**Godalming College**

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Grade: U/S 1 2 3

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**Sociology Department**

**Disability and Stratification**

**STRATIFICATION WORKBOOK 5**

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| Name: | Set: | Group: |

Disability

**Disability questions from ‘Sociology AQA A-Level Year 2’, Chapman et al**

**Introducing the debate:**

Why, until fairly recently has sociology had little to say about disability?

Why has this now changed?

How does the World Health Organisation define an ‘impairment’?

How is disability defined by the social model?

What are the key differences identified between an impairment and a disability?

**The Demographics of Disability**

According to the government’s Office for Disability Issues how many people in the UK have a disability?

What are the differences based on age?

**Disability: myths and misunderstandings**

What are some of the myths?

Why is the location between disabled and non-disabled people inevitably somewhat subjective?

What issues surround the use of the term ‘normal’?

**Composition of disabled population**

What are the three main sources of diversity in relation to disability according to the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit (2005)?

**Disability and life chances: the role of the government**

What did the 1970 Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act do?

What did the 1995 Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) do?

And the 2005 DDA?

What was the strategy put forward by the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit in 2005?

What did the coalition government do for equality between disabled and non-disabled people?

**The evidence on disabled people’s life-chances**

What were the findings of a longitudinal study by the Office for Disability Issues (ODI)?

What disadvantages do disabled people continue to face in relation to education, employment and living standards?

**Hate Crime**

What happened in the case of Fiona Pilkington in 2007?

What did the report ‘Hidden in plain sight’ conclude in 2011?

How many hate crimes against disabled people do the Home Office estimate happen?

**DAVIES:** Most sociological research in this field has been carried out by disabled sociologists

Able-bodied sociologist have in comparison shown little interest in how society stratifies by disability

Why?

1. Few sociologists are disabled themselves
2. Disability provokes complex emotional responses in the non-disable, ‘mixture of guilt, fear, revulsion, anxiety, pity and embarrassment’. Easiest way to deal? Avoid
3. Most sociologists have dismissed disability as a medical rather than sociological problem worthy of social research. Tend to see disability as a result of individual circumstance rather than a product of society/ social issue

**DEFINING DISABILITY**

**Medical model:**

Approach focuses almost exclusively on impairment and therefore sees the difficulties experienced by the disabled as a product of their physical/ mental condition

**DAVIES:** argues social barriers prevent the disabled from fully participating in society

Government policy as a result of the medical model is focused on individual limitations and does not help to remove discriminatory barriers- i.e. by employers- which are mainly responsible for holding the disabled back

**SOCIAL MODEL:**

An approach focuses on how the difficulties and disadvantages experienced by the disabled may be the product of prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory practises.

**SHEARER:** ‘disability’ as a term is imposed on disabled people by the patterns and social expectations organised by/ for the non-disabled.

**BARNES:** ‘Impairment’ should be used to refer to physical, intellectual sensory and hidden limitations, whereas ‘disability’ should refer to the loss or limiting of opportunities that prevent the disabled from taking part in the normal life on the community on an equal basis with others- because of physical and social barriers.

This model therefore argues that disabled people are actually disabled and stratified by society rather than their impairment.

1. Social institutions act in a discriminatory fashion that undermines disabled people’s potential for independence
2. The attitudes and beliefs (i.e. prejudices and stereotypes) that non-disabled people hold about disabled people portray them in a negative light and consequently oppress them

**THOMPSON:** there exists a combination of social forces, cultural values and personal prejudices that marginalise the disabled and produce a type of inequality which he calls ‘disableism’

This refers to the everyday prejudice and discrimination people face in general and from institutions that fail to provide for their needs

**MARXIST THEORY**

**OLIVER:**

* Marginalisation and oppression of disabled people takes a unique form in Western capitalist societies
* Pre-industrial, agricultural societies attitudes to disabled were very different- key role in economic life of communities
* Industrialisation and factory system resulted in intensive labour processes, as a result worth of individuals came to be assessed according to their economic value
* Paid employment, became main source of identity and status

**HYDE:** Dominant ideology of capitalism was ‘competitive individualism’

* Chronically sick and disabled considered to have an inferior status to waged workers

**OLIVER:** social exclusion of disabled reinforced by state policy

* The state transferred their responsibility for the assessment, treatment and care of the disabled to medical professionals. This resulted in dominance of medical model.
* Increasingly committed to long-stay hospitals/ asylums- institutionalism in what GOFFMAN called ‘total institutions’: surrender individuality
* Cure centred about disabled people accepting ‘learned helplessness’- they were the problem and were dependent on others

***Combining the notes above, the textbook source at the end of this booklet and the powerpioint make a summary of the following:***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Summary of the medical model** | |
| ***strengths (p.407)*** | ***weaknesses*** |
|  |  |
| **Summary of the social model- including marxist arguments** | |
| ***strengths (p.409)*** | ***weaknesses*** |
|  |  |

**INEQUALITY**

* The social model and Marxism note UK is NOT a meritocracy in regards to opportunities for disabled people.
* **HYDE:** anti-disabled prejudice underpins everyday beliefs/language/mass media
* Institutional: Educational, welfare, health, legal systems.

**RYAN and THOMAS (1980):** Disabled people are characterised by their ‘abnormalities’

**Morris:** Prejudicial attitudes- ‘do not belong’- stigmatized

**DAVIES:** Seen as possessing discrediting characteristics- ugly, asexual, intellectually impaired, unable to speak for themselves, dependent, bitter, pitiful

* Disabled people are significantly more likely to experience unfair treatment at work than non-disabled people. In 2008, 19 per cent of disabled people experienced unfair treatment at work compared to 13 per cent of non-disabled people
* Around a third of disabled people experience difficulties related to their impairment in accessing public, commercial and leisure goods and services
* Four-fifths of disabled young people in England report being bullied.
* People with a disability or long-term illness are over twice as likely to report bullying or harassment in the workplace as non-disabled people.

***LANGUAGE AND MASS MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS***

**DAVIES:** ‘Language doesn’t simply reflect the world, it constructs the world for us by the meanings it conveys’

**HYDE:** Everyday language used to describe the disabled is often derogatory and abusive- dehumanises

Media reinforces prejudice:

1. **BARNES:** notes existence of negative stereotypes on TV/ print media
2. Even positive images are actually stereotypical assumptions- ‘extraordinary heroism’ presents disabled as ‘super-cripples’, appeals reinforce notion of pity.

**DAVIES:** stereotyping is immensely powerful for three reasons

1. Results in social segregation- this isolation then reinforces prejudice due to ignorance
2. Disability acts as a master status- seen exclusively in terms of their impairment
3. Potential for self- fulfilling prophecy- disabled learn dependency/ helplessness is expected of them

**HYDE:** Disabled have very few role models to aspire to- negative self-identity- lack self-confidence/esteem

**OLIVER and BARNES:** ‘To become ‘disabled’ is to be assigned a new identity’

Paralympics

* Eight in ten British adults say that Paralympics 2012 has had a positive impact on the way disabled people are viewed by the public.
* **Lord Coe**: ''I really genuinely think we have had a seismic effect in shifting public attitudes. I don't think people will ever see sport the same way again, I don't think they will ever see disability in the same way again. One of the most powerful observations was made to me, by one of our volunteers, who talked about having lifted some of the clouds of limitation.''
* The Games changed the perception of the public towards disability.
* Hoped Games would promote equality of opportunity and greater respect if those with disabilities, as well as empowering them to explore what they could do.

Rise in popularity does not convert to more knowledge/ lasting impact?

* 82% of 11-16 year olds are still unable to name a disability charity.
* For the Paralympics to have a long-lasting legacy, services for disabled people would have to be improved, with public transport in particular needing major investment to meet the needs of disabled people in the country
* Disapproval of government’s welfare policies indicates a slash in support for disabled people

***Living standards***

* 20 per cent of individuals in families with at least one disabled member live in relative income poverty, on a Before Housing Costs basis, compared to 15 per cent of individuals in families with no disabled member
* 22 per cent of children in families with at least one disabled member are in poverty, a significantly higher proportion than the 16 per cent of children in families with no disabled member
* Over 1 in 4 of families with disabled people live below 60% median income: 29% of those with a disabled adult, 28% of those with a disabled child and 38% of those with both.
* Disabled people are over-represented in the most deprived neighbourhoods in England.

***Transport***

* Around a fifth of disabled people report having difficulties related to their impairment or disability in accessing transport
* Between 2004/05 and 2011/12, the percentage of buses with low-floor wheelchair access increased from 52 per cent to 88 per cent

***Housing***

* Although the gap in non-decent accommodation has closed over recent years, one in three households with a disabled person still live in non-decent accommodation.
* One in five disabled people requiring adaptations to their home believe that their accommodation is not suitable.

***Communications***

* Disabled people are significantly less likely to live in households with access to the internet than non-disabled people. In 2011 61 per cent of disabled people lived in households with internet access, compared to 86 per cent of non-disabled people

***Independent living***

* Over a quarter of disabled people say that they do not frequently have choice and control over their daily lives

***Justice System***

* Disabled people are significantly more likely to be victims of crime than non-disabled people. This gap is largest amongst 16-34 year-olds where 39 per cent of disabled people reported having been a victim of crime compared to 28 per cent of non-disabled people
* Disabled people are less likely than their non-disabled peers to think the Criminal Justice System (CJS) is fair. This gap is largest amongst 16-34 year-olds, where 54 per cent of disabled people think that the CJS is fair compared to 66 per cent of non-disabled people

***Employment***

* In 2012, 46.3 per cent of working-age disabled people are in employment compared to 76.4 per cent of working-age non-disabled people. There is therefore a 30.1 percentage point gap between disabled and non-disabled people, representing over 2 million people. The gap has reduced by 10 percentage points over the last 14 years and has remained stable over the last two years despite the economic climate.
* Disabled women experience a 31% pay penalty compared to non-disabled men.
* Disabled men experience a pay gap of 11% compared with non-disabled men
* For low qualified British men with disabilities the chances of working halved, from 77% to 38% from the 1970s to the 2000s.
* Employment rates vary by impairment. For example, only 23% of people with depression are in employment, compared to 62% of people with skin conditions.
* Figures suggest that 45% of disabled people in their early 20s are NEET.
* Mark Hyde (1998) refers to the Marxist concept of a ‘reserve army of labour’, explaining that disabled people are most likely to be discarded when there is need to reduce the workforce. Disabled people are particularly underrepresented in professional and managerial positions, leading to vertical segregation and the presence of horizontal segregation.

***Education***

Between 2005/06 and 2010/11, the percentage of pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\*-C has

* increased from 66.3 per cent to 88.9 per cent for students without Special Educational Needs (SEN)
* increased from 19.8 per cent to 59.2 per cent for students with SEN without a statement
* increased from 8.7 per cent to 24.9 per cent for students with SEN with a statement

Post-19 Education

* Disabled people are around three times as likely not to hold any qualifications compared to non-disabled people, and around half as likely to hold a degree-level qualification
* 19.2 per cent of working age disabled people do not hold any formal qualification, compared to 6.5 per cent of working age non-disabled people
* 14.9 per cent of working age disabled people hold degree-level qualifications compared to 28.1 per cent of working age non-disabled people
* When SEN is combined with those eligible for FSM, outcomes drop even further. Of children with SEN and who are eligible for FSM, only 10% of girls and 8% of boys in England obtain 5 good GCSEs including English and Maths.
* Across Britain, disabled adults are three times as likely as others to have no qualifications.
* Almost three-quarters (71%) of permanent exclusions in England involved pupils with some form of SEN in 2008/09.

***POLITICAL PROCESS***

**Oliver:** notes disabled are often excluded from political process

* Inappropriate services are often the result with decisions being made by able-bodied politicians with limited awareness/ understanding

**HYDE:** This has resulted in disabled people’s movement- based on social mode of disability

* Challenged negative stereotypes by becoming organised
* Has resulted in Disability Discrimination Act/ programming aimed at disabled.

**Exam practice**

Item: People with disabilities are particularly underrepresented in the professions and management which offer higher earnings and security of employment (vertical segregation). At the same time they are overrepresented in low-paid, less-skilled routine work.

Applying material from the item, analyse two reasons why people with disabilities are disadvantaged in the labour market [10]

* Outline two ways disabled people face discrimination in the contemporary UK [20]
* Evaluate the view that the social model of disability offers the best approach to understanding disablism [20]