

## Candidate 3 evidence

### Social Issues

- a) Explain the role that gender plays in differential achievement in education 6

Gender has always played a part in explaining the differences in educational achievement that exist in education and still does. Traditionally, education was for males. Boys and girls were both given a basic education and then girls were expected to only be interested in domestic duties and learning associated with that. Even richer women were only encouraged to learn "refined" things like drawing or playing the piano. Boys and men however were able to further their studies at College and University. Women were not able to graduate from Cambridge University until 1948.

Today, girls do better than boys in exams at school and at university. This has led to many people wondering why the education system is failing boys, however feminists point out that there only seems to be a problem now that it is boys who are behind. Despite the better grades for girls, women still don't receive the same pay as men. This is partly caused by the gendered curriculum, where boys and girls tend to study different subjects. Girls are more likely to study childcare, cooking and languages. Boys are more likely to study engineering, physics and maths. Women will then take on more caring, worse paid jobs compared to engineers and scientists.

- b) Explain two findings of the study Understanding low achievement in English schools (2007) by Kingdon and Cassen

One finding of this study related to ethnicity. This found that nearly half of all low achievers were white British males. Both boys and girls from the white British group were more likely than other ethnic groups to still be low achievers in secondary school if they started there in Primary school. Chinese and Indian pupils were the best at not being low achievers and Afro-Caribbean pupils are the worst at this.

Another finding of this study was about the difference that schools can make. They found that schools do make a difference to how well pupils do. They found that 14% of low achievement is due to the quality of the school quality. Although this is not as important as how poor the pupils are, it still shows that pupils in some schools do better than others from the same background.

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- c) Choose a social issue other than differential achievement in education. Explain the social issue using two sociological theories 8

The issue we studied was social mobility. One theory that helps to explain this is functionalism. Functionalists believe that society is a meritocracy. This means that people will end up in the job and position in society that their own talents and hard work deserve. They justify paying some people more than others by saying that this shows how rare their skills are. This means that people are moving up and down the social ladder all the time, where you start does mean that is where you will stay. They believe there is high social mobility.

Marxists believe there is low social mobility. This is because there are two main classes in society, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The bourgeoisie are nearly all born into their

positions at the top and they will do what they can to keep themselves there and to make sure that the proletariat cannot move very far up the social ladder. This is known as social closure, when they prevent social mobility.

The UK has low levels of social mobility. Those from a more privileged background are more likely to go to university and get a better paying job than those from a poorer background.

Children from the richest backgrounds are twice as likely to have had private tutoring than those from the poorest backgrounds. This shows the myth of meritocracy.