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Paper 3 : Education

Describe two examples of education policies that aim to reduce inequality. (4)

- Compensatory education policies: e.g. Head Start, EAZs.
 - Scholarships.
 - Comprehensive education.
 - Policies to reduce gender inequality, e.g. coeducation, GIST.
 - Compulsory education. (Education Act)
 - Free/reduced fees enabling access, e.g. rural China.
 - Mixed ability teaching.
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Explain two ways that negative labelling by teachers can affect the educational attainment of pupils. (8)

Joining anti-school subculture : When a teacher negatively labels a student, consciously or unconsciously they may treat them differently, encouraging them less or punishing them more. This can cause the student to develop a negative self-image and reduced confidence in their abilities. This can lead to disengagement and a lack of motivation to perform well in school. Oftentimes negative labeling can lead students to join an anti-school subculture, where peer pressure to work less can further reduce their academic performance. A classic example of this is **Paul Willis'** study of working-class boys, where he found that their anti-school culture and resistance to authority were influenced by negative labeling and expectations from teachers, alongside the middle class environment of education in which they felt alienated from.

Reduced chance of educational success: Negative labeling can also lead to the placement of students in lower sets or tracks, which can limit their opportunities and access to resources for academic success. When students are seen as "less able," they are often placed in lower sets with less experienced teachers and fewer teacher resources. This can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, as teachers may have lower expectations of these students, providing them with less challenging material and opportunities for growth. The **Gillborn and Youdell** study of London secondary schools found that working-class and black Caribbean pupils were often seen as less able and more likely to present disciplinary problems, leading to their placement in lower sets and systematic neglect in terms of educational support. **Becker's** self-fulfilling prophecy can also be used to explain how negative labeling by teachers can become a self-fulfilling cycle, where a student's poor performance reinforces the negative label assigned to them.

Other acceptable answers

- Guidance for subjects and careers, especially sexist labels. Higher expectations for girls
- Rejection of negative labels leading to harder work for success. (**Fuller** - black girls reject negative stereotypes imposed on them, work harder. **Mirza** - this still disadvantaged them, they would not ask for help.)

'Ethnic inequality in educational attainment is entirely the result of racism in schools.'

Using sociological material, give two arguments against this view. (12)

(1) Cultural deprivation: While racism in schools may contribute to ethnic inequality in educational attainment, it is not the only factor. Cultural deprivation theory suggests that many ethnic minority students come from working-class backgrounds and thus may not have the same level of cultural capital as middle-class or ethnic majority students. **Bourdieu** argues that middle-class children are born to parents who can teach them how to better navigate the educational system because they are familiar with it themselves. **Bernstein** similarly argues that middle-class parents socialize their children with the correct elaborate speech codes that are used in schools, which allow them to better communicate and succeed in the education system. Working-class or ethnic minority parents who are not familiar with the school system may not possess this same knowledge and thus be unable to pass it onto their children. They may also not value education themselves. Therefore, cultural deprivation theory suggests that ethnic inequality in educational attainment is the result of multiple factors, including lack of cultural capital and parental support, as well as racism in schools.

(2) Ethnocentric curriculum: Another argument against the view that ethnic inequality in educational attainment is entirely the result of racism in schools is the existence of an ethnocentric curriculum. The curriculum prioritizes and celebrates the history and culture of the ethnic majority at the expense of the ethnic minority. This can lead to students from ethnic minorities feeling excluded or alienated and not wanting to participate in school. **Gramsci**, a Neo-Marxist thinker, believes that the history taught in schools can be altered to suit the narrative of the ethnic majority, as the ruling class decides what classifies as knowledge. To further support this statement, **Troya and Williams** found that the British curriculum prioritizes white culture and English language, refraining from acknowledging the negative parts of its history, while also misrepresenting or disregarding the cultures of others. As mentioned prior, this can lead to a negative self-image or alienation of ethnic minority students who do not feel accurately represented and thus withdraw from participating. Therefore, the existence of an ethnocentric curriculum suggests that racism in schools is not the only factor contributing to ethnic inequality in educational attainment.

Other acceptable answers

- Material deprivation - ethnic minority students face a 'double bind', unable to afford school supplies and face discrimination
- Ethnic subcultures - **Sewell** found that low educational attainment of black caribbean males is partly due to subcultural influences, trying at school is 'unmasculine'

- Parental attitudes across ethnic groups - **Archer and Francis** argue that the reason why British-Chinese pupils do so well in schools is partially due to the high value placed on education in their culture, leading parents putting lots of pressure on their kids to do well
- Family structure - **Moynihan** found many black caribbean families to be led by single mothers, New Right **Murray** would argue lack of male figure affects educational success

Evaluate the Marxist view that the role of education is to prepare young people to accept their position in an unequal society. (26)

One of the main Marxist views on education is that it is an institution that serves to prepare young people for their place in an unequal society. This is achieved through the hidden curriculum and the promotion of false class consciousness, which legitimizes the inequality in society by teaching students that it is natural. While there are valid criticisms of this view, it is also clear that education plays a significant role in shaping the values and beliefs of young people, and that these values and beliefs are often aligned with those of the ruling class. In this essay I will evaluate this Marxist perspective, as well as highlight the opposing stances, particularly the contrasting views held by functionalists.

The correspondence theory of **Bowles and Gintis** is central to the Marxist view of education. Bowles and Gintis argue that the hidden curriculum, which is not explicitly taught but is transmitted through the culture of schools, serves to prepare students for their roles in a capitalist society. This includes promoting values such as obedience, conformity, and the acceptance of authority, as well as instilling a work ethic that encourages students to work hard in order to achieve success. The hidden curriculum, therefore, prepares young people for a life of work and subordination within a capitalist society. This instilling of docile nature prevents the working class workers from rising up against the capitalist system that exploits them for their labour.

Another important aspect of the Marxist view of education held by both Bowles and Gintis is the myth of meritocracy within the education system. Meritocracy refers to a system in which people are rewarded based on their abilities, skills, and achievements rather than on their social status or other irrelevant factors. Marxists argue that the concept of meritocracy is a false one, as it places the blame for failure on working-class students for not working hard enough, rather than on the system that continuously fails them, in favour of the upper and middle class students who have access to more material, cultural and social capital. This myth of meritocracy further promotes false class consciousness, and teaches young people to accept their unequal position in society, as it was their fault for not putting in enough work.

Davis and Moore's social stratification theory argues that social inequalities are necessary to motivate people to work harder. They contend that the most qualified and hardworking students get the best jobs, and that this ensures that society is filled with the most talented and productive individuals. While this view is in direct opposition to the Marxist view of education, it is important to note that Davis and Moore are functionalists. Functionalist and Marxist

perspectives tend to agree that education has similar functions, for example the allocation of future roles to students, but they disagree on whether this function is positive or negative.

Durkheim, arguably the most prominent functionalist, viewed education as a "society in miniature." He believed that education served two positive main functions: promoting social solidarity by teaching children shared culture, history and values, and teaching children specialist skills that would help society continue to function. Therefore going against the marxist belief that the education system benefits only the elite, rather also benefitting society as a whole. However, **Hargreaves** has criticized the idea that schools promote social solidarity, arguing that they actually promote individualism and competition, rather than working together. For example, cheating in school is punished, even though it technically counts as cooperation. This further aligns with the Marxist view that the ruling class wants the lower classes to be pitted against each other to prevent an uprising, thus maintaining an unequal society where the bourgeoisie benefits.

Parsons, another functionalist, believes that education acts as a bridge between the family and wider society. He argues that schools are meritocratic as they hold universalistic standards, which are different from particularistic standards found in the family. For example, in schools students are given the same exams, marked by the same mark schemes, and are punished equally for misbehavior. This is because having universalistic standards means they are unbiased. This is different to particularistic standards within the family which are heavily biased due to familial relationships. However, as stated prior, Marxists argue that meritocracy is a myth, that schools teach students in order to perpetuate inequality.

Marxist **Althusser's** view is that education is part of the ideological state apparatus, which refers to all the social institutions that control people's values and thoughts, obscuring the reality of exploitation and promoting false class consciousness. Education instills the dominant ideology of the ruling class, teaching students that inequality is natural and normal, and that their failures are their fault alone. He argued that we internalise a culture's values until our ideas are not our own. We are made to believe we are free and our thoughts and opinions are the result of our own minds but the opposite is true.

Neo-Marxist Gramsci held a similar view to this, stating that schools present themselves as ideologically neutral institutions of knowledge, but in reality, history is taught from the perspective of the ruling class, and the curriculum is shaped in a way that benefits capitalism. Subjects such as math are prioritized over more artistic subjects because the capitalist class requires it for jobs. The ruling class determines what is and what isn't knowledge, and this is then reflected in schools. Therefore according to Althusser and Gramsci, we are taught to believe that schools are neutral grounds for obtaining knowledge, when in reality the way lessons are taught and the way the curriculum is shaped, all benefits capitalism as it teaches students the subjects capitalism prioritizes and the values it requires workers to have in order to continue to exploit them.

Finally, one of the main criticisms of the Marxist view on education, and a critique of Marxism as a whole ideology, is that it is too deterministic and views individuals as too passive. The idea that students passively accept inequality and conform to the capitalist agenda is one that has been disproven many times. Marxists argue that schools prepare young people to accept their position in society, but do not consider the possibility of students resisting this socialization process. For instance, it was actually **Neo-marxist Willis's** study of working-class boys that showed that they were aware of their subordination, yet they resisted the capitalist agenda of schools and formed their own anti-school counter-culture. This agency of the working class suggests that the Marxist view may be too simplistic and not fully reflective of reality. Furthermore, the Marxist view overlooks the fact that education can also be a tool for social mobility. While it is true that the education system can be used to reinforce existing social hierarchies, it is also the case that education can provide opportunities for upward mobility. Working-class students can gain access to higher education and better-paying jobs through their academic achievements, despite the structural barriers they may face. This shows that while education may not be completely meritocratic, it is not solely a means of reproducing social inequality.

In conclusion, while the Marxist view that the role of education is to prepare young people to accept their position in an unequal society has some validity, it oversimplifies the complex nature of education and its relationship with society. The Marxist view that the education system is designed to reinforce the social order and promote false class consciousness has some merit, but it neglects the agency of individuals and the possibility of upward social mobility. The Marxist view should be seen as one perspective among many in the study of education, and it should be subject to critical evaluation and refinement.

Other things I could have mentioned

- Schools encourage segregation of social classes – private schools, marketisation of education, deprived schools, streaming by class, cost of higher education, etc. (New Right, **Chubb and Moe** on why marketisation actually promotes equality of opp.)
 - Curriculum – high and low status knowledge, class, gender and ethnic stereotypes, perspectives on history, economy, careers, etc.
 - Education has challenged patriarchy and racism by encouraging achievement for all.
 - It is not education, but the media and culture of the home and of peer groups that explain the choices that lead to inequality and its acceptance (parental attitudes towards education, socialisation of children, etc.)
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Describe two ways education can contribute to a country's economy. (4)

- Increasing level of knowledge and skills in the population.
- Role allocation by identifying and rewarding talents.
- Enabling social mobility
- Providing a submissive workforce.
- Motivating hard work by extrinsic rewards.

- Increase involvement in the economy by e.g. educating girls,
 - compensatory education policies.
 - Education as an export, global industry.
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Explain two ways that ethnicity may influence a pupil's experience of school. (8)

(1) **Ethnicity can influence teacher expectations:** Teacher expectations can have a significant impact on the educational attainment of pupils. In many cases, teacher expectations are shaped by racial and ethnic stereotypes. For example, black Caribbean pupils in the UK are often stereotyped as being less able or motivated, and their behaviour is more likely to be interpreted as disobedient. This can lead to teachers having lower expectations for black Caribbean pupils, which can in turn affect how much time and effort they spend helping these pupils with their schoolwork. For instance, **Gillborn and Youdell's** study in the UK found that black Caribbean pupils were more likely to be put in lower streams and less was expected of them. The teachers interviewed in the study attributed these differences to a range of factors, including the pupils' behaviour and attitudes, and their home backgrounds. However, the researchers argued that the teachers' expectations were based on racial stereotypes, rather than any evidence of the pupils' abilities or attitudes. As a result, black Caribbean pupils were unfairly disadvantaged by their teachers' low expectations.

(2) **Representation :** Another way ethnicity may influence a pupil's experience of school is through the portrayal and visibility of their ethnic group in textbooks, history, literature, and other materials used in the classroom. Studies have shown that in many cases, the history, culture, and experiences of ethnic minorities are underrepresented or misrepresented in these materials. For example, **Troya and Williams'** study in the UK found that the history curriculum in schools often prioritised the history of the white majority over the history of ethnic minorities. This meant that pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds had limited opportunities to learn about their own history and culture, and were more likely to feel excluded and alienated from the curriculum. The study also found that ethnic minority pupils were more likely to encounter negative stereotypes and portrayals of their ethnic group in the materials used in the classroom, which can impact their self-esteem and sense of belonging. This can in turn impact how they view school and the extent they are willing to participate.

Other answers include :

- Peer group involvement, school subcultures - **Sewell** found that black caribbean males tended to view trying at school as unmasculine
- Family expectations and motivations - Archer and Francis argue British-Chinese pupils do well in school due to their culture placing high importance on education, resulting in parental pressure to succeed

- Cultural capital or habitus - **Bourdieu**, ethnic minorities often working class, working class do not have the same cultural capital to help them succeed as middle class, or speech codes (**Bernstein**)
 - Class position / material resources - unable to afford school supplies, uniforms or have a quiet environment to study/sleep in
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'IQ tests are a good indicator of educational ability.' Using sociological material, give two arguments against this view. (12)

The idea that IQ tests are a good indicator of educational ability is a heavily debated topic, with numerous arguments including the belief that intelligence is too abstract of a concept to measure. I will now give 2 other, more in depth, arguments against the idea that IQ tests can be used as a reliable way to indicate an individual's educational attainment.

(1) One argument against the view that IQ tests are a good indicator of educational ability is that questions on IQ tests are **culturally biased**. Sociologists have argued that Western IQ tests cannot be used to measure the intelligence of individuals from non-western cultures, as they may not be familiar with certain terminology, phrases, and customs. This can lead to individuals scoring lower on IQ tests not due to a lack of intelligence but rather a lack of familiarity with the Western culture. For example, in the 1960s, African American civil rights activists argued that IQ tests used in the US were culturally biased against African Americans, who were less likely to have had the same educational opportunities as their white counterparts. In the study conducted by **Robert Williams**, a group of African American children from disadvantaged backgrounds were given an IQ test that contained vocabulary and knowledge that was unfamiliar to them. The children scored significantly lower than their white counterparts who had the same socioeconomic background. This suggests that IQ tests may not be a reliable measure of intelligence.

(2) Another argument against the view that IQ tests are a good indicator of educational ability is that educational attainment is more closely linked to social class than IQ. Marxist sociologists **Bowles and Gintis** conducted a study in which they found little correlation between IQ and educational achievement. They argued that educational attainment is more closely linked to social class and access to social, material, and cultural capital. Middle-class children, for example, are more likely to have access to educational resources such as private tutors, better schools, and cultural experiences that can help them succeed academically. Working-class children, on the other hand, may not have access to the same resources, which can hinder their educational attainment. This suggests that the validity of IQ tests in measuring educational ability may be limited, as social factors such as social class and access to resources may be more important determinants of academic success.

Other acceptable answers

- Performance in IQ tests reflects preparation/practice rather than educational ability.

- Educational ability is determined by a wide range of personal factors, e.g. motivation, resilience.
 - IQ tests are a snapshot; people develop at different rates.
 - Validity of IQ tests can be questioned. Do they measure intelligence or just ability to do IQ tests. (intelligent people who struggle with anxiety or dyslexia may be disadvantaged when having to take a standardised test.)
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Evaluate the functionalist view that schools help to maintain the social system. (26)

The functionalist view of education as a social institution that helps to maintain the social system has been a dominant theory in sociology of education for a long time. According to functionalists, education plays a crucial role in socialising students with the values of society, so that they can prepare themselves for their future roles in helping society function. This essay will evaluate this functionalist view, alongside the aspects of the view that Marxists agree with, and the criticisms of the view as a whole.

Durkheim's view of education was that it serves as a means to develop social solidarity, norms, and shared history. He argued that education enables the division of labour, which is essential for a complex industrial society to function effectively. Durkheim believed that by providing students with a shared understanding of the social norms and values, schools could foster social cohesion and reinforce collective identity. However, this view has been criticised by **Henderson**, who suggests that schools actually promote individualism rather than social solidarity. He argues that the competitive nature of schooling can encourage a focus on personal achievement rather than cooperation, and can lead to the erosion of shared norms and values, thus negatively impacting the social system.

Another prominent functionalist **Parsons** argued that education provides a meritocratic system of role allocation based on universalistic standards. He suggested that schools prepare students to compete on the basis of their abilities and individual achievements, leading to a value consensus in society. However, Marxists such as **Bowles and Gintis** argue that this is a myth of meritocracy. They suggest that educational attainment is largely determined by social class, and that the idea of meritocracy is used to justify inequality in society, teaching working class students that their failures are the result of them not working hard enough, rather than a system that is not working in their favour. They argue that education reproduces and legitimises the existing social hierarchy rather than being a merit-based system.

Davis and Moore's theory of role allocation suggests that education allocates individuals to the most appropriate jobs based on their abilities. Marxists actually agree with the functionalists theory of role allocation but in contrasts view it as negative rather than positive, as it reproduces class inequality by allocating working-class students to lower-skilled jobs. **Bowles and Gintis** also critique this view by suggesting that the correspondence theory of education means that the hidden curriculum prepares students to be docile workers and obedient to authority. Both marxists and functionalists therefore agree that the education system helps to maintain the

social system by the allocation of roles. This allocation of roles is however criticised by marxists for being unfair and inefficient, benefitting students from upper and middle class.

Inefficiencies in role allocation due to inequalities of opportunity have been highlighted by New Right thinkers **Chubb** and **Moe**, who suggest that market-based reforms, such as school choice and vouchers, can increase efficiency and promote equality of opportunity. However, Marxists critique this idea as it fails to address the underlying structural inequalities that exist within the education system.

Marxist sociologist **Althusser** argues that education acts as an ideological state apparatus, reproducing dominant capitalist ideology on students. This idea is based on the concept of cultural hegemony, which suggests that the ruling class maintain their power by legitimising their own values and beliefs as being universal. They decide what constitutes as knowledge, how it should be taught, and what values and attitudes should be reinforced. In this way, the education system can be seen as reproducing the existing social structure, rather than challenging it. Therefore ensuring that the current social system is maintained.

However, **neo-Marxist Paul Willis** criticises this deterministic view of education. He suggests that students are not passive recipients of ideology, but rather are active agents in creating their own counter-cultures within schools. In his study "Learning to Labour," Willis demonstrates how working-class boys actively resisted the dominant ideology of the school and instead created their own anti-school subculture. This study challenges the deterministic view of education by showing that students have agency and can disrupt the social system, if they so choose to.

In conclusion, the functionalist view of education as a social institution that helps to maintain the social system has been a dominant theory in sociology of education, one that is shared by Marxists, with contrasting opinions on whether it is a positive thing. Marxist critiques have highlighted inefficiencies in role allocation due to inequalities of opportunity and argue that education acts as an ideological state apparatus, reproducing the dominant capitalist ideology on students. While neo-Marxist Paul Willis criticises this deterministic view, suggesting that students have agency and can disrupt the social system.

Despite these critiques, the functionalist view still holds relevance in understanding the role of education in society, but it is important to also consider the perspectives of those who may not benefit from the existing social hierarchy. The education system should strive to promote equality of opportunity and challenge the existing power structures to truly prepare students for their future roles in society.

Other things I could have mentioned

- Feminist view that the school system maintains an unequal social system at the expense of girls - reinforcing gender stereotypes
- **McRobbie** and **Kelly** finding gender stereotypes within textbooks and curriculum
- Gendered subject choices
- Ethnocentric curriculum at the expense of ethnic minorities **Troyna and Williams**

Describe 2 examples of how the hidden curriculum can reinforce gender stereotypes (4)

- Role models in textbooks; pictures, story characters, historical, scientific, literary people studied. (**McRobbie**)
 - Role models in school; gender of teaching staff and other workers. (feminised environment, disadvantages boys?)
 - Teacher-pupil interaction; choice to answer questions, help with tasks, discipline styles.
 - Subjects and careers offered or promoted - girls not as encouraged to pursue “masculine subjects.”
 - Uniform, routines or rituals. (when girls are sent home due to showing skin, shows the priority of boy’s education over girls.)
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Explain two ways education systems can serve the interests of the rich and powerful. (8)

The view that the education system serves the interests of the rich and powerful is one held by many marxists. Two ways they argue schools do this is :

(1) The education system can serve the interests of the rich and powerful by preparing students for the workforce. According to Marxist theory, schools socialize children to be obedient and docile workers, effectively preventing the working class from rising up against the oppression of capitalism. This supports the interests of the rich and powerful by maintaining a workforce that is willing to accept low wages and poor working conditions. **Bowles and Gintis' correspondence theory** also supports this argument, suggesting that schools replicate the workforce by teaching students to be obedient and follow orders. This reinforces the capitalist system by creating a workforce that is trained to accept their place in society and not challenge the status quo.

(2) Another way the education system can serve the interests of the rich and powerful is by perpetuating the **myth of meritocracy**. This theory argues that the education system teaches working-class students to see their failures as their own fault, rather than as a result of a flawed system. **Bowles and Gintis** support this argument, suggesting that the education system perpetuates the idea that success is based solely on merit, meaning that those who succeed do so because of their hard work and talent, while those who fail are simply not trying hard enough. Whereas in reality a person's educational success is often dependent on the cultural and material capital parents provide, therefore middle class and upper class students are inherently advantaged in comparison to working class students. This creates false class consciousness and reinforces the idea that the rich and powerful deserve their position in society. By perpetuating this myth, the education system helps to maintain the current social order and keeps the working class in a subservient position.

Other possible answers include :

- **Althusser** - argues that school acts as an ideological state apparatus that legitimizes and maintains inequality by teaching students it is natural and 'normal'
 - Schools prioritize subjects that are beneficial to capitalism and the bourgeois, such as math and science - **Gramsci** (Rich and powerful decide what is knowledge)
 - **Gramsci** also argues that CPS punishes parents who do not send kids to schools, making indoctrination mandatory by law
 - Hidden curriculum, the unofficial curriculum that teaches students to be obedient
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'The education system maintains the existing social order.' Using sociological material, give two arguments against this view. (12)

The idea that the education system serves to maintain the existing social order is a contested view. Two key arguments against this perspective are discussed below.

Firstly, the sociologist **Talcott Parsons** argued that universalistic standards and meritocracy in education supported the development of modern industrial society. Parsons' view suggests that school rules apply to all, which creates a meritocratic system that enables people to overcome the existing social order. Under this view, people are judged based on their abilities and achievements, rather than their social status or background. This means that anyone, regardless of their social background, can succeed if they work hard enough and possess the necessary skills and abilities. This creates a more equitable system and reduces the extent to which the existing social order is maintained through education.

Secondly, the **social democratic view** argues that reducing inequality of opportunity in education increases social mobility, meritocracy, economic growth, widening prosperity, or enables changes in lifestyle. The social democratic view suggests that education is now more fair than it was in the past and that there is greater equality of opportunity for all. This means that individuals from all social backgrounds have a greater chance of success, regardless of their family's social status. This perspective suggests that the education system can help to disrupt the existing social order by enabling individuals to achieve success based on their abilities and achievements, rather than their social background or status.

Other applicable answers include :

- Policies in schools have countered racism, sexism and other traditional stereotypes.
- Even though governments may intend schools to maintain the social order, teachers and pupils have agency which may resist this. (interactionist view, too deterministic.)
- Some institutions have a particularly radical ethos, e.g. **Steiner schools**.

What are Steiner schools?

Steiner schools are a type of alternative education based on the educational philosophy of **Rudolf Steiner**. They emphasize holistic and humanistic education, focusing on the

development of the whole child, including their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. The curriculum is designed to match the developmental stages of the child, with a strong emphasis on creativity, imagination, and practical skills, as well as academic subjects.

Steiner schools also encourage a sense of community and social responsibility. While they provide a unique and alternative approach to education, some have criticized them for lacking a rigorous academic focus

Evaluate the view that ethnicity is the most important influence on educational attainment. (26)

Ethnicity is a complex concept that is often used interchangeably with race. However, ethnicity refers to a shared cultural identity that is based on common traditions, language, and customs, while race is a socially constructed category that is based on physical characteristics such as skin color. While ethnicity and race are different concepts, they can both have an impact on educational attainment.

Ethnicity is one of the factors that can influence educational attainment. Research shows that attainment varies by ethnicity, both related to and independent of class. For example, studies in the UK have found that Chinese and Indian students tend to achieve higher grades compared to Black and White students, with Pakistani and Bangladeshi students achieving the lowest grades. These differences can be influenced by a range of factors, such as family background, parental education, and cultural values.

However, ethnicity does not operate in isolation. Ethnic minorities often face a **double bind**, as they are not only disadvantaged because of their ethnicity, but also because they are more likely to be working class. This can create additional barriers to educational attainment, as working-class students may lack the cultural capital that is valued by schools. **Bourdieu** argues that middle-class children have better access to cultural capital than working-class children, which can include knowledge of art, music, literature, and other forms of high culture, that allows them to assimilate better in school. Similarly, **Bernstein** argues that speech codes can be affected by both class and ethnicity, as students who do not come from an English-speaking background may struggle to meet the expectations of the school.

Students are often disadvantaged by being an ethnic minority as this can also affect perceptions, as teachers may have racialized expectations of ethnic minority students. For example, **Gilborn and Youdell** found that teachers often had lower expectations of black pupils, expecting worse behavior from them and punishing them more harshly than other students of different ethnicities. **Becker's** labeling theory would then suggest that these labels can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, where these ethnic minority students internalize the negative expectations of teachers and perform poorly as a result, due to not feeling supported.

Moreover, those who are ethnic and working class face material deprivation, which can further affect their studies. They may not have access to resources such as textbooks, computers, or a quiet study environment, which can impact their ability to achieve academic success. The poverty experienced by many ethnic minority families can also impact students' health and well-being, which can further hinder their academic progress.

However, it is important to note that these aforementioned statements could also be used to argue that class is the most important factor when it comes to educational attainment. Class differences are more related to capitalism than ethnicity, so this argument would be that the main reason that working-class students face hardship is because of their class, not their ethnicity. **Neo-Marxist Paul Willis's** study of working-class boys showed that these working-class children often felt alienated by the middle-class culture of schools and acted out due to frustration. His study could also be viewed through the lens of gender, where as a result of gender expectations, boys may view school as unmasculine, leading to not taking school seriously in order to fit in with male peers. Scholars, such as **Mac an Ghaill**, argue that this is a crisis of masculinity that is contributing to low attainment among boys.

Therefore instead of ethnicity or class, it can be argued that gender is an even more important factor when it comes to educational attainment. In some parts of the world, girls are still not able to receive an education, due to laws and cultural expectations, regardless of their wealth, status or ethnicity. Feminists additionally argue that there is a gendered curriculum that supports the patriarchy, where girls are treated differently and have different expectations placed on them than boys. For example, they may be expected to be more mature and quiet. **Kelly** also found that textbooks perpetuate gender stereotypes, with women being underrepresented in certain subjects, and their achievements often not being acknowledged. Boys similarly have lower expectations placed on them by teachers. Young boys and girls therefore may internalize these gender stereotypes placed on them and this would affect their educational attainment.

Although in relation to the concept of a gendered curriculum, it has also equally been argued that there is an ethnocentric curriculum, where textbooks prioritize the achievements of the majority ethnic group, which can lead to a sense of cultural alienation and a lack of engagement in school from some students. This is particularly the case for ethnic minority students who may come from backgrounds that are very different from those of the majority ethnic group in the country. For example, **Troya and Williams** argue that the British curriculum prioritizes white culture, often "whitewashing" and misrepresenting history, while also not representing the history of ethnic minorities at all. This as mentioned before, can lead to a feeling of exclusion and result in disengagement from students who feel underrepresented.

In conclusion, I would say while ethnicity is certainly an important factor in educational attainment, it is not the most important influence. Class, gender, and other factors such as language proficiency, cultural capital, and material deprivation can also have significant impacts on educational outcomes. It is therefore important to take a holistic approach to understanding educational inequality and to consider the complex interactions between these different factors.

By doing so, we can work towards creating a more equitable and just education system for all students, regardless of their background.

Could have also included :

- **Sewell** - found that black boys had range of responses to teachers racist labeling - varying from conforming to rebelling
- **Archer** and his study of british muslim boys, viewed themselves as muslim first and british second. Shows importance of Religion mixed with ethnicity
- **Mirza**, black girls often value education, but do not ask teachers for help
- Could include an argument about meritocracy, how ethnicity doesn't matter if work hard

Describe two examples of how cultural capital can influence educational attainment (4)

- High status 'legitimate tastes' in music, literature etc.
- Educational experiences provided by family; e.g. music lessons, visits to art galleries and museums, trips abroad etc.
- Middle class habits; ways of behaving that teachers are more comfortable with.
- Elaborated code and other linguistic advantages. (**Bernstein**)
- Style of presentation of work approved of by teachers.
- Parents' knowledge of educational procedures and more informed educational choices.

Explain two reasons why intelligence tests may not accurately measure educational ability. (8)

(1) Cultural bias is one reason why intelligence tests may not accurately measure educational ability. Cultural values can vary widely between different ethnic and class groups, and these differences can affect the performance of students on IQ tests. **Klineberg's** study of **Yakima** children in the USA found that children from non-White backgrounds scored lower on IQ tests, even when accounting for differences in socioeconomic status. However, when the tests were adapted to reflect the cultural values of the Yakima children, such as not focusing on language or culture but rather a manual test, the performance gap disappeared. This suggests that IQ tests are culturally biased and may not accurately measure intelligence or educational ability in individuals from different cultures, as they have different ideas of what constitutes as knowledge.

(2) The concept of intelligence itself is also difficult to define, which can lead to issues with IQ tests. **Gardner's** theory of multiple intelligences argues that there are many different types of intelligence, including emotional intelligence, musical intelligence, and spatial intelligence. This means that someone who may not perform well on a traditional IQ test may excel in other areas. Additionally, some individuals may have strengths in one area of intelligence but weaknesses in another, which can affect their overall IQ score. This means that IQ tests may not accurately measure an individual's true educational ability and potential, as they are based on a narrow definition of intelligence.

Other answers include :

- Performance depends on experience and practice.
 - Performance depends on the context of the test, e.g. health, anxiety, motivation.
 - Intelligence not fixed over time, it is a social construct, differs by culture/time period
 - Evidence of whole group performance improving; e.g. by girls, explainable by social change rather than intelligence change.
 - Intentional legitimizing of own basis of success by dominant class (**Gramsci**, ruling class determines what is and what is not intelligence.)
 - Intelligence tests may not be an accurate measure of educational ability because they fail to account for the impact of environmental factors on cognitive development.
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'Boys and girls are treated equally in school today.' Using sociological material, give two arguments against this view. (12)

(1) Despite claims of gender equality in education, research has shown that boys often do not perform as well academically as girls. This can be attributed to anti-school subcultures or 'laddish subcultures' that are prevalent among male students, perhaps accompanied by the 'feminisation' of education. These anti school subcultures uphold the idea that academic achievement is not masculine and reward those who rebel against the educational system.

Hargreaves argued that the solution to this failure amongst boys is to create alternative subcultures that give status to those who rebel. **Jackson** backed this up by arguing that boys not caring about education is a defensive strategy stemming from fear and failure.

Another reason why boys may be underperforming in comparison to girls may be due to the fact that education has become a more feminine dominated environment, with teachers being majority female. This may lead to boys sometimes feeling alienated, or underrepresented. Therefore, it is clear that boys and girls are not treated equally in education, as if they truly were, the difference in educational attainment wouldn't be so drastic.

(2) While there may be claims that boys and girls are treated equally in education, there is evidence to suggest that there are different expectations placed on students based on their gender. Girls are often expected to be more quiet, hardworking and mature, while the loud, disruptive behaviour of boys is often excused under the assumption that 'boys will be boys.'

Swann's study found that boys tend to dominate discussions, while girls are more cooperative and attentive. Teachers respond more positively to the latter, reinforcing gendered expectations of behavior. This leads to gender inequalities in education, as it creates an environment where girls are expected to be well-behaved and compliant, while boys are allowed to be disruptive and loud.

This can then translate into the workplace and society as a whole, where men are seen as more dominant in discussions and women more subservient - more accepting of being interrupted and unheard. Feminist **Francis** argues this, claiming that education does not prepare girls for

the workplace environment, which was masculine dominant and rewarded aggression. Therefore, it is clear that boys and girls are not treated equally in education, as there are different expectations and attitudes towards behavior based on gender, which can have major impacts on later life within society.

Other answers include :

- Materials may portray gender stereotypical role models (**Kelly and McRobbie**)
- Hierarchy of school gendered.
- Gendered subject or career choices may be encouraged.
- Boys get more attention from teachers.

Evaluate the view that education systems are a barrier to social mobility. (26)

Social mobility refers to the ability of individuals or families to move up or down the social ladder over the course of their lives. Education is often considered a key factor in social mobility, as it is seen as a means of gaining qualifications and skills necessary for securing well-paying jobs and upward social mobility. However, there is debate over whether education systems actually act as a barrier or a facilitator of social mobility.

Marxists argue that education systems are designed to prepare the labor force for capitalism and to maintain class inequality. According to this view, the rich stay rich and the poor stay poor, and there is little to no upward social mobility. **Bowles and Gintis** developed a correspondence theory that argues that the education system reproduces the existing class structure in society, as schools socialize students to accept their place in society and to prepare them for particular social roles. In their view, the education system is a mechanism for the ruling class to maintain their power over the working class, thus there is no real opportunity for upward social mobility.

Additionally, **Bowles and Gintis** argue that the **myth of meritocracy** perpetuated by schools can be a barrier to social mobility. The myth of meritocracy leads people to believe that if they work hard and achieve good grades, they can achieve upward social mobility. However, in reality, social mobility is determined by an individual's social class and wealth, rather than their abilities or hard work.

Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is also relevant to the discussion of social mobility, and can tie into the marxist viewpoint. Bourdieu argues that cultural capital is required for success in education and is more prevalent in middle-class families. Middle-class families have cultural resources such as knowledge, skills, and values that are valued by the education system, whereas working-class families lack these resources. Therefore, working-class students are at a disadvantage in the education system and have limited opportunities for upward social mobility, regardless of how hard they work.

Functionalists take a different approach and argue that the education system is meritocratic and ensures efficient role allocation. **Davis and Moore's** stratification theory posits that social inequality is necessary and desirable to ensure that people are assigned to roles that best suit

their abilities and qualifications. In this view, the education system is meritocratic and provides opportunities for upward social mobility based on an individual's abilities and achievements.

Parsons also argues that schools are meritocratic, with universalistic norms and achieved status. He suggests that social mobility is possible if an individual works hard and meets universalistic standards.

There is evidence that contradicts the Marxist view of education as a barrier to social mobility. For instance, studies show that working-class students can achieve academically, and some may go on to obtain high-status jobs. However, material deprivation, which results from a lower class, can limit opportunities in education and, therefore, limit opportunities for upward social mobility. Working-class students have to work harder than their middle-class peers to achieve the same educational outcomes. So it begs the question, is this fair? What can be done?

Programs and policies designed to support social mobility may have unintended consequences. For example, grammar schools are often seen as providing opportunities for upward social mobility for working-class students. However, research has shown that grammar schools can increase social inequality by favouring students from wealthier families. Similarly, vocational education policies may be seen as providing opportunities for working-class students to gain skills and qualifications. However, research has shown that vocational education can lead to lower earnings and limited opportunities for upward social mobility.

New right thinkers, such as **Chubb and Moe**, argue that the best way to create equality of opportunity is through marketization of education, as opposed to state education. Marketization involves creating a market for education, where schools compete for students, and parents have a choice over which school their child attends. This, according to Chubb and Moe, creates more opportunities for working-class students to access high-quality education and opportunities for upwards social mobility. However, the idea of marketizing education is one that is not without its own critiques. For instance, it's accused of actually further perpetuating inequality.

Despite these criticisms, some policies have been put in place to support social mobility. One such policy is **compensatory education**, which seeks to redress the balance for disadvantaged students by providing additional resources and support. For example, the Education Maintenance Allowance (**EMA**) provided financial support for students from low-income families to continue their education after the age of 16. The **Pupil Premium scheme** also provides additional funding for schools with a higher proportion of disadvantaged students to improve their educational outcomes. These policies can help to increase opportunities for disadvantaged students and improve their chances of social mobility.

In conclusion, while education can be a tool for social mobility, there are significant barriers that can prevent it from being a reality for many people. Overall, education systems may act as a barrier to social mobility, but with the right policies and interventions, such as compensatory education programs, it is possible to make progress towards a more equitable society, where upwards social mobility is accessible to all.

Other applicable answers :

- Ethnic and gender disadvantages reinforced by class position
 - Increase in qualifications at all levels.
-

Describe two ways in which speech codes may affect educational attainment. (4)

- May cause communication barrier / language used by teachers difficult to understand.
 - May affect marks gained for oral or written assignments.
 - May be interpreted as a sign of low/high intelligence.
 - Which can lead to negative/positive labeling.
 - Which leads to a self-fulfilling prophecy.
-

Explain two reasons why educational attainment is particularly high among some ethnic groups. (8)

(1) Culture encourages hard work/high aspirations: One reason for high educational attainment among some ethnic groups is that their home culture encourages hard work and high aspirations. For example, research by **Sewell** shows that the work ethic in Asian families encourages children to work hard at school and to achieve more of their potential. This is because parents from some ethnic groups put more pressure on their children to work hard and excel academically. They instill the value of education and see it as a way to improve their children's lives and future prospects. This emphasis on education is often passed down through generations and is seen as an integral part of the culture of some ethnic groups. As a result, children from these ethnic groups are more likely to prioritize education and do well in school.

(2) Teachers' perceptions and expectations: Another reason for high educational attainment among some ethnic groups is teachers' perceptions and expectations. **Gillborn and Youdell** found that teachers often have racialized expectations of black pupils and expect more discipline issues, which can lead to negative treatment and punishment. This can make black pupils feel unsupported and targeted, leading to them doing poorly in school. On the other hand, some teachers may have higher expectations for certain ethnic groups, such as those from Asian or Jewish backgrounds, leading them to receive more positive attention and encouragement. This can result in better academic outcomes for these ethnic groups. These biases are often unconscious, but they can have a significant impact on a student's educational experience and success.

Other answers include :

- Subculture and peer expectations. (**Sewell**, black pupils gain anti-school rhetoric from outside of school - black boys view education as unmasculine.)
 - Overlap with class and material advantage. (Marxist perspective)
 - Cultural capital/linguistic advantage. (**Bernstein** and **Bourdieu**)
-

Explain two changes in the wider society that may have affected female attainment in education. (8)

(1) Changing ambitions of women : In the past, women were expected to prioritize marriage and family over their education and career aspirations. However, with the increasing trend of girls seeking to construct their own social identity and gain financial independence, many are now focusing on education to support their future careers. This is due to the uncertain economic environment of unemployment and divorce, which has led to many women deciding to gain their own qualifications to be able to rely on themselves. Feminist researcher **Sharpe** conducted a study of working-class female aspirations in the 1970s and 1990s, which found that in the 1970s, women were more concerned with marriage and children, while in the 1990s, women were increasingly "wary" of marriage and focused on education to support their future careers. This shows that the changing ambition of women has played a significant role in female attainment in education. As a result, many girls are now working harder in school to achieve their career aspirations, leading to higher levels of female attainment in education.

(2) More career driven female role models : In the past, women were often portrayed in media and society as only being suited for the role of housewife and mother, and were not seen as capable of being financially independent. However, in recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of strong, independent female role models for young girls to look up to. As feminist researcher **McRobbie** found in her study of media and textbooks, women are now being portrayed more frequently in successful careers, rather than just as housewives and mothers. This has encouraged many female students to view themselves as capable of pursuing further education and careers. When young girls see successful women in various fields, they are more likely to believe in themselves and their abilities to achieve their educational goals, leading to a higher level of female attainment in education.

Other answers include :

- Legislation against employment discrimination and for **equal pay act**, **sex discrimination act** etc. opening up new career opportunities.
- Impact of feminist ideas in politics, media and on teachers in schools.
- Growth in the service sector, non-manual, flexible and part-time work.
- Changing roles in the family with greater emphasis on gender equality. (new man concept)

'Pupil attainment is determined by factors outside of school.' Using sociological material, give two arguments against this view. (12)

(1) While it is often believed that pupil attainment is determined by factors outside of school, such as socioeconomic background or family circumstances, sociological research has shown that the allocation of attention and work by teachers based on the concept of an "ideal pupil" (as theorized by **Becker**) is a significant factor in determining pupil attainment. Teachers often have different expectations of their students based on factors such as gender, class, or ethnicity, and this can lead to differential treatment of students. For example, **Gillborn and Youdell** found that teachers often have racialized expectations of black pupils and expect more discipline issues from them, leading to less support and more punishment. This differential treatment can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, where students who are treated as "problem" students may start to believe they are, leading to poor educational attainment.

(2) Another argument against the view that pupil attainment is determined by factors outside of school is the influence of gender stereotypes on pupils' opportunities and self-concepts. Boys who participate in laddish subcultures may view academic achievement as unmasculine and may discourage each other from trying hard in school, leading to poor educational attainment. **Jackson** argues that this is a defensive strategy against a fear of failure, while **Mac an Ghaill** posits that boys are struggling in school due to a crisis of masculinity, where traditional masculine identities are no longer valued in the educational system. This shows that while factors outside of school may play a role in educational attainment, societal expectations and gender stereotypes also play a significant role in shaping pupil attitudes towards education and their own academic potential.

Other answers could include :

- Measurable effects of self-fulfilling prophecy (**Rosenthal and Jacobson** - gave teachers false IQ test results for their students, found that teachers treated the ones who were said to have done well differently, leading to their educational attainment actually improving.)
- Effects of labelling on self-concept, motivation, relationships, etc. (interactionist theories).
- Effects of streaming on attainment (**Boaler**).
- Formation of anti-school subcultures resulting from labelling and streaming. (**Hargreaves, Willis, Liu and Xie**).
- Teachers' varied perceptions of ethnicity, racism, discrimination and setting. (**Mirza, Connolly, Shain**).
- Pupil attainment is not determined as pupils have agency in their own performance.

Describe two examples of what can be learned through the hidden curriculum. (4)

- Respect for authority through structure of the school (marxism)
 - Norms through school rules and regulations (functionalism and socialisation)
 - External rewards
 - Competition through exams or sport
 - Teamwork through projects or sport
 - Assumptions about gender, ethnicity or class through textbooks or teacher interaction (feminists)
-

Explain two ways that teachers' perceptions of gender can affect pupils. (8)

(1) Teachers' perceptions of gender can lead to stricter views of female deviance and negative labels for both genders. This can result in girls being negatively labeled for the same behavior their male counterparts exhibit. **Reay's** study found that 7-year-old girls causing trouble in class were called "**scheming little madams**," whereas boys doing the same were seen as having "**high spirits**." This type of labeling can result in girls feeling discouraged and unsupported in the classroom, leading to a lower sense of self-esteem and academic achievement. Furthermore, these negative labels can lead to boys having an inflated sense of confidence and less accountability for their actions, leading to a potential lack of effort and lower academic achievement in the long run.

(2) Teachers' perceptions of gender can also lead to boys being seen as talented but lazy, while girls may underestimate their own ability. Boys may be given higher expectations by teachers due to their gender, leading to an overestimation of their abilities, while girls may be given lower expectations, leading to an underestimation of their abilities. As a result, boys may not put in as much effort as they believe their natural abilities will suffice, while girls may lack confidence and not realize their full potential. **Barber** also found that the gender gap in self-esteem tended to increase during adolescence, with girls experiencing a sharper decline in self-esteem compared to boys. He attributed this to the increased pressure on girls to conform to gender stereotypes, which can oftentimes be perpetuated by teachers. This type of gender bias in teacher perceptions can have a significant impact on student achievement and highlights the need for more awareness and training on gender bias in education.

Other answers include :

- Girls get less attention "invisible", low self-esteem
 - Girls less likely to be known by name, could mean lack confidence
 - Self-fulfilling prophecy resulting from gender perceptions
 - Teacher perception that gender equality is important, so they help pupils think beyond gender stereotypes
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'Grouping by ability enables all pupils to have the most suitable education. Using sociological material, give two arguments against this view. (12)

(1) Streaming, setting, or selective schools can have negative effects on pupils, leading to low self-esteem, exclusion, and anti-school subcultures. These practices are known to disproportionately affect working-class students. **Bourdieu and Bernstein** both argue that the middle-class cultural capital and elaborated speech codes required by schools exclude working-class students from higher streams. As a result, lower-streamed students may be treated as less capable and less deserving of resources and attention from teachers. This can lead to students becoming demotivated and disengaged with education. **Lacey** also notes that this can lead to the development of anti-school subcultures, where students in lower streams may rebel against the system that has labeled them as inferior. Moreover, setting or streaming can also have implications for pupils' future opportunities. For example, students in lower streams may have limited access to higher education or be tracked into lower-status jobs. The label placed on them at a young age can follow them throughout their lives, leading to negative social and economic consequences.

(2) Testing used to group students by ability may not be a valid measure of potential. Intelligence is a complex concept and cannot be fully captured by standardized tests such as IQ, SATS, or 11+. According to **Henderson**, the concept of intelligence is ideological, legitimizing inequality by allocating resources and important roles to those with high status. Therefore, standardized tests that determine these ability groups can reinforce existing social hierarchies. Furthermore, students who struggle with test-taking anxiety or other factors that may affect their performance may not perform as well on tests, leading to them being placed in lower streams. In addition, there are other important characteristics that may be viewed as equally important to intelligence, such as work ethic and resilience, that are not captured by standardized tests. Thus, grouping by ability based on test scores may not be the most effective way to provide students with the most suitable education. A more nuanced approach to grouping that takes into account multiple factors beyond test scores may be more beneficial for pupils' overall educational attainment.

Other examples include :

- Perceived ability may be based on stereotyped views of class, gender or ethnicity, the 'ideal pupil', etc
- There are social and educational benefits for all students of having mixed ability education - can lead to increased social cohesion, as students from diverse backgrounds work and learn together.

Evaluate the view that the main purpose of education is to maintain the economic system. (26)

The debate over the main purpose of education has been a topic of interest for many decades. Many scholars have argued that the main purpose of education is to maintain the economic

system, while others have disagreed with this view. This essay will evaluate the view that the main purpose of education is to maintain the economic system. It will do this by discussing those in support of this idea, and those who believe education has other main purposes.

Marxist ideology would agree with this view. Marxists argue that education serves capitalism through providing a submissive labour force. **Bowles and Gintis** developed the **correspondence theory**, which argues that there is a correspondence between the education system and the economic system. They argue that the education system reflects the needs of the economic system, and students are prepared for their roles in the economic system through the hidden curriculum. The hidden curriculum teaches students to obey authority, conform to rules, and accept their place in society.

The myth of meritocracy is another way in which education helps maintain the economic system. The myth of meritocracy suggests that success is based on merit and hard work, and that everyone has an equal chance of success. This myth is used to justify the unequal distribution of wealth and power in society. The education system reinforces this myth by rewarding students who do well on exams and punishing those who do not. This creates a hierarchy of success, where those who are successful in the education system are more likely to be successful in the economic system.

Another marxist, **Gramsci**, argues that the education system prioritizes subjects that help the economic system, such as math instead of art. This is because math is seen as more practical and useful in the workforce. The education system teaches students the skills that are needed in the workforce, rather than teaching them skills that are important for personal development. This reinforces the idea that education is solely for the purpose of maintaining the economic system.

A few functionalists agree with the idea that education supports the economic system. **Parsons**, for instance, argues that education is universalistic, which means that everyone has access to education, regardless of their social background. This helps maintain the economic system by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to acquire the skills that are needed in the workforce. **Davis and Moore** developed the stratification theory, which argues that society is meritocratic and that people are rewarded based on their abilities and qualifications.

The **stratification theory** argues that those who are most qualified for a particular role will be the ones who are most successful in that role. This helps maintain the economic system by ensuring that the most qualified people are in the most important roles. However, this view has been criticised for not taking into account the fact that not everyone has access to the same opportunities. The education system may be meritocratic in theory, but it is not necessarily meritocratic in practice.

Prominent functionalist **Durkheim's** opinion on the main purpose of education contrasts with the prior functionalists mentioned. Durkheim's view of education is that it is more concerned with socialisation, consensus and solidarity, rather than maintaining the economic system. He argues

that education helps to create a sense of community and shared values, such as when learning about one's shared culture, which is important for maintaining social order. Durkheim believes that education helps to create a sense of belonging and shared identity, which is essential for the functioning of society.

There are also critics that argue about what the role of education SHOULD be. Michael Young's study on underachievement highlights the ways in which education can perpetuate social inequality by failing to provide opportunities for disadvantaged students. He argues that the purpose of education should be to promote social mobility and provide equal opportunities for all students, but the reality is that students from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to underachieve and have limited opportunities for upward mobility. This is due in part to the ways in which education is structured and the resources that are available to students.

In conclusion, while the purpose of education is complex and multifaceted, it is clear that education plays a role in maintaining the economic system. Marxist and many functionalist theories believe that education does indeed support the maintenance of the economic system, although they argue about whether this is a positive or negative thing. Other perspectives, such as Durkheim's, argue that education should promote socialization, consensus, and solidarity.

Regardless of the perspective, it is clear that the purpose of education should be to provide equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their background, and to promote social mobility.

Describe 2 examples of how material deprivation may affect educational achievement (4)

- Lack of money for textbooks, school trips, private tutors.
 - Lack of access to computer technology / the internet.
 - Difficulty accessing private education.
 - Link between poverty and ill health / poor nutrition.
 - Schools in poor areas may be inferior.
 - Stigma of being poor can affect self-esteem.
 - Poor housing/lack of space at home
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'The main purpose of education is the personal development of each individual pupil.'
Using sociological material, give two arguments against this view. (12)

(1) According to the functionalist perspective, education is seen as a means of maintaining social order and stability. Emile **Durkheim** believed that education is a process of socialisation, where individuals learn the values and norms of society, leading to the development of a collective conscience. This collective conscience creates social order, as individuals develop a shared history and identity. This contradicts the view that education is solely for the personal

development of each individual pupil, as it is also for the greater good of society. In this way, the purpose of education is not just about personal development, but rather a means of socialisation and maintenance of social order. Furthermore, Durkheim believed that education should be universalistic, meaning that all individuals should be given equal opportunity to develop their talents and abilities.

(2) From a Marxist perspective, education is viewed as part of the ideological state apparatus, which serves to maintain capitalism. According to Louis **Althusser**, education is one of the institutions that reproduces the social relations of production by training the next generation of workers to accept their place in the capitalist system. **Bowles and Gintis** developed the correspondence theory, which argues that there is a close correspondence between the skills, attitudes, and values that are taught in schools and those that are required in the workplace.

Moreover, the myth of meritocracy in education serves to maintain capitalism by giving the illusion that individuals can achieve success through their own hard work and ability. In reality, social class and other structural factors play a significant role in determining an individual's success in education and the labour market. The emphasis on meritocracy serves to obscure the fact that education and the economy are structured in a way that benefits those in positions of power and reinforces existing inequalities. In this way, the purpose of education is not solely for personal development, but rather to prepare individuals to fit into the existing capitalist system.

Other examples include :

- Evidence of some types of pupils being ignored or disadvantaged in comparison with others. (by ethnicity, working class, gender etc. - **Gillborn and Youdell, Willis..**)
- Education may limit the development of individual pupils (**Illich** - predetermined curriculum may not meet the unique needs and interests of each student. Argued that schools may create a false sense of equality by treating all students the same, regardless of their individual abilities, interests, and backgrounds, which can hinder their potential for personal growth and development.
- Functionalist argument that education prepares for economic roles. (**Davis and Moore's stratification theory.**)

'Gender differences no longer influence educational achievement levels.' Using sociological material, give two arguments against this view (12)

(1) Despite the progress made towards gender equality, statistics continue to show a significant gender gap in academic achievement at GCSE and A-level, with girls outperforming boys. Some argue that this can be attributed to the feminisation of the education system, where there are more female teachers and a curriculum that is more focused on verbal and written skills. However, it is important to note that boys' underachievement cannot simply be attributed to their lack of exposure to male role models in the education system. The 'laddish subculture' among

boys, which views academic success as unmasculine, also plays a significant role. **Hargreaves** argues this subculture often emerges as a response to perceived failure in the education system, as boys form groups that give status to those who rebel and misbehave. Additionally, some scholars, like **Mac an Ghail**, argue that the decline of 'manly jobs' has led to a crisis of masculinity that further impacts boys' academic achievement.

(2) Interactionist studies have highlighted that girls and boys are treated differently in the classroom, which can impact their educational achievement. **Swann** observed that Boys are often given more attention and praise for their contributions in class, while girls are expected to be quiet, mature and obedient. When girls do not meet these expectations, they are treated more negatively than boys, as **Reay's** study of 7-year-old girls and boys has shown. Furthermore, research has shown that boys tend to dominate class discussions, while girls are more likely to be quiet and mannerly. Teachers respond positively to the latter behavior, which can lead to girls being overlooked in the classroom. This differential treatment of boys and girls can lead to differences in academic achievement, with girls being more likely to internalize negative feedback and boys being more likely to have their behavior excused or dismissed. This often translates into the workforce, where feminist **Francis** argues that while girls may outperform boys in school, school does not prepare girls for the workplace environment, which is masculine dominated and rewards aggression. These behaviours are discouraged in girls, so they are disadvantaged. Therefore, it is evident that gender differences continue to influence educational achievement levels, and continue further on in life.

Other answers include :

- Cultural views of gender influence how girls and boys approach and experience education.
 - Pupil subcultures are influenced by gender.
 - Gender affects the impact of both class and ethnicity in education.
 - Gendered curriculum and feminisation of education advantages girls over boys.
 - In some countries gender still has a clear impact on educational opportunities for girls.
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