Unemployed people's attitudes regarding labour market choices and welfare conditionality

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Abstract

Britain's unemployed benefit claimants can now be 'sanctioned' for not applying for a job specified by their 'Work Coach', and the new 'Way to Work' scheme compels them to broaden their job search less than a month after their claim starts. Some advocates of such toughened conditionality, including Conservative Ministers, have suggested that a significant proportion of unemployed people lack sufficient employment commitment. When opposing this suggestion, academics have tended not to present quantitative evidence, and (perhaps for ideological reasons) they have paid little attention to the extent that unemployed benefit claimants are unwilling to undertake the less attractive jobs. This article uses British Social Attitudes and NCDS58 / BCS70 survey data and finds that unemployed people are significantly less likely than employed people to favour work-related conditionality. Favouring being jobless over taking / keeping a job with a negative characteristic associates significantly with being unemployed, even when models control for other relevant variables. People's political views are linked to whether they believe such evidence provides a justification for the increased conditionality, and there is arguably a need for more of the writers on welfare conditionality to differentiate between their

evidential and ideological objections to current policies.

Key words: Ideology, Social Security, Unemployment, Universal Credit, Welfare Conditionality, Work Attitudes

Introduction

Behavioural conditions have always been attached to the receipt of social security benefits for Britain's unemployed people. However, over the last few decades these conditions have increased in number and scope, as part of a trend across OECD countries towards 'active' labour market policies[1]. Current economic woes seem unlikely to precipitate a reversal of this trend; cost-cutting is both an important government motivation for such policies and a higher priority in harsher economic times[2]. Britain's 2012 Welfare Reform Act's "work search requirement" obliges unemployment benefit (now Universal Credit [UC], previously Jobseeker's Allowance [JSA]) claimants to take "all reasonable action" and "any particular action specified by the Secretary of State, for the purpose of obtaining work"[3]. In practice, this means that a Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) 'Work Coach' can now compel an unemployed UC claimant, under threat of a financial penalty, to apply for a job of the former's choosing. Work Coaches see it as an important part of their role to challenge claimants to "consider work they would have otherwise ruled out"[4]. Alongside continuing the policy of sanctioning claimants adjudged to have left their previous job voluntarily[5], the Act took the major new step of making UC payments to employed people subject to possible 'sanction' if, for example, claimants do not seek to increase their working hours when required to[6]. Financial sanctions, which are more severe than they were before the

[1] See Watts, B. and Fitzpatrick, S. (2018), *Welfare Conditionality*, (London: Routledge), and Knotz, C. (2018) 'A rising workfare state? Unemployment benefit conditionality in 21 OECD countries, 1980–2012', *Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy*, 34, 2, 91-108.
[2] See Knotz, C. (2019) 'Why Countries "Get Tough on the Work-Shy": The Role of Adverse Economic Conditions', *Journal of Social Policy*, 48, 3, 615–34.
[3] See Section 17 of H.M. Government. (2012), *Welfare Reform Act 2012*. (London: The Stationery Office).
[4] Quoted from page 65 of Rahim, N., Graham, J., Kiss, Z. and Davies, M. (2017), *Understanding how Universal Credit influences employment behaviour*, DWP Research Report 943 (London: NatCen / Department of Work and Pensions).
[5] See Section 49 of H.M. Government. (2012), Welfare Reform Act *2012*, (London: The Stationery Office).
[6] *Ibid*, Section 18.

2012 Act, have been found to push those affected towards illness, criminality and destitution[7]. In 2022, amid a historically high number of job vacancies[8], the Conservative government continued its steering of unemployed people towards the less attractive jobs with its 'Way to Work' scheme. Way to Work brings forward the point at which employable Universal Credit claimants must start broadening their job search from three months to the fourth week of their claim[9].

Heralding the 2012 Welfare Reform Act, its architect, the then Work and Pensions Secretary Iain Duncan Smith, argued that "reinforced conditionality" to ensure claimants "take reasonable offers of work" was necessitated by the benefit system's regrettable drift towards one "Beveridge warned against", in which "idleness" had become "institutionalised"[10]. In the same speech, Duncan Smith claimed that in the 2000s British companies had been "unable to get British people to fill" some job vacancies, so "workers from overseas stepped in". Similarly, Liz Truss, in a 2012 book she co-authored with four other Conservative MPs, suggested that British people were "among the worst idlers in the world" and commented that JSA had been "actively encouraging the unemployed to be

[7] See, for example, Patrick, R. (2017), *For Whose Benefit? The everyday realities of benefit reform*, (Bristol: Policy Press); Adler, M. (2018), *Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment? Benefit Sanctions in the UK* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan); Dwyer, P. (2018a), 'Punitive and ineffective: benefit sanctions within social security', *Journal of Social Security Law*, 25: 142-157.; Stewart, A. and Wright, S. (2018), *Final Findings: Jobseekers*, (York: WelCond Project).

[8] A record 1295000 job vacancies was recorded in April 2022 (see Office for National Statistics [ONS] web site at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/jobsandvacanciesintheuk/may2022#:~:text=Main%20points,in%20January%20to%20March%202020. (accessed 16/8/2022)

[9] Details of the scheme are provided on the Government's web site, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-jobs-mission-to-get-500-000-into-work (accessed 15/8/2022)

[10] Duncan Smith's (2010b) speech, '*Building Benefits for the 21st Century'*, delivered on 30th July 2010, is available at https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/building-benefits-for-the-21st-century (accessed 10/08/2022). The speech quoted from page 58 of The Beveridge Report - Beveridge, W. (1942), *Social Insurance and Allied Services*, (London: HMSO).

more fussy about the jobs they are willing to do"[11]. Conversely, some leading academics researching welfare conditionality insist that the 2012 Act is underpinned by a misplaced assumption that unemployed benefit claimants lack adequate employment commitment[12].

While evidence-based arguments are made about various aspects of welfare conditionality and sanctioning, this article focuses more narrowly on evidence relevant to the disagreement about the employment commitment of Britain's unemployed benefit claimants. The first part reviews relevant literature on welfare conditionality and employment commitment, and places different categories of opinion in an ideological context. It finds that some of the main empirical projects have delivered similar findings yet some strikingly different conclusions which, it suggests, are indicative of differences in authors' ideological stances. In the second part, three major British surveys are used to compare employed and unemployed people's attitudes towards welfare conditionality and labour market behaviour. In particular, the research asks: are unemployed people less in favour of work-related behavioural conditions being attached to the receipt of benefits? And are they less likely to assert that they should, and would, choose a job with a negative characteristic over being unemployed? As in the first part of the article, ideology is important, as respondents' attitudes inevitably reflect not only their preferences but also their views on what is acceptable or appropriate behaviour. A conclusion reflects on both parts and their possible implications.

[11] See Kwarteng, K., Patel, P., Raab, D., Skidmore, C., and Truss, E. (2012), *Britannia Unchained: global lessons for growth and prosperity*, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan; the 'worst idlers' comment is on page 61. Dunn, A. (2010), 'The "Dole or Drudgery" Dilemma: education, the work ethic and unemployment', *Social Policy and Administration*, 44, 1: 1-19. was cited in support of the "more fussy" comment on page 74.

[12] Wright, S. and Patrick, R. (2019), 'Welfare Conditionality in Lived Experience: Aggregating Qualitative Longitudinal Research', *Social Policy and Society*, 18, 4:597–613.

Ideology and recent British research on welfare conditionality and unemployed people's attitudes towards employment

In 2005, Christopher Beem and Lawrence Mead lamented the lack of connectivity between social security policy analysis and political philosophy[13]. Mead, an important influence on 1990s US welfare reform, had long argued that ideological differences accounted for disagreements about job availability and the extent of voluntary unemployment. As he explained, conservatives like him "define all legal jobs as available…even far away jobs"[14]. Left-of-centre authors typically deem the question of whether unemployed people who claim benefits are avoiding "menial or low paid" jobs irrelevant because, unlike conservatives, their overriding concern for social justice means they only insist they seek jobs that are "attractive as well as legal"[15]. Furthermore, Mead noted that ideology is important in who we hold responsible for an individual's employability and hence her / his employment status: "if workers have a lack of skills [and] limited education" then "conservatives tend to deny these workers deserve jobs while liberals consider them eligible worker[s]"[16].

In Britain, egalitarian liberal Stuart White[17] broadened Mead's discussion by identifying four 'philosophies of economic citizenship', which each imply a distinct position on both welfare conditionality and equality. The 'New Right / Libertarian' philosophy favours both

[13] Beem, C. and Mead, L. (2005) 'Introduction' (p. 1-9), in L. Mead and C. Beem (eds.), *Welfare Reform and Political Theory*, (New York: Russell Sage).
[14] Page 48 of Mead, L. (1988) 'The hidden jobs debate', *Public Interest*, 91, Spring: 40-58.
[15] *Ibid*, p.48.
[16] *Ibid*, p.50
[17] White, S. (2003), *The Civic Minimum: on the rights and obligations of economic citizenship*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

conditionality and an unequal income distribution, with its adherents pointing to capitalism's record on improving opportunities on average[18]. White's preferred 'Justice as Fair Reciprocity' philosophy asserts that conditionality is only justified in a society of genuinely equal opportunities and social justice which, he argued, is one that would necessarily go far beyond New Labour's contemporaneous 'Communitarian / Centre-Left' reform agenda; indeed, much evidence supports White's view on New Labour and equal opportunities[19]. Finally, the 'Real Libertarian' philosophy is as comprehensively egalitarian as White's preferred philosophy, but it insists that social rights must be unconditional to be considered genuine rights, and it draws upon feminist 'care ethic' ideas in calling for a revalorisation of unpaid contributions to society[20].

Leading protagonists in British debates about welfare conditionality fit these political philosophical positions well. For example, reflecting Mead's 'conservative' notion that all legal jobs are 'available', Iain Duncan Smith spoke of the need for some claimants to get "on a bus" to the nearest city to widen their job search[21]; reflecting the 'New Right / Libertarian' philosophy he said "to be fair to the taxpayer, we will cut payments if [UC claimants] don't do the right thing"[22]. In contrast, British Social Policy academia, where discussion about social security and conditionality often takes place, has been dominated by the political left

[18] A recent example of this view is found in McCloskey, D. (2019), *Why Liberalism Works: how true liberal values produce a freer, more equal, prosperous world for all*, (New Haven: Yale University Press).
[19] See, for example, Esping-Andersen, G. (2005) 'Inequality of incomes and opportunities', pp.8-38 in A. Giddens and P. Diamond, (eds.), *The New Egalitarianism*, (Cambridge: Polity Press).
[20] White cites Selma Sevenhuijsen as an example - see Sevenhuijsen, S. (1998), *Citizenship and the Ethics of Care,* (London: Routledge); for a discussion of whether job searching conditions infringe welfare 'rights', see Fitzpatrick, C., McKeever, G. and Simpson, M. ((2019), 'Conditionality, discretion and TH Marshall's 'right to welfare', *Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law*, 41:4:445-62.
[21] Duncan Smith was speaking on the BBC Newsnight television programme on 20th November 2010.
[22] Duncan Smith, I. (2010a), *Welfare for the 21st Century*, speech, 27 May, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/welfare-for-the-21st-century (accessed 13/8/2022).

for decades, and the discipline's focus has been on inequality[23]. Indeed, two major academic studies about the impact of increased conditionality on social security benefit claimants were led by Social Policy scholars whose writing fits the 'Real Libertarian' philosophy. One, the largest research project on the topic, is 'Welfare Conditionality: sanctions, support and behaviour change' (or 'WelCond'), led by Peter Dwyer[24]; the project team[25] paraphrased Dwyer's argument, without reservation, that increasing welfare conditionality "systematically undermines the very idea of economic and social rights as a core component of national citizenship status and / or justifications for such rights on the basis of universal human needs"[26]. The other major study is Ruth Patrick's 'Welfare Conditionality in Lived Experience' qualitative longitudinal project, which focuses on the perspectives of claimants of various out-of-work benefits. She too is an egalitarian critic of welfare conditionality, and her work draws upon 'care ethic' arguments for placing more value on unpaid work[27].

Such ideological differences are inevitable, but they are noteworthy because they can influence how authors view not only government policies, but also people's attitudes

[23] See Deacon, A. (2002), *Perspectives on Welfare*, (Buckingham: Open University Press), Welshman, J. (2012), *From Transmitted Deprivation to Social Exclusion: poverty, politics and parenting*, 2nd Edition, (Bristol: Policy Press), and Dunn, A. (2014), *Rethinking Unemployment and the Work Ethic*, London: Palgrave.

[24] Its main findings are in Dwyer, P. (2018b), *Final findings: Overview research briefing for the welfare conditionality: Sanctions, Support and Behaviour Change project*, available at http://www.welfareconditionality.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/40414_Overview-HR4.pdf , (accessed 15/8/2022).

[25] See page 3 of Dwyer, P., Scullion, L. and Wright, S. (2018), *Visit by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from 5 to 16 November 2018: written evidence from the Welfare Conditionality: Sanctions, Support and Behaviour Change Project*, available at https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/EPoverty/UnitedKingdom/2018/NGOS/Welfare_Conditionality_Sanctions_SupportandBehaviourChange.pdf (accessed 15/8/2022]

[26] See Dwyer, P. (2004) 'Creeping conditionality in the UK: from welfare rights to conditional entitlements', *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 29, 2: 265-87.

[27] See page 25 of Patrick, R. (2015) 'Rhetoric and reality: exploring lived experiences of welfare reform under the Coalition', in L. Foster, A. Brunton, C. Deeming, and T. Haux, (eds.), *In Defence of Welfare 2*, 24-27 , http://www.social-policy.org.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/IDOW-Complete-text-4-online_secured-compressed.pdf ; see also page 209 of Patrick, R. (2017), *For Whose Benefit? The everyday realities of benefit reform*, (Bristol: Policy Press).

towards employment and their labour market behaviour. The two major academic research projects, along with a DWP-commissioned project ('Understanding how Universal Credit influences employment behaviour')[28], form the main empirical evidence that directly addresses the behavioural effects of the new job search conditions. Some of these three qualitative studies' conclusions were similar. All concluded that claimants considered 'supportive' Work Coach interventions more helpful than those which 'policed' or 'monitored' them. All identified claimants who had engaged in pointless (and therefore morale-sapping) job search activities purely to avoid a possible sanction[29]. Finally, all three concluded that unemployed respondents were generally supportive of the underlying conditionality principle that, in return for benefit, they had an obligation to seek employment.

However, there is a striking difference between the DWP study and the two non-DWP studies' conclusions about the behavioural and employment effects of the imposition of more job search conditions on unemployed claimants; this difference concerns a major theme of this article – unemployed people's attitudes towards employment. Authors of the two non-DWP studies, in an article written together, asserted that the conditionality and threat of sanction "appeared to impede, rather than support, transitions into employment", and that this coercion was "experienced as unnecessary" because respondents were already strongly committed to employment[30]. In contrast, the DWP study found that conditionality

[28] Rahim, N., Graham, J., Kiss, Z. and Davies, M. (2017), *Understanding how Universal Credit influences employment behaviour*. DWP Research Report 943 (London: NatCen / DWP).

[29] Other studies have found that employers also complain of having to sift through the many job applications from people compelled to apply under the provisions of the 2012 Welfare Reform Act - see Jones, K., Berry, C., Rouse, J. and Whittle, R. (2019), *Universal Credit and In-Work Conditionality – A Productive Turn?* (Manchester: Productivity Insights Network). and Ingold, J. (2020), 'Employers' perspectives on benefit conditionality in the UK and Denmark', *Social Policy and Administration*, 54, 2: 236–49.

[30] Page 597 of Wright, S. and Patrick, R. (2019) 'Welfare Conditionality in Lived Experience:

"drove a number of positive behaviours", such as "more diversity in jobs applied for", which led to "entry into jobs that claimants would have previously ruled out"[31].

This difference in conclusions might be explained by the DWP Report's clear recognition that a key aim of UC was to "diversify the types of roles" claimants applied for[32] not being matched by the two non-DWP studies' authors. Indeed, the WelCond report on its qualitative longitudinal research with unemployed respondents even implied that avoiding some of the less attractive jobs is consistent with having a high overall commitment to employment:

> …the jobseekers in our study were already keen to work and did not require the threat of sanction to encourage job search or work preparation. Participants frequently and strongly expressed their desire to find work, but identified a range of tangible *barriers to employment including,* few jobs being available locally, mismatches between skills and vacancies, *the unsuitability of low wage and insecure work*, lack of qualifications… (Stewart, A. and Wright, S. (2018), *Final Findings: Jobseekers*, [York: WelCond], p.3 [*emphasis added*]).

In contrast, the DWP researchers identified the following two types of qualitative interviewee:

Aggregating Qualitative Longitudinal Research', *Social Policy and Society*, 18, 4:597–613.

[31] Page 63 of Rahim, N., Graham, J., Kiss, Z. and Davies, M. (2017), *Understanding how Universal Credit influences employment behaviour*, DWP Research Report 943, (London: NatCen / DWP).

[32] *Ibid*, p. 3.

> They expressed two broad attitudes towards work: first that working was always better than not working, regardless of the role or income generated and second, that work was the preferred option but only if it meant being 'better off' in terms of the balance between income and expenditure, enjoyment and prospects of a particular job. (Rahim, N., Graham, J., Kiss, Z. and Davies, M. [2017], *Understanding how Universal Credit influences employment behaviour*, DWP Research Report 943 [London: NatCen / DWP] p. 30).

The threat of sanction increased job search activity among the second type of respondent, but it "made little difference" to the first, "who already demonstrated strong motivation"[33]. The DWP team are not the only qualitative researchers to identify groups of unemployed people with different attitudes of this kind[34]. In fact, Patrick's study of claimants of various out-of-work benefits juxtaposed two respondents who broadly fit the DWP study's two types. One said, "I'd do 'owt, cleaning the toilets or anything as long as I knew we had enough to pay the rent", and the other: "You don't want to be stuck in a job that you don't like for the rest of your life. You want to be doing something you're enjoying"[35]. However, Patrick did not conclude that current government policy might be appropriate for the second respondent she quoted – who might require a nudge to broaden his job search. Instead, she reported uncritically respondents' negative feelings about "the lack of choice that conditionality entailed" which "left no room for their own preferences to be expressed

[33] Page 61 of Rahim, N., Graham, J., Kiss, Z. and Davies, M. (2017), *Understanding how Universal Credit influences employment behaviour*, DWP Research Report 943, (London: NatCen / DWP).
[34] See pages 13-14 of Roberts, E. and Price, L. (2014), *Tipping the balance? A qualitative study on the cumulative impacts of welfare reform in the London Borough of Newham*, (London: Community Links).
[35] Page 92 of Patrick, R. (2017), *For Whose Benefit? The everyday realities of benefit reform*, (Bristol: Policy Press).

and valued"[36]. Thus, unlike the DWP study, which had a policy evaluation style and hence it judged policy against government criteria, Patrick's work appears to take a similar stance to the non-conservative position Mead described.

Rather than discussing this apparent ideological difference, the joint article by WelCond's Sharon Wright and Ruth Patrick argued that policy is premised on a misunderstanding about claimants' work-related motivations:

> Misunderstanding and misrepresenting most claimants' motivations is a central feature (and flaw) in the design of UK welfare conditionality – coercion is unnecessary because most claimants are already highly motivated to look for work (where this is a realistic option) and their existing job seeking behaviour is well matched with that objective[37].

Authors involved in the two non-DWP projects have not referred to the DWP research in any of their publications. Furthermore, their publications have not reflected on how particular sanctioning decisions might be considered fair or unfair from different perspectives. Patrick[38] and Stewart and Wright[39] (in the WelCond report specifically about unemployed 'jobseeker' claimants) uncovered cases of serious material hardship caused by unquestionably wrong sanctioning decisions, and heavy financial penalties incurred for minor transgressions such as being slightly late. Nevertheless, looking beyond these

[36] *Ibid*, p.126.
[37] Page 603 of Wright, S. and Patrick, R. (2019) 'Welfare Conditionality in Lived Experience: Aggregating Qualitative Longitudinal Research', *Social Policy and Society*, 18, 4:597–613.
[38] Patrick, R. (2017), For *Whose Benefit? The everyday realities of benefit reform*, (Bristol: Policy Press).
[39] Stewart, A. and Wright, S. (2018), *Final Findings: Jobseekers*, (York: WelCond Project).

scandalous cases, conservatives might view some supposedly unfair sanctioning decisions as fair. "Slightly over half" of the WelCond unemployed respondents were sanctioned at some point[40], which suggests there is widespread unfairness, widespread claimant rule-breaking or both. The DWP report did not highlight the unfairness or otherwise of sanction decisions, perhaps because 124 Work Coaches contributed to their project and could counter some allegations. In contrast, DWP staff were absent from both Patrick's study (because it focused on claimants' experiences) and the WelCond project (because the DWP vetoed its employees' participation)[41].

The WelCond authors did not publish their thoughts on the possible implications of Work Coaches' and Work Programme staff's absence. This is noteworthy because those who work with unemployed claimants tend to describe their clients' attitudes and job search behaviours far more negatively than unemployed claimants do themselves[42]. There are strengths and limitations in accounts provided by both the unemployed benefit claimants and welfare-to-work employees[43]. Most importantly, staff sometimes exhibit prejudices but tend to possess detailed knowledge of clients' job search behaviour; while those experiencing claimant unemployment can draw upon all relevant circumstances they face, they sometimes fear that being candid runs a risk of being reported to the DWP. When academic authors have commented on differences between staff and clients' accounts they

[40] Stewart and Wright, *Ibid*, p. 5.
[41] See page 18 of Wright, S., Dwyer, P., Jones, K., McNeill, J., Scullion, L. and Stewart, A. (2018), *Welfare Conditionality: final findings: Universal Credit*, (York: Welfare Conditionality Project).
[42] See pages 74-75 of Shildrick, T., MacDonald, R., Webster, C., and Garthwaite, K. (2012), *Poverty and Insecurity: life in low pay, no pay Britain*, (Bristol: Policy Press); see also Dunn, A. (2013), 'Activation Workers" perceptions of their long-term unemployed clients" attitudes towards employment', *Journal of Social Policy*, 42, 4: 799-817.
[43] See Dunn, A. (2014), *Rethinking Unemployment and the Work Ethic*, London: Palgrave., pages 52-53 and 172-74 for a detailed discussion.

have tended to be more critical of staff. For example, Shildrick et al. based their conclusions on claimants' accounts, including their "love" of work, while rejecting agency workers' and employers' accounts due to their inaccurate perception that "a local culture of worklessness was a serious barrier to people getting jobs"[44].

Overall, research on the behavioural effects of increased conditionality has tended to be qualitative, and academic accounts have drawn conclusions without referring to a DWP report's finding that a substantial proportion of unemployed people require a push to broaden their job searches. The research presented next uses quantitative data to compare employed and unemployed people's views on work-related conditionality and their attitudes towards taking and keeping unattractive jobs.

The Study

All directly relevant survey questions in statistically representative sample British surveys are used. Attitude questions about work-related conditionality, and about making a transition from being unemployed to a job with a negative characteristic, are from British Social Attitudes surveys (from hereon, BSAS). The attitude question about moving from a job with a negative characteristic to being unemployed is from two closely related birth cohort studies - the National Child Development Study (from hereon, NCDS58, as they were born in 1958) and the British Cohort Study (from hereon, BCS70, born in 1970). Sample size is usually around 3000 in BSAS and 10000 in waves of NCDS58 and BCS70. BSAS data is

[44] See pages 8 and 74 respectively of Shildrick, T., MacDonald, R., Webster, C., and Garthwaite, K. (2012), Poverty and Insecurity: life in low pay, no pay Britain, (Bristol: Policy Press).

weighted by the variable *WtFactor* to make it more fully representative of the British population.

Attitudes are measured between 1991 and 2015, and 'activity histories' datasets now include information from 1974-2014 in NCDS58[45] and 1986-2016 in BCS70[46]. Space is not permitted for detailed reflection on the possible implications of the times research was conducted. Perhaps the most important consideration is still that when unemployment is relatively low the category tends to be weighted more heavily in favour of the least employable[47].

Measuring the outcome variable

The most frequently used measures of being unemployed are the International Labour Organisation (ILO) measure (all adults outside employment who want employment and have sought it in the last four weeks), and the 'claimant count' (all on unemployment benefits). The ILO measure more closely fits the BSAS measure used here: Unemployed and Employed measures were derived from the BSAS main economic activity variable, with 'In paid work (or away temporarily) for at least 10 hours a week' measuring employed, and the following three categories all included as Unemployed: 'Unemployed and registered at a JobCentre or JobCentre Plus'; 'Unemployed, not registered, but actively looking for a job (of at least 10 hours a week)' and 'Unemployed, wanting a job (of at least 10 hours per week) but not

[45] See Hancock, M. (2016b), *National Child Development Study Activity Histories (1974-2013): a guide to the dataset*, Second Edition, (London: Centre for Longitudinal Studies).
[46] See Hancock, M. (2017a), *British Cohort Study (1970), Activity Histories (1986-2013): a guide to the datasets*, Third Edition, (London: Centre for Longitudinal Studies); see also Brown, M. and Peters, A. (eds.) (2019), *British Cohort Study, Age 46 Survey User Guide*, (London: Centre for Longitudinal Studies).
[47] An early example of evidence being used in support of this point is in White, M. (1991), *Against Unemployment*, (London: Policy Studies Institute), and the view has gone unchallenged since.

actively looking for a job'. The NCDS58 / BCS70 categorisation 'unemployed and seeking work' is based on a very similar main economic activity variable. In both, the presence of categories for the long-term sick / disabled, full-time student and 'looks after home' helps prevent respondents being misallocated as unemployed. (A similar advantage also applies to the BCS70 / NCDS58 measure of reasons for leaving jobs; 'just decided to leave' [see Table 4] is near to 'dismissed', 'found a better job', 'left because of pregnancy', 'made redundant' etc.). A narrower unemployment measure (the same as the surveys' measures but excluding non-UC/JSA claimants) was created because qualitative research has highlighted the effect that the lived experience of being a claimant has on knowledge and attitudes[48].

Attitude questions about work-related welfare conditionality

All three available welfare conditionality questions about unemployed people's obligation to work, or their search for employment, are analysed. They are reproduced in full in Table 1 to enable readers to make more informed judgements about the results. Other possible answers are: for the community work question ('Strongly in favour', 'In favour', and 'Neither in favour nor against'), for the 'not actively looking for work' question ('no' only), and for the question about a couple's work-focused interview (benefits should…. '…be reduced a little', '…be reduced a lot' and '…be stopped'). For all attitude questions 'don't know' / 'no response' answers are excluded from the analysis.

[48] See Patrick, R. (2017), *For Whose Benefit? The everyday realities of benefit reform*, (Bristol: Policy Press).

With the mass media considered an important influence on public attitudes about conditionality and sanctioning[49], the analysis includes a BSAS variable that separates 'tabloid' readers (*Sun*, *Mail*, *Express*, *Record*, *Star*, *Mirror*) from 'broadsheet' (or 'quality' newspaper) readers (*Times*, *Telegraph*, *Financial Times*, *Guardian*, *Independent*). Attitudes towards conditionality reflect both libertarian-authoritarian and left-right dimensions of political orientation[50], so the BSAS 'Left-Right' and 'Libertarian-Authoritarian' scales are used. The scales are based on five-point 'strongly agree to strongly disagree' survey items and are grouped by BSAS to categorise people's overall political orientation[51]. These variables were preferred to political party allegiance variables (popular in BSAS reports[52]) because such allegiance inevitably reflects public perceptions of parties and those parties' changes over time.

Attitude questions about whether or not to take / keep a job with a negative characteristic

The three BSAS unattractive job questions (see Table 2) each offered four options of 'definitely' / 'probably' 'should take the job' and 'definitely' / 'probably' 'should remain on

[49] See, for example, page 2 of Shildrick, T. (2018), *Poverty Propaganda: exploring the myths*, (Bristol: Policy Press), and page 266 of Patrick, R. (2020) 'Unsettling the Anti-Welfare Commonsense: The Potential in Participatory Research with People Living in Poverty', *Journal of Social Policy*, 49, 2: 251-70.
[50] See page 114 of Watts, B. and Fitzpatrick, S. (2018), *Welfare Conditionality*, (London: Routledge).
[51] The Left-Right scale is composed of five items: a. Government should redistribute income from the better-off to those who are less well off; b. Big business benefits owners at the expense of workers; c. Ordinary working people do not get their fair share of the nation's wealth; d. There is one law for the rich and one for the poor; e. Management will always try to get the better of employees if it gets the chance. The Libertarian-Authoritarian scale is based on six items: a. Young people today don't have enough respect for traditional British values; b. People who break the law should be given stiffer sentences; c. For some crimes, the death penalty is the most appropriate sentence; d. Schools should teach children to obey authority; e. The law should always be obeyed, even if a particular law is wrong; f. Censorship of films and magazines is necessary to uphold moral standards. BSAS then groups scores to form three-category variables (see, for example, NatCen. (2015), *British Social Attitudes 2015 User Guide*, [London: National Centre for Social Research]). These groupings are derived from mean scores of 1-2.5, 2.51-3.5, and 3.51-5, with lower scores classed by BSAS as Left / Libertarian, middle scores being 'Neither', and higher scores being Right / Authoritarian.
[52] See, for example, Clery E. (2016),'Welfare: support for government welfare reform', p. 23-44 in J. Curtice, M. Phillips, and E. Clery, (eds.), *British Social Attitudes: the 33rd Report*, (London: NatCen Social Research).

benefits and look for a job' without the particular negative characteristic (i.e. a 'better paid', 'longer-term' job or a 'job they are interested in'). The three variables were recoded as dichotomous, with probably / definitely categories merged, because they invite respondents to choose attitudes that lean heavily in one of two directions. Table 2 also shows the NCDS58 / BCS70 statement used to explore the reverse transition - from a job with a negative characteristic to unemployment. It has a different emphasis to the BSAS questions, as it is about what respondents say they *would* do. It has five answer categories: 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neither agree nor disagree', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'; for the 'same year' tests in Tables 2 and 3 a dichotomised attitude variable was created by collapsing the first two categories and the last three. Attitude questions used in Tables 2 and 3 are from the most recent available surveys. Given that the 2012 Welfare Reform Act continued the policy of sanctioning claimants adjudged to have left a job voluntarily, all four survey items about transitions between employment and unemployment cover attitudes directly relevant to potentially 'sanctionable' behaviours.

Logistic regression models predicting being unemployed at a point in time

Attitudes were used as predictors of a dichotomous outcome – whether someone is unemployed or employed – so logistic regression was undertaken. The unemployed category is weighted heavily in favour of some socio-demographic groups[53] which were included, where possible, as predictors. The BCS70 and NCDS58 surveys lack adequate samples of most ethnic groups, as these cohorts were born in Britain decades ago; living in an urban location was also excluded, as it was not measured in NCDS58 and the study

[53] See, for example, Dunn, A. (2014), *Rethinking Unemployment and the Work Ethic*, London: Palgrave., page 27.

required comparability across models. In these 'same year' models, 'Single' includes all who indicated they did not live with a partner. Region includes those who did not live in the south-east ('south-east' excludes London) and south-west of England. Low Social Class includes routine and semi-routine occupations only; in the NCDS58 and BCS70 class is problematic as a 'same year' variable when studying unemployment, so Low Social Class includes only people whose employment had been in 'semi-routine' or 'routine' jobs only between age sixteen and forty-six; Low / No Qualifications includes those with no formal qualifications and low GCSE grades / CSEs below grade one; hence, the class and education dummy variables split at points below which people incur a substantive labour market disadvantage.

As Zhang[54] encourages, readers are told how predictors were selected, and this also aids transparency on a sensitive topic. Using the 'entry' method, only predictors that associated with the outcome variable at the conventional significance threshold ($P < 0.05$, meaning there is a less than 1 in 20 chance that the significant association between variables came about accidentally) in an initial 'one-to-one' significance test are included in models. Cases with missing values on any of the predictor variables are excluded; this also applies to models which predicted unemployment over a 30-year period.

<u>Logistic regression models predicting amount of time spent unemployed between age 16 and 46</u>

[54] See Zhang, Z. (2016), 'Model building strategy for logistic regression: purposeful selection', *Annals of Translational Medicine*, 4, 6: 111.

To aid comparability, BCS70 and NCDS58 models measuring work attitudes against time spent unemployed across thirty years are as similar as possible to all the 'same year' models. Testing attitudes' associations with employment status across 30 years sits well with in-depth life history research, which has found that attitudes towards being unemployed and towards a variety of jobs, while sometimes changing, tend towards remaining stable over long periods[55]. Using reduced samples with 300 or more activity months, correlations between work attitudes expressed at age 30 / 33 and 42 produced fairly strong Cramer's V (ϕc) scores of 0.2-0.3; these scores suggest a modest level of association between attitudes expressed at different times. Measuring attitudes at similar ages in both cohorts aids comparability (in fact, the only other ages when the attitude question was asked were 26 [BCS70] and 50 [NCDS58]). A dichotomous variable, based on mean scores from age 30 / 33 and 42, separates those averaging two (i.e. averaging 'agree', as responses are coded from one "strongly agree" to five "strongly disagree") from those averaging more than two. Respondents present in only one wave are included, to boost sample size.

Other predictor variables inevitably reflect usual (i.e. not time-specific) statuses. 'Single' includes those who were partnered for fewer than five years in total and had also been single in all waves in which they took part; the latter acts as a check on possibly incomplete partnership data[56]. Low Social Class is measured the same way as it is in the 'same year' analysis. Low / No Qualifications uses a 'middle' year – age 33 for NCDS58 and 30 for BCS70.

[55] See pages 86-113 of Dunn, A. (2014), *Rethinking Unemployment and the Work Ethic*, London: Palgrave.
[56] See these guidebooks on the partnership data: Hancock, M. (2016a), *British Cohort Study (1970) Partnership Histories (1986-2012) a guide to the datasets*, Third Edition, (London: Centre for Longitudinal Studies). and Hancock, M. (2017b), *National Child Development Study Partnership Histories (1974-2013) a guide to the datasets*, Third Edition, (London: Centre for Longitudinal Studies).

'Region' is *not* living in either south-west or south-east England in all waves that respondents participated in. Cases with fewer than 300 months (out of 360) of 'activity history' records are excluded. The figure is 240 months for tests on total time spent either employed (adjusted to be full-time equivalent [FTE]) or unemployed. Finally, the terms 'predictor' and 'outcome' variables are preferred here to the more misleading 'independent' and 'dependent'; prediction is distinct from causation, and the authors make claims only of associations between variables.

Results

Results are presented in Tables 1 to 6. Table 1 presents the proportions of various categories of respondent who oppose various work-related conditions being imposed on unemployed benefit claimants; it shows overwhelming support for conditionality among all groups. A common qualitative finding - that those experiencing unemployment are generally supportive of conditionality in principle - is confirmed with a statistically significant number of respondents. However, unemployed people are far more likely than employed people to oppose conditionality and sanctioning. As Table 1 shows, while political orientation, in particular libertarianism, tends to be strongly associated with attitudes, tabloid and quality / broadsheet newspaper readership is not. The findings on political orientation and unemployment are consistent with those from other studies; Fossati's[57] survey research also found that both being jobless and left political orientation associated significantly with negative attitudes towards behavioural conditions, not only in the UK (albeit with a

[57] See Fossatii, F. (2018), 'Who Wants Demanding Active Labour Market Policies? Public Attitudes towards Policies that put Pressure on the Unemployed', *Journal of Social Policy*, 47, 1: 77-97.

response rate of only four per cent) but also in Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, and Switzerland.

TABLES 1 and 2 HERE

The questions on what an unemployed person *should* do when faced with a choice between staying on benefits and taking a job with a negative characteristic are particularly useful to the study, as there is no question in British surveys about rules compelling claimants to broaden their job search. Table 2 includes only findings from the most recent surveys to include the questions on what a person should / would do when choosing between being employed and being jobless; it displays the proportions of various social categories who chose the jobless option. Those experiencing unemployment at the time expressed significantly more negative views towards employment across all five attitude questions, and this also applies to the 'claimants only' and 'low / no qualifications' sub-groups in Table 2.

TABLE 3 HERE

Table 3 presents the findings on employment status and attitudes from the logistic regression analysis that used only data from the same year's survey. It shows that all five attitude variables that featured in Table 2 remain significant predictors of being unemployed (at $P < 0.001$, which means there is a less than '1 in 1000' possibility that the finding came about by chance) even when other relevant variables are included in models. The Odds Ratios for the five attitude variables (see the top row of numbers in Table 3) are

all above two, which means that expressing a negative attitude towards employment associates with being at least twice as likely to be unemployed at the time. The highest Odds Ratio is just over four, for avoiding a job considered uninteresting. Indeed, Table 3 shows that attitudes variables are found to rival established unemployment risk variables in strength in their ability to predict whether someone is unemployed, as they have similarly sized Odds Ratios; for example, the 'Low / No Qualifications' variable has Odds Ratios in the five models ranging from 1.94 to 3.72, meaning that those in that category are estimated to be 1.94-3.72 times more likely than others to be unemployed, even after controlling for the impact of the other predictor variables in the model, while the Odds Ratios for the attitudes variables range from 2.03 to 4.04. Table 3 also shows the likelihood of being unemployed for respondents who possess either all five 'predictor' characteristics or none of the five. For example, someone who says people should not take a job they find uninteresting, is single, does not live in the south-east or south-west, has few or no qualifications and is in the lowest social classes has a 61.9 per cent chance of being unemployed according to the model's estimates, whereas someone whose characteristics all differ from these has only a 1.3 per cent chance.

TABLE 4 HERE

Tables 4 provides a rare opportunity to see how self-reported attitudes associate with self-reported behaviour. The association between respondents stating they would 'pack in' a disliked job and indicating, when providing information on their own employment records, that they 'just decided to leave' jobs, is statistically significant (at $P < 0.001$), but not strong in either cohort: in both age groups, those who agreed they would 'pack in' a job they

disliked are around twice as likely as other respondents to have 'just decided to leave' a job on two or more occasions. Note that, while the cohorts' results are similar, the percentages who 'just decided to leave' are much smaller in the NCDS58 than in the BCS70; this is because far less data was collected on this topic before the 1990s.

TABLE 5 HERE

Table 5 presents findings on the length of time people who tended to agree in response to the 'pack it in' question spent unemployed between the ages of 16 and 46. It shows that those who indicated they would 'pack in' a disliked job are nearly four times more likely than others in both the NCDS58 and BCS70 to have spent at least five years unemployed. Figures in brackets in Table 5 exclude people who were experiencing unemployment at the time the attitude question was asked. Excluding these respondents (to control for the effect of present-day employment status on people's expressed attitudes) reduced the strength of the association by about a third in both cohorts (see the Cramer's V [ϕc] scores in the right-hand column of Table 5); this finding is perhaps useful in understanding the likely effect of current employment status on other attitude results presented here.

Table 6 shows that the significant associations between the variables in Table 5 still exist when other relevant variables are controlled for; Odds Ratios for the attitude predictors are of similar size to those in Table 3 predicting 'same time' unemployment, ranging from 2.83 to 4.10 (see the top row of numbers in Table 6). Again, these Odds Ratios are similar, across the models, to those for established unemployment predictor variables such as being single and having few or no qualifications (see the second and third rows of numbers in Table 6).

TABLE 6 HERE

Conclusion

Recent British qualitative research has exposed unemployed people's diverse attitudes towards low status jobs, and studies of employers' perceptions indicate that migrants are generally keener than British-born people to undertake such jobs. Quantitative attitudes research presented here found that unemployed people were significantly more likely than employed people to indicate they favour unemployment over taking / keeping a job with a negative characteristic. Attitudes research only tells us how people responded to a particular question worded a particular way. Beyond that, results are open to interpretation. Furthermore, as highlighted here, ideology can play a part in how findings are viewed. From Conservative policymakers' perspective, the findings, in establishing that people experiencing unemployment exhibit significantly more negative attitudes to employment than employed people, help to vindicate the 2012 Welfare Reform Act's tougher work-related conditions. These Conservatives might be dismayed that Britain's unemployed people, a group that in general lacks employability, appear to be keener than others to avoid the less attractive jobs; in making this point they could draw upon another quantitative finding - that the least employable should enter employment at the earliest opportunity if they want to lessen their risk of future unemployment[58]. Non-conservatives, on the other hand, might suggest that the results here reflect the understandable feelings of

[58] Schmelzer, P. (2011), 'Unemployment in the early career in the UK: a trap or a stepping stone?' *Acta Sociologica*, 54, 3: 251-65.

those with more experience of unemployment, sanctioning, low quality welfare-to-work schemes[59] and low status jobs (future qualitative work might offer possible explanations for the general patterns of attitudes established here). Non-conservatives might also defend unemployed people's right to exercise choice in job search, assert that a lack of adequately paid jobs is the main problem, or point to empirical evidence suggesting that people harried into unsuitable jobs face a considerable risk of unemployment in future[60].

As the first part of this article illustrated, debates on welfare conditionality would benefit from more of the academic authors discussing the gap between their perspectives and those of right-wing policymakers. This would help clarify which disagreements can be considered ideological and which are evidential; for example, this article's authors are opposed to removing the entire incomes of unemployed benefit claimants who have broken social security rules, but that view is not based on any empirical evidence.

Nevertheless, findings presented here include some less equivocal patterns of public attitudes, namely strong support for work-related conditionality and widespread adherence to the view that claimants of unemployed benefits should accept a job beneath their aspirations. These findings indicate that conditionality rules like those imposed by the 2012 Welfare Reform Act are unlikely to be lifted soon. Critiques of this conditionality are perhaps at their most persuasive when they weigh the policy's modest (perhaps even negligible) net

[59] Jordan, J. (2018), 'Welfare Grunters and Workfare Monsters? An empirical review of the operation of two UK "Work Programme" centres', *Journal of Social Policy*, 47, 3: 583–601.
[60] Authors making these points include Shildrick, T., MacDonald, R., Webster, C., and Garthwaite, K. (2012) Poverty and Insecurity: life in low pay, no pay Britain, (Bristol: Policy Press) and Patrick, R. (2017), *For Whose Benefit? The everyday realities of benefit reform*, (Bristol: Policy Press).

employment gains against the human cost of sanctioning[61]. The Conservatives' increased levels of sanctioning, in preference to more expensive and state-interventionist policy options, is indicative of a firm ideological commitment to small government and individual responsibility. Given that large numbers who agree with work-related conditionality do not share this right-wing ideological commitment and, given that Britain guarantees its prisoners food and accommodation, the public might be amenable to ending the harsher financial sanctioning brought in by the 2012 Act. The challenge for those who support conditionality in principle, but object to removing social security rule-breakers' incomes, is to develop a more inclusive form of conditionality that builds claimants' work-readiness.

Acknowledgment

The authors thank the anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on earlier drafts.

[61] Examples include the following: Patrick, R. (2017), *For Whose Benefit? The everyday realities of benefit reform*, (Bristol: Policy Press); Adler, M. (2018), *Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment? Benefit Sanctions in the UK*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan); Dwyer, P. (2018a), 'Punitive and ineffective: benefit sanctions within social security', *Journal of Social Security Law*, 25, 142-57; Wright, S., Dwyer, P., Jones, K., McNeill, J., Scullion, L. and Stewart, A. (2018), *Welfare Conditionality: final findings: Universal Credit*, (York: Welfare Conditionality Project).

Table 1: Percentage of various social categories expressing opposition to work-related behavioural conditionality / sanctioning

	Q: Think of a person who can't find a job at the moment. Do you think there are any circumstances where it would be right to limit this person's access to unemployment benefits? (the 'circumstance' given is "They were not actively looking for work")	**Q: Think of a different person who is receiving unemployment benefits, and who is fit and able to work. How much are you in favour or against them being required to do some work in the community. They would not be paid for this work, but they would continue to receive unemployment benefits?**	**Q: Suppose both members of a couple with children, neither of whom are working, but who are both on benefits, were asked to visit the jobcentre at least every six months to talk about ways in which they might find work. Which of these statements comes closest to what you think should happen to their benefits if both of them did not go?**
	A: No	**A: Against / Strongly against**	**A: Their benefits should not be affected**
	(2012)	**(2012)**	**(2009)**
Employed	14.3*** (1507)	4.4*** (1775)	3.9*** (1933)
Unemployed 1. BSAS measure and 2. (JSA / UC claimants only)	31.8*** (151) (32.3*) (62)	9.6* (188) (13.6*) (81)	10.9** (183) (8.2) (73)
Left	23.6*** (1438)	7.0* (1494)	6.4** (1377)
Right	10.3*** (282)	3.5 (289)	1.9* (363)
Libertarian	30.5*** (167)	18.3*** (169)	16.7*** (141)
Authoritarian	19.1 (1689)	4.9* (1771)	4.0** (1802)
Tabloid reader	20.1 (695)	5.7 (835)	5.4 (1031)
Broadsheet reader	20.2 (366)	7.1 (421)	5.7 (297)
ALL RESPONDENTS	**19.8** **(2734)**	**6.0** **(3236)**	**5.5** **(3341)**

Source: British Social Attitudes survey data); P < 0.05=, < 0.01=**, <0.001=***; number of respondents is in brackets.*

Table 2: Employment Status and favouring being unemployed over an unattractive job

	"Imagine a person who is looking for work and receiving unemployment benefits. A job becomes available, which pays at least as much as they get in unemployment benefits, but it is not the kind of job they are looking for. For each of the following situations, please tell me whether you think they should take the available job, or remain on benefits while they look for a different job… **% asserting that the unemployed person definitely /probably "should remain on benefits"**			**% strongly agreeing / agreeing that "If I didn't like a job I'd pack it in, even if there was no other job to go to"…..**	
	...if it is a job they are not interested in	**...if the available job is paid at the minimum wage**	**...if the job is on a short-term contract**	**In the BCS70 Cohort, Age 42**	**In the NCDS58 Cohort, Age 50**
	(2015)	**(2015)**	**(2015)**	**(2012)**	**(2008)**
EMPLOYED	11.7*** (1792)	7.3*** (1784)	12.7*** (1793)	9.3*** (7397)	11.1*** (7431)
UNEMPLOYED Surveys' measure	35.9*** (145)	21.2*** (146)	26.4*** (148)	27.5*** (204)	31.9*** (210)
JSA / UC claimant unemployed only	39.1*** (46)	26.7*** (45)	33.3** (45)	27.5*** (109)	24.1** (83)
Low / No Qualifications unemployed only	40.0*** (55)	20.0** (55)	25.5* (55)	25.7*** (109)	27.5*** (109)
ALL RESPONDENTS	**14.3** **(3168)**	**9.5** **(3150)**	**15.5** **(3163)**	**11.2** **(8656)**	**13.4** **(8732)**

Source: British Social Attitudes Survey data; British Cohort Study (BCS70) data; National Child Development Study (NCDS58) data; Number of respondents is in brackets; P *< 0.05=*, < 0.01=**, < 0.001=****

Table 3: Logistic regression models predicting being unemployed in the same year's survey

PREDICTORS	'Uninteresting Job' Model (BSAS) 2015	'Minimum Wage' job Model (BSAS) 2015	'Short – Term' job Model (BSAS) 2015	'Pack in a job' Model (BCS70) 2012 (age 42)	'Pack in a job' Model (NCDS58) 2008 (age 50)
Attitude about unattractive job / unemployment	4.04*** (0.23)	2.42** (0.28)	2.03** (0.25)	3.55*** (0.17)	3.55*** (0.16)
Single	1.74** (0.21)	1.82** (0.21)	1.88** (0.21)	4.71*** (0.15)	2.82*** (0.14)
Low / No Qualifications	3.72*** (0.23)	3.60*** (0.22)	3.56*** (0.22)	1.94*** (0.15)	2.37*** (0.15)
Low social class	2.76*** (0.22)	2.85*** (0.22)	2.82*** (0.22)	3.13*** (0.25)	1.11 (0.32)
Not in South-East or South-West	1.71 (0.29)	1.67 (0.29)	1.66 (0.29)	1.49* (0.16)	1.46* (0.18)
CONSTANT (B Value)	-4.33*** (0.31)	-4.13*** (0.30)	-4.15*** (0.30)	-4.60*** (0.15)	-4.33*** (0.13)
FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE MODELS					
% probability of unemployment with all predictors	61.9	54.9	49.9	50.5	20.6
% probability of unemployment with no predictors	1.3	1.6	1.5	0.7	0.7
Pseudo R^2 (Nagelkerke)	0.19	0.15	0.15	0.14	0.10
Number of Cases	1679	1679	1679	7600	7640

Source: British Social Attitudes survey data; British Cohort Study data; National Child Development Study data. Note: Odds Ratios and significance levels (P < 0.05=, < 0.01=**, <0.001=***) are presented, with Standard Errors in brackets;*

Table 4: Strongly Agreeing / Agreeing 'I'd pack in' a disliked job and number of times 'just decided to leave' a job between age 16 and 46

Mean response to "If I didn't like a job I'd pack it in, even if I had no other job to go to" at age 30/42 (BCS70) and age 33/42 (NCDS58)		Number of times reason for leaving a job was "just decided to leave"			Strength of association (Cramer's V (ϕc)
		0	1	2 or more	
NCDS58	Strongly Agree / Agree (n=848)	86.8	10.5	2.7	0.06***
	Neither / Disagree / Strongly Disagree (n=7750)	91.6	7.2	1.2	
BCS70	Strongly Agree / Agree (n=669)	61.3	24.5	14.2	0.07***
	Neither / Disagree / Strongly Disagree (n=8278)	72.3	19.5	8.2	

Source: British Cohort Study (BCS70) and National Child Development Study (NCDS58) data.
*Notes: figures are percentages; P < 0.001=****

Table 5: Strongly Agreeing / Agreeing 'I'd pack in' a disliked job and years spent unemployed between age 16 and 46.

Mean response to "If I didn't like a job I'd pack it in, even if I had no other job to go to" at age 30/42 (BCS70) and age 33/42 (NCDS58)		Years spent unemployed between age 16 and 46			Strength of association (Cramer's V (φc)
		< 3	3 - 5	5 or more	
NCDS58	Strongly Agree / Agree n=848 (750)	85.5 (90.9)	4.7 (3.3)	9.8 (5.7)	0.13*** (0.09***)
	Neither/Disagree / Strongly n=7750 (7468)	95.3 (96.6)	2.1 (1.8)	2.6 (1.6)	
BCS70	Strongly Agree / Agree n=669 (555)	85.7 (91.7)	5.2 (4.0)	9.1 (4.3)	0.12*** (0.08***)
	Neither/Disagree / Strongly n=8278 (7775)	95.6 (97.3)	2.1 (1.6)	2.3 (1.1)	

Source: British Cohort Study (BCS70) and National Child Development Study (NCDS58) data.
*Notes: figures are percentages; scores in brackets exclude respondents who were unemployed when attitude questions were asked; P <0.001=****

Table 6: Logistic regression models predicting total years spent unemployed between age 16 and 46

	Model predicting spending at least **FIVE** years unemployed		Model predicting spending at least **THREE** years unemployed		Model predicting spending at least **20% OF 'EMPLOYED FTE + UNEMPLOYED TIME'** unemployed	
PREDICTORS	NCDS58	BCS70	NCDS58	BCS70	NCDS58	BCS70
Agree / Strongly agree to "pack in" disliked job	3.23*** (0.15)	3.75*** (0.17)	2.83*** (0.12)	3.33*** (0.13)	4.06*** (0.18)	4.10*** (0.21)
Single	3.99*** (0.17)	4.65*** (0.16)	3.33*** (0.14)	3.66*** (0.13)	3.64*** (0.20)	5.18*** (0.19)
Low / No Qualifications	3.09*** (0.14)	2.80*** (0.14)	2.32*** (0.10)	2.32*** (0.10)	3.89*** (0.16)	3.01*** (0.17)
Low Social Class	2.09*** (0.21)	2.67*** (0.23)	2.15*** (0.18)	2.13*** (0.20)	2.77*** (0.29)	2.98*** (0.34)
Not in South-East/S.West	1.71*** (0.14)	1.47** (0.15)	1.63*** (0.10)	1.47*** (0.11)	1.87*** (0.17)	1.45* (0.16)
CONSTANT (B value)	-4.60*** (0.14)	-4.42*** (0.13)	-3.76*** (0.10)	-3.51*** (0.10)	-4.77*** (0.17)	-4.35*** (0.16)
FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE MODELS						
% probability of unemployment (ALL predictors)	58.9	61.0	64.0	64.3	71.5	N/A
% probability of unemployment (NO predictors)	1.0	0.8	2.0	2.0	0.8	0.9
R2 (Nagel-kerke)	0.13	0.13	0.10	0.10	0.16	0.13
Number of Cases	8356	8642	8356	8642	5913	5754

Source: British Cohort Study (BCS70) National Child Development Study (NCDS58) data; Odds Ratios and significance (P < 0.05=, < 0.01=**, <0.001=***) are presented, Standard Errors are in brackets.*