



Welfare Conditionality

SANCTIONS, SUPPORT AND
BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

Exploring the impact of welfare conditionality on Roma migrants in the UK



An ESRC large grant



Contents

1. Literature review

- 1.1. Welfare conditionality in the UK
- 1.2. Welfare conditionality and CEE migrants in the UK
- 1.3. Welfare conditionality and Roma migrants in the UK

2. Theoretical framework

- 2.1. The Structure and Agency debate
- 2.2. The Capability Approach Theory

3. Research methodology

- 3.1. Research aim and objectives
- 3.2. Research methods
- 3.3. Location and Sampling
- 3.4. Participant's recruitment strategy
- 3.5. Data analysis and interpretation
- 3.6. Ethical considerations

1. Literature review

- 1.1. **Welfare conditionality in the UK**
- 1.2. **Welfare conditionality and CEE migrants in the UK**
- 1.3. **Welfare conditionality and Roma migrants in the UK**

1.1. Welfare conditionality in the UK

The aim of the study is to explore the extent to which **welfare conditionality** improves or impedes Roma migrant's **participation in the paid labour market** in the United Kingdom.

Welfare conditionality in the UK

Definition:

'[...] access to certain rights and welfare entitlements should be subject to the condition that those who receive them behave in particular ways, or participate in specified activities' (Deacon, 1994: 53).

The stated objective

- to ensure recipients are compliant with the conditionality regime, and to penalise any nonconforming conduct (Miscampbell, 2014).

The main argument

- contributes to people's employability by decreasing the *culture of dependency* and diminishing the costs of social security expenditures (Oakley and Saunders, 2011; Dwyer et al., 2016).

Supporters

- *increase the chances of finding work, and penalises non-compliance without creating excessive hardship* (Gregg, 2008: 14).
- *'clearly much more effective at moving lone parents off out-of-work benefits and into work'* (DWP, 2013: 75).
- *'more of claimants; toughen up sanctions; and re-establish the link between contributions and benefit'* (Oakley and Saunders, 2011: 31).

Welfare conditionality social impact

Various areas of social life

- Finance;
 - Health and wellbeing;
 - Employability;
 - Offending;
- **Specific negative impact on vulnerable people in society**
 - Homeless people;
 - Lone parents;
 - Offenders;
 - Young people and children;
 - People with disabilities/special needs;
 - Migrants

Citizens Advice Bureau (2013)

‘[...] those who are already without resources, especially where they do not have support from relatives or friends, and have barriers to employment such as age, literacy/numeracy problems, sickness etc., are driven into total destitution and frequently actual hunger’

(Cited in Etherington and Daguerre, 2015: 29)

Welfare Stigma

‘The welfare reforms have shifted the focus on benefits and benefit claimants are seen as a ‘problem’ and narratives of ‘dependency’ have led to a stereotyping of benefit claimants’
(Etherington and Daguerre (2015: 5))

1.2. Welfare conditionality and CEE migrants in the UK

A8 countries - 1st May 2004

- Czech Republic
- Estonia
- Hungary
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Poland
- Slovakia
- Slovenia

A2 Countries - 1 January 2007

- Romania
- Bulgaria

1.7 million CEE nationals reside in the UK (Hawkins, 2016).

Findings on WC impact on CEE migrants in the UK

- Low paid work, above their level of qualifications;
- Language barriers;
- Lack of accessible information/services;
- Racism and prejudice on labour market;
- Discretionary handling from public services frontline workers;
- Labour exploitation;
- Extremely vulnerable to modern slavery and exploitation;

Welfare conditionality and CEE migrants in the UK

A. Broad level - Complex regime of entitlements dependent on the socio-legal status

- Rights to residence;
- Rights to work;
- Rights/access to social welfare;

B. Narrower level - Discretionary Welfare Assistance

- Sanctions abuse;
- Discretionary decisions;
- Formal mistreatment;
- Inadequate services;

1.3. Welfare conditionality and Roma migrants in the UK

‘The Roma remain the most deprived ethnic group of Europe. Disproportionately affected by poverty and discriminated against in employment, education, health care, administrative and other services, they face considerable obstacles to the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms’

Policies on Roma’s social Inclusion in Europe: Towards succeeding in social intervention – ROMAin: a quantitative analysis of 85 projects, Ștefan Harda (2006: 7)

Research on Roma migrants in the UK

- Health;
 - Education;
 - Housing;
 - Unemployment and marginal labour;
 - Social relations and social invisibility;
 - Social, media and political discourse;
 - Access to civil rights and public services;
 - Broader policy analyses;
- National estimates of the size of the UK Roma is between 200,000 and one million.**
- London;
 - East Midlands, within England;
 - Glasgow (Scotland),
 - Cardiff (Wales)
 - Belfast (Northern Ireland);
 - Greater Manchester;

Research main conclusions

- Access of Roma migrants to **labour market** is limited because of:
 - ✓ Language barriers;
 - ✓ Limited level of education and qualification;
 - ✓ Lack of support and advice;
 - ✓ Limited social network;
 - ✓ Hostile social relations;
 - ✓ Racists profiling and attitudes;

Research main conclusions

- Access of Roma migrants to **welfare benefits** is limited because of:
 - ✓ Language barriers;
 - ✓ Complex process of application;
 - ✓ High level of conditionality and sanctions
 - ✓ Misunderstanding of compliance;
 - ✓ Lack of proactive support and advice;
 - ✓ Discretionary interpretation and handling of procedures and guidelines by the welfare workers;
 - ✓ Racism

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. The Structure and Agency debate

2.2. The Capability Approach Theory

The structure and agency debate

‘Structure - the recurrent patterned arrangements which influence or limit the choices and opportunities available (socialization)’

‘Society does not consist of individuals, but expresses the sum of interrelations, the relations within which these individuals stand.’

(Marx, 1993: 265)

Agency – ‘the capacity to act independently and to make their own free choices’ (Barker, 2005: 448).

The structure and agency debate

Structure - complex and interconnected set of social forces, relationships, institutions, and elements of social structure that work together to shape the thought, behaviour, experiences, choices, and overall life courses of people.

Agency – [either in individual or collective forms] **the power people** have to think for themselves and act in ways that shape their experiences and life trajectories.

The duality of structure

‘[...] the essential recursiveness of social life, as constituted in social practices: **structure is both medium and outcome of reproduction of practices**. Structure enters simultaneously into the constitution of the agent and social practices, and 'exists' in the generating moments of this constitution’ (Giddens, 1979:5)

Constrain and Enable

depending on:

social position, time and place, environment; resources

Agency transform structure

‘[...] people can be, at the same time, both the subordinate objects of hierarchical power relations and subjects who are agents in their own lives, capable of exercising power in the generative sense of self-actualisation’ (Lister, 1997: 40)

Human – Agent – Rationalize - Agency

Structure and agency in social policy debates

Structuralist vs Individualist Approach

Responsibility of the system vs Blaming the victim

Economic class stratification, Systemic racism, and Patriarchy

Passive victims of the structural forces

‘passive recipients’ or ‘active agents’ ?

The Capability Approach Theory or 'the ability to take control of your life' (Sen, 1985)

'**The contrast** between what great things human beings **can achieve** and what **limited lives most women and men end up living** is truly remarkable' (Sen, 1998)

'What a person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important'

(Sen, 1985: 203).

The Capability Approach Theory

Functionings – ‘valuable beings and doings’ of people

- ‘Beings’ such as being well nourished, being safe, being educated

- ‘Doings’ such as being able to visit loved ones, travelling, caring for a child

a)Elementary functionings – being healthy and nourished, being safe, being educated

b)Complex functionings – ability to contribute to community life achieving self respect, ability to ‘appear in public without shame’

The Capability Approach Theory

Capabilities - the various combinations of functionings (beings and doings) that the person can achieve. [It] is, thus, asset of vectors of functionings, reflecting the person's freedom to lead one type of life or another [...] to choose from possible livings.

The freedom that a person actually has to do this or be that.

1. Personal Capability – inborn potential
2. Social Capability – trained potential [skills and abilities]
3. Opportunity Capability

Freedom

a. Freedom has intrinsic value - valuable in itself

b. Freedom has instrumental value - as a means to other things

Instrumental freedoms for human development

- political freedom
- economic facilities
- social opportunities
- transparency guarantees
- protective security

The translation of capabilities in functionings

Resources	Capability	Functioning
Bike	Able to ride	Ride around
Food	Able to be nourished	Nourished

Personal characteristics, social and environmental factors

The Capability Approach Theory

‘The approach is essentially a **‘people-centered’** approach, which puts human agency (rather than organizations such as markets or governments) at the centre of the stage. The crucial role of social opportunities is to expand the realm of **human agency** and **freedom**, both as an end in itself and as a means of further expansion of freedom. We shall be particularly concerned with those **opportunities** that are **strongly influenced by social circumstances and public policy**’ (Drèze and Sen, 2002:6)

The relevance of the Theoretical framework

‘The ability of Roma to access goods and services is limited throughout Europe by factors including lack of educational qualifications among significant segments of the Romani communities, as well as by ethnic or racial discrimination, driven in particular by AntiGypsyism’ (Cahn and Guild, 2008:6).

Therefore, If we shift our attention from **income** to **capability deprivation** we can better understand the situation of Roma in Europe.

3. Research methodology

- 3.1. Research aim questions and objectives
- 3.2. Research methods
- 3.3. Location and Sampling
- 3.4. Participant's recruitment strategy
- 3.5. Data analysis and interpretation
- 3.6. Ethical considerations

The aim of this PhD research

The aim of the study is to explore the extent to which welfare conditionality improves or impedes Roma migrant's participation in the paid labour market in the United Kingdom.

Research questions

- 1) To what extent does welfare conditionality lead to behavioural changes of those Roma migrants in receipt of in work or out of work welfare benefit?
- 2) What are the specific circumstances in which the use of conditionality and sanctions are justifiable or not in regards with Roma migrant's recipients?
- 3) What are the key barriers and challenges faced by Roma migrant's recipients in relation to British labour market?
- 4) To what extent are Roma migrants able to exercise agency within the context of welfare and paid labour market opportunities?
- 5) What is role of intermediaries in relation to Roma migrants engagement with the welfare conditionality?

Research objectives

- 1) To explore the experiences of conditional welfare of Roma migrants in the UK;
- 2) To provide an understanding of the specific pathways into and out of conditional welfare of Roma migrants in the UK;
- 3) To investigate what are the key barriers and challenges faced by Roma migrant's recipients in relation to British labour market, since the welfare benefit and support is closely linked with their access to labour market.
- 4) To examine the role of intermediaries in relation to Roma migrants engagement with the welfare conditionality;

Research methods

1) Narrative Literature Review

2) Qualitative Empirical Research

- In-depth qualitative interviews

- **20 Roma migrants**, who are currently receiving some form of conditional *in work* or *out work* welfare benefits and support;
- **10 welfare support workers**, who currently provide advice and guidelines to a range of communities, including Roma migrants (i.e. NGOs representatives; outreach workers).

The relevance of the research method

'[...] marginalised groups whose views are seldom sought, and whose voices are rarely heard. Normally, these groups have little opportunity to articulate, justify, and assert their interests' (Bergold and Thomas, 2012: 7)

'[...] in depth interviews can be used with people who otherwise could not provide information: - respondents who are illiterate or otherwise non-literate, blind, bedridden or very old for example' (Russell, 2002: 256)

Location and Sampling

Area	Estimated number	Country of origin
Gorton	400	Romania
Levenshulme	500	Romania
Cheetham Hill	400	Romania
Oldham	600	Czech Republic; Hungary; Romania and Slovakia
Salford area	400	Czech Republic; Hungary; Romania and Slovakia

Sampling

Target group	Criteria	Explanation
20 Roma migrants	Self declared Roma ethnicity	
	Benefit recipient status	(Job Seekers Allowance; Employment and Support Allowance; Universal Credit)
	Gender	(both men and women will be represented)
	Residence	(5 different areas of Greater Manchester)
10 Welfare Support Workers	Experience in working with Roma migrants	(provide welfare support, advice and guidance to Roma migrants at local level)

Participant's recruitment strategy

Type of strategy	Methods and Instruments	Explanation
Passive recruitment	Printed material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs; Public services; Community Centres; Convenience stores; Churches/Congregations.
	Online advert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations websites; Social media; Email; Press releases.
Active recruitment	Active engagement with the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits in the Roma community • Taking part to specific events (religious services; celebrations) • Participation to projects/activities developed by various social or public actors;
	Participation to various public events	Networking during various public events;



Data analysis and interpretation

Type of strategy	Methods and Instruments	Explanation
NVivo data processing software	Thematic Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It emphasizes pinpointing, examining, and recording patterns within data; • It provides a focus on meanings in depth and detail; • Provides high level of flexibility;
Six phases of analysis <i>(Using thematic analysis in psychology, Braun, V. and Clarke, V., 2006)</i>	<p>Phase 1: familiarising yourself with your data</p> <p>Phase 2: generating initial code</p> <p>Phase 3: searching for themes</p> <p>Phase 4: reviewing themes</p> <p>Phase 5: defining and naming themes</p> <p>Phase 6: producing the report</p>	

Ethical considerations

Consideration	Details	Measures
Sensitivity of the subjects and topic	Disclosure of private experiences, information or attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware of their status of welfare beneficiary; • Aware of the potential past or current experiences of social stigma; • To discover the matters of their own concerns, based on equilibrate and voluntary relationship; • To use of open questions
	Research topic and the social stigma attached to welfare beneficiaries or Roma migrants	
	Taking advantage of Roma migrants participants	
Insider researcher position	Shared cultural values and a priori familiarity and work in regard with Roma community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field journals • Peer discussions
Language Barriers	Roma migrants	English, Romanian or Romani



Welfare Conditionality

SANCTIONS, SUPPORT AND
BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

Vici Armitage, Project Manager
Vici.Armitage@york.ac.uk

www.welfareconditionality.ac.uk

Follow us  @WelCond