

EDUCATION – TYPES OF SCHOOLS

TO PAY OR NOT TO PAY?

State schools: Funded by the government and attended for free...

- Comprehensive schools (non-selective)
- Grammar schools (selective)
- Academies (usually part of chains)
- Local authority maintained (run by local council – not many left)
- Free schools (set up by an organisation or group)

Independent schools/private: Students pay fees to attend.

Public schools: The most exclusive private schools, e.g. Eton



COMPETITION BETWEEN SCHOOLS

Marketisation of education: Education is a business – schools have to compete for pupils, and parents ‘go shopping’ for the best schools.

Education Reform Act 1988:

- **League tables** – publishes data on results
- **Ofsted inspections** – judgement on education quality

Both enable parents to make informed choice about where to send children.

Effects of competition:

- State schools are funded per pupil – more pupils = more money (can attract highly qualified staff, have smaller classes, buy more resources, etc)
- Schools have to improve standards to attract the most students...
- ...Schools that don't attract enough children will get less funding (can then fall into a cycle of decline)



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

Often have charity-status – so exempt from certain taxes, business rates and donations. Families are customers.

Benefits:

- Smaller classes
- More extra-curricular opportunities
- Much more spending on facilities and resources

Class reproduction: Marxists argue that rich people buy their way to the top.

Old Boys Network: Links to top universities and top jobs by ex-students.



GRAMMAR SCHOOLS

1960s system – creamed off ‘best’ pupils from comprehensive schools and offered a more academic education. Seen as superior to neighbouring schools. Still operate in some counties, e.g. Kent.

11-plus exam: Pupils sit an entrance exam to gain a place so only high ability pupils can attend. Sometimes viewed as ‘free private education’.



FREE SCHOOLS

Set up to provide parents with more choice – can be set up and run instead by groups such as parents, teachers, religious groups and businesses. Huge amounts of freedom so the experience that their students get can be vastly superior to other schools **BUT**, controversial – taken funding from other local schools, and are often set up where they are not needed.



MULTI-ACADEMY TRUSTS (MATs)

Leadership: Group of schools who are governed by one trust and a single board of directors – run as businesses

SLT: Answerable to CEO – can be removed if performance is poor (e.g. following bad Ofsted).

Independent: State-funded but make own decisions about...

- Curriculum (don't have to follow NC)
 - Staff pay/conditions
 - Length of school day and holidays
 - Admissions criteria
- Originally introduced to improve failing schools – but now most schools are academies.



EDUCATION – ATTAINMENT

SOCIAL CLASS

FSM: White working class pupils on free school meals are lowest achievers (1/3 get 5+ good GCSEs, compared to 2/3s of all other pupils).

Pupil premium: Schools get extra money for FSM pupils to spend on resources to raise achievement of disadvantaged pupils.



CULTURAL FACTORS

Cultural capital: Working class (WC) pupils less likely to watch documentaries or have knowledge of culture.

Social capital: WC pupils have less social networks (e.g. work experience opportunities)

Speech codes: WC may have less developed language skills so could struggle to decode exam questions or key texts.

Parental involvement: Depends on parents' own experience of school – some more able to support/ encourage than others



MATERIAL FACTORS LINKED TO POVERTY

- Unable to afford revision resources
- Unable to school trips
- Poor housing conditions (i.e. not enough space) – nowhere to complete homework/revision
- Pupils more likely to have part-time jobs or look after siblings – this takes time away from studies
- Poor diet of poorer families affects concentration, but also health (time off school)



GENDER

Girls outperform boys at every level...

- Teachers often have higher expectation of girls
- Girls mature earlier – tend to work better/harder earlier
- Boys can be over-confident about their abilities, and might not try as they think they will be okay, whilst girls under-estimate theirs so work harder
- Female role models – girls now have raised expectations and ambitions



ETHNICITY

Labelling: Some teachers have lower expectations for ethnic minority pupils.

Institutional racism: Teachers don't always support EAL pupils effectively or appreciate cultural needs.

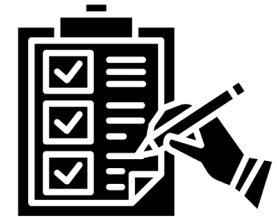
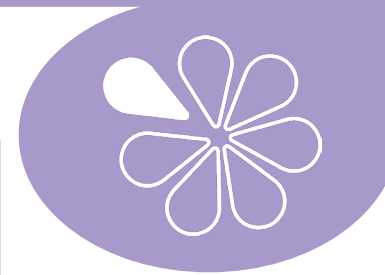
Ethnocentric curriculum: Lessons are often focused on the achievements of white men – so pupils may not relate to it.

EAL: Some pupils speak English as an additional language – may have parents who can't speak English so can't support education effectively.

Poverty: Ethnic minority pupils are more likely to be affected by material factors.

Religion: Pupils may take time off to observe religious festivals, or fasting time may clash with final exams.

Parental aspirations: Parents from some cultures place a huge value on education and are heavily involved, e.g. Chinese pupils achieve very highly.



ANTI-SCHOOL SUBCULTURES

- Go against the main culture/ethos of the school (i.e. to do well)
- Characterised by disrupting lessons, behaving poorly around the site, not doing homework, etc
- Gain status with peers by going against school system
- Tend to be placed in lower sets

Labelling: David Hargreaves argues that labelling students as failures leads to anti-school subcultures as they stop caring.

'Lads' (Paul Willis): The lads didn't attach value school as future manual work didn't need academic qualifications – preferred to have a 'laf'.



EDUCATION – FUNCTIONALIST VIEW

SCHOOL AS AN AGENT OF SOCIALIZATION

Teaching children behavioural norms and values...

- Benefits children as they know what is expected of themselves and each other
- Benefits society as its members will share common norms and values which will bond them together

GENERAL POINTS

Schools perform positive functions for most pupils – exclusion and truancy rates are low...

- Education is more 'work-focused' today
- Schooling is fairer than in previous generations
- Schools try to foster 'solidarity', e.g. PHSE



EMILE DURKHEIM

'School is a society in miniature': Prepares children for life in wider society (e.g. having to work with others, teaching diverse skills).

Secondary socialisation: Education makes children into good members of society and passes on appropriate norms and values.

Social cohesion: Promotes sense of unity with others and strong bonds between members of society (e.g. through collective worship and school events).

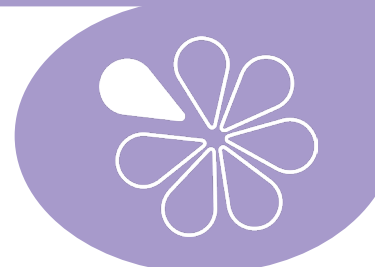
Formal curriculum: Gives children a sense of belonging to something bigger than themselves.



MERITOCRACY

Functionalists argue that schools are fair and reward ability and effort – everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed. Schools reward the most able, who then come out of school with the best exam results and go on to get the best jobs.

Role allocation: Schools select individuals for their future jobs or roles in society – so the top jobs in society are run by the people most capable of doing them well (i.e. with the best qualifications).

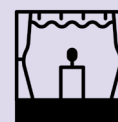


TALCOTT PARSONS

Secondary socialisation: Schools take over socialisation from the family – children learn values at school that they might not be taught at home.

Universalistic values: The values that are important to everyone in society (might differ to values of individual families).

Status: Schools teach children how to achieve status, e.g. judging them on how clever they are, how hard they work, etc, and show the importance of hard work, e.g. trying out for a school sports team, auditioning for a the school play, revising for exams, etc.



CRITICISMS OF THIS VIEWPOINT

- Ignores negative side of school, e.g. bullying, intense pressure faced by young people, lack of support for some SEND students
- 'Teaching to the test' kills creativity and love of learning
- Marxists argue that schools are not meritocratic – not all pupils get same opportunities – private schools reinforce the class divide
- They also argue that schools teach pupils to become obedient workers ready for future exploitation
- Feminists argue that some girls don't feel safe in school, e.g. sexual harassment



EDUCATION – MARXIST VIEW

GENERAL POINTS

- Argue that school system is rigged so that upper- and middle-class children succeed at the expense of the working-class children
- Argue that teachers are lying when they tell pupils that if they work hard they all have a chance to do well – and that meritocracy is a lie
- Argue that if pupils do fail it is not their own fault.
- Argue that schools produce passive, obedient workers – who do exactly as they are instructed and do not question or argue, even though they are being exploited
- Argue that schools kill creativity



CULTURAL CAPITAL – PIERRE BOURDIEU

Class reproduction: The education system is rigged so that the middle and upper classes stay at the top – those students go on and get the best jobs in society and stay at the top.

Middle/upper class culture:

- Upper classes control education system – their culture is seen as superior and is established in school – so upper and middle class pupils fit in more easily
- Importance of cultural capital opportunities in schools, e.g. visits to museums, reading books, etc.

Parents: Upper/middle class parents more equipped to make sense of the education system.



SOCIAL CAPITAL – BECKY FRANCIS

Many working class parents do have high hopes for their children and want them to do well, BUT...

- Might not know how to actually help them achieve this
- Might not have the insider skills/knowledge to make sense of or work their way around the school system
- Might not understand the 'rules of the game'



BOWLES AND GINTIS – CORRESPONDENCE PRINCIPLE

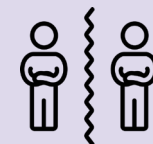
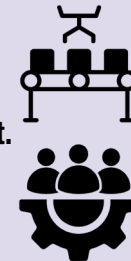
Argued that schools are run along lines that correspond to what is needed at work, and organised to achieve what the upper classes want.

Stage 1: Produce a subservient workforce of obedient and passive workers – grades related to perseverance, consistency and punctuality.

Stage 2: Encourage acceptance of hierarchy/authority – pupils have little say over what they learn (and workers are expected to obey the authority of managers)

Stage 3: Motivate by external rewards, e.g. good grades at school and pay at work – not the joy of learning/working (so accept boring lessons/jobs)

Stage 4: Split subjects for pupils and tasks for workers – easier to control divided workers (they find it harder to unite!)



SOCIAL CAPITAL – DIANE REAY

Study of mother's involvement in their children's education...

- Middle class mothers understand how the school system works and how to help their children to succeed
- More articulate and insistent and therefore more successful at getting what they want



CRITICISMS OF THIS VIEWPOINT

- Marxists want pupils to rebel against rules – but without rules there would be chaos!
- Does not really allow for success among the working class
- Anti-school sub-cultures show that schools are not always successful at producing obedient pupils!



EDUCATION – FEMINIST VIEW

CONFLICT VIEW

Patriarchy: Men have power over women and society is organised in a way that benefits the interests of men at the expense of women. Men expect to be in charge of important institutions, such as schools.



OVER TIME:

Schools reinforced traditional gender roles, e.g. women were more suited to housework...

- Boys would take traditional masculine subjects, e.g. woodwork/metalwork, and girls did cookery/needlework
- Males and females were portrayed in stereotypical roles in reading schemes and text books

National Curriculum (1988): Made boys and girls take the same subjects.

STEM focus: Recent drive to promote opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths to girls



SUE SHARPE AND CHANGING ASPIRATIONS

Female role models: Raised awareness among women and improved expectations/self-esteem.

1970s research: Priorities for young working class girls growing up were marriage, children and a job.

1990s repeated research: Girls wanted equality with men – they were more confident and valued having a job or career, and independence.



HIDDEN CURRICULUM AND GENDER MESSAGES

Positions of power: Often taken by men (far more male head teachers than female)...

- 62% of secondary school teachers are female, but only 36% of head teachers are female
- Lower paid work within school done mainly by women – e.g. office staff, support staff, canteen staff, cleaners, etc

Expectations:

- Girls might be told off for 'boy' behaviour, e.g. being rowdy
- Teachers accept 'lazy' work from boys

Gendered choices:

- Encouraged to take different subjects, e.g. boys – DT; girls – HSC, art
- Different sports offered



GENDER INEQUALITY IN SCHOOLS

Domination of space: Girls occupy far less time and space than boys in school – boys dominate the playing areas, occupying most of the space, e.g. playing football, pushing and shoving each other in bushes, etc.

Teacher-time: Boys attract more attention from teachers – noisier than girls, which leads to more pupil-teacher interaction for them and less for girls.

Interruptions: Girls are more likely to be interrupted by their peers, often being shouted down and silenced by boys.

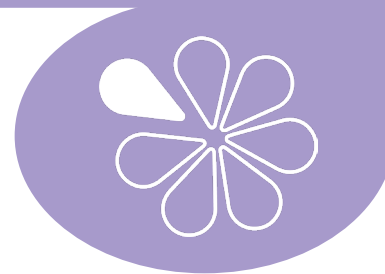
Social control (double standards): Boys might try to police the behaviour of girls by demeaning girls who are sexually promiscuous, but praising boys who are the same!

Sexual harassment: School is the most common setting for sexual harassment and coercion of girls – 1 in 3 girls experience sexual harassment in UK schools, and almost 1 in 3 girls experience unwanted touching at school. Many girls cite this as a reason for feeling unsafe at school.



CRITICISMS OF THIS VIEWPOINT

- Many people would remind feminists that girls outperform boys at every level in education
- Teaching is a female-dominated profession



EDUCATION – INTERACTIONIST VIEW

INTERACTIONISM

Based on relationships – interested in interactions between teachers and students, and what goes on in the classroom as this affects attainment.



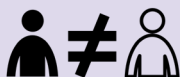
Labelling: When teachers make quick judgements about students – based on background, ability, behaviour, relationships with others, appearance, older siblings, etc.



Over time these judgements become firmer.

HOWARD BECKER AND LABELLING

- Teachers build up images of their students in a very short period of time
- Ideas in their heads of what an 'ideal student' is like
- Often linked to social class – middle class students are more likely to be seen as 'clever' and working class 'less able'
- Can also be based on ethnicity – some teachers make assumptions based about ability based on ethnicity (institutional racism)
- Can affect confidence and lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy where student accepts label



STEPHEN BALL – EFFECTS OF LABELLING

Study at Beachside Comprehensive looking at the effects of setting by ability

Setting: When pupils are put into groups based on ability in certain subjects.

Link to social class: The higher your social-class the greater the chance you'll be placed into a higher streams.

Perception of sets: Top sets = 'high flyers'; bottom sets = 'failures'.

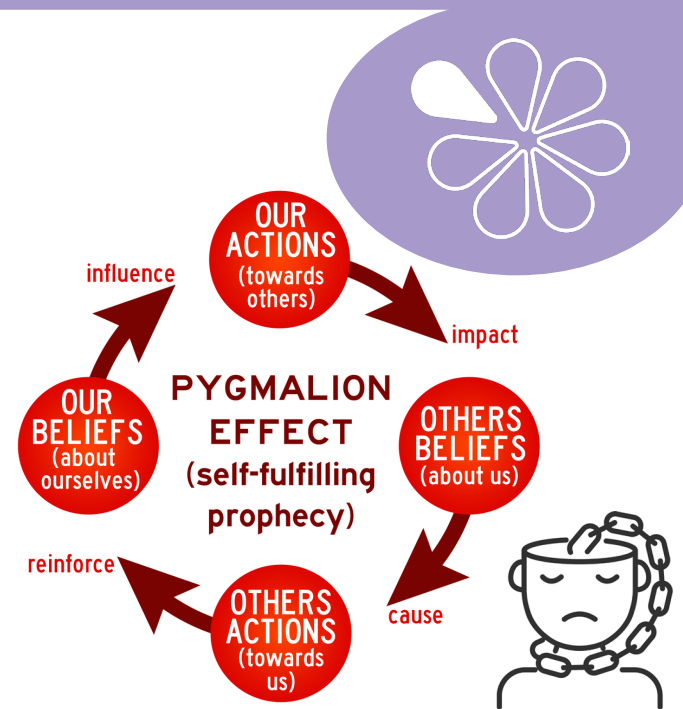
Top sets:

- High expectations – students 'pushed' or 'warmed-up'
- Behave is usually good
- Achieve better grades and go onto university
- Can enter higher tiers of qualifications



Lower sets:

- Low expectations – students 'cooled down'
- Allowed to talk more and were set less homework
- Not given the depth of knowledge needed to achieve at a higher level even if they wanted to
- Limited to lower grades on some papers, e.g. GCSE Maths foundation paper – highest available grade is 5
- Often have poor behaviour
- Get fewer or 'lesser' qualifications (greater focus on vocational)



SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY

Prediction becomes the truth – if you are told you are no good you will give up trying.

“What teachers believe, students achieve”

Rosenthal and Jacobson experiment (Californian primary school):

- Teachers were told that a group of average students were high achievers...
- ...the teachers then gave more time and attention to those students who they thought would do better...
- ...which boosted confidence and motivation of those students...
- ...so they did go on to achieve highest scores!