. Here, we have a more objective measure that moves beyond simply looking at employment status or earnings. We look at three dimensions of social capital; the normative in terms of trust, the structural in terms of organisational involvement, and the practical in terms of number of employed friends.

³⁵ Rapp, C., Rainsford, E., and Maloney, W.A.M, "Parental social capital and young people's economic self-sufficiency: a path model analysis" Working paper.

³⁶ Granovetter, M., 1995. Getting a job: A study of contacts and careers. University of Chicago press.

Findings

The figures below display the results from a path model where we control for parent and child education, age, gender, marital status, whether the young person has moved out of the family home and if they have children themselves. We control for these because they may also affect the young person's economic self-sufficiency.

Figure 1

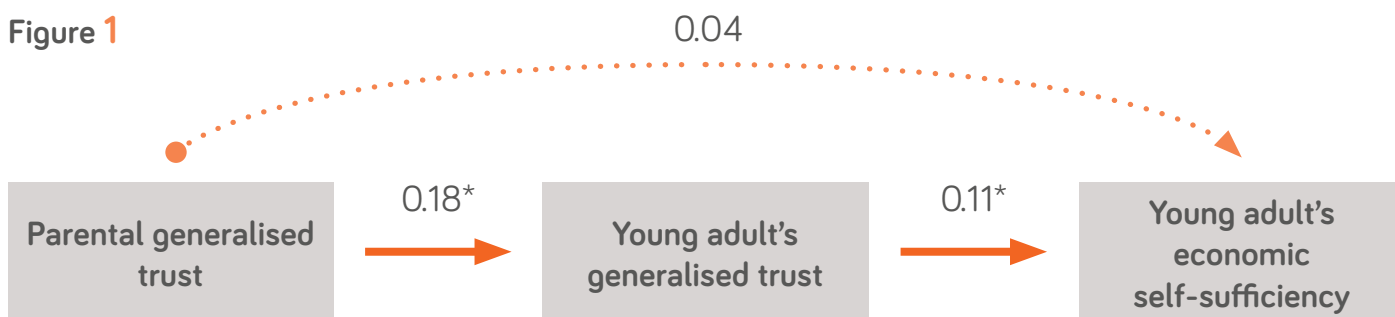


Figure 2

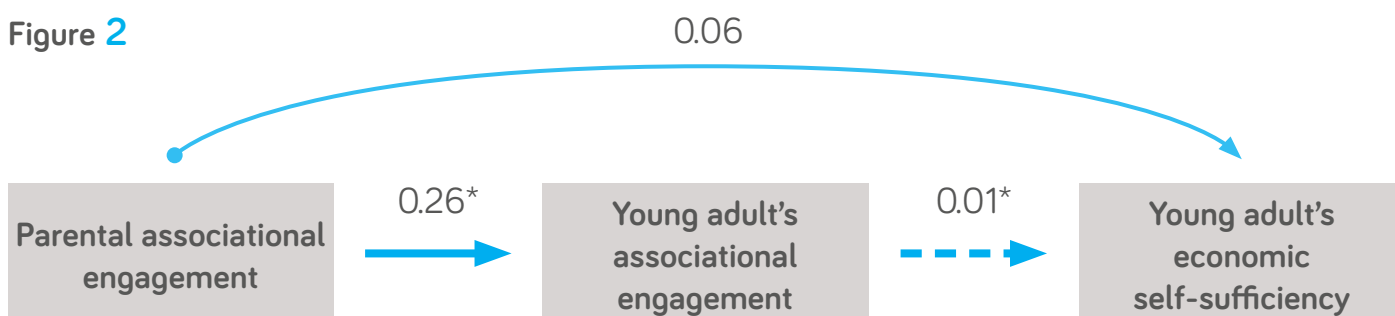
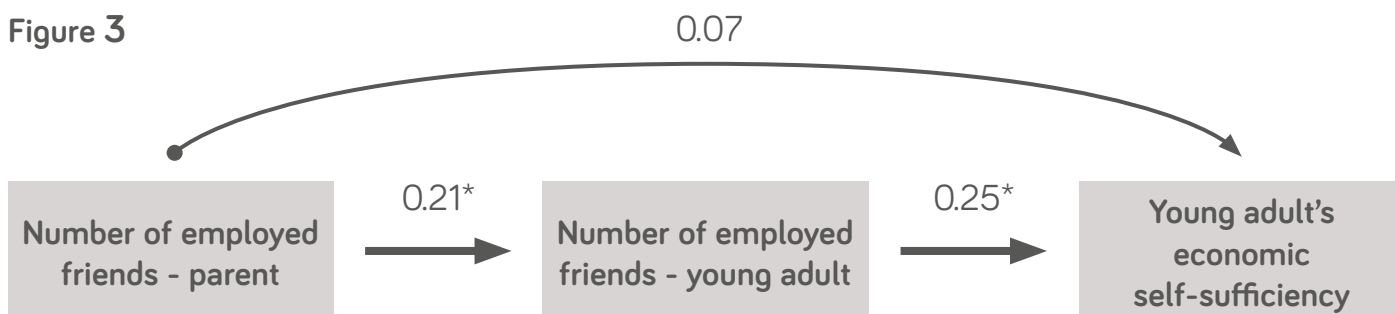


Figure 3



The analysis in the figures above shows three key findings. First, it confirms what we saw previously; that parental trust influences their child's trust, but more importantly, that trust has a positive effect on economic self-sufficiency. This means that those who have trusting parents and are trusting themselves get better paid jobs. However, we do not see a significant effect of parental trust on the child's economic self-sufficiency (indicated by the dotted line), so it is essential that the young person themselves develops trust, and this comes from the parents. Second, we see that parental associational involvement has a positive significant effect both on their child's associational involvement as well as a direct effect on the child's economic self-sufficiency. Surprisingly, the child's associational involvement does not have a significant effect on their economic self-sufficiency. This means that it is the parent's contacts that matter for the young person to get a well-paying job. This finding is strengthened in Figure 3, where we see that the number of employed friends the parents have has a direct significant effect on the child's economic self-sufficiency, as well as on the number of employed friends the child has. This means that the quality of the network of the parent rubs off on their children (or there is overlap in networks), but most importantly it also leads to the child being more economically independent from the parents.

The Risks?

This report highlights the ways that family reproduces capital and values within it. We have shown the conditions under which young people develop the aspiration to become economically independent from their family and what conditions help them to become so. In today's 'austerity Britain', the family increasingly has to step in where the labour market fails or where the welfare state used to step in. Whilst it is inappropriate and unnecessary to suggest that parents ought to stop supporting their children, we see a number of risks for young people as a consequence of increased reliance on the family.

Risk 1

Parental support is withdrawn

This risk is primarily for those who have support from their family. If something happens to the parents financially, the young person will be affected doubly; first because support is withdrawn, but also because they may lack the drive to replace it. As a result they may end up costing the state more.

Risk 2

Social mobility is propped up by parents

Other evidence has already shown the likelihood of the current young generation to be the first to be worse off than their parents. Our evidence questions whether we know the full picture. As with the hidden NEETS, we have hidden dependants and hidden dependency. The support given by parents also hides the young person from labour market statistics, because they do not access Job Centres or other support. Young unemployed people are hidden in families, and we are not getting a true reflection of the state of youth employment levels in the labour force. Even young people who had jobs needed support from their parents. This is not beneficial for either the parental or young person's economic situation. Any upward social mobility that happens is thus not due to the young person getting on in the labour market, but is based on the support the family has given.

Risk 3

Tougher for those who do not have access to parental resources to progress in the labour market

There is a great risk to their future prosperity for those who do not have family resources. Even if they are hardworking and want to work, they would not be able to do the unpaid internships, get trusting recommendations from parents' networks, or move back home to save money like those with access to parental resources. As such, the odds are stacked against them, and their employment and education choices are limited. Even if they invest in a university education, they may not have the social capital to get the well-paying jobs after graduation.

Risk 4

Increase in social inequalities

The concentration and reproduction of resources in the family and decline in social mobility combined will likely result in an increase in social inequalities. Young people without family support entering an already competitive labour market have the odds stacked against them, not only in comparison with their contemporaries, but also due to the inequalities that their parents experienced.

How to mitigate the risks?

To mitigate these risks, we argue that social and cultural capital needs to be built in more places than the family. Many scholars have explored the role of civic organisations in developing trust and, whilst these have been criticised for being self-selective, we argue that there remains scope for other actors to step in. Educational institutions in particular can play a role in fostering networking and many do. We also argue that direct transmission of work values, or the value of work, can be transmitted elsewhere than in the family. Again, we are aware of organisations doing this, but would emphasise the importance between connecting a career to also being able to live on that wage. This should in no way be interpreted as a suggestion that money is all that matters; it is rather an argument to say that money also matters.

To mitigate the risks identified by how capital is transformed and transmitted in families and values and ambitions are fostered we need to:

1. Build social capital in places other than the family and we build both trust and networks for young people.
2. Emphasise the link between working and earning money to foster the ambition to become economically self-sufficient. This must be fostered by everyone involved in employability support for young adults.

Conclusion

This report highlights the need for all stakeholders to recognise the importance all types of capital have on supporting young people to have a meaningful career. Where young people do not have access to the world of work and networks, they will struggle to progress. Our research showed that parents are critical in developing values of trust among young people and that this trust got them a better paying job in addition to parental networks. We need to recognise this when supporting young people into work.

The value of work and money is important in driving ambition and self-sufficiency. We must ensure that young people value work. To do this, they need exposure to work and to see work working for people. Our in-depth interviews found that when work was not part of the family life or conversations, or was less concrete, the young people did not associate work with earning money. They understood the idea of working hard, but mainly with regard to their education. We must have more meaningful conversations about the world of work with young people.

The main message of this report is not just that family matters, but it is how family matters. We know that people have different opportunities depending on their family, where they live and what resources they have. Despite having this knowledge, we have not managed to reduce social inequalities and we see an increased risk of downward social mobility for young people today. Our research has shown where the family matters, and what activities the family does that set their children up for a prosperous future.

The main findings from this research are:

- There is an increased transmission of economic capital now compared to previous generations. The current generation of young people is more likely to rely on their parents for financial support than the parental generation.
- Young people whose families had economic and cultural capital were more likely to be dependant and less ambitious, whilst young people who received less family support were more independent.
- Parental capital is transformed in the family. Parental economic capital is transformed into young people's cultural capital by the parents paying for education. Where parents have social capital (trust and good quality networks), this is transformed to economic capital among their children who have more money available than those whose parents do not have social capital.
- The values attributed by parents to work affects young people's ambitions. Young people whose parents showed them that work and money are connected had a clearer and more concrete ambition to become economically independent than young people whose parents did not make this direct link.

We have made recommendations to address the inequalities that families reproduce. We want you, whether you are an employer, educator or careers adviser, to start asking the questions: not only 'what resources does the young person in front of me have?' But also 'what resources does the family have?'

Excellent practice will shine through where government, education, and employer communities come together to fill in the gaps experienced by young people. A joined up and considered approach to supporting all young people to progress equally is required. It is not enough to create a one-size-fits-all approach; individuals and their family circumstances must be accounted for.

Policy Recommendations

The saying goes that it takes a village to raise a child. The village involved in helping young people enter and succeed in the labour market is diverse. Our recommendations fall under the themes of economic support, advice and guidance, and building meaningful networks, and are targeted at specific actors, such as the government, and more broadly, anyone who is involved in youth employment and employability support. The key aims these recommendations seek to achieve are to compensate for the accumulation of resources and development of values within the family to reduce the unequal opportunities our research highlighted.

Economic Support

- **Funders should invest money in programmes that support the family as well as the young person in employability support.** Many providers and funders in the employability sector do fantastic work helping young people. Involving and supporting the whole family is a worthwhile investment.
- **The government and businesses need to lead the way in tackling low pay and precarious work conditions in the youth labour market.** If there aren't more opportunities for well-paying and sustainable jobs, anything we do to support young people in getting them will be fruitless.
- **Young people need access to work experience.** The importance of good quality work experience has long been recognised. This responsibility does not fall solely on employers; educational institutions, support services and third sector organisations must work creatively to deliver better work experience. Best practice in curriculum learning, project based work and online resources can be utilised to supplement face-to-face work experience.
- **Young people need more access to paid work experience, e.g. Saturday jobs, part time hours and seasonal work.** Work experience can help instil the value that work pays. Extending paid opportunities helps to equalise the different abilities to do work experience, as unpaid work experience is often sponsored by parents.
- **Local government, employability support services and businesses should consider all financial barriers to work, such as lack of affordability of transport or inability to do unpaid work due to lack of resources.** They need to help young people in finding ways of getting access to these opportunities, whether that is through financial means or helping them to find other paid employment.

Advice And Guidance

- **The government needs to further invest in good quality careers advice.** We recognise that the government has invested in the Careers & Enterprise Company and the National Careers Service. These services need to be available for and address all young people's needs both in and outside of education settings. For those who do not have family guidance, getting careers support and guidance on educational choices must come from elsewhere, but this costs money. Where the government already recognises the value of careers advice in schools, they must ensure the funding is available to provide every young person good quality, independent careers advice from a qualified advisor.
- **Young people and their parents should be able to access support from a Job Centre even when they are not seeking to claim.** I.e. a resource with knowledge of local labour market needs, offering advice and guidance on career choices, applying for work and educational opportunities.
- **Careers advisers, Job Centre workers and employability support staff need to be aware of the full family situation when providing support and guidance, and involve the family in support provided.** If the family is not considered and included in the discussions about the next steps for the young person, the right support may not be provided and, in worst case scenarios, might work against it.
- **Careers education must be clearly linked to good labour market earnings and predictions to make the link between work and earning money.** Other actors can ensure there is a focus on working hard and earning money; that direct transmission of the value of work does not only have to happen in the family. Key here is to not necessarily focus on those with the least economic capital in the family, but to target the ones who have it.

Building Good Quality Networks

- **Educational institutions (schools, colleges, universities and other providers) need to facilitate better access to networks and make those networks meaningful.** Whilst many educational institutions already do a lot to build cultural and social capital, we believe they can do more to help their students to actively improve their social networks. These networks need to extend beyond their peers, to link young people with those in labour market who can provide the links to employed networks.
- **Educational providers and businesses should work together to provide meaningful and high quality work experience at all levels of education and all types of educational programmes.** The link between work and pay needs to be established to encourage the ambition to be economically self-sufficient. This experience must clearly show the link between earning money and working; businesses should provide good role models for the young people.
- **Young people should be taught the value of networks and how to develop and utilise them.** Meeting employers and experiencing work is important, but should not be done without the clear link being made regarding the value this brings to the individuals' network.

Appendix

Table 5 Tobit model for young person generalised trust, robust standard errors

	Model 1 YP organisational involvement	Model 2 parent trust	Model 3 combined model
Education level			
Low	Reference	Reference	Reference
Medium	-0.33 (0.24)	-0.17 (0.24)	-0.2 (0.23)
High	-0.29 (0.24)	-0.22 (0.22)	-0.27 (0.21)
Age categories			
18-25	Reference	Reference	Reference
25-29	0.06 (0.26)	0.04 (0.24)	0.05 (0.22)
30-35	0.23 (0.22)	0.21 (0.22)	0.16 (0.21)
Female	0.07 (0.19)	0.08 (0.18)	0.1 (0.17)
Born in other country	-0.67** (0.28)	-0.66** (0.27)	-0.69** (0.26)
Disposable income	0.24** (0.1)	0.13 (0.1)	0.13 (0.09)
Main occupation			
Employed or self-employed	Reference	Reference	Reference
Unemployed	-1.38** (0.51)	-1.4** (0.49)	-1.29** (0.45)
In education or doing internship	-0.32 (0.28)	-0.32 (0.27)	-0.35 (0.26)
Other	-1.05** (0.39)	-0.96** (0.4)	-0.86* (0.38)
UK Regions			
London	Reference	Reference	Reference
South east England	0.18 (0.33)	0.18 (0.32)	0.17 (0.3)
South West England	0.02 (0.39)	-0.33 (0.34)	-0.22 (0.34)
East England	-0.06 (0.38)	-0.35 (0.37)	-0.27 (0.36)
Midlands	-0.37 (0.35)	-0.54 (0.33)	-0.49 (0.32)
North England	-0.75 (0.34)	-0.85** (0.32)	-0.8** (0.31)
Scotland	0.56 (0.41)	0.36 (0.41)	0.36 (0.38)
Wales	-0.15 (0.53)	-0.27 (0.52)	-0.21 (0.5)
Northern Ireland	-0.6 (0.66)	-0.67 (0.65)	-0.65 (0.64)
Organisational involvement			
Not involved	Reference	Reference	Reference
Less than an hour	0.24 (0.27)		0.02 (0.24)
1-3 hours	0.75*** (0.23)		0.6** (0.21)
4-7 hours	0.03 (0.38)		0.07 (0.35)
8 or more hours	0.65 (0.6)		-0.04 (0.56)
Parent trust		0.38*** (0.04)	0.37*** (0.04)
constant	5.22***	3.62***	3.59***
/sigma	1.85	1.76	1.68
Number of observations	447	447	447
Wald F-test of IV in model	3.84***	75.53***	22.55***
AIC	1866.308	1782.877	1783.469
BIC	1964.77	1869.031	1886.033

Note: * = p ≤ 0.05 ** = p ≤ 0.01 *** = p ≤ 0.001



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