



education sociology aqa

Principles of sociology□ (University of London)

## Functionalist Theory of Education

Functionalists see education as an important agent of socialisation, helping to maintain social stability through socialising individuals into society's value consensus and ensuring social solidarity/social cohesion.

Education plays a key role in preparing young people for adulthood and the workplace.

## Durkheim

### Social solidarity and microcosm of society

Emile Durkheim argued that individuals need to feel they are part of society (**social solidarity**). Without this society would not work.

The major function of education is to pass on society's values through socialisation. This is done via the **formal curriculum** (the subjects taught) and the **hidden curriculum** (what we learn at school but are not taught, e.g. school rules).

The formal curriculum teaches subjects that instil shared values, e.g. history focuses on the shared history of the social group, whilst the hidden curriculum teaches shared values such as respect for each other.

School also acts as a **microcosm of society** (society in miniature), preparing us for life in wider society. For example, in school we have to learn to cooperate with people we are unrelated to.

### Specialist division of labour

Modern economies have a complex division of labour where the production of even a single item usually requires the cooperation of many different specialists.

Therefore education also needs to pass on this specialist knowledge and skills.

## Parsons

### Providing a bridge between the family and society

The family treats individuals according to **particularistic standards** and their **ascribed status**. These are standards that only apply to that particular child.

However, society treats individuals according to **universalistic standards** and **achieved status**. These are standards that apply to all individuals.

Therefore education acts as a bridge between the family and society and prepares us for this transition.

Parsons argues education and society are based on a **meritocracy**, where jobs and pay are allocated on the basis of an individual's abilities and qualifications. Therefore, everyone has the same opportunity to achieve and is treated in the same way.

## Davis and Moore

### Role allocation

Davis and Moore argue the education system is a means of selecting people for different levels of the job market and ensuring the most talented and qualified individuals are allocated to the most important jobs.

By grading people through exam results etc., the education system ensures the most suitable people are allocated to different jobs.

There is equality of educational opportunity with all students having the same opportunity to succeed. This means that inequality in society is legitimate and fair as those who get the best jobs deserve their success.

### Criticisms

- Marxists would argue that a value consensus isn't being passed on but the values of the ruling class are.
- Feminists would argue that the school passes on patriarchal values.
- It could also be argued that in a multicultural society such as Britain there is no value consensus.
- There is some doubt about how far contemporary society is really based on universalistic standards and achieved status. Many in the upper class inherit wealth and there are many elite jobs where **social capital** and the old boys' network affect whether an individual gets a job or not.
- Social class, gender and ethnicity seem to be major factors influencing educational achievement. Not everyone has the same chance of success in education.

## The New Right Theory of Education

The New Right view is closest to functionalism.

### **Preparation for the Workplace**

The New Right argues education should not be concerned with promoting equality of opportunity but with training the workforce and making sure the most able students are trained and recruited to the most important jobs. The New Right therefore like vocational education policies.

### **Meritocracy**

The New Right argues that some people are naturally more able than others and they also believe that education should create a meritocracy where the best will flourish.

### **Shared Culture**

They also argue that education should help to create a united society which is clearly integrated by shared national culture and identity. This is similar to the idea of value consensus and social solidarity of the Functionalists.

### **Marketisation**

New Right theorists, like Chubb and Moe, found that pupils from low income families do about 5% better in private than in state schools. They argued this was because private schools had an incentive to provide a better education as parents will not pay to send their children to a school if it provides a poorer quality of education.

Therefore they argued that competition and choice were necessary in education. This is known as **marketisation** where education is run according to business principles. By introducing competition between schools and choice of schools for parents, schools would need to provide the best quality of education in order to attract students. This would lead to schools improving their standards.

## Marxist Theory of Education

Marxists see education primarily as a means of social control, encouraging young people to accept their social position and not to do anything to upset the current patterns of inequality in power, wealth and income.

## Bowles and Gintis

### The correspondence principle and the hidden curriculum

The **correspondence principle** refers to the relationship between education and work. There is a close relationship between the workplace and the education system. Work casts a 'long shadow' over the education system which is passive to the needs of capitalism and those who own the means of production.

The **hidden curriculum** transmits ruling class values and ensures that workers are obedient and subservient.

The hidden curriculum shapes the workforce by:

- 1) **Producing a subservient workforce of uncritical, passive and docile workers.** In a study based upon 237 members of a New York high school, Bowles and Gintis found that the grades awarded related to personality traits, not academic abilities. Low grades were related to creativity, aggressiveness and independence, while higher grades were related to effort, consistency, dependability and punctuality. In this way the education system was creating an unimaginative and unquestioning workforce
- 2) **Encouraging an acceptance of hierarchy.** Schools are organised on hierarchical principles, e.g. teachers and headteachers have authority and pupils don't. This prepares them for the workplace where they will defer to supervisors and managers.
- 3) **Motivating pupils by external rewards.** Students gain little satisfaction from studying. They are only satisfied by gaining external rewards (qualifications). This prepares them for the workplace because work is unfulfilling and workers need to be motivated by the external reward (wages).
- 4) **Fragmentation of school subjects.** Workers are alienated from the product of their labour as they are only a small part of the process and rarely see the end product. Education is the same: pupils go from lesson to lesson but are never able to join these lessons together and see the bigger picture. Bowles and Gintis argue this is done on purpose so that workers cannot compete with the capitalists.

### The myth of meritocracy

Bowles and Gintis examined a sample of individuals and concluded there was no link between IQ and qualifications. However, they found a direct relationship between education and social class. They argued it is not IQ which determines achievement, rather it is class. The education system reproduces social class inequality and does not function as a meritocracy. The upper class achieve high qualifications regardless of ability.

The education system hides this fact by providing a **myth of meritocracy**. Those who fail blame themselves, rather than the system which has set them up for failure. This means class consciousness does not develop because people agree that society is fair and so the working class will not feel exploited.

## Althusser

Education is part of the **ideological state apparatus** where it passes on ruling class ideology to justify the position of the ruling class.

Therefore education has two main roles:

- 1) **Reproducing class inequality** by transmitting it from generation to generation by successively failing working class pupils.
- 2) **Legitimising class inequality** through the transmission of ruling class ideology which disguises the reasons for the inequality. Workers are persuaded that inequality is inevitable and they deserve their lower position in society.

## Bourdieu

### Habitus and cultural capital

Bourdieu argues that each social class has its own **habitus**. This is the tastes, interests and values of a social class. The dominant class has the power to impose its own habitus on the education system, so what counts as educational knowledge is not the culture of society as a whole, but the culture of the ruling class.

The upper and middle classes have more access to the culture of the ruling class which Bourdieu calls **cultural capital**. The lower classes don't have this capital and so fail in education.

The education system devalues working class culture and regards it as inferior to upper and middle class culture. This makes it very difficult for pupils from lower classes to succeed in the education system.

## Evaluation

### Willis

Willis studied 12 working class 'lads' in the 1970s and found they developed an anti-school subculture. The lads did not see school as relevant to them and wanted to earn money, impress their mates and show they could 'graft' in manual jobs. This suggests that schools are not directly preparing an obedient and docile labour force required by capitalism. Young working class males reject school rules, but willingly enter semi-skilled or unskilled work where they are likely to be exploited.

### Criticisms

Postmodernists argue that a post-Fordist economy requires schools to produce a labour force which can think for itself because Fordist models of production (factory lines) have largely disappeared.

Feminists argue that education reproduces not only capitalism, but patriarchy.

Ignores the influence of the formal curriculum. If education was about producing an obedient workforce then subjects such as Sociology would not be taught.



## Differential Class Achievement: External Factors

Factors affecting the educational achievement of different social classes can be divided into external factors (factors outside of the school/education system) and internal factors (factors inside the school/education system)

### External Factors

These can be divided into the following factors:

- 1) Intellectual development
- 2) Language
- 3) Attitudes and values
- 4) Material deprivation
- 5) Cultural capital

Intellectual development, language and attitudes and values are part of the cultural deprivation view.

### Cultural Deprivation

Cultural deprivation theorists argue that most of us begin to learn the values, attitudes and skills needed for educational success through primary socialisation in the family. However, according to these theorists, many working class families fail to adequately prepare their children for education.

#### Intellectual Development

##### Douglas

Found that working class pupils scored lower on tests of ability than middle class students. He argues this is because working class students are less likely to support their children's intellectual development through reading with them or other educational activities in the home.

##### Bernstein and Young

Found that middle class mothers are more likely to choose toys that encourage thinking and reasoning skills and prepare children for school.

#### Language

##### Bernstein

Bernstein identified two types of speech code:

- 1) **The restricted code:** the speech code typically used by the working class. It has a limited vocabulary and has short, often unfinished, grammatically simple sentences.
- 2) **The elaborated code:** the speech code typically used by the middle class. It has a wider vocabulary and has longer, grammatically more complex sentences.

These differences in speech code give the middle class an advantage in education. This is because the elaborated code is the speech code used in education by teachers, textbooks and exams. Because the middle class have been socialised into the elaborated code from an early age they feel more comfortable using it and 'at home' in education. In Bernstein's view it is also more a more effective speech code for analysing and reasoning.



## Criticisms

Troyna and Williams argue the problem is the school's attitude towards language. Schools have a speech hierarchy where they value middle class speech the highest.

Labov studied boys who used the restricted code and found they could still think analytically. He argues the elaborated code can result in arguments being lost in irrelevant detail.

## **Attitudes and Values**

### Sugarman

Working class subculture has four features that act as a barrier to educational achievement:

- 1) Fatalism: there is nothing you can do to change your status.
- 2) Collectivism: value being part of a group more than succeeding as an individual.
- 3) Immediate gratification: seeking pleasure now rather than making sacrifices in order to get rewards in the future.
- 4) Present time orientation: seeing the present as more important than the future and therefore not having any long term plans

These values are passed on to working class children by the family.

### Criticism

Blackstone and Mortimore argue working class parents are interested in their child's education but they visit the school less, e.g. parents evenings, because they work longer and more anti-social hours, or they are put off by the middle class atmosphere of the school.

## **Material Deprivation**

Poverty is closely linked to educational underachievement, e.g. according to the Department for Education barely a third of pupils eligible for free school meals gained five or more GCSEs at A\*-C compared to nearly two thirds of other pupils.

### **Housing**

Poor housing can have direct and indirect effects.

Overcrowding can have a direct effect on a child's education as it may mean less room to do homework and disturbed sleep. Families in temporary accommodation may move more frequently and therefore this will result in constant changes of school and disruption of education.

Housing can also have indirect effects on a child's health and welfare. In crowded houses, for example, there is a greater risk of accidents. Damp houses can also cause illnesses which will result in time missed in education.

### **Diet and Health**

#### Howard

Notes that young people from poorer homes have lower intakes of energy, vitamins and minerals. Poor nutrition will result in more absences or trouble concentrating in class.

### **The Costs of Education**

Low incomes may mean that working class students cannot afford resources that may improve their achievement in education, or experiences that would improve their achievement, like trips etc. This is known as **the costs of free schooling**.

## Ridge

Found that children in poverty take on jobs such as baby sitting, cleaning and paper rounds and this often had a negative impact on their education.

Poverty may also cause working class students to leave education as soon as possible in order to work. This could also link with the fear of debt if they choose to go to university.

## Cultural Capital

Bourdieu identifies three types of capital.

### **Cultural Capital**

This refers to the knowledge, attitudes, values, language, tastes and abilities of the middle class. It gives an advantage to all those who own it.

Through socialisation, middle class children acquire the ability to grasp abstract ideas and develop intellectual interests. This gives middle class children an advantage in school because the education system favours middle class culture.

Working class culture, however, is devalued and the working class' lack of cultural capital results in failure.

This is the fault of the education system which is based on middle class culture.

### **Educational and Economic Capital**

Educational, economic and cultural capital can be converted into one another. For example, middle class children with cultural capital can gain educational capital. Wealthy parents can convert their economic capital into educational capital by sending their children to private schools or paying for extra tuition.

Leech and Campos found middle class parents are more likely to be able to move to a house in the catchment area of a school which is in a high position on the league table. This has become known as **selection by mortgage**.

***You can also use Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz's study on the different types of parental choosers here as well.***

### Criticism

Sullivan found that even when working class and middle class students have similar levels of cultural capital, the working class students still did less well.

## Internal Factors

These can be divided into the following factors:

- 1) Labelling
- 2) The self-fulfilling prophecy
- 3) Pupil subcultures
- 4) Marketisation policies

Labelling and the self-fulfilling prophecy have been studied by interactionist sociologists.

## Labelling

### Becker

Found teachers judged pupils according to how closely they fitted the image of **the ideal pupil**. Pupils' work, conduct and appearance were key factors influencing how closely the teachers saw students as conforming to the ideal pupil. Middle class students were closest to the ideal whilst working class students were the furthest from it.

### Dunne and Gazeley

Studied labelling in secondary schools and found that teachers 'normalised' the underachievement of working class pupils, seemed unconcerned by it and felt they could do little or nothing about it, whereas they believed they could overcome the underachievement of middle class pupils.

A major reason for this difference was the teachers' belief in the role of pupils' home backgrounds: they labelled working class parents as uninterested in their children's education, but labelled middle class parents as supportive.

This led to class differences in how teachers dealt with pupils they perceived as underachieving: setting extension work for underachieving middle class pupils but entering working class pupils for easier exams. Teachers also underestimated working class pupils' potential and those who were doing well were seen as overachieving.

## The Self Fulfilling Prophecy

### Rosenthal and Jacobson

Told the school they had a new test which would identify which pupils would 'spurt' ahead but it was, in fact, a standard IQ test. They picked 20% of students at random and told the school these children were the 'spurters'.

When they returned to the school a year later they found that 47% of those identified as spurters had made significant progress.

They suggest the teachers' beliefs about the pupils had been conveyed to the students via the way they interacted with them in the classroom.

### Douglas

Found children placed in a lower stream at age 8 had suffered a decline in their IQ score by age 11. However, children placed in a higher stream at age 8 had improved their IQ score by age 11.

***You can include Gillborn and Youdell's study on the A-C economy and educational triage here as well.***

## Subcultures

### Lacey

**Differentiation** is the process of teachers categorising pupils according to how they perceive their ability, attitude and/or behaviour. **Polarisation** is the process in which pupils respond to streaming by moving towards one of two extremes: anti school or pro school.

Pupils in high streams tend to be pro school.

Those placed in low streams tend to suffer a loss of self-esteem and so they search for different ways of gaining status. This usually involves rejecting the school's values which gives them status amongst their peers. This, however, causes them to fail.

Lacey showed the impact of labelling on subcultures as the boys in the anti-school subculture had actually been successful at primary school. However, once they got to the local grammar school, the competitive atmosphere and streaming meant they were labelled as failures. They responded by becoming anti school.

### Criticism

Woods argues other responses are possible, not just anti-school and pro school. Woods also shows how students can change their responses and don't remain committed to one response. One week they may be very anti-school, but the next week they may be more motivated in lessons.

## Marketisation Policies

***You can use studies by Bartlett; Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz; and Gillborn and Youdell from the educational policy section here.***

## External Factors

These include:

- 1) Intellectual and linguistic skills
- 2) Attitudes and values
- 3) Family structure and parental support
- 4) Material deprivation
- 5) Racism in wider society

Intellectual and linguistic skills; attitudes and values; and family structure and parental support are part of the cultural deprivation explanation of the underachievement of some ethnic groups.

## Intellectual and Linguistic Skills

### Bereiter and Engelmann

Consider the language spoken by low income black American families as inadequate for educational success. They see it as ungrammatical, disjointed and incapable of expressing abstract ideas.

### Criticisms

Gillborn and Mirza note that Indian pupils do very well despite often not having English as their first language.

## Attitudes and Values

Cultural deprivation theorists argue some black children are socialised into a subculture that instils a fatalistic attitude and present time orientation that does not value education. (You can include Sugarman here and apply this study to ethnic minority groups).

## Family Structure and Parental Support

### Moynihan

Argues that because many black families are headed by a lone mother they are financially deprived causing problems for their educational achievement. Also argues that the lack of a male role model means that black boys don't have a positive role model of male success.

### Criticisms

Ignores the fact that matriarchal families provide positive role models for African Caribbean girls.

### Pryce

Asians are high achievers because their culture is more resistant to racism and gives them greater self esteem. Black Caribbean culture, however, is less resistant to racism leading to low self esteem and failure.

This is due to the impact of colonialism. The experience of slavery destroyed black culture whilst Asian culture remained largely intact.

### Lupton

Adult authority in Asian families is similar to the model that operates in school. Respectful behaviour towards adults was expected from children. This means parents were more likely to be supportive of school behaviour policies.

## Material Deprivation

This links closely with class with Indians and Chinese often being found in higher classes than Pakistanis and Bangladeshis more likely to be in the lower classes. This links with educational achievement.

### Palmer

Almost half of all ethnic minority children live in low income households compared to a quarter of white children.

Ethnic minorities are almost twice as likely to be unemployed compared with whites.

### Criticisms

Gillborn and Mirza argue when we compare pupils of the same class but of different ethnicities we still find differences in achievement. This can be seen with middle class black children.

## Racism in Wider Society

### Rex

Racial discrimination leads to social exclusion. This worsens the material deprivations ethnic minorities face. For example, in housing, discrimination results in minorities being more likely to be placed into substandard housing than whites.

### Wood et al

Sent three closely matched job applications to each of almost 1,000 job vacancies. These came from fictitious applicants using names associated with different ethnic groups. Wood et al found that only 1 in 16 ethnic minority applications were offered an interview compared to 1 in 9 white applications.

## Internal Factors

These include:

- 6) Labelling and teacher racism
- 7) Pupil responses and subcultures
- 8) The ethnocentric curriculum
- 9) Institutional racism
- 10) Selection and segregation

According to Gillborn and Mirza, in one local education authority, black children were the highest achievers on entry to primary school, yet by the time it came to GCSE, they had the worst results of any ethnic group.

## Labelling and Teacher Racism

### Gillborn and Youdell

Teachers are quicker to discipline black pupils than others for the same behaviour due to teachers' racialised expectations. Teachers expected black pupils to present more discipline problems and misinterpreted their behaviour as threatening.

### Bourne

Schools tend to see black boys as a threat and label them negatively. This eventually results in exclusion.

This could explain the higher exclusion rates of black boys.

### Criticisms

Fuller studied black girls who suffered racist labelling from teachers. These girls rejected these labels and didn't ask for help from teachers they perceived as racist. They were successful through relying on their own efforts.

## Pupil Responses and Subcultures

### Mirza

Studied ambitious black girls who faced teacher racism. However, the girls in Mirza's study failed to achieve because their coping strategies resulted in underachievement.

Found racist teachers discouraged black pupils from being ambitious through the advice they gave about careers and subject options.

The girls were selective about which staff to ask for help; got on with their own work in lessons without taking part and didn't choose certain options in order to avoid racist teachers. However, these strategies were unsuccessful and resulted in the girls underachieving.

## Sewell

In Sewell's study of a boys' secondary school, he found that most teachers had a stereotype of 'black machismo', which sees all black boys as rebellious and anti-school.

Sewell identified four ways in which the boys responded to this labelling:

- 1) The **rebels**: a minority of black pupils. Were anti-school and conformed to the stereotype of the black macho lad. Were often excluded.
- 2) The **conformists**: the largest group. Were keen to succeed and were pro school.
- 3) The **retreatists**: disconnected from school and black subcultures.
- 4) The **innovators**: pro education but anti-school. Valued success but did not seek the approval of teachers and conformed only as far as schoolwork itself was concerned.

Sewell shows that only a minority of pupils fit the stereotype of the black macho lad but teachers tend to see all black males in this way. In addition, many of the boys' negative attitudes towards school were a response to racism.

Sewell also recognises the importance of external factors though, such as low aspirations and lack of male role models. In addition, he blames a media inspired role model of anti-school black masculinity. This links to **hypermasculinity**.

## The Ethnocentric Curriculum

### Troyna and Williams

Describe the curriculum in British schools as ethnocentric because it gives priority to white culture and the English language.

### Coard

The ethnocentric curriculum may produce underachievement. For example in history the British are presented as bringing civilisation to the 'primitive' people they colonised. This undermines black children's self-esteem and leads to their failure.

### Criticisms

Doesn't explain the achievement of Chinese and Indian pupils whose culture is not focused on.

## Institutional Racism

### Hatcher

School governing bodies give low priority to race issues. In the schools he studied there were no formal channels of communication between governors and ethnic minority parents. This meant, for example, that nothing was done about parents' concerns about language support.

## Selection and Segregation

### Moore and Davenport

Found schools discriminated against 'problem students'. For example, they used primary school reports to screen out students with language or learning difficulties, while the application process was difficult for less educated or non English speaking parents to understand.



## External Factors

These include:

- 1) The impact of feminism
- 2) Changes in the family
- 3) Changes in women's employment
- 4) Girls' changing ambitions
- 5) Boys and literacy (socialisation)
- 6) Globalisation and the decline of traditional men's jobs

## The Impact of Feminism

The Feminist movement has had considerable success in improving women's rights and opportunities through changes in the law. More broadly, feminism has raised women's expectations and self esteem.

McRobbie

Compared girls' magazines in the 1970s and the 1990s. In the 1970s girls magazines such as Jackie, focused on the importance of getting married and not being 'left on the shelf' whereas nowadays they contain images of assertive, independent women.

## Girls' Changing Ambitions

Sharpe

Interviewed girls in the 1970s and found the girls had low aspirations. Most wanted to become housewives. In the 1990s, however, girls wanted careers.

## Changes in the Family

Since the 1970s there has been an increase in the divorce rate and an increase in the number of lone parent, particularly matriarchal families.

Increased single mother families may mean women need to take on the instrumental role. This provides positive role models for girls as their mothers are independent, which requires a good job and therefore good qualifications. In addition, girls nowadays may feel they don't need to rely on a husband to provide for them. This may encourage them to do better in education.

## Changes in Women's Employment

The 1970 Equal Pay Act makes it illegal to pay women less for doing the same job as men, whilst the 1975 Sex Discrimination Act outlaws sexual discrimination in employment.

The proportion of women in employment rose from 47% in 1959 to 67% in 2013. The growth of the service sector and part time work has provided more employment opportunities for women.

Since 1975 the pay gap between men and women has fallen from 30% to 15% and more women are breaking through the glass ceiling.

These changes may have encouraged girls to see their future in terms of paid work. There are also greater employment opportunities for women now than there used to be.

# Globalisation and the Decline of Traditional Men's Jobs

Mac an Ghail

The decline of traditional men's jobs has resulted in a crisis of masculinity.

Mitsos and Browne

Claim this decline in male employment opportunities has led to an identity crisis for men. Many boys now believe they have little prospect of getting a proper job. This undermines their motivation and self-esteem and so they give up trying to get qualifications.

Criticisms

However, many traditional manual working class jobs didn't need qualifications, so the decline of these jobs shouldn't make much difference to boys' achievement.

## Socialisation

Parents spend less time reading to their sons. In addition, it is usually mothers who do most of the reading with their children. This may lead males to see reading as feminine.

Hannan

Argues girls are better socialised for schools. They often spend more time interacting and communicating with other girls (e.g. bedroom culture) whereas boys are more likely to play computer games.

## Internal Factors

These include:

- 1) Equal opportunities policies
- 2) Role models in schools
- 3) GCSE and coursework
- 4) Teacher attention
- 5) Challenging stereotypes in the curriculum
- 6) Selection and league tables
- 7) Feminisation of education
- 8) Laddish subcultures

## Equal Opportunities Policies

Equal opportunities policies have prevented teachers and the education system from discriminating against females.

Policies such as GIST (girls into science and technology) and WISE (women into science and engineering) encourage girls to pursue careers in these non traditional areas.

Similarly the introduction of the National Curriculum removed one source of gender inequality by making girls and boys study mostly the same subjects.

### Boaler

Sees the impact of equal opportunities policies as a key reason for the changes in girls' achievement. Many of the barriers have been removed and schooling has become more meritocratic.

## Challenging Stereotypes in the Curriculum

Research in the 1970s and 80s found that reading schemes portrayed women mainly as housewives and mothers, that physics books showed them as frightened or amazed by science, and that maths books depicted boys as more inventive than girls.

### Weiner

Argues that since the 1980s, teachers have challenged such stereotypes. Also, in general, sexist images have been removed from learning materials.

## Positive Role Models in Schools

There has been an increase in the proportion of female teachers and headteachers. These women in positions of authority may act as role models for girls.

Between 1992 and 2012, the percentage of female teachers in secondary schools has increased from 49% to 61% and the percentage of headteachers has increased from 22% to 37%.

Only 14% of primary school teachers are male. This may lead to boys seeing education as feminised.

### Criticisms

Francis found that two thirds of 7-8 year olds believed the gender of teachers does not matter.

## Teacher Attention

### Francis

Boys get more attention than girls but were disciplined more harshly and felt picked on by teachers who tended to have lower expectations of them.

### Swann and Graddol

Found boys are generally more boisterous and attract the teacher's attention more than girls. However, the way teachers interact with girls is positive because it is focused on schoolwork rather than on behaviour.

## Selection and League Tables

### Jackson

Notes the introduction of exam league tables, which place a high value on academic achievement, has improved opportunities for girls. High achieving girls are attractive to schools, whereas low achieving boys are not.

### Slee

Argues boys are less attractive to schools because they are more likely to suffer from behavioural difficulties and are four times more likely to be excluded.

## Feminisation of Education

### Sewell

Argues schools do not nurture masculine traits such as competitiveness or leadership. Instead they celebrate qualities more closely associated with girls, such as methodical working and attentiveness in class.

Sees coursework as a major cause of gender differences in achievement.

## GCSE and Coursework

Sociologists argue females are better at coursework due to socialisation in the family.

### Gorard

Found the gender gap increased in 1988-9 which was the year GCSEs were introduced as well as coursework. Gorard concludes the gender gap in achievement is due to the changed system of assessment.

### Mitsos and Browne

Argue girls are more successful in coursework because they are more conscientious and better organised than boys.

### Criticisms

Elwood argues that although coursework has some influence, it is unlikely to be the only cause of the gender gap as exams count more towards final grades.

# Laddish Subcultures

## Epstein

Found working class boys are likely to be harassed and subjected to homophobic verbal abuse if they appear to be trying in education.

## Francis

Femininity in school involves cooperative attitudes to teachers, other pupils and authority in general. This is linked to a supportive attitude to schoolwork which results in a pro school peer group.

## Marketisation Policies

Marketisation is the process of introducing market forces of choice and competition into the education system.

This process was started by the Conservatives with the 1988 Education Reform Act and continued by subsequent New Labour governments as well as the coalition government in 2010.

## Choice and Competition

This was the main emphasis of marketisation: giving parents choice and promoting competition between schools.

### **Open Enrolment**

Before the Education Reform Act children were allocated to schools within their area based on catchment areas. After the act however, parents had a free choice of school.

This emphasised the idea of parental choice (what Miriam David called **parentocracy**). In theory parents were given the right to send their children to a school of their choice.

Schools which had poor exam results and poor standards of behaviour would be unpopular with parents. This would result in them losing students and therefore money. This encouraged schools to compete and improve results in order to attract students. As a result, in theory, all schools should be improving their standards which would benefit all students.

### **Formula Funding**

Funding now depended very heavily on student numbers so that more popular schools would attract more funds and vice versa.

This was intended to reward successful schools which attracted large numbers of pupils, while giving less successful schools an incentive to improve.

### **League Tables**

Local and national league tables of schools were based on national standardised test results in subjects that were part of the new national curriculum.

These were intended to provide parents with information so they could make an informed choice of school, and to intensify competition between schools by encouraging them to improve their position in the league table.

In addition to this, Ofsted was established which would inspect schools and produce reports on the quality of education offered in each school. Parents could then use these reports, as well as league tables, to choose which school to send their children to.

# Different Types of Schools

In order to further increase the amount of choice parents had, various governments brought in different types of schools.

## **Grant Maintained Schools**

Schools were allowed to opt out of Local Education Authority control and become grant maintained schools if enough parents supported this move.

These schools were funded directly from central government rather than the local council (LEA). This funding was to be higher than that provided by local councils.

Via the introduction of **local management** of schools individual head teachers and school governing bodies would have more control over the spending of their own budgets.

## **City Technology Schools**

These were financed by central government and private industry, they would focus on maths, science and technology.

They were to be built mainly in inner city areas for 11 to 18 year old students and they were to compete with existing schools.

## **Specialist Schools**

This were expanded under New Labour who rejected the idea of the 'one size fits all' comprehensive. Schools would instead specialise in particular subject areas.

This would provide diversity and choice within the educational marketplace, it would increase competition and it would raise standards.

State secondary schools could apply to become a specialist school in particular types of subjects, e.g. IT, languages etc. They were also allowed to select 10% of their pupils who showed an aptitude in their specialism.

## **New Academies**

After 2010, all state schools, including primary and special schools, were encouraged to become independent academies, free from control of local councils. They also didn't have to keep to the national curriculum.

Poorly performing schools were forced into becoming academies under the leadership of a high performing neighbouring academy.

## **Free Schools**

Free schools are all ability, state funded independent schools. They are very similar to academies but are set up in response to what local people say they want and in order to improve education for children in their community.

They were generally presented as a way of improving standards and meeting parents' wishes in disadvantaged areas where existing schools were seen by parents as inadequate.

They were designed to be run by groups of teachers, parents, charities, faith groups, education experts or private companies to satisfy local demand.

### **Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz**

Parents were not equally able to take advantage of the supposed opportunities for choice in making decisions about their children's education. Not all parents could use the league tables to their advantage.

Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz identified three groups of parental choosers:

- 1) **Privileged/skilled choosers:** able to understand the nature of different schools and evaluate claims made by schools in their publicity. Devote time and energy into finding out about different schools. They often have money to help them make choices. They may move house or pay for private education. They are usually middle class.
- 2) **Semi-skilled choosers:** concerned to get the best possible education for children but do not have the same level of skill as skilled choosers. Lack knowledge of education system. They are less likely to appeal against decisions and more likely to accept rumours about schools. They do not probe deeply into schools and may have difficulty interpreting league tables. Less likely to be middle class.
- 3) **Disconnected choosers:** do not get very involved with education market. They tend to consider a small amount of options and frequently just the two closest schools to where they live. They may not have a car or good public transport. Tend to believe there is little difference between schools and put more emphasis on happiness of child than on academic reputation of school. More likely to send children to local school where their friends are going. Likely to be working class and more likely to send their children to an under-subscribed school.

### **Ball and Whitty**

Claimed marketization reproduces inequality through the formula funding and league tables.

Publishing a school's results means that schools with the best results are always in demand. These schools become oversubscribed and therefore can choose the students they want. They are likely to choose academic students who will help them maintain their good league table position. These students are likely to be middle class. As a result middle class students get the best education.

For schools with poor league table positions, they cannot afford to be selective and have to take less able students. These are more likely to be working class students. Therefore these schools cannot improve their results and therefore their league table position. This means they remain unattractive to parents and working class students get a poorer education.

In addition, the popular, middle class schools get more formula funding because they can attract more students. This means they can afford better facilities, resources and teachers. Meanwhile, the less popular, working class schools get less formula funding because they attract less students. This means they can't afford better facilities, resources or teachers.

### **Leech and Campos**

Leech and Campos show that middle class parents can afford to move closer to popular schools. This is known as **selection by mortgage**.

### **Gillborn and Youdell**

The policy of publishing league tables creates an **A-C economy**. This is a system in which schools ration their time, effort and resources to the students who can get 5 A\*-C grades and therefore improve the school's league table position.



This process is called **educational triage**. Schools categorise pupils into three groups:

- 1) Those who will pass anyway: students who will get 5 A\*-C grades without much help from teachers. These students are likely to be middle class.
- 2) Those with potential: students who will get 5 A\*-C grades with help.
- 3) Hopeless cases: students who will not get % A\*-C grades no matter how much help they get. This is likely to include working class students, male students and black students.

This process causes a self fulfilling prophecy.

### **Bartlett**

Popular schools become oversubscribed and can therefore be selective about the students they take. Oversubscribed schools do two things:

- **Cream skim:** select higher ability students who gain the best results and cost less to teach. These tend to be middle class students.
- **Silt shift:** off load students who are less likely to get the best results. These tend to be working class students and students with learning difficulties.

### **Fitz**

Found GM schools were reinventing tradition. One school spent £10,000 on a new pipe organ and renamed its canteen 'the dining hall.' This was done to attract middle class parents.

### **Walford**

Found that although CTCs were intended to provide vocational education in partnership with employers and recruit students from all backgrounds, in practice they have become just enough route to elite education.

They became attractive to middle class parents because they were seen as the next best thing to a grammar school.

### **House of Commons Select Committee on Education and Skills**

An Ofsted report found that specialist schools often achieved better results in subjects outside their specialist area. This might have been due to additional government funding during a specialist school's first four years.

Specialist schools tended to have a higher middle class intake than non-specialist schools which may explain their better results. Also schools in low income areas have difficulty in meeting the criteria to become a specialist school.

Evidence indicated a slide away from parents choosing schools for their children and towards schools choosing the pupils they wished to admit. This was due to a shortage of places in schools. Research suggested that some schools will select those they see as the most able pupils in order to boost their results, and these tend to be middle class pupils.

## Privatisation Policies

### **New Academies**

After 2010, all state schools, including primary and special schools were encouraged to become independent academies, free from control of local councils. They also didn't have to keep to the national curriculum.

Poorly performing schools were forced into becoming academies under the leadership of a high performing neighbouring academy.

Academies are the fastest growing type of school and in January 2014 just over 56% of secondary and 11% of primary schools in England had academy or free school status.

### **Free Schools**

Free schools are all ability, state funded independent schools. They are very similar to academies but are set up in response to what local people say they want and in order to improve education for children in their community.

They were generally presented as a way of improving standards and meeting parents' wishes in disadvantaged areas where existing schools were seen by parents as providing inadequate education.

They were designed to be run by groups of teachers, parents, charities, faith groups, education experts or private companies to satisfy local demand.

## The Effects of Privatisation in Education

Privatisation involves the transfer of public assets, e.g. schools, to private companies. There has been an increase in this both in the UK and globally.

Private companies are involved in an increasing range of activities in education, including:

- Building schools
- Providing supply teachers
- Providing work based learning
- Providing careers advice
- Providing inspection services
- Running local education authorities

Many of these activities are very profitable with companies involved in them expecting to make up to ten times as much profit as they do on other contracts. Local education authorities often have to use private companies due to a lack of funding from central government.

There are a number of impacts of the privatisation of education:

## **Blurring the Private/Public Boundary**

Many senior officials in the public sector, such as head teachers, now leave to set up or work for private education businesses. These companies then bid for contracts to provide services to schools and local authorities.

Pollack notes that this allows companies to buy 'insider knowledge' to help win contracts.

## **Privatisation and Globalisation**

Many private education companies are foreign owned, e.g. Edexcel is owned by the US company Pearson.

The UK's four leading educational software companies are all owned by global multinational corporations (Disney, Mattel, Hambro and Vivendi).

Many contracts for educational services are bought by overseas companies.

Some UK educational businesses work overseas. For example, Prospects has worked in China. Often private companies export UK education policies to other countries, e.g. Ofsted style inspections, and then provide the services to deliver the policies. Therefore companies are more involved in making educational policies.

## The Cola-isation of Schools

The private sector may indirectly be involved in education too, e.g. vending machines and displays of logos and sponsorships. This has been called the cola-isation of schools.

Molnar says schools are targeted for this because they can provide positive advertising for a company if they advertise their product.

However, the benefits of this are often very limited. For example, a Cadbury's sports promotion was scrapped after it was revealed that pupils would have to eat over 5,000 chocolate bars just to qualify for a set of volleyball posts. Also, for example, UK families spent £110,000 in Tesco in return for a single computer for schools.

## Education as a Commodity

Ball says privatisation is becoming the key factor shaping educational policy. Policy is increasingly focused on moving education out of the control of the public sector and into the private sector. Education is becoming a commodity to be bought and sold on an education market.

In the Marxist view, the claim that privatisation and competition drive up standards is a myth used to legitimise the turning of education into a source of profit.



## Academies

### **Machin and Vernoit**

Found evidence that the new academies were significantly more advantaged than the average secondary school, contained lower proportions of pupils who were eligible for free school meals and were likely to reinforce advantaged and make existing inequalities in schooling worse.

### **Accountability**

There is now a lack of local oversight and checks and balances over what these schools do and how they spend taxpayers' money.

Parents are often not clear about who these schools are accountable to.

Local councils have lost control over the planning and supply of school places. Some free schools have opened in areas where there are already too many school places, with schools in such areas therefore not full.

### **Academies Commission**

Found some academies were holding 'social' events for prospective parents or asking parents to complete long admission forms and suggested these practices can enable schools to select pupils from more privileged families where parents have more cultural capital and can complete the forms in a way that would improve their child's chances.

### **Ball**

Argues that promoting academies and free schools has led to both increased **fragmentation** and increased **centralisation** of control over educational provision in England.

Fragmentation means the comprehensive system is being replaced by a patchwork of diverse provisions that leads to greater inequality in opportunities.

Centralisation of control means central government alone has the power to allow or require schools to become academies or allow free schools to be set up. These schools are funded directly by central government. Their rapid growth has greatly reduced the role of elected local authorities in education.

## Free Schools

Can also use Machin and Vernoit, Ball and criticisms related to accountability here.

### **Green, Allen and Jenkins**

Found free schools were socially selective and picked bright and wealthy pupils by covert selection. Even in deprived areas schools were failing to admit the neediest children.

**Covert selection** involves discouraging parents from lower classes from even applying to the school by generally giving the impression of the school as more suited to and having more appeal to middle class than working class parents.

## Equality of Opportunity Policies

These are also known as **compensatory education** as they attempt to compensate for material and cultural deprivation.

### **Education Action Zones (EAZs)**

Aimed to raise the motivation and attainment levels of underachieving pupils in deprived, low income, inner city areas. They included initiatives, such as homework and breakfast clubs.

### **Excellence in Cities (EiC)**

This programme steadily replaced EAZs. The main initiatives of EiC were special programmes for gifted pupils, city learning centres with IT facilities, learning mentors and low cost leasing for home computers.

An Ofsted evaluation of EiC found that it was more effective than EAZs. Overall, there was a small improvement in Key Stage 3 test results and in attendance levels.

### **Sure Start**

This programme targeted the under 4s and their families living in the most deprived areas of England. It aimed to improve their health, education and employment prospects. Sure Start was targeted at deprived families, whilst EAZs and EiC were targeted at disadvantaged/failing schools.

It was based on the idea that early intervention, e.g. home visits and play centres run by professionals, will have long term positive results. It aimed to tackle cultural deprivation amongst these children and their parents (the idea that some families socialise their children into norms and values which do not enable them to be successful).

### **Education Maintenance Allowance**

Labour aimed to widen access to further education. In particular, to increase the number and proportion of working class students in FE.

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) was introduced in 2004 in an attempt to reduce the class gap in FE. EMA was a weekly cash allowance payable to 16 to 19 year olds from low income families who remained in education.

Pilot studies found that staying on rates increased by around 6% with EMA.

### **Pupil Premium**

This provided extra money for students who come from poorer homes, defined as those eligible for free school meals. This money, however, went straight to the school rather than the pupil.

This aimed to encourage schools to attract and work harder for poorer pupils with the aim of reducing social inequalities in education.

### **The Aim Higher Programme**

The Aim Higher Programme provided information and activities designed to encourage children to consider the benefits of Higher Education.

It was geared toward children whose parents had not undertaken Higher Education courses.

### **Academies**

These were targeted at inner city schools in order to improve the education of mainly working class pupils.

## Evaluation of Equality of Opportunity Policies

### **McKnight, Glennerster and Lupton**

Participation in further and higher education increased significantly under Labour. However, there is still a significant class gap in continuing full time education after 16.

Labour has directed increased resources towards disadvantaged, low income, inner city areas. There is some evidence that this may have resulted in reasonable improvements.

### **Trowler**

Excellence in Cities, which is directed at low income, inner city areas is seen as positive.

However, policies are not the answer and do not reduce inequality of educational opportunity. Changes in the educational system cannot compensate for social inequality in the wider society.

In order to reduce inequality, inequality in society as a whole needs tackling. This may require a redistribution of wealth.

### **Machin and Vignoles**

The impact of EMA has been positive and it has increased disadvantaged students' participation in further education.

It has been designed to help those who suffer from material deprivation but has been criticised for not targeting the poor as some well off students get EMA.

There are still concerns that although working class are participating they do not always take high status qualifications.

### **Whitty**

Contradiction in New Labour's policies to tackle inequality. Introduced EMA to encourage working class students to stay on until they are 18, yet introduced tuition fees which may deter them from going to university.

### **Ofsted**

Found that in many cases the pupil premium is not spent on those it is supposed to help. Only 1 in 10 headteachers said it had significantly changed how they supported pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

### **Pupil Premium**

Equally, the money provided for students who are eligible for free school meals may not be enough to encourage higher performing schools to try to attract poorer students. These are often the hardest to teach and the money available may not be enough to provide the extra help these students need to help them perform at a level which doesn't undermine the position of the best schools in the league tables.

### **Sure Start/EMA/Aim Higher programme**

The EMA was cut under the coalition government, as well as the Aim Higher programme. The money from these schemes was redirected into other schemes but it is too early to tell how successful these have been.

### **Tuition Fees**

These were increased to £9,000 a year. However, if universities wanted to charge this they had to also put in place measures to attract disadvantaged students.

## Double Standards

### Lees

Identifies a double standard of sexual morality in which boys boast about their own sexual exploits but call a girl a 'slag' if she doesn't have a steady boyfriend or if she dresses and speaks in a certain way.

Sexual conquest is approved of and given status by male peers and ignored by male teachers, but 'promiscuity' among girls attracts negative labels.

## Verbal Abuse

### Lees

Boys called girls 'slags' if they appeared to be sexually available and 'drags' if they didn't.

### Paechter

Sees name calling as helping to shape gender identity and maintain male power. The use of negative labels such as 'gay', 'queer' and 'lezzie' are ways in which pupils police each other's sexual identities.

Both Lees and Paechter note that these labels often bear no relation to pupils' actual sexual behaviour. Their function is simply to reinforce gender norms and identities.

## The Male Gaze

### Mac an Ghail

This is the way male pupils and teachers look girls up and down, seeing them as sexual objects and making judgements about their appearance.

Mac an Ghail sees the **male gaze** as a form of surveillance through which dominant heterosexual masculinity is reinforced and femininity devalued.

## Male Peer Groups

Male peer groups often use verbal abuse to reinforce their definitions of masculinity as shown in studies by Epstein and Willis where boys who want to do well at school are subject to homophobic abuse.

## Female Peer Groups

These can often reinforce class based types of femininity

### Archer

Archer's study into working class identities and symbolic capital and symbolic violence can also be applied to working class girls in education.

Archer explains how girls gain symbolic capital by adopting a hyper heterosexual feminine identity, having a boyfriend and being 'loud'. However, these behaviours also brought them into conflict with the school and prevented them from gaining educational capital (qualifications) and economic capital (middle class careers).



# Teachers and Discipline

## Haywood and Mac an Ghail

Found male teachers told boys off for 'behaving like girls' and teased them when they gained lower marks in tests than girls.

Teachers tended to ignore boys' verbal abuse of girls and even blamed girls for attracting it.

## Askew and Ross

Show how male teachers' behaviour can reinforce messages about gender. For example male teachers often have a protective attitude towards female colleagues, coming into their classes to 'rescue' them by threatening pupils who are being disruptive.

## Habitus

This refers to the learned ways of thinking, being and acting that are shared by a particular social class. It includes their tastes and preferences about lifestyles and consumption, their outlook on life and their expectations about what is normal or realistic for 'people like us'. A group's habitus is formed as a response to its position in the class structure.

The middle class has the power to define its habitus as superior and to impose it on the education system. As a result the school puts a higher value on middle class tastes etc. This gives middle class pupils an advantage.

## Symbolic Capital and Symbolic Violence

Because schools have a middle class habitus, pupils who have been socialised at home into middle class tastes etc gain **symbolic capital** or status from the school and are deemed to have worth or value.

By contrast, the school devalues the working class habitus so that working class pupils' tastes (e.g. in clothing and accent) are deemed to be tasteless and worthless. Bourdieu calls this withholding of symbolic capital from the working class, **symbolic violence**. By defining the working class and their tastes etc. as inferior, symbolic violence reproduces the class system and keeps the lower classes 'in their place'.

Due to this clash between the working class pupils' habitus and the school's middle class habitus, working class students may experience education as unnatural.

For example, Archer found that working class pupils felt that to be educationally successful, they would have to change how they talked and presented themselves. Thus, for working class students, educational success is often experienced as a process of 'losing yourself'. They felt unable to access middle class spaces such as university and professional careers, which were seen as 'not for the likes of us'.

## 'Nike' Identities

Many pupils were conscious that society and school looked down on them. This symbolic violence led them to seek alternative ways of creating self-worth, status and value. They did so by constructing meaningful class identities for themselves by investing heavily in styles, especially through consuming branded clothing.

Style performances were heavily policed by peer groups. The right appearance earned symbolic capital and approval from peer groups. However, at the same time it led to conflict with the school's dress code. Reflecting the school's middle class habitus, teachers opposed 'street' styles as showing 'bad taste' or even a threat. Pupils who adopted street styles risked being labelled as rebels.

Nike styles also play a part in working class pupils' rejection of higher education, which they saw as both unrealistic and undesirable. It was unrealistic because they felt it was not for 'people like us' and they would not fit in. It was undesirable because it would not 'suit' their preferred lifestyle, for example, student loans would mean they would be unable to afford the street styles that gave them their identity.

# Working Class Identity and Educational Success

Ingram studied two groups of working class Catholic boys from the same highly deprived neighbourhood in Belfast. One group had passed their 11 plus exam and gone to grammar school, while the other group had failed and gone to a local secondary school. The grammar school had a strong middle class habitus of high expectations and academic achievement, while the secondary school had a habitus of low expectations of its underachieving pupils.

Ingram found that having a working class identity was inseparable from belonging to a working class locality. The neighbourhood's dense networks of family and friends were a key part of the boys' habitus. It gave them an intense feeling of belonging. As in Archer's study, street culture and branded sportswear were a key part of the boys' habitus and sense of identity.

However, as Ingram notes, working class communities place great emphasis on conformity. The boys experienced a great pressure to 'fit in' and this was a particular problem for the grammar school boys, who experienced a tension between the habitus of their working class neighbourhood and that of their middle class school. For example, one boy, Callum, was ridiculed by his classmates for coming to school in a tracksuit on non uniform day. By opting to 'fit in' with his neighbourhood habitus by wearing his tracksuit, he was made to feel worthless by the school's middle class habitus. As Ingram puts it, the choice is between unworthiness at school for wearing certain clothes and worthlessness at home for not.

## Class Identity and Self Exclusion

Despite the class inequalities in education, many more working class young people now go on to university. Even here, however, the clash between working class identity and the habitus of higher education is a barrier to success. This is partly due to a process of self exclusion.

For example, Evans studied a group of 21 working class girls studying for their A levels. Evans found they were reluctant to apply to elite universities such as Oxbridge and the few who did apply felt a sense of hidden barriers and of not fitting in. Like Archer and Ingram, Evans also found that the girls had a strong attachment to their locality. For example, only 4 of the 21 intended to move away from home to study.

## Gender Achievement and Subject Choice

Despite females now achieving better than boys in education, there are still fairly traditional patterns of 'boys subjects' and 'girls subjects'.

## Gender Role Socialisation

This is the process of learning the behaviour expected of males and females in society.

### Browne and Ross

Socialisation shapes children's beliefs about **gender domains**. By gender domains, they mean the tasks and activities that boys and girls see as male or female 'territory' and therefore as relevant to themselves. Children are more confident when engaging in tasks that they see as part of their own gender domain. For example, when they are set the same mathematical task, girls are more confident in tackling it when it is presented as being about food and nutrition, whereas boys are more confident if it is about cars.

## Gendered Subject Images

The gender image of a subject affects who will want to choose it.

### Kelly

Argues science is seen as a boys' subject for several reasons:

- Science teachers are more likely to be men
- The examples teachers use, and those in textbooks, often draw on boys' rather than girls' interests
- In science lessons, boys monopolise the apparatus and dominate the laboratory.

## Gender Identity and Peer Pressure

Subject choice can be influenced by peer pressure. Boys and girls may opt out of a subject if their peers disapprove of their subject choice, for example boys tend to opt out of music and dance because they are seen as outside of their gender domain and therefore might attract a negative response from their peers.

### Paechter

Found that because pupils see sport as mainly within the male gender domain, girls who are 'sporty' have to cope with an image that contradicts the conventional female stereotype. This might explain why girls are more likely than boys to opt out of sport.

## Gendered Career Opportunities

Employment is highly gendered: jobs tend to be sex typed as men's or women's.

Women's jobs often involve work similar to that performed by housewives. Over half of all women's employment falls within only four categories: clerical, secretarial, personal services and occupations such as cleaning.

This affects boys' and girls' ideas about what kinds of jobs are possible or acceptable and will therefore affect their subject choices.

On vocational courses, working class pupils in particular may choose courses based on a traditional sense of gender identity.

## Fuller

Most of the working class girls Fuller studied had ambitions to go into jobs such as child care or hair and beauty. This reflected their working class habitus. This was also influenced by their work experience placements. Fuller found that placements in feminine, working class jobs such as nurseries, were overwhelmingly the norm for the girls in her study.

Globalisation has affected education in a number of ways:

## Competition and the Economy

- In a globalised world economies of different nations are competing with one another.
- As a result national governments increasingly tailor education to the needs of the economy. This is to produce workers who can compete in a global economy.
- This means there is less focus on social objectives of education, than economic objectives. For example, there may be less focus on increasing equality of opportunity or passing on important knowledge and more focus on training workers with skills needed in the workplace.
- This can be seen with the emphasis of the government recently on SATS tests for 6 and 7 year olds which has been justified in order to ensure students can compete with students in nations such as China.

## 'Homogenisation' of Education Systems

- Education systems around the world may become increasingly alike. There is a global trend towards marketization and privatisation.
- There is the adoption of similar school improvement programmes in different parts of the world, often driven by multinational corporations.
- These trends can lead to the professionalism of teachers being undermined, as managers and consultants are seen as having more expertise in these programmes than individual teachers.
- Local democratic accountability, e.g. LEAs, lose power as a result of these changes.
- For example, free schools which have been implemented in the UK were also used in Scandinavia.

## Globalisation and Higher Education

- Educational institutions increasingly have to run as businesses if they market their products (education) globally. Ball points out that universities have increasingly done this, often setting up overseas branches.
- Universities are often keen to attract overseas students because they pay high fees.
- Having overseas branches also allows universities to expand, e.g. Liverpool University has set up a joint venture in China and Nottingham, Newcastle and Southampton have developed universities in Malaysia.
- Private schools have also become increasingly reliant on overseas students.

***You can also include the arguments that privatisation has resulted in global multinational corporations influencing education in the UK and exporting UK style education to other countries.***

## Vocational Education

Vocational education refers to education which prepares young people for the world of work and ensures education meets the needs of the economy.

It is focused on the New Right idea of providing a trained workforce. As a result, the New Right and Functionalists see vocational education positively whilst the Marxists see it as providing a second class education for working class students whilst ensuring these students are trained as passive and obedient workers.

The main focus of vocational education in the UK has been on:

- 1) Improving the basic skills of the workforce.
- 2) Ending the difference in status between academic and vocational qualifications.

By ensuring the workforce are fully trained, it was thought education would produce a skilled and flexible workforce that could contribute to the economy and enable them to compete for jobs in a globalised economy.

Measures to achieve this have included the following:

## Work Experience Programmes

The intention of this has been to ease the transition for students from school to work.

Examples, include the Training and Vocational Education Initiative, introduced under the Conservatives in the 1980s, which provided work experience for students. It also made additional funds available to schools which were to be spent on themes especially related to the needs of industry such as improving pupil awareness of the importance of industry, information technology and work experience.

The Conservatives also introduced Youth Training in the 1980s, which aimed to provide work experience and education for school leavers with little or no qualifications. Workers on this scheme followed a training programme which led to a level 2 NVQ qualification.

## Expansion of Post-16 Education

There have been a number of qualifications and training schemes introduced for students leaving school, with a greater focus on the workplace.

These also provide alternative educational qualifications for less academic students or students more interested in vocational education.

This includes apprenticeships, which involves working in a particular job role whilst working towards a relevant qualification.

In addition, there are alternative qualifications to A levels, such as BTECs and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs).

## Stronger Emphasis on Key Skills

There has been an increased emphasis on skills such as literacy, numeracy, communication, problem solving and IT, in all subjects.

This is to ensure that students have all the skills they need for when they are working.

# Criticisms of Vocational Policies

## **Finn**

Many Marxists see vocational policies as simply providing cheap labour for employers, ensuring the working class cannot improve their social position and reducing embarrassing unemployment statistics. Finn argued this was the main purpose of Youth Training.

Finn argued that workers on this scheme were unable to join unions and by being put on this scheme were no longer classed as unemployed. This weakened the workforce by resulting in less workers joining unions, and made the government look better by lowering unemployment statistics.

## **De Waal**

Argues vocational qualifications simply recreate the tripartite system with working class students doing low status vocational qualifications which lead to low paid jobs and the middle class doing high status vocational qualifications which lead to highly paid jobs.

Also argued that schools simply put students onto vocational education courses in order to ensure that students who would fail GCSEs and A levels didn't show up on league tables.

## **Birdwell**

Argues secondary schools ignore students on vocational courses and instead focus on students on academic courses.

## **Davies and Biesta**

Argued students get varied experiences in vocational education. At its worst it is dull, repetitive and unrewarding and some employers may use students as cheap labour. However, at their best they can be an invaluable method of giving people important skills that will enable them to gain good jobs.



You need to be aware of the issues you need to take account of when assessing the use of different research methods to research educational topics.

## Researching Pupils

### **Power and Status**

Children may not be able to state their attitudes and views openly, especially if they challenge those of adults.

Formal research methods such as structured interviews tend to reinforce power differences. This may affect their responses.

Students who resent the power of teachers over them may be less likely to cooperate with research, or they may feel empowered by expressing their true feelings about school.

### **Ability and Understanding**

Pupils' will have less developed literacy skills to the researchers so may misunderstand questions. This may also make it more difficult to gain informed consent.

Young people use language in different ways from adults, which may mean they give responses the researcher doesn't fully understand.

A young person's memory is less developed than that of an adult, so they may be unable to recall in detail relevant material.

### **Vulnerability and Ethical Issues**

Young people are often more vulnerable than adults. This raises special ethical issues for the researcher.

Child protection issues are very important. For example, personal data should not be kept unless it is vital to the research.

The researcher should also consider any stress that may result from the study.

The greater vulnerability of young people means there are more 'gatekeepers' controlling access to pupils. This may affect access.

### **Laws and Guidelines**

Child protection laws require researchers to have DBS checks. This may delay researchers from carrying out their research.

As a result of ethical concerns some organisations have developed special codes of practice for researching young people.

## Researching Teachers

Teachers often feel over worked and may be less than fully cooperative, even when they want to be helpful.

On the other hand, as professionals, teachers are likely to be sympathetic to educational research.

### **Power and Status**

Teachers often see it as 'my classroom', in which the researcher may be viewed as a trespasser.

Researchers will need to develop a 'cover' if they carry out covert investigations, e.g. a supply teacher. These have lower status though.

### **Impression Management**

Teachers are used to being observed so they may be more willing to be observed by a researcher.

However, teachers are often highly skilled at what Goffman calls impression management. The researcher may have to find ways to get behind the public face that teachers put on.

Teachers will be aware that any critical comments they make about the school where they work could affect their career prospects.

Head teachers may try to influence which staff are selected to be involved in the research and these may not be fully representative of all teachers in the school.

## **Researching Classrooms**

The classroom is highly controlled. As a result the classroom behaviour the researcher observes may not accurately reflect what those involved really think and feel.

Furthermore in classroom interactions teachers and pupils are very experienced at concealing their real thoughts and feelings and they may conceal them from the researcher.

### **Gatekeepers**

Unlike many other social environments, access to classrooms is controlled by a wide range of gatekeepers.

### **Peer Groups**

When in school based groups such as classes and friendship groups, pupils may be more sensitive to peer pressure and the need to conform.

This may be important to bear in mind with questionnaires and focus groups.

## **Researching Schools**

There are lots of different kinds of in the UK. If the sociologist uses qualitative methods they may not have the time to investigate a lot and their research risks being unrepresentative.

Using large scale surveys or official statistics may overcome this problem although these may lose the insight that can be gained from the detailed observation of a single school.

### **Schools' Own Data**

There is a great deal of secondary data available about schools. However, some data will be confidential and so researchers may not be able to gain access to them.

Schools may be less willing to record or release data which portrays the school in a bad light.

Official statistics on exam performance should be treated with care. Schools may make changes in the curriculum in order to improve their results.

### **The Law**

Since the school's primary role is to educate pupils, heads and teachers may see involvement in research as interfering with the school's most important function.

Schools are required to collect information on pupils, e.g. attendance, and this might be helpful. However, schools have a duty of care and this may restrict researchers' access.

## **Gatekeepers**

Head teachers and governors are gatekeepers who have the power to refuse a researcher access to the school. They may do so if they feel the research will have a negative impact.

Some situations may be off limits to researchers, e.g. a head teacher interviewing parents.

Head teachers may also steer the researcher away from sensitive situations, e.g. classes where the teacher has poor classroom control.

## **School Organisation**

Many schools are single sex. This may pose problems where the researcher is of a different gender from that of the pupils.

Schools have timetables, meeting schedules etc. This may affect when and how a study can be carried out.

The size and complexity of a school can cause difficulties for researchers. It can take researchers time to work out where everything is and who does what.

## **Researching Parents**

The class, gender and ethnicity of parents may all affect how willing or able they are able to participate in research.

How likely parents are to give their permission depends on the sensitivity of the topic and whether they think their children will benefit from being involved.

Parents may engage in impression management, presenting themselves to researchers in a positive light by exaggerating their involvement in their children's education.

## **Access to Parents**

Most parent child interaction takes place in the home. As this is a private setting it is often difficult for researchers to gain access.

Parents are located outside of the school. This may make them more difficult to contact and research.

A school might help a researcher contact parents by sending a letter home but there is no guarantee that parents will receive these or that pupils will return responses.

## Key Concepts

Hidden curriculum  
Formal curriculum  
Value consensus  
Social solidarity  
Microcosm of society  
Particularistic values  
Ascribed status  
Achieved status  
Meritocracy  
Human capital  
Specialised division of labour  
Role allocation  
Correspondence principle  
Subservient workforce  
Acceptance of hierarchy  
Motivating pupils by external rewards  
Fragmentation of school subjects  
Myth of Meritocracy  
Ideological state apparatus  
Reproducing class inequality  
Legitimising class inequality  
Habitus  
Cultural capital  
Vocational education  
Youth Training  
NVQs  
Btecs  
Apprenticeships  
Tripartite system  
Grammar schools  
Private schools  
Faith schools  
Marketisation  
Catchment area  
Parentocracy  
Formula funding  
Open enrolment  
League tables  
Grant maintained schools  
Local management  
City technology colleges  
Privileged/skilled choosers  
Semi-skilled choosers  
Disconnected choosers  
Selection by mortgage  
A-C economy  
Educational triage  
Cream skimming  
Silt shifting  
Covert selection  
Compensatory education  
EAZs  
EiCs  
EMA  
Sure Start  
Specialist schools  
Privatisation  
Free schools  
Academies  
Pupil premium  
Fragmentation of control  
Centralisation of control  
Cola-isation of schools  
Globalisation

Homogenisation of education  
Labelling  
Self-fulfilling prophecy  
Halo effect  
Banding/streaming  
Pro/anti-school subculture  
Ideal pupil  
Normalised working class underachievement  
Differentiation  
Polarisation  
Cultural deprivation  
Restricted code  
Elaborated code  
Speech hierarchy  
Fatalism  
Collectivism  
Immediate gratification  
Present time orientation  
Deferred gratification  
Future orientation  
Material deprivation  
The costs of free schooling  
Educational capital  
Economic capital

Symbolic capital  
Symbolic violence  
Nike identities  
Feminisation of education  
GIST  
  
WISE  
Equal Pay Act  
Sex Discrimination Act  
Crisis of masculinity  
Bedroom culture  
Gender domains  
Gendered subject images  
Peer pressure  
Gendered career opportunities  
Double standards  
The male gaze  
Rebels  
Conformists  
Innovators  
Retreatists  
Hypermasculinity  
Ethnocentric curriculum  
Institutional racism