



Positive influence?

A report into parents' attitudes to their children's career choices

FOREWORD

Construction is the UK's largest industry. This year will see the start of some 13,000 projects, with a value of £160 billion. In light of the industry's growth we currently face a huge skills demand and need to recruit 87,600 new recruits each year for the next five years in a range of roles, from technical and professional occupations to craft and clerical careers.



With output growth forecast to reach 10.8% by 2011 with over 2.8 million workers, the industry is risking its economic growth if it fails to tap into the huge potential of Britain's Black and Asian communities to recruit a diverse workforce representative of non-traditional recruits, including women.

Creating a diverse construction workforce, and at the same time overcoming outdated perceptions and pockets of bad practice in the industry is a huge task. It requires the cooperation of employers, teachers, careers advisers and especially the guidance of parents.

The industry needs to put in place the necessary measures to support recruits from non-traditional backgrounds. Teachers and careers advisers need to be supplied with the right information to communicate the range of opportunities in the industry. Parents - by encouraging their children to take advantage of the opportunities available to them - should urge them to find out about options that they may not have considered. Parents need to be well-informed and prepared to guide their child when making their first 'adult decisions'. They also need to be aware of the effect of

any underlying beliefs they may hold, which will undoubtedly affect their child's view of 'a good career for me'. As this report shows, parents of different ethnic origins have very different beliefs about their role in guiding their child's education and career choices.

The 2007 launch of the construction industry's annual recruitment campaign provides us with an opportunity to address the issue of diversity in construction directly. As the Sector Skills Council for the industry, we have a central role to play in driving the recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce. April 2007 sees the start of a number of new initiatives within our organisation. They include the arrival of trained diversity advisers able to provide one-to-one support for Black and Asian candidates and the creation of new strategic partnerships that will support a diverse construction workforce from schools to FE colleges to the workplace.

The £1 million Positive Image advertising and marketing campaign will challenge young people to 'Make their Mark' by joining the construction industry. The campaign features TV advertising on digital and terrestrial channels, online advertising,

email response, mobile phone gaming, outdoor advertising and PR activity, all supported by our education and apprentice teams on the ground throughout the UK. It aims to engage and inspire young people and increase the quality and diversity of applicants to the industry.

We hope the *Positive Influence?* research contains some thought-provoking insights for all readers. We look forward to working with partners in education and industry to support young people in making educated choices about their career.

**Sir Michael Latham, chairman,
ConstructionSkills**



“We need to foster positive attitudes towards vocational education and training amongst parents as well as young people. The Government is introducing the new 14-19 Diplomas to encourage more people to stay in education and training but also bridge the gap between vocational and academic education that has held this country back for too long.

“Diplomas will open up careers like construction to a wider variety of potential new entrants, particularly young female learners and those from Black and ethnic minority groups. We very much support the aims of ConstructionSkills’ Positive Image campaign seeking to increase the diversity of the workforce and attract women into less traditional sectors and careers.”

Phil Hope MP, Skills Minister

INTRODUCTION

This report is informed by a survey of over 600 parents of children aged under 18, commissioned by ConstructionSkills and carried out by ICM Research in February 2007. The survey itself builds upon previous qualitative research with Black and Asian teenagers in Tower Hamlets, Leeds, and Leicester in February 2007. The overall aim of the research is to facilitate a better understanding of the factors influencing course study and career choices among young people.

The survey provides a snapshot view of UK parents and their aspirations for their children's future. It asks whether Britain is a nation of 'pushy parents', or by contrast, are mothers and fathers so keen to be 'best friends' with their teenage children that they are reluctant to appear as authority figures?

The Positive Influence? report sets out to discover the factors motivating young people's education and career choices, from peer groups and pop stars to TV and tabloid newspapers. Is the next generation likely to want to change the world? Or more simply to want to make a difference to their bank balance?

It identifies the challenge faced by the UK's largest industry, as it battles to overcome the traditional perceptions that construction is a career for those under-achieving in other school subject areas - a career summed up by the image of 'blokes, bums and bricks'. How can the industry successfully communicate the range and quantity of opportunities it offers, and increase its allure as a first-choice career path for everyone regardless of background, colour, gender and other traditional barriers to entry?

Most vitally, it seeks to reach Black and Asian parents to understand their views on a desirable career for their children, and to provide a platform for the construction industry to communicate the opportunities it offers to this community.

Whilst recognising large disparities in the Black and Asian Minority Ethnic (BAAME) population the report seeks to identify some common concerns and barriers to help us address the general under-representation of BAAME groups in the construction industry.

POSITIVE INFLUENCE? REPORT FINDINGS

Key findings of the ConstructionSkills survey into parental attitudes to their child’s career choices, from how much guidance they feel they should offer their child, to the ideal job criteria, and where parents think the best opportunities lie in tomorrow’s labour market.

Who do parents think has the biggest influence over their child’s career choices?

- 71% of parents believe that the biggest influence on their children’s career is one or both parents.
- 59% of parents believe they shouldn’t have much of an influence on their children’s career choices.
- 57% of Black and Asian parents expect to play a key role in their children’s career choices compared to an overall average of 39%
- Over half of respondents (54%) said that both parents have equal influence over their children, however, individually mothers (14%) ranked considerably higher than fathers (4%), with teachers ranked at 13%

Overwhelmingly, parents see themselves as influencers of their children’s career choices, but want to exercise that influence with a lighter touch. There is approximately a 60:40 split between the ‘hands-off’ and the ‘hands-on’ approach, with only minor deviations between parents of different age, gender, social class, region and working status; nor did the children’s age and gender produce much variation in the response.

Generally, mothers and fathers identify the greatest influence on their children as being ‘both parents equally’, although the mother on her own is the next most favoured choice (14%).

Almost two-thirds (64%) of those who identified both parents as the biggest influence also expected to have a lot of influence over their children’s career choices.

Behind parents, schools and other family members, celebrities and the media were thought to be the next biggest influence. For both white and non-white parents the Church and other community groups and celebrities/media are the two factors parents believe are least influential over their children’s career choices.

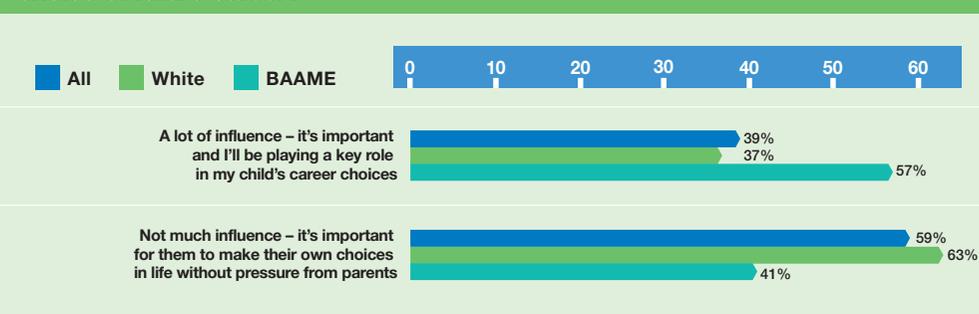
Who has the biggest influence on your child's career choices?

Influence	Total
Both Parents	54%
Teacher/School careers adviser	34%
Other family members	25%
Celebrities/the media	19%
Peers	17%
Community groups e.g. Church	16%

While only 39% of parents expect to play a key role in their children’s career choices, the picture is dramatically different among Black and Asian families, where the proportion rises to 57% of parents.

Almost two-thirds (64%) of Black and Asian parents said they thought their children would have to work harder to succeed, because of their ethnic origin. This view was particularly widely held among Black and Asian parents aged 18-24 (77%) and those in the C2* (81%) and DE (70%) demographic groups

As a parent, how much influence do you believe you should have on your child’s choice of future career?



* See back page for social class definitions

Raj Kotecha, 20, a civil engineering student, wasn't sure what kind of career he wanted to pursue but was encouraged to find out more by a speaker from a local construction firm who visited his school.

Raj says: *"Following a work placement at the Miller Group, I realised that my love of construction is down to the fact that I'm such a fidgety person; I just can't sit still and would hate to be constantly cooped up in an office when I start work properly."*

"The best thing about my course so far has been seeing how something goes from drawings on paper to what you see on a site. Seeing those techniques in practice is fantastic. In the future, I'd love to get involved in more structural engineering work, especially large capital projects, like the Olympics."

"I'm extremely proud of my son for making his own decisions about his career and for securing an Inspire Scholarship before he began his course at university. Although I've always supported Raj, I don't think I've had a huge influence over him. He has always sought careers information from a wide range of sources, including teachers and the internet."

Mahesh Kotecha, Raj's father.

Would parents be happy or unhappy if their child wished to follow their own career, and why?

- 54% of parents (62% of Black and Asian parents) would be happy for their children to follow their own career, while 19% would be unhappy.
- 62% of parents in the AB social classes want their children to go to university, compared to only 37% of parents in DE social classes.
- 40% of parents in the DE social classes want their children to learn a trade or craft, compared to only 26% of parents in AB social classes.

When asked if they would be happy for their children to follow in their footsteps, over half (54%) of parents said 'yes'. This view was expressed by 63% of those in the AB demographic, compared to 46% in the DE demographic. The principal reason underlying this opinion was a general perception that their own job was a good one, with factors such as pay, prospects, fulfilment and importance rating less highly.

When asked if they would be happy for their children to follow in their footsteps, nearly two-thirds (62%) of Black and Asian parents said 'yes', compared to 53% of White parents.

No less than 50% of those who expressed unhappiness at their children following their career wanted something better for them, while others (12%) actively disliked their job, or thought there were better ways to earn a living (8%).

What parents think about the number of career opportunities these days, compared to when they left school, and the quality of jobs available

- 65% of parents think there are more career opportunities for young people now, compared to when they left school. The percentages are higher in South East England (71%) and Wales (75%) than in Northern England (60%).
- 43% of parents (52% of Black and Asian parents) believe the quality of jobs is better now than when they left school, while 26% of parents believe the quality of jobs is worse.
- Parents would be most pleased if their children wanted to be a doctor (41%) or a teacher (11%), with the other options - policeman, civil engineer, journalist, accountant and construction site manager - all coming in at 6% or less. Last of all came pop star, at 2%.

Almost two thirds of parents (65%) feel that there are more career opportunities for young people now, compared to when they left school. There is a difference of view between North and South, with 75% of people in Wales and South West and 71% of people in the South East saying there are now more career opportunities; compared to only 60% of people in Northern England.

However, the view that 'the quality of opportunities has improved since their day' is held by 52% of Black and Asian parents compared to only 41% of White parents. This is a promising indication that there may now be fewer invisible barriers to entry for Blacks and Asians in the workplace. Their children may still have to work harder than White children to achieve the same, but the playing field is more level than it used to be.

Which industries do parents think will provide the best career opportunities in future?

When asked to identify where the best career opportunities lay, parents chose IT (23%) followed by construction (20%) and medicine (18%) ahead of others such as teaching, banking, law, media, retail, police and manufacturing. Construction scored consistently well across all age groups, social classes, regions and ethnic groups.

What are the most important factors for their child's career?

- Parents believe the most important factor in their children's choice of career is 'Quality of life'.
- Parents believe the least important factor in their children's choice of career is 'Status'.
- Among Black and Asian parents career progression ranks above personal fulfillment, and salary ranks above contribution to community or environment.

According to all parents, quality of life is the most important factor for their children's choice of career, followed by personal fulfillment, career progression and helping others. Less important were: contributing to the community and environment, salary, working for themselves and, at the bottom of the pile, status.

There are relatively few significant variations between parents of different ages, gender, social class, region and working status, or with children of differing age and gender: salary is more important to parents from lower social classes than from higher, and less important to the Scots and Welsh than to the English.

Salary and status seem to be more important to Black and Asian parents than White parents. By contrast, personal fulfillment is less important to Black and Asian parents than White parents.

Career progression is more important to parents from lower social classes than from higher. Contributing to the community and the environment as well as helping others are more important factors for parents from DE social classes than ABCs.

Biggest factor for child's choice of career?

Factor	White	BME's
Quality of life	1	1
Opportunity for personal fulfillment	2	3
Opportunities for career progression	3	2
Opportunity to help others	4	4
Contribute to community/environment	5	6
Salary	6	5
Entrepreneurialism/ work for themselves	7	7
Status	8	8

And which career would parents be most pleased to mention that their child was pursuing?

Which career would you be most pleased with (for your child)?	
Career	Total
Doctor	41%
Teacher	11%
Policeman	6%
Civil Engineer	6%
Journalist	5%
Accountant	5%
Construction Site Manager	4%
Pop Star	2%

Do you feel there are more career opportunities or less than when you left school?

There are more career opportunities for young people than when I left education	
All	65%
South East	71%
Midlands	61%
Northern England	60%
Wales & South West	75%
Scotland	62%

There are fewer career opportunities for young people than when I left education	
All	31%
South East	25%
Midlands	37%
Northern England	35%
Wales & South West	22%
Scotland	34%

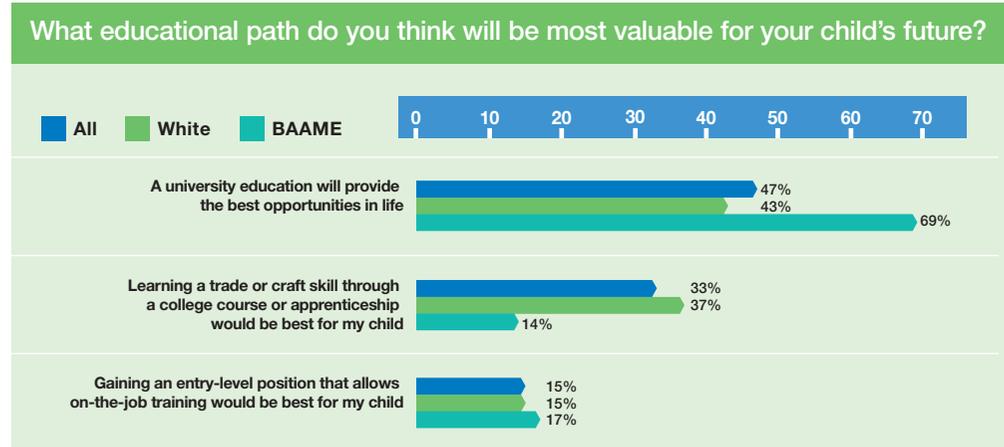
What educational path do parents consider will be most valuable for their child’s future?

The report findings also provide a boost for the government's vocational skills agenda, with 48% of parents thinking that learning a trade or an entry level position with on-the-job training is the best option. This is almost level with 47% of parents thinking that universities provide the most valuable educational path.

University is viewed as more important by those in the AB social classes than the DE social classes: more parents from the DE social classes (40%) want their children to pursue a trade or craft than those from the AB classes (26%).

Interestingly, university is seen as much less important by parents between 18 and 24 than by those over 25, possibly suggesting either that those parents were not themselves graduates or that they have yet to see the benefit of their university education given the burden of student debt and early parenthood.

University is viewed as the most valuable educational path by 69% of Black and Asian parents compared to 43% of White parents. More than half (51%) of Black and Asian parents thought they had higher expectations of their children than White parents.




“When I was choosing a subject to study at university, I spoke to a careers adviser and Quantity Surveying was an easy choice – it seemed to match my skill-set well. Since starting my career I’ve worked on a range of projects including the iconic GLA building in London and Gatwick’s Pier 6 project.”

Samta Patel



Gemma Sapiano, 25, works for Willmott Dixon Construction and has progressed rapidly up the ranks to become a Building Manager.

She is currently working on a new £7.6 million science block for Oundle School near Peterborough. Discovering a new-found love of construction on completion of an art and design course at college, Gemma joined Willmott Dixon as a Management Trainee in September 2000.

Gemma says: *"I love my job, especially the variety of tasks in a day; it never gets boring. Managing people on site is really important to get projects finished; seeing a building develop from start to finish and knowing you made it happen is an incredible feeling."*

Gemma enjoys spreading the word about all the career opportunities available in construction and is encouraging young people to find out more by joining her MySpace network: <http://www.Myspace.com/gemmasapiano>

How would parents react if their child wanted to go into a career that was not stereotypical for their gender?

- 90% of White parents and only 64% of Black and Asian parents would be proud that their child chose a career that wasn't stereotypical for their gender.
- 51% of Black and Asian parents believe they have higher expectations of their children than their White counterparts.
- 64% of Black and Asian parents believe their children will have to work harder to succeed because of their ethnic origin.

How would parents feel if their child wanted to work in the construction industry?

- 40% of parents would be pleased if their children were interested in working in the construction industry. Only 8% would be disappointed.
- 68% of mothers and 49% of fathers don't know that construction is the UK's largest employer, with 87,600 new jobs a year.
- 20% of parents believe the construction industry offers the most career opportunities for their children, while 23% say the IT/technology industries.

Today's parents are extremely supportive of a child looking to break the mould. When asked how they would respond to their child choosing a career in an area traditionally dominated by the other sex, 86% of all parents said it would make them proud. The proportion is even higher among parents aged 18-44 (88%), from the AB social classes (90%) and from Northern England (90%).

By contrast - reflecting a wider concern about the challenge their child faces to 'fit in' - Black and Asian parents had concerned reactions to their child wanting to pursue a career that is atypical for their gender. Over a third (36%) expressed concern that their child would struggle to fit in whereas only 8% of White parents expressed the same concern.

CONCLUSIONS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Durkan is one example of a construction company which visibly puts its diversity policy into practice. Focusing on three main groups: women, ethnic minorities and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, the company has fostered links with a number of partner organisations including Women and Manual Trades and Women's Education in Building (WEB) to ensure it really makes a difference. Durkan also has a dedicated diversity resource, Community Liaison Manager, Paul McCrea, who mentors young people, gives on-site support to new recruits and acts as a construction ambassador in local schools. By making implementation of its equal opportunities policy a key business objective, Durkan have been able to train over 200 women since 1999 and provide six Modern Apprenticeships for young Black students since 2003. Durkan's community outreach work is often the first opportunity that local students have to learn more about careers in construction and the company's ability to offer work placements is crucial in convincing young people that a career in the industry is a viable option for them.



Managing Director, Robert Clark says: *"As well as helping the industry to combat the issue of skills shortages, we have seen countless commercial benefits which are a direct result of having such a strong diversity policy. It's not just policy for policy's sake but is something which is making a real difference to local communities and showing that we are delivering on the ground. Because we have concrete evidence of putting our diversity policy into practice our clients see us as a responsible business, and consequently, our profile is raised among potential new clients."*

Statistics from the latest Construction Skills Network Report published in March 2007 - the most thorough and comprehensive data analysis and consultation ever conducted for the construction industry - reveal that 87,600 recruits will be needed each year between 2007-2011 in order to meet demand and to take account of those leaving the industry.

It also shows that, to meet the challenge of attracting sufficient recruits, the construction industry will have to challenge existing stereotypes about the various non-professional occupations within the industry, and reverse the current under-representation of women and ethnic minorities. Findings from the *Positive Influence?* survey indicate an openness to change but with much work still to be done.

A career in construction

Mention of the construction industry as a career choice provokes very little negative reaction: 40% of parents would be pleased and 50% neither pleased nor displeased if their child wished to enter the industry. However, when asked which of a range of potential career choices would please them, it appears that parents are still rather conservative and traditional in outlook: only 6% or less of parents opted for construction careers such as 'civil engineer', 'construction site manager' and 'bricklayer', while 'doctor' took a clear lead for 41% of parents.

There are, however, clear signs of a shift in attitudes: among parents aged 55 and above (26%), and to a lesser extent among those aged 45-54 (13%), there is a significant minority who would be disappointed were their children to work in the construction industry. By contrast, this would disappoint around 6% of parents between 18 and 44. There is little difference in views between gender, region, social class or ethnicity.

A clear pattern emerges when parents are asked to explain this view: 70% of those expressing disappointment have no bias against the construction industry, they simply think there are better ways of earning a living. Those approving of the choice do so for a number of different reasons: because it is well paid with good prospects, provides a skill for life, opens up a broad range of opportunities, will keep them in work, or simply because they want their children to be happy and would support them whatever they choose. Yet 60% when questioned were unaware that construction is the UK's largest employer.

This may not be a ringing endorsement of construction but it reflects the intense challenge faced by the industry to attract the best candidates. When asked which of 10 careers chosen by their children would give them most pleasure, they chose doctor (41%), followed by teacher (11%), policeman (6%), civil engineer (6%), journalist (5%), accountant (5%), construction site manager (4%), pop star (2%), marketer (2%) and bricklayer (1%).

CONCLUSIONS FOR EDUCATIONALISTS



Dr M. Rachel Mulvey
Head of Centre for
Training in Careers
Guidance, University
of East London
Immediate Past
President, Institute
of Careers Guidance

“We welcome the Positive Influence? research – it proves once again that parents are a significant influence on their children’s choice of career.

“The challenge for career guidance professionals is to personalise the services we offer, taking into account family preferences and cultural differences, so we work effectively to support young people making informed choices.

“Equally, our members want to complement the guidance teachers give by contributing our specialist knowledge of the labour market informed by the work of Sector Skills Councils such as ConstructionSkills.”

Whilst the survey reveals parental perceptions of their own influence to be key, the strongest secondary influence on their children’s career choices is thought (by 34% of parents) to be that of teachers and school careers advisers.

There is a social divide: 20% of parents in the DE social classes thought schools had the greatest influence on their children, compared to just 8% of those in the AB social classes. This may indicate that some parents feel unequal to the task of offering careers advice: they want their children to ‘outdo’ them, to succeed where they failed, to explore careers beyond the boundaries of their own experience. To do so in an increasingly complex and specialised job market, they need expert help from school careers advisers.

The role of teachers becomes even more important especially when parents are hanging back, not wishing to exert too much pressure on their children. Teachers should be ready to plug the gap, not only in the provision of information and impartial advice but also in helping to discourage parents and students alike from thinking that certain career paths are, or should be, closed to them because of their gender, ethnicity or background.

The survey results also indicate that parents are aware of the increasing importance of their children making the right choice of subjects and courses at school in order to be able to follow a chosen career path. Without the right information from teachers at the right time, wrong choices can be made, leading to disappointment and missed opportunities. Educationalists therefore need to ensure that all schools and colleges are equipped with the necessary information to direct students towards the most appropriate choice for them.

According to the 2007 Construction Skills Network Report, the highest forecast increase in construction jobs will be in trades such as bricklaying and building envelope specialists, including cladders and roofers (14%). However, white collar workers will also be in significant demand: over 32% of the forecast requirement is for professional roles such as construction managers, architects and technical staff.

Talk of a career ‘in construction’ describes literally hundreds of distinct occupations, appealing to students of all abilities and aptitudes across the spectrum of arts, sciences, technical and practical subjects. Any difficulties posed by the sheer weight of choice may to some extent be alleviated by ConstructionSkills’ continuing efforts to clarify certain career pathways with initiatives such as the proposed new GCSE in Construction and the Built Environment (currently piloting),

the Construction and the Built Environment Diploma and the Inspire Scholarship scheme – which helps selected graduates gain £9,000 in funding and work experience with an industry employer and is currently receiving hundreds of applications. Anyone interested in a career in construction should visit www.bconstructive.co.uk which received over 457,000 visits last year alone.

Only by close cooperation with schools and colleges, and in recruiting from all sectors of the community to all levels of the industry, will the construction industry succeed in meeting its forecast need. This requires employers to get involved at all stages: from providing school work experience to apprenticeship places, and by supporting entry to Construction and the Built Environment degree courses in sponsoring the Inspire Scholarship scheme.

CONCLUSIONS FOR PARENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE



"My only exposure to careers advice at school was via a psychometric test. However, the outcome of the test suggested I might be suited to construction and I was subsequently able to spend a day on site at the British Library, near King's Cross, when it was being built. Seeing the project under development first-hand was fantastic and it gave me a real insight into the industry. Although at the time I didn't know I wanted to be a cost consultant, it definitely got me thinking!"

Alfred Kanya, 26, Senior Cost Manager



"Construction offers up so many opportunities for young people. I'm currently working in Boston, USA, where the skills I learnt at home are proving really useful. I'm also learning lots as certain things are done quite differently here! My family has no ties to the industry, I was just really lucky to stumble upon this career when I was choosing a degree course. Sadly, it's not something you hear about at all at school or college in the UK - that needs to be changed in my view."

Tom Donkin, 24, Quantity Surveying and Commercial Management graduate

Almost two-thirds (59%) of parents of children under 18 years old believe they should not have too much influence over their child's choice of future career, despite acknowledging that they are their child's greatest external influence (54%). So is the light parental touch what children really need?

Whatever the position, parents should not underestimate their own role in helping their children to sift through the bewildering array of complex and interwoven choices they have to make - about what they like to study, what they need to learn and what they want to become.

Despite rating quality of life and personal fulfilment as the most important career drivers for their children, the survey reveals that parents:

- would predominantly be happy if their children followed their own career;
- rate university as the most valuable educational path for their children to follow;
- confess that the most parent-pleasing career choice their child could make would be to become a doctor.

It is possible that conformity is alive and well beneath liberal overtones, which indicates that parents could be confusing their children with mixed messages.

So when 86% of parents say they would be proud if their child chose a career that wasn't stereotypical for their gender, do they really mean it?

APPENDIX

POSITIVE INFLUENCE SURVEY: THE QUESTIONS*

1. As a parent, how much influence do you believe you should have on your child's choice of future career?
- A lot of influence – it's important and I'll be playing a key role in my child's career choices (39%)
 - Not much influence – it's important for them to make their own choices in life without pressure from parents (59%)
2. Who do you think has the (a) biggest influence (b) second biggest influence on your child's career choice?
- Mother (14%) (5%)
 - Father (3%) (7%)
 - Both parents equally (54%) (14%)
 - Other family members, e.g. grandparent, uncle, sibling (2%) (16%)
 - Peers (3%) (7%)
 - Teacher/school career advisers (13%) (34%)
 - Celebrities/the media (3%) (5%)
 - Community groups e.g. church (1%) (2%)
3. Would you be happy (54%) or unhappy (19%) or neither (26%) if your child wanted to follow your own career (and why)?
4. Do you think there are more (65%) the same (2%) or fewer (3%) career opportunities for young people than when you left education?
5. Do you think the quality of jobs available now is better (43%), worse (26%) or the same (29%) than when you left education?
6. What do you think is most important for your child's career?
- Quality of life (94%)
 - Opportunity for personal fulfilment (89%)
 - Opportunities for career progression (79%)
 - Opportunity to help others (74%)
 - Chance to contribute to the community/environment (66%)
 - Salary (62%)
 - Entrepreneurialism/ opportunity to work for themselves (60%)
 - Status (46%)
7. What educational path do you think will be most valuable for your child's future?
- A university education will provide the best opportunities in life (47%)
 - Learning a trade or craft skill through a college course or apprenticeship would be best for my child (33%)
 - Gaining an entry-level position that allows on-the-job training would be best for my child (15%)
8. If your child were interested in working in the construction industry, would you be pleased (40%) or disappointed (8%) or neither (50%) (and why)?
9. If your child went into a career that wasn't stereotypical for their gender (eg your daughter wanted to work in the construction industry or your son wanted to be a ballet dancer, would you (a) be worried they were challenging the norm and would struggle to fit in (3%) (b) be proud that they had made their own choice (86%) or (c) neither (1%)
10. Which career would you be (a) most pleased (b) second most pleased (c) least pleased to mention that your child was pursuing?
- Doctor (41%) (14%) (2%)
 - Teacher (11%) (18%) (4%)
 - Policeman (6%) (8%) (6%)
 - Civil engineer (6%) (6%) (1%)
 - Journalist (5%) (9%) (8%)
 - Accountant (5%) (10%) (3%)
 - Construction site manager (4%) (6%) (5%)
 - Pop star (2%) (4%) (29%)
 - Marketing (2%) (5%) (4%)
 - Bricklayer (1%) (2%) (12%)
11. What industries do you think will provide the most career opportunities in the future?
- IT/Technology (23%)
 - Construction (20%)
 - Doctor/medical profession (18%)
 - Teaching (12%)
 - Banking/financial sector (8%)
 - Service industry (6%)
 - The media (6%)
 - Legal (3%)
 - Retail (2%)
 - Police (2%)
 - Leisure/entertainment industry (2%)
 - Travel/tourism (2%)
 - Environmental services (1%)
 - Armed forces/military (1%)
 - Marketing (1%)
 - Communication (1%)
 - Science/scientist (1%)
 - Electronic (1%)
 - Farming/agriculture (<1%)
 - Manufacturing (<1%)
 - Community work (<1%)
 - Other (9%)
12. Did you know that construction is one of the UK's largest employers, with 87,600 jobs available each year? Yes 40%, No 60%
13. Do you think that you have higher expectations of your child than White British parents? Yes 51%, No 41%
14. Do you feel your child will have to work harder to succeed because of their ethnic origin? Yes 64%, No 34%
- * For brevity, some questions have been rephrased and possible answers why to questions 3b and 8b have been omitted.

APPENDIX

About ConstructionSkills

ConstructionSkills is a partnership between CITB-ConstructionSkills, CIC and CITB (NI). It is one of the Sector Skills Councils tasked by the Government to implement UK-wide Sector Skills Agreements between the bodies responsible for delivering training in the UK and those that demand it. Through its network of regional offices, ConstructionSkills' Recruitment and Careers Teams work with around 25% of all schools in the country. This involves working with careers advisers to expand their knowledge of the industry, with teachers to supply curriculum resources and with young people to assist with construction-related activities.

About ConstructionSkills' diversity-led activity

From May 2007, ConstructionSkills is providing a team of dedicated Equality Advisors (replacing Equal Opportunities Liaison Officers) based in the North, the South and the Midlands. These dedicated diversity staff are able to offer help and support to Black and Asian and Minority Ethnic candidates as they enter the industry with CV writing, interview technique tips and support during the job hunt process.

During 2007 ConstructionSkills will be extending its Construction Ambassador Programme to develop a Mentoring and Support scheme, to assist BAAME candidates in their early stages of employment, address any specific concerns that they might have and provide practical and emotional support to ensure that BAAME candidates do not feel isolated. The Construction Ambassador Mentoring & Support scheme will aim to assist BAAMEs of all ages, from 16+ and graduate level to career changers entering the industry.

In addition to diversity targets for BAAME and female apprenticeships, ConstructionSkills has a range of initiatives that actively recruit Black and Asian candidates into the industry and assist them in finding a sustainable career:

- The STEP programme is designed to assist employers in the recruitment of atypical recruits in order to create a more representative and effective workforce. Resources are offered to employers to enable them to fund 'positive action events' in schools, colleges and universities that can enlighten organisations to the business benefits of employing non traditional recruits.
- The Women and Work project, assists women of all ages (from 19+, to returners) into sustainable construction roles and is measured directly by job outcomes. The Women and Work project is currently being rolled out in areas of high BAAME populations (Merseyside, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield) and is being extended into the 5 London Olympic Boroughs during 2007 – offering more BAAME women the opportunity of sustainable jobs in construction.
- From Autumn 2007, the ConstructionSkills administrated-Inspire Scholarship scheme will actively target and seek more applications from the BAAME community. Up to £9,000 is available for under-graduates studying construction-related degree courses to help in their studies. The scheme is now in its third year and in 2006, over 750 young people applied. Of particular note was that 30% were female. However, just 8% were ethnic minority applicants, reminding us of the real challenge that remains in coming years.

- The Recruitment and Careers team is currently in discussion with the Stephen Lawrence Trust to develop a 'one stop shop' for BAAME candidates (plus their parents and wider community groups), to provide detailed information, advice and guidance about career pathways into construction and the built environment.

ICM Research and the Positive Influence? report

ICM is a member of the British Polling Council and its research conforms to BPC rules. The research was conducted between 23 February and 1 March 2007 by telephone interviews among a random sample

of 640 parents of children aged under 18. Of the 640 interviews, 120 were conducted with Black and Asian minority ethnic parents. The research was carried out for the construction industry's Positive Image recruitment campaign, which seeks to communicate the range of careers on offer in the modern industry. Interviews were conducted across the country and the results have been weighted to the profile of all adults.

For further information, please contact Becky Jefcoate, marketing manager, Field and Managing Agency, ConstructionSkills. Tel. 01485 577 577

What is Social Class?

Social Grade A

- 3% of the population
- Professional people, very senior managers in business or commerce or top level civil servants
- Retired people previously graded A and their widows

Social Grade B

- 14% of the population
- Middle management executives in large organisations with appropriate qualifications
- Principal officers in local government and civil service
- Top management or owners of small business concerns, educational and service establishments
- Retired people previously graded B and their widows

Social Grade C1

- 26% of the population
- Junior management, owners of small establishments, and all non manual positions
- Jobs in this group have very varied responsibilities and educational requirements
- Retired people previously graded C1 and their widows

Social Grade C2

- 25% of the population
- All skilled manual workers and those manual workers with responsibility for other people
- Retired people previously graded C2, with pensions from their job
- Widows if receiving pensions from the late partners job

Social Grade D

- 19% of the population
- All semi skilled and unskilled manual workers, and apprentices and trainees to skilled workers
- Retired people previously graded D, with pensions from their job
- Widows if receiving pensions from the late partners job

Social Grade E

- 13% of the population
- All those entirely dependent on the state long term, through sickness, unemployment, old age or other reasons. Those unemployed for a period of 6 months (otherwise classify on previous occupation)
- Casual workers and those without regular income
- Only households without a chief wage earner will be coded in this group

Source: ICM Research

