



Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK

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**Attitudes to the necessities of life
in Scotland; can a UK poverty
standard be applied in Scotland?**

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Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK

Overview

The Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK Project is funded by the Economic, Science and Research Council (ESRC). The Project is a collaboration between the University of Bristol, University of Glasgow, Heriot Watt University, Open University, Queen's University (Belfast), University of York, the National Centre for Social Research and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. The project commenced in April 2010 and will run for three-and-a-half years.

The primary purpose is to advance the 'state of the art' of the theory and practice of poverty and social exclusion measurement. In order to improve current measurement methodologies, the research will develop and repeat the 1999 Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey. This research will produce information of immediate and direct interest to policy makers, academics and the general public. It will provide a rigorous and detailed independent assessment on progress towards the UK Government's target of eradicating child poverty.

Objectives

This research has three main objectives:

- To improve the measurement of poverty, deprivation, social exclusion and standard of living
- To assess changes in poverty and social exclusion in the UK
- To conduct policy-relevant analyses of poverty and social exclusion

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Contents

Abstract	4
1. Introduction.....	5
2. Poverty, deprivation and the 'necessities of life'	6
3. Exploring national differences	8
4. Data and methods	10
5. Findings.....	14
6. Conclusions and discussion	28
References	30

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Abstract

This paper examines whether the population of Scotland would set a different poverty standard compared with the rest of the UK. It is based on the 'necessities of life' approach – a consensual or democratic measure of relative poverty. The measure is consensual in the sense that majority opinion is used to determine the set of items and activities which are regarded as necessities. The set of necessities is then used to assess individual living standards in order to identify individuals living in poverty. The purpose of this paper is to identify whether public opinions on necessities are the same in Scotland compared with the rest of the UK and hence whether it is appropriate to have a single UK standard. More generally, the paper explores how attitudes to necessities differ north and south of the border, and the possible reasons for this. Data on attitudes were collected through three closely-related sample surveys in 2011 and 2012. The analysis suggests that Scots do not differ in their views about necessities so it is appropriate to use one standard for the whole of the UK. More generally, attitudes in Scotland are very similar to those for the rest of the UK on the great majority of items. Such differences as exist appear to stem from cultural or other forms of contextual difference, rather than from compositional differences.

1. Introduction

This paper stems from work on the *Poverty and Social Exclusion UK (PSE-UK) Survey*. One of the main aims of the survey is to update the consensual measure of relative poverty originally developed by Mack and Lansley (1985). The consensual measure uses an attitudinal survey to identify the items or activities which a majority of the public believes constitute the ‘necessities of life’. These necessities then form the standard for judging whether households or individuals are in poverty or not: people are regarded as being in poverty where they lack a specified number of necessities *and* this lack is due to a lack of resources (notably income). The first aim of this paper is therefore to examine whether views in Scotland on the necessities differ from those in the rest of the UK (RoUK), i.e. whether it is reasonable to have a single poverty standard for the whole of the UK or whether Scotland should have a separate standard. The focus here is on which items are viewed as necessities by the majority of people in each case.

However, the analysis also has a wider relevance, linked to the on-going debates about Scotland’s constitutional future. A referendum on independence will be held on 18 September 2014. Even in the event of a ‘no’ vote, the current constitutional settlement may change with Scotland gaining increasing control over fiscal policy. One central question in these debate is the extent to which a more autonomous Scotland would choose a significantly different social settlement – for example, one which placed a higher emphasis on equality and hence on greater regulation of the labour market or more redistributive taxation or welfare policies. This might include a more generous definition of the social minimum, reflected in a higher minimum wage or higher levels of welfare benefit payments.

Certainly there has been a long-standing and popularly-held view that Scots have a more egalitarian culture (McCrone 2001) although this has persisted despite evidence to the contrary from surveys of political attitudes (Brown et al 1996). At the present time, the Nationalists appear to believe that the UK government’s programme of cuts in welfare expenditure presents an opportunity to increase support for independence ahead of the forthcoming referendum. Their leader, Alex Salmond, used a major speech in January 2013 to outline how *the referendum would be an opportunity to vote for a future where a different welfare system was possible, one “which makes work pay without reducing people to penury and despair”* (Salmond 2013). The second aim of this paper is therefore to examine whether attitudes to necessities reveal more subtle differences between Scotland and the rest of the UK. Here the focus is on the degree of support for each item and for the set of items as a whole: do Scots tend to be more ‘generous’ in their views about whether items should be considered necessities or not? Are there particular items or activities which attract more or less support in Scotland?

Finally, we seek to identify the factors which may explain any differences. One

possibility is that differences between Scotland and the RoUK arise simply because of differences in population mix – a compositional effect. For example, if older people are more likely to see a given item as a necessity, a region with more older people will tend to have higher aggregate support for that item. The alternative possibility is that people with similar characteristics (age, gender or class, for example) have different views in different places – a contextual effect. One source of contextual effects would be cultural difference, arising from historical development, but others might be physical environment (e.g. climate) or geography (e.g. urban-rural settlement patterns). The third aim is therefore to identify the relative contribution of composition and context in explaining any differences in attitudes between Scotland and the RoUK.

2. Poverty, deprivation and the ‘necessities of life’

The PSE-UK Survey provides a measure of relative poverty based on the democratic or consensual approach. Following Townsend’s (1979) pioneering definition of relative poverty and early attempts at measurement, Mack and Lansley (1985) developed the consensual approach. This was further refined in studies by Gordon and Pantazis (1997), Gordon et al (2000) and Hillyard et al (2003). This approach identifies whether individuals are deprived by assessing their living standards against a socially-defined set of minimum requirements or ‘necessities’. Where deprivation arises from lack of income (or lack of resources more generally), people are said to be in poverty. The measure is therefore a direct measure of poverty since it is based on the observation of achieved living standards rather than being an indirect measure based on observation of income or resources alone (Ringen 1988; Gordon 2006). A version of the deprivation measure has been incorporated into the UK’s statutory child poverty target (Child Poverty Act 2010) and into one of the EU’s five headline targets in the *EU 2020* strategy (EU, 2010). Deprivation measures have been incorporated into the UK’s Family Resources Survey, the European Union’s Survey of Income and Living Standards (EU-SILC), and UN definitions and measures of poverty (Rio Group 2006).

The PSE measure is regarded as ‘consensual’ in two senses. First, the set of necessities which forms the deprivation measure is determined by majority public opinion. In an initial attitudinal survey, people are asked to identify items from a long list which they regarded as ‘necessities of life’ – things which everyone should be able to afford and which they should not have to do without. In the PSE-UK Survey, the process of determining the initial long list of potential necessities began with a review of past studies and expert consultations combined with 14 focus groups with a cross section of the public (Fahmy et al 2012). Separate lists cover adult items, adult activities, child

items and child activities. Items are regarded as necessities only where they attract majority support. This set of necessities then goes into a subsequent survey of living standards, where people are asked if they lack each item or do not do each activity and, if so, whether this lack is due to lack of income.¹

Second, the deprivation measure is regarded as consensual because there exists broad agreement across society on the items which should be regarded as necessities. It is seen as a requirement of the methodology that differences in attitudes between population groups are relatively small: “Otherwise, the definition of an unacceptable standard of living just becomes the opinion of one group against another” (Pantazis et al, 2006: p90). Analysis of the 1999 attitudes data confirmed that differences by gender, age, social class, and a range of other characteristics were relatively modest (Pantazis et al 2006). Similar analyses of the 2012 data confirm that this still holds true for the wide range of contrasts examined to date (Patsios et al 2013; Main and Bradshaw 2013).

For a UK-wide measure, the method also requires that differences between nations or regions are modest. In 1999, analyses were limited by the small size of the sample for Scotland (just 165) and comparisons were made only with England (Pantazis et al 2000). Overall, however, they concluded that the two countries were remarkably similar in their views on necessities. For adult items and activities, people living in England saw 35 out of the long list of 54 items as necessities. People living in Scotland saw 34 out of the 54 as necessities, and all of these were in the English set. The one item where the two countries differed was on having a roast joint (or vegetarian equivalent) at least once a week where 58 per cent of the English saw it as a necessity compared with 42 per cent of the Scots. For 25 of the 34 necessities items, the variation in support was less than 5 per cent. Scots were slightly more likely to identify material possessions as necessities, whereas the English were slightly more likely to identify social activities.

With the present PSE-UK Survey, there is the need to repeat this analysis to ensure that it is still appropriate to use the UK standard for analyses in Scotland. The presence of a much larger Scottish sample along with coverage for the whole of the UK also provides an opportunity to address this question with more precision and in greater depth.

¹ A very small number of items which are viewed as necessities by a majority of the public are removed from the measure for technical reasons: namely, where the lack of that item does not correlate with the lack of other items or it is not associated with outcomes such as poor health which are known to be strongly correlated with poverty. See Gordon (2006).

3. Exploring national differences

Measuring 'nation'

When we ask whether there are differences between Scots and the RoUK, at least two different interpretations could be taken of 'Scottish'. One of these would be to examine variations in terms of people's national identity. Although such identities may change over time, we might expect them to capture something about cultural differences stemming from upbringing or the adoption of a particular national outlook, if such differences exist. Several factors make national identity problematic here. First, categories within the UK are not exclusive but overlap: 'British' with 'English', 'Welsh' or 'Scottish', most obviously. People may hold multiple or hybrid identities. Second, national identity in the Scottish case is linked with political identity. People living in Scotland who identify themselves as British rather than Scottish are more likely to be on the right of the political spectrum. For those living in England, no such relationship exists (Curtice and Ormston 2012). Using national identity would therefore tend to bias the 'Scottish' sample to the left politically which may in turn impact on our measure of views about necessities. Third, the current debate about independence may be further skewing declarations. People living in Scotland who are more sceptical about or hostile to independence may be more likely to describe themselves as 'British' as a result. An analysis of attitudes on the basis of national identity could therefore give a misleading picture of the likely future politics of Scotland – unless all those who vote against independence leave in the event that Scotland achieves that status.

The alternative approach to defining 'Scottish' is simply to use country of residence. The main argument for doing so is that this is what matters in a political sense since this is the basis on which elections occur. The future politics of an independent Scotland will be determined very largely by the population living there at present. The paper is therefore based on country of residence.

The basis of a 'Scottish' effect

Contextual effects

One reason we might expect Scots to have different views on necessities would be cultural difference – a particular kind of contextual effect. The argument that Scotland has a distinctive social or political culture is one that has a long history. In general terms, Scots have tended to see themselves as having a more social-democratic or 'left-of-centre' outlook and this view is bolstered by the recent tendency for Scots to return more left-of-centre parties in Westminster elections (McCrone 2001; Mooney and Scott, 2005; Curtice

and Ormston 2011). However, survey evidence on social and political attitudes does not tend to support the view that there are substantial differences there beyond the voting patterns (Brown et al, 1996; SurrIDGE 2003). For example, successive surveys of social attitudes in since 1999 have shown that, in Scotland, there tends to be slightly greater concern over levels of inequality in society and slightly greater support for redistribution but the difference averages about 3 or 4 percentage points and it has not changed in that time (Curtice and Ormston 2012).

Many factors might be cited as possible drivers of a Scottish difference. For example, one commonly mentioned factor would be the rather different religious history of Scotland. Here, the Reformation occurred later and had a more 'Protestant' or 'Calvinist' character (McCrone 2001). The Church of Scotland – the Kirk – is presbyterian, unlike the episcopalian Church of England; it is more democratic and less hierarchical in its governance, for example. Van Oorschott (2006) notes that people who identify as Christian tend to be more solidaristic in outlook than non-religious people, and that Protestants tend to be more solidaristic or supportive of redistributive policies than Catholics. On that basis, we might expect Scots to have more 'progressive' politics on average. On the other hand, present-day Scots are more likely to report themselves as having 'no religion' than their counterparts in England (2001 Census figures) and that will tend to work in the opposite direction.

Other aspects of the Scottish context may lead to differences in interest and hence in attitudes. One feature of debates about poverty in Scotland has been a stronger emphasis on rural poverty than in other parts of the UK. This reflects the greater extent of rural, and particularly remote rural areas (McCrone 2001). We might expect that there would be a greater emphasis on problems of mobility and access, and perhaps greater support for the suggestion that specific items such as car ownership should be seen as a necessity.

Compositional effects

The other basis for differences between countries might be simply compositional effects. For example, previous research suggested that older groups were more likely to view many items as necessities (Pantazis et al 2006). As Scotland has slightly more older people, this will tend to push up support there even in the absence of any cultural differences. Having said this, there is generally little reason to expect large differences to result from compositional differences. For much of the twentieth century, Scotland was notably poorer than the RoUK with higher unemployment levels and lower wages (Devine et al, 2005). More recently, however, these differences have reduced so that, on the eve of the independence referendum, it is probably the region of the UK which is most like the UK average in terms of indicators such as labour market status or household incomes.

Summary and research questions

This paper examines attitudes to the necessities of life in Scotland compared with the RoUK. It addresses three specific questions: whether the residents of Scotland identify the same set of necessities as those in the RoUK, and hence whether it is appropriate to use the same standard to judge poverty in Scotland as elsewhere; more generally, whether Scots tend to express similar attitudes on each item as people in the RoUK; and, related to this, whether any differences observed arise through population composition or through context, including cultural differences.

4. Data and methods

Surveys

Three linked datasets are used in this analysis: a survey of Britain from 2012; a survey of Northern Ireland from 2012; and a survey of Scotland from 2011. All were conducted as part of the PSE-UK Survey and used the same methodology albeit with some minor differences.

The British data were collected through a standalone survey conducted by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) for the PSE-UK Survey between May and August 2012. A multi-stage sampling design was used (NatCen 2013), with postcode sectors as the primary sampling units (PSUs). Postcode sectors were stratified by region, social class and housing tenure. The sample was clustered with multiple addresses sampled within selected sectors. An interview was attempted with a random adult at each address. There were 1447 completed interviews (51 per cent response rate). The Scottish part of this sample is relatively small (111 completed interviews). For cost reasons, it was drawn only from the area south of the Caledonian Canal; we discuss the potential implications of this below.

The Northern Irish data come from a Necessities of Life Module within the June 2012 Northern Irish Omnibus Survey conducted by the Northern Irish Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA 2012). As with the first survey, this was conducted as part of the overall PSE-UK study. This was based on a simple random sample of private addresses, interviewing a random adult at each (550 completed interviews, 53 per cent response rate).

The Scottish data for 2011 were collected from a Necessities of Life Module within a NatCen Omnibus survey conducted between February and April 2011

(NatCen 2012). It employs the same multi-stage sampling design as the British survey of 2012. Like that survey, the sample was drawn only from the area south of the Caledonian Canal. There were 465 completed interviews (54 per cent response rate).

Necessities data

As noted above, an initial long list of potential necessity items was constructed through a process including reviews of previous studies, expert consultations and focus group discussions (Fahmy et al 2012). In all three surveys, views about necessities were captured using a sort card exercise.² Respondents were given a pile of cards with one item or activity on each. Separate piles covered adult items, adult activities, child items and child activities. Respondents were given each pile with the following guidance:

“On these cards are a number of different items which relate to our standard of living. I would like you to indicate the living standards you feel all adults should have in Britain today by placing the cards in the appropriate box. BOX A is for items which you think are necessary – which all adults should be able to afford and which they should not have to do without. BOX B is for items which may be desirable but are not necessary.

Now, I would like you to do the same thing for the adult’s activities on this set of cards – set H....

Now, I would like you to do the same thing for the items on this set of cards, set I, but this time thinking of children....

Now, I would like you to do the same thing for the children’s activities on this set of cards – set J....”

There was no box for ‘Don’t know’ or other responses but such spontaneous responses were recorded separately (as ‘don’t know/unallocated’). Although checks within the survey were intended to ensure that all items were coded to one of the three responses, a small number of responses were simply missing. Both ‘don’t know/unallocated’ and ‘missings’ are excluded from the

² The Northern Irish survey collected data using two different methodologies: a sort card exercise as in the British surveys; and a computer-based self-completion exercise. Respondents were assigned to each at random. There were significant differences in the responses from using these two methods. In general, respondents using the sort card exercise were less likely to indicate that a particular item was a necessity. For comparability with British results, only the data from the sort card exercise is used here.

analyses here.³

Omission of areas north of the Caledonian Canal

One limitation of both Scottish samples is the absence of data from households north of the Caledonian Canal (NoCC). This is a feature of many social surveys, including well-resourced national studies for Government. It reflects the very high costs of sampling in sparsely populated areas of the Highlands and Islands. We can get some idea of the potential scale of any bias by looking at the size and nature of the areas omitted (Table 1). The failure to survey in the NoCC area leads to the omission of 3 per cent of the Scottish population. Across all 'rural' categories, 8 per cent of the population is omitted. The categories most under-represented are the 'remote' areas but, even here, only one fifth of the population is omitted. The potential for this to bias the overall Scottish figures should not be overstated although there remains a concern that issues which are particularly relevant to those living the most remote areas, particularly on many of the Scottish islands, may not be adequately reflected here. In the analyses that follow, we try to highlight areas where there are significant urban-rural differences in attitudes across the UK so that we are aware of the risk that Scottish-RoUK differences may be understated.

Table 1 also shows how the sample in the two Scottish surveys is distributed. This highlights a more worrying aspect of the 2012 data – that it is skewed to large urban centres, and to urban areas more generally. The more rural areas (the lower four categories) make up just 11 per cent of the sample compared with 31 per cent of the population, with all of these coming from the 'accessible towns' category. The 2012 sample does not, therefore, provide a very representative picture of Scotland at least in terms of urban-rural composition. By contrast, the coverage of more rural areas is much better in the 2011 sample; indeed, they appear slightly over-represented there. As the 2011 sample is larger and appears to have a better geographic coverage, the later stages of the paper focus on that data alone.

³ For the British surveys, there was a hard check within the CAPI software so that the surveyor was alerted if an item had not been recorded in one of the three categories. This hard check was inadvertently disabled within the version used in Northern Ireland. This led to rather higher levels of missing data. This has no perceptible impact on the results.

Table 1: Urban-rural distribution of sample

	% of total population (1)	% of category NoCC (1)	% of 2012 sample	% of 2011 sample
Large urban	39%	0%	66%	35%
Other urban	30%	1%	23%	31%
Accessible towns	9%	0%	1%	4%
Remote towns	4%	22%		0%
Accessible rural	12%	3%	8%	20%
Remote rural	7%	22%	2%	10%
All	100%	3%	100%	100%

Source: (1) Authors' analysis. 'All figures based on Datazones with Scottish Government estimates of population in 2009.

Analysis

Each of the three datasets includes a normalised weight to allow for unequal probabilities of selection and non-response. Sample characteristics are adjusted to fit the known distributions for each region or nation in terms of age and gender. In constructing a file for the UK in 2012 (combining the first two surveys), weights were adjusted so the relative contribution of British and NI data reflected relative populations; weights for NI data were significantly reduced given over-sampling there while those for British data were marginally increased. In this paper, when comparing one area with another (e.g. Scotland 2012 or Scotland 2011 with the RoUK 2012), weights are further adjusted so that the total weight for each area reflects the actual number of surveys conducted in each while preserving other relativities. This permits the estimation of the correct confidence intervals.

An important aspect of the sampling process for both British and Scottish surveys is the use of a stratified, clustered random sample. All analyses here allow for the effects of this design on estimates of confidence intervals by using the Complex Survey feature within SPSS. In order that the NI data could be included, it is treated as if it was constructed with a single stratum with each individual in their own cluster.

To test for differences in aggregate views between countries for the first and second research questions, comparisons are made using Relative Risks: the ratio of the probability that someone from Scotland will view a particular item as a necessity to the probability that someone from the RoUK will view it as such (Gordon 2012). We also look at the proportion of items which each individual views as necessities.

To address the third research question on the relative role of composition and context, we use a series of logistic regression models. For this stage, we use only the Scottish data 2011 for reasons noted above, and we compare this with the RoUK in 2012. In each model, one item or activity is the dependent variable with independent variables entered in three stages. The first model shows the simple difference between Scotland and the RoUK (i.e. the odds ratio for people in Scotland viewing an item as a necessity compared with those in RoUK). This is in effect a very similar test to the Relative Risk measures reported in the previous stage. The second model shows the Scottish/RoUK difference after controlling for a range of socio-demographic variables. Controls are included for socio-demographic factors (age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, presence of dependent children, limiting disability) as well as urban-rural location and neighbourhood deprivation. In the third, further controls are included for socio-economic status (educational attainment, housing tenure, employment status, social class based on occupation and income quintile). Incomes in the 2011 survey are uprated to allow for inflation between the two surveys.

Throughout the paper, results are reported as statistically significant where the probability that they would have occurred by chance is less than 1 per cent. This is a stricter test than usually applied (the norm is 5 per cent) but it is appropriate here given the large number of tests being performed.

5. Findings

Definition of necessities

Our first question is whether Scots identify the same set of items as 'necessities of life' and hence whether the same standard can be used to judge poverty in Scotland as in the rest of the UK. The answer is clearly that the same standard can be applied as there is a very high level of agreement between the Scottish respondents and those in other parts of the UK. This is true of both adult and child necessities. Agreement is particularly close when using the larger 2011 sample for Scotland.

Tables 2 to 5 show the proportion viewing each item as a necessity in the UK as a whole (using 2012 data only), the RoUK (2012 data only) and in the two Scottish samples, along with the Relative Risks for the latter compared with the RoUK. The horizontal line in each table divides the items regarded as necessities for the UK as whole from the others. Of the 32 adult items, 20 are considered necessities by the whole of the UK (Table 2). With the 2011 Scottish sample, exactly the same set of items was regarded as necessities.

With the 2012 sample, there was one difference as that sample of Scots did not view 'unexpected expenses of £500' as a necessity. However, the proportion was only just below the 50 per cent threshold and the difference in ratings was not statistically different from the RoUK using the Relative Risk measure. Of the 14 adult social activities, the same five were considered necessities by both Scottish samples as for the RoUK (Table 3).

From the list of 22 child items, respondents in the UK selected 17 as necessities (Table 4). Scots in the 2011 sample chose exactly the same list. In the 2012 sample, Scots identified 15 of these 17 as necessities. The two items that were not viewed as necessities by the 2012 sample of Scots were 'money to save' and 'construction toys' but both close to the 50 per cent threshold and, as previously, the difference in ratings between Scots and the RoUK were not statistically significant. With child activities, seven of the eight were viewed as necessities by the UK sample. The 2012 Scottish sample identified exactly the same list (the '50%' figure for the eighth item is below 50% but rounded up). The 2011 Scottish sample identified all eight as necessities, adding 'friends round once a fortnight' to the UK list (Table 5). Once again, this difference was not statistically significant.

Table 2: Proportions viewing adult items as necessities and relative risks

Card	Label	UK 2012	RoUK 2012	Scot 2012	Scot 2011	RR 2012	RR 2011
A21	Keep home adequately warm	96%	96%	95%	93%	1.00	0.97
A13	Damp-free home	94%	94%	95%	94%	1.01	0.99
A22	Two meals a day	91%	91%	98%	92%	1.08	1.01 *
A03	Replace/repair broken elec. goods	86%	86%	91%	81%	1.06	0.95
A26	Fresh fruit & vegetables every day	83%	83%	78%	82%	0.94	0.98
A08	Washing machine	82%	82%	87%	84%	1.06	1.03
A29	All recommended dental work	82%	82%	78%	84%	0.95	1.03
A09	A warm waterproof coat	79%	79%	82%	81%	1.04	1.02
A16	Telephone (landline or mobile)	76%	76%	82%	74%	1.07	0.97
A19	Meat, fish or equiv. every other day	76%	76%	79%	82%	1.04	1.09 *
A30	Curtains or window blinds	71%	71%	74%	70%	1.04	0.98
A20	Household contents insurance	70%	69%	79%	75%	1.14	1.08
A01	Keep home in decent state of decor	70%	70%	64%	73%	0.91	1.04
A28	Appropriate clothes for job intervws	69%	69%	70%	69%	1.01	1.00
A31	Table and chairs for all the family	64%	65%	58%	61%	0.89	0.95
A23	Pay unexpected expense of £500	56%	56%	45%	57%	0.81	1.01
A05	Two pairs all-weather shoes	53%	53%	62%	59%	1.17	1.12
A06	Regular savings of £20 a month	52%	52%	51%	59%	0.98	1.12
A32	Regular payments into pension	51%	51%	51%	54%	1.00	1.05
A15	Television	51%	51%	51%	53%	1.01	1.04
A12	Presents for friends/family once a yr	46%	47%	39%	47%	0.83	1.01
A10	Replace worn out clothes with new	46%	46%	48%	49%	1.04	1.07
A07	Car	45%	46%	24%	36%	0.52	0.78 *
A04	Money to spend on self each week	42%	42%	39%	48%	0.92	1.14
A18	Internet connection at home	41%	42%	32%	27%	0.77	0.66 *
A17	Home computer	40%	40%	34%	30%	0.84	0.75 *
A14	Mobile phone	40%	41%	31%	31%	0.77	0.77 *
A02	Replace worn out furniture	39%	39%	47%	43%	1.21	1.12
A27	Outfit for social or family occasions	37%	37%	44%	40%	1.18	1.08
A11	Roast joint (or equiv.) once a week	36%	37%	33%	37%	0.91	1.01
A24	Hair done or cut regularly	35%	35%	33%	38%	0.94	1.08
A25	Dishwasher	10%	11%	7%	7%	0.70	0.65

Notes: RR 2012 – Relative Risk (Scotland 2012 vs RoUK 2012); RR 2011 – Relative Risk (Scotland 2011 vs RoUK 2012); '*' – significant at 1 per cent level. Shading highlights disagreement over necessities.

Table 3: Proportions viewing adult activities as necessities and relative risks

Card	Label	UK 2012	RoUK 2012	Scot 2012	Scot 2011	RR 2012	RR 2011
B11	Visit friends/family in hospital etc.	89%	89%	95%	91%	1.07	* 1.02
B05	Celebrations on special occasions	80%	80%	81%	80%	1.01	1.00
B10	Attending weddings, etc.	78%	78%	80%	80%	1.02	1.01
B01	Hobby or leisure activity	70%	69%	80%	73%	1.15	1.05
B14	Sport/exercise activities or classes	55%	55%	67%	60%	1.24	* 1.11
B03	Friends/family round once a month	46%	46%	41%	43%	0.89	0.94
B02	Holiday one week a year	42%	42%	44%	45%	1.05	1.05
B04	Going out socially once a fortnight	34%	34%	32%	31%	0.93	0.89
B12	Attending place of worship	30%	29%	41%	31%	1.42	* 1.05
B08	Visit friends/family 4 times a year	27%	28%	23%	20%	0.83	0.74
B06	Meal out once a month	25%	25%	17%	27%	0.67	1.06
B07	Holidays abroad once a year	18%	18%	14%	19%	0.76	1.04
B09	Going out for drink once a fortnight	17%	17%	15%	14%	0.87	0.81
B13	Going to cinema, etc. once a month	15%	15%	13%	19%	0.89	1.24

Notes: RR 2012 – Relative Risk (Scotland 2012 vs RoUK 2012); RR 2011 – Relative Risk (Scotland 2011 vs RoUK 2012); '*' – significant at 1 per cent level. Shading highlights disagreement over necessities.

Table 4: Proportions viewing children's items as necessities and relative risks

Card	Label	UK 2012	RoUK 2012	Scot 2012	Scot 2011	RR 2012	RR 2011
C07	A warm winter coat	97%	97%	98%	95%	1.01	0.98
C04	Fresh fruit/vegetables once a day	96%	96%	96%	93%	1.01	0.98
C02	New, properly fitting, shoes	93%	93%	93%	91%	1.00	0.98
C01	Three meals a day	93%	93%	92%	91%	0.99	0.98
C09	Garden or outdoor space	93%	93%	84%	89%	0.90	0.96
C08	Books at home	92%	92%	88%	90%	0.96	0.98
C10	Meat, fish or equivalent once a day	90%	90%	87%	90%	0.97	1.00
C11	Suitable place at home to study	89%	89%	89%	88%	1.00	0.98
C12	Indoor games	81%	81%	81%	78%	1.01	0.97
C06	Bedrm for every child 10+ of diff sex	74%	74%	75%	75%	1.01	1.00
C21	Computer/internet for homework	67%	67%	64%	56%	0.96	0.83
C03	Some new, not second-hand clothes	65%	65%	67%	72%	1.02	1.11
C05	Outdoor leisure equipment	58%	58%	61%	59%	1.05	1.03
C13	At least 4 pairs of trousers, etc.	57%	57%	52%	55%	0.92	0.97
C17	Money to save	55%	55%	49%	57%	0.89	1.03
C16	Pocket money	54%	54%	57%	56%	1.06	1.05
C14	Construction toys	53%	54%	48%	53%	0.89	0.98

C15	Bicycle	45%	45%	46%	47%	1.02	1.05
C20	Clothes to fit in with friends	31%	32%	28%	30%	0.89	0.95
C22	Mobile phone for children 11+	26%	26%	29%	25%	1.11	0.95
C19	MP3 player	8%	8%	11%	8%	1.47	1.04
C18	Designer/brand name trainers	6%	6%	7%	6%	1.21	0.97

Notes: RR 2012 – Relative Risk (Scotland 2012 vs RoUK 2012); RR 2011 – Relative Risk (Scotland 2011 vs RoUK 2012); ‘*’ – significant at 1 per cent level. Shading highlights disagreement over necessities.

Table 5: Proportions viewing children’s activities as necessities and relative risks

Card	Label	UK 2012	RoUK 2012	Scot 2012	Scot 2011	RR 2012	RR 2011
D02	Celebrations on special occasions	91%	91%	93%	92%	1.02	1.01
D01	Hobby or leisure activity	88%	88%	90%	91%	1.02	1.03
D05	Toddler/nursery grp once a week	86%	86%	91%	88%	1.06	1.02
D08	Activities e.g. drama, football etc.	74%	74%	77%	80%	1.05	1.09 *
D07	Day trips with family once a month	60%	60%	57%	58%	0.96	0.97
D06	School trip once a term	55%	55%	52%	58%	0.95	1.06
D04	Holiday away from home once a yr	53%	53%	51%	54%	0.97	1.03
D03	Friends round once a fortnight	49%	49%	50%	53%	1.01	1.07

Notes: RR 2012 – Relative Risk (Scotland 2012 vs RoUK 2012); RR 2011 – Relative Risk (Scotland 2011 vs RoUK 2012); ‘*’ – significant at 1 per cent level. Shading highlights disagreement over necessities.

Views on individual items

Our second question is whether Scots tended to rate individual items the same as people in the RoUK – whether they thought them necessities or not. We examine this using the Relative Risk measures from the Tables above to assess the significance of differences and using scatterplots showing the proportion of people in Scotland who view each item as a necessity against the proportion for the RoUK (Figure 1 to 4). Again, the picture which emerges is of a very high level of consistency. As previously, it is noticeable that there is closer agreement between the larger 2011 Scottish sample and the RoUK sample as we would expect; the greater variation between the 2012 Scottish sample and the RoUK sample reflects the smaller sample size for the former. For each year, we test differences for all 76 items or activities. With a 1 per cent threshold for significance testing, we would expect to see one or perhaps two items identified as significantly different in each year. In practice, we observe 5 significant differences in 2012 and 6 in 2011. However, the absolute

scale of the differences remains small and the direction of the difference is not consistent.

Of the 32 adult items, there were six where the proportion of Scots viewing them as a necessity was significantly different to the RoUK on either 2012 or 2011 samples (Table 2, Figures 1 and 2). There were no items where the differences were significant in both samples. Two of these differences were for items regarded as necessities by the UK as a whole ('two meals' in 2012, and 'meat/fish/vegetarian equivalent' in 2011) and, in both cases, there was slightly greater support in Scotland. The other four differences were for items not regarded as necessities by the UK as a whole and, for all of these, Scots tended to give lower support than their counterparts in the RoUK. All are 'advanced consumer goods' of some kind: car in 2012, and internet access, computer, and mobile phone in 2011. At the margin, then, there is a suggestion that Scots are slightly more likely to emphasise more basic food items and less likely to support more advanced technology but the general picture is one of similarity as the Figures emphasise.

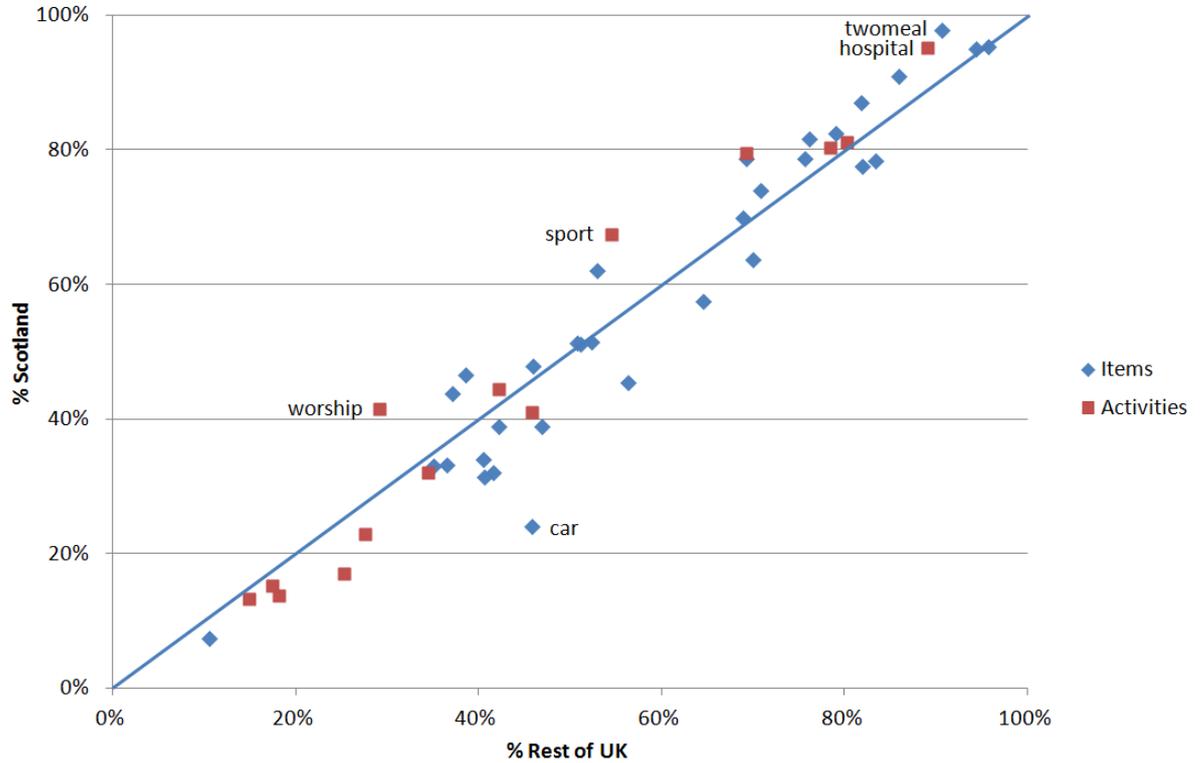
Views on car ownership are particularly interesting given debates about rural poverty in Scotland. Both Scottish samples give it less support than their UK counterparts. The gap is 22 percentage points in 2012 but that sample suffers from a clear urban bias as noted above. Assuming people in rural areas are more inclined to see a car as a necessity, that might explain some of the difference recorded there. The same cannot be said of the 2011 sample where support for cars as necessities remains substantially lower in Scotland.

On adult activities, differences are again minor and all occur only with the 2012 sample (Table 3, Figures 1 and 2). For the five activities viewed as necessities, the 2012 Scottish sample differs on two, with higher levels of support for 'visiting friends/family in hospital' and 'taking part in sport/exercise'. This emphasis on sport/leisure activities is interesting given the Scottish populations' reputation for a more sedentary lifestyle with around 60 per cent of over 16s failing to meet the minimum recommended level of physical exercise (Scottish Health Survey 2010). For the remaining nine activities which are not necessities, the Scottish sample differs on just one: greater support for 'attending a place of worship' being a necessity. The greater support for organised religion in Scotland is unusual as, on one measure at least, it is a more secular part of the UK as already noted.

Turning to the child items and activities (Tables 4 and 5, Figures 3 and 4), difference are even more muted. Of the 22 child items, the only difference is with 'computer and internet for homework' which attracts less support in Scotland. This difference ties in with what we saw in the adult item responses, with the Scots expressing lower support for several of the items which were advanced consumer goods including home computer and home internet connection. With child activities, there is one significant difference, with the 2011 Scottish sample giving a higher rating to 'activities' or clubs for children. Here there is perhaps a parallel with the greater support given to adults to

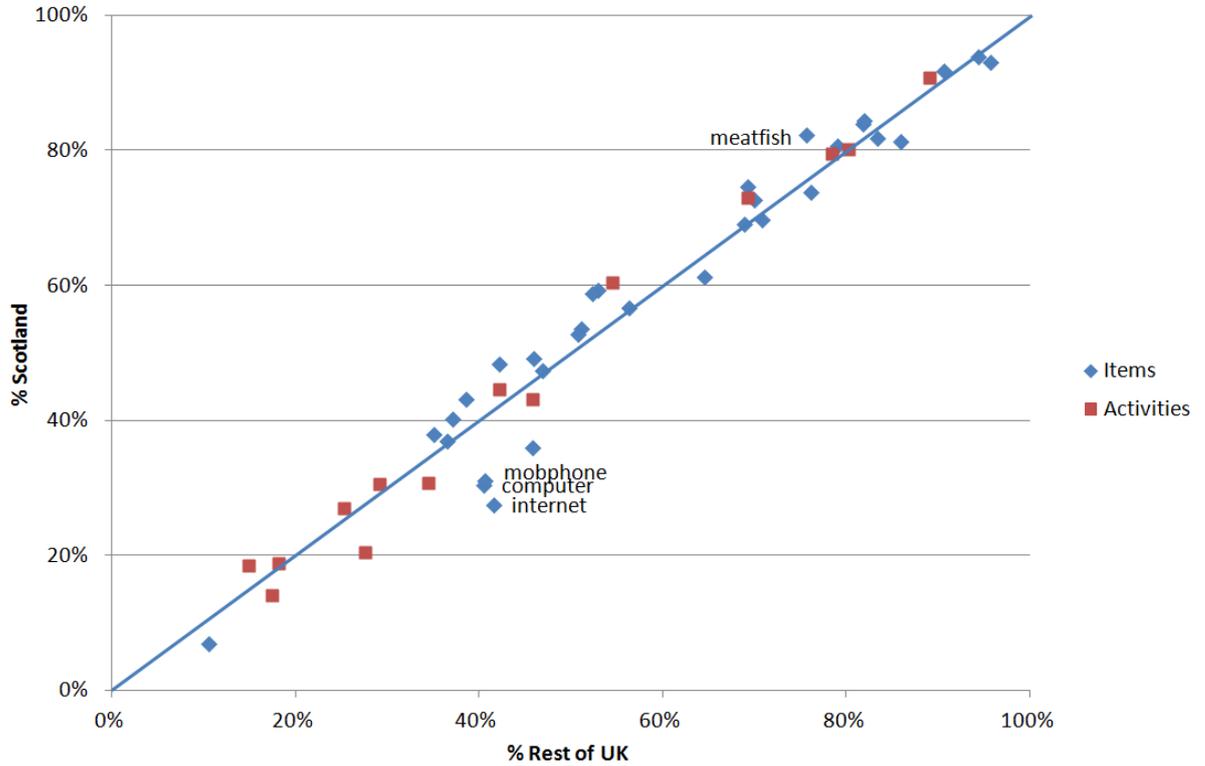
have access to sports or exercise activities.

Figure 1: Adult items and activities – Scotland 2012 vs RoUK



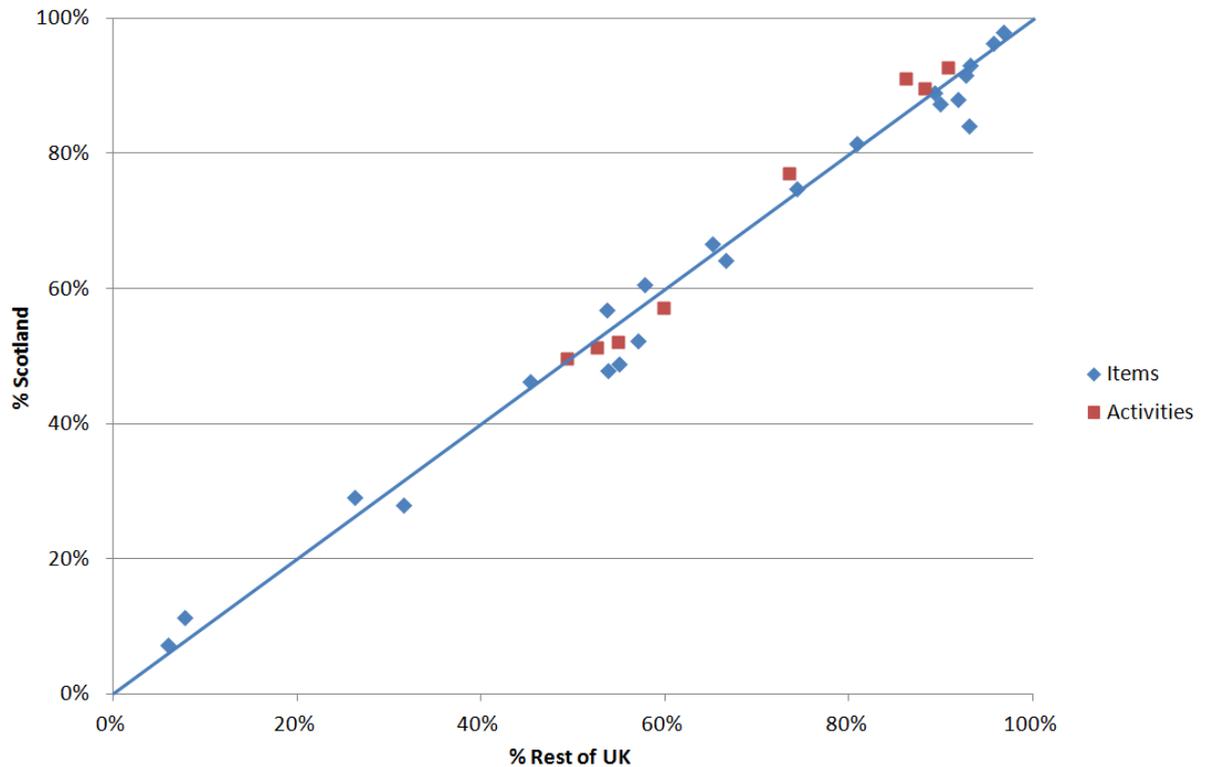
Note: items labelled where RR shows significant difference at 1 per cent level.

Figure 2: Adult items and activities – Scotland 2011 vs RoUK



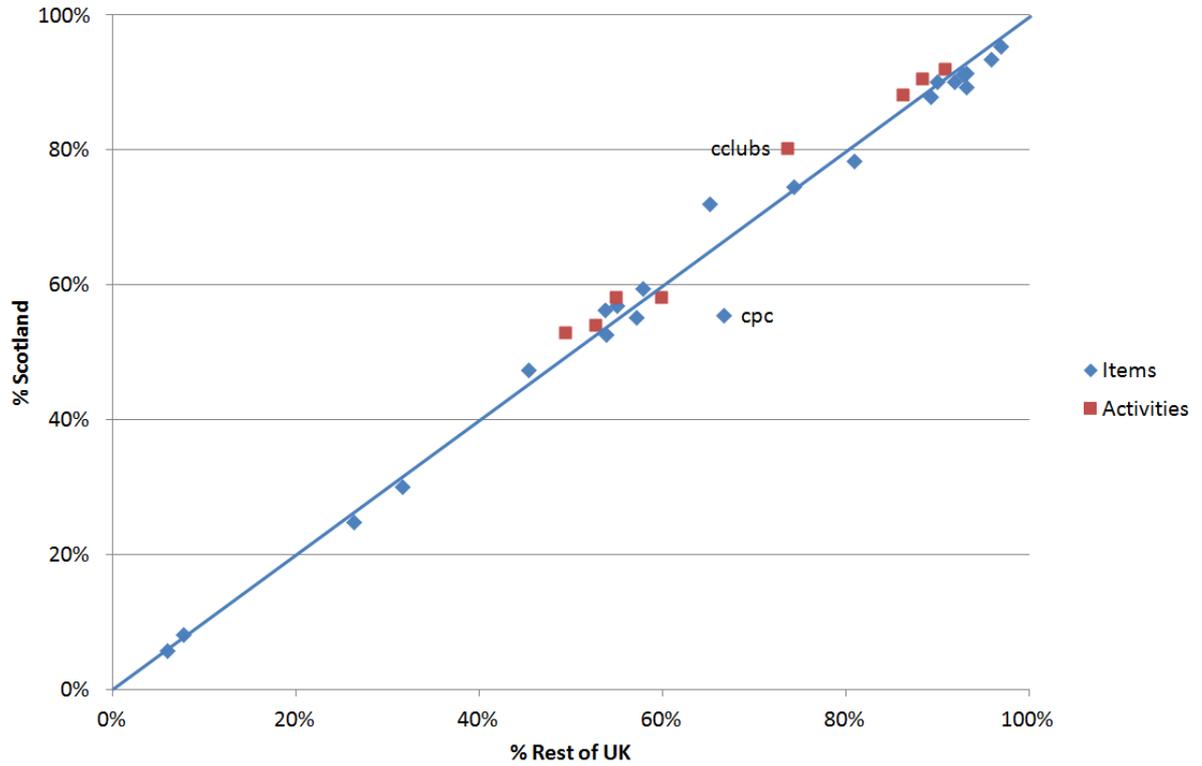
Note: items labelled where RR shows significant difference at 1 per cent level.

Figure 3: Child items and activities – Scotland 2012 vs RoUK



Note: items labelled where RR shows significant difference at 1 per cent level.

Figure 4: Child items and activities – Scotland 2011 vs RoUK



Note: items labelled where RR shows significant difference at 1 per cent level.

One way of summarising these differences is to look at the total number of items regarded as necessities by each individual, and whether this varies between Scotland and the RoUK (Table 6). This confirms the overall impression from the detailed tables above. Across all 76 items and activities, people in the RoUK view 45 as necessities on average, while those in Scotland view 44 as necessities. This difference is not statistically or substantively significant.

Table 6: Number of items viewed as necessities – Scotland vs RoUK

Areas	Estimate	Standard Error	99% Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper
Scotland 2011	43.9	.7	42.2	45.6
Scotland 2012	44.4	.9	42.1	46.7
Rest of UK	44.8	.3	44.0	45.7

Composition versus context

In this stage, the aim is to explore whether differences observed above reflect compositional or contextual factors. The differences between views in Scotland are compared with those in the RoUK before and after controlling for compositional factors (Tables 7 to 10). Model 1 in each table shows the difference between the 2011 Scottish sample and the RoUK sample without any other controls. Effectively these tables are very similar to the previous set, except here the difference is measured using Odds Ratios (ORs) rather than Relative Risks (RRs). Not surprisingly, these models produce very similar results to the RRs reported above. One adult item that was seen as significantly different using RRs ('meat/fish or equivalent every other day') is not seen as such using ORs and one adult activity that was not significant using RRs is significant using ORs ('visit friends/family 4 times a year'). The other 74 tests gave the same result.

Overall, when controlling for a range of socio-demographic variables in Models 2 and 3 of each table, the differences between Scottish views and those in the RoUK remain quite consistent. Given the large number of controls included, the absence of change suggests that such differences as exist are not compositional, but contextual. Across all 76 items or activities, only one shows a change in the significance of the Scottish difference between Model 1 remain in Model 3: car. Once compositional factors are taken into account, Scots in the 2011 sample are significantly less likely to view a car as a necessity; the 2012 Scottish sample showed the same difference. People who

live in large cities are much less likely to view a car as a necessity as expected. People with higher educational qualifications are also less likely to see it as a necessity, while people who are married or cohabiting are more likely to see it as such. Once the effect of these differences has been taken into account, the difference between Scots and those in the RoUK becomes significant.

Table 7: Logistic regression models – adult items

Var	Label	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
		OR	Sig	OR	Sig	OR	Sig
heating	Keep home adequately warm	0.60		0.62		0.64	
nodamp	Damp-free home	0.90		0.81		0.81	
twomeal	Two meals a day	1.16		1.18		1.14	
elec	Replace/repair broken elec. goods	0.71		0.74		0.69	
vegfruit	Fresh fruit & vegetables every day	0.89		0.86		0.81	
washing	Washing machine	1.16		1.13		1.11	
dental	All recommended dental work	1.19		1.15		1.27	
warmcoat	A warm waterproof coat	1.11		1.03		1.00	
phone	Telephone (landline or mobile)	0.88		0.91		0.88	
meatfish	Meat, fish or equiv. every other day	1.49		1.45		1.54	
curtains	Curtains or window blinds	0.94		0.95		0.94	
insurance	Household contents insurance	1.30		1.19		1.29	
decorate	Keep home in decent state of decor	1.14		1.22		1.40	
jobfrock	Appropriate clothes for job intervws	1.01		0.97		0.90	
table	Table and chairs for all the family	0.87		0.86		0.81	
unexcost	Pay unexpected expense of £500	1.01		1.00		1.10	
shoes	Two pairs all-weather shoes	1.29		1.32		1.29	
savings	Regular savings of £20 a month	1.30		1.36		1.28	
pension	Regular payments into pension	1.10		1.06		1.04	
tv	Television	1.08		1.19		1.27	
presents	Presents for friends/family once a yr	1.02		1.07		1.16	
clothes	Replace worn out clothes with new	1.13		1.19		1.20	
car	Car	0.66		0.59	*	0.60	*
money	Money to spend on self each week	1.28		1.27		1.29	
internet	Internet connection at home	0.53	*	0.56	*	0.53	*
computer	Home computer	0.64	*	0.68	*	0.66	*
mobphon	Mobile phone	0.66	*	0.72		0.61	*
e	Replace worn out furniture	1.21		1.26		1.37	
furnit	Outfit for social or family occasions	1.14		1.19		1.17	
poshfrock	Roast joint (or equiv.) once a week	1.01		1.04		1.00	
roast	Hair done or cut regularly	1.13		1.09		1.17	
haircut	Dishwasher	0.62		0.65		0.50	
dishwash							

Notes: Model 1 – Scotland dummy only; Model 2 – add socio-demographic and location controls; Model 3 – add socio-economic controls. See text for details. ‘*’ – significant at 1 per cent level.

Table 8: Logistic regression models – adult activities

		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
		OR	Sig	OR	Sig	OR	Sig
hospital	Visit friends/family in hospital etc.	1.21		1.26		1.30	
celebrat	Celebrations on special occasions	0.99		1.01		0.98	
wedding	Attending weddings, etc.	1.07		1.03		1.00	
hobby	Hobby or leisure activity	1.20		1.13		1.25	
sport	Sport/exercise activities or classes	1.27		1.21		1.38	
<hr/>							
mealfam	Friends/family round once a month	0.89		0.96		1.08	
holiday	Holiday one week a year	1.10		1.04		1.16	
nightout	Going out socially once a fortnight	0.84		0.84		0.99	
worship	Attending place of worship	1.07		1.27		1.24	
visit	Visit friends/family 4 times a year	0.68	*	0.64	*	0.63	*
mealout	Meal out once a month	1.09		1.14		1.13	
holabrd	Holidays abroad once a year	1.05		1.25		1.31	
pub	Going out for drink once a fortnight	0.78		0.79		0.72	
cinema	Going to cinema, etc. once a month	1.30		1.38		1.20	

Notes: Model 1 – Scotland dummy only; Model 2 – add socio-demographic and location controls; Model 3 – add socio-economic controls. See text for details. ** – significant at 1 per cent level.

Table 9: Logistic regression models – child items

		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
		OR	Sig	OR	Sig	OR	Sig
ccoat	A warm winter coat	0.67		0.66		0.49	
cveg	Fresh fruit/vegetables once a day	0.63		0.62		0.65	
cshoes	New, properly fitting, shoes	0.78		0.81		0.68	
cmeal	Three meals a day	0.82		0.91		1.03	
cgarden	Garden or outdoor space	0.62		0.66		0.64	
cbooks	Books at home	0.81		0.90		0.88	
cmeat	Meat, fish or equivalent once a day	1.03		1.06		1.02	
cstudy	Suitable place at home to study	0.87		0.87		0.82	
cgames	Indoor games	0.86		0.84		0.91	
cbedroom	Bedrm for every child 10+ of diff sex	1.01		1.00		0.97	
cpc	Computer/internet for homework	0.63	*	0.65	*	0.60	*
cclothes	Some new, not second-hand clothes	1.38		1.42		1.64	
cleisure	Outdoor leisure equipment	1.07		1.02		0.97	
ctrousers	At least 4 pairs of trousers, etc.	0.93		1.02		0.98	
csave	Money to save	1.08		1.12		1.10	
cmoney	Pocket money	1.11		1.08		1.18	
clego	Construction toys	0.95		0.90		0.97	
cBike	Bicycle	1.09		1.04		1.15	
cstyle	Clothes to fit in with friends	0.93		0.93		0.87	
cmobphone	Mobile phone for children 11+	0.93		0.94		0.96	
cmp3	MP3 player	1.05		1.14		1.15	
cpumps	Designer/brand name trainers	0.97		1.28		0.94	

Notes: Model 1 – Scotland dummy only; Model 2 – add socio-demographic and location controls; Model 3 – add socio-economic controls. See text for details. ‘*’ – significant at 1 per cent level.

Table 10: Logistic regression models – child activities

		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
		OR	Sig	OR	Sig	OR	Sig
cceleb	Celebrations on special occasions	1.17		1.09		0.98	
chobby	Hobby or leisure activity	1.28		1.16		1.11	
cplaygrp	Toddler/nursery grp once a week	1.20		1.21		1.22	
cclubs	Activities e.g. drama, football etc.	1.47	*	1.53	*	1.61	*
cfamtrip	Day trips with family once a month	0.93		0.94		1.00	
cschool	School trip once a term	1.14		1.21		1.19	
choliday	Holiday away from home once a yr	1.06		1.05		1.09	
csnack	Friends round once a fortnight	1.15		1.04		1.10	

Notes: Model 1 – Scotland dummy only; Model 2 – add socio-demographic and location controls; Model 3 – add socio-economic controls. See text for details. ‘*’ – significant at 1 per cent level.

6. Conclusions and discussion

For the analysis of poverty, the key finding from this paper is that the population of Scotland does *not* have a different view about the items which constitute necessities of life compared to the RoUK. Scots do not hold a different view about the social minimum so the same standard can therefore be used to judge levels of poverty across the whole of the UK. That is an important finding for the PSE-UK project. It confirms previous comparisons of views about 'necessities of life' north and south of the border (Pantazis et al 2000). More generally, it supports the results of much previous work on consensual poverty measures that a strong consensus on the necessities exists across a very wide range of social groups or divisions (Pantazis et al 2006).

For the wider understanding of social attitudes in Scotland, the analysis suggests that differences are not as great as might have been expected. Even where differences are statistically significant, the absolute differences remain minor. We should of course be wary about over-generalising from this analysis as it focuses on one specific set of attitudes. Other research has shown that the public at large may hold quite divergent views on different aspects of social welfare – being generally critical of current levels of inequality and supportive of greater redistribution, for example, while viewing many welfare recipients in a negative light and being reluctant to support greater expenditure on benefits (Golding and Middleton, 1982; Sefton 2005). However, it does fit with much previous research which has suggested that the Scots' self-image as a more 'progressive' part of the UK does not tend to be reflected in social and political attitudes on many topics. When we extend the analysis by controlling for a wide range of compositional factors, the modest differences tend to persist with little change. This suggests that such differences as do exist tend to arise from context rather than composition. They might therefore be viewed as some indication of limited cultural difference.

For debates about independence or devolution, the message which emerges from this analysis is more complex. On the one hand, it appears to be a rejection of the claims made by many proponents of constitutional change that an independent Scotland would be a fairer, more progressive society characterised by less inequality and a stronger welfare state. The fact that Scots would set the same minimum standard could suggest little would change with independence. On the other hand, it is striking that the most notable political difference Scotland and the rest of the UK in recent years has been the willingness to vote for more left-of-centre political parties. One might conclude that, while an independent Scotland would set the poverty line at the same level as the rest of the UK, it might be more likely to find the political will to ensure that far fewer households fell below that line. When we compare actual living standards with the poverty line defined by this analysis, whether for Scotland (Bailey and Bramley 2013) or for the UK as a whole (Gordon et al

2013), what is striking is how many people fall short of the minimum standard set by this democratic or consensual approach. It is just possible that a more autonomous Scotland might actually do something about this.

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