

What would make a difference? Modelling policy scenarios for tackling poverty in the UK ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Full report PDF ^[2]

Executive summary

This report contributes to a major research-based programme by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) to develop an Anti Poverty Strategy (APS) for the UK. A modelling framework was developed to enable the testing of a wide range of policy and contextual scenarios over a medium-to-longer term time horizon for the whole of the UK. This framework links a dynamic macro-simulation of demography, housing and labour markets at sub-regional scale with a micro-simulation to generate snapshots of poverty and related outcomes at household level.

One finding of the study was that "better quality, more comprehensive, flexible and affordable childcare [is the] most important route to enabling greater economic participation in the workforce by women..." It also found that "Childcare packages, particularly the JRF APS version, score highest in terms of reducing combined poverty, as well as other poverty measures (including specific measures which allow for childcare costs paid by parents). They also appear likely to have a positive net fiscal impact by enabling parents to work at all or to work longer hours or in better jobs. This is all quite apart from the longer-term benefits in terms of better quality pre-school and after-school experiences leading to improved educational attainment and greater future earning power, which are not modelled within this exercise."

Related link: Childcare 'key to reducing inequality' ^[3]

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