



Centre for Research in
Education Inclusion
and Diversity



Intersections of disability and social class: Deaf young people's post-school outcomes

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Overview

- Study commissioned by the National Deaf Children's Society
- Aim - to investigate the post-school transitions of young people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing in Scotland
- This paper - particular focus on
 - the intersection between deafness and social class
 - its impact on attainment, educational experiences and post-school outcomes

Context of the research

- The aftermath of the recent economic crisis (e.g., rise in youth unemployment and disability poverty)
- Changes in the nature of the labour market driven by the knowledge economy – overqualified workforce
- UK Government's reform of the welfare system
- Scottish Government's efforts to reform post-school transition policies
- GB equality legislation

Methods

- Analysis of policy and legislation
- Analysis of administrative and survey data
- Interviews with 30 deaf young people aged 18-24
 - School background
 - Post-school transition planning
 - Experiences of post-16 education, training and employment
 - Personal background: identity and social networks

Analytical framework

- Transitions as an interaction between identity, agency and structure (Ecclestone et al., 2010)
- Mixed-methods approach
 - Broad patterns (administrative and survey data)
 - Individual experiences (case studies)
- Intersectional approach to data collection and analysis (Siltanen, 2004)
 - *Inter-categorical analysis*: comparing experiences of people with different socio-demographic characteristics
 - *Intra-categorical analysis*: how individual experiences are shaped by multiple structural dimensions

Weak association between deafness and social class in Scottish schools

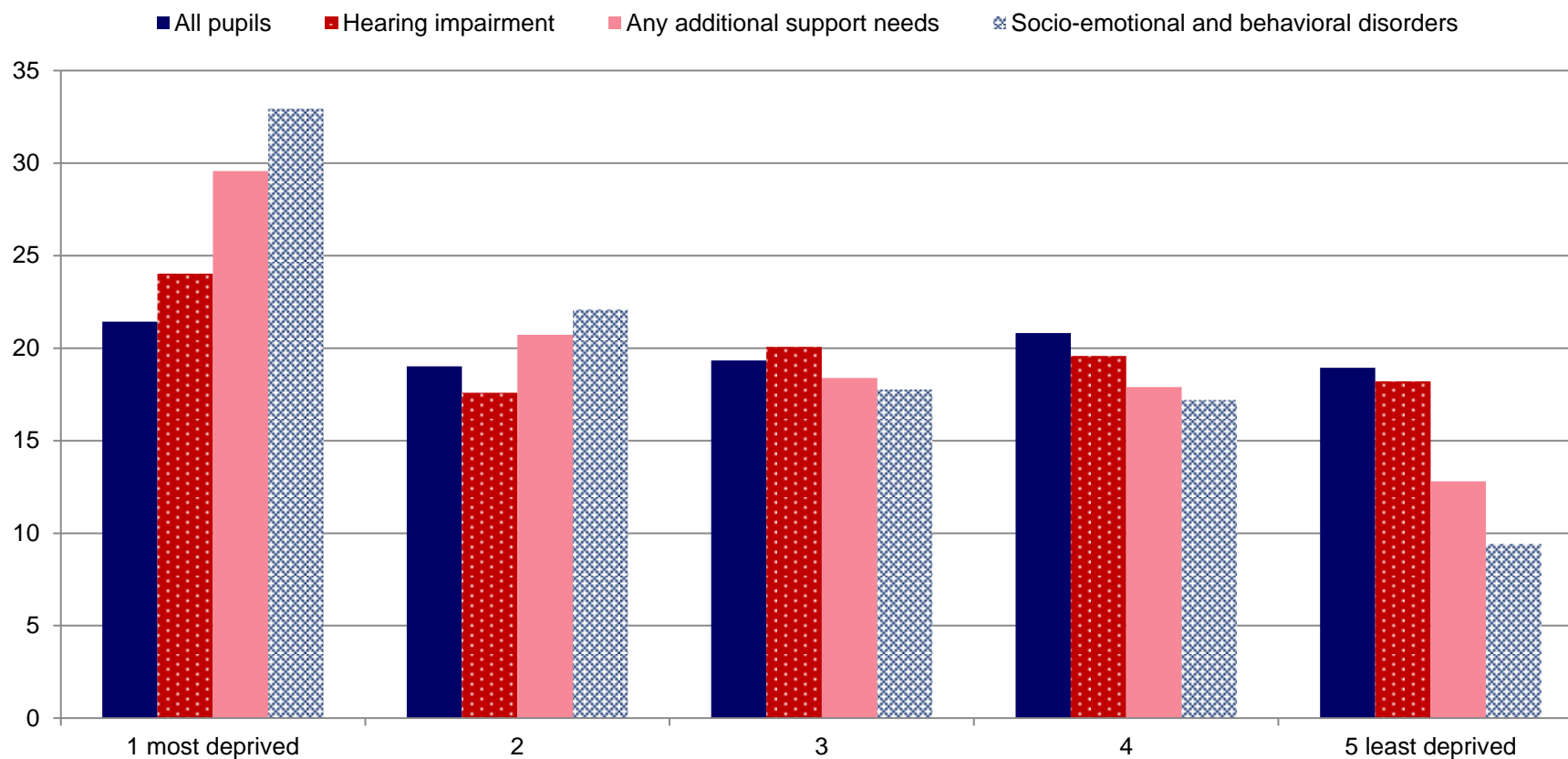


FIGURE 1: PUPILS IN SCOTTISH PUBLICLY-FUNDED SCHOOLS BY CATEGORY OF NEED AND SIMD QUINTILE (%)
Source: *Attainment and Leaver Destinations, Supplementary Data. Scottish Government (2013)*

Association between social class and attainment

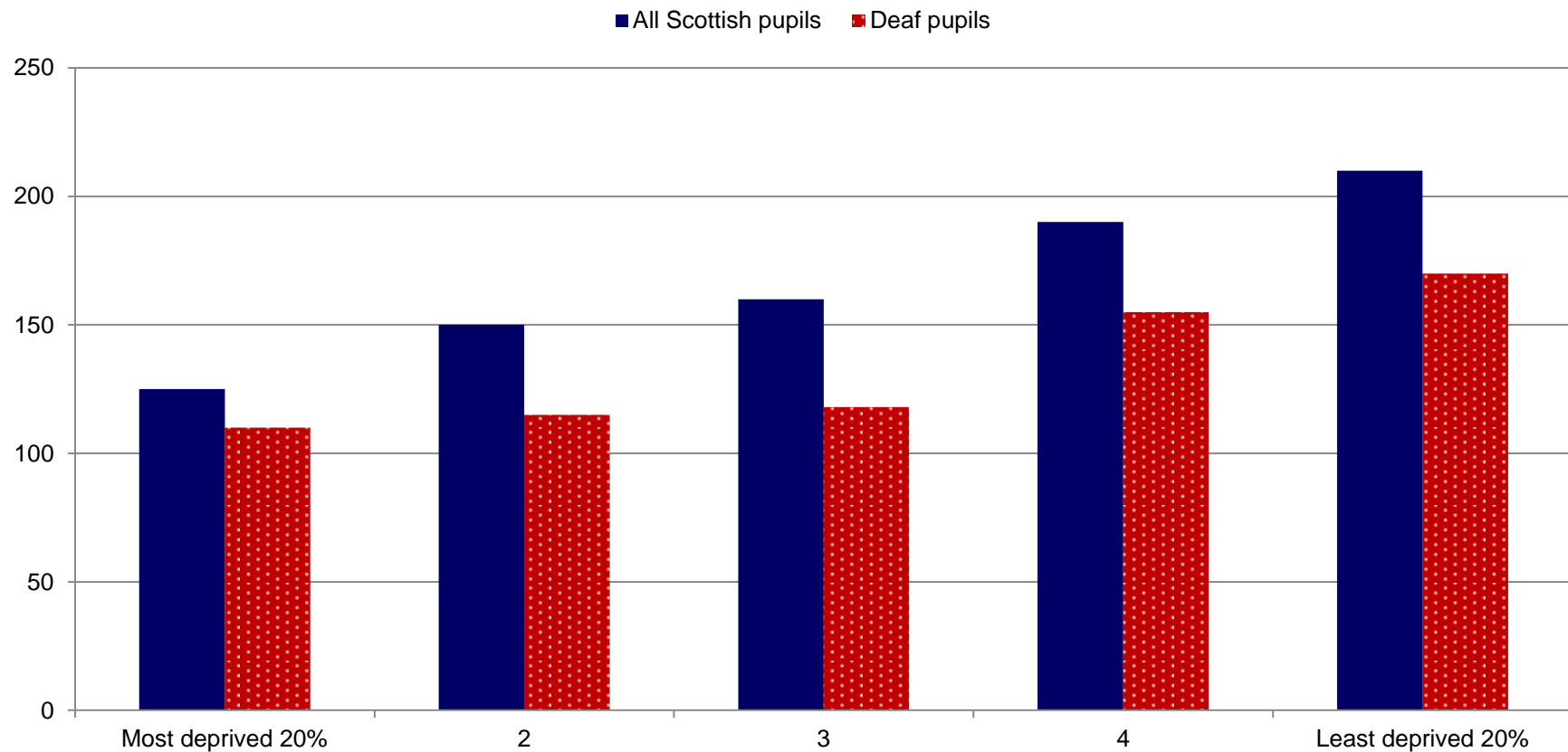


FIGURE 2: MEAN TARIFF SCORES AT THE END OF LOWER SECONDARY BY SIMD QUINTILE, 2004-2010
Source: Arendt, O'Neill, and Marschark (2013)

Deaf young people's post-school outcomes



Deaf school leavers

- have lower qualifications than their non-disabled peers
- are less likely to enter higher education and employment
- are over-represented in further education and unemployment

Deaf Higher Education graduates

- have high employment rates in graduate-level occupations

Deaf people with lower qualifications

- have low employment rates

Differences in outcomes by social class

- Deaf school leavers from socially-deprived areas are more likely to enter further education or be unemployed

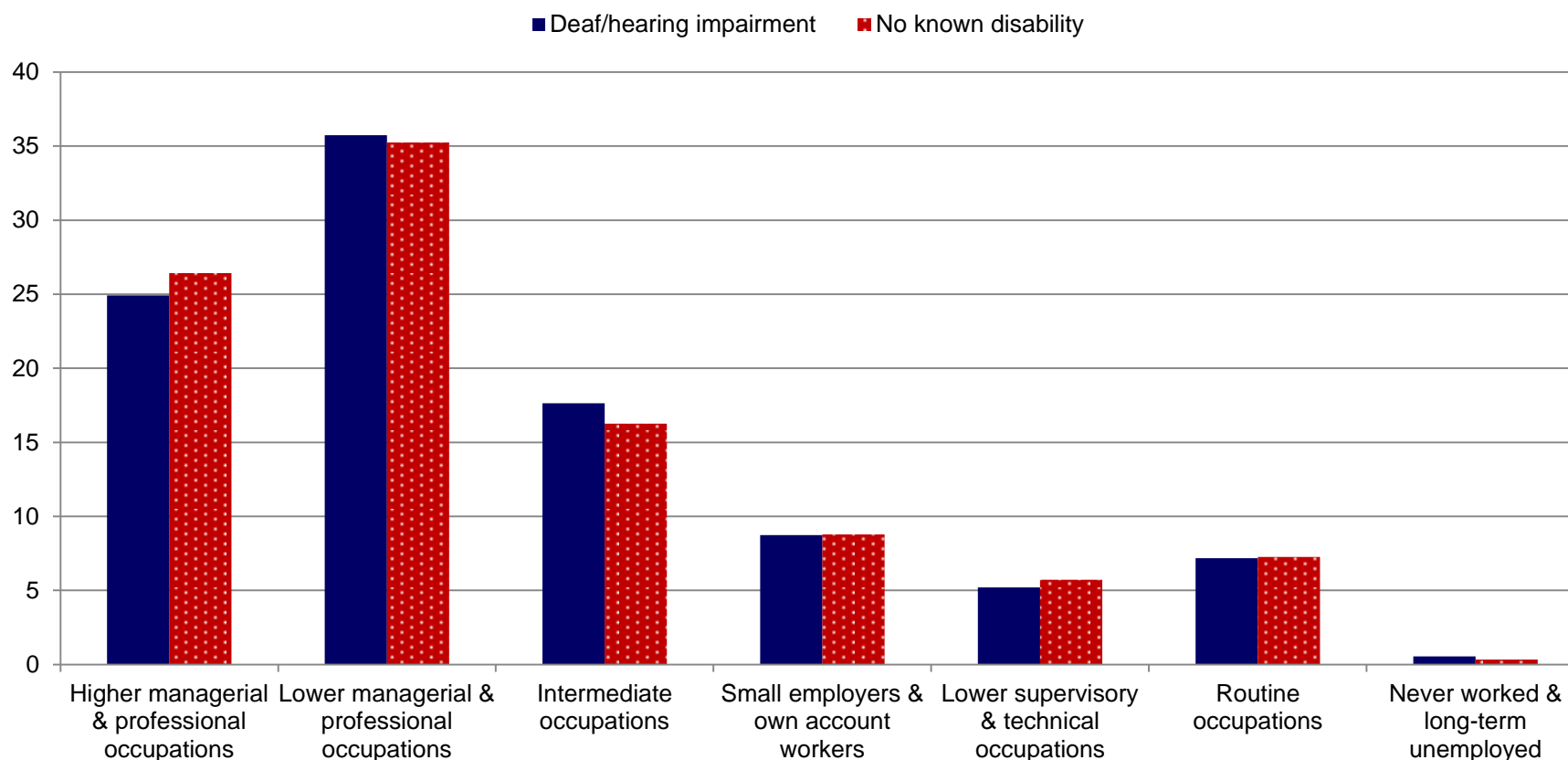
Type of support needs	Most deprived areas in Scotland (SIMD 1 st quintile)		The rest of Scotland (SIMD 2 nd to 5 th quintiles)	
	Further education	Unemployment	Further education	Unemployment
Deaf school leavers	54.8%	19.4%	42.2%	14.7%
School leavers with no additional support needs	33.5%	14.7%	23.2%	7.6%

TABLE 1: SCHOOL LEAVERS IN FURTHER EDUCATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT BY SIMD

Source: Source: Attainment and Leaver Destinations, Supplementary Data. Scottish Government (2013)

Differences in outcomes by social class

- Deaf students in HE are a socially-disadvantaged group



Source: *Students in UK Higher Education Institutions 2011/12*, Higher Education Statistics Agency

Interviews with deaf young people

- Deaf young people from socially-advantaged backgrounds mitigated the negative consequences of deafness
 - Parental support and advocacy power
 - Social networks

- Association between social class and post-school outcomes:
 - School qualifications
 - Post-school destinations
 - Work experience
 - Experiences of discrimination in the labour market
 - Employment rates

Two case studies

- Socially-advantaged background and university trajectory
(Lucy)
- Disadvantaged background and vocational education
(Leah)

Lucy, disability support worker, 23

- Law graduate, pre-1992 university, SIMD 5
- Profound hearing loss, communicates orally
- Mainstream education. Middle class family, strong social capital – parental support in education and on entering the labour market. Initial difficulties at university due to lack of support - parents intervened and were instrumental in ensuring adequate support. After university, found full-time employment through parental professional networks.

Leah, full-time mum, 23

- SVQ 3 in Beauty Therapy, SIMD 1
- Profound hearing loss, British Sign Language user
- Leah – initially educated in school for the deaf but did not thrive – moved to mainstream for secondary education. Left school suddenly before completing final exams and completed beauty therapy course at local college - chosen 'at random'. At time of research, living in peripheral housing estate. Both herself and her partner struggling to find work. Little mention of parental support. Encountered discrimination in recruitment.

Conclusions

- Deaf young people have poorer school and post-school outcomes than their hearing peers
- School qualifications and post-school outcomes were strongly associated with parental socio-economic status
- Those from socially-advantaged backgrounds were more likely to have higher qualifications and good employment outcomes
- Those from less advantaged backgrounds faced a double disadvantage and had poorer outcomes

Thank you!

- Further information about the project can be found at www.creid.ed.ac.uk

- Project outputs include

Fordyce, M., Riddell, S., O'Neill, R., & Weedon, E. (2014). Educational outcomes of young people in Scotland who are deaf or hard of hearing: Intersections of deafness and social class. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. (ahead-of-print) 1-18.

<http://goo.gl/VzHHj>

Fordyce, M., & Riddell, S. (forthcoming 2014). Employment experiences of young people in Scotland who are deaf or hard of hearing: Intersections of deafness and social class. In Chris Grover and Linda Piggott (eds.), *Work, welfare and disabled people: UK and international perspectives*. Bristol: Policy Press.