

The Characteristics of Youth Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) in Australia and Japan

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Abstract

This paper focuses on comparing young people who are 'not in employment, education or training' or known as NEET, in Australia and Japan. I begin by creating sub-groups of young people that allow for meaningful comparisons between the two countries as well as an Australian measure that is comparable to the Japanese definition of NEET. For both countries, the three sub-groups include young people who are unemployed, those with home duties and those without home duties. Using data from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics Survey (HILDA) and the Japanese Household Panel Survey (JHPS), I then compare the socioeconomic characteristics between the three NEET groups by their age and gender, education, health, living arrangements, housing and income for both countries. The results show that in general, young people who were unemployed in Japan were the most disadvantaged group while young people without home duties were the most disadvantaged in Australia.

1 Introduction

Since before the global financial crisis, increasing unemployment rates of young people have already been a pressing matter for many countries. In Australia for example, the overall unemployment rate has been largely driven by those in the younger age group who transition from school or work or move from temporary to permanent employment (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014). However, the weakening of the global economy since the crisis has further aggravated the situation for young jobseekers. Indeed, we have been accustomed in recent years to the difficulties faced by youth entering the labour market for the first time, as well as experiences of discontinuous employment (Cuzzocrea, 2013).

Previously, these issues relating to the vulnerability of youth were conceptualised and measured using a “simple dichotomy” of youth employment and unemployment, with no grey area in between (Furlong, 2007). This ‘grey’ area or what Furlong (2007) calls a “zone of precarity”, consists of a set of positions that lie between stable employment and recognised unemployment. As a result, the concept of those who are ‘not in employment, education or training’ or NEET was conceived in an attempt to capture the precarious situation of youth. The use of this indicator has gained a lot of traction in recent years in the areas of policy, practice and research. Governments in the UK and Japan for example, have adopted this measure but have applied different conventions to create a definition of NEET that fit within the policy and cultural context of each country. Countries like Australia on the other hand, do not have an official definition of NEET but have applied measures used in the UK and Europe in the many areas of research.

Despite its popularity, only very few studies (Furlong, 2006; Furlong 2007; Cuzzocrea, 2013) have looked at the conceptual problems and inconsistencies arising from the use of the term NEET, especially in regards to the heterogeneous nature underlying this concept. As mentioned above, different definitions are also used in different countries. International organisations have also set their own definitions or created sub-groups to account for the variety in the population of vulnerable youth (Eurofound, 2012).

This paper attempts to address some of these issues by comparing young people who are NEET in Australia and Japan. It contributes to this area of research by disaggregating NEET into meaningful sub-groups that take into account of the heterogeneous nature of NEET young people but also allows for comparisons between the two countries. It provides an Australian measure of NEET that is comparable to the Japanese definition. This paper also analyses and compares the socioeconomic characteristics of the NEET groups for both countries in order to understand the circumstances that affect these groups and to highlight any similarities and differences across the groups between Australia and Japan.

The remainder of the paper is organised as follows; after a review of the background and an overview of the data and methods used, the results are presented and discussed. First, section 2 provides a brief discussion of the concept and definitions of NEET in Australia and Japan. This is followed by a description in section 3 of the data sources, methods used in this study as well as the challenges faced when creating the sub-groups. Section 4 then presents the descriptive results of the socioeconomic comparisons of NEET groups in Australia and Japan while section 5 provides a discussion of the findings. Section 6 summarises the main conclusions and briefly discusses ideas for future work.

2 Background and the definition of NEET

The term NEET is a fairly new concept and was first used in the United Kingdom by the Social Exclusion Unit in their report 'Bridging the Gap' to understand why young people are not in education, training and work for long periods after the school leaving age of 16 (Social Exclusion Unit, 1999). Since then, the measure of young people who are NEET have been adopted by governments such as those in the UK, Canada and Japan, by non-government organisations as well as by international organisations. A Eurofound report (Eurofound, 2012) notes that "NEET has been introduced as a key statistical indicator for youth unemployment and social situation of young people in the framework of the Europe 2020 growth strategy, alongside the youth unemployment rate and the unemployment ratio" while the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) uses NEET to monitor the smoothness of the transition from education to work for young people across its member countries (OECD, 2013).

In Australia, it was estimated that around 7.2% of 15-19 year olds and 12.2% of 20-24 year olds were NEET in 2013, and mainly consist of women as they are more likely to take on caring responsibilities compared to men, as well as Indigenous young people (Foundation for Young Australians, 2015). In Japan, the issue of NEET has been a policy focus due the increase in youth unemployment since the early 2000s. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare defines NEET as those who are in the 15-34 year age group who are neither keeping house, not attending school as well as not in the labour force. This definition of NEET was derived to fit into the social and labour market circumstances in Japan (Kosugi, 2005). However, it can also include 'non-seekers' who may wish to work but not searching for jobs, and also do not wish to work, or also known as discouraged workers (Genda, 2005).

Previous research have also shown that young people who fall into the NEET category are a heterogeneous group. Youth studies researcher Andy Furlong argues that it is essentially this heterogeneous nature of NEET that underpins the confusion and policy debate surrounding this concept (Furlong, 2007). He argues that NEET must be divided into sub-groups in order to recognise the variety of reasons and needs of young people, and states that "...the heterogeneity

of NEET means that both research and policy must begin by disaggregating so as to be able to identify the distinct characteristics and needs of the various sub-groups” (Furlong, 2006).

A recent study by Eurofound reported that most NEET young people were found to be unemployed, but also consisted of those who were involved in other activities including being:

- unavailable – includes those who care for other or have a sickness or disability;
- disengaged – not seeking employment or education but not restricted to do so;
- opportunity seekers – seeking work or education but holding out for opportunities befitting their skills and status;
- voluntary – travel, holidays, involvement in the arts etc. (Eurofound, 2012).

It is of no surprise then, that the complexity of this term has caused it to be both contentious as well as problematic. As discussed above, there is no international standard definition of NEET which makes it very difficult to conduct international comparisons. The term NEET also merges complex concepts together such as unemployment, discouraged workers and marginalisation which has further caused it to be even more complicated to interpret (Elder, 2015). In addition to this, there is also no agreed age range for young people or youth. Previous studies have shown that the definition of youth varies in different societies around the world and that it is best understood as a period of transition from dependence of childhood to adult independence (Eurostat, 2009). It is also often referred to a person who is between the ages of leaving compulsory education and finding their first job (UN, 2013).

Given this background, the broad research goal of this study is to explore the characteristics of those who are ‘not in education, employment or training’ (NEET) in Australia and Japan during the period following the global economic crisis. Specific key research questions include:

- Can a comparable typology of NEET youth in Australia and Japan be identified given the societal circumstances and cultural context?
- What are the socioeconomic differences and similarities between those who are NEET in Australia and Japan?
- And in particular, do income and living arrangements determine those who are NEET in Australia and Japan?

In regards to the last point, I am interested in the presence of any buffering effects that may exist for specific groups of young people who are NEET. That is, there may be groups of young people within NEET who are disadvantaged and may therefore lack the resources to exercise choice in

their lives, whereas more privileged young people are able to exercise a significant degree of choice in which they manage their lives (Furlong, 2007).

3 Data Sources and Methodology

In order to carry out the comparative analysis for this study, there were two main issues concerned with selecting the appropriate data sources – comparability of the data between Australia and Japan as well as accessibility of the data. As the majority of household and person level data in Japan are only available in Japanese, the best comparable datasets that were available in English as well as containing the appropriate variables in order to answer the key research questions are the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics Survey (HILDA) for Australia and the Japanese Household Panel Survey (JHPS) for Japan.

The HILDA is funded by the Department of Social Services and managed by the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research at the University of Melbourne. It is a household-based longitudinal study that follows individuals over time and contains information on economic and subjective wellbeing, labour market as well as family dynamics. The sampling method for HILDA is area-based clustered or stratified sampling of private dwellings. The first wave was carried out in 2001 and consisted of 7,682 households and 19,914 individuals. In wave 11, this was topped up with an additional 2,153 households and 5,477 individuals. Face to face interviews are conducted annually with all adult members of each household aged 15 years and over. All respondents are also given a self-completion supplement which was collected at a later date. Sampling weights at the household and person levels well as longitudinal weights have been created to account for unequal probabilities of selection, unit non-response as well as non-response across time (Summerfield et al., 2015).

The JHPS is a panel survey managed by the Panel Data Research Centre at Keio University. It includes questions on individual economic and employment status, income, education, health and healthcare as well as special modules on time-use and subjective wellbeing asked in different waves. In cases where respondents are married, their spouses are asked the same survey questions. The survey also includes household level questions on income and expenditure. The first wave of the JHPS was implemented in January 2009 and was sent to individuals aged 20 year and over. The sampling was carried out as a two-stage stratified method based on the 2005 National Census and the 2008 National Residents Register. The survey areas were then randomly divided into two parts in which two different survey methods were applied. The first involved a self-administered method where the survey was dropped off and collected at a later point in time, while the second method involved combining the self-completion of the questionnaire with an

interview with the respondent. The sample size for the first wave is 4,022 individuals.² Sample weights were not available for release and not provided with the data.

3.1 Methodology

There are two main parts of analysis for this study. The first consists of disaggregating all young people aged 20-39 in both countries into meaningful sub-groups of NEET. The reason for choosing this age range is because data for Japan only includes individuals 20 years and over as this is the age where one is considered an adult and may take part in the survey. The age range goes up to 39 years old to account for the increasing proportions of young people who are marrying later as well as having children later (Statistics Japan, 2015). The increases in the average age of marriage and having children will have an effect on those who fall into the NEET group where they are involved in home duties.

Those who are unemployed are a straightforward group to define based on by one's reported labour force status. The other groups of NEET were created to fit within the social and cultural context of Japan and its definition of NEET. Henceforth, I derived two other sub-groups of NEET – those with home duties and those without home duties. The method in which these groups were derived is explained in the next sub-section.

The second part of the analysis include comparisons of socioeconomic characteristics between the three NEET groups by their age and gender, education, health, living arrangements, housing and income for Australia and Japan.

3.2 Data limitations and challenges

The first challenge of the JHPS data is the problem of small sample size and attrition over time. When reduced to only include respondents aged 20-39 years of age, the sample size decreased to 1,237 individuals. In order to maximize the number of responses, the responses from spouses were also included. This increased the sample size to 1,915. The responses of the JHPS survey also fell significantly over time. Unlike the HILDA, the JHPS did not carry out a top-up survey in between their first wave in 2009 and 2013. Respondents for the 20-39 age group (including responses from spouses) added up to only 891 individuals in the 2013. Because of the large fall in response rates, I have decided to use the 2009 JHPS data with the largest sample of 20-39 year olds and compare this to the sample of 20-39 year olds in HILDA in 2009.

The second challenge of the JHPS data is concerned with the definition of the NEET groups. As mentioned, NEETs that were unemployed are straightforward to deal with as this is based on ones labour force classification. However, in the JHPS data, it is not possible to separate

² The data included 22 individuals that were selected as a backup sample in case any persons from the original sample of 4,000 individuals were not able to take part in the survey (Keio University).

individuals that are NEET that are involved with home duties and NEET without home duties. In order to be consistent as possible to the Japanese definition of where NEET as a defined as those who are single, neither keeping house, not attending school as well as not in the labour force, I have assumed that NEETs with home duties are defined as those that are not in the labour force, not studying, married and have at least one child who is aged 3 years or younger. For NEETs that do not have home duties, not married and not have children aged 3 years or younger are classified as NEET without home duties. Hence, an individual who is not in the labour force, married but whose youngest child is above the age of 3 will be counted as NEET without home duties. The reason for choosing children aged 3 years or younger as the threshold in defining the NEET groups is because this is the age of children that most Japanese mothers will enrol their children into kindergarten or day care and have the opportunity to return to work. In Australia, the proportion of mothers returning of work after the birth of their child is around 54% by the time the child had reached 18 months of age (Baxter, 2008).

The third challenge of the data, although not an unusual feature of cross-country comparative research, is comparability. The challenge here depends on how the survey questions have been asked and categories of responses provided. Consequently, this has to be kept in mind when interpreting the results. Also, the analysis may be limited to variables that exist between the two dataset. For example, a common socioeconomic variable that would be used to analyse the characteristics of NEET young people in Australia is if they come from an Indigenous background. However, a variable on Indigeneity does not exist in the Japanese data. For this study, the ‘most common denominator’ approach is used where existing question and response categories have been matched as close as possible for the two countries.

4 Results

4.1 NEET sample sizes and proportions

Table 1 shows the NEET groups by their corresponding sample sizes and proportions in 2009 for both Australia and Japan. Note that all results for the Australian analysis have been weighted according to the sample weights provided with the HILDA data. It is interesting that the proportions of young people without home duties (WOHD) are about the same in both countries. The proportions are also relatively high at around 48%, which opposes the view that most young people who are NEET are made up mostly of those who are unemployed (Eurofound, 2012). However, this could be due to the older and wider age range (20-39 years) used in this report that would generally include more women who take time off work to have children or be involved in child caring activities. The proportion of young people with home duties (WHD) is much higher in Japan compared to Australia while about a third of young people in Australia reported their labour force status as unemployed in 2009 compared to 15% in Japan.

4.2 Age and gender

The data for the three NEET groups have been further disaggregated by age and gender as shown in Table 2. The mean or average age is lower for all three corresponding groups in Australia compared to Japan. The youngest group is the unemployed in Australia with an average age of 27.4 years while the group with the oldest mean age is made up of those WOHD in Japan. In fact, more than half of those WOHD in Japan are aged in their late thirties, from 35 to 39 year of age.

In terms of gender, the proportions of women are higher for all corresponding groups in Japan compared to Australia. Unemployed young people in Australia is the only group where the percentage of men (59.5%) is great than that of women (40.5%). Again, this could be due to the higher proportion of women who have taken time off work to have children and were therefore not actively seeking work. It could also be due to the higher proportion of men in Australia who tend to leave school early and look for work compared to women. There is a small share of men who make up those WHD in Australia while all of those WHD in Japan are women. About 30% of men are WOHD in Australia while only about 6% of men are in this group in Japan.

4.3 Education qualifications

Figure 1 shows the NEET groups by their education qualifications for both Australia and Japan. It should be noted that for the case of Japan, the survey respondents were asked about the last school they attended and not the qualifications that were actually attained. However, in Australia, the response categories consisted of levels of education qualifications and were matched according to the institutions in which these qualifications are normally awarded. For example, bachelor degree and above were assumed to be awarded at a university institution and so on. Once these categories have been matched for the two countries, the resulting categories are university and above, junior college, secondary school and below secondary school.

It is clear from Figure 2 that the levels of secondary school completion are much lower in Australia compared to Japan. One of the reasons for this is that many young people who are not suited to secondary schooling move onto vocational education that are provided by Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges in Australia after compulsory school in Year 10 around when young people are aged 15. This is considered to be an alternative pathway for students with a qualification considered to be a Certificate III or above (Lim and Karmel, 2011). This has been categorised as those who completed junior college in this analysis. However, the levels of those who do not complete secondary schooling are significant especially for those who are WOHD. This is not a surprising result for Australia where in 2012, the Foundation of Young Australians found that more than 30% of young people who left school at Year 9 or below were NEET (Foundation for Young Australians, 2012).

4.4 Housing tenure

The categories of housing tenure by NEET groups are presented in Figure 2, and are made up of respondents who either own their homes or are paying off a mortgage, those who are renting privately, public renters and others types of housing tenure. In Australia, 'other' refers to those who were involved in a rent-buy scheme and lived rent free or with life tenure while in Japan, this category refers to company housing or dormitory and other type of housing not further described. More than 60% of those WHD in Australia own their own homes, while those who are WOHD have the lowest proportion of home ownership (39%). Young people in the WOHD group also have the highest proportion of public renters (18%) compared to the other groups in Australia. In Japan, it is interesting that those WHD have a relatively high proportion of those who say they are renting from 'other' (14%). Also, young people who are unemployed in Japan make up the highest share of public renters (11%).

4.5 Household Income

The measure of income used here is equivalised disposable (after tax) household income. For sake of comparability and simplicity, the equivalent scale used is the square root of the number of people in the household for both Australia and Japan. The income deciles have been created at the household level for the entire sample for both countries. Figure 3 shows the NEET groups by the lowest equivalised disposable household income decile in 2009. For the case of Australia, the most disadvantaged group consists of those who are WOHD, followed by UE and lastly WHD. For Japan on the other hand, those who are most disadvantaged in terms of income are those who are UE, followed closely by WHD. Young people who were WOHD have significantly less proportion in terms of income compared to the other groups in Japan.

4.6 Household type

Figure 4 presents the NEET groups for both countries by household types with reference to the respondents themselves. The household types consists of those who are couple with no children, couple with children, lone or single parents with children, lone persons and other type of households. In the Australian data, 'other' refers to group and multi-family households as well as those who are neither couple with or without children, lone parent or lone persons but may live with other related and non-related adults and children. In the Japanese data, other refers to those who are neither couple with or without children, lone parent or lone persons but may live with other related and non-related adults and children.

Almost all young people who are WHD in Australia are made up of couples with children (92%) while in Japan, all respondents who are WHD are made up of couples with children. In Australia, those who are WOHD have the largest share of lone parents (24%) while those who are UE have about less than half of that proportion at around 11%. In Japan, we see the opposite – there are

only about 2% of those in the WOHD group that are lone parents, but more than double the proportion at around 5% for those in the UE group.

Another interesting comparison between the two countries is in terms of those who live in 'other' household types. In Australia, the UE and WOHD groups have the highest and similar share of those living in this household category. However, in Japan, more than half of young people (55%) who were unemployed live with others, which suggests that young people in this group are most likely still living at home with their parents. This is further discussed in the next sub-section.

4.7 Living with parents

Overall, the proportion of young people living with their parents is much higher in Japan compared to Australia as presented in Figure 5. While the share is not too different between the WHD and WOHD in Japan, almost half (45%) of those UE are living with their parents. In Australia, there is a similar trend across the groups when compared with Japan, however, about 5 times less of unemployed young people in Australia stay with their parents compared to Japan.

4.8 Subjective, physical and mental health

Figures 6, 7 and 8 show the health status of NEET groups in Australia and Japan by according to their subjective, physical as well as mental health. Figure 6 present the proportions of NEET groups who have low subjective health, defined as those who reported their health to be "fair" or "poor" in the Australian data and "Fairly bad" or "Bad" in the Japanese data. In Australia, about a quarter (26%) of those who are WOHD and about 17% of young unemployed people reported low subjective health. Young people who were WHD had the lowest share in this indicator, reporting around 9% with low subjective health. For the case of Japan, it is interesting that those who were unemployed reported the highest share of poor health; 16% of young people in the UE group reported low subjective health, compared to 5% for those WHD and 6% WOHD.

Physical health is measured using an indicator on how often the respondent feels tired. For Japan, this refers to respondents who reported often "get tired easily" those for those who felt tired "all of the time", "most of the time" and "a good bit of the time" in the Australian data. Although this is not the most ideal measure to represent the physical health of respondents, it is the closest and most comparable indicator available in the data for both countries.

In Australia, more than half of those in the WHD group say that they often feel tired (53%) , followed by those in the WOHD group (38%) and lastly by those UE (28%). The high proportion of those reporting feeling tired in the WHD is most likely to do with the time spent caring for children as well as carrying out household chores. In Japan, overall there is a much lower rate of

those who say they feel tired, but a similar pattern with those WHD reporting the highest percentage of feeling tired often (25%).

Figure 8 shows the proportion of NEET respondents who reported often feeling anxious or nervous. Interpretation of this indicator needs to be taken with caution as the Japanese data refers to respondents who reported often "feel anxiety over the future" where as in the Australian case, responses have been used for those who reported having been a nervous person "all of the time", "most of the time" and "a good bit of the time".

It is surprising to see that almost half of young people who were unemployed (45%) say they often feel anxious or nervous in Japan, about double that compared to the UE group in Australia where about 21% of respondents in the UE group reported feeling anxious or nervous. For both countries, those who were WHD reported having the lowest proportion of mental health.

5 Discussion

Table 2 provides a summary of the results for all three NEET groups in both Australia and Japan. In Australia, the group that is most disadvantaged in the areas discussed above consists of young people who were WOHD. That is, young people who did not have any home duties have the highest proportion of not completing secondary school, live in public housing, are in the lowest income decile, have poor subjective health and are a lone parent family. This result is consistent with Australian Census data which shows that young people who live in areas of lower socioeconomic status were over-represented for those who are NEET (AWPA, 2014). For Japan, the most disadvantaged group is the unemployed. Although this group has the highest level of university completion, they also have the highest rate of living in public housing, are in the lowest income decile, have poor subjective health, poor mental health, have the highest share of being a lone parent family and also highest share of living with their parents. However, results of the unemployed group in Japan should be interpreted with caution due to the small sample size of this group.

For those WHD, young people in Australia tend to be better off than those in Japan in terms of education, home ownership as well as income, which may suggest that the majority of those in this group are women who are not disadvantaged but might have taken time off work to have children or to care for their children. Interestingly, home ownership and income does not seem to be a problem for those WOHD in Japan and they are better off than those WOHD in Australia. This could be because the majority of respondents in this group consist of women in the older age group. Genda (2007) found that older women, less educated and lacking work experience are discouraged from entering the workforce due to gender inequality in the workplace. He also argued that competition for jobs from younger persons with higher education backgrounds tend to discourage women with less education to enter the workforce. This is evident from the group

of younger Japanese with higher proportion of university attainment in the unemployed group. In addition to this, there may also be evidence of an income effect - those that stay out of the labour force do so because they are able to afford to not look for work. Indeed, when the term NEET was first introduced in Japan, there have been criticisms that these were simply young people who came from wealthy families and were avoiding work. Although Genda (2007) showed that this result was true for Japan, the income effect for this group was declining over time. On the other hand, the proportions of jobless young people from poor families have increased. The results shown here reinforces the view held by Furlong where he argued that “NEET is a flawed concept that tries to merge a heterogeneous mix of young people, some being extremely disadvantaged while others are able to exercise choices” (Furlong, 2007).

In addition, the unemployed youth in both countries have the highest share of living with their parents. This could be caused by young people having to move back to their parental home due to lack of work and therefore were unable to support themselves. This has certainly been a trend seen amongst Australia youth. In 2006, almost one in four (23%) people aged 20–34 years were living at home with their parents, compared with 19% in 1986, where the main reason for staying at home or moving back home was because of financial circumstances (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009).

6 Conclusion

In this study, the comparisons of the socioeconomic characteristics of youth not in education, employment or training in Australia and Japan were carried out. Three sub-groups of NEET were created in order to separate those who were unemployed with young people who were involved with home duties and those who were not involved with home duties. Separating young people by these sub-groups have allowed for comparison of NEET groups while highlighting the heterogeneous aspect of young people who are NEET, provided useful insight into the differences and similarities of these groups between the two countries, as well as the advantages and disadvantages faced by certain groups. It also allowed for an Australian measure that is comparable to the Japanese definition of NEET.

The results show that demographically, the NEET groups in both countries are quite different. Japan has an older sample of NEET compared to Australia as well as higher proportions of women in all the groups of NEET in Japan. Socioeconomic characteristics between the two countries were then analysed where overall, young people who were NEET in Japan had higher levels of education qualifications and rates of home ownership compared to Australia but also higher rate of those still living with parents, higher levels of anxiety or nervousness and higher proportions of those in lowest income quintile. Australian NEETs had higher levels of poor subjective health and reporting often feeling tired as well as higher proportions of lone parents compared to Japan.

Young people who were unemployed in Japan were the most disadvantaged group while young people without home duties were the most disadvantaged in Australia.

There may also be a possibility of an income effect for those who are without home duties in Japan which are preventing them from entering the labour market. Also, living arrangements i.e. those who are still living with their parents do not buffer groups from disadvantage. For both countries, the young people who were unemployed lived with parents but still face other areas of disadvantage.

As with all research studies carried out, this study has its limitations. The definition of with home duties (WHD) and without home duties (WOHD) do not directly refer to housekeeping as a main activity and has been assumed according to the marital status of the individual and the presence of young children in the household. There was also no information on the employment characteristics of individuals such as previous work experience, labour force status before having children and take-up of maternity leave which may be useful in determining the NEET groups that young people may or may not fall into for both countries. Lastly, this study was a point-in-time study, which does not allow for analysis of young people who move in and out of the labour force.

In terms of next steps, I hope to extend this study by including a multinomial logistic regression to analyse the risk of falling into a particular NEET group according to the socioeconomic background of young people in Australia and Japan. In addition, previous studies have shown that for most, being NEET is a transient state and is a concept which must reflect the dynamics of young people's lives (Brynner and Parsons, 2002; Quintini et al., 2007). Therefore, I hope to include a longitudinal analysis to explore the circumstances of those that have been NEET for long periods of time.

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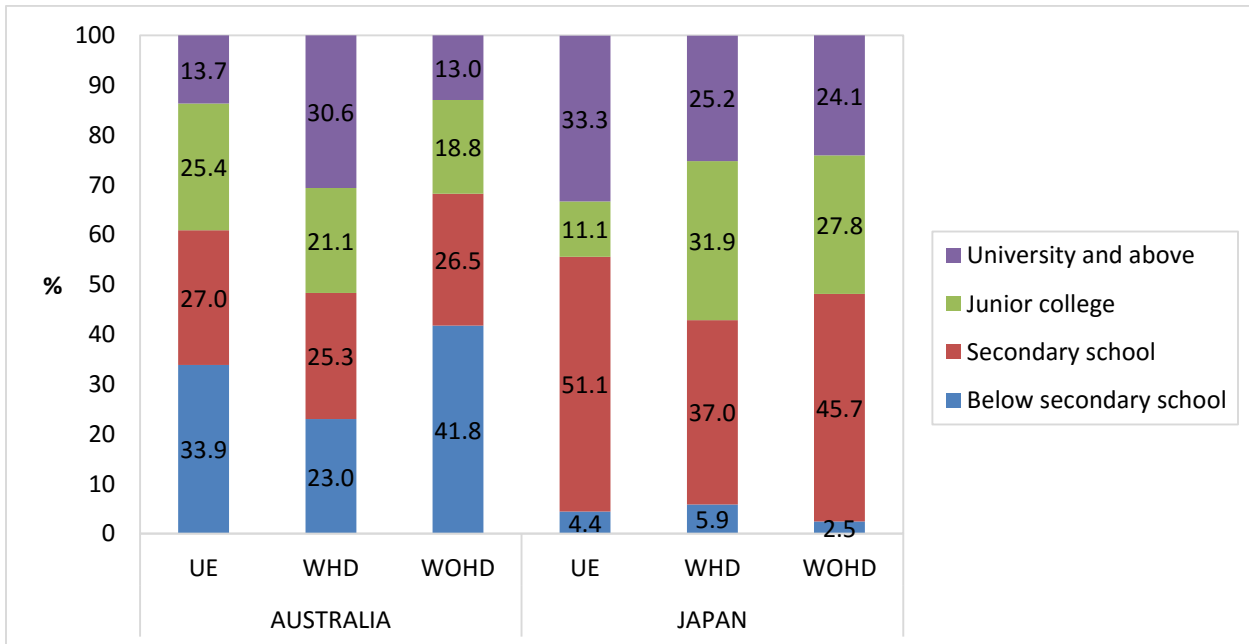
Table 1: NEET groups by sample size and proportions, 2009 (%)

	AUSTRALIA				JAPAN			
	UE	WHD	WOHD	Total	UE	WHD	WOHD	Total
Sample size, n	225	175	378	778	56	138	180	374
Percent, %	28.9	22.5	48.6	100.0	15.0	36.9	48.15.4	100.0

Table 2: NEET groups by age and gender, 2009 (%)

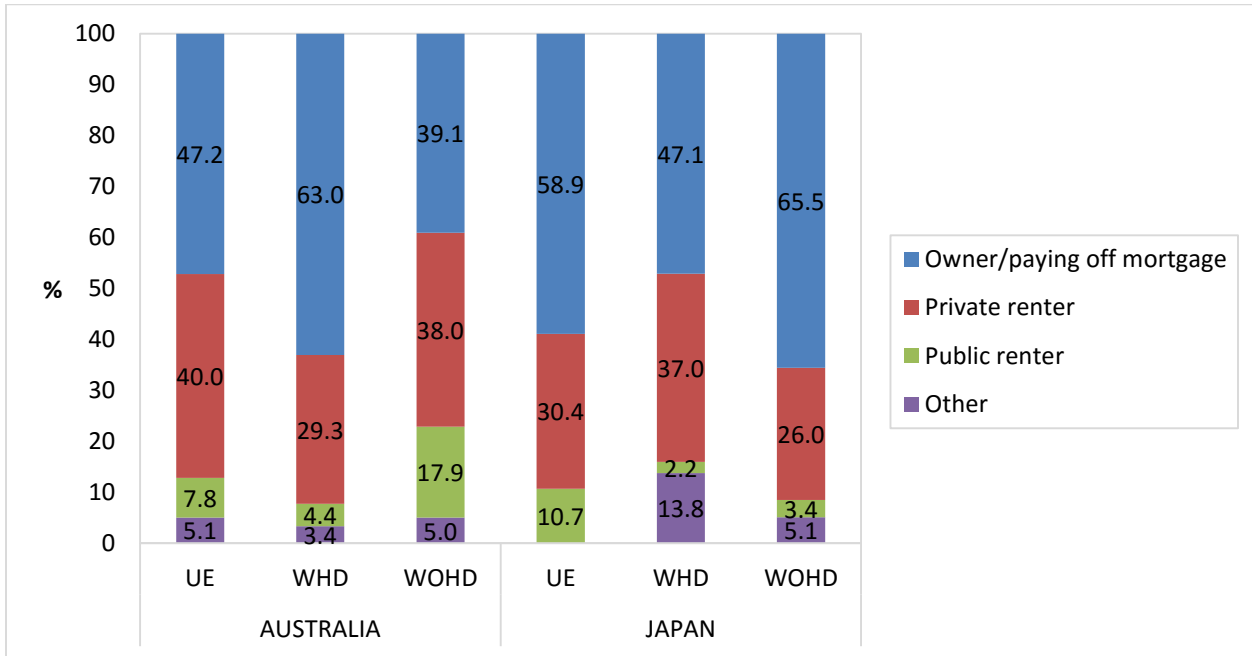
	AUSTRALIA			JAPAN		
	UE	WHD	WOHD	UE	WHD	WOHD
Sample size, n	225	175	378	56	138	180
Mean age	27.4	31.3	30.1	30.4	32.1	33.0
Percent, %						
20-24	38.6	8.6	21.3	25.0	3.6	10.6
25-29	28.7	27.4	23.3	23.2	21.7	13.9
30-34	16.5	37.2	23.4	17.9	44.2	22.2
35-39	16.2	26.8	32.0	33.9	30.4	53.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Men	59.5	3.5	29.0	41.1	0.0	6.1
Women	40.5	96.5	71.0	58.9	100.0	93.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Figure 1: NEET groups by education qualifications, 2009 (%)



Note: The corresponding categories for Australia are based on qualifications and are as follows: Below secondary school=Year 11 and below, Secondary school = Yeah 12, Junior college = Certificate III and IV, Advanced Diploma and Diploma, and University and above=Bachelor degree and above.

Figure 2: NEET groups by housing tenure, 2009 (%)



Note: In the JHPS data, 'Other' refers to company housing or dormitory and other type. For Australia, 'Other' refers to those who were involved in a rent-buy scheme and lived rent free or with life tenure.

Figure 3: NEET groups by lowest equivalised disposable household income decile, 2009 (%)

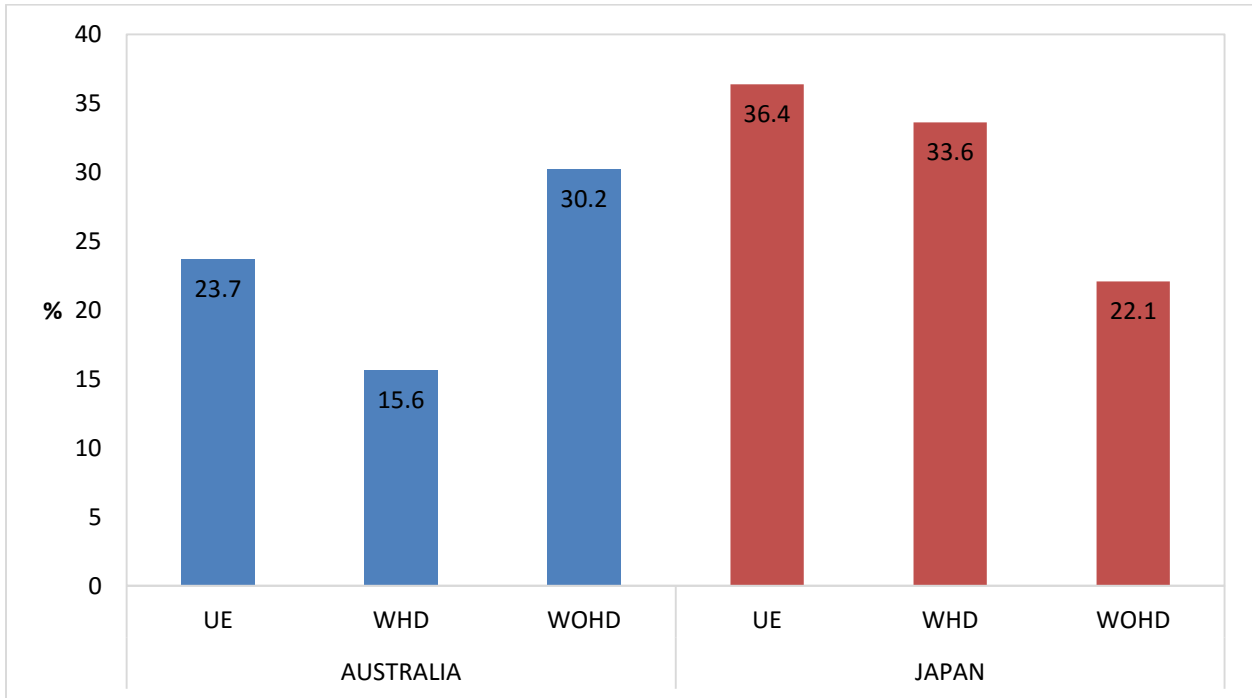
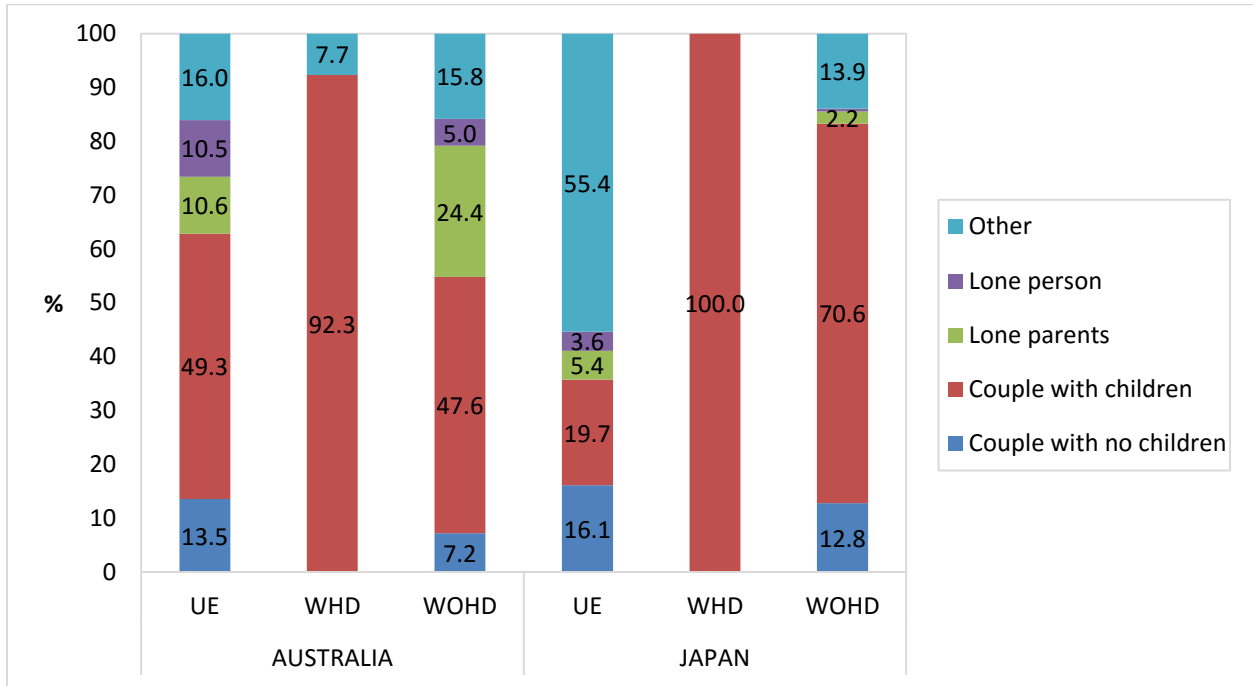


Figure 4: NEET groups by household type, 2009 (%)



Note: In the Australian data, 'Other' refers to group and multi-family households as well as those who are neither couple with or without children, lone parent or lone persons but may live with other related and non-related adults and children. In the Japanese data, other refers to those who are neither couple with or without children, lone parent or lone persons but may live with other related and non-related adults and children.

Figure 5: NEET groups by those living with parents, 2009 (%)

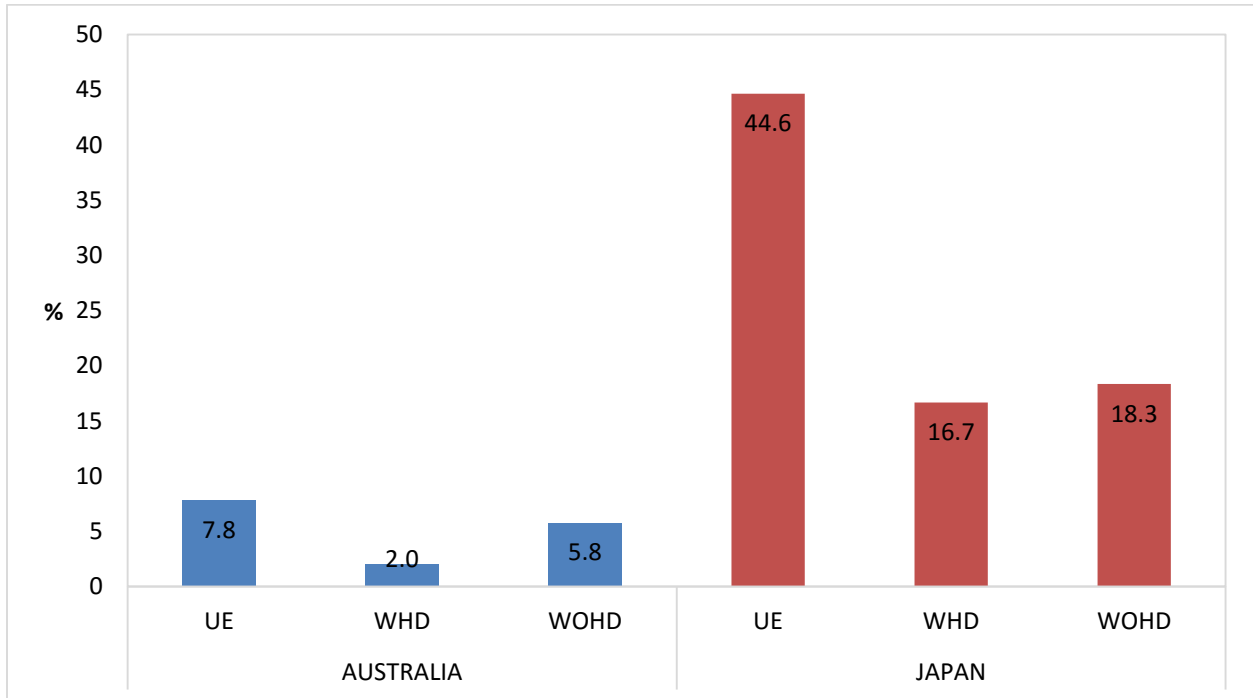
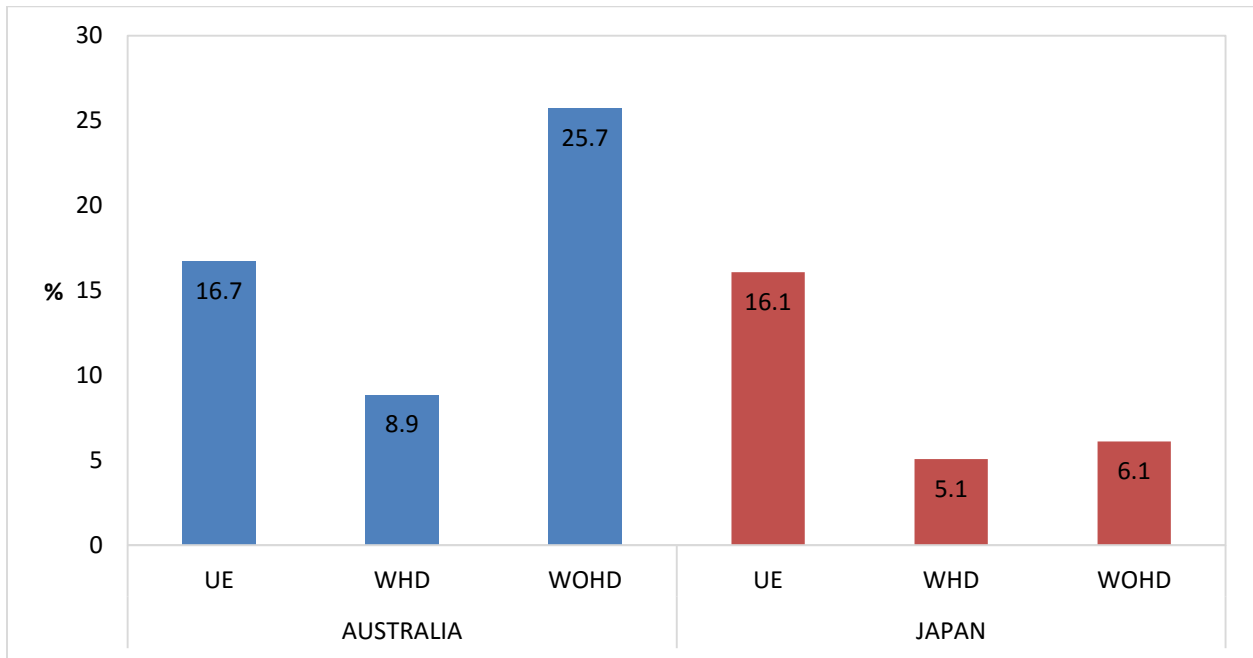
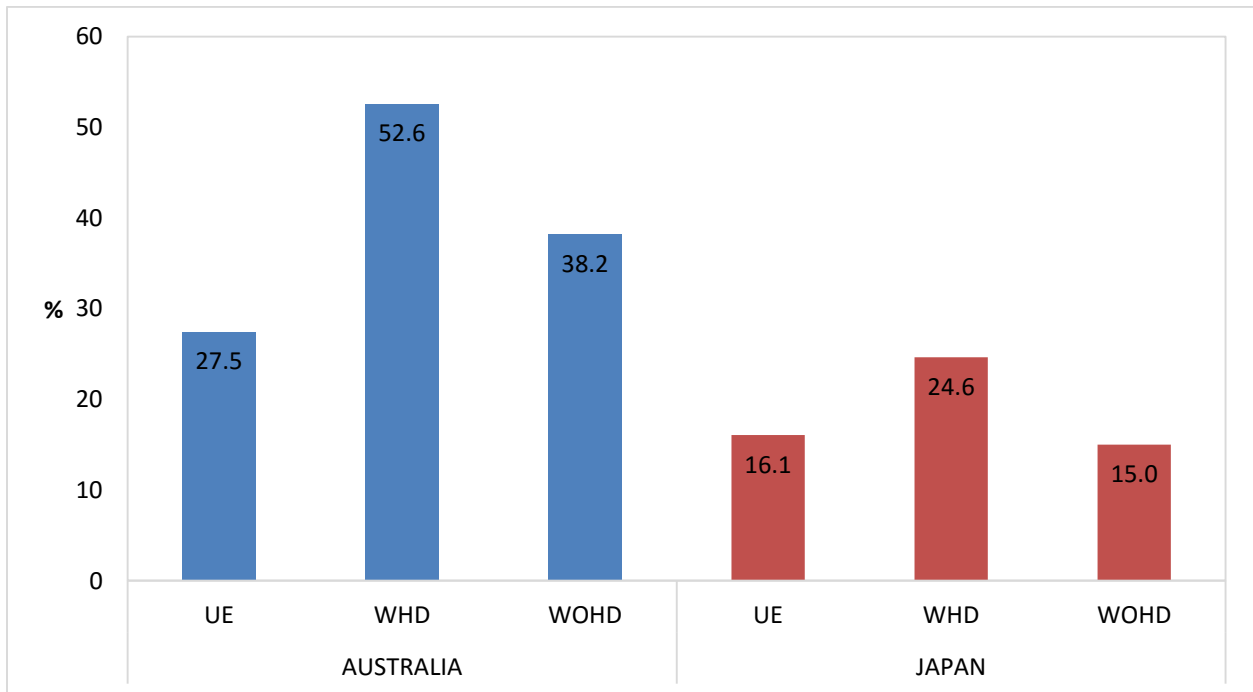


Figure 6: NEET groups by low subjective health, 2009 (%)



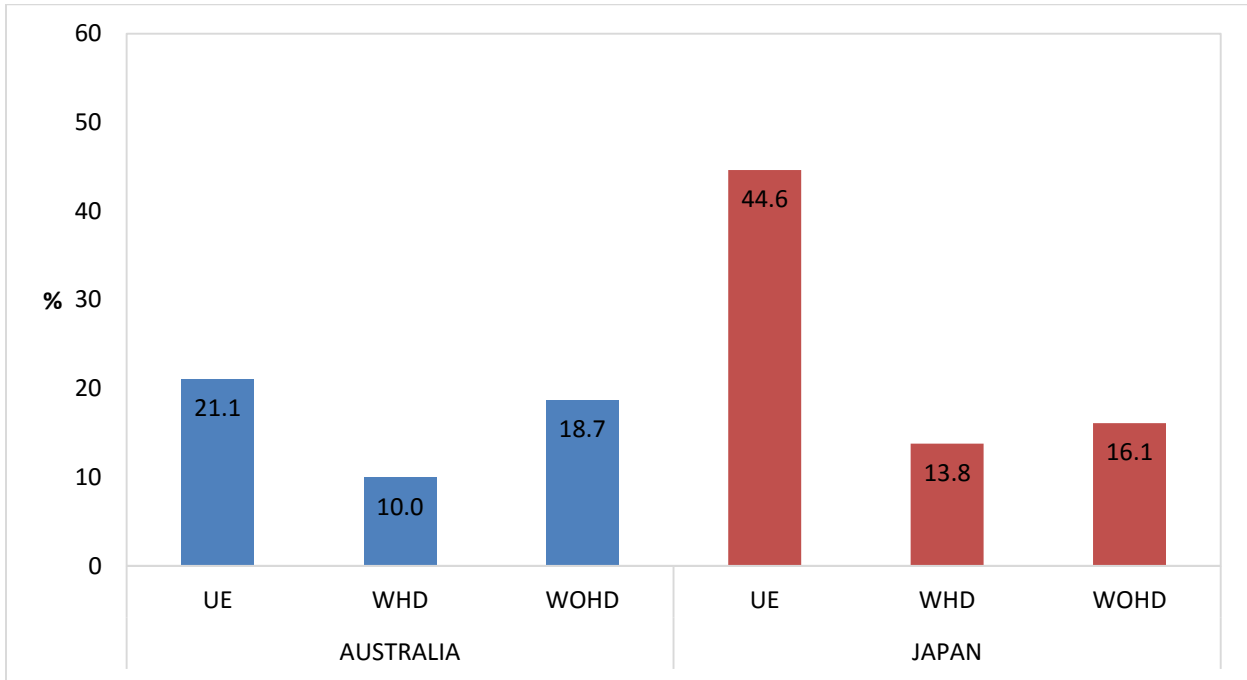
Note: Low subjective health is defined as those who reported their health to be "fair" or "poor" in the Australian data and "Fairly bad" or "Bad" in the Japanese data.

Figure 7: NEET groups by those who often feel tired, 2009 (%)



Note: This refers to the respondents who reported often "get tired easily" in the Japanese data and those who has those who felt tired "all of the time", "most of the time" and "a good bit of the time" in the Australian data.

Figure 8: NEET groups by those often feel anxious or nervous, 2009 (%)



Note: This refers to the respondents who reported often "feel anxiety over the future" in the Japanese data and those who has been a nervous person "all of the time", "most of the time" and "a good bit of the time" in the Australian data.

Table 2: Summary results for NEET groups in Australia and Japan

	AUSTRALIA	JAPAN
Unemployed (UE)	Highest proportion in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor mental health • Living with parents Lowest proportion in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home ownership 	Highest proportion in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University completion • Public housing • Lowest income decile • Poor subjective health • Poor mental health • Lone parent family • Living with parents
With home duties (WHD)	Highest proportion in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University completion • Home ownership • Poor physical health Lowest proportion in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowest income decile 	Highest proportion in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not completing secondary school • Poor subjective health • Poor physical health
Without home duties (WOHD)	Highest proportion in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not completing secondary school • Public housing • Lowest income decile • Poor subjective health • Lone parent family 	Highest proportion in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home ownership Lowest proportion in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowest income decile