1. Background

1.1. Introduction

The ‘New Deal’, which forms part of a wider shift from welfare to ‘workfare’ (Peck, 1998), has been the flagship initiative of the Labour Governments first term in office. Its’ largest component, The New Deal for Young People (NDYP) was introduced in January 1998 in 12 pathfinder areas and was rolled out nation-wide in April 1998. The main objectives of the NDYP are to help people aged 16-24 find and retain employment, and to improve their long run employability. The success or otherwise of workfare initiatives in tackling youth unemployment has been examined in a wide range of research, both in the US and increasingly in Europe (Auspos et al 1999). European appraisals have produced mainly positive results, including those already undertaken in Britain, many of which were commissioned by the Employment Service (these are reviewed in Hasluck 2000a, and 2000b).

The NDYP is mandatory for people aged 18-24 who have been unemployed for six months or more. Ultimately there are sanctions for those who do not meet the requirements of the initiative. There are 2 phases in the New Deal. During the first phase, the ‘Gateway’, each participant is allocated a personal adviser who manages their progression through New Deal providing support and advice. The Gateway aims to help those who are ready for work to find a suitable unsubsidised job or to prepare the less ‘job-ready’ young people for New Deal options. The second stage is the placement itself. This consists of four options:

- Six months subsidised employment with a public or private sector employer
- Six months placement with a voluntary organisation.
- Six months placement on an environmental task force.
- Up to 12 months studying towards NVQ level 1 or 2 for those who have not yet achieved this qualification.

1.2 Equality of opportunity?

Some have questioned whether the New Deal for Young People has served ethnic minority communities as well as the white population (e.g. Boddy, 1998, Ogbonna and Noon, 1999). This is a major concern as the government have made it a clear priority to provide equality of opportunity, especially in the light of perceived problems of discrimination in previous training initiatives such as Youth Training (Baqi 1987, De Souza, 1987, Verma and Darby, 1987, Cross and Smith, 1988 Cross et al, 1988). This position is summed up in the Employment Services own guidelines which states that ‘the Government is committed to ensuring that New Deal actively promotes equality of opportunity and outcome for young jobseekers of all ethnic and racial groups’ (Employment Service 1998 p3).
Five objectives are stated, the first two of which are most relevant to this study:

- Objective one: ‘To promote equality of opportunity and outcome for young jobseekers of all ethnic and racial groups’ (Employment Service 1998 p3)

- Objective two: ‘To ensure that the design and future development of the New Deal meets the needs of all young jobseekers, including those from ethnic minorities.’ (Employment Service 1998 p4)

Since these objectives were stated an ethnic minority toolkit has been introduced to improve outcomes for ethnic minority participants and every unit of delivery has been set the target of parity of outcome (Moody 2000). While research commissioned by the Employment Service does include ethnic minority young people in the sample design, there has been no research focussed specifically on ethnic minorities and often sample size does not permit detailed analysis of ethnic minorities (e.g. Bryson, 2000, Bonjour et al, 2001). However evidence of ethnic minority participation can be found in the New Deal Evaluation Database (see Daly and Bentley, 1999).

1.3 Evidence of ethnic differentials

By December 2000 there had been over 570,000 starts on the NDYP and 83,000 (14%) were from ethnic minority communities (with a further 5% of unknown ethnic origin). In August 2000 there were nearly 22,000 ethnic minority young people participating in the New Deal, but this had fallen to 14,000 in December 2000 due to the fall in unemployment. The proportion of ethnic minorities on the New Deal reflects the high levels of unemployment amongst this section of the population. According to the Quarterly Labour Force Survey for Spring 1998-2000 for example, unemployment amongst Pakistani and Bangladeshi people aged 16-24 was 30% compared to 12% for young white people (see Twomey, 2001). Figure 1 shows that the ethnic minority share of New Deal participants has remained stable since the initiative was rolled out nationwide in April 98.

Other research has shown that there are differential patterns of participation on New Deal (Boddy, 1998; Bryson et al, 2000; Bonjour et al, 2001). Monitoring data published in monthly statistical releases show that young people from ethnic minority communities are less likely to find subsidised employment and more likely to do the full-time education and training option (see Figure 2). They are also more likely to leave the New Deal before reaching options and to leave to unknown destinations (see also Moody 2000, O'Donnel et al, 2001). In terms of experiences of New Deal, one national survey found that black and ethnic minority young people did not find the NDYP as useful as their white peers (Bryson et al, 2000).
Figure 1. Ethnic minorities as percentage of all participants

Source: Derived from Statistical First Release, table 1, December 2000.

Figure 2 Immediate destination of those leaving Gateway by ethnic group (to date).

Source: Derived from DFEE December 2000 table 4c

1.4 Measuring employment and employability

Although reducing unemployment through job creation is a major concern of the government, the success or failure of the New Deal in particular areas will
depend largely on the labour market conditions in the locality (McCormick, 1998; Peck, 1998; Holtham et al, 1998, Turok and Webster, 1998). Philpott (1999) argues that long-term macro-economic outcomes cannot yet be assessed due to a lack of evidence whilst short-term outcomes are difficult to separate from overall labour market processes that would have occurred anyway. In recognition of these problems, the government shifted the emphasis from employment to employability (Finn 2000). Philpott (1999) notes, in the long-run ‘the bottom line objective is to make New Dealers more employable and better able to fill job vacancies’. However, the notion of employability itself is contestable. Hillage and Pollard (1999) define employability as the ability to gain initial employment, maintain employment and obtain new employment. For individuals these depend on ‘the knowledge, skills and attitudes they possess, the way they use those assets and present them to employers and the context within which they seek work’ (Hillage and Pollard 1999). Quantitative measure of employability have been adopted in a number of surveys of NDYP participants (e.g. Bryson et al 2000, Hoogvelt and France, 2000)

1.5 A qualitative approach

Overall, the main body of empirical research into New Deal has been based mainly on monitoring statistics or on survey data. The former has focussed on objective outcomes (employment etc) and the latter on more subjective notions satisfaction of participants and improvements in their employability (but have lacked sufficiently large samples for detailed ethnic analyses). We argue that in order to fully understand the impact of the New Deal on young people form minority ethnic communities; it is necessary to understand their individual situations, expectations and experiences. A simple comparison of outcomes tells only part of the story. Indeed we find there are may diverse outcomes and routes through New Deal. This research provides qualitative evidence regarding the wide range of experiences of the New Deal of young people from ethnic minority communities in Oldham in Greater Manchester. It complements the more ‘objective’ measurement of outcomes reported in the numerous ES research reports.

In the DfEE’s guidelines, employability is defined in terms of levels of basic skills and qualifications; previous work experience; personal characteristics including self-esteem and attitudes towards work; and job search focus and activity. Our interviews mainly focus on the way that personal characteristics are affected by participation in the NDYP. In particular how confidence, motivation and attitudes to work may have been affected by various aspects of the NDYP. Objective outcomes such as improvement in basic skills, and job search techniques lend themselves to survey methods (e.g. Hoogvelt and France, 2000, Bryson et al 200, Bonjour et al 2001). Whilst these studies show there is some evidence of ethnic differences in improvements in employability in the New Deal, as Obganna and Noon (1999) argue it is important to place supply side factors in the wider
context of minority ethnic groups structural position within the labour market, which has historically been marked by discrimination and unequal treatment.

2. Objectives

The objectives of this research project were developed with the needs and requirements of specific user groups in mind. There was close collaboration with key organisations including the Employment Service, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and Oldham MBC. Additional funding was obtained from both the CRE and from Oldham MBC through Gladwick SRB. These organisations were also represented on the advisory group (see section 5). The emphasis of the aims and objectives was modified slightly in response to the advice of the advisory panel. In particular we focussed more on participants than providers and on qualitative evidence rather than quantitative (as this was done widely elsewhere). We also expanded our research to look at non-participants.

In relation to the original objectives, we have collected extensive qualitative evidence about ethnic minority experiences of the NDYP and the extent to which it has brought young people form minority ethnic communities back into the labour market (objective 1). The qualitative data also provides much evidence of the complex relationship between prior expectations, experiences and attitudes on an individual’s experience of the New Deal (objective 3). In particular we show how young people from minority ethnic communities often face different barriers and opportunities and this has a bearing on outcomes. Gender differences were also explored, but due to the size of the sample analysis by social class was limited. However, we do show important differences between participants with degrees and those without. The quantitative analysis provides some evidence of the impact on unemployment (objective 2) though we argue that quantitative outcomes do not truly reflect the success or failure of the New Deal.

Objective 4 was to ‘inform the future development and implementation of welfare-to-work and youth training policies which are sensitive to culturally diverse labour market experiences and expectations’. A central aspect of the project was close communication with policy makers at the local and regional level. This included including the Employment Service in Oldham and nationally for whom we made numerous presentations (see section 5). We obtained funding and shared our research findings with Gladwick SRB and the Commission for Racial Equality. The advisory panel provided a forum for discussion of policy implications. We were represented on and made presentations to the Welfare to Work Plus SRB Forum.

Objective five was ‘to explore the role of labour market intervention in facilitating the transition from full time education to economic self-sufficiency for young people’. Some evidence of this was obtained through interviews with young people. However, because of the long-term nature of the transition from
education to economic self-sufficiency it proved difficult to assess this over a two year period.

3. Methods

3.1. The Oldham case study

The research is based primarily on a qualitative longitudinal study of New Deal participants in Oldham in Greater Manchester. Oldham has relatively large Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities and although it suffers from average levels of unemployment, it is not spread equally. According to the 1997 Oldham Labour Force Survey around 15 per cent of all young people, aged 16-24, described themselves as unemployed. The figure for young Pakistanis and Bangladeshis aged 18-24 who were unemployed (17 per cent) was significantly higher than that for whites (14 per cent). In the year April 1999- March 2000 there were 772 starts on New Deal, as defined by those invited for initial interview. Overall 65 per cent of these clients were white, although a further 18 per cent did not disclose their ethnic origin. The remaining 17 per cent were from ethnic minority groups which is lower than the population share (21 per cent) amongst that age group in the borough as a whole.

The New Deal in Oldham is delivered by the Employment Service in partnership with the Oldham New Deal Strategic Taskforce. Localism (through partnerships) is integral to the design of the New Deal and it is important to note that the delivery of the New Deal and the organisation of the in Oldham may not be typical of the country more generally. However, the New Deal has fairly well defined procedures and it is likely that experiences of young black and minority ethnic people in Oldham are likely to be repeated elsewhere. The profile of the client population; the excellent links built by the research team with local policy makers; and the ability to draw on related research in the borough (e.g. Kalra et al, 1999; Dale et al, 1999) all made Oldham an ideal case study of ethnic minority experiences of the NDYP.

3.2 Interviews with young people

Interviewees were initially contacted either when they first became eligible for New Deal, or during either the Gateway or option stages. In addition a number of non-participants were identified from those eligible for the New Deal, but who chose to withdraw from the benefits system (see table 1). Where possible all interviewees were re-interviewed at subsequent stages of the New Deal and after completion or dropping out.

Initial contact with young people on New Deal was made through the Job Centre where the researcher handed out information about the project, and approached young people attending appointments. Subsequent contacts were made by
telephone or prior arrangement. While re-contacting subjects was successful, the numbers leaving New Deal were higher than were anticipated in the original proposal and higher than those forecast by the Employment Service. Therefore a staged approach was adopted whereby participants at the early stages of NDYP were identified and interviewed first, and additional subjects were recruited as the project progressed (see table 1). Figures in bold represent new subjects and figures in normal font represent follow up interviews. For example, thirty young people were interviewed when they reached 5 months unemployed. Seven of these were re-interviewed in the Gateway, and four were followed right through to the options and follow-through. An additional 20 new subjects were contacted whilst on Gateway (and ten of these were followed through to completion) etc.

Table 1. Number of interviews by stage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First point of contact</th>
<th>Stage when interviewed</th>
<th>Pre-Gateway</th>
<th>Gateway</th>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Post-ND</th>
<th>Drop-out</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>30 →</td>
<td>7 →</td>
<td>4 →</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>20 →</td>
<td>12 →</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 →</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: bold = first point of contact

Although the original research proposal focussed on participants, discussion in the Advisory Group suggested that to obtain a fuller understanding of the New Deal, it was important to understand the perspectives of young people who, despite being long term unemployed, do not participate or have dropped-out of New Deal. Further research aided by additional funding from the Commission for Racial Equality examined the reasons for avoidance of NDYP by focusing on the experiences of young people who became eligible for New Deal but, for a variety of reasons, chose to avoid participation.

Overall 75 young people were interviewed compared to the 32 originally proposed. The increase in numbers was also a response to our advisory panel members who argued the need for a wider selection of participant interviewees, reflecting the complex array of pathways taken by young people through the New Deal. This translated into 130 interviews with participants compared to the 88 proposed. These additional interviews were financed partly by the generation of additional funding from Glodwick SRB and the CRE and partly by a reduction in interviews with employers (see below).
Of the 75 interviewees 39 were Pakistani, 24 Bangladeshi and eight from other ethnic groups (mainly Afro-Caribbean). Four were white. Just under half (36) were female (table 2). All interviews were carried out by Saima Alam, the project researcher. Being of a similar age to the client group, and of Pakistani she was able to gain the trust of the participants, which was important to the successful completion of the interviews. All interviews were fully transcribed and analysed using Atlas ti.

Table 2. Characteristics of sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pakistani</th>
<th>Bangladeshi</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3. Interviews with providers

A number of formal and informal interviews were carried out with key New Deal providers in Oldham. Two interviews were carried out with personnel from the Employment Service in Oldham as well as a focus group with personal advisors based in the Oldham Job Centre. This enabled a general discussion of issues and was considered more appropriate than individual interviews as it avoided any discussion of specific clients. For ethical reasons, to avoid discussion of individual clients, interviews were not carried out with employers. However three key providers of subsidised employment places were interviewed about their general experiences of New Deal. Interviews were also carried out with key personnel from the Stanguide (Gateway program providers), Oldham College New Deal Centre (FTET), OPAL (voluntary sector provider) Groundwork (ETF provider) and Oldham Chamber (New Deal co-ordinator). These interviews provided contextual information in which to understand the interviews with young people and enhanced our understanding of the experiences of the young people concerned.

3.4 Quantitative analysis

The qualitative research was supplemented by quantitative information taken mainly from the New Deal Evaluation Database (NDED) compiled by the Employment Service, both nationally and locally (Daly and Bentley, 1999). These illustrate differential outcomes by ethnicity and gender. The Quarterly Labour Force survey was also analysed, although there proved to be insufficient numbers to undertake any detailed micro-level analysis. For this reason most of the quantitative analyses presented below draw on the NDED. Baseline analysis of young people’s attitudes toward the Labour Market was done using the Oldham Labour Force Survey (1997).
4. Results

4.1 Non-participation: quantitative evidence

There are two major categories of NDYP ‘avoiders’. Those who avoid New Deal after becoming eligible but before attending an initial interview. In other words they do not participate in any aspect of the NDYP. In the first two years of the initiative 41,700 or 12% NDYP leavers had left prior to initial interview. The equivalent figure for ethnic minorities was very similar (11%). The second type are those who attend an initial interview but leave before participating in further activities. Overall, minority ethnic young people have similar leaving patterns form the New Deal as their white counterparts (figure 3) though a slightly larger number leave before reaching options (see also Moody, 2000).

Figure 3. Stage of leaving the New Deal

Source: Table 11 specially provided with ethnic breakdown by Employment Service Research Division.

However, ethnic minorities were more likely to leave the New Deal to unknown destinations (see also Hales and Collins, 1999; O'Donnell 2001). According to the ES monitoring information published for December 2000, since the NDYP's inception in 1998, 33% of all eligible participants (including those who do not attend the initial interview) drop-out of the Gateway transfer to other benefits or go on to other or unknown destinations. In other words they opt to leave NDYP rather than embark on an option or move into employment known to the Employment Service. The equivalent figure for the 75,000 ethnic minority young people leaving Gateway is 41%, compared to 31% for whites (Figure 4). The highest proportion is for Pakistanis (45%). The largest proportion of these went to unknown destinations, although a substantial proportion transferred to other
benefits or went to other known destinations. Evidence suggests many of these end up unemployed and claiming benefits (Hales and Collins, 1999).

Figure 4. Leavers to other destinations June 2000

![Leavers to 'other' destinations](image)

Source: Statistical First Release (derived from table 4c)

4.2. Active avoidance: qualitative evidence.

Our interviews show that New Deal avoidance fell into two broad categories: avoidance through employment and avoidance through non-attendance. Avoidance was not simply a reflection of negative attitude towards the labour market. Nor was a lack of motivation and disaffection solely responsible for poor attendance. In reality there were a variety of reasons for avoiding or dropping out of the New Deal. ‘Getting a job to avoid attending the NDYP’ emerged as a dominant theme amongst our sample. Often a young person would take a job that they would not have normally taken in order to avoid participation. Although in these cases employment was achieved, the outcome was often poorly paid or informal work.

A minority of non-participators were deliberate avoiders, who were generally not interested in participation in the formal labour market. Unlike research with a predominantly white sample (Hoogvelt 2000), avoidance of the NDYP did not result in a decline into crime or destitution. For the most disaffected amongst our sample it was apparent that alternative sources of employment and/or family support were sufficient to maintain them financially. Sometimes avoidance occurred because of previous poor experiences of training.
Numerically, of much more significance were those young people who do not participate on New Deal, not because they are actively seeking to avoid it or because they have been spurred to find a job, but because of other external factors, unrelated to New Deal. These include looking after home or family and travelling abroad. This issue also reflected a gender divide, where young women were more likely to have an overall positive or ambivalent attitude towards the NDYP but be in situations where they were less able to participate (especially due to domestic responsibilities).

4.3 Participation

As discussed above there is evidence of different levels of representation on different stages of New Deal both from the NDED (e.g. Moody 2000) and to a lesser extent from surveys of the participants (e.g. Bryson et al, 2000; Bonjour et al, 2001). Analysis of the NDED for December 2000 show ethnic minorities are over represented in FTET and the voluntary sector and relatively under-represented in the employment and ET options (figure 5). Below we examine differential experiences at various stages of the New Deal which help to account for such differences.

Figure 5. The National Figures – December 2000 Participation at each stage by ethnic group

Source: Derived from DfEE December 2000
4.4. The Gateway

4.4.1 Gateway outcomes

Data from the NDED shows that participation and experience of Gateway varies between ethnic groups. Ethnic groups are more likely to leave to unknown destinations and less likely to go into subsidised and unsubsidised employment from the Gateway (Figure 2 above). The national figures for December 1999 – November 2000 indicated there was some difference between minority ethnic groups (45%) and young white people (58%) in their propensity to move into unsubsidised employment from the Gateway (Figure 6). The ratio of ethnic minority young people entering jobs in the year ending November 2000 was therefore 0.78. The equivalent figures for Oldham were 62% for white young people and 57% for ethnic minorities (or a ratio of 0.92).

Figure 6. Proportion of white and ethnic minority New Deal leavers who entered jobs (December 1999 - November 2000).

Source: Employment Service District Office (Oldham)

Figures from Oldham Employment Service also show that ethnic minorities in Oldham are more likely to take part on Gateway programs (e.g. basic skills training). This is despite the fact that ethnic minorities tend to enter the New Deal with higher levels of qualification (Moody, 2000). Our interviews showed that many young people felt Gateway training to be repetitive and a waste of time. Often young people reported doing the same activities day after day. This boredom was particularly evident amongst the better qualified (see section 4.4).

4.4.2 Experiences of gateway

Twenty-seven young people were interviewed during the Gateway stage and more than half (16) of these were subsequently interviewed during the option phase (see table 1). A further twelve New Deal clients interviewed on options were also asked about their reflections on Gateway. Significantly, experiences
of young Asians in Oldham appear to be similar to those of (mainly) white NDYP participants elsewhere (e.g. Legard et al, 1999; Walsh et al, 1999).

Firstly there was a general lack of awareness during Gateway about the New Deal in general, and about specific options and Gateway programmes in particular. To some extent this may have reflected a filtering of information by personal advisers, according to their perceived needs of individual clients. There is, however, no evidence that this filtering was any way a product of discrimination. Indeed none of the sample felt they had experienced any discrimination in the New Deal Gateway, and most felt that they had been allowed to make their own decisions. More generally, there was a highly positive view of the role played by personal advisers. The personalised approach of the New Deal was almost universally welcomed, and it was the strength of the relationship with the personal adviser which appeared to shape the subsequent level of satisfaction with the Gateway amongst clients.

On the whole the interviewees had fairly positive expectations of the New Deal and the priority of the large majority was to find a job. However, most went in with the expectation of being asked to do work experience or on the job training. There was, therefore, widespread approval with the idea that the Gateway might help them find a job. Indeed, following the initial interview, perceptions of the New Deal seemed to become more favourable. In general, job search and key skills training were met with approval, though this depended on the extent to which they were perceived to be necessary.

However, despite the initially positive reaction, retrospective reflections on Gateway of those re-interviewed at later stages were much more negative. For those who found a satisfactory placement many regretted time spent on Gateway and would have preferred to proceed more quickly to the option stage which was seen as more useful. For others who were unsatisfied with their placement the Gateway was also reviewed negatively, reflecting disillusionment over failure to find unsubsidised employment. These opinions were in stark contrast to the initial positive assessment of Gateway participants (see attached paper).

4.5 The options

Figure 5 showed there was differential participation on New Deal options between ethnic groups. Analysis of local data showed similar patterns of participation in Oldham. These patterns need to be understood in relation to the expectations and preferences of young people. In a similar manner to the YTS where non-vocational placements were seen as inferior, our research shows that the NDYP is also perceived as having a hierarchy of options. In particular subsidised employment is seen as the favoured option, and Environmental task force as the last resort. Whilst placement policies under YTS resulted in the concentration of ethnic minority young people in ‘mode b’ non-vocational placements (Cross and Smith, 1987, Cross et al 1988), similarly ethnic minorities
are under-represented on subsidised employment and over represented in the FTET option (see above).

We conducted 28 interviews with young people during their options mostly from Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds. Generally, options were perceived more favourably than the Gateway and those on subsidised employment options were the most satisfied with their placement, even where it may not have been the work that they aspired to. Indeed, it is clear that the value of the subsidised employment was not solely in terms of having a job but also in the key features of employability it engendered. Confidence, experience and job specific skills were the main positive aspects mentioned by our respondents.

One important feature was that subsidised employment places were often organised by the young people themselves. This involved contacting a local employer (often from within the Asian community) and telling them about New Deal. While this was advantageous for the individual and business concerned it cast a bad light on the role of the NDYP, which was basically seen as a way of facilitating cheap (substitute) employment rather than creating new employment.

The FTET presented an opportunity for some young people to follow an educational path and still be eligible for benefit. This was seen as a positive aspect of the NDYP and even though many courses went beyond the period of NDYP assistance, all of our respondents stated that they would continue with the course they had started. For some the NDYP was an incentive to return to education. There was a perception that the FTET was an easier option than the others. However, the discipline of the NDYP maintained through regular attendance and time sheets served to dispel this idea. Indeed, this resulted in a number of drop outs from the FTET option.

The voluntary option was viewed critically by our interviewees. There were complaints about the mundane nature of the tasks being performed and a feeling that inadequate training was being provided. Though this may reflect an overall poor opinion of the voluntary sector placement, there was a higher level of dissatisfaction amongst young people on this option compared to other options. There were only two interviewees on the ETF option, who both had positive experiences and outcomes (though they were not actually involved in any environmental work).

One of the criticisms across all of the options was the lack of contact with personal advisors once the options began, a finding that is consistent with surveys of the wider population (e.g. see Woodfield et al, 2000). One of the central premises of the NDYP is to provide continuous support while on a placement. Largely, the young people were left to fend for themselves and not re-contacted. It was only where the young person was not attending or was failing to complete their obligations that the personal advisor played a major role. This shift in the role of the PA, from supportive to disciplinary, was perceived negatively.
4.6 Employment and employability outcomes

Our research showed that there was a general high level of orientation towards work amongst young people on the NDYP (see also Bryson et al, 2000) though this was related to a number of factors including previous experiences of work and training, potential for alternative employment and gender. However whilst employment outcomes are important, they only tell half the story. Young people follow diverse pathways through the New Deal, and leave to a variety of destinations for a many different reasons. Equating employment and success can therefore be problematic. For example, although normally considered a successful outcome, some young people in our sample felt forced into badly paid or unsuitable employment. In contrast, others left NDYP due to external factors (such as the need to look after home or family), yet gained from the New Deal in terms of employability. It was perhaps due to these complexities that the personalised approach of the New Deal was so universally welcomed.

Furthermore, not all employment was credited to the NDYP. It was noted above that many young people who did the subsidised employment option felt they had obtained (and sustained) employment through there own efforts. Even in those cases where eventual employment followed a voluntary, FTET or ETF option, the role of the NDYP was not seen in an overly positive manner. Rather, young people were concerned to emphasise their own initiative, discipline and willingness to work hard, with the NDYP providing the right opportunity at the right time. Indeed, positive labour market outcome was less common than perceived improvements in employability. The fact of work experience alone was viewed as one of the positive outcomes from participation. The key employability indicators of improved job readiness, increased confidence and improvements to CV through work experience were all mentioned and can be considered positive outcomes in their own right. However, improvements in employability do not necessarily lead to employment. It difficult to assess how successful the NDYP will be in providing long-term secure employment for young people from minority ethnic groups.

Our interviews also revealed an issue that has not attracted much attention in the literature, that of graduate entry into NDYP. Other research has shown that ethnic minority entrants into NDYP tend to be better qualified, than their white counterparts (Moody, 2000). Recent research indicates that for the first two years after completing their degree, Asian graduates are more likely to be unemployed than their white peers (Pathak and Shalini 2000). This group is therefore eligible for the NDYP. Indeed, of those going on to full time employment from our sample, half had degrees. However, these graduates were the least satisfied with the process, arguing that it was not geared to the kind of employment they wanted. Even after securing employment they were all looking for other jobs that might be more suited to their skills and qualifications.
4.7. Conclusions

Our research set out initially to understand whether the NDYP offered a better pathway into employment for ethnic minority young people than the Youth Training Scheme. Quantitative analyses have demonstrated different patterns of participation by ethnicity and survey methods show small differences in attitudes towards the NDYP. Our research has shown that objective outcomes, particularly employment, can be problematic, but there is evidence of positive impacts on employability especially through work experience. Furthermore, there are many complex pathways through the New Deal with individuals having a huge range of needs, barriers and expectations. Given this complexity, it is not altogether surprising that the personalised approach offered by the New Deal is so popular with young people. There are also clear advantages to the individual in terms of the experience offered by the options and the opportunities that the NDYP presents in respect to further education. In these terms the NDYP clearly represents a departure from the YTS and has had a generally positive reception from participants (for contrary viewpoint see Turner and McKinlay, 2000).

However, our study of non-participants emphasises the fact that participants are a self-selected cross section of young unemployed people and that there are major differences between participants and ‘avoiders’. Most notably, the avoiders are much more disaffected with the labour market and more negative about the New Deal. Furthermore, the contrast between the aims of the NDYP with a focus on employability and sustainable jobs, and the needs of young people who participate (decent, well paid employment) may inevitably lead to some disillusionment. For black and ethnic minority young people in towns such as Oldham, which has historically seen racial segregation in the labour market (Kalra 2000), it is not certain that interventions such as the NDYP are sufficient to overcome these barriers to equity in labour market outcome.
5. Activities

5.1 Dissemination

A key aspect of the project has been to feedback research findings to practitioners in key organisations including the Employment Service, the Commission for Racial Equality and Oldham MBC as well as to academic audiences. The following presentations have been made

- CCSR seminar (26 April 1999).
- Regional Studies International Conference, Bilbao, Spain, September 1999 ‘More of the same? The impact of the New Deal Gateway on young people from minority ethnic communities’.
- Leicester University Department of Sociology seminar (10th November 1999)
- Employment Service, North West Regional Seminar Leyland (February 2000) ‘The impact of the New Deal on Young People from ethnuc minority communities’
- SRB Forum meeting (May 10th 2000) ‘Involvement of minority ethnic young people in the New Deal’ (Civic Centre Oldham)
- Employment Service Oldham: Report to ES management team and partners on research findings (Aug 1st 2000)
- Pacific Sociologists Association, San Francisco (March 2001) ‘How new is a New Deal? A qualitative study of the New Deal for Young People on minority ethnic groups in Britain’
- British Sociologists Association Annual Conference (April 2001) ‘How new is a New Deal? A qualitative study of the New Deal for Young People on minority ethnic groups in Britain.’

5.2 Advisory Panel

The project was overseen by an advisory panel consisting of senior representatives with relevant experience from the Employment Service District Office (Oldham and Rochdale), CRE, Oldham Metropolitan District Council and the University of Manchester (see appendix). The Panel met on six occasions and provided invaluable advice, ensuring our research was best tailored to the user community, whilst achieving its academic aims. Most significantly, the advisory panel suggested we incorporate non-participants in the research design, changing the overall emphasis of the research. This was reported in the interim report to the ESRC (Dec 1999).
6. Outputs


A number of further outputs are also planned including summary reports for the Employment Service and the CRE and the following paper to be submitted to *Local Economy* in April 2001.

Fieldhouse, E A; Kalra, VS and Alam, S (forthcoming). ‘How new is a New Deal? A qualitative study of the New Deal for Young People on minority ethnic groups in Oldham’

A large qualitative database of young peoples experiences was created but has not been deposited with Qualidata for ethical reasons. The issues discussed with young people were highly sensitive, sometimes touching on illegal activities. Due to the nature of the sample and the NDYP client base in Oldham, it would not have possible to guarantee anonymity if a dataset had been deposited. Further analysis of these data may be undertaken by special arrangements with the Principal Investigator.

7. Impacts

The research has been received with interest in a range of spheres outside the academic sector. The Commission for Racial Equality funded additional research (£4189) and Glodwick SRB also provided additional funding (£6400). Both received special reports. A number of guest presentations were made to the user community such as the CRE, Oldham MBC, and the Employment Service including their North West Regional Seminar in Leyland in February 2000 (see section 5 activities). Regular feedback has been (and continues to be) given to the Employment Service in Oldham. The ES will receive an executive summary report in April. Key users of the research were represented on the Advisory Panel (see appendix).
8. References


Hasluck, C. 2000b: *The New Deal for Young People, Two Years On*, ESR41, Employment Service Research and Development Branch, Sheffield.


Appendix: Advisory Panel Membership

Chairperson: Jamie Peck (Professor of Geography, University of Wisconsin)
Angela Dale (Director, CCSR, University of Manchester)
Donna Denheim (Equality Action Team Manager, Commission for Racial Equality, Manchester)
Pauline Hardwick (New Deal co-ordinator, Employment Service, Oldham and Rochdale District Office)
Bruce Penhale (Unit Head, Inclusion and Research Unit, Policy Performance and Regeneration Department Oldham MBC)
Sara Todd (SRB Manager, Welfare to Work Plus SRB, Oldham MBC)

Meetings were held at the University of Manchester on:

October 23rd 1998
January 22nd 1999
May 10th 1999
September 22nd 2000
February 4th 2000
April 14th 2000