

Source: CEER, Buckingham University

Chapter 4: Education S

4.7 Gender and educational attainment

Key concepts in 4.7

- KC 1 Inequality and opportunity
- KC 2 Power, control and resistance
- KC3 Social change and development
- KC4 Socialisation, culture and identity
- KC5 Structure and human agency



The key concepts for Cambridge International AS & A Level Sociology



Elizabeth Wolfson

Elizabeth Wolfson is a proponent of gender-based education and founded the first all-girls school in Denver that is based on an active, movement-oriented pedagog



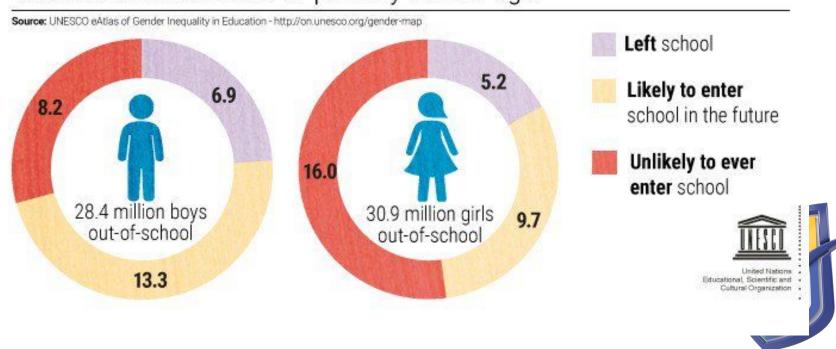


The relationship between gender socialisation and educational attainment

- Primary adult role for a women in the past : mother / housewife
- UNESCO:

TWICE AS MANY GIRLS AS BOYS WILL NEVER START SCHOOL

Out-of-school children of primary school age



The relationship between gender socialisation and educational attainment

- Crespi 2003 there is a range of gender identities available to teenage girls, whereas previously these roles had been largely restricted to part time or domestic work
- Socialisation : now there is a wider range of *femininities*

Sue Sharpe did a classic piece of research in the 1970s, repeated in the 1990s in which she interviewed young girls about their ambitions. In the 1970s there priorities were to get married and have a family, but by the 1990s their priorities were to get a career and have a family later on in life



Workplace changes reflect back onto family socialisation processes

- Changed perception about children's future roles and importance of male and female education
- Norman 1988 girls brought up more "gently" and were read to more negative impact on male educational achievement

- Male dominated fields: engineering
- Female dominated fields : nursing and secretarial work

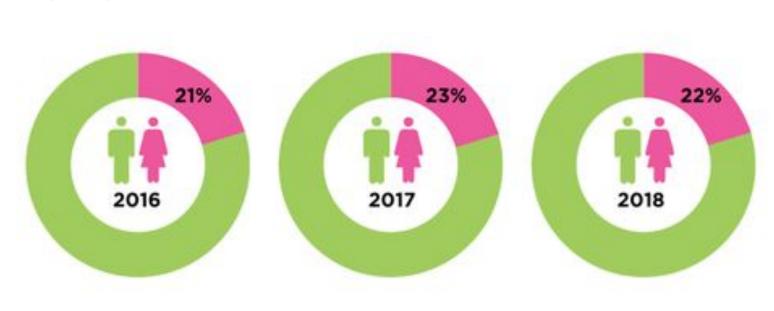




2017/2018 In the UK 35 % of stem students in higher education are women

Most female graduates took physical sciences more than mathematics, computer science or engineering

WORKFORCE:



LINK for stats



The relationship between gender socialisation and educational attainment

- Increasing levels of female educational achievement relate closely to concerns about male underachievement
- Decline in positions for men less likely to seek educational achievement
 - Less manufacturing positions "intended for working class boys lads"
- Francis and Skelton explanations of female achievement in terms of male underachievement :
 - Natural differences (brain functions)
 - Feminisation of schools inequality (lack of male role models)
 - Gender constructions and interpretations produce different behaviour that impacts education (teacher expectations)

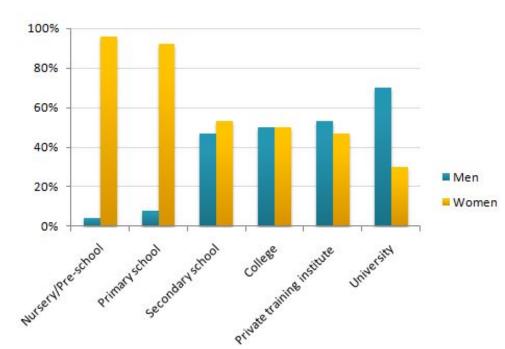
feminization is the shift in gender roles and sex roles in a society

Feminisation of schools and teaching

- More female than male teachers
- More positive role models for females than males
- "Female teaching styles are more appropriate to girls" ?
- Re-masculinising of primary schools in the UK, 2011 Skelton
 - Hiring more male teachers

Feminist perspective on education





The relationship between gender socialisation and educational attainment

- Jones and Myhill educational underachievement is defined by teachers in ways that are increasingly likely to identify boys (*white and black working class) as potential underachievers
- Underachievement varies by gender:
 - female underachievement among working class/ethnic girls overlooked in the rush to explain male underachievement



The relationship between gender socialisation and educational attainment

- Labelling abilities
 - Female achievement performance
 - Male achievement ability
- Swann and Graddol (1994) found that teachers tend to see boys as unruly and disruptive and are more likely to spend time telling them off than helping them with schoolwork
- Cultural beliefs some cultures believe boys are more intelligent but girls are better at passing exams
- Patriarchal societies: male education > female education



6 BARRIERS TO GIRLS' EDUCATION:

POVERTY: Even if education is free, the cost of uniforms and or supplies can make education inaccessible

CHILD MARRIAGE & EARLY PREGNANCY: Child brides are almost always forced to drop out of school

LACK OF SAFE, PRIVATE GIRLS-ONLY LATRINES:

Stigma and other of factors mean 1 in 10 girls in Africa miss school during their periods

VIOLENCE: Once arriving to school, girls may face various forms of violence at the hands of teachers, peers and other people in the school environment. If parents find out school isn't safe for their daughters, they may remove them from school

GENDER INEQUALITY: Girls are often kept home from school to help with family care & housework

LONG DISTANCE TO SCHOOL: Girls are at an increased risk of experiencing violence or harassment

- Marxist: gender differences are framed in terms of class
- Gorard 2001
 - There is little measurable difference in male/female attainment in maths and science
 - There is no significant gender difference at the lowest attainment levels for all other curriculum subjects
 - Girls do better than boys among "mid to high achievers " more correlation between class and achievement

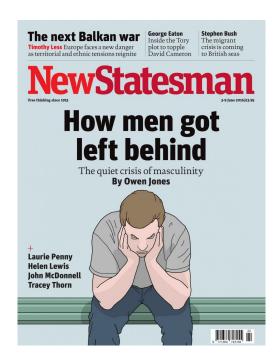


- Neo marxist underachievement due to changing male identities
- Traditional masculinity of putting in a classroom setting
- Jones and Myhill 2004 male identities that emphasise physical strength sexual virility and aggressiveness are not helpful to educational achievement
- Change in female identities + changes in the workplace = working class boys consider education irrelevant to their future

- Francis 2000 changes within the school and wider society have altered the way
 girls construct femininity no longer seen in terms of the home
- Concepts of masculinity relatively unchanged

- Walker 1996 changing concepts in masculinity are identified in terms of finding a role in a fast changing world as a challenge to many young men
- Laddishness leads to trouble at school and underachievement

DISCUSSION: CRISIS OF MASCULINITY





Economic change + New right view

 Increase in female labour → changing parental attitudes towards female education → more qualifications needed for females → competition

- New right: male underachievement results from social and economic changes that have tipped educational balance unfairly in girls' favour
- Moving away from more difficult male subjects to softer girl subjects
- New right : feminisation of schools results in punishment of natural exuberant male behaviour

Crisis of masculinity - male underachievement

- Male underachievement results from the feminisation of school and work
- Teaching and testing systems favour female ways of thinking and teaching
- 3. Male underachievement results from the school's failure to develop ways to engage boys effectively and actively

Criticisms

- Skelton the Feminisation of teaching does not have a negative impact on educational performance of boys
 - 65 % of children rejected the idea that the gender of the teacher mattered,
 with no major differences between girls and boys
- Generalising not all girls do better than all boys
- Warrington and Younger little difference in percentage of boys and girls who leave school with no qualifications
- Gillborn and Mirza 2000 gender differences in education small compared to class differences
 - Underachievement of working class and ethnic girls ignored by feminists

Gender and subcultures



Lees (1993) described three types of attitude towards school and education among girls:

- Pro-school girls
- Pro-education girls
- Anti-education girls
- Anti-school girls







Blackman (1995) captured how tensions within the school contribute to subcultural development

- Boffin boys were conformist and pro-school
- Boffin girls worked hard and were pro-school
- New wave girls had a mixed attitude
- Mod boys were similarly ambivalent (anti-school but pro-education)

Subcultures and "Laddishness"

Paul Willis (1977)- working class boys tend to form anti-school subcultures

Tony Swell (1997)- there is a black- anti school masculinity

Diane Reay et al (2003)- boys felt they had little control over their educational learning and so seek power through other negative strategies



Pro-school female subcultures

Scott Davis (1995)- girls resistance to school was evident

Abrahams (1995)- female resistance as one based pushing school rules to the limit

Osler and Vincent (2003)- girls are more likely to develop patterns of non-attendance

Teacher expectations and gendered behaviour in the classroom

Behaviour of boys and girls will differ

- Boys tend to be louder and misbehave
- Girls break the rules in a less noticeable way



Girls who behave similarly to boys, due to the stereotype of feminine behaviour, are considered deviant (boys are just conforming to gender stereotype - <u>excused normal masculine behaviour?</u>)





Labelling - gender issues and labelling theory

- Swann and Graddol (1994) found that teachers tend to see boys as unruly and disruptive and are more likely to spend time telling them off than helping them with schoolwork
- Four out of five permanent exclusions are boys

John Abraham (1986) asked teachers to describe a typical boy and a typical girl – The typical boy was described as not particularly bright, likes a laugh and always attention seeking, often by messing around. The typical girl is bright, well –behaved and hard working, being quiet and timid



Lads and ladettes in school - *Gender and the fear of failure* by Carolyn Jackson 2006

Qualitative and quantitative methods of research to research how pupil subcultures develop in school + how it affects achievement of boys

- Both genders try to achieve status through popularity
- Boys : being athletic, being in a relationship
- All pupils : not being seen as hardworking (wanted to be successful but did not want to be seen working in school)
- Boys tend to be given sanctions more than girls → male behaviour is assumed to be a larger issue
- Girls rebel by avoiding classwork or by talking in class (less noticable)

Notice any of this in our school? Or other student/gender subcultures?

Thank you for your attention

Opinions?

Agree or disagree?

Do you have anything to add?

How to stop gendered labelling? Is it possible?

