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**INTRA-HOUSEHOLD DISTRIBUTION OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL
EXCLUSION: EVIDENCE FROM THE 1999 PSE SURVEY OF BRITAIN**

Laura Adelman, Sue Middleton and Karl Ashworth

Poverty and Social Exclusion
Survey of Britain ●●●●



PREFACE

This Working Paper arose from the *1999 Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey of Britain* funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The *1999 PSE Survey of Britain* is the most comprehensive and scientifically rigorous survey of its kind ever undertaken. It provides unparalleled detail about deprivation and exclusion among the British population at the close of the twentieth century. It uses a particularly powerful scientific approach to measuring poverty which:

- incorporates the views of members of the public, rather than judgments by social scientists, about what are the necessities of life in modern Britain
- calculates the levels of deprivation that constitutes poverty using scientific methods rather than arbitrary decisions.

The *1999 PSE Survey of Britain* is also the first national study to attempt to measure social exclusion, and to introduce a methodology for poverty and social exclusion which is internationally comparable. Three data sets were used:

- The *1998-9 General Household Survey* (GHS) provided data on the socio-economic circumstances of the respondents, including their incomes
- The *June 1999 ONS Omnibus Survey* included questions designed to establish from a sample of the general population what items and activities they consider to be necessities.
- A follow-up survey of a sub-sample of respondents to the 1998-9 GHS were interviewed in late 1999 to establish how many lacked items identified as necessities, and also to collect other information on poverty and social exclusion.

Further details about the *1999 Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey of Britain* are available at: <http://www.bris.ac.uk/poverty/pse/>

1 INTRODUCTION

Poverty research is currently dominated by measures based on household income. Such measures have an underlying assumption that income is distributed equitably among household members. Since the 1980s, research has begun to suggest that this is not always the case (see further below). These findings have a number of important implications, in particular for equivalence scales which weight household income to reflect family types and sizes, so that the incomes of various household types can be properly compared. A variety of equivalence scales are in use which apply different weights to additional adults in the household, and to children according to their age. However, all the scales assume that first and second adults carry far greater weights than children and that there is no difference between men and women's share of resources. If these scales are incorrect, for example if children receive a greater share of the family income than the scales assume, this has important and serious implications for poverty measurement. In this case families with children will be under-represented in the poverty statistics.

Pahl was among the first to test assumptions about income distribution and found that there was, in fact, a great deal of inequity in how resources are shared within households. In some households where the household income should have been adequate for all, women and children were in poverty. Pahl went on to look at the ways in which households manage their finances and found that this had an important impact on the way in which household resources were allocated. Vogler continued and expanded this work, highlighting differences between 'management' of finances on a day-to-day basis and ultimate 'control' of finances (see further below).

A number of factors have been shown to influence how couples choose to organise their finances (Molloy and Snape, 1999).

These include:

- income level;
- personal income;
- source of income;
- previous experience of household allocative systems; and
- gender roles and other cultural factors.

Secondary analysis of the Family Expenditure Survey has suggested that patterns of spending within households are also gendered. Pahl (1998) showed that men spent more than women on alcohol, motor vehicles, repairs to the house, meals out gambling and holidays. Women spent more on food, clothes, childcare and education. In contrast, Cantillon and Nolan's work (1998), using data from the Economic and Social Research Institute survey tends to suggest small differences between the items husbands and wives actually went without, although the number of items considered was limited. Of those lacking by differing amounts, females were slightly (at least one percentage point) more likely than their male partners to go without a holiday; warm waterproof coat; hobby or leisure activity; and some new, not second hand, clothes.

Qualitative work by Goode et. al., (1998) also found differences in the ways in which men and women used debt and credit. Men tended to use credit for their own benefit to buy, for example, car accessories, computer equipment and CDs, but justified it as spending which would be of use to the whole family. Women, in contrast, saw such spending as personal, rather than for the collective family good. Earlier work by Ritchie (1990) similarly found that women on a low income felt less comfortable with the idea of spending money on themselves than men. Men felt more strongly that they were entitled to spend on themselves, even when the main source of income was benefits.

Women's lack of personal spending on themselves has been credited to the fact that spending on their children is often seen by both men and women as part of women's

personal spending (Goode et. al, 1998). It is, therefore, unsurprising that ‘research into life on a low income has consistently found that women generally protect other members from the worst effects of poverty...’ (Molloy and Snape, 1999). Middleton et al’s (1997) study found that spending on children varied surprisingly little according to household income and, therefore, in poorer families the proportion spent on children was considerably larger than in richer families. This was achieved by putting children first in the priorities for disposable income. The same study also found that mothers were one and half times more likely to claim to go without daily necessities such as food, adequate clothing, and shoes than their male partners.

This paper uses data from the Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey of Britain (PSE) to pull together three strands in previous research. First, the management and control of household finances are considered. Which methods are used, and how does the choice of method impact on the extent to which partners go without? Does the choice of method vary according to income and a range of other family characteristics? Second, do female partners go without to a greater extent than their male partners and, again, does this differ for couples in income poverty? Finally, we test the previous research evidence that children are less likely to go without than their parents and, in households where children are not protected from poverty, we ask why is this the case?

The extent of the data available from the PSE survey for this analysis is inevitably limited, given the scope of the survey and its total sample size. Specific limitations are highlighted in the sections that follow. However, the main limitation is that it was only possible to ask the respondent, and not their partners, how household finances were managed and what they and their partners went without. This has been overcome to some extent by comparing the responses of male respondents in couple households with those of female respondents in couple households.

2 MANAGEMENT OF HOUSEHOLD FINANCES

2.1 HOW HOUSEHOLDS MANAGE THEIR FINANCES

Respondents to the PSE Survey who lived in couple households were asked:

'People organise their household finances in different ways. Which of the methods on this card comes closest to the way you organise yours?' They were given the following choices, based on a question in the Social Change and Economic Life Initiative (SCELI) survey:

- I look after the household money except my partner's personal spending money;
- my partner looks after the household's money except my personal spending money;
- I am given a housekeeping allowance. My partner looks after the rest of the money;
- my partner is given a housekeeping allowance. I look after the rest of the money;
- we share and manage our finances jointly;
- we keep our finances completely separate; and
- spontaneous – some other arrangement.

Answers were re-coded depending on whether the respondent was male or female. The results reveal similar patterns to those in other studies (Table 2.1). Just over one-half of couple households say that they manage their finances jointly, in one quarter the female partner looks after the household money except for their partner's spending money and in 12 per cent the male partner looks after the household money in this way. Of the seven per cent of households that operate a 'housekeeping allowance' system, in six per cent females are given a housekeeping allowance and in the remaining one per cent males receive the allowance.

Table 2.1 Organisation of Household Finances

	column per cent
Method of Financial Organisation	Households
Male looks after household money except partner's personal spending money 'male whole wage' system	12
Female looks after household money except partner's personal spending money 'female whole wage' system	24
Male is given a housekeeping allowance, female looks after the rest of the money 'housekeeping allowance' system	1
Female is given a housekeeping allowance, male looks after the rest of the money 'housekeeping allowance' system	6
Share and manage household finances jointly 'joint pool' or 'pooling' system	54
Keep finances completely separate, or some other method 'independent management' system	3
Base (unweighted)	709

Vogler (1994) also found that 50 per cent of households used the 'joint pool' method of organising their finances. However, her study went on to ask both partners in the couple which partner in their household had *'ultimate responsibility for organising household money and paying the bills'* – male, female or both. The results showed that only 39 per cent of those who said that they used the joint pool method also *both* said that their finances were 'ultimately' jointly managed. There was agreement between over one-quarter of the couples that their finances were actually managed by just one of the partners – 14 per cent by the female and 13 per cent by the male. However, more than one-third of couples disagreed with each other as to whether finances were organised by the male or jointly (16 per cent) or female or jointly (18 per cent). Therefore, in over 60 per cent of households who initially said that they used the 'joint pool' method of organising their finances, both or one of the partners nominated one partner as ultimately responsible for management. As Vogler points out *'These results clearly indicate that the general 'pool' category masks three analytically different forms of pool – the male pool, the female pool, and the jointly managed pool'*

(Vogler, 1994, p. 219). She suggests that these should be analysed separately. This is not possible in our study, but shows that respondents who say that they manage their finances jointly cannot be assumed to 'ultimately' share this management. This needs to be borne in mind in what follows.

2.2 EXPLAINING COUPLES CHOICE OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Work and financial management

It has been suggested that whether a female partner works will impact upon the households financial management system (Vogler, 1994, p.245; Pahl, 1983, p.253). When the female partner is one of the providers for the family, it may be felt that she is more entitled to a say in how that money is managed and spent.

Couple households have been divided into three groups according to employment patterns – couple households with two or more workers; those with one worker; and those with no workers. In over three-quarters of the households with just one worker, this is the male partner (78 per cent).

Generally, it appears that differences between the financial management systems used are small according to the numbers of adults working in the household. However, females are slightly more likely to look after the household finances (apart from their partner's spending money) when there are just one or no workers in the household (28 and 27 per cent, compared to 23 per cent in two or more worker households). Households with two or more workers are more likely to share and manage household finances jointly than one or no worker households; 56 per cent compared to 52 and 50 per cent respectively. Although numbers are small, those with just one worker are slightly more likely to use the female housekeeping allowance system than the other groups. In contrast to the literature, a higher

proportion of no worker households have finances managed by the male partner (except for their partner's personal spending money) than other households.

Table 2.2 Household Financial Organisation by Work in the Household

Method of Financial Organisation	Number of Adults in the Household			
	Working Two or More	One	None	All
Male looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	11	(12)	(14)	12
Female looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	23	27	28	24
Male is given a housekeeping allowance, female looks after the rest of the money	(1)	0	(2)	(1)
Female is given a housekeeping allowance, male looks after the rest of the money	(6)	(9)	(5)	6
Share and manage household finances jointly	56	52	50	54
Keep finances completely separate, or some other method	(4)	(1)	0	(3)
All	65	23	13	100
Base (unweighted)	264	137	110	709

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

Ethnicity and financial management

There has been little research into the financial management techniques used by people from different ethnic groups. Numbers are very small in this survey, but

tend to suggest that non-white couples are more likely to share and manage finances jointly than white couples. This is perhaps opposite to what would have been expected; traditional cultural models would presume the male partner to take responsibility for household finances. However, as has been already pointed out, there was no separation between management and control of finances in this study, nor were both partners asked separately.

Table 2.3 Household Financial Organisation by Ethnicity

Method of Financial Organisation	column per cent		
	White	Non-white	All
Male looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	12	(5)	12
Female looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	25	(5)	24
Male is given a housekeeping allowance, female looks after the rest of the money	(1)	0	(1)
Female is given a housekeeping allowance, male looks after the rest of the money	6	(7)	6
Share and manage household finances jointly	53	(79)	54
Keep finances completely separate, or some other method	3	(4)	(3)
All	97	3	100
Base (unweighted)	689	20	709

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

Cohabitation and financial management

Much previous research has failed to distinguish between married and cohabiting couples (Molloy and Snape, 1999). It might be hypothesised that cohabiting couples would be less sure of their future together and, therefore, more likely to keep finances separate.

Again numbers are small, but the evidence suggests that this is the case to some extent. Six per cent of cohabiting couples keep their finances separate compared to just two per cent of married couples. Cohabiting couples are less likely to use systems where only one partner has control, in particular they are less likely to use the female housekeeping model – one per cent compared to eight per cent for married couples. One possible explanation could be that cohabiting couples are more likely both to work. However, further analysis has shown that cohabiting couples are only slightly more likely to be both working than married couples (68 per cent compared to 65 per cent). Cohabiting couples are more likely to be younger than married couples and it may be that their relationships are more equal in this respect. Older cohabiting couples may have been married before and have had problems with money and, therefore, wish to share the responsibility in their new relationship (Vogler and Pahl, 1993).

Table 2.4 Household Financial Organisation by Marital Status

Method of Financial Organisation	column per cent		
	Married	Cohabiting	All
Male looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	12	(13)	12
Female looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	25	(22)	24
Male is given a housekeeping allowance, female looks after the rest of the money	1	(2)	(1)
Female is given a housekeeping allowance, male looks after the rest of the money	8	(1)	6
Share and manage household finances jointly	54	55	54
Keep finances completely separate, or some other method	2	(6)	(3)
All	85	15	100
Base (unweighted)	629	67	696

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

Benefit receipt and financial management

The literature suggests that there is a strong link between the income of households and the financial management structure used. It has been found that in low-income families females are more likely to manage the household finances, at least nominally, whereas males are more likely to be in control if the household income is fairly high (Goode et. al., 1998, Vogler, 1994).

The survey evidence partly confirms these findings. In couples receiving Income Support or Jobseeker's Allowance, females are slightly more likely to look after the household money (except for partner's personal spending money) than in couples that do not, 27 compared to 24 per cent. Couples in receipt of benefit are also more likely to use the system in which finances are jointly managed and shared. They are less likely to use systems in which the male is in control (male whole wage or housekeeping) – 14 compared to 19 per cent.

These differences are perhaps not as stark as might have been expected, but this again may be due to differences between 'management' and 'control'.

Table 2.5 Household Financial Organisation by Benefit Receipt

Method of Financial Organisation	column per cent		
	Does Not Receive IS/JSA	Does Receive IS/JSA	All
Male looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	12	(11)	12
Female looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	24	27	24
Male is given a housekeeping allowance, female looks after the rest of the money	1	(1)	(1)
Female is given a housekeeping allowance, male looks after the rest of the money	7	(3)	6
Share and manage household finances jointly	54	58	54
Keep finances completely separate, or some other method	3	(2)	(3)
All	95	5	100
Base (unweighted)	636	71	711

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

Poverty and financial management

There are a number of poverty measures in the PSE that could be used to analyse the relationship between poverty and financial management. For this paper, deprivation of necessities (Table 2.6) and income below 50 per cent of the median (Table 2.7) have been chosen. These reveal that, using both measures, those in 'poor' households are more likely to use the female 'whole wage' managed system, more than one-quarter of those deprived (28 per cent) and those in income poverty (29 per cent), compared to 23 per cent of non-deprived and non-poor households.

Table 2.6 Household Financial Organisation by Deprivation

column per cent

Method of Financial Organisation	Deprived Necessities	of Not Deprived of Necessities	All
Male looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	(7)	13	12
Female looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	28	23	24
Male is given a housekeeping allowance, female looks after the rest of the money	(1)	(1)	(1)
Female is given a housekeeping allowance, male looks after the rest of the money	(5)	7	6
Share and manage household finances jointly	57	53	54
Keep finances completely separate, or some other method	(1)	(3)	(3)
All	22	78	100
Base (unweighted)	196	513	709

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

Methods used also differ between deprived and income poor couples. Households that are deprived are less likely to use male 'whole-wage' or male housekeeping allowance systems, and more likely to use jointly managed systems than the non-deprived. In contrast, those with incomes below 50 per cent of the median are as likely as those with incomes above to use the male 'whole-wage' or housekeeping systems, and *less* likely to use the joint managed system. Further analysis has shown that the same finding emerges for household with below 40 per cent of the median.

There appears to be something distinctly different in how households manage their finances between those that are deprived and those with low incomes.

Table 2.7 Household Financial Organisation by Income Poverty

column per cent

Method of Financial Organisation Households Use	Income 50% of the Median	Below 50% of the Median	Income 50% of the Median	Above 50% of the Median	All
Male looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	11		12		12
Female looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	29		23		24
Male is given a housekeeping allowance, female looks after the rest of the money	(3)		(1)		1
Female is given a housekeeping allowance, male looks after the rest of the money	(6)		6		6
Share and manage household finances jointly	49		56		54
Keep finances completely separate, or some other method	3		3		3
All	23		77		100
Base (unweighted)	243		466		709

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

To try and explain these differences a number of characteristics were compared (Table 2.8). Few differences emerged, with the exception of the presence of children. Couples with children are more likely to be necessities poor than income poor. Therefore it appears that when children are present, couples are more likely to jointly manage their household finances, perhaps to ensure that resources are pooled in order to provide for their children. A further explanation lies in the fact that

couples who are necessities poor are also more likely to be cohabiting than income poor couples. As seen above, cohabiting couples are more likely to use the pooling system.

Table 2.8 Characteristics of Income Poor and Deprived Couples

	Income Poor	Necessities Poor
Benefit		
Yes	16	17
No	84	83
Number working		
Two or more	41	44
One	30	31
None	28	(25)
Number of children		
None	46	38
One	17	16
Two	20	28
Three or more	17	19
Marital status		
Married	85	78
Cohabiting	15	22
Base (unweighted)	141	94

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

Debt and financial management

If, as the literature suggests, women are more likely to look after finances when households are in poverty, it might be anticipated that this would also be the case when households are in debt. The PSE asked respondents whether they had been seriously behind in paying within the time allowed for a variety of items including mortgage repayments, utilities, mail order catalogues, and credit cards.

Households in debt are far more likely to use the female 'whole wage' system, approximately one-third compared to one-quarter of those not in debt. Fewer use

the housekeeping allowance method, three per cent of those in debt compared to seven per cent not in debt. Lower proportions of in debt households use the male whole wage system (nine compared to 12 per cent). Similar proportions use the pooling system.

Table 2.9 Household Financial Organisation by Experience of debt

column per cent

Method of Financial Organisation	Not Been in Debt in the Past 12 Months	Been in Debt in the Past 12 Months	All
Male looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	12	(9)	12
Female looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	23	34	24
Male is given a housekeeping allowance, female looks after the rest of the money	(1)	(2)	1
Female is given a housekeeping allowance, male looks after the rest of the money	7	(3)	6
Share and manage household finances jointly	54	52	54
Keep finances completely separate, or some other method	(3)	0	3
All	88	12	100
Base (unweighted)	612	97	709

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

Stress and financial management

Previous research has suggested that females who have responsibility for household finances are more likely to experience stress than males, largely because females are

more likely to manage lower incomes. The PSE asked all respondents (not just those in debt) how worried they were about having financial debts.

In contrast to earlier research, this study found relatively few differences between the extent to which males and females worry about having financial debts (Table 2.10). In households using the female whole wage system, female respondents are more likely to be very or fairly worried than males (30 compared to 19 per cent). When households claim to share financial management it appears that men are slightly more likely to be very or fairly worried – 32 compared to 26 per cent of women. Eighty-four per cent of male respondents in households that use the male whole wage system are either not very or not at all worried about having financial debts, similar to the 82 per cent of female respondents using this system.

Table 2.10 Stress by Gender of Respondent and Financial Organisation

Method of Financial Organisation Use	How Worried are you About Having Financial Debts Such as HP, Mortgage, Loans etc.?	Male Respondent	Female Respondent
Male looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	Very /Fairly worried	(16)	(18)
	Not very /Not at all worried	84	82
Female looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	Very /Fairly worried	19	30
	Not very /Not at all worried	81	70
Female is given a housekeeping allowance, male looks after the rest of the money	Very /Fairly worried	(18)	(15)
	Not very /Not at all worried	82	85
Share and manage household finances jointly	Very /Fairly worried	32	26
	Not very /Not at all worried	68	74

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

2.3 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND GOING WITHOUT

A number of previous studies have reported that women are more likely to go without than their male partners and children, particularly when women manage the household income (Goode et. al., Middleton et. al., Vogler). It is suggested that women tend to put the needs of their children and partners before their own needs. Respondents to the PSE survey were asked whether they had gone without the following items because of a lack of money in the past year:

- clothes;
- shoes;
- food;
- heating;
- telephoning friends or family;
- going out;
- visits to the pub;
- a hobby or sport; and
- a holiday.

Respondents were then asked the same question about their partner's consumption of these nine items and activities. In other words, respondents' partners were not asked this question directly. Rather the respondent's view of what their partner goes without was recorded. However, since a mix of male and female respondents were interviewed, it is possible to compare the perceptions of men and women about what their partner goes without. Respondents in couples who answered both parts of this question have been retained in the analysis.

Responses to these questions will be analysed in detail in Section 3. However, this section explores the specific relationship between the household finance management system and going without (Table 2.11; only the two whole wage, male housekeeping and pooling systems have been retained due to small numbers). The number of items respondents said they and/or their partners lacked were added to

give them a total out of nine (see section 3.1.2 for more detail of this method). These were then cross-tabulated so that the number of items a respondent lacked could be matched with the number that they said their partner went without.

Table 2.11 Going Without and Financial Organisation

cell per cent

Method of Financial Organisation Households Use	Number of Essentials Respondents and Partners Going Without	Male Respondent	Female Respondent
Male looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	Both lack none	74	70
	Both lack same number (1 +)	(9) (5)	(27) (3)
	Female lacks more	(14)	0
	Male lacks more		
Female looks after household money except partner's personal spending money	Both lack none	52	46
	Both lack same number (1 +)	25 (1)	28 25
	Female lacks more	22	(1)
	Male lacks more		
Female is given a housekeeping allowance, male looks after the rest of the money	Both lack none	86	70
	Both lack same number (1 +)	(14) 0	(12) (18)
	Female lacks more	0	0
	Male lacks more		
Share and manage household finances jointly	Both lack none	52	50
	Both lack same number (1 +)	24 7	25 23
	Female lacks more	17	(2)
	Male lacks more		

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

Respondents, men or women, are more likely to say that they themselves are lacking items rather than their partner. So, for example, in households where the female looks after the household money except for their partner's personal spending money, approximately one-quarter of both male and female respondents say that they go without more than their partner. Similarly, in households where finances

are meant to be shared and managed jointly, 17 per cent of male respondents and 23 per cent of female respondents feel that they go without more than their partner.

It seems likely that, had it been possible to ask respondents' partners these questions directly and separately, rather than relying on respondents' perceptions, partners would have reported going without more than the respondent thought, particularly if the partner who was not asked the question was in control of the money. An example of this is those households where the female is given a housekeeping allowance. In these households, male respondents felt that neither himself nor his partner were lacking more, whereas 18 per cent of female respondents thought that they were going without more. Although it should be noted that numbers are small, it seems to suggest that those who are not looking after the household finances will not always know how much their partner is going without.

Further, in those households where finances are said to be shared and managed jointly almost one-quarter of respondents, male and female, say that as a couple they go without differing amounts. This leaves open the question as to whether they are truly in a 'joint pool' but, equally, it could be another example of respondents not knowing what their partners feel they go without.

This section has shown that couple households use a variety of methods to organise their finances. The findings are similar to those of other research in terms of the proportions using these methods, and that females are more likely to manage the household finances if their families are in poverty. However, the differences between male and females going without depending on their financial system are not as large as previous evidence has suggested.

3 INTRA-HOUSEHOLD POVERTY

Previous research has emphasised that female partners are more likely to go without items and activities than their male partners. It has been suggested that this is because they are more likely to put the needs of their partner and children before their own (Wilson, 1987; Pahl, 1989; Callender, 1992; and Goode, Callender and Lister, 1998). Middleton et. al., (1997) found that children in particular were protected from the poverty of the household. They found that one half of non-poor children (measured as a lack of items and activities) had parents who were poor (similarly defined).

This section first compares the extent to which men and women partners in the same household go without, the items they go without and the depth of their deprivation. The experiences of poor and non-poor couples are then compared. Differences between parents and non-parents are then described and, finally, whether children are protected from poverty and explanations for this.

3.1 ALL COUPLES

In this first section the deprivation experience of all couples is examined, in particular:

- the extent to which couples differ in what they go without;
- which items and activities partners go without; and
- variations in the depth of their deprivation.

Going without within households

Analysis was undertaken to explore the patterns of going without by men and women in the same household. In the majority of couples neither partner went without each item, in particular food, heating, and telephoning friends and family (Table 3.1). Relatively large proportions of couples both lack items that are more to

do with social engagement, approximately one-quarter of couples lack a holiday and going out, and 18 per cent both lack visits to the pub.

Table 3.1 Proportions of Couples Lacking Items

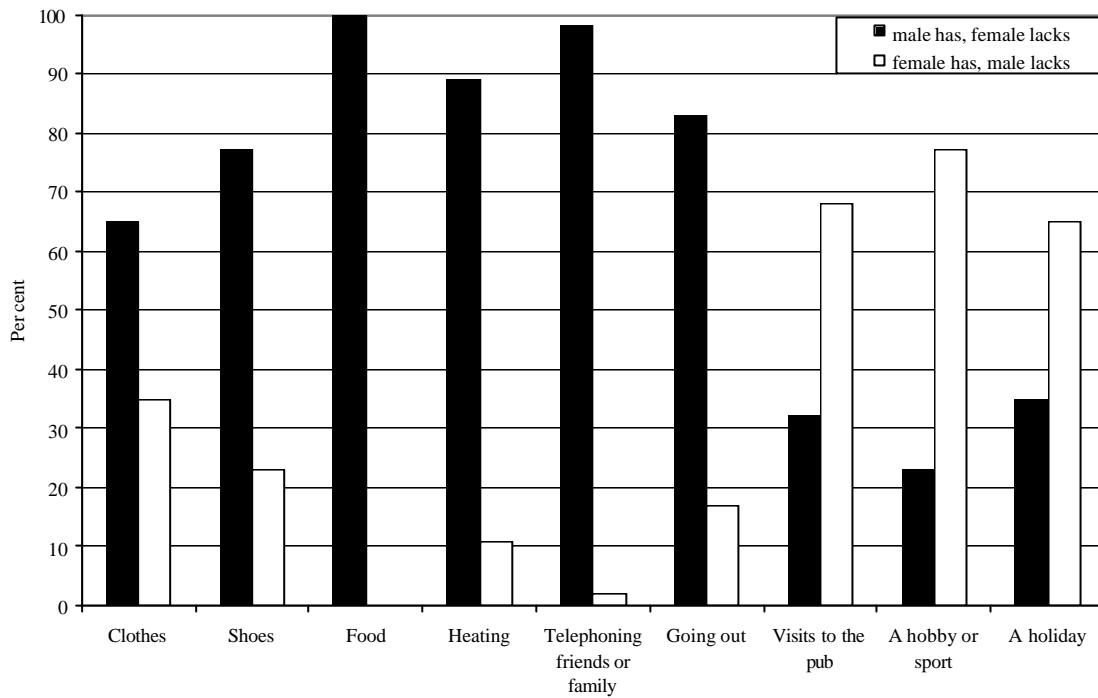
	row per cent		
	% Neither Lacking	Say % Both Lacking	Say % Partners Differ
Clothes	79	15	6
Shoes	87	8	5
Food	98	(1)	(1)
Heating	98	2	(1)
Telephoning friends or family	94	3	(3)
Going out	69	27	5
Visits to the pub	78	18	5
A hobby or sport	87	7	6
A holiday	75	23	(2)

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

In a small percentages of couples there are differences between items that partners said they lack. In approximately one in twenty couples one partner is said to lack clothes, shoes, going out, visits to the pub and hobby or sport, when the other partner does not.

In these couples where differences occur, is it the male or female partner that is most likely to go without? Although numbers are small, it is clear that females are far more likely to go without clothes, shoes, food, heating, telephoning family and friends and going out (Figure 3.1). However, male partners are more likely to say they lack visits to the pub, a hobby or sport or a holiday.

Figure 3.1 Which Partner Goes Without When Couples go Without Differentially?



Depth of deprivation

A deprivation index was created with a score of one added for each item the individual lacks. This assumes, of course, that going without each item is equally important. Logically this is not the case – going without food is more significant than going without visits to the pub and it has already been shown that women are more likely to go without food than men. However, this simplistic approach is a useful tool for beginning to explore the depths of deprivation among men and women.

Cross-tabulating the respondent and partner's scores, a very large majority of couples go without the same number of items, 55 per cent both go without no items, 11 per cent both go without one and 13 per cent go without two or more items. In 19 per cent of couples, the respondent states that they are more disadvantaged than

their partner and the remaining three per cent of respondents state that their partners are more likely to go without (Table 3.2).

Whether it is the male or female partner that is the respondent makes a significant difference to these findings. Female respondents are more likely to state that they go without more than their partners than are male respondents - 21 compared to 17 per cent. However, male respondents are more likely to feel that their female partners go without more than do female respondents about their males partners, five compared to one per cent, although numbers are very small. This suggests that in couples where the depth of deprivation is not equal, it is the female partner that is more likely to go without. The fact that this has been found regardless of the gender of the respondent suggests that some male partners are aware of this unequal distribution.

Table 3.2 Differences Between Amount Respondents and Partners Go Without by Gender

	column per cent		
	Male Respondent*	Female Respondent*	All Respondents
Respondent and partner not lacking any items	57	53	55
Respondent and partner lacking one item	9	12	11
Respondent and partner lacking over two, equal number of items	12	13	13
Partner lacks less items than respondent	17	21	19
Partner lacks more items than respondent	(5)	(1)	(3)

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

* significant differences between male and female respondents; $p < 0.005$

In summary, although in the majority of couples neither partner lacks any of the items, there are significant proportions of couples where both partners go without and where differences occur. Women in couples are more likely to go without food, clothes, shoes and going out, whilst men are more likely to lack visits to the pub, a hobby or sport, and a holiday. It also appears that deprivation is deeper among women than among their male partners.

This picture of the intra-household distribution of resources among all couples, not just those in poverty, is important since, as Pahl and others have shown, because the family as a whole is not in poverty does not necessarily mean that each member of the family will avoid poverty. However, the paper now turns to the distribution of deprivation within income poor households, where going without might be assumed to be greatest.

3.2 COUPLES IN POVERTY

Going without in 'poor' couples

It was mentioned earlier in this paper that other studies have found that female partners are particularly likely to go without if resources are tight. This section investigates whether this is so according to evidence from the PSE survey. For these purposes couples in poverty are defined as those with household incomes of below 50 per cent of median income.

Proportions of couples where neither are lacking are similar to those of all couples for clothes, shoes, food, heating and phone calls. However, poor couples are less likely to both have social items and more likely to both lack these items, particularly a holiday. For items where partners differ, couples in poverty are more likely to

differ than all couples; particularly for going out (almost double the proportion of all couples), but also for clothes and a hobby or sport.

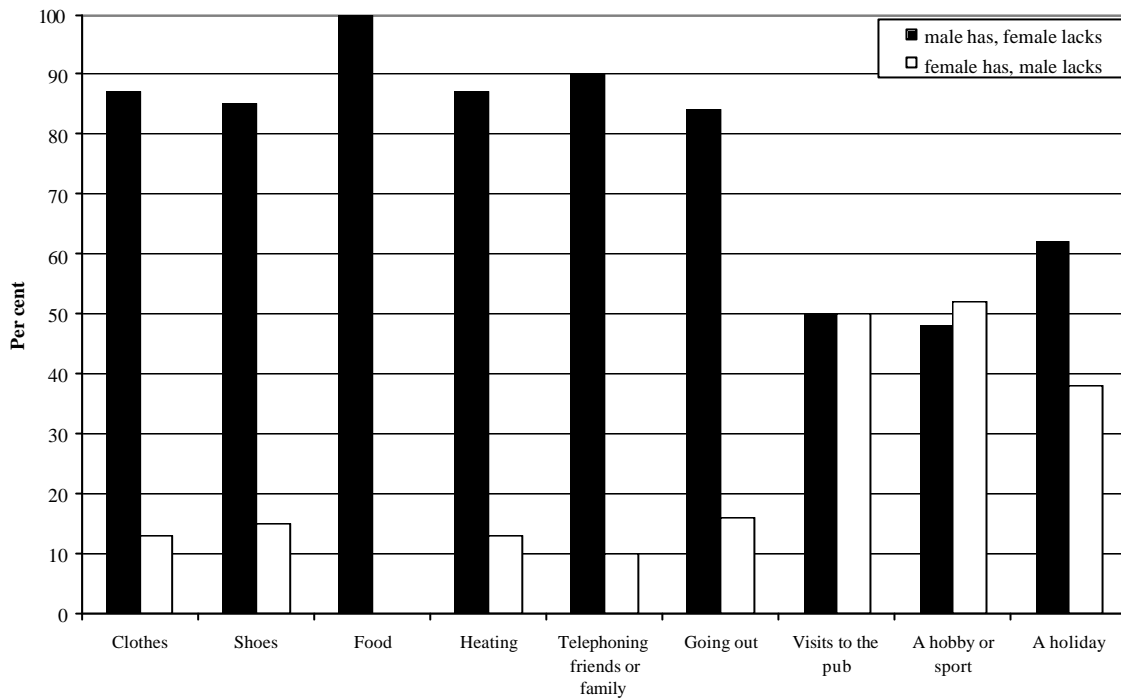
Table 3.3 Proportions of 'Poor' Couples Lacking Items

	row per cent		
	% Neither Lacking	Say % Both Say Lacking	% Partners Differ
Clothes	78	13	(8)
Shoes	86	8	(5)
Food	97	(1)	(2)
Heating	96	(2)	(2)
Telephoning friends or family	92	(6)	(2)
Going out	62	29	(9)
Visits to the pub	73	22	(5)
A hobby or sport	81	10	(9)
A holiday	67	31	(2)

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

Although numbers for this analysis are very small, it appears that women are going without to a greater degree than their partners (84 per cent or greater for clothes, shoes, heating, phone calls, going out and a holiday; Figure 3.2). Men are only more likely to go without having a hobby. Men in poor couples are far less likely than men in all couples to be the partner going without the social items, as well as less likely to be the partner going without clothes, shoes and phone calls. This suggests that even, or particularly, when resources are tight, women are more likely to go without.

Figure 3.2 Which Partner Goes Without When 'Poor' Couples Go Without Differentially?



Depth of deprivation

A deprivation index was created as in the previous section and found that, as for all couples, male and female respondents are both aware that it is the female partners who are going without to a greater extent (Table 3.4). Eleven per cent of male and 27 per cent of female respondents feel that the female is going without more items than the male. Men in poor couples are more likely to think that their partner lacks more than themselves than do all men (11 compared to five per cent).

Table 3.4 Differences Between Amount 'Poor' Respondents and Partners Go Without by Gender

	column per cent		
	Male Respondent	Female Respondent	All Respondents
Respondent and partner not lacking any items	52	46	49
Respondent and partner lacking one item	(9)	(7)	8
Respondent and partner lacking over two, equal number of items	17	(20)	18
Partner lacks less items than respondent	11	27	17
Partner lacks more items than respondent	(11)	(1)	(7)

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

Not surprisingly, couples in poverty are more likely to go without than all couples. The proportion of couples where partners differ as to what they go without is only slightly greater than that of all couples. Of these, women are even more likely to be the partner that goes without. However, their male partners appear to recognise this to a larger degree than in all couples.

3.3 PARENT AND NON-PARENT COUPLES

Section 2.2.5 suggested that couples who are parents are more likely to be necessities poor than couples without children. This section investigates whether parent couples are also more likely to go without the items in this analysis than non-parent couples. The section follows the same pattern as the previous two, looking first at the proportions of parent and non-parent couples (for simplicity referred to as

parents and non-parents in what follows) lacking items, the difference between males and females in these couples and the depth of their deprivation.

Going without for parents and non-parents

Parents are far more likely than non-parents to go without the various items and activities (Table 3.5). They are:

- four times more likely to go without clothes (effecting one-quarter of parents);
- twice as likely to go without shoes, going out, and a holiday (effecting one-third of parents); and
- one and a half times more likely to go without visits to the pub and a hobby or sport.

Partners in parent couples are not only more likely both to go without, they are also more likely to differ as to whether they go without or not than partners in non-parent couples. Although numbers are small, it appears that parent couples are:

- four times more likely to differ about whether they go without telephoning friends or family, or a hobby or sport; and
- twice as likely to differ with respect to going out and visits to the pub.

Table 3.5 Proportions of Parent and Non-parent Couples Lacking Items

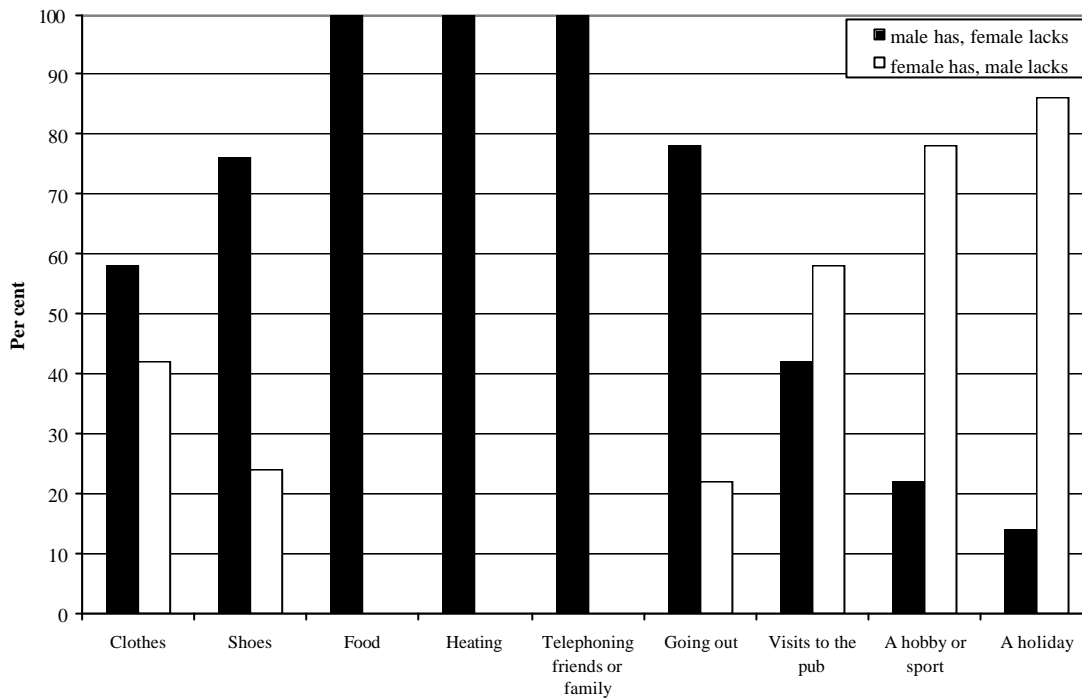
row per cent

	% Neither Say Lacking		% Both Say Lacking		% Partners Differ	
	Parents	Non-parents	Parents	Non-parents	Parents	Non-parents
Clothes	71	87	24	6	(5)	8
Shoes	84	91	10	5	(6)	(4)
Food	97	98	(0)	(1)	(2)	(0)
Heating	98	97	(2)	(2)	(0)	(1)
Telephoning friends or family	92	97	(4)	(3)	(4)	(1)
Going out	56	81	38	16	6	(3)
Visits to the pub	70	84	23	13	7	(3)
A hobby or sport	82	92	9	6	9	(2)
A holiday	67	84	32	14	(2)	2

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

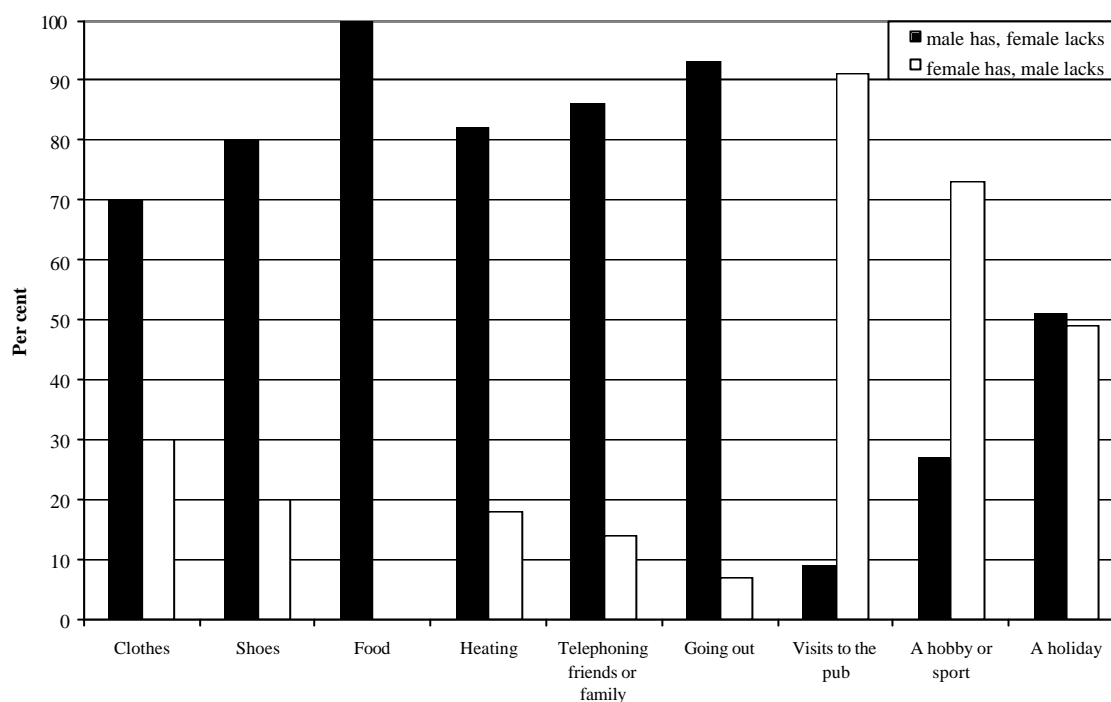
As with all couples and 'poor' couples, it seems that women are more likely to be going without when partners differ (Figure 3.3a). Although numbers are small and the analysis should be treated with caution, the pattern is clear. Females in parent and non-parent couples are more likely to lack clothes, shoes, food, heating, telephoning friends and family and going out, whilst men are more likely to lack visits to the pub, sport or hobby and a holiday.

Figure 3.3a Which Parent Goes Without When Parent Couples Go Without Differentially?



However, there are differences between parents and non-parents (Figure 3.3b). Although female parents are more likely to go without than male parents, where there are differences between couples, male parents are more likely than male non-parents to be the partner to go without clothes, shoes, and, in particular, a holiday. Male non-parents, however, are far more likely to be the partner to go without visits to the pub, telephoning friends and family and heating.

Figure 3.3b Which Non-parent Goes Without When Non-parent Couples Go Without Differentially?



Depth of deprivation

As was shown above, parents are more likely than non-parents to lack items (Table 3.6). It is therefore to be expected, when comparing the simple deprivation index for parents and non-parents, that in just under two-fifths of parent couples neither partner goes without any of the items, compared with 71 per cent of both partners in non-parent couples. Almost twice the proportion of partners in parent couples both lack one or two or more items (13 and 17 per cent) than both partners of non-parent couples (eight and nine per cent).

In both parent and non-parent couples, male and female respondents are more likely to think that they lack more items than their partner. However, the females of both couple types are slightly more likely to feel that they go without to a greater degree than are males (29 per cent of mothers compared to 26 per cent of fathers and twelve compared to nine per cent for non-parents).

Table 3.6 Differences Between Amount Parents and Non-parents Go Without by Gender

	column per cent					
	Male Respondent		Female Respondent		All Respondents	
	Parents	Non-parents	Parents	Non-parents	Parents	Non-parents
Respondent and partner not lacking any items	39	74	39	68	39	71
Respondent and partner lacking one item	13	(5)	(13)	(10)	13	8
Respondent and partner lacking over two, equal number of items	17	3	16	(10)	17	9
Partner lacks less items than respondent	26	(9)	29	12	28	10
Partner lacks more items than respondent	(5)	(5)	(2)	(0)	(3)	(2)

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

Parents are at far greater risk of going without the various items and activities than non-parents, all couples and even all poor couples. However, there are only a few items where the proportions of parent partners differ more than other couples. As with all, and poor, couples, mothers are more likely to go without 'essential' items, whilst fathers are more likely to lack 'social' items. However, these differences are often not as stark as for other couples.

3.4 PARENTS AND CHILDREN

Having looked at the differences between parents and non-parents, this section concentrates on parents and their children. It first compares the proportions of respondents and children in the same household who are going without. The percentages of children going without in households where parents are going without are then described. Thirdly, the depth of parent and child deprivation are examined and, finally, the characteristics and circumstances of household where parents go without and children do not are compared to those where both parents and children go without.

In addition to items for themselves and their partner, respondents were asked which of the following items their child or children had gone without in the past year because of a shortage of money:

- clothes;
- shoes;
- food;
- a hobby or sport;
- a trip or holiday arranged by the school;
- a family holiday; and
- pocket money.

Five of these items are the same as in the adult analysis and these are used in what follows. For simplicity, respondents' levels of deprivation is used to represent parents' levels of deprivation, as there are few couples where parents say that they vary in what they do or do not go without.

Going without within households

In the majority of families neither parent nor child go without the items (Table 3.7). This ranges from 96 per cent not lacking food to 60 per cent not lacking a holiday. In

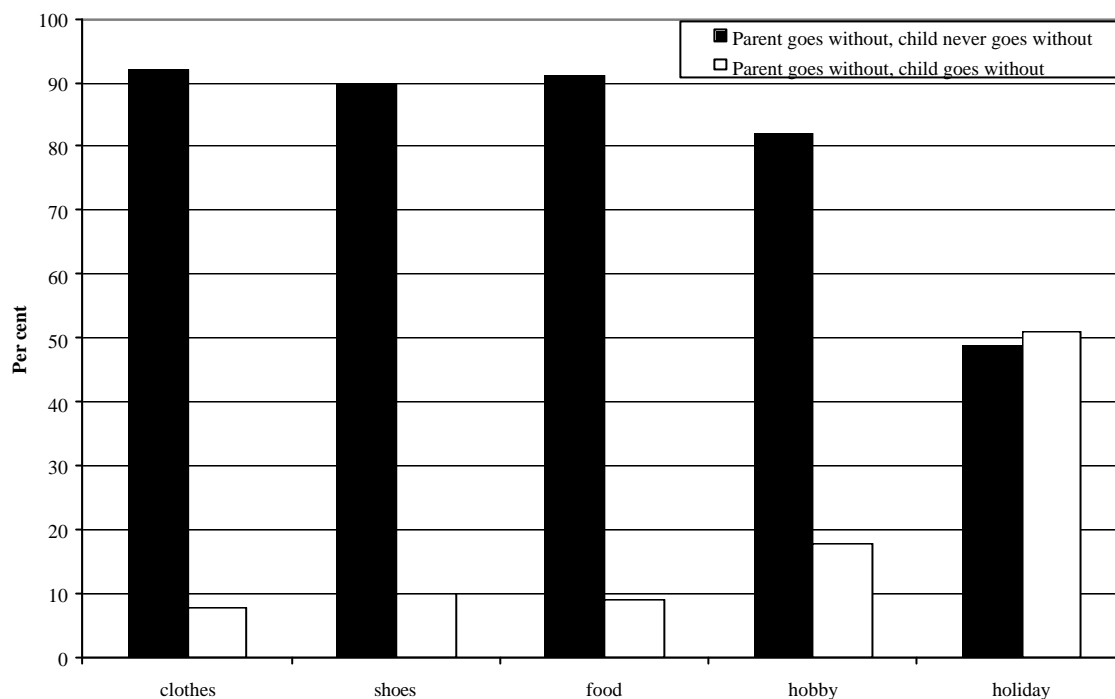
the case of a holiday, almost one in five of both parents and their children go without, compared to only two or three per cent where both lack clothes, shoes and a hobby and less than one per cent both lacking food. In the remaining families where deprivation is said not to be equally distributed between parents and children, it is almost invariably parents rather than their children that go without. So, for example, 30 per cent of parents go without clothes when their children do not, and almost one-fifth go without shoes or a holiday.

Table 3.7 Proportions of Parents and Children Lacking Items

	row per cent			
	% Neither Lacking	% Both Lacking	% Parent Goes Without, Child Does Not	% Child Goes Without Parent Does Not
Clothes	68	(2)	30	(0)
Shoes	80	(2)	18	(0)
Food	96	(0)	4	0
A hobby or sport	80	3	15	(2)
A holiday	60	19	18	(2)

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

It is clear that children are going without to a far lesser extent than their parents. Looking at this in an alternative way, for four of the five items even when their parents are going without essential items, over 80 per cent of children are not (Figure 3.5). Even in the case of a holiday, 51 per cent of children are able to have one, even when their parents go without, presumably with grandparents or other relations.

Figure 3.4 Comparison of Parents and Children Going Without**Depth of deprivation**

The previously described method for creating a deprivation index based on just the five equivalent items was used to create an index for both parents and children. In more than two-fifths of families neither parents or their children lack any of the items. In ten per cent of families both parents and children lack one, and in just two per cent of families both lack two or more (of equal amounts). Of those with differing amounts of deprivation, as would be anticipated, parents are more likely to lack a greater number than their children, occurring in over two-fifths of cases, and in just one per cent of families do children lack a greater number of items than parents.

Table 3.8 Differences between amount parents and children go without by gender**Column per cent**

Items Included in Both Lists	
Respondent and child not lacking any items	45
Respondent and child lacking one item	10
Respondent and child lacking over two, equal number of items	(2)
Child lacks less items than respondent	42
Child lacks more items than respondent	(1)

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

How bad does it get before children go without?

Such findings seem to suggest that there might be something different about households in which parents cannot afford to protect their children from deprivation of these items. Therefore, analysis was undertaken to compare the characteristics, poverty and social exclusion experiences of households where parents went without but children did not, and households where both children and parents went without (Tables 3.9 and 3.10).

Households where parents lack items but children do not are slightly more likely than all parents to be:

- with a respondent aged 25-34;
- couple households;
- white;
- living in local authority or housing association accommodation; and
- a household with no long standing illnesses.

For households where both the parent and child are lacking items, they are approximately twice as likely as all parents to be:

- no worker households;
- of non-white ethnicity;
- in receipt of Income Support or JSA; and

over one and a half times more likely than all parents to be:

- lone parent households; or
- living in local authority or housing association accommodation.

Table 3.9 Comparison Between Characteristics of Households Where Parents and/or Children go Without

	Parent Lacking Items - Children Not	Parent Lacking Items - Children Are	All Parent s
HOUSEHOLD EMPLOYMENT	9	14	9
	12	19	10
1 adult worker	-	-	(0)
1 adult not worker	56	36	56
1 adult retired	18	20	18
2+ adults 2+ working	(5)	11	6
2+ adults 1 working	(1)	(0)	(0)
2+ adults none working			
2+ adults 1+ retired			
AGE	14	(9)	12
	38	39	31
16 - 24	37	37	39
25 - 34	(11)	15	18
35 - 44	-	-	(0)
45 - 64	(0)	-	(0)
65 - 74			
75 +			
FAMILY TYPE	21	35	20
	71	54	65
Lone parent	(8)	11	15
Couple with children			
Other			
Ethnicity			
White	96	86	92
Other	(4)	(14)	8

BENEFIT RECEIPT	82	67	83
No	18	33	17
Yes			
Population size¹			
1 million or more residents	22	29	24
100,000 to 999,999 residents	25	27	25
10,000 to 99,999 residents	23	24	25
1,000 to 9,999 residents	17	13	15
Less than 1000 residents	13	(7)	11
TENURE	(3)	(1)	6
Own outright	63	50	65
Own with a mortgage	28	39	24
LA or HA	7	10	6
Rent privately			
Members of household with a long-standing illness			
None	50	40	43
One	28	37	33
Two or more	22	23	24
	179	115	540
TOTAL			

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

The fact that families in receipt of Income Support of JSA are more likely to be those in which both parents and children go without would suggest that it is simply lack of money which explains why their children are going without.

¹ This variable was created from information collected during the last census. Areas were split into enumeration districts for the census enumerators. A count was then made of the usual resident population within the enumeration districts.

Further analysis confirms this (Table 3.10). Households where parents go without but children do not are, on many measures, more likely to be 'in poverty' or 'socially excluded' than all parents. However, households where both parents and children are going without are at a very much greater risk of poverty and social exclusion either than households where parents go without and children do not, or than all parents. For example, compared to all parents, parents in households where both they and their children go without are:

- three times more likely to have been disconnected from utilities and to lack five or more essential social activities;
- two and a half times more likely to consider themselves currently in poverty 'all of the time';
- twice as likely to feel that they have been in poverty 'often' or 'most of the time' in the past and to have had to cut back on the amount of utilities used; and
- one and a half times more likely to have incomes below 40 per cent of the median and to be necessities deprived.

Therefore, for parents to go without household poverty need not be severe, but for parents to let poverty impact upon their children they have to be suffering very severe poverty indeed.

Table 3.10 Comparison Between Poverty and Social Exclusion Measures of Households Where Parents and/or Children Go Without

	Parent Lacking Items - Children Not	Parent Lacking Item - Children Are	All Parents
Deprived of necessities	53	36	64
No	47	64	36
Yes			
Below 40% median			
No	72	57	69
Yes	28	43	31
Below 50% median			
No	67	50	64
Yes	33	50	36
Below 60% median			
No	62	42	58
Yes	38	58	42
Currently in poverty			
Never	50	41	63
Sometimes	41	35	27
All the time	9	24	10
History of poverty			
Never	53	45	55
Rarely	13	(14)	13
Occasionally	25	21	20
Often /Most of the time	10	20	11
Disconnected			
No	94	75	91
Yes	(6)	25	9
Used less utilities			
No	81	62	84
Yes	19	37	16
Lack necessary activities			
None	28	(14)	45
One	18	(12)	13
Two	15	(10)	10
Three or four	22	19	15
Five or more	17	45	18
Lack public services			
None	52	49	55
One	18	21	22
Two or more	30	30	23
Base (unweighted)	179	115	540

Key: () less than 20 unweighted cases

CONCLUSION

This paper has shown how household financial management strategies vary according to the number of household members in paid employment, ethnicity, marital status and income. There is some evidence to suggest that women are more likely to go without when they are in control of the household money, but that they are more likely to worry about finances if they are not in control.

This has implications for who benefits and tax credits are allocated to within households. Preliminary research for the Government prior to the introduction of the Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC) suggested that couples should have the choice as to which partner received the credit - its predecessor, Family Credit, was paid directly to mothers. Unfortunately this advice was not taken and WFTC is paid through the pay packet in order, the argument goes, to strengthen work incentives.

The findings also provide further supporting evidence for Child Benefit continuing to be paid to mothers directly, and support for the Government's intention to pay the proposed Integrated Child Credit to the main carer when it is introduced. It also raises questions regarding the payment of other benefits to just one partner. Women in households in receipt of benefit are slightly more likely to be in control of the finances, except for partners' personal spending money which, in turn, seems to be related to higher proportions of women going without.

Women go without daily necessities, such as food and clothes, to a greater extent than their male partners who are more likely to lack social items. For couples in poverty these differences are extenuated. Both male and female respondents are aware that female partners go without to a greater extent than males.

The policy implications of such findings are unclear – it is hard to imagine how government could intervene to ensure equal sacrifice within families. The fact that men are more likely to be unable to afford to go out whilst their female partners are unable to eat or clothe themselves properly sounds like a scenario of the 19th century rather than the 21st. It seems inevitable that whenever there is a shortage of family resources, women will bear a disproportionate share of the consequences. The fact that to a very large extent children are not experiencing the same levels of deprivation as their parents highlights this further. Whilst there is poverty, it will be parents and, more particularly, mothers who go without in order to provide for children. The main plank of current anti-poverty policy, employment, will for parents, as highlighted in both the main report and other working papers, not necessarily be the answer. The majority of families where children and parents are deprived are in worker households, and the proportion is larger still when just parents are deprived. The ‘making work pay’ element of the government’s prescription for poverty reduction is equally as important as work of itself.

The paper has also highlighted the need to consider not just the proportions of children in poverty – the incidence of childhood poverty – but the intensity and depth of poverty. It will always be those in the deepest poverty who will find it hardest to escape. This paper has shown that attention to the poorest is vitally important, since parents seem able to protect their children from deprivation to some extent when poverty is present, but not when it is severe. It is vital that government indicators of poverty include measures of poverty depth, rather than just measures of incidence if the success of anti-poverty policies is to be properly evaluated.

The redistribution of resources towards children in the family also has implications for equivalence scales used to weight income to reflect all family types and sizes. Equivalence scales tend to give far less weight to the needs of children, whereas these results clearly suggest that children, far from getting the least of the family’s resources, are provided for when parents are not. Scales such as the OECD’s where

children, defined as 14 or under, are given a weight of 0.3 are likely to be more accurate than the McClements scale (as used in the Government's Households Below Average Statistics series) which uses a range of between 0.09 and 0.36 depending on the child's age. The scale developed for the PSE survey has been even more generous with 0.35 for the first child and 0.3 for all subsequent children. There is also extra weight given for lone parent families. Given these, and other, research findings, the evidence to support changes to equivalence scales is overwhelming.

Perhaps most important, the findings in this paper suggest the need for further attention to be given to this still under-developed area of work. This survey has provided some useful evidence and directions for further work but is inadequate because of small sample sizes and lack of resources to interview men and women in the same household. There is still a lack of evidence about:

- whether men's ideas about personal spending money are different from women's;
- the detail of management and control of household finances;
- the degree of deprivation experienced by men and women in the same household.

A survey to consider solely these issues would be highly desirable, where both partners of a couple and their children were interviewed. This is probably the only way to get a nationally representative picture of how resources are distributed within households, yet with the depth achieved through qualitative work. A useful 'next step' would also be to investigate how couples' financial management strategies and the extent to which they go without change over time, alongside other changes such as losing a job, receiving benefit, having children and vice versa. There is also a great lack of information about how households in other industrialised countries manage their finances with which the British situation could be compared.

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