**Sociology of Education**

**Unit 01**



**How is the education system of the UK organised?**

**Learning targets:**

* the education system of the UK is complex, so that there are a variety of different types of schools, especially for secondary education
* the reasons for this complexity are historical as the system has developed over time
* there are also political reasons for the different types of school organisation that have emerged

**Key questions**

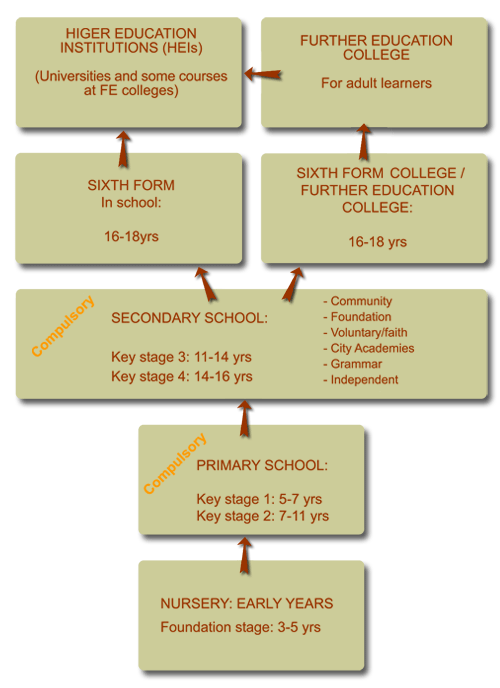
How has our school system evolved since 1945?

Why has the system evolved in the way that it has?

Is it a good or efficient system?

Are all children given equal chances to do well in our current system?

**The UK Education System**

In this topic, you are mostly concerned with secondary schooling and its historical development.

**Summary of key points**

Although most children in the UK attend local primary schools between the ages of 5 and 11, there are a variety of different types of secondary schools for children aged between 11 and 16. The reasons for this are to do with changes in government policy over time. Governments have changed their views on how schools should be organised for practical, ideological and economic reasons.

In the 1950s, most areas of England and Wales had a very similar system of education for children between the ages of 5 and 15. This had been set up as a result of the 1945 Education Act. Children all sat an examination known as the 11 + and they were allocated a school based on how they had achieved. Those seen as more academic attended Grammar Schools which taught a very academic curriculum and those seen as less able went to Secondary Modern Schools which taught practical subjects such as metal work and carpentry for boys and needlework and cookery for girls.

In 1965, a weak and unpopular Labour government sent out a circular to all Education Authorities known as 10/65. This told local education authorities, which were run by local councils that they should prepare for comprehensive schools. These would be single schools taking children of all abilities regardless. In some areas, local education authorities changed to this new system of educating all children with some speed. In others, local education authorities failed to submit workable plans, and in these areas, there are still grammar schools.

1979 was a turning point in British society because a very ideological Conservative government, led by Margaret Thatcher took power. This government is identified with a set of beliefs known as New Right. The New Right believes that no rules are needed for society because economic factors (market forces) can be relied upon. This impacted on schools, because the New Right believed that schools could only improve if they were encouraged to be competitive with each other for students. New types of school were developed and this policy continued under the Labour governments since 1997. Parents are now offered a choice of types of school to send their children to. What you should understand is that the education system that we have now is the result of social and political change over time.

In some areas of the country there are grammar schools and secondary modern or comprehensive schools, in other areas there are just comprehensives and in some towns there are also city academies, specialist schools and colleges, independent schools and faith schools.

These schools are all allocated money in different ways. Some schools can select the children that they will teach and others must take anyone who applies to them. There are different methods of funding schools and different types of schools. In practice, the types of schools that you might find in an area depend on where you are in the country.

Community schools are owned by local authorities who allocate money and employ staff. This is probably the most common type of school. These include grammar schools, comprehensive schools, and secondary modern schools.

Foundation schools have more freedom than community schools because the governing body can select pupils and employ staff. These schools may include comprehensives and grammar schools.

Voluntary-aided schools are owned by charities and they employ staff. They may be religious faith schools. City Technology Colleges are independent from Local Authorities, but do not charge fees. They tend to offer vocational qualifications.

City Academies which are independent from local authorities and many are funded by businesses or charities. They were often set up on the sites of failing schools and many offer vocational education. They have been controversial

In some areas you might also find Independent Schools that are usually run as businesses and charge fees to parents. There are approximately 2,300 such schools in the country.

Specialist schools have extra funding to establish a centre of excellence in certain subject areas, although they must teach the whole curriculum. There are over 2,600 such schools in England. In Wales, you will also find schools that teach through the medium of the Welsh language.

How were New Right policies developed?

1988 Education reform act.

This brought the introduction of the National Curriculum meaning that schools had to teach particular ‘core’ subjects to all pupils. SATs were introduced to measure the efficiency of schools. Some schools were able to ‘opt out’ of local funding meaning they were funded by central government. City colleges were started with increased teaching in areas of IT and Business. Parents were now able to send their child to any school of their choice. This had the affect of schools competing with each other for students as their funding was influenced by the number of students on roll. League tables meant that parents would flock to successful schools and therefore improvements in education would be driven by competition and market forces.

What are more recent changes?

Education Action Zones and Excellence in Cities (EAZs and EiC)

From 1998 under labour government new initiatives set up to improve attainment in disadvantaged areas such as breakfast clubs, extra-curricula activities, access to IT, arrangements for gifted and talented students.

Changes to Post 16 Education

* Introduction of A\* grade for A’levels and new Diplomas
* Changes to compulsory school leaving age from 2013
* Introduction of AS levels, more skills based qualifications and Extended project.

Policies introduced by the Coalition Government since 2010

Free Schools –Government funding can be used by private groups to set up schools. Increased University Fees – fee rise to £9,000. Abolition of EMA and moves to place higher value on academic as opposed to vocational courses. From 2014 there were revisions to examinations e.g scraping of January Modules in AS Levels and modular courses in GCSE. In 2016 There was a proposal by the conservative party that all schools will become academies by 2020. This was later scaled down to say that schools who are Outstanding or Good will not be forced to academies.

That should you have in your folder of notes on this topic? (AO1)

**Key concepts**

Define the key concepts and ideas.

Circular 10/65

Comprehensive schools

Conservatism

Education

Equality

Grammar Schools

Independent schools

League tables

Local authorities

Market forces

National Curriculum

New Right

Public schools

SATS

Tripartite system of education (Butler Act 1944)

Vocational education

Independent study

**Compulsory**

* Downloads of information from websites about different types of schools
* Evidence that you have looked at least one news story about the educational system of the UK
* Notes taken from at least one textbook in the LRC that focus on educational changes since 1945

**Extension work**

* Make notes on the education system in any other country of the world.

**Useful websites and sources of information (AO1):**

Find out about independent schools

<http://www.isc.co.uk/>

The website of Eton College, a leading independent school can be seen at [www.etoncollege.com](file:///F:\ShortCutsTV\Social%20Media\Blog\Sociology\Revision\Booklets\A-level\Education\www.etoncollege.com).

The government department with responsibility for education is the Department for Children, Schools and Families

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/>

For news stories about education, use the BBC website

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/default.stm>

The main teaching newspaper is the Times Educational Supplement [www.tes.co.uk/](F:\\ShortCutsTV\\Social Media\\Blog\\Sociology\\Revision\\Booklets\\A-level\\Education\\www.tes.co.uk\\)

Here are some research articles about the politics of choice in education:

<http://www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/about/CI/CP/the_edge/issue23/education.aspx>

Relevant news stories that you should look at:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/4554817.stm>

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/rod_liddle/article737572.ece>

You should use the website of the NgfL Cymru and look at the ebook to develop your notes

<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/sociology-as-ebook>

Answer these questions in your notes

1. What different types of secondary school are there?
2. What factors have influenced the development of the variety of secondary schools that we have in the UK?
3. List four different acts of Parliament or Government circulars and explain what the main points were.
4. What does the Labour party traditionally believe about education?
5. What does the Conservative Party traditionally believe about education?

1. Do all children in the UK have an equal chance of getting a good education?
   * List three points that suggest that they do
   * List three points which suggest that they do not

Identify and explain how the education system has changed since 1945. (15)

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| --- | --- |
| What change can you identify? | How did this change affect the education system that we have in Britain? |
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**Sociology of Education**

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**Unit 02**

**What is the purpose of the education system of the UK?**

**Learning targets:**

* Education and learning are not necessarily the same thing
* There are many different reasons why we need mass education
* Many arguments about the purpose of education are ideological: functionalists say education offers poor children and chance to do well, Marxists and feminists say education exists to protect the children of the rich.

**Key questions**

What different views are there about the purpose of education?

How have these views influenced government policy on education?

Does the education system benefit all children equally?

Do schools exist to help poorer children improve their lives or to keep the richest in their comfortable lifestyles?

**Summary of key points**

Education is a process whereby people pass on knowledge or skills. Formal education systems where children were taught specific skills and tested in their knowledge developed through religious institutions in Britain in the Middle Ages. Few children were educated then and it was not thought necessary to educate girls. Education was therefore reserved for the ruling elite.

The first government Act imposing compulsory education in Britain was in 1880 and then partly it was designed to end child labour in factories and only affected children aged 5 - 10. It also served the purpose of providing a trained workforce who could operate new machines and technology. Other major changes to the education system have developed in times of war or economic crisis. One of the major purposes of education therefore is to have a workforce that is efficient and trained; the other is to have a workforce who can be trained for military purposes.

Socialisation is the process of learning the rules and knowledge valued by a culture. One of the most important agencies of secondary socialisation is the education system. It is known as an agency of formal socialisation, because schools and education systems deliberately set out to influence people's behaviour. This process is known as social control. Education exists to train children in the behaviour that is deemed acceptable in our culture.  
  
Schools also exist to control behaviour. Children are taught to obey authority and respect rules. This is done through a series of complex processes, some of which children are fully aware - discipline systems, punishments, rulebooks. Some of the things that children are taught are not obvious, but nevertheless still form part of the socialisation process. The socialisation which children are not aware of was first described by a number of writers and is associated with Phillip Jackson among others. Jackson said that if they are to succeed, pupils do not just require knowledge, but also conformity to the socially acceptable behaviour of the school. This deeper knowledge is termed the 'hidden curriculum' and describes the attitudes and approaches of the whole school. Pat McNeil (1986) says that this includes knowledge such as how to get on with teachers and other pupils, how to cope with boredom and how to conform.

State education systems are associated with the need to prepare people for work. This is known as vocationalism. In the past, vocationalism was associated with low ability students. In the 1950s in secondary modern schools, less academic boys would be trained in craft skills and girls would be trained in domestic sciences to become housewives. This type of education was low status and did not allow children to go to college or university but kept some people in low pay work. In the 1970s, James Callaghan, a Labour Prime Minister made a famous speech in Ruskin College, Oxford, where he said that Britain was falling behind its industrial competitors because the education system failed to produce skilled and motivated workers. This has affected government policy and thinking for over 30 years. It influenced many of the changes made by the Conservative governments of 19879 -1997. It formed the basis of National Curriculum. There is still a strong vocational agenda in British schools and colleges that involves examinations, key skills and portfolio approaches to learning.

Success in education is the best and most reliable way for people to improve their lives and escape from poorer backgrounds. Functionalists such as Parsons believe that this is the main purpose of the education system, though other sociologists have argued strongly that in reality, those who do best in the education system are already advantaged in other ways.

Historically in Wales, a high value was placed on educational success for children, because it was a route out of poverty. Welsh miners were famous for their libraries and learning and they encouraged their sons to aim for professional work. In the 1950s and 1960s, those who attended grammar schools were the only children educated in the subjects needed to go to university. Working class children who won a place at a grammar school could aim for middle class jobs, and as more middle class jobs became available, many people changed their social class. There is evidence that education supports those who are ambitious.

In opposition to this view is the Marxist perspective which suggests that education systems exist to protect the privileges and advantages of the very wealthy. Not all knowledge is equally valued by society, and it is high culture that is passed on by teachers and schools. High culture refers to the kinds of knowledge that often require some education to appreciate fully: art, classical music, ballet, opera, and literature. This is associated with middle class values and is transmitted through schools. Mass culture is the kind of knowledge that people have from the media and tends to be working class culture. It includes knowledge of sports, entertainment and does not require education, though it can be just as difficult to acquire as high culture.

Pierre Bourdieu (1986) says that schools value middle class knowledge more than they value working class culture. This gives middle class children an advantage in school because they are socialised into the same values as teachers. Pierre Bourdieu uses the term cultural capital to describe knowledge and skills valued by society that enables people who have them to succeed in life and have more respect. Bourdieu says many working class children come to be aware, through socialisation that the education system operates to rules that they don't understand. They eliminate themselves from competition by leaving schools early. Thus education can be a way of keeping working class children from the best jobs and the good opportunities.

**Key Educational philosophies**

* **Compensation** - This is the belief that education can correct some of the problems and evils of society (**compensatory views**). This philosophy can take two forms in that Right realist thinkers suggest that schools should teach morality and Left wing thinkers will want schools to support the poorest children in society so that the disadvantages that they suffer because of poverty will not affect their learning.
* **Comprehensivisation** - this is the suggestion that all children should attend the same schools and that schools should make equal provision for all. Differences of gender, race, ability and social class in particular should be disregarded so that all children have equal access to what the school has to offer.
* **Egalitarianism** - This is a liberal political belief that suggests we can make society more equal by allowing people equality of access to education or outcome from education. This means that if 50% of the school population is female, then 50% of those who achieve top grades will be female, as will half of all those who leave school without qualifications. Sociologically, this view is often associated with Marxism or Feminism. Marxists study class differences and Feminists argue that education systems reinforce and consolidate gender inequalities.
* **Meritocracy** - Meritocrats believe that education should provide a ladder of opportunity for the brightest and the best among us. Meritocratic arguments are often used to support selective education. This is generally a Functionalist perception of the purpose of education.
* **Vocationalism** - This is the belief that the purpose of education is to prepare students for future life/careers/places in the workforce. This is likely to be associated with Functionalism and forms an element of the theories of the New Right. Unsurprisingly, this is a view put forward by employers and industrialists.
* **Lifelong learning** – This is a newer philosophy associated with the Labour Government of the late 1990s. It supports the idea that technology and society are moving so fast that the workforce need to be able to develop a flexible approach to the learning of new skills and aptitudes. They must be trained how to learn for themselves and to adapt to new ideas, hence the emphasis on key skills in schools.

**Create a learning poster or some revision cards for each of these points of view.**

**Develop your learning by adding points for and against each point of view.**

What should you have in your folder of notes on this topic? (AO1)

**Definitions of the key concepts**

Cultural capital

Education

Formal education

Functionalism

Hidden curriculum

High culture

Ideology

Informal education

Learning

Mass culture

Meritocracy

National curriculum

Non-formal education

Social mobility

Socialisation

The Great Debate

Vocational education

Vocationalism

Independent study

**Compulsory**

* Notes on Pierre Bourdieu and the notion of cultural capital taken from a textbook or the internet
* Notes on functional views of education taken from a textbook or the internet
* A clear summary list of all of the different views on the main purpose of the education system

**Extension work**

* Ask a wide variety of teachers to suggest four words which would sum up some of the characteristics of their perfect pupil. Put these words into categories and then use a spreadsheet programme to draw graphs and pie charts of your results.
* Observe teachers in an assembly in school. How do they maintain control of their pupils?
* Collect viewpoints of as many people as possible asking them why we need/have an education system for children in this country.

**Useful websites and sources of information (AO1):**

You should use the website of the NgfL Cymru and look at the ebook to develop your notes

<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/sociology-as-ebook>

A discussion and argument page with good links to Hot Potatoes exercises on Marxism and functionalism

<http://www.educationforum.co.uk/sociology_2/edupurpose/index.htm>

Relevant news stories that you should look at:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/mortarboard/2009/apr/20/faith-schools-purpose>

An American site about home schooling can be seen at <http://homeschooling.about.com/> The UK site is to be found at <http://www.schoolhouse.org.uk/> and both send you to links and articles that are critical of traditional education in schools.

Find out more about an anti-school which challenges traditional views of education by looking up more about Summerhill School <http://www.summerhillschool.co.uk/>

You can read about the history of the philosophy of education in an article on <http://www.helium.com/items/424989-the-five-key-educational-philosophies>

S-cool has some interesting notes on the history and sociology of education, see <http://www.s-cool.co.uk/alevel/sociology/history-of-the-sociology-of-education.html>

One of the best sites for free notes and resources is Sociology Central, find this page and scroll down to the education section <http://www.sociology.org.uk/rload.htm>

* You should look in any of the textbooks in the LRC to see what they have on this topic.
* Your teachers will also be a useful source of ideas and discussion as to the purpose of schools. Some of them may well surprise you.

Answer these questions in your notes

1. What are the differences between formal and informal education?
2. What elements of the hidden curriculum can you identify in your school
3. What evidence is there that middle class culture is seen as 'better' than working class culture?
4. Explain the concept of cultural capital.
5. Which political party introduced vocationalism into British schools for all children?
6. What features of the British education system are associated with vocational training?
7. Do vocational qualifications such as GNVQ have the same status as traditional academic subjects in schools and colleges?
8. What do functionalists think is the main purpose of education?
9. Why do Marxists criticise the education system?
10. Is it the role of schools to correct problems in society?

**Education exists to protect the interests of the wealthy. Discuss (35)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Explain this viewpoint – who would say this and why would it be said? | Evidence or writers? |
| What strengths are there to this point of view? |  |
| What weaknesses are there to this point of view |  |
| Who would disagree with this point of view? Why would they disagree |  |
| What evidence is there to support the opposing view? |  |
| What criticisms are there of the opposing view? |  |
| What is your conclusion? |  |

**Sociology of Education**



**Unit 03**

**Is the education system meritocratic?**

**Learning targets:**

* The government of the UK has had a target of improving the educational chances of all children since the 1945 Education Act in order to ensure that children have an equal chance of success.
* Middle class children of average ability are more likely to attain qualifications than working class children of similar ability. This difference in attainment has an effect on subsequent life chances.
* There are social factors that have as much influence on success in schools as ability and talent. The indicators of success in education are linked to class, gender, ethnicity and locality

**Key questions**

What is meritocracy?

How has the British education system promoted meritocracy?

Has the education system achieved meritocracy?

What social factors may influence attainment?

**Summary of key points**

One of the main understandings of the functionalist view of the education system is that it acts as a ladder of opportunity for people to achieve the best that they can, according to their ability. The best people will then go on to gain the best jobs and become the leaders of their society. This belief is known as meritocracy. How true is this picture of the education system? Do all children have an equal chance to do well?  
  
The education system in Britain since World War 2 has operated under the principle of providing equal opportunity for all pupils. This can be illustrated in a number of ways.  
  
All schools are expected to have equal opportunities policies, and for this to be open for anyone to see. This means that all teachers must abide by the policy, and that all governors in schools should ensure that the policies are carried out. More importantly, governors are expected to discuss the effectiveness of the equal opportunity policy at governing body meetings.  
  
Other government bodies also have a duty to ensure that there is equality of opportunity in schools. One of the most important of such bodies is the QCA, or Qualifications and Curriculum Authority who oversee all examination systems in the UK. A statement regarding equality can be seen in all examination specifications that have been approved by QCA. Equally all school inspections report on the extent to which schools provide equality of opportunity for their pupils. The Department for Education and Skills website has an equality statement as its opening sentence referring to 'all' children, specifically.

The social unrest of the 1960s drew attention to the fact that certain groups within society did not have the same access to human or equality rights as others. This gave rise to laws protecting the rights of individuals in work and public places. It is agreed that certain groups still do not have full equality in certain areas of life, but nevertheless, laws do protect people's rights in other areas.  
  
The Sex Discrimination Act (1975) and other laws mean that it is illegal to discriminate on the basis of gender in the UK. Complaints may be made to courts if schools are seen to offer opportunities to one gender and not the other. The Race Relations Act (1976) and the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) mean that all public organisations have a duty to eliminate racial discrimination and to promote equality between people of different ethnic groups. The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) is more recent and means that schools must make adjustments in order that disabled students are not disadvantaged by the facilities or the curriculum.  
  
In educational terms, these Acts have had an impact on how schools are required to think about people who experience difficulties or disadvantage. Since the 1990s, with the publication of the Tomlinson Report on Inclusive Further Education (1996), one of the strongest themes in educational thinking has been 'inclusion'. Schools and educational institutions are expected to adapt their courses, and teaching styles to the needs of the students who use them, so that all learners have equal access to education and learning regardless of ability.

A H Halsey suggested that there are two tests of whether equality has actually been achieved in a society. The first of these is equality of opportunity. If everyone has the right to the same opportunities, then a degree of equality has been achieved. British society has largely achieved equality of opportunity. The government wants schools to be meritocratic, and offer equal opportunities. It has mostly succeeded in this test of its ability to meet its own targets.  
  
However, according to Halsey, there is a more stringent test of equality and this is known as equality of outcome. Equality of outcome is when people appear in social institutions in the same proportions in which they occur in the whole society. If 8% of the population comes from an ethnic minority, then equality of outcome is when ethnic minorities form 8% of educational success, have 8% of the best jobs and form only 8% of people in prison. The pattern of society is very different, and ethnic minorities are under-represented in the best jobs and over-represented in prison.  
  
It is this second test of equality that British society fails. Statistics show that people who belong in certain social groups are more likely to go on to have good jobs and powerful positions in society, whereas members of other social groups form the majority of the poor and disadvantaged. Study of education statistics suggests that in fact, the British education system favours members of some social groups and disadvantages others quite significantly. Certain individuals may do well if they come from disadvantaged groups, but in general, the pattern of evidence suggests that they will have to work harder to succeed. The social factors that appear to influence an individual's chances of educational success are: gender, ethnicity, social class and type or quality of school attended. This can be seen in data produced by the Government on their statistics website.

Schools are not all equal. Some schools have far different facilities, more money and better-trained staff than others. It is accepted that a parent's choice of school can have an impact on the quality of education that a child receives. Governments since the 1980s have tried to improve schools by offering parents choices about which schools they should send their children to and developing competition between schools to provide the best service.  
  
Britain has a fee-paying sector in education, which is also known as the independent sector. Parents pay money to schools that are run as businesses. These schools benefit from large amounts of tax-free income because they qualify as charities. Some of the best of these schools have excellent results, but there are many schools with limited facilities and poor pay for teachers as well. Not all of these schools are as good as the best. However, what they do have in common is that they prepare children for places at the universities with good reputations.  
  
In the state sector, there are many different types of schools as well. Some are far better funded and have very much better facilities than others. The government tries to give parents information regarding the quality of schools in a number of ways. Inspection reports are available on the Internet and parents are encouraged to visit schools to choose the best for their children. League tables showing the differences in results produced by schools at GCSE were introduced in 1992. The introduction of parental choice and information now means that houses in the catchment areas of good schools have become very expensive and it is known that parents will move to live in catchment areas for schools with good examination results. Anecdotal evidence has been supported by work that has been done by Reay and Lucey. Some parents have been known to lie and cheat to get their children into schools with good results.  
  
The problem is that it is difficult to know whether schools that produce good examination results are actually the best schools. Karl Turner found that schools with high percentages of pupils with free school meals were unlikely to get good inspection reports. Schools with the best examination results tend to be single sex female, fee paying or in very wealthy areas and which select their pupils. Are their good results because they are better schools, have better facilities or because they have more advantaged pupils? Schools have various ways of improving their examination results, such as encouraging clever children to sit extra examinations or excluding difficult students before their examinations.

The government has struggled to make British education more equal by focussing on schools. However, children only spend about 14% of their time in school. Sociologists have been concerned to look at what happens in homes. There is a long-standing and well-known connection between family income and examination results. Children from poorer homes tend to do less well in the education system than children from wealthy backgrounds. Feinstein points out that the children from the poorest families may be a year developmentally behind wealthy children before they even get to school. About 25% of children with free school meals gain 5 good GCSE passes compared to the national average of about 50%. Children from poorer homes tend to have a negative view of the education system compared to wealthy children.  
  
Stephen Gorard and Peter Tymms (2006) said that pupils' examination results and schools' positions in league tables are affected by family wealth and pupil's prior ability. This relationship may be to do with factors that are beyond the control of parents: poor diet, poor health, and lack of resources. However, there is also a strong argument, particularly from government, that suggests it can also be the result of poor parenting, poor parental education, broken families and lack of self-esteem. For example, Hibbert et al (1990) found that persistent truancy and non-attendance among children were linked to poor examination results, low status work, marital instability and offending in adult life

However, Aldridge (2001) an economist says 'the barriers against bright working class children succeeding are quite low, the safeguards against failure enjoyed by dull middle class children are quite strong'. The evidence therefore suggests that among children with the same measured intelligence, middle class children experience more success in school than working class children.

What should you have in your folder of notes on this topic? (AO1)

**Definitions of the key concepts**

Discriminate

Education

Equality

Equality of opportunity

Equality of outcome

Inclusion

Independent school

League tables

Meritocracy

QCA

Social mobility

Truancy

Value added data

Independent study

**Compulsory**

* Notes on A H Halsey and the notion of equality of outcome
* Statistical data taken from the website of the ONS to look at differences in attainment according to social characteristics such as gender, ethnicity and class
* Downloads explaining why parents are cheating to get their children into some schools rather than others

**Extension work**

* Ask a wide variety of parents what factors influenced their choice of schools for their children. You might like to ask school teachers and other educated people as well as those who are not so familiar with how the education system works.
* Find out as much as you can about the impact of a school with a good reputation on house prices in an area.
* A list of arguments for and against including children with special educational needs in mainstream schools. You may find it useful to talk to teaching assistants, the Head of Faculty of Special Needs and senior teachers in the school.

**Useful websites and sources of information (AO1):**

You should use the website of the NgfL Cymru and look at the ebook to develop your notes

<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/sociology-as-ebook>

Extremely badly written and ungrammatical, but has some interesting and controversial ideas favouring the middle classes. What do you think?

<http://socyberty.com/education/no-student-loans-for-uk-middle-class/>

Relevant news stories and forums that you should look at:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/8243357.stm>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/8334503.stm>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/6403017.stm>

<http://newsforums.bbc.co.uk/nol/thread.jspa?forumID=7182&edition=1&ttl=20091228112842>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/4774407.stm>

Look at the website of Get The Right School which outlines strategies and techniques for parents who are choosing schools for their children

<http://www.gettherightschool.co.uk/>

This page discusses the impact of a good school on house prices in an area

<http://www.gettherightschool.co.uk/SchoolCatchmentsCategory.html>

This site examines the impact of a good school on house prices

<http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/mortgages-and-homes/house-prices/article.html?in_article_id=494795&in_page_id=57>

Answer these questions in your notes

1. What is meritocracy?
2. Which sociologists support the view that the education system in the UK is meritocratic?
3. What has the government done to try and achieve meritocracy?
4. How successful have the various strategies to encourage meritocracy been in the UK?
5. What laws promote equality in school?
6. What evidence is there to suggest that there is no **equality of provision** in education in the UK?
7. What evidence to suggest that there is not **equality of outcome** for children attending school in the UK
8. How are some parents able to manipulate the system to gain advantages for their children?

**Outline and assess the view that the education system of the UK is not equal for all children (35)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Explain this viewpoint – who would say that education is equal/meritocratic? why would they have this view?  Marxist view – children do not succeed because of merits but because of social class, money and cultural capital.  Schools are not equally funded/ some are fee paying.  Middle classes at advantage. | Evidence or writers?  A H Halsey  Pierre Bourdieau  Government stats |
| What strengths are there to this point of view?  Statistics show that education is not equal  Acknowledges that there are still inequalities  Drives improvements.  Meritocracy has been basis of educational equality policies. | Government stats  Government policies devised  Aldridge 2001 |
| What weaknesses are there to this point of view?  The opportunities are there but lower class children don’t achieve because of poor parenting, diet or cultural factors e.g behaviour or lack of attendance. This cannot be solved by the education system.  A meritocratic system is fair  There are not enough top jobs to go around. | Hibbert et al  Bernstein  Murray |
| Who would disagree with this point of view? Why would they disagree?  Functionalist view – positive view of education says its fair and right that the BEST people should get the BEST jobs. | Davis and Moore |
| What evidence is there to support the opposing view?  We can’t all have the best jobs.  If you work hard and are intelligent it is fair you get better status  Inequality is inevitable and functional for society. | Equality policies introduced  Sex discrimination  Race relations |
| What criticisms are there of the opposing view?  People are successful for other reasons i.e money/class and ethnicity/gender. So it is not fair  Some are able to pay for better education  Some have cultural capital so get better jobs  It’s not because of merits but because of money or culture. Choice system advantages middle-classes. Meritocracy could be part of the false class consciousness (explain) | Reay et al 2005  Influence of class on higher education |
| What is your conclusion?  There are strengths and weaknesses on both sides however evidence shows that there are still inequalities in society which could be addressed within the education system as a whole |  |

**Sociology of Education**

**Unit 04**



## *What have traditional explanations of education suggested about attainment in schools?*

**Learning targets:**

* According to Functionalists, education has three roles - socialization, skills provision and role allocation.
* Education helps to support society by the socialisation of young people to cultural values.
* Education categorizes people to the posts to which they are best suited according to their talents through the use of examinations and qualifications.
* Everyone has the opportunity to succeed in society on the basis of their ability.
* Schools operate according to meritocratic principles, and status is gained on the basis of merit.

**Key questions**

What is functionalism?

How do functional sociologists view the education system?

What support is there for functionalist views of education?

What criticisms can be made of functional views of education?

**Summary of key points**

Functionalism is a view of sociology that suggests that the role of a sociologist is to look at the workings of society, in a scientific manner, in order to discover how it works. Holmwood (2005) and others have said that social phenomena exist because there is a purpose for them. This is controversial; it leads to the view that many negative things such as crime exist because they fulfil societal needs.

Writers in the structural functionalist tradition of sociology claim that the education system is a meritocracy and that the education system exists to allow the most talented students through to fill the most important jobs in society. Testing of ability through examinations is one of the most fundamental elements of the British education system. British children are among the most tested in the world and this is controversial for a number of reasons, including the emotional impact of regular testing on children.

Emile Durkheim (1858 - 1917) was a French sociologist and is known as one of the Founding Fathers of the discipline. Many of his ideas became the foundations of structural functionalism. He was interested in education and trained teachers for part of his career. He believed that education had a number of purposes (or functions) for society.  
  
The first of these is to reinforce our sense of belonging and community (social solidarity). This is done is schools in a number of ways, but it can be seen best in those things which unite people and make them feel part of a group. Think of uniforms, sport activities and competitions against other schools. The study of history gives us a sense of the continuity of our culture.  
  
The next role of education is to maintain social roles and social rules (social order). Schools are like a wider society in miniature, so pupils learn that some people have more power than others, manners are important. They learn the patterns of behaviour that will help them to survive in society when they leave school.  
  
According to Durkheim, the final function of education is to sort people out to do the correct work for their ability (meritocracy). In modern societies, we have division of labour. Nobody has all of the skills that are needed to survive in our complex world. Durkheim said that schools pass on the general values of society to students and also provide the skills that they will need to work together and produce goods. People must specialise in the kind of work that they do; we have plumbers, carers, check-out operators and doctors. Society could not survive if we did not have people to do different work. People sit examinations, they are sorted out and then encouraged to take up jobs that is suited to what they are able to do. The most able will study the subjects that will encourage their thinking skills, and the low ability children are taught what they need for life.

In the USA, Talcott Parsons (1902 - 1979) developed Durkheim's ideas. For Parsons, the most important agency of secondary socialisation is education. Schools pass on the norms and values of wider society and we learn the rules that apply outside the home. The values that we learn in school apply to all of society, not just our own homes. However, schools have a more serious function than that. They also prepare us for future life. To do that, they act as a form of social selection, choosing what students will do for their future adult roles. Schools are competitive and the best students will go on to the best jobs whereas weaker ones will have to take low pay and low status work. Schools teach children that it is fair to have different rewards and so they teach children to be competitive.  
  
The values that American schools pass on to children are achievement and equality of opportunity. They reward those who have high levels of success and encourage children to work hard to achieve those rewards. In addition, examinations are held under equal conditions and students have equal access to the high grades as the system is impersonal. This means that students learn to accept that the system is a fair and equal one.

In 1945, Davis and Moore, following on from Parson's writings and Durkheim's logic suggested that if education systems are unequal, then there must be a functional reason for this inequality. They argued that inequality is necessary and universal because all societies have inequalities. In effect, if it exists, then it must be because it is for the good of society. This analysis became an influential piece of work as it justified the high pay and status of the richest people in society.  
  
The basic argument is that some jobs and positions are more important to society than others. People who are in these special jobs must have skills and personal qualities that set them apart from other people. It is important for society that the best people fulfil these roles even though they may require huge amounts of work and may not always be pleasant. Very few people have the skill and talent for the best jobs. In addition, a lot of training is required for the top positions. People who undergo extended educational training to get those jobs or those who study hard, often give up a lot to do so. They may work long hours and have no personal time for fun. This is known as deferred gratification; people work hard now for the sake of possible pleasure in the future. People will not do this unless they feel that it brings them some form of advantage over other people.  
  
They must therefore be given an incentive to sacrifice their time so they should be rewarded in the form of excellent pay and rewards. Their pay and rewards should be significantly better than everyone else has to act as an incentive for them to work hard. Thus, social inequality is a good thing for the whole of society as only those who deserve the best rewards can have them. More than that, because society is unequal, it is clear that inequality serves a purpose for society as a whole, otherwise it would not happen.  
  
Surprisingly, this type of thinking influenced some members of the Labour Party in the 1960s, such as Antony Crosland who became Secretary of State for Education and Science. He thought that one way to make society more equal was to make competition between pupils within schools more equal. This led to the policies that created comprehensive schools.  
  
In 1971, another writer developed the ideas of Davis and Moore. Turner suggested that the education system operated to allow some early selection of very able children from the lowest sections of society for the top jobs through mechanisms such as grammar schools and examination systems. Thus education is a ladder of opportunity that people can climb or not depending on their ability and effort. Turner also recognised that some people strive and do not succeed, so schools need to provide systems to encourage the best, but to let the less able be happy with their situation and to accept that they are not good enough for the top jobs.

*Criticisms of structural functionalism*

One of the most famous critics of Parsons was Alvin Gouldner who wrote in the 1970s at the height of student rioting against the Vietnam War. He said that structural functionalism says that we are socialised by education. The education system is meritocratic so the best people get the best jobs. People who do not fit in are deviant. So, how come it was all the best and most intelligent who were deviant enough to complain about the war, the lack of equality for Blacks, homosexuals and women and who challenged traditional ways of thinking?

Whilst Parsons wrote a great deal, he did not do much practical research and although he considered himself a scientist, there is little research evidence to support his ideas. This is a weakness because it is difficult to test his theories.  
  
In addition, Parsons and structural functionalists seem to confuse cause and effect. They argue that certain social phenomena exist because they are needed by society. If they are needed by society, they must fulfill a function for that society. By that logic, women take care of children in our society because that is what they do. This does not take into account all of the other reasons why women care for children, such as socialisation or even male dominance, which is what feminists would argue. There are many factors that influence how cultures develop that are not good for society: racism, sexism and differences in power, but functionalism appears to overlook these.  
  
Structural functionalists suggest that societies wish to be stable and not to change, so they fail to explain changes to society. In reality, societies appear to undergo massive changes, and sometimes in quite a short space of time. Consider changes that have taken place in the role of the genders in the last 50 years or so.  
  
Structural functionalism seems to believe that people all share the same values and morality in society. This is difficult to prove. There are many different social groups which all have very different points of view and patterns of behaving. Norms that apply to one group in society do not necessarily apply to another; for example, many youth cultures are openly critical of mainstream society.

**Alternative perspectives as they apply to the study of education**

**Conflict or Marxist theory**

Education is part of the bourgeois hegemony. Education is a crucial part of the system of social control where we are taught to believe in the dominant ideology of the capitalist state structures. See Bowles and Gintis, Paul Willis’s ***Learning to Labour*** and Randall Collins.

**Radical theories**

These vary but are usually some aberrant form of Marxism. The usual suggestion is that formal structures of education alienate those it exists to serve so children and adults should learn through choice and experience. See A S Neill’s, ***Summerhill***, Ivan Illich’s ***Deschooling Society*** and the work of the Brazilian writer, Paulo Friere

**Sociology of knowledge**

Again this is linked to Marxism, but is more usually associated with the branch of sociology known as phenomenology. Knowledge is a way that experts have of controlling us. This is not as influential a theoretical viewpoint as it once was.

**Interactionism**

Theories are concerned with what is happening in the classroom and with teacher labelling of students. Key ideas include the hidden curriculum and ‘C’ stream mentality.

See Hargreaves, Lacey and Michelle Stanworth.

**Cultural theories and Socialisation**

The concern with this type of theory is the differing success rates in the education system of children from differing circumstances. These look at two basic themes -

*Material circumstances* - Children fail because they are deprived of the basic necessities of life. See Frank Field and Wedge and Prosser

*Parental values* - Children fail because of cultural reasons such as ‘poor’ parenting skills or a severely deficient linguistic ability. See Kohn, the Newsons, Basil Bernstein.

What should you have in your folder of notes on this topic? (AO1)

**Definitions of the key concepts**

Structuralism

Deviant

Meritocracy

Socialisation

Social order

Feminism

Deferred gratification

Ladder of opportunity

Functionalism

Internalise

Meritocracy

Independent study

**Compulsory**

* A mind map or spider diagram that identifies the strengths and weaknesses of functional accounts of education.
* Notes taken from an A level textbook or a website on functionalist views of education.
* A list of each of the writers and theorists mentioned in this booklet and a 50 words or fewer summary of their main points about education.
* One good paragraph either in support of or criticizing functionalism as a viewpoint.

**Extension work**

* Do the gap-fill exercise on <http://www.educationforum.co.uk/sociology_2/functionalist.htm>. Print it out and add it to your notes.
* Use one of the names of the writers or theorists in this section of your notes and put them into a search engine to see what useful information you can find to add to your notes.
* Write up your essay plan notes as a full essay with additional detail added from other sources and books that you have researched

**Useful websites and sources of information (AO1):**

You should use the website of the NgfL Cymru and look at the ebook to develop your notes

<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/sociology-as-ebook>

Look at Cliff’s notes on educational theory and add some to your folder <http://www.cliffsnotes.com/study_guide/Theories-of-Education.topicArticleId-26957,articleId-26914.html>

<http://www.cliffsnotes.com/study_guide/Three-Major-Perspectives-in-Sociology.topicArticleId-26957,articleId-26837.html>

Add some of Chris Livesey’s detailed notes to your folders by downloading and reading <http://www.sociology.org.uk/function.doc>

Use Wikipedia, but treat it with care as it is sometimes incorrect

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Structural_functionalism>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sociology_of_education>

Tbhere is detailed notes and reading to be found on this site <http://www.educ.utas.edu.au/users/pthrosse/Ed4-99/HaraHolborn.htm>

More about functionalism as a perspective

<http://sixthsense.osfc.ac.uk/sociology/as_sociology/functionalism.asp>

<http://learningat.ke7.org.uk/socialsciences/soc-sci/soc/a2/Theory&methodsLT/funtionalism.doc>

A downloadable summary of the functionalist view of education with evaluations <http://homepages.uwp.edu/goldsmip/education/Functism.pdf>

A summary page and a multiple choice quiz can be seen at <http://home.clara.net/chrisgardner/sls1/tests_access/ed6/edpersps_multi6.htm>

Here is a useful summary PowerPoint to download <http://www.angelfire.com/scary/helstonsociology/AS%20Education/The%20UK%20Education%20System%203.ppt>

Here is a sociology of education blog that has a number of entries relating to educational theories <http://sociofeducation.blogspot.com/2009/09/theories-of-schooling-and-society.html>

Find an essay on the Helium website

<http://www.helium.com/items/779460-functional-and-conflict-theory-a-point-of-view>

**AO1 Knowledge and understanding**

1.What is structural functionalism?

2.What do functionalists believe is the main purpose of the education system?

3.What three functions of education did Durkheim identify for the education system?

4.What did Parsons say that students must learn to accept?

5.Why do you think Davis and Moore’s views are popular with the ruling classes in our society?

6.What impact did the theories of Davis and Moore have on the history of the British education system?

7.How did Turner develop the ideas of Davis and Moore?

8.What criticism did Alvin Gouldner make of functionalist views of education?

9.What other criticisms have been made of functionalist views of education?

10.Explain how functionalism can be criticised by using one alternative perspective to the study of education.

**Outline and assess functionalism views of the education system. (35)**

|  |
| --- |
| What do functionalists say about education? Summarise their basic principles. |
| What evidence and theories do functionalists use to support their views about education? |
| Either: how can functionalism be criticised?  Or what have other theories said and how can these be used to criticise functionalism? |
| Summative conclusion: What is the overall view that you have as to the usefulness of functionalism |

**Sociology of Education**

**Unit 05**

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## *How have functional views of education been applied to education policy in modern Britain?*

**Learning targets:**

* The New Right believes society should develop economic growth and efficiency by encouraging competition in all sectors of society.
* This includes in the provision of public services such as education and health which were seen as wasteful and expensive for the state.
* Parental choice is in schools is believed to raise standards
* The New Right support national standardised tests, League Tables and examinations, which permit the direct comparison of schools with each other.

**Key questions**

Who is the New Right?

What policies have the New Right introduced into the British education system?

What impact have these policies had on British education?

How have the New Right been challenged?

**Summary of key points**

The functional standpoint on education tends to concentrate on the positive contributions of education to social order. Functionalists believe that schools operate according to meritocratic principles, and status is gained on the basis of merit. This theory has been developed into a political philosophy by the New Right.

#### 

In 1976, in an address at Ruskin College, the Labour Prime Minister, James Callaghan, called for the 'Great Debate' on education. At a time when unemployment was rising and Britain's economy was declining, it was feared that education was failing to produce young people with the appropriate skills for the world of work. He said it was necessary for schools to improve vocational education and training in order to satisfy the needs of industry. Although it was a Labour prime minister who instigated the 'Great Debate', New Right and Conservative Governments from 1979 onwards reflected his viewpoint and it became one of the beliefs of the New Right.

The New Right is a set of beliefs that was particularly associated with the policies adopted by Margaret Thatcher’s government, elected in 1979. Politicians and writers who support her viewpoints were known as the New Right.

A number of the principles of the New Right are based on the theories of market forces. They felt that the British economy was in decline and something needed to be done to change the situation. People had to take the responsibility for their own future rather than depend on the state. They said that there should be competition amongst schools in the same way as private companies compete against each other.

The New Right also intended to use education to promote economic growth. The objectives of their educational reforms was the raising of standards, increasing the choice available to parents and improving the partnership between parents and schools, as well as improving the link between further and higher education and the needs of the economy.   
  
Chubb and Moe (1997) said competition would lead to raising educational standards. Their argument was that it is necessary for schools to attract their 'customers' by being successful and popular. Publishing examination results would inform parents which schools had the best teachers. League tables were introduced.

So schools could be compared, the National Curriculum was introduced in 1988. Pupils aged 11 - 16 years had to study Mathematics, English, (and Welsh in Wales), Science, History, Geography, Technology, Music, Art, Physical Education and a Foreign Language. The core subjects were Welsh, English, Mathematics and Science. The remainders were the foundation subjects.  
  
The National Curriculum also contained Attainment Targets that stated what every pupil needed to know in the four key stages, at 7, 11, 14 and 16 years of age. This would then be checked in formal tests at the end of every stage - the SATs.

The Education Reform Acts of 1986 and 1988 emphasised parental choice - parents had the choice of sending their children to a school of their choosing. New types of schools were developed. City Technical Colleges were established in cities. These were sponsored by private industry, so that the state did not have to pay the full costs of building the colleges. They were also independent of Local Education Authorities.  
  
Schools were given more control over their own finances, with Headteachers and governors being responsible for the budget. The schools, therefore, received funding based on the number of pupils on the school register. The aim of this was to reward schools who succeeded in attracting a large number of pupils, and motivate other schools to improve.

When the New Labour Party came to power in 1997, Tony Blair stated that education was his priority and that variety and choice were important. Rather than remove Conservative educational reforms, he merely adapted them. New Labour argued that having one comprehensive system that provided the same education for everyone was no longer suitable.

In the New Deal in 1998, education and training was offered for young people between 18 and 24 years old who had been out of work for over six months. A promise was also made to increase the number of student places for students from a working class background in higher education. In 1998, Labour changed the method of obtaining student grants to a system of having low-interest loans. Some argued, however, that this widened the class gap in terms of access to higher education.  
  
Although there was more choice available to young people, it was still difficult to get rid of the obvious division between academic and vocational education. The numbers of post 16 pupils who pursue vocational courses as opposed to 'A' level courses remains small. The majority of white middle class students choose the traditional academic curriculum as before, and working class students and those from ethnic minorities tend to choose vocational courses.  
  
As a result, the Tomlinson review of 14-19 education was set up to try to get rid of this division once and for all. The aim of the New Labour government was to familiarise pupils with the world of work throughout their time in school, in the hope that this will provide suitable and better workers for industry.

#### Evaluations of educational policy

Some sociologists have evidence which supports the view that inequality is continuing. Between 1991 and 1994, Stephen Ball, Richard Bowe and Sharon Gerwitz studied 15 schools in 3 neighbouring LEAs. They visited the schools, attended meetings, examined documents and interviewed a sample of the teachers. They interviewed 150 parents who had children in primary schools who were about to choose which secondary school the children would attend. They also interviewed the Headteachers of some of the primary schools and examined LEA documents in respect of changes in the selection patterns.  
  
They sought to discover what the effects on the education system of giving a choice to parents and stimulating competition between schools were. They looked particularly at the effect of the opportunities on different social groups. The study reached the conclusion that educational changes had substantially influenced secondary schools, particularly those who were short of pupils and who had to do something to arrest the decline. The most successful schools could feel fairly satisfied with their achievements, but they too were beginning to change some of their practices.  
  
Importantly in terms of equality of opportunity, schools were not enthusiastic about attracting every student. Those who could began to select their students. Because of the publication of the league tables, they were more eager to attract children with academic ability who would raise the school's position in the table and add to its prestige.  
  
This emphasis was a stimulus for some schools to restart streams and sets and direct more resources towards those children who were likely to be successful in examinations and tests.

This led to fewer resources being allocated to Special Needs and more directed towards marketing activities in order to attract more pupils - colourful brochures, open evenings etc. Neighbouring schools no longer collaborate, but compete against each other for pupils. As the base line for league tables is the number of pupils achieving 5 x A – C at GCSE, middle band pupils are targeted to get their grades to 5 A-C passes at the expense of the able and the less able. Gillborn and Youdell called this process ‘*the* *A-C economy’*  
  
As LEAs had less control over pupil allocation to the schools, parents had a better opportunity to steer the market. Middle class parents were seen to be exploiting the situation by placing more emphasis on their own educational and cultural values. Middle class parents are in a better position than working class parents to ensure that their children attend the school of their choice. There are a number of reasons for this. Middle class parents have more cultural capital than the majority of working class parents. Collecting information about the educational system and turning to your own advantage requires perseverance, knowledge, time and money. Money also brings other benefits in its wake, for example, paying for public transport to schools that are further away.  
  
The study did not find that working class parents did not have less of an interest in the education of their children. However, they lacked the material resources and cultural capital to influence secondary schools. Many working class parents preferred to send their children to the nearest school.  
  
The study concluded that encouraging choice amongst parents, publishing league tables, open registration, budgeting by formula and other policies that were devised to make education more market-orientated had all made education less egalitarian. It was seen that those who are already at an advantage gain greater benefits and that those who are disadvantaged are losing more ground. The ideology of educational establishments is changing, and is more concerned about attracting the talented and the privileged than helping the disadvantaged.  
  
Some critics strongly attacked the new vocationalism, which characterises the different youth training schemes. Dan Finn refuses to accept that its real aim is to achieve the objectives it alleges. Finn states that confidential government papers that were disclosed to the London publication ***Time Out*** in 1983 show that the true purpose of the youth training schemes was to restrict the number of workers who would join trade unions, in order to minimise the bargaining power of the workforce.

John Clarke and Paul Willis came to a similar conclusion. They argued that the new vocationalism was a means of producing people who wanted to work but who were caught in the middle between education and the world of work. Trainees could be used instead of other full-time workers, and as a result would be cheaper for the employer.  
  
Philip Cohen has studied the educational content within training schemes. Rather than reskilling the population - that is, training them in specific skills such as bricklaying - Cohen perceived that these courses were deskilling the workforce. The real condition of the labour market was being concealed and the fact that unemployment is one of the structural characteristics of society.

What should you have in your folder of notes on this topic? (AO1)

**Definitions of the key concepts**

Cultural capital

League Tables

National Curriculum

New Deal

New Labour

SATS

The A-C economy

The Great Debate

The New Right

The Tomlinson Report

Vocational courses

Vocationalism

Independent study

**Compulsory**

* Notes about the education policies of the New Right.
* A list of each of the writers and theorists mentioned in this booklet and a 50 words or fewer summary of their main points about education.
* One good paragraph either in support of or criticizing the New Right as a viewpoint.
* Add newspaper or BBC news stories about educational policy to your folder of notes

**Extension work**

* Here is an online quiz, do it and then print it out to add to your notes <http://www.educationforum.co.uk/sociology_2/post.htm>
* Use one of the names of the writers or theorists in this section of your notes and put them into a search engine to see what useful information you can find to add to your notes.
* Summary of one of the textbooks in the LRC on functionalism and New Right in education
* Powerpoint summary of key points

**Useful websites and sources of information (AO1):**

You should use the website of the NgfL Cymru and look at the ebook to develop your notes

<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/sociology-as-ebook>

A downloadable summary of the policies of the New Right in education <http://learningat.ke7.org.uk/socialsciences/soc-sci/soc/a2/Theory&methodsLT/newright.doc>

Wikipedia has a useful page, though treat it with care <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Right>

Do an online multiple choice quiz <http://home.clara.net/chrisgardner/sls1/tests_access/ed6/edpol_mult6.htm>

This site is a Left wing site that is critical of Labour Party policy, believing it to be too close to the New Right. Have a look at what it says about education

<http://www.labourpolicywatch.co.uk/education.html>

And another one that is critical of the Labour government for not being more concerned with equality <http://www.socialistworker.co.uk/art.php?id=5969>

Recent editorial from ***the Guardian*** criticising educational policy

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/jan/02/education-policy-class-of-2010>

and a news story saying that reforms have not been successful

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2010/feb/24/national-strategies-a-burden-ofsted>

See the Conservative Party Manifesto on education for the 2010 election <http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/Where_we_stand/Schools.aspx>

and the Labour Party can be seen at

<http://www.labourspace.com/protecting-frontline-services--education>

**AO1 Knowledge and understanding**

What is the New Right?

What is vocationalism?

What do the New Right believe about education?

What did the New Right do to encourage competition between schools?

What are the main effects of competition between schools on the education system?

Has vocational education been successful in raising the status of work?

What vocational elements are there in National Curriculum?

Why do middle class parents often reject vocational courses for their own children?

**1979 – 1997 the New Right and Marketization.**

**The Education Reform Act 1988.**

The Conservative party that came to power in 1979 was a radical government with a very different from previous Labour and Conservative governments. A central part of this "new" ideology was a belief in a "free market" economy i.e. the belief that economies prosper and grow with the minimum of state intervention and vibrant competition. These were not new ideas but had been popular during Victorian times; however the ideas were new to most people during the 1980s. Supporters of this view were often referred to as the **"New Right".** When applied to education they meant**:**

* Education should address **economic growth** by developing workforce skills.
* The best way to achieve this is by creating an **educational market-place** which will make schools more efficient.
* There should be more **competition** which could only work if parents have **choice**.
* If parents are to choose they must have **information about the quality of schools**, which could be achieved through **inspections** and **testing** performance of pupils.

The 1988 Education Reform Act sought to bring the principles of the market into the education system in order to boost its efficiency.

**The main features of the Act.**

1. **National Curriculum**. Schools were to teach to a national curriculum prescribed by government. Pupils would be tested in these subjects at “**key stages**” 7, 11 and 14 and the results of tests to be published in **league tables**.
2. **Opting out**. It became possible for schools to "opt out" of local authority control and get their funding directly government. Opted out or "**grant maintained**" schools were given greater freedom to run their own affairs: to specialise in particular subjects and thereby create greater diversity and thus more choice
3. **Local financial management of schools**. Headmasters and governors were allowed greater control over budgets and the policy of the school.
4. **Open enrolment**. Schools no longer had to recruit from only their catchment area. Thus parents would have more choice as to which school their children attended.
5. **Formula funding**. Schools to be funded on the number of students enrolled. Successful schools would recruit large numbers and get more money; less successful schools would get less and be forced to improve of close.
6. **OFSTED.** There would be regular inspections the results of which would be published to help parents make informed choices.

**The 1988 Act: Evaluation**

**Ball, Bowe and Gerwitz** investigated the impact of greater parental choice and increased competition on opportunities for different social groups.

**Effects on schools**:

* Publication of league tables meant schools were keen to attract most able students to boost results.
* Some schools introduced streaming and directed resources to the most successful students.
* Less attention has been paid to less able children and those with special needs.
* To attract more pupils schools have devoted resources to producing glossy brochures and even employing PR firms. Teachers have been expected to give more time and energy to marketing activities. More attention has been given to the image of the school.
* Neighbouring schools have ceased to co-operate with each other and instead there is “suspicion and hostility” in their relationship.
* Sink schools. Some schools only able recruit those who failed to get into good schools. This will cause problems (e.g. Ridings School, West Yorkshire 1996. which had to be closed)

**Choice**

Different groups of parents can be distinguished by their ability to choose between schools. Three groups of choosers are identified

**Privileged/skilled choosers** (often professional and middle class) spend time researching schools and have money to maximise their choice. They can move house, pay fees etc.

**Semi skilled choosers** who are also concerned to get the best possible education but do not have the experience or skills of the privileged choosers. They are more likely to accept rumours and local reputations.

**Disconnected choosers**. This group tends to choose the nearest school. They might not have a car or money for bus/train fares. They tend to put greater emphasis on the happiness of the child than school’s reputation (e.g. “they will be with their friends”. These choosers are more likely to be on low incomes.

Class therefore is a major factor influencing ability to choose.

**The National Curriculum**

**Lawton** (1989) made the following criticisms of the national curriculum

1. It is too bureaucratic and more concerned with controlling teachers than improving standards.
2. It has centralised power and undermined local control
3. Private schools were exempt thus only the rich have true choice.
4. Its content has been accused of being too traditional and unimaginative. It also excludes certain useful subjects.
5. Publication of test results can lead to schools going into decline.
6. Too much testing might lead to the labelling of some children as failures.

**New Labour Policies – Since 1997.**

Since they were elected in 1997 Labour’s policy have been characterised by elements of New Right thinking combined with a return to social democratic values and equality.

**Policies designed to improve standards**.

* Established **national maximum class sizes** for primary schools made national literacy hours compulsory.
* **Literacy hour and numeracy hours** introduced.
* Closing “failing” schools and giving them a “fresh start” with a new management team. **City Academies** partly funded by private business under the “**private finance initiative**”
* Setting examination **performance targets**
* **Fining parents** up to £1000 if they do not prevent children from playing truant.
* **Faith schools** and specialist to be expanded to increase diversity.

**Policies designed to reduce inequality**

* Established **Education Action Zones** in disadvantaged areas.
* **Grant maintained schools** abolished.
* Pledged that **50% of young people** would get some form of **Higher Education** by 2010.
* **Education Maintenance Allowance** given to young people from lower income backgrounds.

**Evaluation of New Labour policies.**

* The introduction of tuition fees for higher education and the replacement of student grants with loans have been criticised for discouraging those from W/C backgrounds.
* The New Right has attacked Labour for reducing diversity and threatening academic excellence.
* They have placed too much emphasis on markets in education and M/C parents are better placed to take advantage of these.
* Some progress has been made in improving the status of vocational training but it still remains a route into lower paid employment.
* It has failed to recognise that educational reform alone can not change society and underestimated the extent to which inequality in society holds back the disadvantaged.

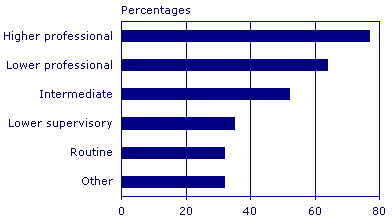
**Outline and assess the impact of the New Right on the education system (35)**

|  |
| --- |
| What have the New Right done to education? Summarise their basic policies. |
| What evidence suggests that they have been successful and that schools have been improved? |
| What evidence suggests that they have been unsuccessful and that schools have not improved but inequalities have been widened between the social classes? |
| Summative conclusion: What is the overall view that you have as to the usefulness of New Right educational policy |

**Sociology of Education**

**Unit 06**

Attainment of five or more GCSE grades A\* to C: by parental NS-SEC, 2002, England & Wales



## *What are the patterns of achievement for students of different social classes?*

**Learning targets:**

* There is a persistent gap in the achievement levels of working-class and middle-class pupils.
* There is close correlation between a child's postcode and education achievement.
* Although working-class achievement has improved in absolute terms, the relative difference between the social classes has remained largely unchanged.
* There are a variety of theories to explain this gap in attainment, including processes within schools, such as labelling and also outside schools such material and cultural deprivation

**Key questions**

What patterns of attainment on the basis of class are there?

How are significant are these differences?

What processes within schools may affect attainment?

What processes outside school may disengage the working class?

**Summary of key points**

There is a clear and well known link between social class and educational achievement. Middle class children with similar ability levels to working class children will almost inevitably gain better grades.  
  
Sociologists have long been concerned by this social class gap in achievement. Since compulsory education began, they have known of a huge wastage of working-class talent in the education system. The working-class as a group seem to have less motivation and do less well in examinations.  
  
In addition, the working classes are more inclined to leave school at 16 rather than staying on to further or higher education. Although the government blames poor teaching and schools for underachievement, it recognises that a child's postcode is also a factor in determining achievement. Postcodes tend to reflect a child's social class background.  
  
School league tables show that a school's success is based largely on the class background of its pupils. However, as we have seen in other topics, social factors such as gender and ethnicity are also important to educational success.  
  
Bynner and Joshi (1999) found that social class differences had persisted with little change from the 1950s to the 1990s. Although in absolute terms, more people (including the working-class) are achieving more and higher qualifications, the relative difference between the social classes has remained largely unchanged. In fact, Jefferis et al (2002) found the gap between higher and lower class pupils had actually widened between 1958 and today.  
  
Any analysis of social class and education cannot ignore private education. The benefits of private education to those who can afford it were summed up in 2008 by Anthony Seldon. He said "It is not right for any longer for our schools to cream off the best pupils, the best teachers, the best facilities, the best results and the best university places."

Material deprivation is a term used to describe the effects of low income on a home. Some people cannot afford the things that they need to gain success for their children: computers, good quality food, a place to work, toys, books and games.  
  
Early research, such as that conducted by Halsey, Heath and Ridge (1980), emphasised the importance of material deprivation and the link between social class background and educational outcome. Paul Harrison (1985) studied the London borough of Hackney. He found a close correlation between the fact it had major problems of poverty and deprivation and had that lowest examination results in London:

Increasingly, researchers are aware that material deprivation has an impact on people's emotions, so it will affect children's attitude to school. Ridge (2007) points out that poor children are aware that their experiences of school will not be of the same quality as richer people. Middle class children see education as a route to a good adult life, whereas working class children see education in a negative light and suggest that it stops you looking stupid.

#### **Cultural deprivation theory suggests that the culture of working class people is 'not as good' as the culture of middle class people and that it leads to educational failure among working class children. This idea is actually a popular one, though controversial in sociology. One view suggests that working class parents are not so good at parenting. This approach focuses upon the traits and values transmitted by parents to their children through child-rearing practices and socialisation. This version of the theory is supported by the New Right and supported by commentators such as Melanie Phillips and Sue Palmer, author of Toxic Childhood.**

#### **However, another view suggests that the working class are the victims of an unequal society. So, the working-class home is seen as less effective in transmitting the values appropriate to education success. Pierre Bourdieu developed the concept of 'cultural capital' and 'habitus' to reflect the importance of culture. He argues the higher up the class structure a family is, the more of the dominant cultural values they possess. Because these reflect the values of the education system, they provide a passport for success. Teachers view children from middle class homes positively.**

#### **Pierre Bourdieu described this undermining of working-class choices, knowledge, accent, and general confidence as a form of 'symbolic violence'. The middle-class is able to define the curriculum and what counts as worthwhile knowledge. This clearly puts the working-class at a disadvantage despite their equal anxiety with the middle class to do the best for their children. Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz (1995) talk about 'cultural capital and educational choice' to reflect on how being better educated themselves, middle-class parents have better knowledge and skills to negotiate the education system. Many working-class parents are ambitious for their children, but do not know how to give practical help.**

There have been attempts to improve the achievement of children from materially and culturally poor backgrounds. One of the earliest and most expensive examples of compensatory education was Operation Head Start, developed in the 1960s in the USA. This involved a pre-school programme of play, activities and stimulation for deprived children to attend 'enriched' environments such as summer camps and nursery schools. By 1973 Head Start was not considered good value for money, and wound down.  
  
In Britain, the government tends to link working-class underachievement with poor teaching and schools rather than low income. Large sums of research money have been poured into studies on what makes an effective school, an effective lesson and effective teaching. Examples of such research include the huge Improving School Effectiveness project by MacBeath and Mortimore.

Addressing cultural deprivation rather than material deprivation is controversial because it implies working class attitudes need to change. Nell Keddie (1976) rejects this ideology that implies that there is nothing of any cultural worth in working-class life. The working-class home, she argues, is simply different not inferior. However, research published in 2007 by Leon Feinstein for the Institute of Education, found that by the age of 3 children from poor families were already lagging by up to a year in development compared to children from wealthier backgrounds.

Many sociologists see social class achievement as linked to the experiences and meanings that are negotiated in schools and classrooms. According to interactionists the underachievement of working-class pupils is not caused by unequal social structures, but by processes within the school such as teacher labelling and expectations. These processes result in self-fulfilling prophecies, the hidden curriculum and anti-school subcultures.

Since the Education Reform Act (1988) there has been a significant move by schools from mixed-ability classes to 'streaming' and 'setting'. There are several reasons for this. Middle class parents pressure schools for streaming as they assume their children will be in the top set. Their children will therefore be protected from weaker or disruptive children who would hold back learning.  
  
Recent research by Stephen Ball (2003), for the Institute of Education, describes streaming as 'social barbarism' in that it allows middle-class parents to separate their children from what they see as 'inferior' pupils. Gillborn and Youdell (2001) found that schools driven by the 'A-C economy' were more likely to allocate working-class to lower sets than middle-class children doing work of the same standard. Much early work on setting found that pupils were placed in sets according to behaviour rather than ability. Working-class pupils were also less likely to be entered for higher tiers of GCSE.



**Answer the following questions:**

What was the main finding of the study?

How are high achievers identified?

How is deprivation measured?

Who conducted the research?

What criticism do the researchers have of the current measure of poverty?

What types of subjects do bright pupils in deprived areas study?

How did the Children’s Minister respond to the findings of the research?

Suggest an essay title for an examination question based on this research.

What should you have in your folder of notes on this topic? (AO1)

**Definitions of the key concepts**

Social class

Cultural deprivation

Interactionists

Material deprivation

Cultural deprivation

Cultural capital

Symbolic violence

Compensatory education

A-C economy

Labelling

Self-fulfilling prophecy

Independent study

**Compulsory**

* Notes from Social Trends or any other government or official statistics source on differences in educational attainment between the social classes
* Detailed notes from textbooks explaining why people of different social classes tend to do less well in school. Write down the names of some researchers and studies.
* Mind map of different reasons why the poorest sectors of society tend to do less well in education.
* News stories taken from newspapers or their websites on attainment and the working class.

**Extension work**

* Talk to teachers about the social characteristics of high achieving pupils. What do you learn about social class and educational attainment from their answers?
* Look at government websites and see what explanations and policies are in place to improve the standard of education for the working class child in school.
* Talk to any of your teachers if they are willing and ask if they have a working class background. If they do, find out about: their feelings towards school when they were young; their parental attitudes to education**;** what made them want to gain qualifications; what disadvantages they experienced, if any; the attitudes that teachers had towards them and anything else that you think might be of interest.

**Useful websites and sources of information (AO1):**

You should use the website of the NgfL Cymru and look at the ebook to develop your notes

<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/sociology-as-ebook>

Recent government findings on inequality in the UK to provide a context for this material can be seen on the Guardian website

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/interactive/2010/jan/26/hills-report-uk-inequality-social-trends>

[A simple summary of this topic can be seen at](http://tobermory.cc.strath.ac.uk/erica/module6_reader/unit4/Jackson%20Reading%202.pdf) <http://sixthsense.osfc.ac.uk/sociology/education/index.asp>

A research summary accounting for the failure of working class children can be seen at <http://www.brunel.ac.uk/news/pressoffice/cdata/failing+schools+or+parents>

A news story examining why working class children often choose not to go to university. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2003/aug/05/socialexclusion.highereducation>

Summary of research into fear of failure among working class girls

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/media-centre/june-2009/working-class-girls-fear-failure/>

Model essay on the topic for you to look at and use

<http://www.earlhamsociologypages.co.uk/subculture.html>

**Answer these key questions in paragraphs**

What patterns of attainment on the basis of class are there?

How are significant are these differences?

What processes within schools may affect attainment?

What processes outside school may disengage the working class?

**Outline and assess sociological explanations of social class differences educational attainment (35)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What specific patterns are there for class attainment among children in the UK?  Children on free school meals (low income) do significantly worse in GCSEs  Your post code affects attainment – students in deprived areas don’t do as well  Working class more often leave at 16 – less motivated and perform less well in exams | |
| What explanations are offered by sociologists for working class underattainment?  Lack of Cultural capital  Material deprivation | |
| What are cultural explanations?  Cultural deprivation  Attitude  Upbringing  accents | What evidence is there to support or reject cultural explanations?  (Bourdieu) – cultural deprivation  (Smith and Noble)  Bernstein |
| What is there in school process and structure that discriminates against the working class?  Labelling (interactionists)  Discrimination  Material deprivation of school resources | What evidence is there to support or reject school process explanations? |
| What are material deprivation explanations? | What evidence is there to support or reject material deprivation theses? |
| What is your view on this topic? | |

**Sociology of Education**

**Unit 07**



## *What influence does locality have on educational attainment?*

**Learning targets:**

* The locality in which a child lives can have an impact on his or her chances of attaining high GCSE grades.
* Wealth tends to be located within certain areas in towns and cities as well as in certain areas of the country.
* The study of locality and its impact on education is therefore, mostly a study on the impact of social class and social deprivation on education.
* Middle class parents have the economic power to buy houses in the catchments of schools with reputations for good results or to find other ways of avoiding sending their children to schools with low attainment and poor results.

**Key questions**

What patterns of attainment on the basis of locality are there?

How are significant are these differences?

To what extent do the middle classes avoid poorer schools for their children?

Have government policies to improve schools been successful?

**Summary of key points**

There is a link between the area in which a child lives and the chances of that child attaining certain examination grades. In Britain, people tend to live in geographical areas that reflect the quality of housing available. In urban or city areas, it is well known that schools serving areas that experience poverty and deprivation such as the inner city will have significantly lower examination success rates than schools serving wealthy areas. Very rural schools also tend to have poor results.  
  
Detailed statistics are gathered by the government and the kind of data that is gathered will include detail such as: average class size, pupil teacher ratios, unauthorised absenteeism, exclusions (permanent and fixed term), numbers of pupils who receive free school meals, and in Wales, the numbers of children educated through the medium of Welsh. This data can be compared across counties and interesting patterns emerge. For example, Rhondda Cynon Taff (2006) had 21% of pupils claiming free school meals, whereas the Vale of Glamorgan had just 10.7%.

Some of the most challenging schools for teachers to work in are found in inner city areas. These are the areas just on the outside of city centres where the housing is older and the rents and rates are lower, so it is where poorer people tend to live. There are a number of reasons why inner city schools tend to be challenging and difficult and have low average examination pass rates. In 2003, David Bell, Chief Inspector for Schools (Ofsted) suggested that the issues for inner city schools were to do with difficulties in the recruitment of staff, high turnover of pupils, lack of confidence from the community, and lack of investment. Alan Smithers and Pamela Robinson (2005) found that teachers only work in some inner city schools for very short periods of time, and then leave to work in less challenging schools in suburbs.

In 1997, over 500 schools in England and Wales were judged to be failing schools and most of these were found in inner cities. By 2003, the number of such schools had dropped to 160. In London in 2007, the number of failing schools was reduced from 26 to 21 but this apparent success was achieved by closing some of the lowest achieving schools. In November 2007, Prime Minister, Gordon Brown claimed he could put an end to educational failure by closing more schools and he threatened the lowest achieving 670 comprehensive schools with take-over or closure. The government has also set up schemes to improve examination results among inner city schools. These include EAZ (Education Action Zone) and EiC (Excellence in Cities). These schemes have been given massive funding. In 2003/4, £350 million was allocated to the projects which have seen limited success  
  
Diane Reay (2004) claims that certain secondary schools and certain groups of children come to be demonised. This is often to do with social class, gender and ethnicity issues. This means that the inner city schools these children attend have very little chance of improving because middle class parents will send their children elsewhere to be educated. In work with Lucey she found that working class parents often did not live in the catchment areas of high achieving schools, but even when they did, they found it difficult to get places for their children. If middle class parents lived in the catchment areas for low achieving schools their options were to move, to send their children to fee-paying schools, or to apply for faith or selective schools so that they did not have educate their children in schools with large numbers of working class or ethnic minority children.

There is a relationship between the quality of a school's intake of pupils and the examination results that are achieved by those pupils. It is argued that one of the impacts of league tables has been to make it difficult for schools at the lower end of the league tables to improve because they no longer attract the most able or the most ambitious students. This has led to differences between England and Wales in terms of policy on educational testing.  
  
Stephen Gorard (2005) studied 124 secondary schools in Yorkshire and discovered that schools have a limited effect on pupils compared to outside factors such as poverty. He is a leading critic of league tables on the grounds that they are polarising types of schools and acting against social mixing in individual schools. This is happening because middle class people often do not send their children what they see as poorly performing schools.

The Thatcher Government of the 1980s sponsored a programme of school renewal and improvement in inner city areas known as City Technology Colleges. Since 2000, the term Academy was used to describe schools that are publicly funded, but not governed by any local authority. These schools are independent of state control. They were designed to deal with the problem of poorly achieving inner city schools, many of which have been closed and converted into academies. By the mid 00s, there were about 50 Academies, but the Labour Government committed itself to opening a further 150 by 2010.  
  
The City Academy programme has been very controversial for a number of reasons. Private sponsors are given considerable control over the schools in return for investment of money. There has been considerable government investment in the schemes. Academies can select up to 10% of their pupils and they do not have to follow National Curriculum. It has been argued that Academies have seen an improvement in examination results. However, other commentators say that the rise in examination results is not due to better teaching or better attitudes among students, but to changes in the intake of pupils and more teaching of vocational courses.  
  
Academies can exclude challenging pupils and these students attend other inner city schools. Some sponsors of schools have been accused of promoting religious or political ideas in the schools that they control. Not all Academies have been equally successful. The Academies cost large sums to start up, and some sponsors have been given government grants to fund their academies. The quality of the actual results are the subject of some debate, with the government suggesting that they are excellent and critics pointing out that they remain below the average figures for the whole of the country.

Habitus is a concept that has been used in philosophy and sociology for a long time. Most recently the idea has been used by sociologists such as Bourdieu to look at how the culture of the area you live in and the people you live amongst affects the way that you think about and see the world. Habitus is more than geography, but is linked to human geography in that people are said to develop a view of the world that depends on the culture of the people around them.  
  
All children will grow up among a distinct group of people who will share a particular view of the world. This affects the patterns in which they think. People are not really aware of their particular thought patterns or how their behaviour is influenced. Research in Scotland (2003) has shown that 83% of children brought up in middle class families and living in middle class areas expect to go to university. This is therefore part of their habitus. On the other hand, only 41% of children from lower class families expect to go to university.  
  
Archer and Yamashita (2003) studied Year 11 pupils in a deprived and over-crowded inner London school and discovered that despite the high opinion and efforts of teachers, pupils often had a sense of 'not being good' enough for higher education. They also blamed their local area, emphasizing its danger and criminality. Some students would not attend certain local colleges because they would have to pass through unsafe neighbourhoods where they would be at risk of crime. This second finding points to practical problems caused by the location of schools and colleges in some areas.  
  
Research by Forsyth and Furlong (2000) in Scotland discovered that although many students from deprived areas may go to university, they are not from the most deprived families in those areas and often come from the wealthiest families in those communities. They were not rich in terms of the whole of society, only rich in terms of the areas that they came from. Poorer students who attend university were more likely to live at home for economic reasons and travelling became a problem for them. It was expensive to travel back and forth from college, it cut into study time. In addition, because public transport is poor, they often missed lectures.

What should you have in your folder of notes on this topic? (AO1)

**Definitions of the key concepts**

City Academy

Demonisation

Deprivation

Failing schools

Habitus

Inner city

League Tables

Postcode lottery

Selective schools

Urban

Independent study

**Compulsory**

* Notes or an annotated download of a recent news story about the City Academies from either a newspaper or the Internet
* Arguments for and against the publication of school League Tables
* Arguments for and against the City Academy programme

**Extension work**

* Suggest policies that you could put into place to encourage working class children to do well in schools. How popular do you think your policies would be with middle class parents?
* Mind map reasons why children from poorer areas tend to do less well in school than those from wealthy or privileged backgrounds.
* Research from GCSE and AS level textbooks to support the idea that geography can play a part in the educational attainment of some pupils.
* Compare and contrast house prices and facilities in different areas of Cardiff, what do you notice about the impact of a high attaining school on where people choose to live.
* You could even ask those of your teachers with school aged children about what choices they made when they were selecting where to live and what schools to send their children to.

**Useful websites and sources of information (AO1):**

You should use the website of the NgfL Cymru and look at the ebook to develop your notes

<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/sociology-as-ebook>

Find out more about a City Academy by looking at the Bristol City Academy website <http://www.cityacademybristol.org/>

Find out more about government policy and the Academy programme <http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/academies/>

What criticisms are made of City Academies – look very carefully for lots of information on this website <http://www.notoacademies.org.uk/>

You can find a list of failing schools and the areas of the country in which they are found on this site

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/3356423/Full-list-of-failing-schools.html>

Here is a news story about government policy to address the issue of failing schools. What do you think of these plans?

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/2106148/Grammars-to-take-on-failing-schools.html>

Conservative plans for education are outlined in this news story <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/8294444.stm>

A news story about improving school performance in the League Tables <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/education/school_league_tables/article6811434.ece>

Here is a useful Youtube clip about white working class failure <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fU6uvKixSro>

**Answer these key questions in paragraphs**

What patterns of attainment on the basis of locality are there?

How are significant are these differences?

To what extent do the middle classes avoid poorer schools for their children?

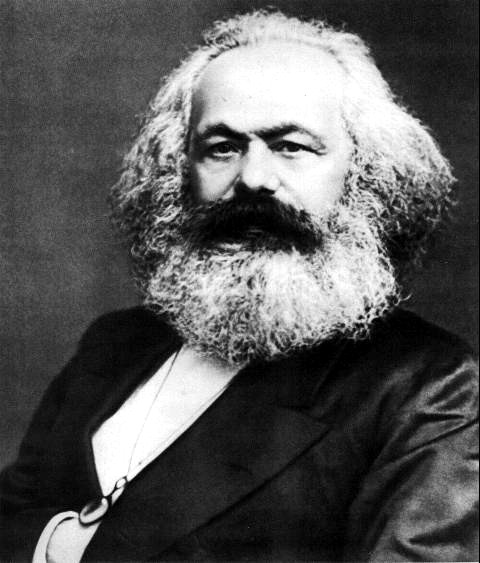
Have government policies to improve schools been successful?

**Outline and explain the link between locality and educational attainment in the UK (15)**

|  |
| --- |
| What specific patterns are there for educational attainment in terms of the geography of the UK? (Explain the problem) |
| What are the probable causes for the link between where a school is located and the attainment of children in the school? (List three or four and explain them) |
| What has the government tried to do about this link and break down the fact that schools in poorer areas tend to do less well? |
| Has this policy been successful? |

**Sociology of Education**

**Unit 8**



## *What do Marxists say about the education system?*

**Learning targets:**

* Marxists see that the ruling class or 'bourgeoisie' rule the workers or 'proletariat'.
* The bourgeoisie have the wealth and the power to rule. The proletariat are exploited because they are not treated fairly.
* Marxists argue that the education system plays a key role in disseminating the ideology of the ruling class.
* Education acts as a force of oppression for the children of the working classes

**Key questions**

What do Marxists believe?

How do Marxist theories apply to the education system?

What strengths are there to the Marxist view of education system?

How have Marxist views been criticised by other writers?

**Summary of key points**

Marxists see capitalist society as being ruled by the economy. The minority, the ruling class or 'bourgeoisie' rule the majority, namely the workers or 'proletariat'. The bourgeoisie have the wealth and the power to rule. The proletariat are exploited because they are not treated fairly. This is the basis of class inequality.  
  
Institutions such as organised religion, the mass media, the political and the education systems all reinforce the ideology that the rich and powerful should control society. They promote an ideology or belief that our society is fair and just and that the proletariat should quietly accept capitalist society.  
  
Marxists argue that the education system plays a key role in promoting the ideology of the ruling class.

Traditionally, the Labour Party has been associated with Marxist principles. It believes that the interests of the working class should be seen as important. Historically the Labour Party has been associated with policies that promote equality of access to education. The Labour Party introduced comprehensive schools, student grants and other educational legislation that made education more accessible to a wider range of people.  
  
Since the arrival of New Labour in 1997, that traditional link with Marxism has broken down. The Labour Party is much less associated with working class ideals because it has followed New Right ideas of competition and market forces in education.  
  
Nevertheless, the Labour Party in Wales has remained much more traditional than the Labour Party in London and has introduced a slightly different range of legislation that is concerned with improving education access for learners. It has abolished the unpopular SATS and made access to Higher Education cheaper for Welsh students applying to Welsh Universities.

The American sociologists, Bowles and Gintis (1976), considered that the main function of education in capitalist countries is to regenerate the labour market. They proposed correspondence theory. This suggests that educational inequality mirrors the inequality of wider society.  
  
If capitalism is to succeed it must have an industrious and obedient workforce that is too divided to challenge the authority of the rulers. According to Bowles and Gintis, education supplies a workforce with the type of personality, attitudes and values that are most useful to capitalists.  
  
The education system succeeds in fulfilling this aim by means of the hidden curriculum. The hidden curriculum includes things that children learn by attending school rather than the alleged educational objectives. There is a correlation between the hidden curriculum and the needs of the workforce. According to Bowles and Gintis, the hidden curriculum moulds the workforce of the future in the following ways:  
  
In a study of 237 members of the senior year in a secondary school in New York, Bowles and Gintis showed that the grades gained had more to do with personal characteristics than academic ability. A relationship was detected between low grades and creativity whilst the higher grades were associated with reliability and punctuality. The American education system was creating an unimaginative, uncomplaining workforce that could be dealt with easily by employers.  
  
Very little control is given to students in respect of the subjects they study and the methods of study. That prepares them for the nature of the relationship in the workplace, where workers are expected to listen and obey.

In capitalist society the workforce must be motivated by external rewards such as pay because the work is so dreary. The wage packet is the external reward, in exactly the same way as the external reward of qualifications was the motivation in school.  
  
Bowles and Gintis allege that knowledge is divided into fragments and kept in 'neat' compartments. The approach to education corresponds to the way that the workforce is divided. Bowles and Gintis believe that jobs in factories are also divided into specific tasks to be done by different individuals. A fragmented workforce is easy to control - an example of dividing in order to overcome.  
  
Bowles and Gintis, therefore believe that the hidden curriculum provides a tolerant and obedient workforce that unquestioningly accepts authority, and is motivated by external reward and which is divided. They also argue that formal parts of the curriculum correspond to the needs of capitalist employers.  
  
They argue that education is indirectly beneficial to capitalism by legalising inequality. By making a society appear to be fair and just, it obscures the awareness of class, and safeguards the stability of society.  
  
Although education is free and open to all, and individuals can apply for jobs as they wish, Bowles and Gintis insist that some have much better opportunities than others. The children of rich and powerful people tend to gain better qualifications and better paid jobs, irrespective of their abilities. This is what the education system seeks to hide behind the myth of meritocracy. Some who are deprived of success blame themselves and not the system which has condemned them to fail. The idea that we are competing on a level playing field is a myth.

Louis Althusser (1971) believed that education socialises working class children into accepting their subordinate status to the middle class. He also stated that the media, the law and religion reinforce this message and pass on an ideology or belief system, namely the ideology of the ruling class. He used the term state ideological apparatus to describe the role of these agencies.  
  
In a capitalist society, he sees education taking over as the main agency of social control. Education reproduces the attitudes and behaviour for divisions of labour. It teaches people how to accept their position, to be exploited, and to show the rulers how to control the workforce.  
  
Education prepares individuals for the world of work, and to accept their position in the capitalist society. Marxists correctly claim that the education system benefits the wealthy in society. University students are more likely to come from professional and middle class backgrounds than from the working class. This is particularly true of the old universities and those that are high in the league tables, and that have close associations with private schools. Oxford University, for example, accepts a substantial number of students from the private sector, even after considering the 'A' level results.  
  
Connor and Dewson (2001) state that only one in five higher education students came from a working class background. This partly reflects their low grades at GCSE and 'A' Level, but also that there are a number of students from working class backgrounds who have the necessary qualifications but opt not to continue to higher education. This supports Marxist ideas that the education system is elitist.  
  
A survey of 2000 young people demonstrated that students from the working class showed more interest in jobs and financial matters than middle class students.  
  
Some of the most common reasons given for not considering higher education level were - wanting to start working, wanting training and to work at the same time, wanting to be independent, they were aiming for a job that did not require being highly qualified, and they were concerned about the cost, namely of student loans and the fear of not being able to repay the debt.  
  
This evidence can be used to support correspondence theory in that working class children are socialised into not challenging middle class power over education and the myth of meritocracy.  
  
However, the people who experience the most discrimination in Marxist terms are women and members of ethnic minorities. Yet it is these who are the two groups who are increasingly attending universities.

The work of Bowles and Gintis is considered to be extremely controversial, and it has been criticised by Marxist critics and others.  
  
Critics agree that Bowles and Gintis over-emphasise the correlation between work and education and that they have failed to provide adequate evidence. A number of points have been made by their critics.  
  
The education system was established much later than the beginning of the industrial period. For a long time, industrialists were employing an uneducated workforce and thriving. This weakens the alleged relationship between education and economic development.  
  
Insufficient research was undertaken to the allegation that schools had an effect on personality. Detailed research into life in schools was not undertaken, whilst admitting that the hidden curriculum in fact was influencing pupils. Other research suggests that little attention is paid to school rules by many pupils, and their respect for teachers is minimal - in contrast to Bowles and Gintis' idea of a docile workforce for the future.  
  
Bowles and Gintis were criticised for ignoring the influence of formal education. Reynolds insists that it is not the objective of the curriculum to develop a workforce that is obedient. Pupils are taught to appraise and question, to know about social and political matters.  
  
In a study of workers in England by Richard Scase, only 2.5% were of the opinion that educational qualifications were an important factor in deciding social class. This does not suggest that education has succeeded in legalising inequality in Britain.  
  
According to David Reynolds, it would be impossible for British capitalists to completely rule schools. Local authorities have a great deal of freedom in the matter of organising education. Teachers do have freedom within the classroom.  
  
The Bowles and Gintis research was completed in the 70s. Since then, there have been many changes to the education system which suggests that their assumptions could be more relevant today. Local authorities lost some of their power and control over education, for example, by the establishment of grant-maintained schools; teachers lost their freedom as a result of the national curriculum; and there has been a growth in vocational training.  
  
The Marxist, Henry Giroux, sought a new analysis, following the criticisms made of Bowles and Gintis. He claimed that pupils from the working class participated in designing their own education. They do not accept everything they are taught. They take advantage of their own culture to find ways of responding to the school - often by opposition (anti-school subculture).

What should you have in your folder of notes on this topic? (AO1)

**Definitions of the key concepts**

Correspondence theory

Ideology

Repression

Proletariat

Bourgeoisie

Bourgeois hegemony

Capitalism

Ideological state apparatus

Hidden curriculum

Cultural capital

Independent study

**Compulsory**

* A PowerPoint presentation explaining Marxist theories of the social system
* Notes on each of the writers in these notes, summarised to 50 words or fewer.
* Evidence of personal research from a textbook explaining Marxist approaches towards education.

**Extension work**

1. Write a short essay to the title:

Outline and assess Marxist theories of education.

* Find out about one or more of the following Marxist writers and add notes or annotated downloads to your folder:

Karl Marx

Louis Althusser

Pierre Bourdieu

Antonio Gramsci

Jurgen Habermas

**Useful websites and sources of information (AO1):**

You should use the website of the NgfL Cymru and look at the ebook to develop your notes

<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/sociology-as-ebook>

[Karl Marx's life and influence are summarised here](http://learningat.ke7.org.uk/socialsciences/soc-sci/soc/a2/Theory&methodsLT/newright.doc)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/marx_karl.shtml>

[Summaries of Marxist thinking](http://learningat.ke7.org.uk/socialsciences/soc-sci/soc/a2/Theory&methodsLT/newright.doc)

<http://sixthsense.osfc.ac.uk/sociology/as_sociology/marxism.asp>

<http://www.infed.org/thinkers/et-marx.htm>

<http://www.sociology.org.uk/ffmarx.doc>

<http://www.sociology.org.uk/tmmarx.pdf>

<http://www.mrthirkill.com/resources/marxism.doc>

There is an activity lesson on this website that should ensure your notes are good:

<http://www.educationforum.co.uk/sociology_2/basesuper.htm>

There is material that could be very useful on the pages of the Earlham Sociology pages <http://www.earlhamsociologypages.co.uk/edtraintitle.htm>

Really detailed Marxism can be seen at

<http://www.marxism.org.uk/>

**AO1 Knowledge and understanding**

Who was Karl Marx?

What do Marxist believe about society and how it is structured?

What do Marxists believe about education?

What is the link between the Labour Party and Marxism?

Explain what Bowles and Gintis suggest with correspondence theory.

What are the strengths of Marxist thinking about schools and education?

What weaknesses are there to Marxist views of the education system?

**Outline and assess Marxist theories of education. (35)**

|  |
| --- |
| Outline Marxism in general |
| What do Marxist theorists say about education? |
| What are the strengths of the Marxist view of education? |
| What are the weaknesses of the Marxist view of education? |
| Summative conclusion: What does Marxism add to our understanding of the education system of the UK? |

**Discuss sociological explanations for why we have an educational system.**

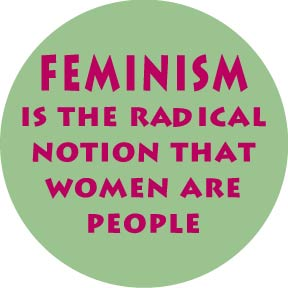
Key terminology for the essay (AO 1)

Marxism, Functionalism, meritocracy, social control, socialisation, ideology, hidden curriculum, ladder of opportunity

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | What is formal education? What are the historical reasons to explain why we have an education system? |
|  | What do Functionalists say about the reasons for the education system? (refer to writers) |
|  | What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Functionalist point of view? (refer to evidence) |
|  | What do Marxists say about the reasons for an education system? (refer to writers) |
|  | What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Marxist point of view? (refer to evidence) |
|  | In conclusion, which point of view has the strongest arguments to support it? |

**Sociology of Education**

**Unit 9**



What critical theories of education have developed?

**Learning targets:**

* Neither Marxism or Functionalism offer good explanation of the education system.
* Critical theorists have adapted Marxist ideas and developed them to explain educational inequality.
* Neo-Marxists suggest that boys reject school for reasons of their own
* Feminists see girls as victims of the education system

**Key questions**

What are critical theories?

What do subcultural theories and feminists say about education?

What strengths and weaknesses are there to subcultural theories?

What strengths and weaknesses are there to feminist views of education?

**Summary of key points**

Functionalists have a view of education that seems optimistic and unrealistic to many sociologists. Marxists view the education system as being a form of mind control. Neither picture is entirely satisfactory. Sociologists have therefore looked at other ways of explaining how education works. These other theories are known as critical theories because they criticise society and attempt to change society itself and to examine how people look at the world.  
  
When studying education, the point is that pupils respond to their education in different ways. Some groups accept teachers' rules and authority unquestioningly, whilst others spend most of their time breaking the rules and avoiding work.  
  
In the 1970s, the media gave a great deal of attention to inner-city schools and to the misbehaviour of their pupils. This motivated sociologists such as Paul Willis to look into the reasons for the development of these working class groups of 'undisciplined' school pupils, or anti-school subcultures. Paul Willis's study entitled 'Learning to Labour' is an important Neo-Marxist approach on education. He began with a Marxist perspective, but went on to criticise Marxist viewpoints as being too negative.  
  
Willis tried to understand the experience of being in school from the children's perspective. He soon discovered that schools were not as successful as Bowles and Gintis thought in terms of producing a docile and compliant workforce.  
  
The school studied by Willis was on a working class housing estate. The main focus of his study was 12 working class boys who he shadowed for their last 18 months in school and in their first few months in work. Willis referred to the boys as 'lads'.  
  
He claimed that they had their own anti-school culture which was opposed to the common values of the school. He claimed that boys developed an anti-school culture because school was irrelevant. His material is now very dated, but it has been influential over the years.

#### Anti-school culture

Boys felt that they were above teachers and other pupils who conformed. They placed little or no value on academic work, and they had no interest in gaining qualifications. One of their objectives was to miss lessons or do as little work as possible when they did attend. School equated to boredom, the adult world was far more exciting. Means of identifying with the adult world were smoking, drinking and not wearing school uniform.  
  
Boys were very keen to leave school and looked forward to having full-time work. They were prepared to take any job as long as it was male manual work. Any manual work was acceptable. They saw little benefit in studying for years in order to have a job requiring mental ability. There was no money in that and they would lose their independence.  
  
Willis believes that education reproduces the type of workforce required by capitalism, but not intentionally. Boys in school are not forced to behave in the way that they do, nor are they forced to look for manual work; rather it is they in their subculture who choose that type of work. They learn from their fathers, brothers and others in the community. The attraction is the adult male world.  
  
Willis concludes that anti-school culture is neither good nor bad for capitalism. The boys realise that capitalist society is not meritocratic. They understand that there are no means for them to improve their lives on their own and they must work together to improve the situation of the working class, both in school and at work. They know that there are no jobs available locally and that studying at school will not prepare them for work. They understand the importance of manual work, but they do not know to what extent capitalism has succeeded in taking advantage of them.  
  
Willis demonstrates therefore, that voluntary abstention from school prepares one section of the workforce for their future role. The force of work reproduces itself unintentionally and indirectly in school.

#### Critiquing Willis

#### **David Blackledge and Barry Hunt made a number of criticisms of Willis's work. They suggested that Willis's sample was insufficient. He concentrated on 12 pupils, all males who were not typical of the pupils in the school he studied. Therefore, this study cannot be used as a general picture of working class children and education. Willis disregarded the broad variety of subcultures in the school. Many of the pupils were in the middle, between both extremes of wholly conforming and the other of being wholly committed to the anti-school culture. Willis misinterpreted some of the evidence, for example that some boys copied their fathers' attitude towards work. Some of the fathers were very proud of their work and their good relationship with the managers, whilst their sons rejected everyone who did not belong to their own little world. Twenty years later, a similar study was undertaken in the West Midlands by Mairtin Mac an Ghaill (1994). Some of the young working-class boys - 'the macho lads' - were similar to Willis's boys. They rejected teachers' authority and school values. However, when Mac an Ghaill conducted his research, it was a period of high unemployment when a number of the traditional low-skill working-class jobs were disappearing. Because of this, the 'rebellious' behaviour of the boys was not so suitable - the jobs for them were disappearing. Often, a period in a youth training scheme was followed by unemployment, and this became the norm for a number of working-class boys.**

#### Post modernists

Post-modernists argue that the age that we are living in is different from any other period because so many changes are occurring all the time, and this of course also affects and influences the world of education. There are differences and concerns because of the number of languages that exist, the number of ethnic groups that co-exist in towns and cities and changes in working patterns. All of these influence education.  
  
Society has also changed. By now there are a number of single-parent families, same-sex couples are accepted and religion has to appeal to a multicultural society. To enforce one common curriculum on everyone is going to lead to some problems.  
  
Post-modernists also argue that they are constantly being 'watched' in today's society. Not only because of CCTV cameras but also because of the increase in maintaining records of everything on paper and setting targets in order to monitor people in schools and in jobs.   
  
Moore and Hickox (1994) stated that it is impossible to provide a curriculum that suits everyone, either a national or vocational curriculum, because of the social changes that are taking place in society.

Because of the increase in monitoring also, record keeping and setting targets, pupils suffer as they constantly have to sit tests and examinations. This causes strain and concern for some.

**Feminist criticisms of education**

### Feminists argue that education reinforces 'patriarchy'. It must be borne in mind that there are different groups of feminists, but they all study the role of education as a secondary socialisation agent. They emphasise patterns of inequality and show how patriarchy is conveyed culturally and is reproduced through education. Sylvia Walby (1999) mentions the 'triple system' of oppression where ethnicity and class complicate the situation for women, and that it is necessary to look at patriarchy, capitalism and racism together. Liberal feminists argue that changes in education and equal opportunities policies are necessary in order to be rid of patriarchy, so the introduction of the National Curriculum does so by ensuring both sexes study the same subjects in school. Marxist feminists argue that the role of women in society is decided by the economy's needs. They see the capitalist system at fault for the socialization of women to supporting men in the home and in the workplace. Education reinforces these ideas. Black feminists argue that being female and black is different from being female and white. These experiences can be seen in schools and colleges and the ways in which teachers and books treat the students differently. Radical feminists argue that the only way to see an end to patriarchy is when women are freed from the negative (and aggressive) influence of men over women - both physically and emotionally. The classroom and the playground are seen as sources of this type of aggression. Post-feminists argue that the word 'woman' does not have only one meaning but several. A woman can be black, white, lesbian, working-class or middle class. This is the post-modern idea that there is not one single theory or concept that explains everything. Heaton and Lawson (1996) refer to the hidden curriculum discussed by feminists. This occurs in several ways - literature that portrays women as being dependent on men - Kelly (1987) states that women are 'invisible' in science subjects. A number of women feel uncomfortable studying some subjects. Culley (1986) stated that in ICT lessons boys take over and exclude girls. In a number of cases the teachers were not seen intervening. Heaton and Lawson argue that some teachers still have sexist ideas with regards to some tasks, e.g. boys moving furniture and girls cleaning. A number of feminists argue that what is taught in schools still creates gender inequality despite the National Curriculum. Sport tends to concentrate more on boys' successes and the choice of 'A' levels in some subjects still tends towards traditional patterns of gender segregation.

### Although there are more women teachers in England and Wales, in schools and colleges there are more men in the senior management posts. And there is a shortage of Black female teachers. Feminists state that all this gives the misconception that positions of power are held by men. Feminists view education as socialisation agent for gender roles, although different aspects are dealt with by different feminists. The education system reinforces the ideology that men are in authority and that the hidden curriculum contributes towards it. What must be remembered, of course, is that girls generally do much better than boys in many areas of education. Feminist views of women as the victims of the education system may need to be challenged in the light of female achievements.

What should you have in your folder of notes on this topic? (AO1)

**Definitions of the key concepts**

Critical theory

Neo-Marxism

Anti-school culture

Feminism

Post modernism

Triple system of oppression

Lad culture

Hidden curriculum

Independent study

**Compulsory**

* Notes from a textbook on feminism and neo Marxism
* Notes on each of the writers in these notes, summarised to 50 words or fewer.
* An evaluation of Willis's work
* An evaluation of Feminist views of education that refers back to the work that you did on gender and educational attainment.

**Extension work**

1. Write or plan a short essay to the title:

Education does more harm than good to society. Discuss

* Observe a group of anti-school subculture students – do they really reject school?
* Use a textbook or the internet to make notes on Carolyn Jackson’s ***Lads and Ladettes in school***
* Use a textbook to make notes on Paul Willis ***Learning to Labour***

**Useful websites and sources of information (AO1):**

You should use the website of the NgfL Cymru and look at the ebook to develop your notes

<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/sociology-as-ebook>

There is an online activity on Paul Willis's work that you can print out: <http://www.educationforum.co.uk/sociology_2/willis.htm>

Find out more about feminisms

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminism>

Anti-school subculture explained in one slide print outs

<http://www.slideshare.net/sociologytwynham/anti-school-subculture-presentation>

<http://www.slideshare.net/sociologytwynham/anti-school-subcultures2-presentation?src=related_normal&rel=874533>

Anti-school subculture linked to gender achievement

<http://juni.osfc.ac.uk/Extension/level_3_extension/sociology/lesson_3/index.asp>

An internet essay on delinquency and anti-school subcultures

<http://www.timothyjpmason.com/WebPages/Deviance/Deviance6.htm>

An interactivity can be completed and printed out from this webpage# <http://www.educationforum.co.uk/sociology_2/boy.htm>

Mind maps covering writers, topics and key concepts can be downloaded from

<http://www.sociology.org.uk/c4_4.pdf>

Find out more about Paul Willis’s ***Learning to Labour***

<http://onlineclassroom.tv/sociology/catalogue/classic_collection/paul_willis_-_learning_to_labour>

<http://www.educationforum.co.uk/sociology_2/willis.htm>

**AO1 Knowledge and understanding**

What is a critical theory?

What were the aims of Paul Willis’s study?

What did Paul Willis conclude?

What criticisms have been made of Willis’s methods?

What did Mac an Ghaill discover when he reproduced the work of Willis?

What do postmodernists say about the society we live in?

What impact do Moore and Hickox say that recording keeping and targets has had on children?

How have feminists criticised schools and education?

What is the triple system of oppression?

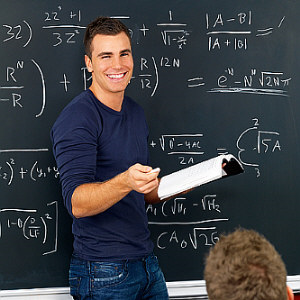
Why can feminist views of education be challenged?

**Discussion and thinking questions**

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How true is this image of the experience of school for most children?

What do you learn about Japanese culture and schools from this image of school children?

What kind of influence do teachers and schools have over the behaviour of children?

**Sociology of Education**

**Unit 10**

What patterns of achievement are there for students of different ethnicities?



**Learning targets:**

* Different ethnic groups appear to have differing levels of achievement in school. Overall, the ethnicities of attainment are White, Chinese and Indian heritage students.

* There has been concern about the achievement levels of certain Black minorities: in particular, African Caribbeans and Bangladeshi students under-attain in schools.
* Sociologists have difficulty in measuring the impact of ethnicity on achievement because other factors may be involved. Poverty, class and cultural factors may all form part of reasons why some Black ethnic groups underperform.

**Key questions**

What is ethnicity?

What patterns of attainment on the basis of ethnicity are there?

Is the education system institutionally racist? What evidence supports this?

What other social factors may influence ethnic attainment?

**Summary of key points**

Ethnicity is a word used in sociology to describe the culture that you belong to. Everyone has an ethnicity. For most people in Barry, this ethnicity or sense of belonging to a culture is Welsh. Some people have more than one ethnicity; they might be Welsh/Chinese or English/African. The majority ethnicity in Britain is white British. People who do not fit into that group are said to belong to an ethnic minority. There are many ethnicities in Britain. The majority of the UK population in 2001 was White (92 per cent). The remaining 4.6 million (or 7.9 per cent) people belonged to other ethnic groups.

It has been known for a long time that different ethnic groups appear to have differing rates of attainment in the education system. Although some writers such as H J Eysenck and the geneticist, James Watson have claimed that there are differences in ability between various ethnic groups and 'races', the evidence for this view is very poor indeed. Intelligence tests are often culture bound; it is difficult for someone to succeed in a test not designed for their culture. No ethnic group is naturally less capable than any other although we can identify patterns of achievement associated with ethnic groups. There is a general concern about the achievement level of Black minorities. For example, there is data to show that they are far more likely to be permanently excluded from school than other ethnicities.

It was not until 2003 that the government first published statistics showing GCSE pass-rates across different ethnic groups. Statistics show that Indian, Chinese, and African-Asian pupils consistently have higher levels of achievement than other ethnic groups across all the Key Stages. In contrast, Black, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Gypsy/traveller pupils consistently have lower levels of attainment than other ethnic groups across all the Key Stages. It is important to recognise that there is significant individual variation in achievement within each group. Many Black Caribbean and Bangladeshi pupils will excel and some Chinese pupils will fail.

However, official results published in November 2007 show that Black pupils are closing the educational gap at GCSE. The numbers of Black Caribbean pupils achieving five good GCSEs has shown almost double the national increase, meaning that the gap has narrowed by eight percentage points in four years. An interesting fact about the current education system is that the worst performing group (in terms of achieving five A\*-C grades at GCSE) is white working-class boys.

If some Black children are underachieving in education then this raises questions about the education system and also Black British culture.

* Is the education system institutionally racist?
* Is the failure of some ethnic minorities due to cultural factors such as poverty and deprivation?

***Is the education system institutionally racist?***

African-Caribbeans have the highest exclusion rate, three times the rate of white pupils. Bourne et al (1994) explain this as White teachers feeling threatened. Others suggest it results from behaviour that stems from frustrations of racism. In schools there is an under-representation of Black teachers who account for just 1.5% of the profession (7% in London). In 2007 the Reach group called for more positive role models from within Black boy's own communities consisting of lawyers, doctors and teachers.

Tony Sewell (1997) identified peer pressure and street culture as a key factor to explain why many Black-Caribbean pupils' achievement declines through secondary school. He sees the high number of boys who grow up in female single-parent families as a factor, and points out that this makes boys vulnerable to negative influences of peer pressure and street culture. Boys are attracted to a culture of masculinity which undermines the value of schooling and education qualifications. Máirtín Mac an Ghaill (1988) illustrates this attitude with his description of the 'Rastas' who arrived late, disturbed other students, interrupted teachers, tried to cause arguments and talked incessantly. Critics of Sewell and Mac an Ghaill argue that they ignore a racist ethnocentric hidden curriculum, prejudiced teacher attitudes and racist policies of the educational system.

Smith and Tomlinson (1989) studied 2,400 pupils aged 11-16 years from a range of ethnic groups who attended 18 multi-ethnic comprehensives. They found achievement levels varied enormously, suggesting that schools could make a significant difference to children of all ethnic groups. When looking at schools, Andrew Pilkington (1999) argues research should centre around two key questions.

* Is there evidence of racial discrimination in the allocation of pupils to sets/streams?
* Is there evidence of racial discrimination by teachers in their classrooms?

Cecile Wright (1992) researched four inner-city primary schools and found evidence that teachers treated ethnic minority children differently from White children. David Gillborn (1990) found something similar in secondary education. He believes underachievement amongst ethnic minority groups is due to racism.  
  
Gillborn and Youdell (2001) found evidence that racism is still a key factor in educational underachievement. In a study of two London schools they found black children were the lowest achieving group when they left school after GCSEs despite being the highest achieving group when they started. Working-class and black pupils were more likely to be allocated to lower sets than middle class children doing work of the same standard. They were also less likely to be entered for higher tiers of GCSE.  
  
Trevor Phillips of the Committee for Racial Equality in 2004 said that many Black parents want separate classes for Black pupils in state schools. Some African-Caribbean parents suggest the creation of 'Black schools' to foster a positive image of Black identity. Equally the Muslim community argues that education for their children should be based on Islam. They point out that 'mainstream' religious schools (Anglican, Roman Catholic and Jewish) receive government aid and so it is discriminating to refuse the same aid to Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus. A fear of Islamic fundamentalism appears to have dampened this enthusiasm, but interest in Faith Schools has been revived in the Education White Paper (2006).

***Is the failure of some ethnic minorities due to cultural factors such as poverty and deprivation?***

Modood et al(1997) pointed out that the ethnic groups with the poorest achievement levels - Bangladeshis, Pakistanis and Black-Caribbeans - tend to be located within the working-class. On the other hand, the relative success of the Indian ethnic group and African-Asians can be explained because they are often located within the middle-class. Research by Cassen and Kingdon for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, (2007) identified the key characteristic of low achievers as coming from disadvantaged backgrounds (qualifying for free school meals), living in areas of high unemployment, and having single parents who themselves have poor qualifications.  
  
Government statistics show that 70% of Bangladeshi pupils and almost 60% of Pakistani and Black African pupils live in the 20% most deprived postcode areas compared to less than 20% of White British pupils. Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils are also more likely than other groups to live in households where the head of household has never worked or is long term unemployed. Access to free school meals is viewed as a good indicator of deprivation and a close relationship exists between free school meals and underachievement. Two-thirds (66%) of Gypsy and Traveller pupils are eligible for free school meals in primary schools compared to 18% of all pupils. There are also higher than average proportions of Bangladeshi, Pakistani, mixed-race and African-Caribbean pupils who are eligible for free school meals, across primary and secondary schools.  
  
Richard Berthoud (1998) used data produced for the Family Resources survey and discovered that Indian, Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups were very vulnerable to poverty. Incomes are low, and often only one partner works. If there are a number of children, this results in child poverty. He discovered that after basic needs had been deducted from income, there was less money available than in White households.

There is a strong belief that parental interest is important in raising standards in education. In 1997, a White Paper, Excellence in Schools was published. This set out three routes for parents to become more active participants in schools: providing information, becoming parent governors and feeding back to inspectors. Desforges (2003) for the DfES suggested that parental involvement is more important than class in terms of educational attainment. However, others argue there are limits to the degree to which parents can become involved in their children's education for reasons such as poverty, depression, low literacy skills, inappropriate support from schools.  
  
Language has been an area researched by sociologists to explain differential educational achievement by ethnic groups. In some Asian households English is not the main language. However, Cassen and Kingdon (JRF, 2007) found that not speaking English at home was only 'a short-lived handicap', overcome by most pupils by the time they attended secondary school. However, Mac an Ghaill (1988) found that the 'Creole' or 'patois' spoken by African-Caribbeans could cause problems; either through causing misunderstandings for them or not being understood by teachers.  
  
A number of sociologists have suggested that the nature of family life affects achievement among ethnic minorities. The New Right has criticised single-parent families - a common family type within the Caribbean community. Writers such as Murray and Saunders have suggested that Caribbeans have a family life that is demotivating to boys who grow up without a father-figure. In addition, the New Right point to the fact that large numbers of Caribbean mothers work full-time and unsocial hours. This inevitably results in practical problems of time and money in supporting their children's education and could be a factor in poor Caribbean achievement in school.  
  
Tizzard et al. (1988) found great enthusiasm for educational success in the African-Caribbean community. They encourage of 'Saturday schools' which are typically found in every city with a sizeable Black population. These are schools organised by black community. Within the South Asian community, especially the Indian and African-Asian group, education is seen as a 'positive resource' that helps gain access into the professions and upward social mobility. Parents have high aspirations for their children's education, and parental encouragement and expectations may well be a major contributory factor towards their children's success.  
  
Bhatti (1999) found that many Asian parents valued education but they had very little understanding of the systems by which schools are run. They found schools unwelcoming and unsupportive. The children experienced racism, but the schools did not deal with it effectively. There was little interest in Asian culture in British schools and little positive acknowledgement of the cultural differences.

It follows therefore that sociologists have a difficult task in isolating and quantifying any link between low achievement in schools and ethnicity. How do they measure the impact of ethnicity over any of the many other factors that can affect how well an individual does in the education system?

What should you have in your folder of notes on this topic? (AO1)

**Definitions of the key concepts**

Ethnicity

Hidden Curriculum

Racism

Prejudice

Discrimination

Ethnocentric

Institutional racism

Material deprivation

Cultural deprivation

Independent study

**Compulsory**

* Notes from Social Trends on differences in educational attainment between different social groups
* Detailed notes explaining why children from some ethnic minorities underachieve in school. Use ‘A’ level textbooks and the Internet for ideas.
* Short summary notes from one of the publications of the JRF website which looks at the experience of ethnic minorities in British schools. Either use this page <http://www.jrf.org.uk/search/site/ethnicity%20education> or look at the media pages for press releases on this topic.
* Find out more about the psychology of racism and check yourself for racist attitudes by looking at this website <http://raceandscience.channel4.com/>

Find out more about the history of migration and immigrant groups into Britain. Why did these people come to the UK? What impact have they had on British culture? You could start by researching the history of Caribbean migrants into the UK by putting ***Empire Windrush*** into a search engine. Alternatively, ask someone in your family as most British families have a history of migration.

**Answer these key questions in paragraphs**

What is ethnicity?

What patterns of attainment on the basis of ethnicity are there?

Is the education system institutionally racist? What evidence supports this?

What other social factors may influence ethnic attainment?

**Useful websites and sources of information (AO1):**

You should use the website of the NgfL Cymru and look at the ebook to develop your notes

<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/sociology-as-ebook>

Information on race and ethnicity in the UK can be seen on this BBC website <http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/in_depth/uk/2002/race/> and you will find an article on race and ethnicity in education on this page <http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/in_depth/uk/2002/race/educational_achievement.stm>

Use the search engine of the JRF website <http://www.jrf.org.uk> and see what you can find to add to your folder

These pages on the JRF site offer summaries of recent research linking poverty, education and ethnicity

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/2059.pdf>

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/comparison-how-young-people-different-ethnic-groups-experience-leaving-school>

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/challenging-and-changing-racist-attitudes-and-behaviour-young-people>

BBC news pages on this topic include

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/6594911.stm>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/6301699.stm>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/thereporters/markeaston/2008/10/ethnicity_and_the_fiveyearold.html>

Government research and information is summarised in this huge document, you probably only need to look at the key findings

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DFES-0208-2006.pdf>

The ONS have this document which looks at exclusions and GCSE results

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=461>

Here is an article by Tariq Modood on this issue <http://www.bris.ac.uk/sociology/ethnicitycitizenship/publications_index/teaching.html> **Outline and explain differences in ethnic patterns in educational attainment (15)**

|  |
| --- |
| What specific patterns are there for ethnic attainment among children in the UK? |
| What evidence is there to support the idea that schools are the cause of underattainment for some ethnic minority groups? |
| What evidence is there to suggest that the problems have a wider social origin in poverty, deprivation and cultural misunderstanding? |
| What is your view on this topic? |

**Sociology of Education**

**Unit 11**

## *What are the patterns of achievement for students of different genders?*



**Learning targets:**

* Until the mid 1980s, boys outperformed girls in schools except at eleven plus. This was seen as natural, except by feminists who challenged entrenched racist attitudes.
* The impact of feminist research changed many attitudes in schools so that there were educational policies that set out to raise the attainment of girls.

* By the mid 1980s, girls and boys were achieving equally well. Girls are now consistently outperforming boys at all levels and in most subjects.
* This is a cause for concern by many politicians and media publications so it has become something of a moral panic.

**Key questions**

What patterns of attainment on the basis of gender are there?

How are gender patterns of attainment changing?

Are changes to the education system favouring women?

What other social factors may influence gender attainment?

**Summary of key points**

There are significant differences between the genders in terms of the educational success of girls and of boys.

In the 1960s, boys achieved results that were on average 5% better than girls. Until the mid 1980s, boys out-performed girls at all levels of the education system, with the exception of 11+. Most educational writers read this as being 'proof' that girls were generally less intelligent than boys and that boys were 'late developers'.

There was little serious challenge to this type of thinking until the 1960s and 1970s when feminists pointed out that the better school performance of boys was not the result of the superiority of male intelligence, but that the educational experiences of boys and girls were very different. A number of studies by feminist writers such as Spender, Deem, Stanworth and Delamont pointed to the sexism of the educational system that they claimed reflected the sexism of everyday life.  
  
In general, until the 1980s girls were usually offered a curriculum that prepared them for life in the home whereas boys were offered practical subjects such as woodwork and metal work or were encouraged to study academic subjects. Schoolbooks were written with the focus firmly on males. Even the common style of school uniform was masculine clothing of a jacket, shirt and tie, only modified with a skirt for girls. This reinforced the hidden curriculum idea that education and intelligence were masculine. Even as late as 1993, Scrimgeour investigated education with a small sample of Scottish teachers and found considerable bias in favour of males in terms of practice and materials.  
  
In the mid-1980s, both genders began to improve their school performance significantly. The improvement of girls was more rapid than that for boys. Females are now no longer the gender associated with underachievement. They outperformed boys at every key stage level in 2007 (except Maths KS2). Girls outperformed boys at GCSE in 2007 by 9.1 percentage points. Boys' achievement has been rising alongside girls' since the 1980s; but girls' results have improved more quickly. This has given rise to a moral panic in the newspapers about ‘boys’ failure’. The problem is generally located with working class White boys.   
  
In English, girls have been moving ahead the fastest at all Key Stages. At GCSE the gender gap is 13.9% with 69.2% of girls getting an A\* to C grade compared to only 55.3% of boys in 2007. The importance of an ability in English to support all other subjects is underlined by the clear lead of girls in all GCSE results. The proportion of girls getting five or more passes at grade C or better in 2007 was 66%; the figure for boys was just 57%. A quarter of boys did not earn any A\* to C grades. Although there is a gender gap in maths and science, it is not nearly so marked.

Warrington and Younger (1999) note that the success of girls should be a cause for celebration and congratulation. Instead it is viewed as a 'problem' with concern expressed about how males are 'failing'. There is a danger that by over-focusing upon the new social 'problem' of 'underachieving boys' we ignore the reality which is that the performance of boys as a group has been rising significantly over time.

In terms of post-16 education, females are staying on in education and attending Higher Education in ever-increasing numbers. This is having a knock-on effect in the workplace as increasing numbers of females with graduate status penetrate areas traditionally considered as male.  
  
The picture is not equally good for all women; feminists such as Becky Francis (2006) maintain that despite the focus on male under-performance, a high proportion of working-class girls still fail. In addition, they argue that many females fail to achieve their full individual potential or choose to study ‘feminine’ subjects which are less valued than ‘masculine’ subjects. Where females do succeed, feminists feel it is often in spite of the education system, not because of it. Feminists claim that females are still subject to institutional disadvantage in schools. Furthermore, Hartman points out that the attention that is paid to gender differences in achievement is large when compared to the way much larger differences in attainment between the social classes are ignored.

Traditionally high achieving females have come from middle-class backgrounds. Riddell (1992) found that middle-class girls shared the achievement values of the school and sought the approval of teachers. Working-class girls saw their futures in terms of the local job market combined with motherhood and domesticity. However, Sharpe (1994) found working-class girls' attitudes had changed dramatically in the past 20 years with careers, travel and independence now increasingly valued.  
  
Such attitudes reflect what Wilkinson (1994) refers to as the 'genderquake' whereby young females are increasingly striving for a fulfilling career with good earning potential. Thus young women are more confident, assertive and ambitious; striving for gender equality. There has been a huge growth in the numbers of women working, with successful career women operating as positive role models. In 2005, figures show nearly double the number of women entering high status careers such as medicine and the law. Working mothers are providing positive role models for their daughters. Fuller (1984) found in her study of black girls in Brent, that girls were motivated not to end up in dead-end jobs like their mothers. Working class unqualified women still tend to be confined to cleaning, caring, catering and cash registers (the four Cs)

Arnot (2004) found female pupils adopted private learning strategies such as asking teachers questions after the lesson to improve their understanding. Evidence shows that females are more likely to revise more effectively. They do not leave it to the last minute like many male pupils who assume it will be "all right on the day". For males poor examination performance is excused away. They blame external factors such as the quality of their teaching or claim that the wrong exam questions came up. Female students are more likely to blame themselves for poor performance and therefore seem more motivated in their revision and preparation to ensure a successful outcome.

***Crisis of masculinity and laddism***

Writers such as Susan Faludi and Robert Bly suggest male underachievement is linked to a 'crisis of masculinity'. Male pupils, it is argued, are sensing wider changes in society, and the growing opportunities and confidence of females generally. Even before leaving school some males are picking up the message that women do not need men. Such ideas can be very discouraging and it seems to alienate them further into acceptance of failure or brutal 'laddism'. Recent research by Carolyn Jackson suggests that girls are now engaged in similar behaviour which she calls ‘Ladette’ due to the extreme pressure of testing that occurs in modern British schools.   
  
Aggleton (1987) studied young men from the new professional middle classes and found that some boys distanced themselves from aggressive working class male masculinity. However, they also reject the idea of hard-work and seriousness. Instead, they aim for a male identity of effortless achievement. Clearly, success without effort is very difficult to achieve indeed and many of these boys underperform.  
  
Salisbury and Jackson (1995) say that there is more than one possible form of masculinity for boys to identify with. Archer says that not all of these are aggressive. Notions of maleness are fluid, so boys will behave differently in differing situations. Male identities are, however, concerned with the creation of hierarchies of power and dominance. Some male identities are seen as having more status than others. As early as the 1970s Willis pointed out that hard working academic achievement among boys was seen, even by some teachers, as being effeminate, low status and undesirable.

Some males, especially from the working-class, see academic school work as feminine and resist it as undermining their culture of masculinity (Willis, 1979). It simply is not 'cool' to be academically able and can result in being labelled as a 'boffin' or 'geek'. As a consequence they seek alternative anti-school values and adopt 'laddish' attitudes and behaviour (Mac an Ghaill, 1994).

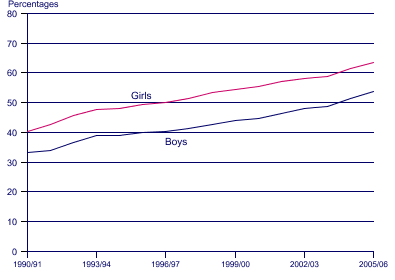
***Gender and single sex education***

Leonard Sax, in the USA, has taken the view proposed by many psychologists that male and female brains are different. He is a strong advocate of single sex education, arguing that lessons should be gender appropriate because boys and girls require different education. Certainly, schools and colleges are now more 'girl-friendly' places. There is some sociological support from writers such as Murphy and Elwood (1998) who argue that teachers are now more sensitive to gender issues facing females. Teaching has become a feminised profession, with fewer men choosing a career in education. There has been considerable INSET on equal opportunities that make teachers address sexist attitudes and practices in schools.  
  
Many Local Authorities and schools in the 1970s and 1980s experimented with single-sex classes and other initiatives aimed at improving female performance. Experiments at removing boys from the classroom have been found to be particularly helpful to girls in science and maths lessons allowing them more opportunity to answer questions, grow in confidence and develop an interest in the subject.  
  
There is evidence that girls at single-sex schools out-perform those in coeducation (mixed) schools. Many feminists have argued strongly in favour of single sex education for girls. Research published by the Girls' School Association (2007) showed that girls taught without boys achieve higher grades than those at even the most elite mixed-sex schools. Single sex girls' schools are regularly at the top of school league tables. It is suggested that single-sex schools promote debating skills in girls and lesson content can be tailored to female interests. Curiously, while parents are in favour of single sex education for their daughters, they are reluctant to accept it for their sons.  
  
There has also been opposition to the view that single sex education favours girls. Alan Smithers has argued that the differences between attainment in single sex schools and coeducational schools can be attributed to social class and intake as single sex schools are now mostly found in the private sector or among faith schools and they can select their pupils.

Mitsos and Browne (1998) found that in coeducation schools girls worked harder and spent more time on homework, were better organised, and were more likely to meet deadlines than boys. Lyon, et al (2006), found that females were significantly more conscientious in doing homework. Research by Harris et al. (1993) found that boys were more easily distracted in the classroom and less determined to overcome academic difficulties.

**Pupils achieving five or more GCSE grades A\*-C or equivalent: by sex**

What should you have in your folder of notes on this topic? (AO1)



**Definitions of the key concepts**

Crisis of masculinity

Cultural deprivation

Discrimination

Feminism

Gender

Genderquake

Hidden Curriculum

Laddishness

Ladettes

Material deprivation

Sexism

Independent study

**Compulsory**

* Notes from Social Trends on differences in educational attainment between the two genders (perhaps with reference to ethnicity as well as gender)
* Detailed notes from text books explaining why girls are now the gender of achievement in school. Use ‘A’ level textbooks and the Internet for ideas.
* Notes on the persistence of gender inequality in the UK taken from the website of the Fawcett Society <http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/>

**Extension work**

* Find out more about the history of women’s’ education and changes in attitude to the education of girls by talking to women who are older than you about the attitudes that their families had towards their education compared with the education of their brothers or boys in general.
* Look at newspaper sites and download stories relating the different achievement of boys and girls in school. Add these to your folder of notes.
* Find out what you can about recent research into differences in the attainment of girls and boys in education. Add notes to your folder.

**Useful websites and sources of information (AO1):**

You should use the website of the NgfL Cymru and look at the ebook to develop your notes

<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/sociology-as-ebook>

News stories about gender and attainment include

<http://www.teachingexpertise.com/articles/white-boys-achievement-4964>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2008/mar/27/schools.uk4>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/8010834.stm>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1209287/GCSE-results-2009-Gender-gap-narrows-boys-overtake-girls-maths-time-12-years.html>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/gcse-results-reveal-boys-are-failing-to-close-the-gender-gap-710411.html>

Here is a summary of research into improving male attainment in school published by the government

<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ntrp/lib/pdf/horwood.pdf>

Estyn (the Inspection body for Wales) has done research into gender attainment and has relevant research findings <http://www.estyn.gov.uk/ThematicReports/0308_gender_gap_report_march_2008.pdf>

Numerical data about UK education can be seen at <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/Images/UK%20by%20numbers_tcm6-34204.pdf>

Online classroom has an excellent summary of recent research into gender and attainment by Carolyn Jackson (Lads and Ladettes) <http://onlineclassroom.tv/files/posts/lads_and_ladettes/document00/p_jackson_article.pdf>

And some original related research data by Jackson can be seen here <http://tobermory.cc.strath.ac.uk/erica/module6_reader/unit4/Jackson%20Reading%202.pdf>

**Answer these key questions in paragraphs**

What patterns of attainment on the basis of gender are there?

How have gender patterns of attainment changed?

Are changes to the education system favouring women?

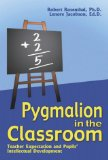
What other social factors may influence gender attainment?

**Outline and explain differences in gender patterns in educational attainment (15)**

|  |
| --- |
| What specific patterns are there for gender attainment among children in the UK? |
| Why are girls improving in school more quickly than boys? |
| Why are boys failing to improve as quickly as girls in education? |
| What is your view on this topic? |

**Sociology of Education**

**Unit 12**

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What processes within schools can affect how children achieve?

**Learning targets:**

* What takes place within educational institutions has an effect on a pupil's education.
* Processes such as labelling and banding and the hidden curriculum are influential.
* A number of sociologists believe that the informal or hidden curriculum is equally as important as the formal curriculum.
* This approach can be criticised because it blames the teacher and ignores other social processes that may affect some children.

**Key questions**

What are interactional theories?

What do interactional theorists say about education ?

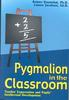
What strengths are there to labelling theories?

What weaknesses are there to labelling theories of education?

**Summary of key points**

Notable contributions to educational thinking have been made from a variety of American and British writers using **the interactional perspective**. Interactional thought is somewhat difficult to separate from research based on other theoretical perspectives because Bowles and Gintis, Paul Willis (Marxists) and feminist writers use the methodology of interactionism, which is known as ethnography.

Interactionism begins with the position that we develop a sense of who we are, or **self**, through our interactions with other people. Given this, our sense of self may develop from some ***significant others*** in our lives, our parents, our friends, and our teachers. Education therefore is enormously important because it is from teachers that we learn a whole range of social definitions, which we can apply to ourselves.

An influential book in its time, Rosenthal and Jacobsen’s ***Pygmalion in the Classroom*** (1967) suggested that the attitude of teachers to children could affect their measured level of intelligence. Students in a poor school were tested for intelligence levels. Teachers were told that the test was actually a predictor for very sudden increases of ability. Names were given at random to the teachers who were told that these particular children would show significant improvement in ability over a six-month period.

The children were then re-tested and it was claimed that the children whose names were given to the teachers as ‘bloomers’ or improvers showed improvement. However, it was noted that the teachers themselves could not remember which children had been predicted as ‘bloomers’. The methodology has since been largely discredited for a number of reasons:

* Their work was completely based on a little known and inaccurate intelligence test.
* Student study groups were subject to change of people and they were not static.
* The statistical evidence did not always support the interpretations that were placed on the findings.
* It presupposed that teachers actually believed what was told to them by psychologists and the story that was manufactured for the teachers as a pretext for the work was more than a little far-fetched.

There are also claims that the research was unethical in design because it encouraged teachers to perceive certain pupils as somehow different and worthy of extra attention. There is, however, a common sense appeal to the idea that caught the imagination of teacher trainers at the time.

The key theme to interactional sociology is that teachers and school processes label pupils as intelligent or not able, and pupils then behave to those perceptions. This process was defined as the **self-fulfilling prophecy**. Although Rosenthal and Jacobsen were by no means the first to make claims about the nature of the interaction of the pupils and school, this particular work was extremely popular. A whole sequence of more reliable and valid studies into various aspects of interaction followed.

***David H Hargreaves*** *-* Hargreaves is associated with a variety of interactional studies of classrooms. He was interested in the way that teachers began to ‘know’ or to label pupils. He suggested that a three-stage process occurred, whereby teachers typified pupils on the basis of appearance and behaviour, then these first judgements were confirmed or rejected. Finally, the teacher arrives at a judgement by which all future acts will be assessed.

In evaluating interactional theories, it is necessary to consider some of the following points.

* Teachers may well be justified in this evaluative process, they are very experienced and may well be able to recognise certain signals. Are teachers to be faulted for recognising signs?
* Where do the labels originate? Pupils can often signal rebellion and rejection of school to teachers at an early stage in their school careers. In this case the labelling process surely starts with the student and not the teacher or the school.
* Working in the USA, Cicourel and Kitsuse suggested that factors, which affect teacher counsellor assessment of students, could well be on the basis of appearance, manners and clothing. These are all identifiers of social class. This work has been supported by much subsequent research. It is probable that teachers do evaluate children on the basis of their social class and on features other than their ability levels.
* This process seems to be too deterministic. It implies that once a child is labelled then he or she will reject school, thus fulfilling the self-fulfilling prophecy. However, negative labelling can cause students to reject the judgements of the teacher and students report that they will work hard and pass examinations to ‘spite’ teachers.
* Feminists such as Heidi Safia-Mirza working with black and Asian girls found that girls were able to reject labels and educational success became part of a process of resistance to teacher labelling. This process is known as **resistance**.

*Evaluations*

The key issue with interactionism is always that it does not consider the issue of how labels arise well enough. The focus is on the person in power who labels and then the subsequent impact on the ‘victim’. This ignores the possibility that the victim may initiate the process. There is also lots of evidence to show that labels, if applied, can be resisted.

What should you have in your folder of notes on this topic? (AO1)

**Definitions of the key concepts**

Interactionism

Self fulfilling prophecy

Labelling theory

Ethnography

Independent study

**Compulsory**

* Notes from a textbook on interactionism, self fulfilling prophecy and labelling theory.
* Notes on each of the writers in these notes, summarised to 50 words or fewer.
* Downloads from the internet
* The exercises in this booklet should be completed in full.

**Extension work**

* Interview someone about their experience of school and the extent to which they feel that they may have been labelled by teachers.
* Think about your own experience of school – do you feel that teachers label children?
* Consider the extent to which pupil may influence the behaviour of teachers. Is labelling a one-way process?
* Find out more about interactionism and how it applies to social research methods and the theory of research.

# Schools and subcultures



Aims

To investigate whether some pupils form anti-school cultures as a way of resisting the control of the school

Revision and vocabulary questions

What is a ***subculture***?

What is ***ethnography***?

What is a ***moral panic***?

What are the social characteristics of a ‘good’ pupil? List a number of ideas

What are the social characteristics of a ‘bad’ pupil? List a number of ideas.

Look in a textbook. What are the characteristics of anti-school subcultures as described by ethnographers who study anti-school subcultures?

Suggest your own reasons why pupils may conform to schools and teachers.

Suggest your own reasons why pupils may reject schools and teachers.

What reasons have sociologists offered for the way that some pupils reject schools? Use your textbook.

Summarise the following writers in 50 words or fewer.

**Valerie Hey** on girls

**Tony Sewell** on African-Caribbean boys

**Mac an Ghaill** on the black sisters

**Sara Delamont** on subculture research

What evaluation can you make on the quality of ethnographic research? Use your textbook.

**Useful websites and sources of information (AO1):**

You should use the website of the NgfL Cymru and look at the ebook to develop your notes

<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/sociology-as-ebook>

Find out more about teacher expectations

<http://classroom-issues.suite101.com/article.cfm/teacher_expectations>

<https://www.ncetm.org.uk/mathemapedia/Teacher+Expectations+and+Assumptions>

Youtube clips can be seen at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P4wL5t8YH1Q>

The impact of teacher racism is discussed in this article on teacher expectations and BME attainment

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2008/sep/05/raceineducation.raceinschools>

Professional advice for teachers about pupil behaviour can be seen at

<http://www.behaviourneeds.co.uk/if-pupils-behave-badly-it-s-the-teacher-s-fault/>

A thoroughly comprehensive booklet can be downloaded from

[www.sociology.org.uk/hc3.doc](http://www.sociology.org.uk/hc3.doc)

**AO1 Knowledge and understanding**

What is interactionism?

How does interactionism differ from both Marxism and Functionalism?

What research methods are associated with interactionism?

Why was Pygmalion in the classroom such an influential book?

What are the strengths of interactionism as an explanation of why some children fail in school?

What are the weaknesses of interactionism as a process explaining school failure?

What is resistance theory and what evidence is there to support it.

**Individual Research**

Use textbooks in the LRC and the Internet to find out the answers to as many of these questions as possible. You may share your research with friends and study partners.

Make a note of the sources that you used for your information. This is a key skill when conducting research.

1. Define **labelling theory**.
2. Define **self fulfilling prophecy theory.**
3. What is the significant difference between the two theories?
4. With which main sociological perspectives are these two theories usually linked?
5. Summarise the work of **Cicourel and Kitsuse** in as few words as possible.
6. What did **Ball** discover about Beachside Comprehensive?
7. What did **Keddie** discover to be the most significant difference between the top and lower band students in the humanities groups she studied?
8. Suggest reasons why children from certain social backgrounds may possibly experience positive labelling whereas others are rejected by the teachers.
9. Think hard about the next question. You are being invited to be critical. Can teachers be ‘blamed’ for labelling students? Is labelling of itself wrong according to labelling theories?
10. What did **Hargreaves** discover about the relationship between teacher labelling and the creation of anti-school subcultures?
11. Summarise the strengths of interactional and labelling theories to an understanding of the processes that take place within schools.
12. Summarise what you consider to be the weakness of labelling theories to an understanding of the processes that that take place within schools.

**Do teachers cause teenage pregnancy?**

Nearly 15 per cent of babies in England are born to teenage mothers

Boring subjects and unsympathetic teachers are among the factors driving teenage girls to become pregnant, a new study has revealed. Dr Denise Hawkes led a team of researchers from London University’s institute of Education who found that many teenage mothers shared a dislike of school and a sense of educational failure.

Their report states: “Some of the mothers said that they were made to feel that they were ‘thick’ at school, often in embarrassing situations in front of their peers. “These experiences made them feel humiliated, and removed all desire to attend school or achieve educational qualifications.”

Many said they were bored by the subjects on offer, the methods of teaching, and the constraints of the classroom. Researchers said: “What they were being taught seemed entirely irrelevant to their lives at the time.”

Several also expressed frustration at unsympathetic teachers, criticising them either for being too strict or for allowing misbehaviour to disrupt learning.

Almost 250 women who had had babies as teenagers were questioned for the survey. A further 31 were interviewed in focus groups. Most agreed that the sex education offered by their schools had been inadequate.

In many cases, lack of contraceptive knowledge led directly to pregnancy. This level of ignorance was common among those who conceived in their early teens. One girl, who fell pregnant at 13, said: “When I first had my period, I didn’t even know what a period was.”

But many of those questioned felt their prospects had improved since having a baby. One mother said: “If I didn’t have [my daughter], I’d be, like, ‘I’ve got to get a job, but it’s not that important’. But now I’ve got her, I’m making sure that I do my education and get a good job, so that I can support her for the rest of my life.”

Rhoda Thomas, 20, gave birth to Cory two years ago. She said: “When you’re just sitting in a classroom, being talked at, you tend to switch off. But having a child raises your aspirations. You want to support your family.”

Adi Bloom Published: 10 February 2006 [www.tes.co.uk](http://www.tes.co.uk)

1. Explain what is meant by the term **educational failure**. (5)
2. Using the extract above, summarise reasons teen mothers gave for disliking school. (5)
3. Discuss reasons why some young people choose to reject the education system. (30)

**Sociology of Education**

**Unit 13**

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## *To what extent do cultural factors explain different attainment levels between social groups?*

**Learning targets:**

* Some sociologists have argued that the system of values of the lower classes created an obstacle to their improvement.
* Those who are at the bottom of the class system are being deprived of some values, attitudes and special skills that are essential for educational success.
* Children who are culturally deprived are lacking in essential skills, attitudes and values.

**Key questions**

What do cultural deprivation theorists say about education success?

What cultural obstacles are there to working class failure?

Can the working class be blamed for their own failure in education?

Are government policies effective in tackling underattainment?

**Summary of key points**

Class is the most important influence on educational failure. Its effect on educational attainment is almost three times greater than ethnicity.  
  
Herbert H Hyman argued that the system of values of the lower classes created an obstacle to their improvement. Drawing on much of the data gained from opinion polls and surveys undertaken by sociologists, Hyman outlined the following differences between the system of values of the working and middle classes.

* The working class place less value on education.
* The working class place less value on attaining a higher occupational status,
* The working class believes that there is less opportunity for personal advancement - the belief itself further reduces the opportunity.

Therefore, according to Hyman, the motivation to succeed in school is generally lower for members of the working class.

In addition, Sugarman alleges that many middle-class occupations encourage planning for the future: investing time, energy and money in training, to meet the requirements of higher status posts. In comparison, working class jobs reach the maximum income fairly quickly, but provide fewer opportunities for promotion.

Sugarman argues that differentiating in the nature of jobs tends to generate differences in attitude and outlook. As they have less control over the future, less opportunity to improve their status, and less income to invest, working class people tend to be concerned about direct immediate satisfaction.

### Cultural deprivation theory

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#### **Cultural deprivation theory states that those who are at the bottom of the class system are being deprived of some values, attitudes and special skills that are essential for educational success. This theory puts the blame for educational failure on children and their families, their neighbourhood and the subculture of their social group. The child who has been culturally deprived is lacking in skills, attitudes and important values that are essential to high educational success. His environment is culturally as well as economically poor.**

#### **A number of researchers allege there are class differences in language patterns and these could be partly responsible for class differences in educational attainment. Basil Bernstein (1990) stated that there are two language patterns - the limited code and the extended code. The limited code is found in the everyday spoken language used by people who know each other well. Short simple sentences are used and often details and explanations are omitted. The extended code explains things in greater detail and uses long, complex sentences. According to Bernstein both languages are familiar to the middle class but only the limited code is used by the working class. Teachers in school use the extended code and therefore working class children are at a disadvantage from the outset.**

In 'The Home and the School' (1964), J. W. B. Douglas studied the educational career of British children born during the first week of March 1946, Douglas related educational attainment to many factors including students' health, size of family and the quality of the school. The most important factor apparently was parents' interest in their children's education. In general, middle class parents showed a greater interest in their children's education, by visiting the school more frequently to discuss their children's progress.

Recent research lends Douglas' suggestion some support in that parental interest is the key factor in explaining the class differences in educational attainment. Leon Feinstein (2003) researched data from two longitudinal studies - The National Child Development Study and The British Cohort Study. He claimed that the main factor accounting for the class differences in attainment was parental interest in their children's education. However, as in Douglas's study, parental interest was measured by teachers. And the same criticism is ongoing - that working class parents do not feel at ease in a middle class establishment such as a school, and perhaps their jobs with long hours and shift work make it difficult for them to visit the school.

The theory of cultural deprivation has had a significant influence on education policies in the 1960s and 1970s. If children were culturally deprived, then they should have some form of compensation to atone for this deprivation. This is the thinking behind compensatory education. The idea was to target children in some areas who had failed in the education system. Funding was provided to try and 'enrich' the lives and culture of those children who did not have this innate support at home. An attempt was made to try and raise the standards of literacy as well as cultural experiences.  
  
**Critics of cultural deprivation theory**

Tessa Blackstone and Jo Mortimore point out that the parents of working class children do have an interest in the education of their children. They do not feel comfortable visiting the school because of the attitude of some of the teachers. Blackstone and Mortimore state that the teachers represent authority and perhaps because of the parents' childhood experiences, they do not feel comfortable meeting them. They also point out that working class parents do not have as much time to visit the school because of the demands of their jobs, e.g. flexible working salary of the fathers who are in non-manual posts.  
  
**Cultural capital**

The idea of 'cultural capital' was developed by Pierre Bourdieu (1977). He refers to the way the middle and upper classes have cultural capital as well as financial capital. They have an advantage over the working class because their parents give them support in terms of books and reading, literature, art, classical music, visits to museums, theatres and art galleries. This culture is closer to the culture of the school, and therefore they are more likely to be successful. This success then manifests itself through high qualifications, senior posts, high salaries and a high standard of living.  
  
Alice Sullivan (2001) has examined Bourdieu's theory further. She tried to measure the cultural capital in four comprehensives schools in England. She gave a questionnaire to Year 11 pupils to try and discover which books and newspapers they read and also which television programmes they watched. Her research confirmed that there was a strong connection between the cultural capital of parents and that of their children. This supports Bourdieu's supposition that cultural capital is taught by parents in the home.  
  
Sullivan goes on to compare pupils' cultural capital with their GCSE results. Again, there was an obvious connection. Those who had the best results had high cultural capital and the pupils who gained the best results also came from families with a professional background which further confirmed, therefore, the link between cultural capital and social class.

**Tackling cultural deprivation**

In 1977, when the Labour Party came to power, 'Education Action Zones' (EAZs) were established to try and tackle the problem. In this case, disadvantaged areas had additional help. The schools and the Local Education Authorities worked with local businesses and other industries. They received more funding.  
  
These Labour policies placed a greater emphasis on the weaknesses of schools. But according to Curtis (2003) some of the outcomes were disappointing.  
  
The latest schemes, namely 'Excellence in Cities' help more schools and contribute more funding. According to Mc Knight et al. (2005), this scheme, to date, has shown some improvement.

What should you have in your folder of notes on this topic? (AO1)

**Definitions of the key concepts**

Compensatory education

Material deprivation

Cultural deprivation

Cultural capital

Fatalistic attitudes

Independent study

**Compulsory**

* Notes from a textbook on cultural deprivation.
* Notes on each of the writers in these notes, summarised to 50 words or fewer.
* Downloads from the internet relating to the work of Feinstein
* A PowerPoint presentation of six slides (20 words per slide) explaining cultural deprivation and cultural capital.
* Research on Charles Murray and his notion of the underclass

**Extension work**

* What social attitudes are essential for success in school?
* How do parents support their children through education? Are the class differences in how parents are able to influence their children?
* What is working class culture? What attitudes are typical of working class people? Are they very different from the culture of middle class people?
* Make a poster or powerpoint of working class culture in Britain.

# Useful websites and sources of information (AO1):

You should use the website of the NgfL Cymru and look at the ebook to develop your notes

<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/sociology-as-ebook>

There is an excellent PowerPoint on NGfL Cymru to help with this topic

[www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/vtc/ngfl/sociology/**cultural**\_**deprivation**.ppt](http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/vtc/ngfl/sociology/cultural_deprivation.ppt)

For an American perspective see <http://wikibin.org/articles/cultural-deprivation.html>

A highly academic account of the debate about causes of working class under attainment can be seen at <http://www.answers.com/topic/race-ethnicity-and-culture-cultural-expectations-and-student-learning>

A note about Sure Start policies in education in the UK can be seen at <http://www.preventionaction.org/reference/sure-start>

Some recent political debate can be seen on the BBC news website but you should read through to the bottom of the page to see the importance of Feinstein’s work.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/8051986.stm>

For notes on Bourdieu see <http://www.williambowles.info/mimo/refs/tece1ef.htm>

An opinion piece on working class culture that was printed in the Independent

<http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/columnists/thomas-sutcliffe/tom-sutcliffe-workingclass-culture-thats-so-middle-class-1787354.html>

A BBC think piece on working class white culture and then a critical response to it <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/7296072.stm>

<http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/standard/article-23453848-bbc-attacked-over-insulting-focus-on-white-working-class.do>

Here is a download of a book examining working class culture with chapters by a number of eminent sociologists. See what you can find out from the articles.

<http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/WhoCaresAboutTheWhiteWorkingClass-2009.pdf>

**AO1 Knowledge and understanding**

What was Hyman's argument about working class culture?

What was Sugarman's perspective on working class culutre?

Do working class people have a different culture from middle class people? What is your view?

Outline and explain Douglas's findings.

What criticisms of Douglas can you identify?

Explain what is meant by cultural capital.

What evidence do Bourdieu and Sullivan offer for their viewpoints?

Explain what is meant by cultural deprivation theory.

What was Basil Bernstein's theory?

Do middle class and working class people use language in a different way?

**Sociology of Education**



**Unit 14**

## *To what extent does material deprivation explain class differences in attainment?*

**Learning targets:**

* The evidence of longitudinal research suggests that working class underachievement is linked to poverty and social exclusion.
* Poor people lack the material necessities for comfortable life and this impacts on their lifestyle choices and their opportunities
* Recent research suggests that the gap between rich and poor is obvious before children attend school

**Key questions**

What is material deprivation?

What do longitudinal studies say about working class failure?

How important is deprivation in school failure?

Will a more equal society support the poor?

**Summary of key points**

Fewer from the working class go on to further and higher education. A number of sociologists have tried to explain this by referring to shortcomings in the lives of these children in the form of material deprivation. Material deprivation refers to lack of physical necessities for good living.  
  
Children who live in poverty often live in poorer areas with poor housing. Some children have to work in the evening and at weekends to get money and therefore there is no time for homework and preparing for examinations. There is no money available to buy resources to support the child's education, such as books, a computer, additional tuition. And a number of children choose to leave school at 16. Poverty can also lead to sickness which could in turn lead to absence from school.  
  
According to Smith and Noble (1995), there are a number of additional hidden costs that are part of maintaining a child's education, such as school uniform, school dinners, travelling to school, necessary equipment, educational trips with the school etc. There have been schemes in existence all along to provide financial assistance for some families who meet certain criteria, for example free school meals, financial assistance to buy school uniform, but in recent years there have also been financial cutbacks. In the 1990s, some Local Education Authorities cut back on their grants.  
  
In poor schools, some have requested substantial financial contributions for school trips form the pupils themselves as the schools did not have the necessary funding. If funding was not available, then the children would miss out and therefore their educational experiences are not as rich as those of other pupils.

### Longitudinal Studies

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Sociologists have tracked children's performance over time. Many longitudinal studies consist of thousands of participants and follow participants over a number of years. The best known is probably the YCS or the Youth Cohort Study. These longitudinal studies all tend to suggest that poverty is a factor in educational underachievement. This is not a new discovery.  
  
In the ***National Child Development Study*** (1969) and (1974) which tracked all the children born in one week in 1958, the link between poverty and under attainment were explicit and clear. In 1980, Halsey, Heath and Ridge published their famous longitudinal study ***Origins and Destinations***. Again poverty was identified as a critical factor in school failure.  
  
Feinstein (2003) noted that the educational achievement of a 26 year old could be accurately predicted by the wealth of the household when the child was 22 months. Gaps were already opening up in attainment levels between children of different social background before they had all of their first teeth. Dorling (2007) compared 1968 and 2005. He suggested that there has been an increase in inequality in Britain so that in some areas, more than half of all households are poor.  
  
Kingdon and Cassen (2007) discovered that factors associated with poverty such as free school meals, low levels of family employment, single parent families and poor educational qualifications of parents all contributed to low achievement. Disadvantaged children also attend schools that rate low in the league tables. They considered that one solution to the problem for poor achieving students was better financing of schools and high ratios of teachers to pupils. A number of studies have suggested that the effects of poverty may be more serious for boys than girls, because of the way in which boys create notions of masculinity.  
  
Despite the consistency of these findings from longitudinal studies, the government has persisted in tackling problems of underachievement by creating policies that are directed at changing schools and teachers. As a point of evaluation, you might note that school funding under the New Right was directed towards high achieving schools because it was believed that if schools were in competition for funding, they would all improve.

### Access to Education

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A number of working class children have to leave school at 16 as they need the money. And even for many of those who have stayed on in the sixth form, the cost of higher education is out of their reach. They are unable to afford getting into debt by having loans as their parents are unable to give them financial assistance.  
  
In 2002, the British government announced that it was providing a grant of £30 per week from September 2004 onwards to help some 16-19 year old students to stay in education. This scheme had already been piloted in some parts of the country and evidence showed a 6% increase in those who had stayed on in education. (DfES 2002) Unfortunately, these grants were small, and therefore there was insufficient assistance available for all those who wished to continue their education.  
  
During recent years, there has been some debate about funding higher education. Between 1962 and the end of the 80s, the state paid the fees of every student in higher education and there were grants available for the cost of living for those who met the criteria. (These were 'means-tested'.)But as more students chose to go on to higher education, the government sought to find means of cutting back on these increasing costs.  
  
From 1990 onwards, the Conservative government decided to freeze grants and loans to students were offered as an additional means of support. Between 1990 and 1998, the value of loan increased whilst the value of the grant was reduced.  
  
From 1999 onwards, the Labour government abolished grants - the only choice available by now was loans. According to Merryn Hutchings (2003), the government justified these changes by stating that graduates would earn a higher salary than non-graduates, and therefore it made sense for them to contribute to their own education. There are differences between Wales and England as the Welsh Assembly Government offers more support to Welsh students in Welsh universities.

**Middle class parents**

In general, it can be stated that the higher a child's social class, then the family income is higher. This, therefore, enables the child to have a number of educational benefits such as a warm, comfortable house with nice big rooms and a desk to work at, a computer with Internet access, course books and additional private lessons reference books and even a choice of private school.  
  
Middle class parents also have the choice of moving house to the catchment area of a school they have chosen for their children - a good school with high examination results.  
  
Middle class children are less likely to be obese and have better health than working class children. They are likely to take expensive holidays and to attend clubs and classes after school which will support their education.

A number of sociologists are concerned that the changes to the methods of funding higher education is turning students from poor backgrounds away from higher education as they are apprehensive about going into debt and they do not have rich parents to help to pay the debts.  
  
Hutchings (2003) says that if students from low-income families went to university, they often had to get evening jobs in order to pay for their course. This may then possibly have the effect of them obtaining a lower degree or even having to leave the course before completing it.

What should you have in your folder of notes on this topic? (AO1)

**Definitions of the key concepts**

Compensatory education

Material deprivation

Cultural deprivation

Longitudinal study

Funding of study

Means testing

Independent study

**Compulsory**

* Notes from a textbook on poverty.
* Notes on each of the writers in these notes, summarised to 50 words or fewer.
* Downloads from the Internet relating to the the extent of poverty and inequality in the UK
* A PowerPoint presentation of six slides (20 words per slide) explaining material deprivation

**Extension work**

* What impact does poverty have on health and life expectancy in the UK?
* Who are the poor? Identify those groups who experience poverty and explain why they are vulnerable to being poor.
* Identify what people may expect as income if they rely on benefits to survive.
* What is minimum wage legislation? Why was the National Minimum wage established?
* A revision poster or mind map exploring material deprivation as a source of school failure.

# Useful websites and sources of information (AO1):

You should use the website of the NgfL Cymru and look at the ebook to develop your notes

<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/sociology-as-ebook>

Campaigning websites to tell you about the extent of poverty in the UK

<http://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_issues/Creating_better_neighbourhoods/supporting_families_and_children?gclid=CNHX47mKu6ECFQZslAodinU8Aw>

<http://www.poverty.org.uk/>

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/ukpoverty/povertyfacts.html>

<http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/>

<http://www.cpag.org.uk/povertyfacts/index.htm>

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/child-poverty>

<http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/sevchildpovuk.pdf>

News stories and sites

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/poverty>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/britain-faces-return-to-victorian-levels-of-poverty-1831088.html>

Resources and fact sheets

<http://www.ttrb.ac.uk/ViewArticle2.aspx?ContentId=16222>

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/experiences-poverty-and-educational-disadvantage>

**AO1 Knowledge and understanding**

How do the school experiences of the rich and the poor differ?

What impact can educational attainment have on success rates in later life?

What hidden costs can education have for parents?

In what ways can poverty and material deprivation limit children’s success in the school environment? Write at least five sentences explaining.

(hints: schools attended, home and cultural life, health, expectations of the future, place in the job market, self-esteem and confidence)

Summarise what researchers have told us about the link between poverty and deprivation.