Driving Licence Uptake & Emerging Inequalities

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Overview

1. Research background
2. Understanding Society
3. Demographic drivers
4. Raising questions
Declining mobility

- Car miles per person stabilising
- Fall in young adults holding a driving licence

Choice?

- Technological change
- ‘Urban renaissance’
- Lifestyle/ consumer preference issues

Constraint?

- Precarity in employment
- Increased entry and maintenance costs
Declining mobility

- Car miles per person stabilising
- Fall in young adults holding a driving licence

Applying an ‘equalities’ lens
To gain greater understanding of overall trends driving licence holding and car use

+ **Aim**
  - Gender
  - Urbanisation
  - Social Class

Are these trends temporary or do they signal longer term change?

What might the equity implications of such changes be?
Panel data, rather than cross-sectional snapshots

BHPS established 1991
10,000 people in 5,050 hhds
Merged with Understanding Society in 2010/11

Combines questions on car access with extensive socio-economic data

Approach

Licence holding & car access:

Examination of age, period & cohort effects by gender, social class and urbanisation.

Figure from Schöley & Willekens (2015: 3)
- Baby boomers (Born 1946-1964 – male!)

- Pronounced historic cohort effects in licence uptake for women
Gender

- Baby boomers (Born 1946-1964 – male!)

- Pronounced historic cohort effects in licence uptake for women
Gender

- Change for men far less marked
Gender: 50s/60s cohorts

- Female ‘catch up’ towards parity in licence holding for women born in 1950s

- Convergence for cohorts born in 1960s (nearer 90%+ driving licence ownership for both genders in these cohorts)
Gender & the Millennials

- For cohorts born after around 1970, licence levels fell around 10% for both genders
- They fell further for those born after around 1980s (Early Millennials?), and faster for men
- Licence gap closing
The Millennials
- Period effect for young males?
Gender

- Historic cohort effects for both genders

- More consistency (age effect) at younger ages (approx 17-30) years
Gender gap in converting licence to opportunity

BUT

more consistent age effect between genders for drivers driving
Urban/ Non-urban

- Gender differences more marked in urban areas

- Choice: more alternative modes available in highly urbanised areas?

- Constraint: risk of forced car ownership in less urbanised environments?

Maybe women just don’t like driving??
- Close to 100% for rural males

- Earlier female-male cohort ‘catch up’ than for more urban counterparts

- A decline for the millennial cohort (less pronounced than for urban males)
Licenced Drivers driving
- Older urban women, 10-20% lower licence-holding than men of the same age
- Some catch up for the 1970s - 80s cohorts (<40yrs in 1995)
- Declining for both from mid-1970s onwards

More consistency between genders at younger ages (approx 17-30) years
Urban/Non-Urban

- Historic cohort effect (more drivers driving) most clearly evident in urban areas.
Urban/Non-Urban

- Historic cohort effect (more drivers driving) most clearly evident in urban areas.

- Slower conversion from licence to driving for young adults in urban areas BUT gender parity in the age effect.
Licenced Drivers driving High, Medium, and Low Social Class

- Highest educational qualification strongly mediates female licence holding
- Effect most pronounced in older cohorts

Social Class

- Highest educational qualification strongly mediates female licence holding
- Effect most pronounced in older cohorts
Social Class

- Some ‘catch up’ for women with intermediate qualifications for the 1945-1970 cohorts (much weaker evidence for women in the lowest category)
- Recent declining licence holding for men most apparent in low-intermediate groups
Social Class

- The historic trend towards successive cohorts with driving licences driving (around 1940) is most clearly evident in those with low qualifications, especially women.

- Evident to a lesser extent with the intermediate but not the high group.
Social Class

- For those in intermediate and high groups, the main change is an age effect, between 17 & 30 yrs
Social Class

- The greatest period-based change, (early 2000s) shows increased proportions of women born 1945-1970 driving, is clearest in the intermediate category, although apparent elsewhere.
Although gender differences are still striking, social class dominates in the gap between licence and practice.
Implications

**Gender:**
- increased gender parity in licence and driving; cultural (choice)
- period effect with millennials (economic insecurity, mostly male, constraint)

**Urbanisation:**
- Less need to drive in urban areas BUT male/ female differential suggests *still* very desirable and possibly necessary for many

**Social class:**
- Strong mediation by social class and period effect for intermediate women indicates constraint rather than choice as the key factor in lower mobility
Driving segregation: Driving licence uptake & emerging inequalities

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Thank you!