

- 1a Action theory believes that individuals are more important than the institutions and systems. It focuses on interaction and socialisation between groups of people as opposed to the social structures. It involves analysing how people are socialised into the norms, rules, roles and values of their society through social experiences and interaction with others.
- b Feminism believes that people are forced into the norms, rules, roles and values and that females are exploited by men. Action theorists believe that people socialise each other into the norms, rules, roles and values and that we have the

free will to choose whether we wish to follow them or not. Feminists believe that we are brainwashed into the rules and values dictated by the males within society.

Feminists believe that the social structures of society are more important and that every aspect of society is dictated by them. Action theorists believe that the people are more important and that they form their own rules and values.

2 The sociologists could use ~~the~~ structured interviews to carry out the research. Structured interviews involve pre-set, closed questions which will usually involve a simple 'yes' or 'no' answer. It is also a primary source of research finding.

Structured interviews are relatively easy for the researcher to carry out and the closed questions make the results easy to quantify. It also does not involve the need for the respondents to be able to read or write.\* However, they can be time consuming and often costly due to the high input of time required by the researcher to carry out the interviews. Also, as the questions are

closed the answers given may only skim the surface as the respondent is unable to fully expand on their answers.

For example, in relation to the scenario, the researcher could interview women of different ages and ethnicity from different professions. This is because women of a particular race or age may be discriminated against more than other groups. The researcher will then ask a question such as, "have you ever been discriminated against in the work place?" to which they will reply "yes" or "no". The researcher may also want to interview men in the same way to establish whether they also

experience discrimination in the workplace and whether the occurrence of discrimination varies between gender.

- 3 From the moment we are born the socialisation process occurs and we build a sense of identity. For example, baby boys are dressed in blue and girls in pink, different genders are given different toys to play with; boys may get guns or action men while girls usually play with dolls or cooking sets. This is a prime example of how our gender identity is moulded from the very beginning of our lives. Most of what we learn is picked up by listening to or watching

our family and friends. This is how we learn to speak and interact with others and is called primary socialisation. It is informal as it is taking place all the time and most is subconscious.

Secondary socialisation is carried out by the institutions and systems, for example schools. In school we learn the necessary skills of reading, writing and counting which are required to communicate and get a job within society. As a result it is a form of formal socialisation.

As a result of primary and secondary socialisation, we learn the norms, rules, roles and values of our particular culture. For

example, children from particular religions will learn that it is the norm for them to wear a burqa/turban. In many middle eastern countries women are not allowed to drive or vote, whereas in countries such as the UK or USA this has been considered the norm for years.

Different theories have differing views on how humans develop a sense of identity. Functionalists believe that we are socialised into the norms, rules, roles and values of society through the institutions and systems. They believe that we then internalise the norms, rules, roles and values, believe in them and carry them out. This

then creates value consensus which is the shared idea of the ~~rules~~ appropriate rules and values within a particular society.

4 Stan Cohen's study *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* (1972) investigates the significance of power and status within youth subculture. The study was based around an outbreak of violence at an English seaside during the Easter weekend of 1964 by two groups of youth subculture; the mods and the rockers. Although the incident only involved some property damage and no serious injury to anyone involved, Cohen noted a series of sensationalist newspaper articles



written on the event. The mods and the rockers were depicted by simplistic, stereotypical descriptions to make them easy to identify. Cohen observed that the articles contained distorted facts or information that was completely fabricated. As a result of the articles, a moral panic broke out within society. As a result of this moral panic, police presence was increased, however this in itself led to more outbreaks of violence as the subcultures were simply behaving in the way which was expected of them.

This clearly shows the impact negative labelling can have, as a master status is formed which

results in a self fulfilling prophecy. Subcultures often form due to lack of power and status within mainstream society, thus deviation from the norm occurs. This deviation is due to the desire for power and status which can usually only be found within exclusive subcultures, as was the case of the mods and rockers. They rebelled against society in hope to gain the power and status which they simply did not have within mainstream society.

5 Social Stratification is the way in which society divides people into ordered layers, or strata, in a hierarchical way with the most privileged at the top and the least privileged at the bottom. In the UK, a three class model is in place; the upper class, the middle class, and the lower class. Some sociologists such as Charles Murray have noted the emergence of a fourth social class - the under class. The wealthiest in our society enjoy a disproportionate share of wealth, power and other valuable resources. In a recent study it was shown that 1% of people own 99% of the world's

wealth.

Social mobility describes the up or downward movement between the social stratas. In the UK, we have an 'open' stratification system, in which people are free to move between stratas. Despite this, many people within society still find it difficult to achieve upward mobility. For example, ~~the~~ a working or underclass child may feel like they are never likely to amount to much due to their families position. They may simply not try to achieve upward mobility. However, if such child has the drive to succeed and achieves good grades in school, they may still

be hindered by their families' inability to pay tuition fees. As a result the upper class are in the position to better themselves still as they can provide private tutors for their children as well as being able to afford private schools and elite universities.

Karl Marx was a sociologist who studied social class stratification. He came up with a two class model: the owners and the workers. The owners he called the bourgeoisie. They owned workplaces and industries and as a result had the power to dictate how work was carried out, how much workers were paid and the raw

materials to be used. The workers he called the proletariat. They owned nothing therefore the only way they could survive was by selling their labour to the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie knew this and therefore created harsh working conditions and low pay which they knew the proletariat would have no option but to accept. This inequality was intensified by the continual production of profits wanted by the bourgeoisie. The only way to meet such profit was to pay the workers less than they deserved and sell the goods/service at significantly more than they cost to make/provide. As a result the proletariat were strong

twice, <sup>first</sup> ~~once~~ as a worker and then as a consumer.

Functionalists such as Talcott Parsons believe that there are a variety of necessary factors which a society needs in order to continue from one generation to the next.

These are called functional prerequisites. Functionalism believes that social class stratification is a functional prerequisite as it creates order and stability within society, which it needs to survive. As a result they believe that the inequality it promotes is necessary and justified because of this. However, they believe that society

is meritocratic, in that anyone can achieve upward mobility if they have the skills and drive required to do so.

A sociological study which looks at socio-economic inequality is on Intergenerational Mobility by Blenden and Machin. They looked at income rather than occupation as they believed it offered a direct measurement of inequality as wages vary within and between occupations. They looked at 8 countries and split the population into quartiles of income. They then studied the graduation rates of boys within each quartile. They found that boys from the



lowest income group increased their graduation rate by just 3% over the period in question compared to 36% for those with parents in the highest income group. This evidence shows that people from lower social classes still find it <sup>particularly</sup> ~~significantly~~ difficult to achieve upward mobility than other income groups.

The Oxford Mobility study by Goldthorpe is another sociological study which looks at socio-economic inequality. Goldthorpe analysed absolute mobility rates by looking at the General Household Surveys. He found that while looking at male absolute mobility <sup>it</sup> ~~there was~~

remained fairly stable both up and downwards from the mid 80's until 2005. However, while looking at female absolute mobility, he noted a significant increase in upward mobility and a decrease in downward mobility. He also found that the working class had shrunk due to the ~~decrease~~ decline of typically working class labour in the shipyards and mines. However when he looked at relative mobility rates he found little movement up or downwards for both male and females. He concluded that absolute mobility gave a distorted picture of mobility and that it was due to the changing

structure of society which gave these results, not an increase in upward mobility. Goldthorpe then concluded that the working class still find it extremely difficult to achieve upward mobility as there was little movement over the 40 year period.

~~In conclusion, it~~

Based on the evidence shown, it can therefore be concluded that working classes find it increasingly difficult to achieve upward mobility while the upper classes continue to better themselves still. This socio-economic inequality was highlighted and backed up

throughout, with the research evidence solidifying the view that socio-economic inequality is ever present in our society, with the lower / under class finding it increasingly difficult to improve living standards and life chances.