

4 Summary of the three outlook models

Three models have been developed whose purpose is to aid understanding of the significance of the outlook tool and to highlight how it might be usefully applied by communal planners. These are the Jewish Market Framework, the Consensus–Dissensus Model and the Social Distance Model.

The Jewish Market Framework

This model highlights items that are disproportionately subscribed to or carried out by one outlook type as compared with another. So, for example, *attending synagogue services weekly or more often* tended to be the preserve of the Religious *proportionately* more than any of the other three outlook types. Conversely, *donating to general overseas charities* tended to be done *proportionately* more by the Secular than any of the other three outlook types. It transpired that several of the variables fitted into one of these two types; these have been labelled Religious Unique items and Secular Unique items, the so-called ‘niche markets’ (see Table 14, page 26).

This bunching or ‘agglomeration’ of variables, however, goes further. It transpires that there are three further agglomeration types that are of relevance. The first is the Secular/Religious Split, which applies when a clear distinction of responses is evident between the secular half and the religious half of the sample (such as those who *eat only kosher meat outside the home*). The second is the Middle Ground, which applies when a clear distinction emerges between those who see themselves as Somewhat Religious or Somewhat Secular and those who see themselves at the two extremes (the Religious and the Secular). For example, those who *had a Traditional upbringing* were more likely to be in this middle group. The third agglomeration type, Unity, is the most important, and highlights those items on which there is broad agreement. It applies to variables that produce no significant distinction between any of the four outlook groups, such as *having previously visited Israel* and *having at least half of all friends being Jewish*. Interestingly, *attending part-time classes in synagogue or cheder* also produces Unity, which suggests that the *cheder* system has not exerted much influence on outlook type.

The key advantage of the Jewish Market Framework is that it enables planners to identify

Jewish markets be they ‘niche’ or ‘cross communal’. In the past, if the aim of a project was to attract the Secular, planners had virtually to guess what it was that inspired and interested this group. We can now predict that they are as likely as any other outlook group, and regardless of gender and age, to be interested in television and radio programmes on Jewish subjects, books on Jewish subjects, visiting Israel, prioritizing UK charities above those concerned with issues outside Britain, and socializing in predominantly Jewish circles. This kind of knowledge provides planners with the means to deliver communal events, activities and services more efficiently and more effectively.

The Consensus–Dissensus Model

The Consensus–Dissensus Model is slightly more sophisticated than the Jewish Market Framework. Instead of grouping variables according to market segmentation, it compares outlook types in relation to the three sociological categories Belief, Belonging and Behaviour. Here the focus is on whether there is something unusual or different about the sociological traits of specific outlook types compared with other outlook types, on where they agree and where they disagree. For example, we could analyse Behaviour by looking at the nature and extent of charitable giving among the different outlook groups to see what, if any, differences exist. Moreover, this model can be used to identify what it is that unites and divides the four outlook types in terms of Belief (opinions), Belonging (affiliations) and Behaviour (religious practices). In short: the Consensus–Dissensus Model.

This analysis has yielded two key findings. The first is that factors that are not especially ‘Jewish’ (such as donating to non-Jewish charities) or that have a specifically social flavour (such as having many Jewish friends or attending a Passover seder) showed high levels of consensus across all the outlook types, regardless of whether it was a Belief, Belonging or Behaviour item. These are items of ‘Jewish exceptionalism’, defining the Jewish social boundary in relation to the wider society. More importantly, these are the items that attract or involve *all* members of the community. They tend either to be not especially ‘religious’ in nature (though not necessarily *un-Jewish*) or else to be

familial/meal-oriented activities (Passover seders) or Jewish activities that require minimal effort or commitment (watching a television programme on a Jewish subject).

Second, the analysis shows that variables relating to Belonging (such as synagogue membership and participation in youth groups) are more likely than those relating to either Belief or Behaviour to exhibit ‘dissensus’ between the outlook types. Of particular interest are synagogue membership (highlighting the isolation of the secular group), self-reported current Jewish practice and upbringing, and doing volunteer work for Jewish charities. All of these Belonging items show high levels of ‘dissensus’.

Belief items achieve the greatest consensus, suggesting the homogeneity of Jewish opinion. Accordingly, we find that Jews tend to exhibit similar values as a group but display individuality in terms of attachments.

With regard to Behaviour variables (such as keeping kosher, volunteering, charitable giving and socializing) respondents tend to act in similar ways if the variable is secular in nature—often in ways that diverge from society at large: London Jews of all outlooks drink less alcohol than the British mainstream—but act individualistically if the item involves Jewish ritual. Thus, from the point of view of Behaviour, consensus is achieved on issues relating to general leisure activities but ‘dissensus’ occurs when items relate to (specifically Jewish) religious or communal spheres.

The Social Distance Model

The Social Distance Model is, logically, the next analytical step, and allows for a more precise measure of the different sociological patterns that have been observed. It attempts an actual quantification of how far apart the four different outlook types are in terms of the three sociological categories, Belief, Belonging and Behaviour. Such a quantification is achieved by developing an index that makes possible statements such as ‘the distance between the Secular and the Religious is, with regard to Behaviour, twice what it is with regard to Belonging’. This is similar to making a quantitative declaration such as ‘John likes football twice as much as Jim but only half as much as James’. Such a representation of social distance enables us to quantify what is essentially qualitative information.

The advantage of being able to *measure* differences (e.g. of Behaviour) between outlook types, relative to one another, is that planners can more accurately assess the most important and least important items dividing and uniting the community. That is, they can understand which outlook types stand furthest away or closest together on specific groups of items.

Conceptualizing social distance

One way of conceptualizing social distance is to imagine four typical respondents standing in a queue, each representing one of the four outlook types. The nature of what is offered at the front of the queue will influence how near to the front each of the respondents wishes to stand, as well as how near or far their position is from the other respondents in the queue.

If what is being offered at the front of the queue is a Belief item, we would notice first that, compared with Behaviour or Belonging offerings, the greatest spread between the individuals in the queue would be produced, the greatest overall social distance. Furthermore, we would notice that the Religious respondent would stand alone at the front, and the other three respondents some way back in the line but not particularly close to each other either.

In the queue for items relating to Belonging respondents do not even stand in order of their outlooks. This time the queue is much more bunched than the queue for Belief, with little space between each respondent. Here, the Somewhat Religious respondent (*not* the Religious) is at the front, with the Somewhat Secular respondent behind him. The latter in turn is almost standing on the toes of the Religious respondent who is right behind him. Someway off behind this group is the Secular respondent.

In the queue for Behaviour items, the respondents line up just as we might expect if outlook is thought of as a smooth continuum. They stand in order from Religious to Secular, spaced equidistantly. Only in this queue do the respondents behave as their outlooks would predict intuitively. In other words, when it comes to Belief and Belonging items, the outlook labels are not necessarily the best guides to predicting responses. Thus, according to this analysis, the outlook tool works best as a predictor when it comes to items relating to Behaviour (e.g. fasting).