

**CHAPTER 9: Sociological theory applied to equal opportunities**

**Practice questions - text book pages 133 - 134**

- 1) Knowledge and theories in the sociology of sport enable us to:
- discover ultimate truths about the role of sports in society.
  - view sports from multiple perspectives.
  - predict how athletes and teams will perform under pressure.
  - eliminate the causes of serious injuries in sports.

**Answer:** b.

- 2) Socialisation is:
- the formation of an attached bond between an infant and its carer.
  - a process of becoming part of a society by learning its norms and values.
  - the historical process by which societies change from traditional to modern.
  - the overall impression of ourselves that we try to give off to others.

**Answer:** b.

- 3) Which one of the following best describes the meaning of prejudice:
- a combination of beliefs and feelings which lead us to think and behave positively and negatively.
  - an over generalized belief about a particular group or class of people.
  - a prejudgement of a person, group or situation usually based on inadequate information.
  - a prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, or gender.

**Answer:** c.

**Explanation:**

- a. is a definition for attitudes, b. is a definition for stereotypes and d. is a definition for discrimination, so the correct answer is c.*

- 4) Under represented groups in sports are often the result of:
- characteristics that makes an individual abnormal.
  - social and environmental barriers to participation.
  - an inability that makes a person inferior to others.
  - an individual attitude more than a physical condition.

**Answer:** b.

- 5) Identify key factors that limit under represented groups taking part in sport:
- equal opportunity, provision and esteem.
  - prejudice.
  - discrimination.
  - lack of financial support.

**Answer:** a.

**Explanation:**

- The question is asking for more than one factor and so the correct answer a. Choices b. c. and d. all singularly contribute towards why under-represented groups have lower participation rates compared with mainstream society.*

- 6) What does the term 'social exclusion' mean and what measures can be taken to address this issue.

3 marks

**Answer:**

- Social exclusion is the exclusion from the prevailing **social system** and its **rights and privileges**.*
- Typically those belonging to the **minority groups** such as disability, ethnicity, gender, those with economic disadvantage.*
- Measures taken will widen **opportunity**, provide inexpensive **facilities**, provide **coaching**.*

- 7) What is social action theory?

3 marks

**Answer:**

- The examination of the **social structure** of the sport in question.*
- The network of entities found within the sport when considered as **distinct, independent, or self-contained**.*
- For example, leagues or sports team.*
- It consists of acts and behaviours.*

- 8) Identify three problems faced by the disabled in the sporting context and outline ways in which these problems have been addressed.

6 marks

**Answer:**

- The tradition is that only able-bodied people pursue sport – but there is much more opportunity today.
- The **attitude** by some disabled people is that sport is not for them through **lack of self-esteem** – but there has been a great deal of publicity and media coverage to show that this should not be the case.
- Esteem and therefore **take-up is particularly poor** where double discrimination exists such as ethnic, female and aged disabled – there are policies to encourage these particular groups and they have special rates of entry to facilities.
- A history of little or no organisation for disabled performers – there are now numerous sporting activities which enable different levels of competition.
- **Limited provision** for participation, advancement or coaching opportunities – but there are now specialist coaches and coaching courses available through UK Sport and sports coach UK.
- There used to be very limited access for disabled spectators or facilities – there is now a legal obligation for access to be available in all places open to the public.
- There used to be very limited performance pyramid development for the disabled – there is now development and media coverage of the Paralympic Games.
- There are now development programmes via organisations such as the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS).

- 9) What is the significance of the emergence of 'Disability sport'?

3 marks

**Answer:**

- The significance of disability sport lies in the gradual reduction in **prejudices**.
- Resulting from **attitudes** which say that disability groups are **inferior** 'you can't do that - you are disabled'.
- A gradual **acceptance** that disabled people can actually perform tasks which at one time were thought impossible (both physical and intellectual tasks).

- 10) What is the significance of the term inclusiveness when referring to disability and sporting participation?

4 marks

**Answer:**

- Society has accepted that **equal opportunities** for all social activities (for example in transport, employment, sport) should now be offered to disabled people.
- And **inclusiveness** has meant that the majority of disabled people are **included with the able-bodied** for most activities.
- **Lottery funding** supporting the elite sporting disability population in an equivalent basis to the able-bodied elite sportspeople.
- **NGBs** have embraced this inclusiveness and disabled people are now treated in a similar way to the able-bodied.

- 11) What does the term 'stacking' refer to in the context of sporting situations?

2 marks

**Answer:**

2 marks for 2 of:

- Stacking refers to the **disproportionate concentration** of ethnic minorities in certain positions in a sports team.
- As they are perceived as **more valuable** for their physical skills than for their decision making and communication qualities.
- For example, in American football **African-American** players are often positioned as running backs and wide receiver positions.
- Significantly, **coaches**, who make these decisions, are generally white.

12) Discuss the terms opportunity, provision and esteem in the context of female discrimination in sport. 5 marks

**Answer**

- **Opportunity** to participate reflects the chances women have to participate in sport compared to men.
- This is less a problem than in the past as opportunities are better today because gender discrimination is legally not acceptable.
- **Provision** to allow opportunity has not totally caught up with the law.
- There are still facilities, which are unsuitable for women in some sports, which have been historically used by men only, for example toilet and changing provision.
- Certain private club traditions have retained limitations for women, e.g. there are very few independent women's rugby clubs or equal rights in many private golf clubs.
- Many clubs full with predominance of young men.
- Some clubs remain exclusively male or female.
- The main problem today lies in **women's low esteem** regarding context of sport and participation in competitive sport.
- Self-conscious in a male environment or as a beginner.
- They presume that some sports are not suitable for them, for example boxing.
- They feel that their female image is damaged by becoming muscular.
- Certain females may be discriminated against on other grounds, such as age, race or disability.
- Some lack the free-time to participate, with jobs and dependents.

13) How might women experience discrimination in recreational and sporting activities? 3 marks

**Answer:**

3 marks for 3 of:

- The **glass ceiling** effect.
- In which there are **more males in leadership and coaching** roles than there are females.
- Although there are no overt rules which enforce this, there are **long-standing prejudices** from males in society in particular against females in responsible positions.
- Female sportspeople receive far less sports coverage (although fashion and personal issues sometimes do get big press) than males.
- And far less sponsorship as a result.
- And far less opportunities to become full time professionals - and therefore earn a living from their sport.
- Also Muslim women are heavily discriminated against because of religious and cultural observances.

14) Sport England has a role to play in identifying and targeting minority sub-cultures who for various reasons do not fully participate in Active Sport.

- a) What are the main reasons why young women do not have as high a profile as their male counterparts in sport in England?

4 marks

**Answer:**

Four main reasons from the following:

- **Tradition** - historical role of women having low sports profile.
- **Physical** - presumption that women are physically inferior.
- **Social** - present role of women as wives and mothers.
- **Economic** - only male sportspeople are fully professionalised.
- **Media** - biased media coverage towards male sport.
- **Administration** - men dominate administration, coaching and officials in top level sport.
- **Esteem** - large numbers of women do not feel equal in sport.

- b) Outline ways in which some of these problems have been addressed.

4 marks

**Answer:**

4 marks for 4 of:

- **Initiatives** are for example:
- The **Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation** is the UK charity that campaigns to make physical activity an everyday part of life for women and girls.
- **This Girl Can** is a nationwide campaign, launched by Sport England, to get women and girls moving, regardless of shape, size and ability.
- This campaign was based on addressing gender issues, such as time and cost, worries about being judged for being the wrong size, not fit enough and not skilled enough.
- **Paula Radcliffe's** 'get women running' programme aimed to include more women in a healthy activity.
- Provision of **creches** in sports centres to allow mums to engage in active sport.
- **Active Sport** targets all female age groups in particular the over 50s,

- c) Suggest reasons why women over 50 years of age participate in sport less than other minority sub-groups. 4 marks

**Answer:**

- **Tradition** - older women may not be convinced about modern trends.
- **Influence** - less organised than other groups.
- **Social** - tend to have other preferences and time filled up.
- **Health** - feel they are not fit enough or have limited access to medical advice.
- **Esteem** - sense of embarrassment.
- **Administration** - not adequately catered for.
- **Preference and availability** - perhaps older women would prefer dancing and this is not offered at the local leisure centre.

15) Explain the social and cultural factors that have led to an increase in the opportunities for women to participate in activities such as football.

4 marks

**Answer:**

4 marks for 4 of:

- **Demand** by young girls to join in the **fun** that their male peers enjoy as a matter of course.
- The **culture of young males** of playing and **enjoying** soccer has expanded to include older girls and women.
- Availability of soccer in **girls' physical education** lessons in schools has expanded.
- **Success of female teams** from big (male) clubs in national leagues and cup competitions leads girls to expect opportunity to play.
- **Spectatorship** for female matches has dramatically increased.
- **Success at World Cup** level for the national female teams brings high status **role models** to the community.

16) Sport for all is not yet a reality in the UK. How can a person's opportunity to participate in sport be affected by socio-cultural factors?

5 marks

**Answer:**

5 marks for 5 of:

- **Economic status** - cost of taking part or low income, since people with less money cannot afford to participate in sport.
- Lack of or **cost** of transport/limited public services - particularly rural areas where public transport services have been cut back.
- **Ability, physique, stamina, fitness** – in the UK obesity is one of the biggest health issues. Obese people may be self-conscious.
- **Disability** – not all leisure centres can accommodate disabled people. For example, lack of ramps or disabled changing facilities.
- **Social pressures, stereotypes or social constraints** - this could be ethnic background, race or religion. For example, muslim girls may not be able to take part in sports such as swimming or gymnastics.
- **Age** – as the population gets older, it is harder to get to leisure facilities and so old people become isolated.
- **Ethnic background, race or religion** - for example, Muslim girls may not be able to take part in sports such as swimming or gymnastics.
- **Gender** – women find it more difficult to access sport because of lack of time, stereotyping,
- **Geographical factors** from inner city to rural areas - generally there are more sporting opportunities in and close to large cities.
- In rural areas activities are often restricted to outdoor adventure sports such as walking, climbing and water sports.

17) **A Level.** People from ethnic minorities, low socio-economic groups and women face more barriers in their struggle to reach elite levels in sport than those from dominant groups. Discuss.

15 marks

**Answer:**

- People from ethnic minorities, low-economic groups and women in the population, as a whole, face **discrimination** and barriers to progress in all aspects of life, not just sport.
- But the consequences for people with the talent to be elite sportspeople are even greater, since the demands of most sports are that they are **expensive** (cost more than general everyday living costs in terms of travel, food, facilities access – cost of entry to sports facilities – and equipment), demand use of **time** (every day time for training and time for travel to training), which would be on top of work time for most people.
- This means that people with low **socio-economic status** tend to drop out of sport quite quickly after the age of 16 if no sponsorship or government support can be found.
- In terms of **equipment**, the cost of this (particularly horses, bikes, and boats) would be an insurmountable obstacle to those people of the lowest socio-economic status. Such an obstacle would be insurmountable without grants and free provision of such equipment by National Governing Bodies or Local Authorities.
- Most people operating at just below elite level would need to support themselves via **employment** of some sort, and again this would affect groups most with lower socio-economic status.
- In general, people from **ethnic minorities** face the same socio-economic issues but more so, since such groups in general have to face the institutional racism embedded in the lives of the bulk of the population – particularly those over 50 years of age.
- This **attitude** by people to the excellence of black people at sport can affect the attitude of sponsors to those black people. For example, Serena Williams has 22 tennis slam tournament wins compared to Maria Sharapova's 5 wins, but Serena earned less than half of that earned by Maria in 2015.
- **Women**, as 51% of the population, and whose age of possible elite sport participation coincides with the best years for childbirth, have also their **stereotyping** as homebuilders rather than strivers, seekers and careerists to contend with.
- The **opportunities** for women are also less than for men (only 45% of participants in Beijing Olympics were women).
- There is a glass ceiling for women – there are fewer women in the top positions of power (members of the IOC, presidents of governing bodies) in sport, and this must affect some women as they strive for excellence.
- The **social status of women in sport** is less than that of men – which affects exposure in the media and therefore the possibilities for sponsorship are less than those for the men.
- The fact that the **media** tend to focus on women's **appearance** more than their sporting excellence tends to **trivialise** people's perception of women as sportspeople, and hence reduce their chances of sponsorship.

- 18) What are the potential barriers to participation in active recreation for individuals from ethnic minority groups?  
Suggest solutions to these potential barriers.

6 marks

**Answer:**

3 marks for 3 of (barriers):

- **Background** can affect values. For example lower value given to sport and more emphasis on academic subjects.
- Can be affected by **parental** preferences.
- **Female participation** lower in ethnic minority groups (patriarchal societies).
- **Discrimination** may prevent access to clubs, hence racism.
- **Lack of information** getting to these groups who do not already participate.
- Preferred traditional **cultural** activities may not be offered.
- Lack of **media** coverage and hence lack of role models.

3 marks for 3 of (solutions):

- More ethnic **role models** such as Nicola Adams.
- Increased **media** exposure.
- Role of **education** to expand awareness of **ethnicity** issues.
- Use of **national initiatives** such as SportingEquals, MakingEquals, and Sportivate programmes.

- 19) Today, social and economic conditions can restrict opportunities to participate in sport.  
How and why is Sport England supporting participation projects in deprived areas?

6 marks

**Answer:**

3 marks for 3 of:

How?

- Community action **initiatives** such as the 'Active Communities' programme.
- **Funding** such as the allocation of Lottery money to help provide, develop and improve facilities.
- Paying salaries of development officers and coaches.
- **Training** of sports leaders and coaches.
- Setting up of **clubs**, NGB schemes, local initiatives.

3 marks for 3 of:

Why?

- Because it can be much more difficult for **organisations** in these areas to raise funds for capital project than it is in relatively prosperous areas.
- To help achieve **regeneration**.
- To help achieve **social inclusion**.
- Contribute to closing the gap in the **provision** of sports facilities between deprived areas and other areas.
- Help raise levels of **participation**.
- Value to **health** to promote active lifestyles.
- **Educational outcomes** and development of personal and social skills.
- **Community safety**, cohesion and crime reduction.
- Sport England making its contribution to the Government's social agenda.
- Discover and develop **potential elite performers** linked to specific sport schemes.

20) How have NGBs addressed discrimination issues? Support your answer with relevant examples.

6 marks

**Answer:**

6 marks for 6 of:

- Governing bodies are responsible for ensuring **compliance** by with equality **laws**.
- Governing bodies aim to promote **equality of opportunity** and good relations between different races, and between men and women.
- Here NGBs have increased sporting opportunities for minority groups. For example, in track and field athletics females have the same competitive programme as males.
- Governing bodies are monitoring and measuring **participation levels**.
- For example, The Sport England 'Active People survey' showed how participation levels varied from place to place, gender, ethnicity, social class, age and disability.
- This statistical data can be used when developing action plans to address **discrimination** issues and lead to cohesive, integrated policies and procedures.
- Governing bodies have used campaigns and the media to **publicise** discrimination issues.
- For example, 'Let's Kick Racism Out of Football' campaign was established within educational and community sectors to challenge discrimination, encourage inclusive practices and work for positive change.
- Governing bodies have created **initiatives** to create positive images for discriminating minorities.
- For example, Sport England's 2016 'This Girl Can' is a nationwide campaign to get women and girls moving, regardless of shape, size and ability.

21) Discuss the benefits of raising participation levels in sport.

6 marks

**Answer:**

2 marks for each segment of:

- **Health and economic benefits:**
  - **Life-extending** effects of physical activity by reducing death rate from cardiovascular diseases.
  - A **fitter workforce** from whom the national **economy** will benefit.
  - Reduces **health care costs** to the NHS due to a healthier community.
- **Psychological benefits:**
  - Lower **risk** of depression and dementia.
  - Improved **mental health** and **stress management**.
  - Gives the individual a more **balanced attitude** towards personal fitness.
  - Boost of **self-confidence**.
  - Improves **sleep**.
  - Helps memory, **brain function** and will reduce stress and memory loss.
- **Social benefits:**
  - Improves **self-esteem** and self-worth.
  - Exercise is a great **social activity**, meeting people and making friends.
  - Minority groups become **integrated** into society.
  - **Reduction in crime** due to positive use of free time.

22) National sports organisations, such as Sport England, have devised schemes to introduce children to sport and to develop their talents. Using examples, explain how such schemes help to achieve these aims.

5 marks

**Answer:**

There are many possible schemes to answer this question.

- **Sports Hall Athletics** provides a nationwide opportunity for all primary and secondary pupils and clubs to compete indoors in team competitions that involve running, jumping and throwing events.
- **Tennis for Kids** initiative, 10,000 free lessons through Lawn Tennis Association (LTA).
  - This initiative offers a free six-week course led by 1,000 trained coaches, and 10,000 free rackets given away to children.
- FA Girls' Football **Come and Try** Participation Programme, is an initiative for girls aged from 5 to 14.
  - These series of girls-only sessions are organised within partner clubs across the country.
- **Sportivate**, lottery funded initiative aimed at 11-25 year olds.
  - Provides six to eight weeks of free or low cost coaching with support to continue playing the sport of their choice.
  - Inclusive, targeting a variety of young people including minority groups.

23) Game plan, created in 2002, provided a strategy for delivering the government's UK sport and physical activity objectives.

Identify two possible reasons behind why this policy document was produced.

2 marks

**Answer:**

- Game plan provided statistics and comment about **sports participation** and associated **inequalities**.
- This initiative provided possible **solutions** to these inequalities in an attempt to **increase sports participation** levels.

24) Briefly outline two grass roots initiatives and their impact that specifically target in lower socio-economic groups.

6 marks

**Answer:**

3 marks for 3 of:

How?

- **StreetGames** is a lottery funded charity that was set up by a small group of experienced workers already involved in community regeneration projects and Sport England Sport Action Zone projects.
- Managed by a network of **Doorstep Sport providers**.
- Its mission is to change lives, change communities and change sport particularly in **disadvantaged communities**.
- **Chance to shine** is a sport's charity initiative '**Street Cricket**' introducing this sport to thousands more young people in inner city areas.
- It uses the game to increase aspiration, promote sportsmanship, social cohesion and create opportunities in diverse communities affected by youth crime and anti-social behaviour, with an impact on young peoples' fitness as well.

3 marks for 3 of:

Impact?

- Because it can be much more difficult for **organisations** in these areas to **raise funds** for capital project than it is in relatively prosperous areas.
- To help achieve **regeneration**.
- To help achieve **social inclusion**.
- Contribute to closing the gap in the **provision** of sports facilities between deprived areas and other areas.
- Help raise levels of **participation**.
- Value to **health** to promote active lifestyles.
- **Educational outcomes** and development of personal and social skills.
- **Community safety**, cohesion and crime reduction.
- Sport England making its contribution to the Government's social agenda.
- Discover and develop **potential elite performers** linked to specific sport schemes.