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FamiliesAndSocieties

Why Does Fertility Remain High Among Certain Ethnic Minority Women in the UK, France and Belgium?

Hill Kulu, *University of Liverpool, UK*

Tina Hannemann, *University of Liverpool, UK*

Ariane Pailhé, *Institut national d'études démographiques, France*

Karel Neels, *University of Antwerp*

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Rationale

- Increasing diversity of European societies
- Understanding dynamics of migrant and ethnic minority families
 - Immigrants shape demographic, social and cultural trends
 - Family patterns provide valuable information on immigrant lives and their integration
- Raising social cohesion

Previous Research

- Fertility levels in Europe are high among immigrants from 'high-fertility' countries (Sobotka 2008)
- Fertility levels of the descendants of immigrants from 'high-fertility' countries are usually lower than those of their parents
- But for some groups fertility remains high, e.g. Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the UK; individuals of Turkish descent in Germany; Turkish and North Africans in France (Sobotka 2008; Coleman and Dubuc 2010)

Causes of High Fertility

- Large families continue to be a norm among some ethnic minorities
- High fertility is the consequence of poor education and labour market prospects among ethnic minorities

Objectives

- Investigate fertility patterns among the descendants of immigrants in selected European countries
- Examine the determinants of the relatively high fertility among certain ethnic minority groups
 - The UK case study
 - Comparative study of Britain, France and Belgium

Data

- Britain
 - Understanding Society study (UoS); first two waves (2009, 2011)
- France
 - Trajectories and Origins survey (2008)
- Belgium
 - Population Census and Register (2000-2005)

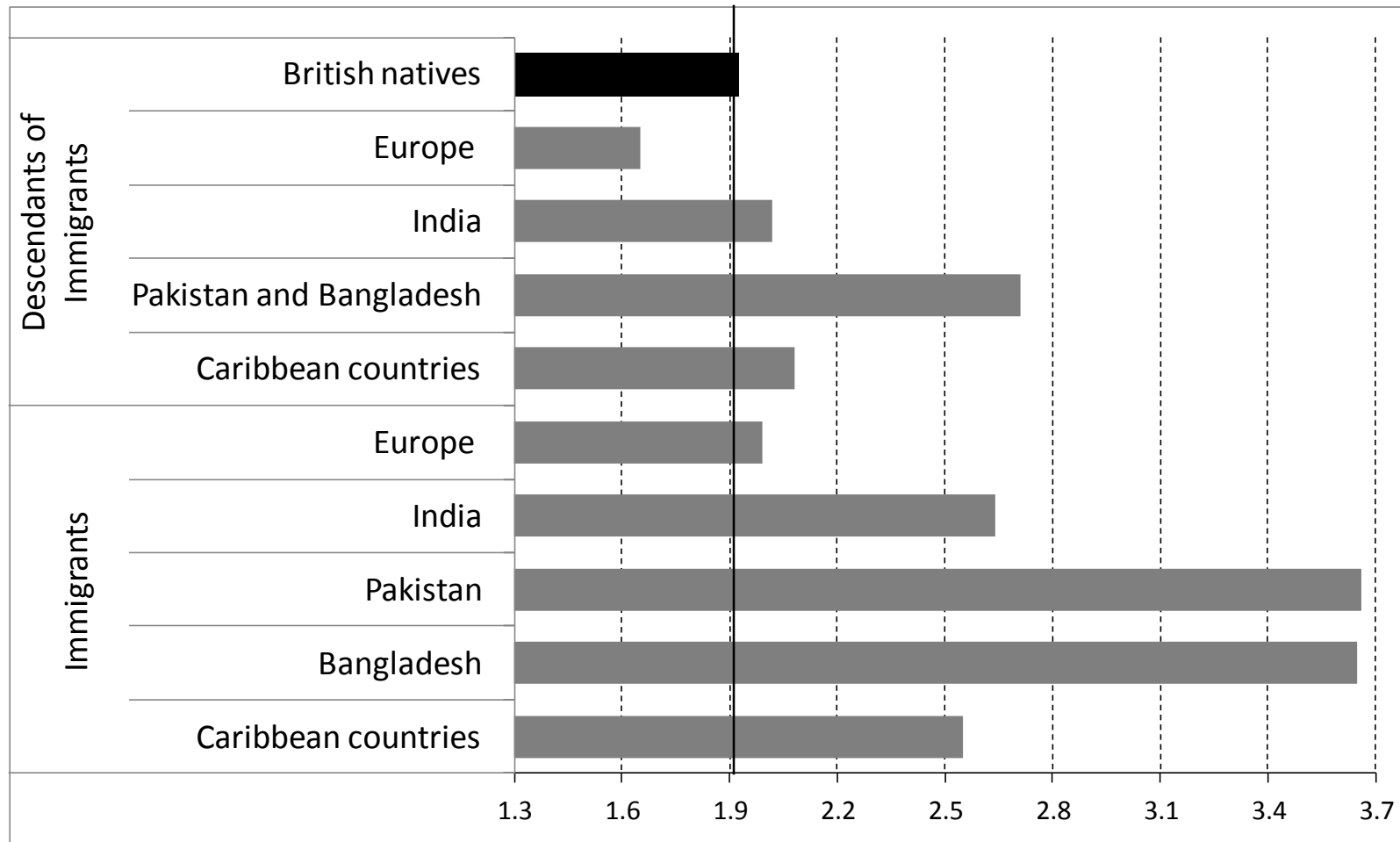
Sample

- Sample: Women born between 1940 and 1990
- The number of women:

<i>Country</i>	<i>Number</i>
United Kingdom	21,680
France	8,234
Belgium	~20,000

The British Case Study

Total Fertility Rate Among Ethnic Minorities in Britain, 1989-2008

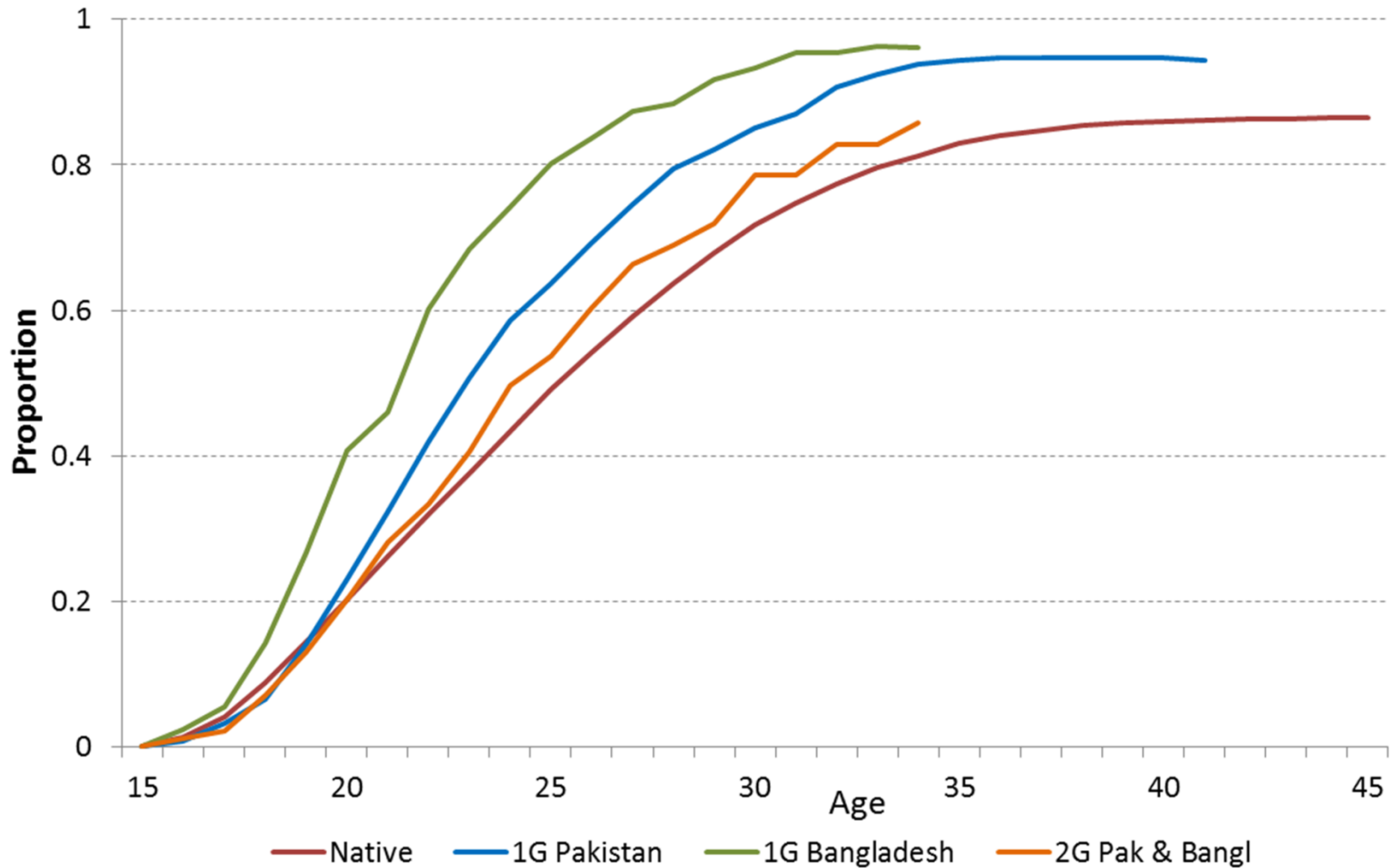


Source: Understanding Society, 2011

Steps for Analysis

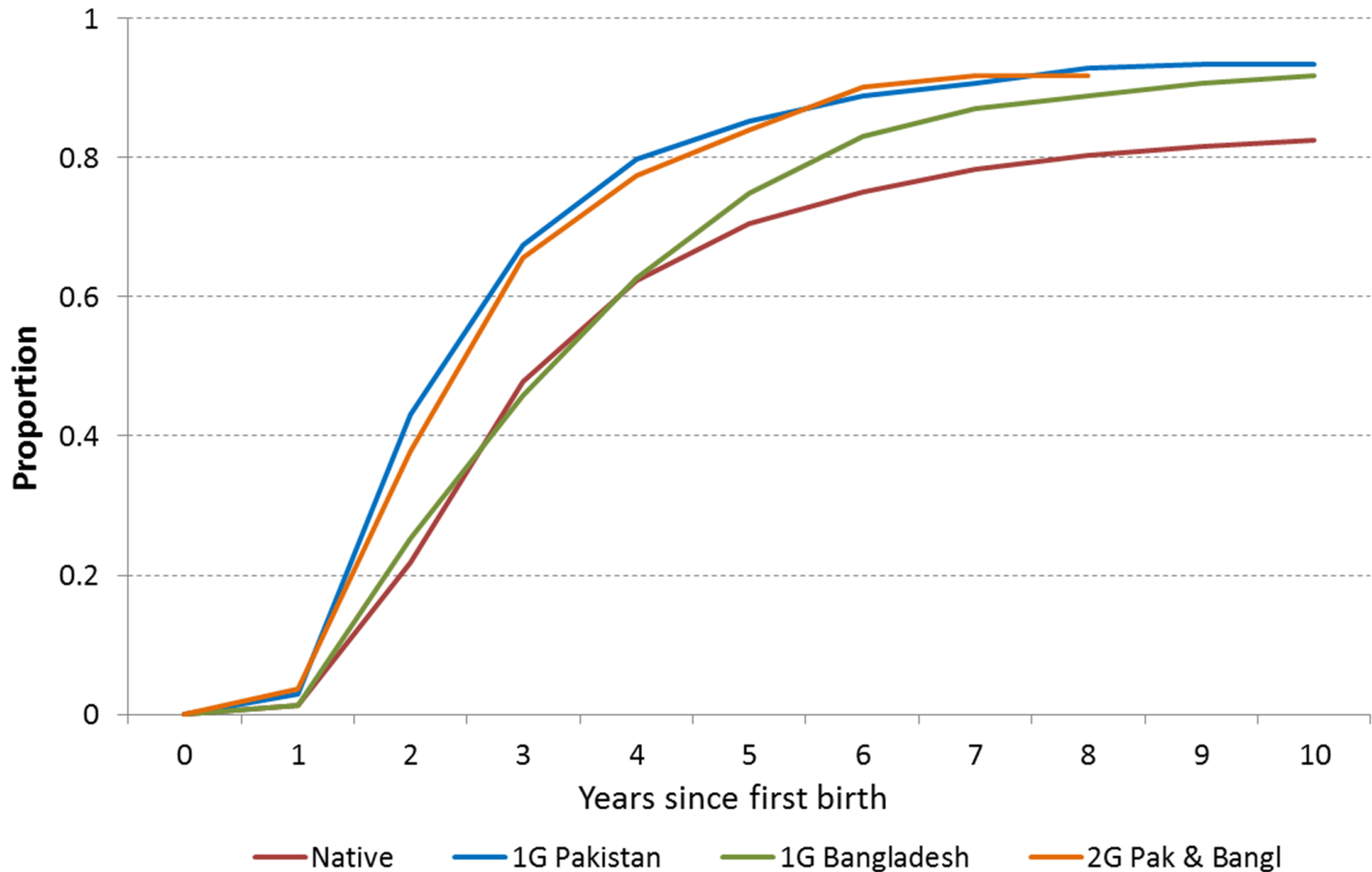
- Step 1: Calculate fertility rates by **birth order** (first four transitions) – investigate the sources of fertility variation across ethnic groups
- Step 2: Calculate fertility rates by birth order controlling for **socio-economic** characteristics of women – detect the role of economic factors
- Step 3: Calculate fertility rates by birth order controlling (also) for **socio-cultural** characteristics of women – detect the role of cultural factors

Proportion of Women Having a First Child



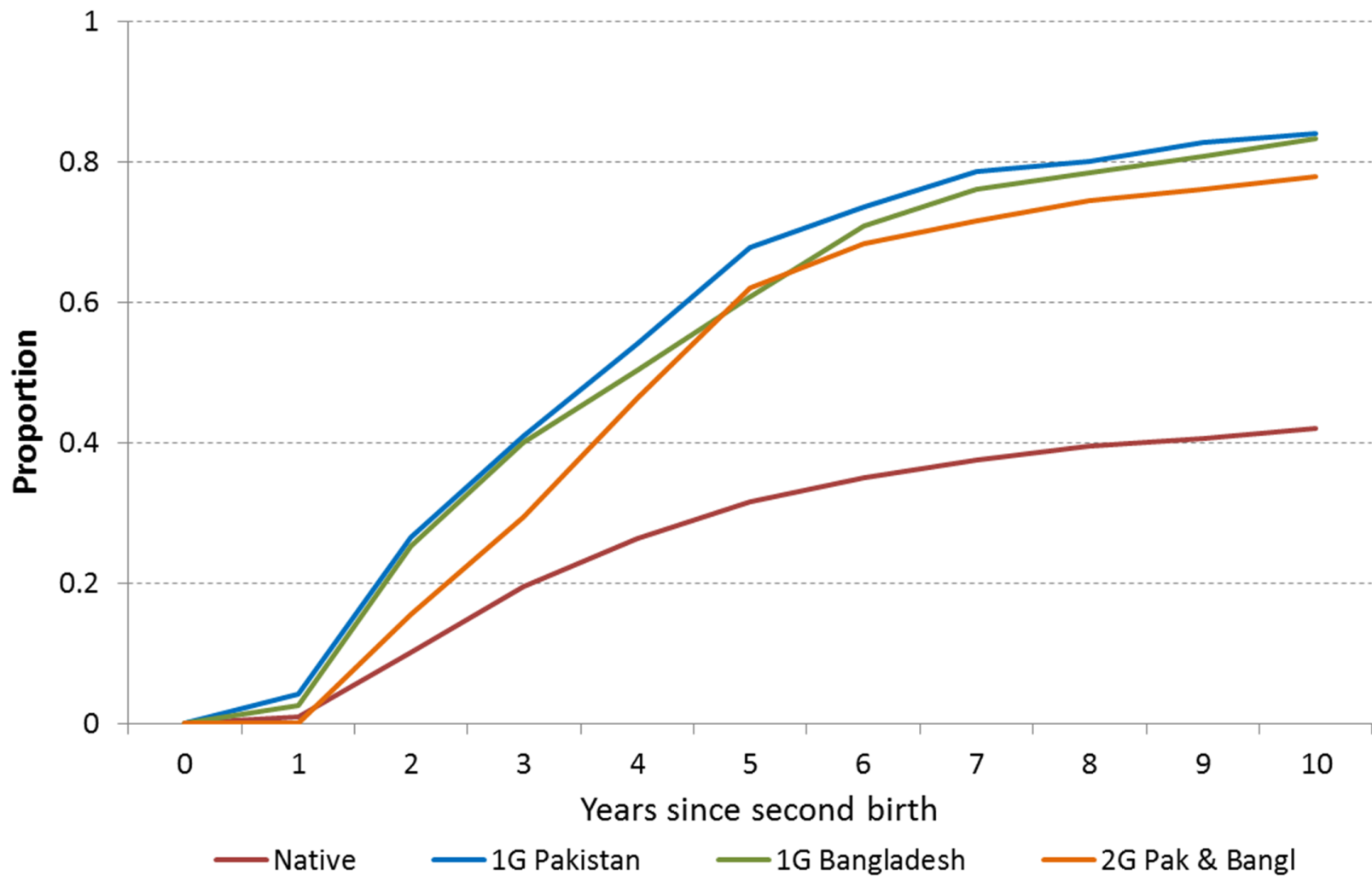
Data: *Understanding Society*

Proportion of Women Having a Second Child



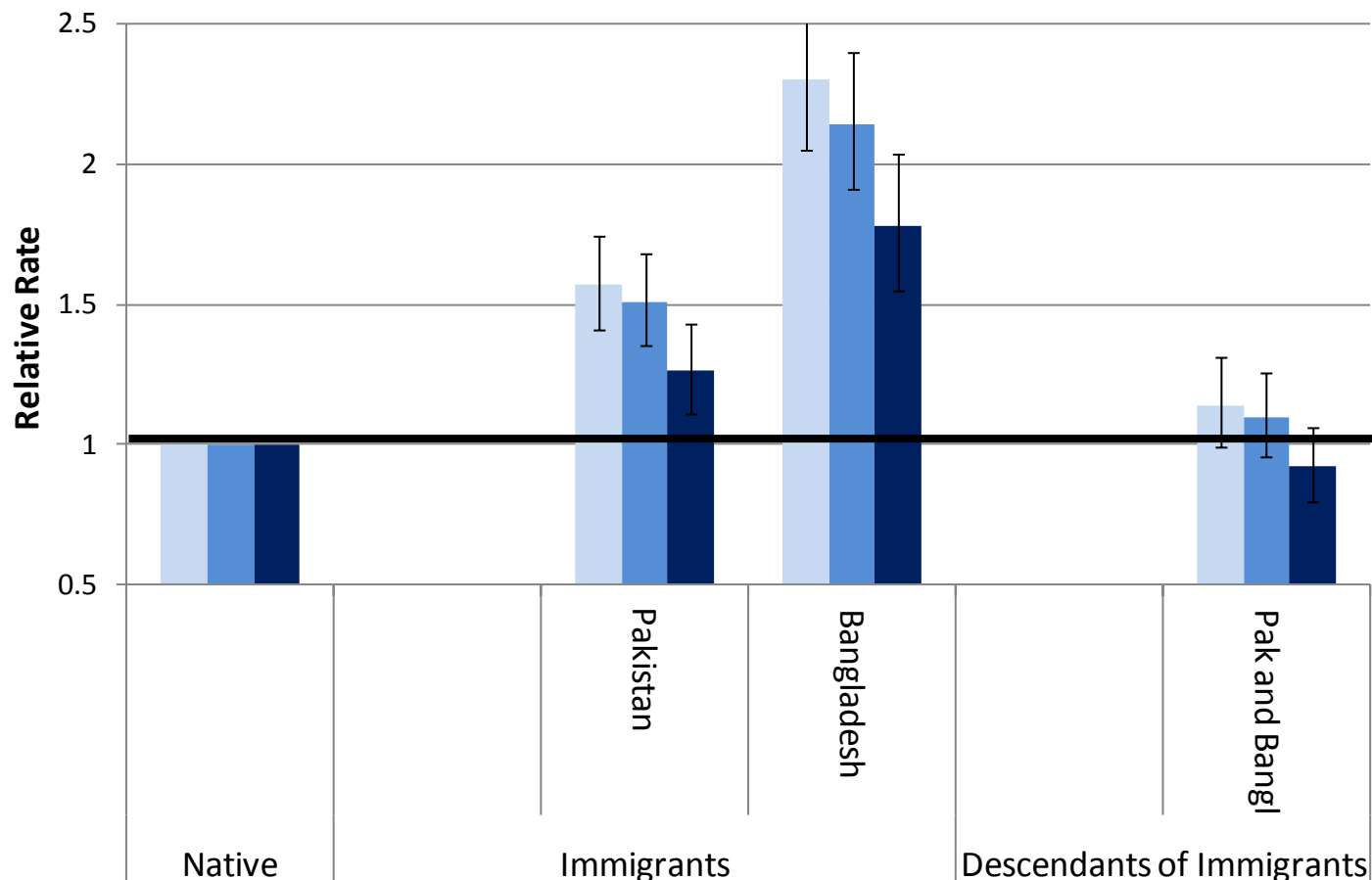
Data: *Understanding Society*

Proportion of Women Having a Third Child



Data: *Understanding Society*

Relative Rates of First Birth



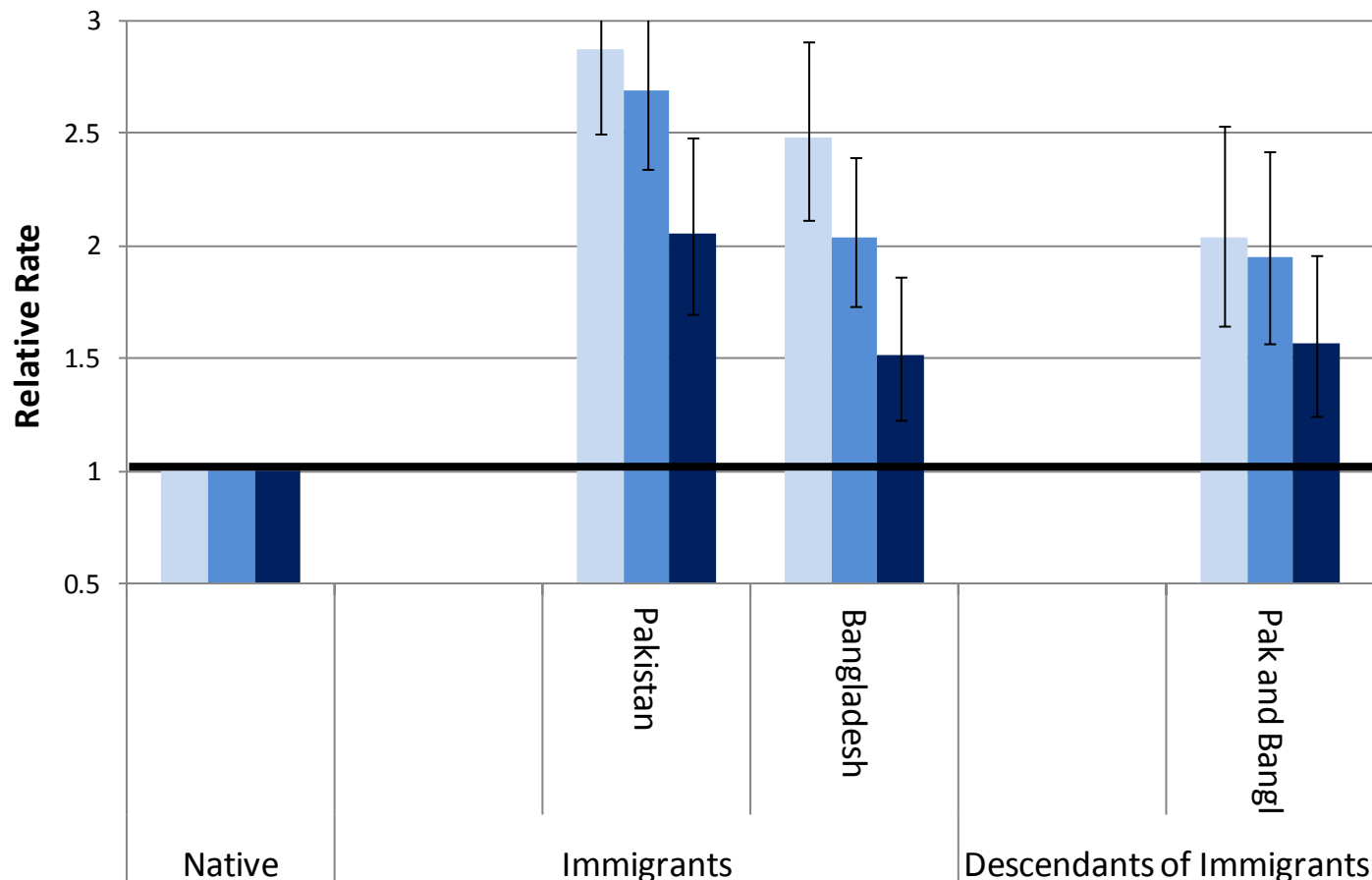
Model 1: Controlled for the **women's age** and **birth cohort**

Model 2: Controlled for the women's age, birth cohort and **educational level**

Model 3: Controlled for the women's age, birth cohort, educational level, **English skills, religiosity, the number of siblings**

Data: *Understanding Society*

Relative Rates of Third Birth



Model 1: Controlled for **time since second birth** and **birth cohort**

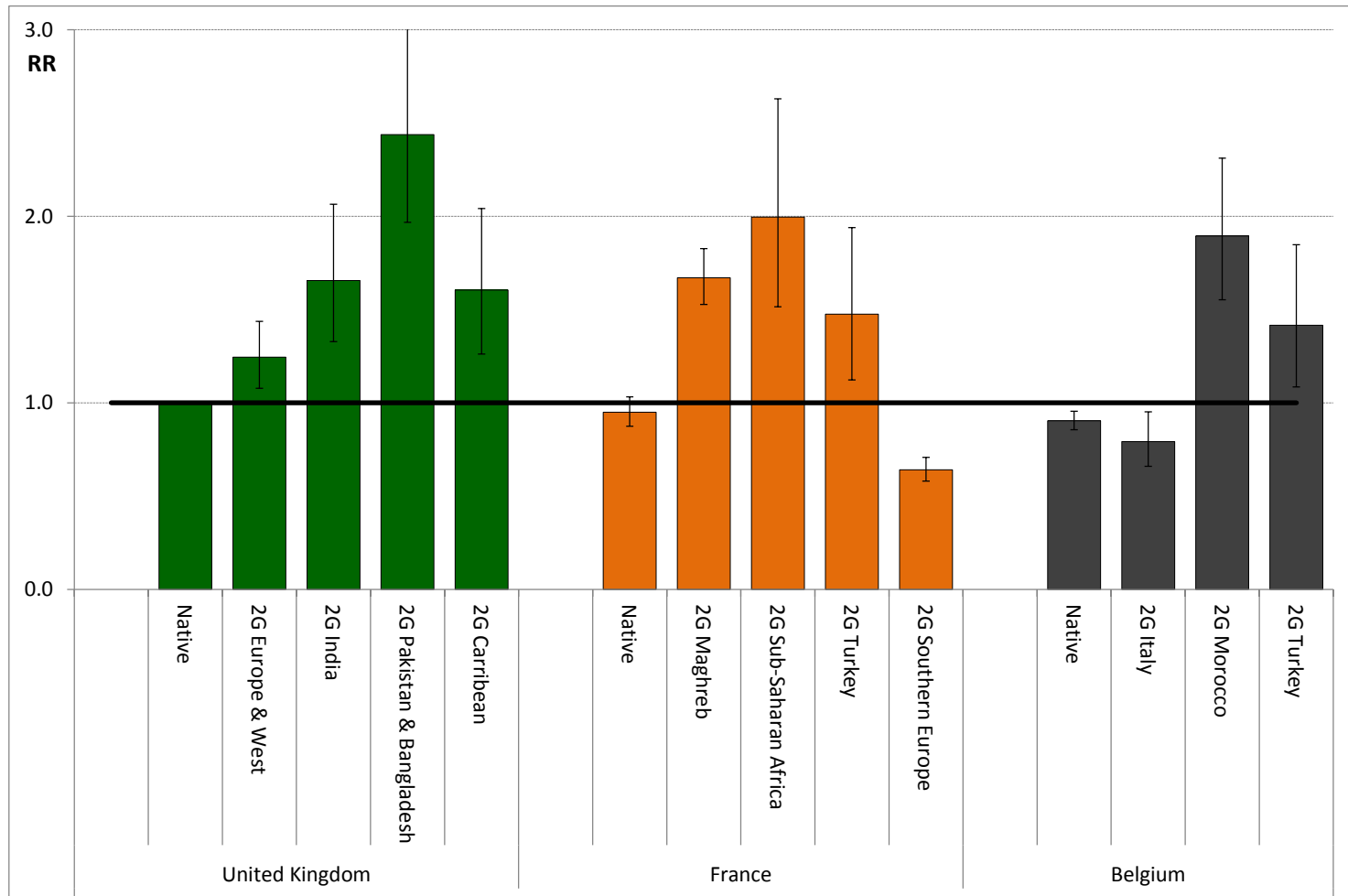
Model 2: Controlled for time since second birth, birth cohort, **age at first birth**, **educational level**

Model 3: Controlled for time since second birth, birth cohort, age at first birth, educational level, **English skills, religiosity, the number of siblings, sex of previous child**

Data: *Understanding Society*

Comparative Study

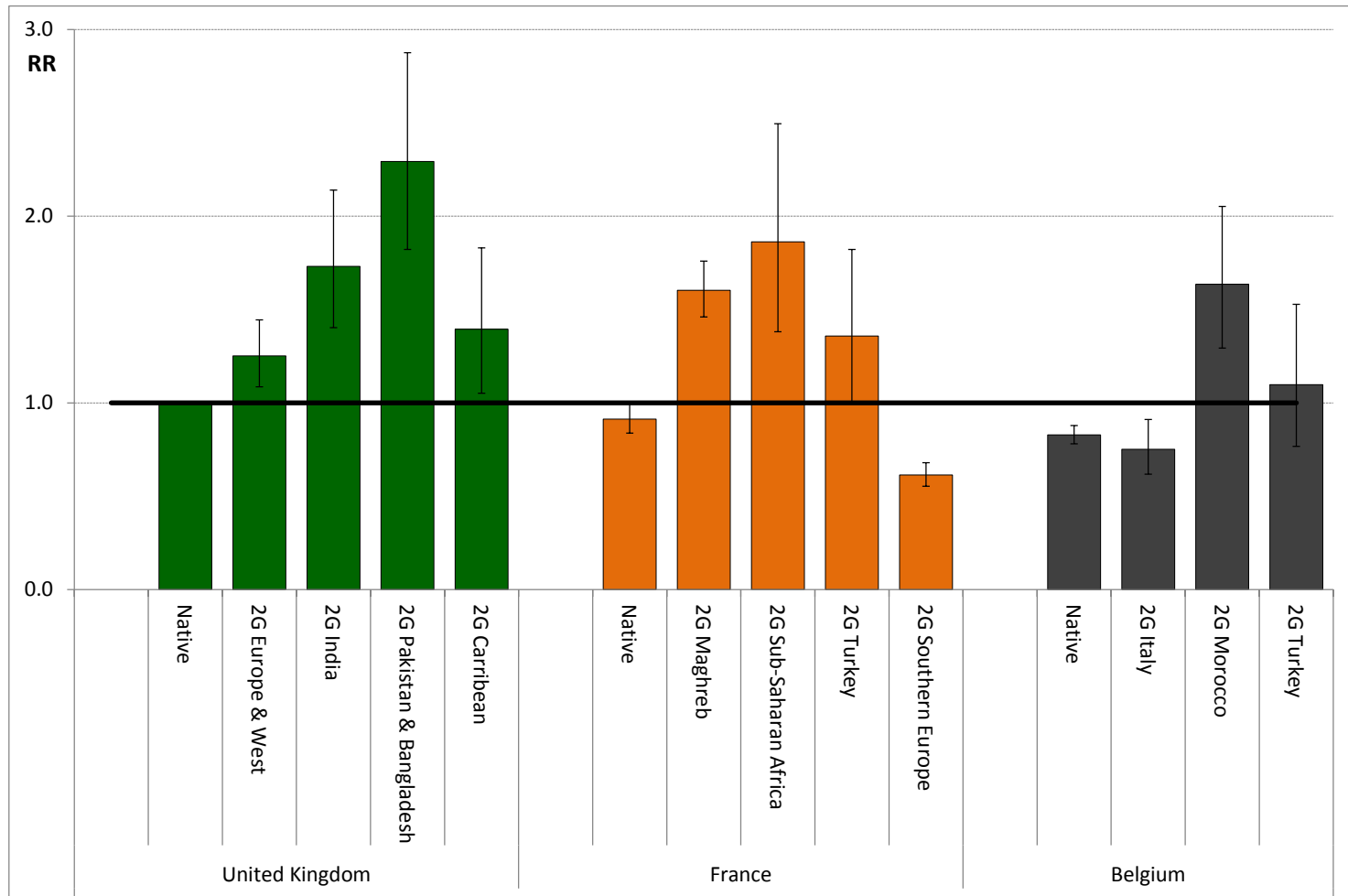
Relative Rates of Third Birth



Controlled for **time since second birth** and **birth cohort**

Source: Kulu et al. 2015

Relative Rates of Third Birth



Controlled for **time since second birth, birth cohort and educational level**

Source: Kulu et al. 2015

Summary

- Relatively high fertility among some ethnic minority groups in the UK (women of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin)
- High second-, third- and fourth-birth levels are responsible for the high total fertility among women of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin
- Socio-cultural factors (the number of siblings and religiosity) account for some elevated fertility among UK-born ethnic minorities, whereas the role of education is negligible
- Similar childbearing patterns for some ethnic minority groups in France, Belgium and the UK (women of Turkish origin in France and Belgium; those of Pakistani and Bangladeshi descent in the UK)



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