|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Learning Table 6: Policies for Equal Opportunity** | | |
| **oalition Government Policies** | **Analysis** | **Evaluation** |
| Policies on Gender and Ethnicity | **Gender**  In the 19th century, females were largely excluded from higher education. More recently, in the tripartite system girls often had to achieve a higher mark than boys in the 11+ to obtain a grammar school place.  Since the 1970s, however, polices such as GIST and WISE have been introduced to try to reduce gender differences in subject choice:   * GIST: Girls Into Science and Technology: The GIST program is a series of day camps, summer camps, and other educational workshops designed and taught by women, for girls ages 5-14. The educational content of the programs focuses on different aspects of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, and is designed to introduce and educate girls in these areas in single gender settings. The goal of the program is to inspire more girls to explore careers in the sciences * WISE: Women into Science and Engineering: WISE inspires girls and women to study and build careers using science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM). They advise organisations on how to create environments where those women can do their best work and thrive   According to the WISE campaign’s latest analysis of UK labour market statistics, women make up just 12.8% (690,000 females) of the Stem workforce (compared to 4.71 million males). The proportion had increased by only 0.2 percentage points since their analysis in 2012.  **Ethnicity**  These policies have gone through several phases to raise achievements of children from minority ethnic backgrounds:   * **Assimilation:** policies in the 60s and 70s focussed on the minorities assimilating (adopting social characteristics of British culture and society) as a way of helping those that didn’t have English as their first language e.g. compensatory education policies including ‘Sure Start’ and ‘Head start’ (programmes designed to support children’s learning skills, health and well-being, and social and emotional development from disadvantaged groups or backgrounds, including ethnic minority groups) * **Multicultural education:** MCE policies through the 80s and 90s aimed to promote achievement of all children from minority ethnic groups by valuing all cultures in the school curriculum – this would mean increasing self-esteem and thereby increasing achievement. * **Social Inclusion:** these policies became the focus in the late 90s and included; * Detailed monitoring of exam results by ethnicity * Amending the Race Relations Act to place a legal duty on schools to promote racial equality * Help for voluntary ‘Saturday schools’ in the black community * English as Additional Language (EAL) programs | **Evaluation for Gender Policies**  Radical feminists would argue that although these policies do encourage girls to engage in more scientific subjects and areas of technology, there is still a huge under-representation of women across the curriculum in other areas (e.g. History) which may discourage women to become involved in career opportunities linked to this    **Evaluation for Assimilation in Ethnicity**  Critics argue that some minority groups who are at risk of underachieving e.g. African Caribbean pupils already speak English and the real cause of their under-achievement is poverty or racism  **Evaluation for MCE**  Maureen Stone (1981) argues that black pupils do not fail because of low self-esteem so MCE is misguided. Critical race theorists argue that MCE is ‘tokenism’ and that it picks out stereotypical features of minority cultures for inclusion in the curriculum, but still fails to tackle institutional racism.  The New right criticise MCE for continuing to highlight a cultural division. They argue policies like this are the reason for a cultural division. They state that education should promote a shared national culture and identity into which minorities should be assimilated.  **Evaluation for Social Inclusion**  Heidi Safia Mirza (2005) sees little genuine change in policy. She argues that educational policies still take a ‘soft’ approach that focuses on culture and the home, rather than tackling ‘hard’ issues such as poverty and racism.  Gillborn argues that institutionally racist policies in relation to the ethnocentric curriculum, assessment and streaming continue to disadvantage minority ethnic group pupils. |