The Ethnic Minority British Election Survey (EMBES)
Acknowledgements

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The research team

- Anthony Heath (Oxford and ISC, Manchester)
- Stephen Fisher (Oxford)
- Gemma Rosenblatt (Electoral Commission)
- David Sanders (Essex – current director of main BES)
- Maria Sobolewska (Manchester)
Background – the BES

• Regular post-election British Election Surveys have been conducted after every general election since 1964
• Longest-running social survey in Britain
• Originally aimed to understand electoral behaviour (turnout and vote choice) but aims gradually widened to include political attitudes and behaviour more generally
• Representative high-quality probability samples of around 2-3000 respondents
• But not of sufficient size to give reliable estimates of ethnic minority political attitudes and behaviour
Ethnic minorities

- Ethnic minorities make up an increasing proportion of the electorate, probably around 8% in 2010
- Geographically concentrated, especially in metropolitan areas of England
- Small numbers in the main BES (around 200 in 2010)
- ‘Booster’ sample of minorities in 1997 BES to permit a more detailed study but no major study since then
Why study ethnic minorities?

• Voting patterns are very different from those of majority group
• Influences on vote also seem to be different, so interesting academic puzzles
• Wider social justice and practical concerns about integration/exclusion of minorities and their political responses (eg protest or withdrawal)
Aims of EMBES

• To conduct a nationally-representative post-election probability sample of the main established ethnic minorities – people of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean and Black African background
• To harmonize with main British Election Survey (which we use to examine attitudes and behaviour of the White British majority group)
• To help understand the political integration or exclusion of ethnic minorities in Britain today
• NOT intended to investigate extremism – extremists don’t answer surveys
Major focus on

- Registration
- Turnout
- Vote choice
- Other forms of political participation (eg protest)
- Trust in Parliament
- Satisfaction with democracy
- Sense of British identity
Major explanatory themes

- Attitudes to political issues, e.g., the economy, war in Afghanistan, multiculturalism
- Perceptions of the parties and leaders
- Feelings of relative deprivation and experiences of discrimination
- Bridging and bonding social capital
- Ethnic mobilization
Plan of the afternoon

• Gemma on registration and turnout
• Anthony on the ethnic agenda
• David on vote choice
• Anthony on satisfaction with democracy
• General discussion
Design 1

• Stand-alone survey rather than a booster to the main BES (ie separate sample design etc)
• Nationally-representative probability sample with face-to-face interviewing
• Clustered, stratified design with over-sampling in high EM density areas and exclusion of lowest density areas (< 2% EM)
• PAF used as sample frame
• LSOAs were the PSUs (unlike main BES)
• Initial screening of addresses
Design 2

- 30,000 addresses issued for screening
- In 620 PSUs
- £20 conditional incentive offered to participants
- 50 minute questionnaire, administered by CAPI with a self-completion module for confidential items
- Translations into main languages available
- Around half items exact replications of those in main BES, and a few replicated from the small 1997 ethnic minority module
- Short mailback questionnaire – variable names indicate whether in BES or mailback
Language and translation

• Interviews in English, but
  – Translators (over 12) within household allowed
  – Interviewer allowed to translate but no special arrangements for bilingual interviews provided

• Paper versions of the questionnaire in:
  – Punjabi (Urdu script)
  – Punjabi (Gurmukhi script)
  – Urdu
  – Hindi
  – Gujarati
  – Bengali
Outcome

• 2787 respondents in total (including some from mixed and other backgrounds who had been indicated as belonging to one of the 5 target groups at screening)

• Response rate of 58 – 62% (depending on method of treating those with unknown ethnicity from the screening exercise)

• Poor response to mailback – only 975 returned
## Sample characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EMBES</th>
<th>BES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White British</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other white</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>587</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>668</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Caribbean</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Our theoretical approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prior values and orientations (cf loyalty)</th>
<th>Position in British society/interests and political demands</th>
<th>Treatment by British society</th>
<th>Individual and collective resources</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to democratic values</td>
<td>Class interests and other ‘mainstream’ concerns</td>
<td>Labour market discrimination</td>
<td>Individual resources (money, skills/political knowledge and time )</td>
<td>Democratic engagement, eg participation in national and local elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to British society (national identity and patriotism)</td>
<td>Cultural demands, eg for right to wear traditional dress</td>
<td>Other areas of discrimination, eg by police and courts</td>
<td>Acculturation (eg fluency in English)</td>
<td>Other forms of standard engagement, eg peaceful protest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motives for migration</td>
<td>Racial demands, eg for equality of opportunity</td>
<td>Social rejection and prejudice</td>
<td>Bridging and bonding social capital</td>
<td>Withdrawal (lack of interest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation to origin country</td>
<td>Religious concerns, eg over war in Afghanistan</td>
<td>Political exclusion (eg lack of substantive or descriptive representation)</td>
<td>Collective resources, eg ethnic solidarity</td>
<td>Hostility and willingness to resort to non-democratic means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic media consumption</td>
<td>Relative deprivation</td>
<td>Access to citizenship and voting rights</td>
<td>Ethnic mobilization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questionnaire content 1 – common questions with BES

- Standard questions covering ‘outcomes’ eg turnout, vote choice, political participation, satisfaction with democracy
- Standard questions on explanatory variables eg perceptions/evaluations of parties and leaders, attitudes to main issues, political knowledge, political efficacy, demographics
- Questions added to main BES to provide comparability with EMBES, eg on improving opportunities for Blacks and Asians
Questionnaire content 2 – new ethnic-specific questions

- Additional demographics
- Ethnic and religious identities
- Acculturation and attitudes towards integration
- Experiences of discrimination
- Attitudes to ethnic issues
- Bridging and bonding social capital
- Mobilization
Demographics

- Own, mother’s and father’s country of birth (used for constructing generations and distinctions within the Indian and Black African categories) [bq102, eq52_f, bq52_m]
- Contacts with origin country and interest in home country politics [eq54_1, eq56]
- Reasons for coming to live in Britain [eq60_1a, eq60_2q eq60_3a etc]
- Main language spoken at home [eq61_1]
- British and foreign qualifications [eq63, eq64_1 etc]
- Ownership of workplace [eq68]
Identities and group consciousness

• ‘Moreno’ questions on ethnic and British identity, also religious and ethnic identity [eq16a, eq16b, eq16c]

• How much you feel in common with your ethnic or religious group, or with Britain [eq17, eq18, eq19]

• Feelings of relative deprivation [bq18_1a, bq18_2a]
Acculturation and attitudes to integration

• Do you or your family send Christmas cards, wear poppy on remembrance day, etc [eq23_1 to eq13_6]

• Orientations to maintaining own culture/British culture [eq22_1, eq22_2, bq72_2] – cf Berry’s typology

• English language fluency [eq61_3]
Discrimination

• Experiences of discrimination over last 5 years, reasons and areas (borrowed from Canadian Ethnic Diversity Survey) [eq37 to eq40k]
Attitudes

- Attitudes towards affirmative action [bq72_1]
- Sharia law [eq32]
- To people wearing different types of dress [eq31_1 to eq31_5]
- Social distance [eq33_1 to eq33_4]
- Support for violent demonstrations [eq34 to eq36_2e]
Bridging and bonding social capital

• Membership of organizations, churches, workplaces and their ethnic compositions [eq41 etc]

• Ethnic composition of friends and neighbours [eq46_1 etc]
Mobilization

- Church, friend persuaded you to vote [eq47, bq55_1a to bq55_1g]
- Party campaigned for Black and Asian votes [eq20_1]
- Party campaigned for votes of prejudiced [eq21_1]
- Contacted by party [bq86_1 to bq86_2m]
- Ethnic canvasser [eq50a to eq50i]