

Institution: London Metropolitan University
Unit of Assessment: Education
Title of case study: <i>Gender Equality in Work Placements for Young People</i>
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>The recommendations from this EOC funded research have had a demonstrable impact upon policy. Government responded by implementing a national agenda to challenge gender stereotypes and extend choices for young people which included a review of work experience placements. Best Practice Guides produced by EOC and distributed to key stakeholders foreground the study's recommendations. At the local level, EBPs, LSC and schools have reformed practice and piloted a range of initiatives. In response to the recommendations made through this research, the construction of the London 2012 Olympic Games site met targets for greater gender equality – specifically non-traditional placements for women.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The study was one of a series commissioned by EOC to investigate gendered occupational segregation in education, training and employment. The aim of the research was to produce a body of evidence upon which recommendations could be made at the level of policy and practice.</p> <p>The study was a mixed method investigation considering gender (in)equality in work experience placements for Key Stage 4 pupils in England. It included interviews with representatives from local Learning & Skills Councils, managers from Education Business Partnerships, questionnaire surveys of school work experience co-ordinators and year 11 pupils, and in-depth case studies in four schools. The research was commissioned in 2003 and the final report published 2005.</p> <p>The study highlighted the interconnection of gender and social class to the persistence of stereotypical work placements for young people; identified structural issues in respect of the organisation and allocation of work placements which exacerbated stereotypical placements (e.g. self-organised 'own-finds'); stressed the need for policy, data collection and target setting to be revised at various levels (school, LSC, QCA, DfES); recommended that young people undertaking non-traditional placements should be prepared and supported to do so.</p> <p>The research was carried out by an experienced team within IPSE: Dr Becky Francis (Reader & Lead Researcher on the study); Jayne Osgood (Research Fellow & primary researcher – review of literature & qualitative data collection); Dr Jacinta Dalgety (Research Fellow & Quantitative data collection); and Dr Louise Archer (Senior Research Fellow & Consultative Role).</p>
<p>3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Francis, B., Osgood, J., Dalgety, J. and Archer, L (2005). <i>Gender Equality in Work Experience Placements for Young People</i>. Manchester: Equal Opportunities Commission. Osgood, J., Francis, B., Archer, L. & Dalgety, J. (2006). 'Gendered Identities and Work Placement: why don't boys care?' <i>Journal of Education Policy</i>. 21 (3) 305-321. http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02680930600600424 (this paper was part of London Met's Education submission to the last RAE) Equal Opportunities Commission. (2006) <i>'Free to Choose: tackling gender barriers to better jobs'</i>. Manchester: Equal Opportunities Commission. <p>The grant was awarded to the Institute for Policy Studies in Education (IPSE) under the working paper series (No.27) for a study entitled: <i>Gender Equality & Work Experience Placements for Young People</i>. The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) was the awarding body. The project ran for 18 months from 2003-2005 and the grant awarded was £25K. The EOC commended the research as being of outstanding quality and considered it a vitally important contribution to the</p>

evidence-base for tackling gendered segregation in education, training and employment.

The outputs from the research have been cited and applied within various policy outputs including *The Youth Matters Green Paper* and *The House of Commons, Trade & Industry 6th Special Report*, it has also been referred to by MPs in public addresses (Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt MP, then Secretary of State for Trade and Industry; Phil Hope MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Skills, speech to National Work Experience Conference, The Rt Hon Tessa Jowell MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Minister for Women, addressing Women & Work Commission in respect of planning for 2012 Olympics); and it is cited in strategic planning documents that call for changes to work placement/experience practice (e.g. *Gender Equality Duty & Schools Guidance*).

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The study contributed to an evidence-base concerning the persistence of gender inequality in respect of educational, training and employment opportunities available to young people. The EOC drew together findings and recommendations from a series of research studies in a key publication *'Free to Choose: tackling gender barriers to better jobs'*; through on-line resources (www.works4me.org.uk website); and via a high profile and sustained media campaign. All of which directly contributed to the direction and development of policies by Government and other key stakeholders.

The research informed the DfES (2005) *Youth Matters Green Paper*; which in turn has resulted in various strategic and practical developments. The Green Paper focused on improving information, advice and guidance to young people, and demonstrated a policy commitment to delivering comprehensive, impartial advice that challenges rather than perpetuates stereotypes. Quality standards for careers advice were developed to challenge gender stereotyping. Proposals for giving young people work experience placements to help them understand the world of work 'and which can challenge gender stereotypes' were included in the policy document. A recent publication from the EHRC (Hutchinson et al, 2011) makes direct reference to the research and its stated recommendations.

The Department for Local Communities: Government Action Plan 2006 was enacted in April 2007, with a new duty to promote gender equality placed on the public sector including all education institutions and organisations. The cross-Government strategy and action plan draws upon the evidence base provided by the EOC research to provide a framework and delivery arrangements for challenging gender stereotyping/segregation through better provision of education/training services and better public sector employment opportunities to young people.

A further example of the impact of the research is available from SummitSkills (the national Sector Skills Council for the building services and engineering sector) which incorporated recommendations from the EOC research into its Diversity Action Plan and its 5 year strategic plan. It carried out consultation with regional training groups of employers and reported in March 2006 on action to be taken to widen recruitment over the coming years. Employers now offer taster days and non-traditional work experience placements to girls. In 2011 the Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) made teaching materials available on its website: e.g. *'There's no Such Thing as a Boys'/Girl's Job'* which is informed by the EOC research and its recommendations to challenge gender stereotypes in careers education at school level.

Further to policy/strategic impacts, the research has contributed to demonstrable changes in practice. At a local level, for example in 2006 JIVE Yorkshire & Humber piloted a Science Engineering Construction Technology (SECT) /Built Environment work experience programme called 'Wider Horizons' for girls in Years 10 and 11. The programme was run in conjunction with the local Business Education Partnerships and employers in the area. In West Yorkshire, girls were encouraged by taster activities in SECT in Year 9 to find out more about careers in the sector. In South Yorkshire, the programme was offered to girls who selected gender stereotypical placements in business administration to encourage widening future career choices. Related

activities were developed to encourage placements with architects, in electronics companies, housing associations, public and private sector placements. During block placement the girls met and shadowed female role models and investigated gender issues such as pay differentials across sectors.

Finally, the impact of the research is evidenced in the Women & Work Commission's recommendations in respect of The 2012 London Olympics. The WWC recommended that the Skills Alliance Delivery Group, which had an overview of skills activity including that related to the London 2012 Olympic Games, should act upon the recommendations of the EOC research to ensure that reducing the gender segregation of jobs was part of plans for tackling skills shortages in the relevant sectors, such as construction. Government departments and specifically the DTI, the DfES and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) who led on specific aspects of Olympic delivery, including development of procurement principles, built strategies and programmes to address under-representation of women into their Olympic work plans.

Within The London 2012 Olympic Games bid detailed plans for site construction pledged the availability of non-traditional work placements, which was precisely what the EOC funded research recommended. The Olympic Development Authority, the body responsible for overseeing the construction of the Olympic site launched an *Equality Delivery Scheme* (2007-2010) and an *Integrated Equality Scheme* (2009-2012). Within these schemes the ODA stated a legal duty to ensure gender equality through the construction of the Olympic Site; a series of measurable equality targets were integrated into ODA business processes and systematic monitoring and evaluation occurred. The London Development Agency in its *Olympic Legacy* (2011) stated that greater gender equality through the construction of the Olympic Site had been achieved, in respect of the recommendations made through the research: work experience placements were made available including non-traditional placements for women under 'The Women's Project'. The LDA stated that "the approach taken to equality and diversity will be taken through to future projects".

The impact of IPSE's study has been felt at various levels of policy, strategic planning and practice over a prolonged period and it is important to note the continued and current impact. The means by which the London Development Agency (during this assessment period) took up and responded to the evidence base, to which this study contributed a significant part, has had a demonstrable impact on the equality work placement practices taken during the planning and construction of the Olympic Site. Furthermore, the lasting impact, or 'legacy' of the recommendations of the research study has been pledged by the LDA for future projects.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Olympic Delivery Authority (2007). *Equality and Diversity Strategy*. London: ODA.

Olympic Delivery Authority (2007). *Gender Equality Scheme*. London: ODA.

Donaldson, H. (2009). *Closing the Gender Skills Gap: a National Skills Forum report on women, skills and productivity*. London: Policy Connect.

Humber Education Business Partnership (2010). *Good Practice Work Experience Guide for Schools: operational guidelines for secondary schools in East Riding of Yorkshire, Kingston-upon-Hull, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire*. Institute for Education and Business Excellence.

Hutchinson, Rolfe, Moore, Bysse and Bentley (2011). *All things being equal? Equality and diversity in careers education, information, advice and guidance*. London: EHRC.

Olympic Development Agency (2011) *Learning legacy: Lessons learned from the London 2012 Games construction project*. London: ODA.

EHRC (2012) *Equal Choices, Equal Chances: Learning Area 2: Challenging Stereotypes and Discrimination*. www.equalityhumanrights.com/equalchoices/

EHRC (2012) *Equal Choices, Equal Chances: Learning Area 3: There's no Such Thing as a*

Impact case study (REF3b)

Boy's/Girl's Job. www.equalityhumanrights.com/equalchoices/

<http://wnc.equalities.gov.uk/work-of-the-wnc/international-articles/cedaw/163-convention-on-the-elimination-of-all-forms-of-discrimination-against-women-cedaw.html>

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/key-projects/youth-projects/staying-on/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/womens-business-council-report-maximising-womens-contribution-to-future-economic-growth>

A **testimonial** has been provided by the Head of Education, Skills and Employability Policy, Equality and Human Rights Commission. This testimonial attests to the excellence, importance and highly significant impact of the research conducted by IPSE.