

Secular trends in adolescent mental health: the impact of socio-economic status

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Background

- Approximately one in five children report emotional problems and one in twelve report behavioural issues (Husky et al., 2018)
- Predict maladjustment and psychopathology later in life (Smith et al., 2017)
- Evidence that emotional and behavioural problems are increasing amongst children (Collishaw, Maughan, Goodman, & Pickles, 2004; Patalay & Gage, 2019)

Methodological considerations

1. To what extent are we comparing 'like for like'?
2. How representative are our samples?
3. Changes in the ways informants report mental health?
4. Linked data on hypothesized explanatory factors is necessary

(Collishaw, 2015)

Mental health and socioeconomic inequalities

- Low SES associated with mental health difficulties in childhood/adolescence (Piotrowska et al., 2015; McBride et al., 2011; Quon & McGrath, 2014)
- Evidence that the socio-economic divide is increasing (OECD, 2019)

Aims

- Use harmonised measures to examine secular trends in adolescent emotional and behavioural problems across
- Examine the impact of SES on these difficulties across cohorts

Methods

BCS70
1970 British
Cohort Study

ncds
National Child
Development Study

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Millennium Cohort Study

CHILD OF THE
NEW CENTURY 



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Methods

Rutter Parent Questionnaire	Rutter Parent Questionnaire (19 items)	Rutter Revised Preschool Scale (43 items)	SDQ
5. Is miserable or tearful	9. Often appears miserable, unhappy, tearful or distressed.	14. Appears miserable, unhappy, tearful or distressed	13. Is often unhappy, down hearted or tearful
7. Worries about many things	6. Often worried, worries about many things	10. Is worried, worries about many things	8. Has many worries, often seems worried
10. Is upset by new situation, by things happening for the first time	16. Tends to be fearful or afraid of new things or new situations.	20. Tends to be afraid of new things or new situations	16. Is nervous or clingy in new situations, easily loses confidence
3. Is bullied by other children	5. Not much liked by other children.	8. Is not much liked by other children	11. Has at least one good friends
2. Prefers to do things on his/her own rather than with others	7. Tends to do things on his/her own – rather solitary.	11. Tends to do things on his own, rather solitary	6. Is rather solitary, tends to play alone
12. Fights with other children	4. Frequently fights other children.	7. Fights with other children	12. Often fights with other children or bullies them
14. Is disobedient at home	14. Is often disobedient	17. Is disobedient	7. Is generally obedient, usually does what adults request
8. Is irritable, quick to fly off the handle	8. Irritable. Is quick to fly off the handle.	12. Is irritable, quick to fly off the handle	5. Often has temper tantrums or hot tempers
6. Is squirmy or fidgety	1. Very restless. Often running about or jumping up and down. Hardly ever still.	2. Is restless, runs about or jumps up & down. Doesn't keep still	2. Is restless, overactive, cannot stay still for long
1. Has difficulty in settling to anything for more than a few moments	15. Cannot settle to anything for more than a few moments.	19. Has poor concentration, or short attention span	15. Is easily distracted, concentration wanders

Results

Goodness of fit criteria									
			Chi-square (d.f.)	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	Δ RMS EA	Δ CFI	Δ TLI
	Model	Configural	1924.908 (32)	0.080	0.960	0.925			
		Metric	1955.124 (50)	0.064	0.960	0.952	0.016	0.00	0.027
		Scalar	6177.316 (86)	0.087	0.871	0.910	0.007	0.089	0.015
		Partial Scalar	4663.250 (80)	0.078	0.903	0.927	0.002	0.057	0.002

Trends across cohorts

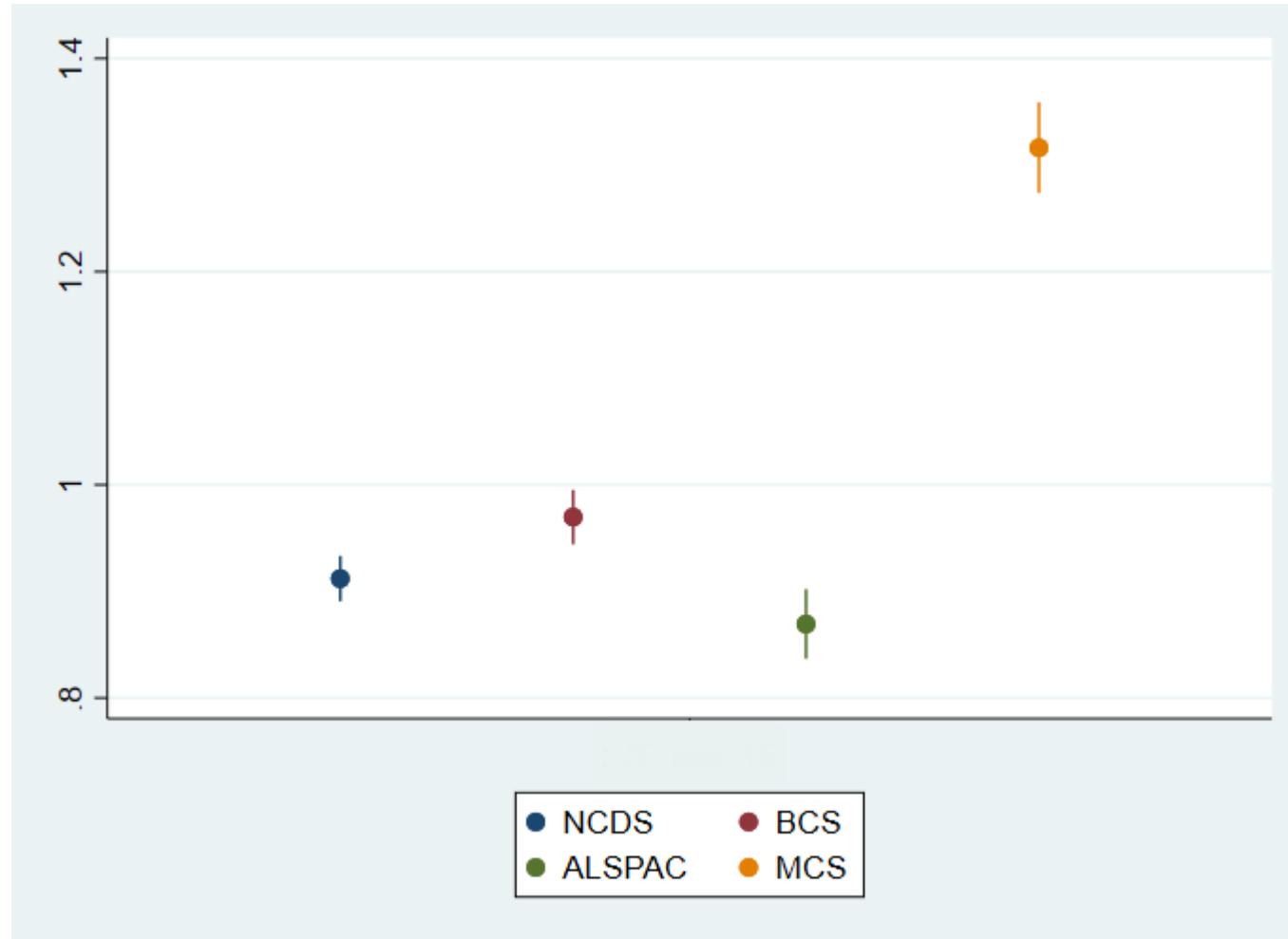


Fig.1 Means and 95% confidence intervals of harmonised emotional/internalizing items across cohorts at age 15

Trends across cohorts

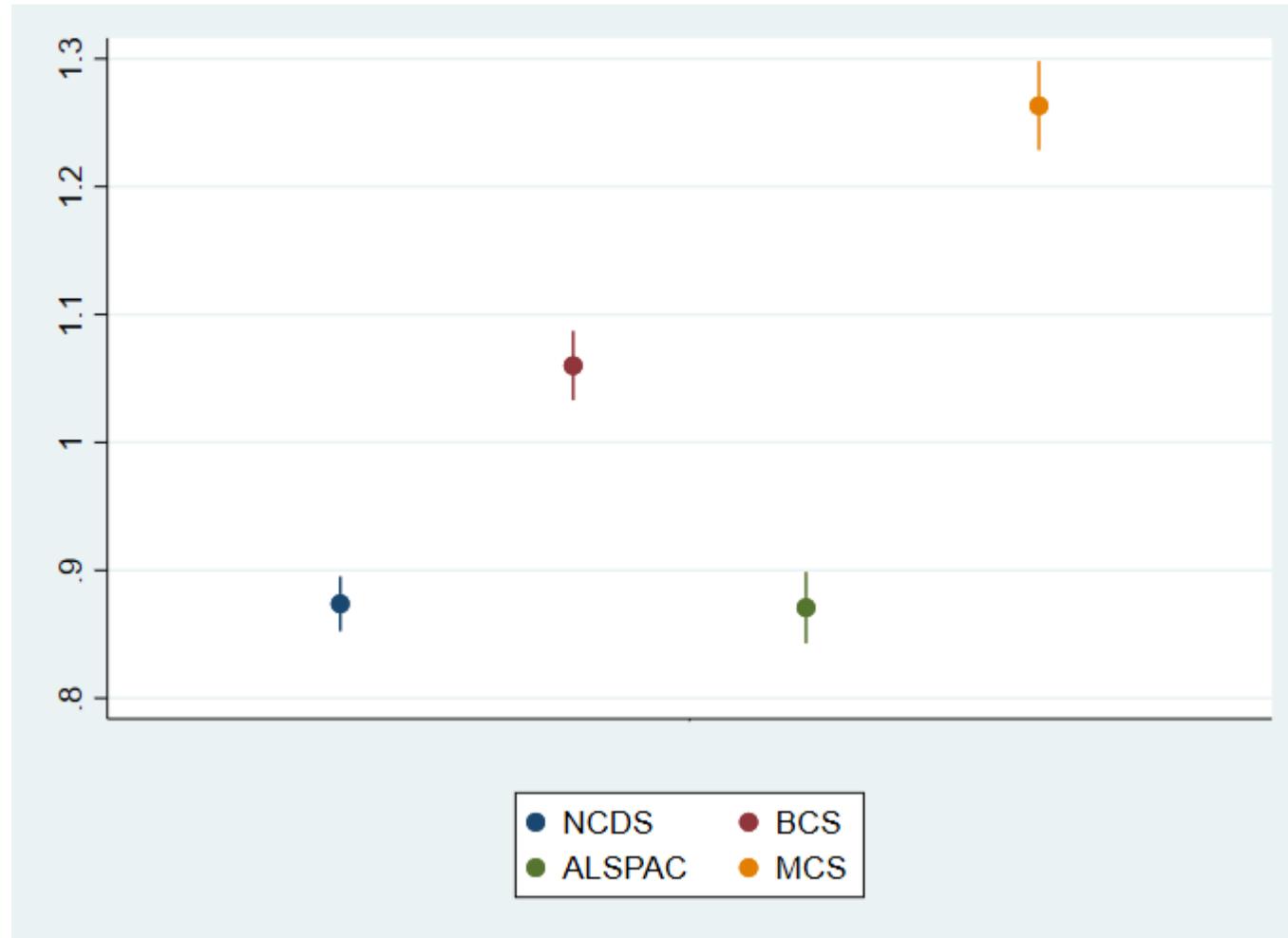


Fig.2 Means and 95% confidence intervals of harmonised behavioural/externalizing items across cohorts at age 15

Methods



CLOSER Work Package 2:

Harmonised Socio-Economic Measures User Guide

Brian Dodgeon
Tim Morris
Claire Crawford
Samantha Parsons
Anna Vignoles
Zoe Oldfield

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Methods

Variable Code List	1.0	Professional etc. Occupations
	2.0	Managerial and Technical occupations
	3.1	Skilled occupations (non-manual)
	3.2	Skilled occupations (manual)
	4.0	Partly-skilled occupations
	5.0	Unskilled occupations
	6.0	Occupation unclassifiable/ insufficient information/ armed forces/ carer/ unemployed/sick/retired
	11.0	Age 42 Questionnaire not completed

Initial findings

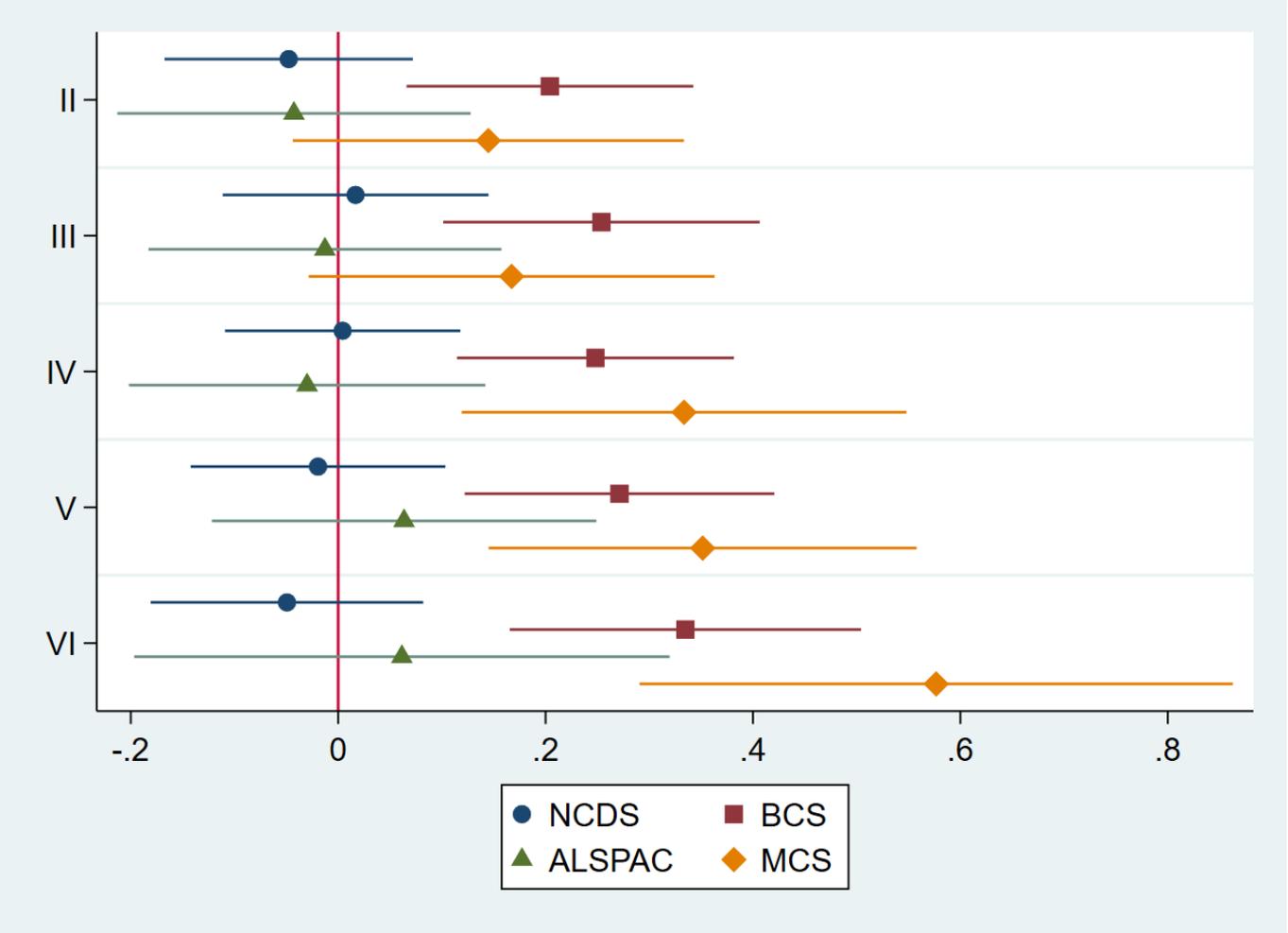


Fig.3 Regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals. IV = Childhood SES. DV = Total internalizing at age 15. Controlling for sex. Reference category is class I (professional).

Initial findings

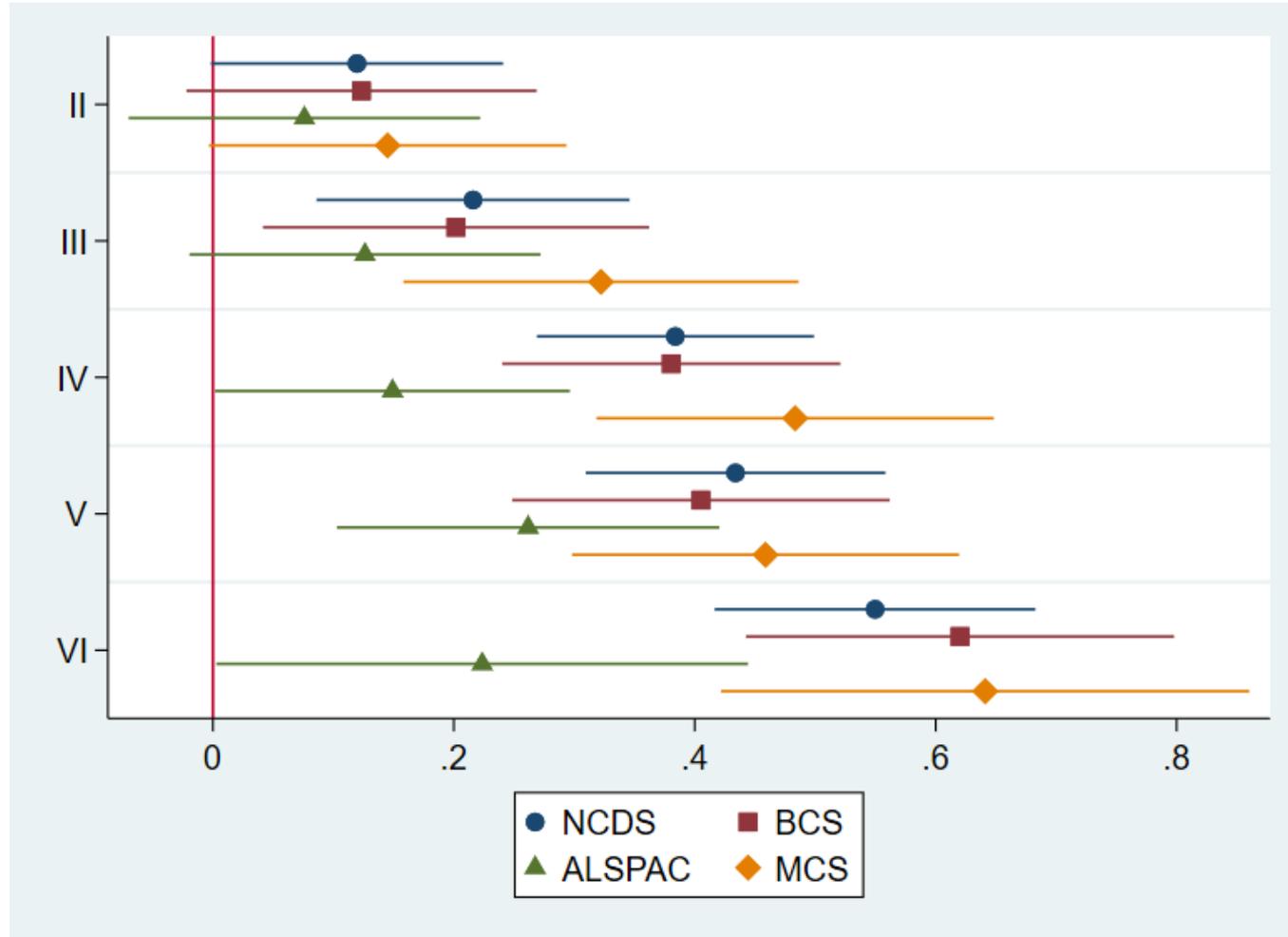


Fig.4 Regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals. IV = Childhood SES. DV = Total externalizing at age 15. Controlling for sex. Reference category is class I (professional).

Future directions

- Formal comparison of effects of SES
- Formal mediation
- Developmental trajectories

Thank you!



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