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Humanities
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“Are Children Born to Succeed or Fail”

I conducted an investigation to answer the question “are children born to succeed or fail?”

This means that systematically when a child is born there future of whether they are going to succeed or fail is determined depending on their families’ background. A success should have been born into a Social Class 1 or 2 family, a family that is functional and a family that loves and cares for their child/children. This is the environment that a child born to succeed would have been nurtured in. On the other hand a failure is generally born into a family with low social class and very little income, have a dysfunctional family who argue constantly and subsequently neglect their child/children. This should result in Childs chances of success being very low. This means not all children are born with the same chances of success because of the factors of socialisation. There is a debate of nature and nurture, nature argues that we inherit skills regardless of the way we are brought up. This is a very good argument because animals for example instinct (nature) to survive in the wild. Nature on the other hand is a process of which we learn manners expected of us by society so that we do not offend but fit in. The way we are nurtured depends on our parent’s behaviour, social class and environment thus the quote “give me a child before he is 7 and I will show you the man.” I have had to investigate how nurture affects our success because investigating nature is beyond my resources. In investigating how nature affects our chances of success I will be looking at social classes of grand – parents, parents and children from both primary and secondary resources, I will also be looking at ethnicity and gender.

In my opinion there are two kinds of success and failure, there is societies opinion or success and failure in which we as a whole measure there status, income, location of where they live, education, wealth, skill and property. In societies opinion people with many of these factors are deemed successful. However people with very little of these are judged as failures. However, interestingly enough society (which means everyone’s) opinion is very different to most individuals opinion. Most individuals measure success in how happy a person is. For example a person with low income, public education, little wealth, low skill and is in a council bed-sit in a run down area however, has loads of friends and is happy with there current status is in societies opinion is a failure but in most peoples opinion, as well as mine, deems them as a success because they are happy.

In this investigation I am going to focus on nurture which means I am looking to see how successful a child is depending on how they are socialised. In Ken Brownes description in the “sociology” book he says “socialisation. The process of learning the culture of any society.” Using the word learning is all what socialisation is about. Nurtures argument is that when a child is born you can “mold” them into anything you like. Thus the quote “Give me a child before he is 7, and I will show you

the man” – Programme seven up. Furthermore to support this theory I watched this programme called “FREAKS” on BBC and it showed a boy in Germany who was abandoned in a house by his parents and left with a dog. The dog treated the baby as a puppy and raised him. When the boy was found in the streets crawling on the floor and actually barking at passers by 10 years later and was then taken into care. He is still in care to this day. This is extreme proof that Childs agents of socialisation affect Childs behaviour. The boy who was raised by the dog only had the dog as a role model (which means he wanted to emulate the dog) and sadly enough he only had the dog as a parental like figure. However, for more “normal” situation with children thing like media, school, friends also affect a child as well.

Now that I have given an example and definition of success and failure and also socialisation I am now going to see if there are any patterns of who succeeds and who fails. I am going to do this by looking at a number of secondary researches.

I am going to base my secondary research to not only find out who succeeds and who fails but also, who succeeds in schools and who succeeds in the work place. This is because I would like to see if there is any contradiction.

I analysed a graph of “Attainment of 5 or more GCSE grades A* - C by gender” in a “Statistics booklet” to find out if gender effects GCSE success. After this study I noticed many patterns.

Attainment of 5 or more GCSE grades A* - C by

gender %	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000
Male	33	37	40	42	44
Female	40	46	49	51	54
Total	37	42	44	46	49

The first trend is good for both genders and that is that both genders are improving every year. In 1992 only 33% of males got 5 or more GCSE A* - C grades and 40% of females accomplished this, then in the year 2000, 44% of males achieved 5 or more GCSE A* - C grades and 54% of females attained this. Over 8 years both genders have risen percentage wise in GCSE’s. Also females are consistently performing better than males at GCSE level. They are beating males every year at attaining 5 A* - C GCSE grades. Furthermore and more staggeringly it’s not getting any better for males. Due to the fact that females are always pulling ahead of males, even though males are improving. In 1992, 33% of males achieve 5 or more GCSE A* - C grades and females 40%. This means that 7% more girls achieve 5 or more GCSE A* - C grades. Then in 1994, 1996 and 1998 9% more females achieved this than boys, even though the boy’s percentages had improved. In 2000 females got 54% and males achieved 44% of 5 or more GCSE A* - C grades. This is now a percentile differential of 10%. In conclusion to this graph we can say that males are improving there performance at GCSE, however, females are improving there performance in GCSE further still. Ultimately to conclude this graph I can state that females achieve better than males in GCSE.

Now I have identified that females are superior to males at GCSE level I am now going to see if ethnicity affects performance at GCSE level as well as gender. The graph that I shall be analysing is called “Attainment of 5 or more GCSE grades A*-C by ethnicity” once again in “Statistics booklet.”

Attainment of 5 or more GCSE grades A*-C by ethnicity

%	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000
White	37	43	45	47	50
Black	23	21	23	29	37
Indian	38	45	48	54	62
Pakistani	26	24	23	29	30
Bangladeshi	14	20	25	33	30
Other Asian	46	50	61	61	70
Other	n/a	37	46	47	43
Total	37	42	44	46	49

The first general trend is that every year that is listed each ethnicity improves its performance at GCSE except for in 1994 for Blacks and Pakistani's who both saw a 2% decrease in the figures from 1992. However, by 1998 both ethnicities recovered and fitted the trend once again. This graph also shows that the best ethnicity at GCSE level is that of the other Asian ethnicity, secondly its Indians (who are Asian as well) and thirdly whites. (4th is other, 5th Black, 6 and 7 are Pakistani and Bangladeshi's).

So in conclusion to who performs well at GCSE level, the best are female and other Asian. So after looking at this data you could predict that females and Asian would get the highest paid jobs. I am going to test this prediction by looking at average earnings for not only genders but also each individual ethnicity. I analysed a chart called "Mean (average) weekly earnings in Britain (2000)." In the "Statistics Booklet."

Average Earnings of Gender and ethnicity

Ethnicity	£	£
	Male	Female
White	332	180
Black	235	187
Indian	327	194
Pakistani	182	146
Bangladeshi	182	146
Caribbean	217	210
African	216	199

To investigate the prediction that I made that Asians and females should get the highest paid jobs. However, interestingly enough this is not the case. The average male earns £252 whereas women earn £186, £66 less than a male. In addition I looked at the graph and also found out that Asians are not the highest earning race, whites are. White men earn £332 a week and Indians earn £327 a week. This is a complete contradiction to educational success at GCSE. From these contradictions I am now interested to find out how this has happened. I feel that this may have something to do with college and university success and also social class of a person. This graph "Who goes to University?" from the "Statistics Booklet"

Who goes to University

Social Class	Year 1996	Year 1997	Year 1998	Year 1999	Year 2000	Year 2001
Social Classes A, B, C1	185169	201808	198332	199005	200931	208991
Social Classes C2, D, E	56053	66460	63621	64921	67465	67492
Unknown	27067	35050	36257	39139	40322	48989
Total	262289	303318	298220	303065	308718	325472

This graph shows what social classes attend university. We can say that every year universities are enrolling more students. (Except for 1998 and 1999) this maybe because people are realising the benefits of further education. In 2001, nearly 3 times as many people in Social Class A, B and C1 208,991 enrolled into a university. Whereas only 67,442 students from social class C2, D E backgrounds enrolled. This is significant because for all the top jobs you have to attend a university. This is proving the quote "The rich get richer the poor get poorer." Furthermore social classes C2,D,E only enrol 11,000 more people into university from 1996 – 2001 and yet social classes A,B,C1 enrolled nearly 25,000 more people from 1996 -2001.

I conclude that there must be a link between ethnicity, gender and social class that dictates a success of a child. So, I think that for the highest paid jobs you have to be highly qualified which means that generally you have to attend and pass university. Furthermore, University is expensive therefore generally children brought up in the higher social classes are able to enrol into a university because they are more financially secure than those of the lower social classes. So this results in that the higher social classes succeed. Also, I feel that Asian children are in the lower social classes. Thus even though they achieve better than anyone else at GCSE, they are not financially secure enough to press on at university. Therefore ethnicity effects weather or not a child succeeds or fails. Therefore ethnicity effects weather or not a child succeeds or fails. Here by I can say that social class A, B, C1 children will succeed because they can afford private schooling and Universities. Therefore Social Class effects weather a child succeeds or fails. Gender also effects weather or not a child succeeds or fails. Gender also effects weather or not a child succeeds or fails. This is because of sexist stereotypes that parents and teachers inflict upon a child at an early age. The "Socialisation Student Booklet" proves this. Simple things like the toys parents buy there children and the nursery rhymes sung to the two genders. For Example boys at an early age are given toys that are competitive and toys that they are in control of like Racing Cars. Girls on the other hand are given toys that require love and caring for like dolls. Furthermore, both genders are usually sung these nursery rhymes. "What are little girls made of, sugar and spice and all things nice, that's what little girls are made of." "What are little boys made of, Slugs and snails and puppy dogs tails, that's what little boys are made of." This tells young children from an early age that there is a difference between the two genders. It also tells boys to be competitive in the world whereas females are meant to be loving. Therefore when a child leaves school males would be more likely to further there education whereas females even though better achievers at school are socialised to not go to university but find a husband and get married.

I feel that in contradiction to my prediction that females and Asians will succeed, I now feel that White males will succeed in the world of work.

Now that it is October I am going to on work experience, which means that I am going to experience the world of work for two weeks. Whilst on my work experience I am going to integrate it into my studies as this will allow me to see that if my theory of White men succeeding is accurate. Unfortunately I am mostly concentrating on work in and around the East Midlands as other areas of the country are out of my resources. However, in this section of my investigation I will have an insight to the rest of the country aswell.

This investigation is data that I shall be collecting and analysing to prove or even contradict my secondary research that I did by collecting my own data.

So before I went on work experience I conducted a survey to be carried out in an interview style and asked 11 other people to collect this data for me. The survey was conducted to find out what gender was the top person within the company, furthermore what ethnicity were the managers. Also I was interested in the work force they were in charge of because the higher the work forces the higher the status of the manager.

(See graph 1 at the end of the investigation)

From this table I can see that out of 12 companies included 7 of 12 managers are male. Also in the 12 companies interviewed there was in total 44 people on management team, 52% of them are male. Furthermore out of the 44 members of management teams across the 12 companies a staggering 97.7% of them are white and there are no Asians and only 2.3% blacks on the management teams. Even more specifically 50% members of management are white and male.

The second survey that I conducted in my primary research is called "Two generations, No change?" The aim of this survey was to see if social class of grandparents would influence the social class of there children. This would also give me an indication to weather or not parents give there children the same educational background that they had. The questions I had to ask to achieve this were the gender of the person, occupation, social class, school (State or Private), number of children, then align these answers up against their children's as to identify trends. I would have to conduct these questions by using an interview technique because it was convenient. By going for convenience my results are neither balanced/stratified nor geographically spread and furthermore more there was no representation of ethnic minorities. However, I needed quick accessible results; by asking 19 other people to conduct a similar interview for me I was able to achieve this.

(See graph 2 at the end of the investigation)

Now that I have got the results of my survey back I can conclude that little if not any trends are revealed. Only 25% of children in the survey were found to be in the same social class in adult hood as there parents. 30% of people in the survey were in lower social classes than that of there parents. Therefore only 45% of people who participated in this survey achieved a higher social class than there parents.

As far as tends go on a educational stand point no body in the second generation attended private school and only 2 people in the grand-parent generation attended private school. This means that only 5% out of everybody in this survey attended private schooling.

The majority of female children in my survey grew up into a social class below show class 3 (50%), mainly into social class 4 (50%). Males however performed differently with 6 males achieving social class 3a, 3b. 6 males achieved social class 1 and 2. So in conclusion to the “2 generation survey, No change?” I can once again conclude that men achieve higher social classes and success than women. People who went to private school did not send there children to private school. Also children did not seem to be influenced by their parent’s social class.

This survey contradicts everything that I have been taught in school.

Now it is November we are going to watch a programme called “7up” and “28 up” I want to integrate this into my studies. I can do this because these two programmes are about 12 children who are filmed every 7 years to prove the theory “Show me a child before he is seven and I will show you the man.” However, this source is also unreliable because of the sample size, 12 children are representing 55,000,000 people, and it’s not a fair reflection. Also the sample was not distributed fairly around the country. My reasons being that from the 12 children 8 of them lived in London, 2 of them from Merseyside (Liverpool), 1 from up North and one from Scotland. The gender ration was also unfair, 8 boys: 4 girls. There was also no ethnic minority representation. The social classes were not stratified either. There was 5 social class 5 children, no social class 4 and 2 represented, 2 social class 3 children and 5 social class 1 children. I feel that ATV did this programme like this to enthesis the 2 extremes of living. However, this is within my limitations so I have to use this. Here is my survey.

Name of child	Social Class as a child	Education	Social Class as an adult
Bruce	Social Class 1	Private	Social Class 1
Tony	Social Class 5	State	Social Class 3
Neil	Social Class 3	State	Social Class 5
John	Social Class 1	Private	Social Class 1
Andrew	Social Class 1	Private	Social Class 1
Nick	Social Class 2	Private	Social Class 2
Sue	Social Class 5	State	Social Class 3
Jackie	Social Class 5	State	Social Class 3
Lynn	Social Class 5	State	Social Class 3
Suzy	Social Class 1	Private	Social Class 1
Paul	Social Class 5	State	Social Class 3
Peter	Social Class 3	State	Social Class 2

I can not do any conclusion on ethnicity in this survey as all the participants are white however; I can investigate social class and gender. Overall 5 of the 12 participants remained in the same social class, 1 of them ended up in a lower social class and 6 of them ended up in a higher social class. None of the women dropped in social class and 1 of them stayed in the same social class and yet 3 of the women achieved higher social class. 4 of the male participants stayed in the same social class, 1 male dropped in social class, 3 of the males improved there social class. This proves that men perform better than females because the 3 women who improved there social class did so through marriage. On a more positive aspect, on a whole 50% of the participants earned higher social class than they were children. I am now intrigued to see if education effects this. This proved to be interesting. 6 of the 7 state education children improved there social class. Whereas all 5 private education children remained in the same social class. However, this could be deceiving because the lowest social class achieved by the privately educated children was 2. To get a clearer view I am going to do a correlation graph.

From this you can see that by looking at the line of best fit and then the crucial meeting point it shows a clear trend of social class increases between childhood and adulthood. Clearest point being that if you grew up in social class 3a you will wind up in social class 2.

From “7up” and “28up” I can say that once again white succeed more than the other ethnicities and males dominate the genders in the work place and furthermore that children’s social class is improving to that of there parents.

My reading to the secondary research of this investigation tells me many things. It shows that in school whether it is private or state, Girls and Asians perform better at GCSE. I feel that this is because of the way boys and girls are nurtured into playing with toys that teach them to be organised and caring, therefore this benefits school work because they take more pride and organise better than boys this subsequently means higher grades. I know that Asians perform well at GCSE because Asians are very competitive with school.

However, when it comes to University only those who belong in high social classes can enrol into University and therefore they wind up with the top jobs. Also because of the way we are nurtured children, mainly boys, attend university because when they are children they are taught to be in control and competitive.

So in conclusion I say that discrimination affects weather or not a child succeeds or fails. I feel this because when no discrimination exists (in school), females and Asians succeed. However, when enrolling into a university most Asians can not participate because they do not have the funds to do so, the same with other ethnic minorities. This then means that only people who belong to the high social classes can attend, who are generally white.

So this means that from my secondary research I can say that in contradiction to GCSE performance that in the work place white men will succeed. This means that a child is born to succeed or fail depending on there environment.

My survey “2 generations, No change?” in the primary research supports this idea, it showed that 25% of cases children grew up into the same social class as there parents. It also showed that everyone who went to a state school sent there children to a state school. This shows the nurture influence upon a child effects the way they nurture there own children. It also supports the idea that men achieve greater success than women, 50% of the males belong to social class 1 and 2 and 100% of the male

participants belonged to social class 3b and above. However 50% of the female participants belonged to social class 4.

My investigation into “7up” and “28up” also gives a supporting verdict. I showed that all of the children in social class 1, 2 either improved or stayed into the same social class. It shows that if you are nurtured in social class then (in general) you will also end up in adult hood as a success. This also supports the idea of males going to university and competing for jobs because 3 of the females who were in social class 5 as children attended no further education and are unemployed and only in social class 3b due to marriage.

My work experience survey heavily supports the idea of gender and ethnicity affecting job status. It shows that in 12 companies taken on management (the highest status in businesses) 52% of them were male. Even more farfetched 97.7% of management team were white.

My primary research showed that in the work place white, middle class men will succeed. My secondary research shows that white, middle class, men will succeed. They both prove the same thing.

So the answer to “are children born to succeed or fail?” on evidence I have to say yes children are either born to succeed or fail. This is because if you are born into a higher social class then you are generally more structured and the higher the enthuses of education than that of lower social classes. I fell that nature gives us limited ability however it is how we are nurtured that makes us use the most of that ability.

Limitations

The limitations to my essay were the sizes of the samples. I was unable to get a true reflection on every area of the country because I did not have the time or resources to do as such. Also not all of the sources were reliable.

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