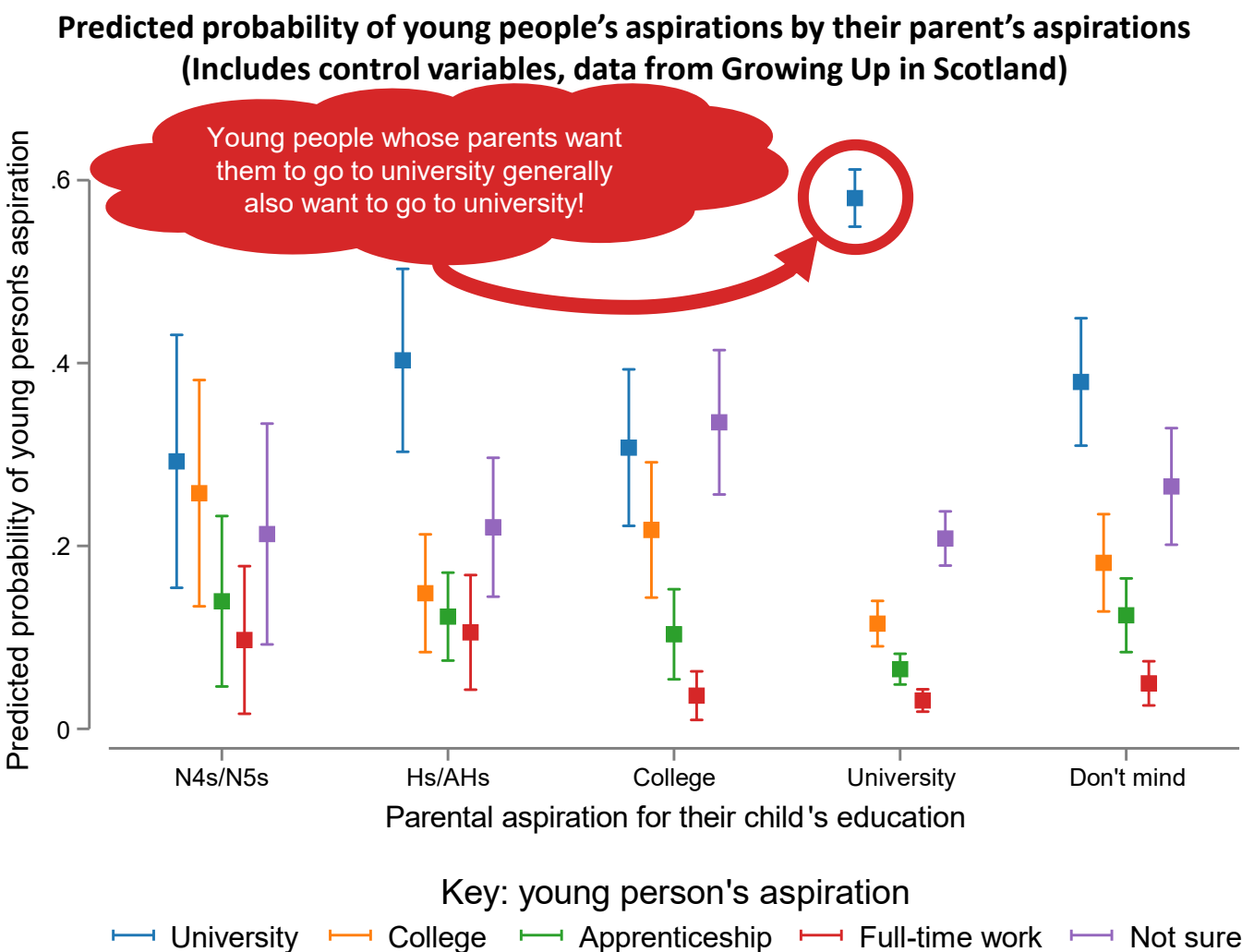
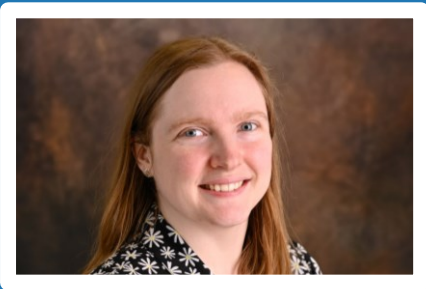


Do parents still matter in shaping young people's post-school aspirations in Scotland? (Yes!)

Hannah Glover, SDS-sponsored PhD student at the University of Edinburgh, h.glover@ed.ac.uk



Background to research

Prior research indicates that young people's parents' social class – or what they do for work – influences what young people themselves want to do when they leave secondary education^{1,2}. However, more recent research indicates that social class is no longer a good predictor of young people's aspirations, just their outcomes^{3,4,5}. There was a lack of nationally representative evidence on whether parental social class affects young people's aspirations in Scotland today, which I sought to address.

Research questions

1. What is the relationship between parental and child aspirations for young people's futures?
2. What is the relationship between parental social class and young people's career aspirations?

Findings

Most young people and their parents wanted them to go to university. Parental social class was not a predictor of young people's aspirations, meaning that **young people from all social classes aspired to post-school destinations at similar rates**. Parents did still matter, however: *parental aspirations* for their children predicted young people's aspirations well, as illustrated on the left.

Methods

I used *Growing Up in Scotland* data, a nationally representative longitudinal cohort study of around 5000 young people born in Scotland in 2004/05. With this data, I developed a multinomial logistic regression model predicting young people's post-school aspirations based on parental social class and parental aspirations for their child, controlling for other key factors.

References

1. Furlong and Cartmel, 1995
2. Lynch and O'Riordan, 1998
3. Bradley and Miller, 2010
4. Friedman and Laurison, 2019
5. Powell et al., 2024