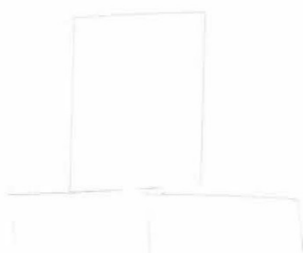


Candidate 6 evidence

Sectarianism in Scotland



Assignment



INTRODUCTION

Sectarianism is an issue that has for a long time plagued Scottish society. Sectarianism by definition is a form of bigotry, discrimination, or hatred arising from attaching relations of inferiority and superiority to differences between subdivisions within a group. This sectarian division in Scotland comes mostly from the west coast with Roman Catholics and Protestants being the two main religious groups. Sectarianist behaviour can occur in many different environments like; in sport, the workplace, schools, and social environments like pubs etc. It can be damaging for many communities and relationships. Sectarianism in Scotland is sociologically significant because of the outstanding effect it has on people's lives, it dictates where people get their education, who people choose to have in their social groups and can even dictate people's political views. An example of sectarianism today is the sectarian abuse that is given to football players, managers and fans around Scottish football like, the recent sectarian abuse aimed towards Kilmarnock FC manager Steve Clarke¹ or player Kris Boyd². Another example of Sectarianism directed at a football player is the abuse aimed towards ex-Rangers striker Michael O'Halloran following his visit to a catholic church. ³Former Inverness player and manager Richie Foran is another of the many examples of sectarian abuse directed towards players and managers as he was subject to sectarian abuse in a nightclub in Inverness, which then led to a mass violent brawl. ⁴There was an attempt to eradicate this type of abuse from Scottish football as the 'Offensive behaviour at football and threatening communications' act was introduced in 2012. This act was however repealed by the government in 2018. I will examine this topic by collecting a series of findings from different studies on subjects and will give the hypothesis that Sectarianism is still present and strong in Scottish society.

HYPOTHESIS

Sectarianism is still present and damaging to Scottish society.

¹ 'Kilmarnock's Steve Clarke furious after sectarian abuse at Ibrox' - The Scotsman Newspaper 20/02/19

² 'Kris Boyd 'hit by coin and subjected to sectarian abuse' during Kilmarnock-Celtic clash' - The Guardian Newspaper 17/02/19

³ 'Rangers striker Michael O'Halloran targeted with vile sectarian abuse after Catholic church visit' - The Daily Record Newspaper 16/05/18

⁴ 'Sectarian abuse hurled at Foran before brawl' - The Inverness Courier 09/04/14

Section 2

A study found on the topic of sectarianism, based on secondary research is 'Religiously Aggravated Offending in Scotland 2016-17', a document published by the Scottish Government on the 9th of June 2017.⁵

One finding from this is that sectarianism is ever present amongst the younger generation. This is proved as 41% of people charged with sectarianism in 2016-2017 were between the ages of <16 and 30. This is the same proportion as in 2015-16, however the actual number of charges increased by 34. This shows that the problem of sectarianism in Scotland does not seem to be going away as young people's attitudes towards the problem is not changing, showing it is still present.

Another finding from this study is that alcohol is a big factor in causing people to commit sectarian offences. This is shown as 52% of people charged with sectarianism in 2016-17 were under the influence of alcohol at the time of committing their crime, an increase in the percentage from 2015-16. Alcohol is noted from this study as being a factor that can bring out sectarianist behaviour in people.

Lastly, a finding from the study is that out of the whole of Scotland, Glasgow is the city where sectarianism is the most present. Glasgow had, by far the highest concentration of charges out of the whole of Scotland with 203 charges, resulting to 30% of charges throughout the whole of Scotland. It is present throughout but strongest in Glasgow.

Another study found on sectarianism, based from secondary research is 'Community Experiences of Sectarianism', a government document published on the 20th of February 2015.⁶

One finding from this is that sectarianism was not perceived as happening everywhere. Certain times and places were frequently mentioned, these included; football, public drinking and loyalist and Irish Republican marches. The rivalry between Celtic and Rangers was highlighted often. These types of events are therefore shown as being ones that can encourage sectarianist attitudes and are the type of places where you'd most likely witness sectarian behaviour. Once again, alcohol is being shown as another factor that can spur on sectarianist behaviour.

Another finding from the study was that there was a strong gender element to people's encounters with sectarianism. It was clear that subjects would only mention males as being the cause of sectarianism, however would describe both males and females as being the victims of it. Therefore the cause of sectarianism is found to be rather gender exclusive whereas both males and females can suffer as a result of this.

Lastly, another finding from this study is that sectarian attitudes are often passed down by older generations. Despite there being big changes in Scottish society throughout the years, participants in the study emphasised the role that families, and older generations amongst families play in transmitting

⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/religiously-aggravated-offending-scotland-2016-2017/> 09/06/17

⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/community-experiences-sectarianism/> 20/02/15

these sectarian ideas and beliefs onto the younger generation. This shows that sectarianism is still present and explains why.

ANALYSIS

A theory that these studies both link to is Labelling. The theory of labelling states that when a person or group within society is given a label by the rest of society, they will play up to it and start acting in character with it.

The study 'Religiously Aggravated Offending in Scotland 2016-17' links to labelling as it stated that, upon using quantitative data, the researcher found that, in Scotland Sectarianism was mostly present in Glasgow. This could possibly be influenced by labelling. This is because for instance, there could be a stereotype that Glasgow is typically a place with a lot of sectarianism. This could lead to people from around Glasgow to play up to this stereotype, or even believing that it would be 'less wrong' for them to be sectarianist. This is as they are from Glasgow and it is well known that it is common behaviour in Glasgow, making it acceptable.

The study 'Community Experiences of Sectarianism' also links to labelling as it states that there is a strong gender divide in sectarianist offences. There are much more males that get charged with sectarianism than females. Labelling could possibly play a part in this as males could be the group labelled as being more likely to commit a sectarianist crime. In turn this would make them eventually conform to this behaviour and become the more sectarianist gender.

Another theory that relates to these studies is Marxism. Marxism states that the two main groups in society are the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The bourgeoisie being the ruling class and the proletariat being the working class. It states that the bourgeoisie own all of the wealth in society and the proletariat work for them. It states that the proletariat need to revolt against the bourgeoisie to stop the exploitation, however the bourgeoisie will establish distractions to ensure that the workers don't do this.

The study 'Religiously Aggravated Offending in Scotland 2016-17' links to Marxism. This is proved as it states that alcohol is a big factor in causing people to commit sectarian offences. Marxists could see alcohol as being something that is sold by the ruling class to the working class to distract them from any potential revolts or uprisings. Instead, with alcohol their minds are distracted from the exploitation against them and they're more focussed on conflict between themselves, in the form of sectarianism.

The study 'Community experiences of sectarianism' links to Marxism. This is as it states that sectarianism was not perceived as happening everywhere. Certain times and places were frequently mentioned, these included; football, public drinking and loyalist and Irish Republican marches. This relates to the theory as marxism states that the ruling class implement distractions to prevent the working class from realising their exploitation. These kind of events where sectarianism is most present could viewed as these kind of distractions where, instead of uniting and revolting against the bourgeoisie the workers would fight with each other. This is seen in the form of sectarianism. This would then mean that the ruling class keep their position in society and all of their wealth.

EVALUATION

A strength of my first source 'Religiously aggravated offending in Scotland 2016-17' is that it is an official government document. This means that the information in it is dutified to be accurate and it will be a truthful account of events in the country. Therefore all the information and statistics in it are completely valid. A lot of the evidence gathered from source one is quantitative data like statistics and figures and this means that it's strong evidence as it is all facts, instead of just being a story from someone's experience, as this could be easily exaggerated or completely untrue to suit some kind of agenda.

A weakness of my first source however, is that, as it's quantitative data it does not tell you much about the real life experience that people have of sectarianism. This is because it is solely facts and figures and there is no story or explanation behind it. With qualitative research, depending on the research method, you could gain an understanding as to why the statistics are the number that they are. This is because with some aspects of qualitative data the researcher can really feel and get to understand the actions behind the topic they are researching. This means they develop a greater understanding of the topic as a whole, therefore meaning the research is better. With quantitative data, like that from my first source, it can be hard to get much information from the figures meaning that is a weakness to my first source.

A strength of my second source is that it is done using qualitative data. This means that it is exploratory research and will provide an insight into the problem of sectarianism. As the research is conveyed with a group of local people sharing their experiences, It will give the researcher a greater understanding of what sectarianism is like in communities of Scotland, this is because it is real people sharing real stories of their experiences with sectarianism. This enhances the validity of the research as it ensures that it is more detailed and there is more reasoning towards the problem.

A weakness of my second source, however is that the research is carried out overtly. This is a because the subjects being interviewed may not tell the absolute truth about the matter. This is because of the 'hawthorne effect' which states that people will act differently if they know they're being observed. This could therefore lead participants to give false information about their experiences or thoughts about sectarianism. This could be because they don't want to appear bad or don't want the area they live in or the people around them to look bad in front of the other subjects being interviewed or the interviewer. This would result in the research gathered and published being invalid and untrue. Therefore overt research can be unreliable and this is a weakness of my second source.

CONCLUSION ON THE HYPOTHESIS

In conclusion, my hypothesis is correct and this is backed up by my findings.

CONCLUSIONS

My first conclusion is that sectarianism can still be found in parts of Scottish society today. This is shown as my research findings state that there are still a number of sectarianist crimes being committed to this day. This conclusion therefore proves my hypothesis to be correct.

My second conclusion is that there are certain times and places where sectarianism is most likely to occur. This is shown in my research findings as it is found that there are certain events and occasions that are most likely to trigger sectarianist behaviour. Once again proving my hypothesis to be correct as it is still present in Scotland.

My third conclusion is that sectarianism is heavily present at times in Glasgow and the west of Scotland but is scarce elsewhere. It is therefore less of a problem in some areas of Scotland however is still majorly present in Glasgow and the surrounding areas, proving my hypothesis to be correct.

My fourth conclusion is that football plays a big role in keeping sectarianism alive in Scotland, without it it would be far less of a problem. This is shown as my findings state that there are certain places and events where sectarian behaviour is more likely to occur, and football in particular is noted as being one of these.

A Further conclusion is that the older generations play a part in keeping sectarianism alive in Scottish society as it is often them that pass down sectarianist attitudes. This could possibly be seen as one of the main reasons why sectarianism still exists in Scotland and proves my hypothesis to be correct as it is still an issue.

My next conclusion is that there is a strong gendered divide with sectarianism behaviour. My research findings recalled that males were far more likely to be the cause of sectarian abuse or behaviour towards people. Both males and females however were likely to be victims of this abuse or behaviour.

My last conclusion is that, a lot of the time alcohol is the catalyst that spurs on sectarian behaviour. My findings stated that a large number of individuals charged with sectarianism were under the influence of alcohol at the time of offence. Therefore alcohol has a big part to play in causing people to act on their sectarian prejudices.

Word count: 2,198