Making Waves in Education

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A Collaboration Between:
The University of Plymouth and The University of York

Introduction

Once upon a time, in a land far, far away, two universities came together to break institutional barriers. It began when John Issitt from York University, somehow, got in touch with Joanna Haynes and Suanne Gibson from Plymouth University and they fancied a bit of (book writing) action. That's where we (a pretty superb bunch of writers) came in! It was then that the spiritual journey (writing) on the path to enlightenment (a book) had begun.

It was October, when the Plymouth Posse came up to York, much frangipane was eaten and dancing was done, but it was not all fun and games. Ideas were presented and we could see the book beginning to take shape (literally... we sat on the floor and moved bits of paper around) and a great sense of optimism filled the room.

After the camaraderie of the group it was time for each individual to spend many long hours in the library on their intellectual journeys.

After many long 'intellectual' hours in the library it was time for a trip to the seaside. York packed up their buckets and spades, put on their suntan lotion (apparently the south is hot in November) and headed towards Exmouth. It was not without conflicts, but we worked hard, so we played hard! Playing on the beach helped strengthen the bonds of our friendship, which was to be important as these bonds were to be tested during the intense meetings that followed... but they were not to be broken.

Once all the important decisions were made, it was time to go our separate ways. Many more long hours were spent in the library until we could stay awake no longer. We each persevered until we were happy with our own chapter and the deadline was met (just!).

If these pages could talk (which thankfully they can't) they'd tell a story not just of words, but of revolving dance floors, frangipane and frolics in the sea. What you have before you, is thirteen chapters, written by thirteen people, from two academic institutions, to make just one book (well actually there are about one hundred books but you know what we mean). Then they all lived happily ever after.

January 2008

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Learning Theories in Education

John Bolton

John is a mature student who has been a Police officer and a soldier before commencing his studies at the University of York. It is his intention after completing his degree to become a primary school teacher.
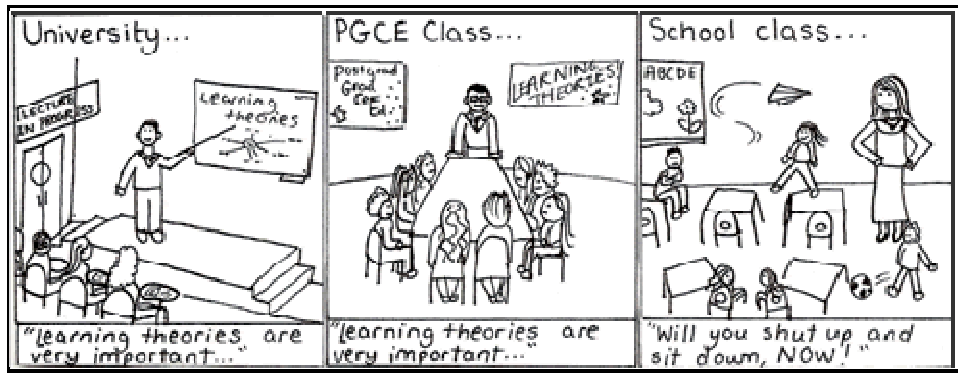
figure 1

Introduction

The cartoon above illustrates how some people may think teachers behave. They keep control of a class by shouting at them, but there are other ways to control learners. These are known as learning theories.

But what are Educational and learning theories? They are not new. Educational and learning theories have been in existence since at least the 16th Century when John Comenius (1592 – 1670) (sometimes known as Komensky) developed his ideas about education being not just for children but lifelong. He was also one of the first educators to encourage the education of women, (Pound, 2005).

Learning theories place the emphasis on nurturing the individual and the ability of teachers to facilitate the learning that people do. Johann Pestolozzi (1746 – 1827), was arguably the founder of modern education theory with his view that the home environment is important for children to learn effectively, something that educational theorists and commentators are re-emphasising today. He also encouraged cognitive learning in that he expected children to understand ideas around mathematics before moving on to numbers, (Terra Nova, 2007). By understanding the ideas behind concepts such as addition and subtraction the child finds it much easier to move onto more complex ideas.

Perhaps the most accessible definition of what learning theories are, is found in Bigge, & Shermis, (1999) who stated that : -

> *'…a systematic integrated outlook in regard to the nature of the process whereby people relate to their environments in such a way as to enhance their ability to use both themselves and their environments in a most effective way'.*

> *(p. 3)*

There are many other early innovators in the field of education in fact far too many to mention by name. Perhaps one though who deserves to be mentioned is Jean-

Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778), who postulated that all people are born good and he was the first to suggest the 'noble savage' view of mankind. Rousseau actually freed up thinking about education, allowing people to explore other possibilities and to try new ideas, (Pound, 2005). For example he believed that,

> *'… the only habit the child should be allowed is that of having no habits…Reverse the usual procedure and you will almost always do right'.*

> *(Pound, 2005. p. 7)*

These individuals were the forerunners of the more modern theorists and theories that this chapter will look at and discuss.

It is important to recognise that most teachers have either developed a theory of education or hold to a theory of education developed by others. In order to explore how teachers think about sand use learning theories I have interviewed a Head teacher, this interview is at appendix 1. Those teachers who have developed their own ways, have done this over the years by learning what works for them. This they continue to use in the classroom. Whilst this way of teaching may contain some elements of educational theory it will be an individualistic one. This is not to denigrate the teacher who develops their own theory about the teaching of young people or adults. If it works for them, and helps the people who are being taught to progress, then they should use it. The problem, however, is that this is unlikely to be suitable for other teachers to use. The point is that it is not just the theory that the teacher uses that makes it successful, it is also the personality of that teacher that makes their method successful, (Cohen, 1969).

When we talk about educational theory we are not talking about a single discipline i.e. that of the educational theorist who merely looks at education. Educational theory is a multi disciplinary field. It covers Psychology, Education, Philosophy and History, (Kazepides, 1994). It is only by combining some or all disciplines, that an educational theory may be developed and articulated.

Education theories have perhaps developed much faster over the last 50 or so years than in the previous 500. I have been unable to find any research that explains the reason for this. Theory and research grows and continues to grow in regard to education, (Schunk, 2004).

> *'We have often heard that …of all the scientists from the dawn of history until now some 90% are still alive. It would not be surprising to find that of all the educational researchers in our history close to 100% are still alive and active in their field'.*

> *(Torsten, 1979, p.326)*

Torsten identified that until recently universities had few Professors of Education and even up until the 1950's and 60's, those that did have them linked the subjects of education with psychology. The emphasis, however, was mainly on the psychology at the expense of education. Since then, the numbers of chairs in education has grown and more emphasis has been placed on education. This may be explained by the beliefs current at that time regarding the power of education; Halsey and Floud, (1961), believed that education was essential to exploit modern technology. Education had also been seen, since the early 19th century, as being essential to a fully functioning and effective democracy, (Dewey, 1916). This was re-emphasised forcefully in the 1950s and 1960s by Crosland and others, (Halsey, et. al. 2003).

This has led to a complete change in how we look at the mind over the last 30 to 40 years. (National Research Council, 2000) It is important then to recognise that educational theories are changing all the time as more is discovered about how the mind works. As Torsten, (1979), demonstrates, the number of theorists has dramatically increased in number in the last 50 to 60 years. This is bound to bring new research and new insights into education.

In order to acquire an understanding of theories that are popular now it is important to look at some of what has gone before. This chapter will look at three different theories of learning. These are, Behaviourism, Cognitivism and Humanism. It will also identify and suggest some of the ways in which these theories have been and are being put to use where relevant to the discussion. The following chart (see figure 2) gives an illustration of what theories it is intended that this essay will cover, and the names of some of the theorists involved in their development.

Behaviourism.

Whilst all of learning and teaching is about behaviour, behaviourism is in itself a field of study, with a focus on what a person or animal does as opposed to what it thinks. It is in fact the science of behaviour and not the science of the mind. A behaviourist would argue that this is what psychology is all about, (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy 2007).

Within the overall theory of behaviourism are a number of sub-groups two of which are 'Connectivism' and 'Conditioning'.

Edward Thorndike (1874 – 1949) was one of the main advocates of 'Connectivism'. Through his research he came to the view that how humans and animals behave is all about stimulus and response. Thorndike believed that he was able to cause an animal or person to behave in a certain way through the use of a stimulus. The stimulus and the context that the stimulus occurs in are what creates a particular response. This response can be reduced or encouraged by the application of a further stimulus (either a negative or positive one) dependent upon what is desired, (Tip Theories, 11.10.2007).

Behaviourism Conditioning

Classical
Operant
Contiguous

Educational & Learning Theories

Stimulus/response
Reinforce
Punishment

Reward & Punishment

Pavlov, Thorndike, Skinner & Guthrie

Skill Development

Humanistic

Self Growth

Maslow, Rogers & Tolman

Cognitive

Modelling/Goal Setting

Knowing how/why/when

figure 2

Chomsky, Piaget, Vygotsky

Thorndike believed that learning occurred through trial and error. This led him to the view that there are two laws that relate to learning. These are the laws of Exercise and Effect, (Schunk, 2004).

Thorndike conducted experiments using cats in particular to see how effective this stimuli and response actually was. Thorndike was able to show that the cat behaved in a certain way when a stimulus was placed before it. In this case the stimulus was food and the cat had to pull a lever to get the food. What Thorndike was able to show was that the cat 'learnt' how to access food by pulling the lever. Thorndike believed that this theory of learning could be extrapolated to include humans and therefore he believed that this was the universal law of learning i.e. the law of cause and effect, (Domjan, 1998).

Possibly the best description of the law of effect is given by Thorndike himself:

> *'When a modifiable connection between a situation and a response is made and is accompanied or followed by a satisfying state of affairs, that connections strength is increased: when made and accompanied or followed by an annoying state of affairs, its strength is decreased'.*
>
> *(Thorndike, 1913. p. 4.)*

Moving on from Thorndike to B. F. Skinner (1904 – 1990) who was also a believer in behaviourism and conditioning it is important to note that Skinner built on the previous work of Thorndike. Skinner termed his view of behaviourism 'Operant Conditioning'. His view was that an animal or human being, operated upon through conditioning would also emit responses, (Tip Theories, 11.10.2007).

He believed that it was not just about trial and error, but that a response, which may occur naturally, could then be improved through stimuli from a third party. This could apply either in a medical setting (behavioural therapy), or in the classroom amongst other settings. As with Thorndike, he took the view that the stimuli could be negative, pain or criticism for example, or positive, as in praise or reward, (B.F. Skinner Foundation 2007). This is the basic difference between the view that Skinner held and that of other behaviourists, such as Thorndike. Whilst they believed that it was reward or punishment that could cause the behaviour in the first place, Skinner reinforced behaviour that had already happened. Thus this is the essential difference between classical and operant conditioning. Classical conditioning causes behaviour to occur and acts on that whilst operant conditioning acts on a naturally occurring behaviour.

Whilst Behaviourism, and in particular, 'Operant Conditioning', has been widely accepted by the educational community as a way of teaching, (think about the ticks that you received for your work in school, the well done stickers and the grades you were promised if you worked harder and answered the questions correctly). There are, however, also strong arguments against behaviourism.

Kohn, (1995) argues that to treat human beings as animals is wrong and that, contrary to the view of Skinner; human beings actually have choice in what they do. They do more than merely react to stimuli. This is not to say that human beings are not affected by conditioning. As Kohn (1995) explained one has only to observe people for a short while to identify that to some extent we are all conditioned. A useful example is as Kohn says, if you are in the shower and you hear the toilet flush in the house it is likely that you will get out of the shower. This is because you are expecting the water to get hotter. You have learnt that the water system is unable to supply enough cold water to keep a consistent temperature of water coming out of the shower and to fill the toilet cistern at the same time. The first time that this

happened to you, the hotter water probably shocked you. The second time you may not have recognised the noise but by the third it was likely you expected the water to get hotter and stepped out. However, whilst it is a valid point that we would step out without thinking about it, if we are aware that something is about to happen we can decide to override the reaction to the stimulus and react in a different way to the way an animal may react.

Kohn's argument though is that we are not animals that merely react to stimuli. We have choice and it is this choice that makes us different to the animals.

As Koestler, (1995), said

> ' For the anthropomorphic view of the rat, American psychology substituted a rattomorphic view of man'.

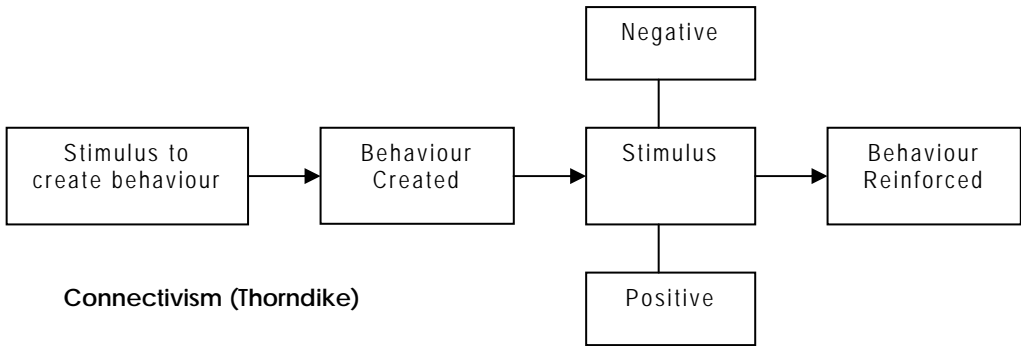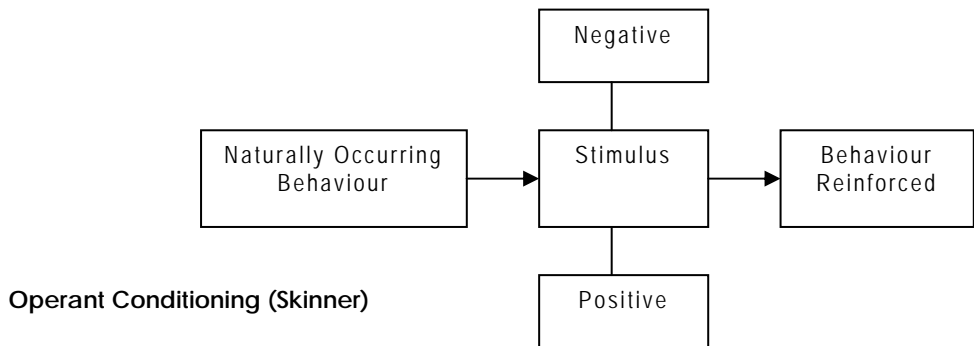> (Koestler in Kohn, 1995, p 3).

Koestler is saying that instead of giving the rat human like qualities as in, for example 'Wind in the Willows' by Kenneth Graham, what we do is transfer the life view of a rat into the life view of a human being.

It is this that causes the problem regarding behaviourism as the only way forward. Whilst it has some validity and continues to be used today in some circumstances, it is not the complete answer to learning. If we consider for a moment the differences between classical and operant conditioning it becomes obvious that we do in not fact merely react to stimuli as Thorndike argues. We all behave in ways that may be the same or different to how others may behave in similar conditions. We are able to control, to a degree, how we behave. This is because we are able to think about what is happening to us and to react according to the viewpoint that we arrive at. It is, however, also apparent that we can have our viewpoint altered by a deliberately created stimulus that will affect how we think and therefore possibly react. This is why, because it is effective in certain circumstances, that conditioning is still used today.

 The graphic below (figure 3) gives a description of the two types of conditioning.

Cognitive Learning

Cognitive psychology, of which cognitive learning is a part, is a relatively recent way of looking at how we learn and behave. Whilst it is difficult to identify a single date on which it commenced a critical date is 1956 when Noam Chomsky (1928 -) presented a paper on the theory of language. This was just one of a surprising number of papers presented in that year relating to cognitive issues, (Eysenck, & Keane, 2005). Cognitive Psychology was a response to the then predominant belief in behaviourism. Cognitive psychologists believe that through the use of modelling and artificial intelligence it is possible to both predict and explain human behaviour. In contrast to the behaviourist the cognitivist believes that learning cannot be

```
                                    ┌──────────┐
                                    │ Negative │
                                    └──────────┘
                                         │
┌───────────────┐   ┌───────────┐   ┌──────────┐   ┌───────────┐
│ Stimulus to   │──▶│ Behaviour │──▶│ Stimulus │──▶│ Behaviour │
│ create        │   │ Created   │   │          │   │ Reinforced│
│ behaviour     │   │           │   │          │   │           │
└───────────────┘   └───────────┘   └──────────┘   └───────────┘
                                         │
     **Connectivism (Thorndike)**    ┌──────────┐
                                     │ Positive │
                                     └──────────┘
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figure 3

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                                    ┌──────────┐
                                    │ Negative │
                                    └──────────┘
                                         │
            ┌────────────────────┐   ┌──────────┐   ┌───────────┐
            │ Naturally Occurring│──▶│ Stimulus │──▶│ Behaviour │
            │ Behaviour          │   │          │   │ Reinforced│
            └────────────────────┘   └──────────┘   └───────────┘
                                         │
     **Operant Conditioning (Skinner)**  ┌──────────┐
                                         │ Positive │
                                         └──────────┘
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identified just from a change in behaviour. Learning occurs whether or not there is a change in behaviour. The question is, are we free to decide after we have learnt something, whether we should change our behaviour? The behaviourist would argue that any learning creates a change in behaviour whilst the cognitivist would argue that the learning still occurs even if it does not create a change in behaviour at that point. Jean Piaget (1896 – 1980) from his observations of children argued that there are four different stages of cognitive development and that they relate to a period in each persons life. Whilst some of his claims are open to debate, (for more information see chapter 2, Piaget v Vygotsky), it is useful to look at these four stages.

These stages are: -

- Sensorimotor stage (Infancy)

- Pre-operational stage (Toddler and Early Childhood)

- Concrete operational stage (Early Adolescence)

- Formal operational Stage (Adolescence and Childhood)

(Educational Psychology Interactive 2007)

The **sensorimotor** stage is about what the child can feel and do. The child is trying to make sense of the world around them. They have, however limited abilities to do so. After all the child cannot verbalise, other than by crying. The child demonstrates what it knows, or to put it another way, the child's intelligence is shown by what it can do when carrying out a motor activity. As the child moves to the **Pre-operational** stage the language of the child starts to improve and mature as the child develops memory and what we would term intelligence. Piaget believed that at this stage the child is very egocentric. In these terms egocentric means that they are unable to see it from another person's perspective.

As the child grows it enters the **concrete operational** stage and becomes logical and egocentricity reduces so they are able to reverse their mental actions. Finally the **formal operational** stage begins. They are able to link abstract concepts together. Piaget argued that for the vast majority of the population this is a step too far and that most people fail to reach this point.

However, it has to be noted that a number of people have challenged the view that Piaget held about child development. For example Piaget postulated that much of a young child's speech was of no use as it was communicating with no one and was in fact speaking to itself. This was challenged by Lev Vygotsky (1836 – 1934) who believed it was the beginning of learning how to use language and that the child was going through a learning process, (Spiked it 2007).

Whilst these challenges to Piaget carry weight, they do not affect the validity of his view about cognitive development, as even the people challenging do so, in the main, from a cognitive viewpoint.

What is, however, apparent is that there is still much to learn about how people mature and take information in and process it. Whilst Piaget was quite firm about the different stages and the ages at which children develop the various forms of cognition others have not been as convinced.

Flavell, (1993) stated: -

> *'We have much to learn about exactly what sorts of experience at what points in development for what sorts of children nurture what kinds of cognitive acquisitions.'*
>
> *(p. 342)*

Cognitive learning has taken over to a large extent from behaviourism. It is being used in western schools and a good example is its use in mathematics in the Netherlands. Treffers, & Beishuizen, (1999) highlighted how as part of the Realistic Mathematical education being used in Dutch schools cognition is a large part.

It is a reversal of how children used to be taught:

'It involves a complete reversal of the teaching/learning process. No longer is the emphasis on the teacher transmitting knowledge and concepts but on the children finding mathematical patterns and structures in realistic situations, and becoming active participants in the teaching /learning process'.

(Treffers, & Beishuizen, 1999, p28)

It is not about concepts but about the cognitive process and how the learner is able to reach that concept, (Freudenthal 1973). We all arrive at concepts in different ways and by allowing learners to reach that concept through their own cognitive process and by developing their own insights based on their own personal knowledge it embeds the concept more successfully, (Bigge & Shermis, 1999). This is what cognitive learning is about, providing the framework for learners to arrive at concepts for themselves through their won insights based on what they know and understand at the time, rather than handing those concepts to them.

Humanistic Learning

Whilst humanistic learning really came to the forefront in the 1960's and 70's (infed.org), and placed the emphasis more on the whole person, (Jarvis, P. 2006) it was first developed by Edward Tolman (1886 – 1959). Tolman believed that learning could take place without the need for any reinforcement. It is about the motivation behind what the person is doing, (The learning Curve, 2000).

A number of people led this movement in the 60's; perhaps the two most notable are Carl Rogers (1902 – 1987) and Abraham Maslow (1908 – 1970). Humanistic education was initially used for adult education and was seen as a way to educate the whole person as opposed to individual elements of that individual. It is about concern for 'self' and self-fulfilment, (Tennant, 1997). It is as both Rogers and Maslow stated about the need for the individual to 'self-actualise', (Jarvis, 2006).

Maslow identified 5 key points that an individual needs to achieve to be able to be a self-actualising organism, (Schunk, 2004).]
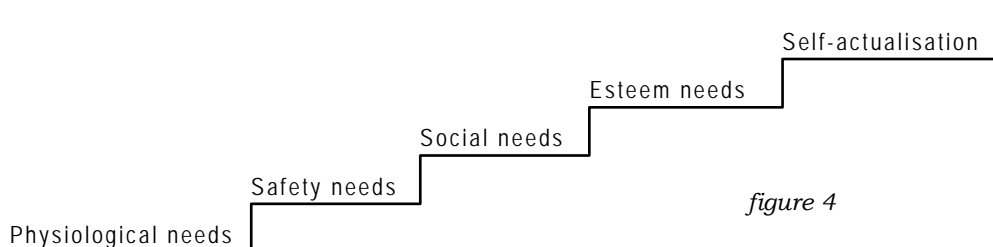
These 5 key points are illustrated below (figure 4):

figure 4

First the individual must have their physiological needs met. These include food and drink. The second critical need is the need for safety – safety from the elements or from danger. If these two basic needs are not met then it is difficult for someone to move on, or even to possibly be aware of the need to move on. An example of this is the child that is being abused in the home. Whilst it may appear to the teacher to come from a good home with parents who care, the child experiences something completely different. It may or may not have its physiological needs met but it will not feel safe and secure in the home environment. This then will prevent it from moving on to the next level.

The third stage is to belong and be loved. All human beings need to be accepted for themselves. With this acceptance should come love and only with this will they be able to move on and change and develop. Once they feel they belong and are loved they can move on to the fourth stage, which is to develop self-esteem. This is about independence and competence. Having developed this they can reach the fifth and highest level, which is self-actualisation. This is the desire for personal growth; personal growth takes many different forms and depends on what we desire for ourselves. It is not uniform across society, (Maslow, 1970). What one person may see as their ideal, another may not. However if they have achieved that self-actualisation they will respect the views of the other person.

As can be seen this theory is about the whole person and not just the learning at that time. Rogers believed that it was about developing and maintaining that whole person and not just a part of it, (Jarvis, 2006). The humanist theory is a holistic theory of education, using the experiences of that individual to enable them to learn. It involves using the affective as well as the cognitive processes. In other words as well as understanding they are feeling, (Educational Psychology Interactive). It is about using the emotions as well as mental and physical aspects of learning.

A Personal View

Like most people in this country I have gone through many stages of learning and I have experienced many different learning theories. The purpose of this section is to focus on a few small segments of my learning experiences and to discuss the effect and appropriateness of the learning theories that were used.

The first area that I will address is a segment of my secondary education when I was aged from 13 to 15 years. This was in a state secondary school. The teaching style used will be discussed as will the appropriateness of this style. The second area is my education and training, and the learning theories used, to become a combat infantryman in the RAF Regiment.

As well as identifying the learning theories I will also show how a number of linked theories impact on the learning. The main theories I will be examining are behaviourism, and the cognitive approach to learning.

Secondary School (The Cognitive Approach).

As an 11 plus failure, the 11 plus was an examination that took place at age 11 to academically select children for different types of education, either academic or more vocational, I attended the local Secondary Modern school. This school had about 500 pupils and was then considered a large school. Secondary schools tended to have a lack of expectation of their pupils. They were the people expected to go into apprenticeships, not to go to University. During my time at the school I was in the top ability set. I was at the bottom end of the scale in that set. The style of teaching was cognitivist with the teacher encouraging the student to think about what was said and discussed. Hergenhahn, (1976), best described the role of the teacher using the cognitive method when he said: -

> *'the cognitively oriented teacher's job consists of two things:*
> *(1)   to induce ambiguity,*
>
> *and*
> *(2)   help the student clarify the ambiguity.'*
>
> *(Hergenhahn 1976 p. 356)*

This did not work in my case. There is no doubt that I was more influenced by the behaviourist methodology. I was an outsider in the class desperate to be accepted by the 'in' group. This overcame any desire to learn and to address the issues that the teacher was trying to present and encourage our minds to grapple with. I was more interested in behaving in a way that would reward me with membership of the 'in' group. The school did use some behavioural systems in that it gave rewards to those doing well no matter to which ability group they belonged. This did not enable me to perceive that I was valued in the school as I was not one of the ones doing well. I therefore received no positive behavioural reinforcement of my behaviour from the school.

This left the teacher with the problem of either ignoring me or dealing with me. The general consensus was to leave the ones who did not take an active part. The teachers focussed on the more able in the class which again led to feelings of exclusion thereby reinforcing the activist part of the process, I wanted to get out of the classroom situation. This must have been disruptive for the teacher and therefore became a classroom problem.

 This fits well with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs demonstrated in Slavin. (2000). I was in fact receiving physiological needs as well as the need for safety being met. I could not get past the belongingness and love point, as I did not feel that the teacher or the 'in' crowd of pupils loved me. This made it impossible for me to reach the need to know and understand level (cognitive needs). Without reaching this I could not attain the standard that the teacher required, which then prevented me from moving on, as this was the methodology that the school used. From this it can be

seen that my education was badly affected by a number of factors, some internal and some external.

Military Training (The Behaviourist Approach)

My military training started about two years after I had left school when I joined the RAF Regiment. The infantry training was very behaviourist oriented. The training was based around reward and punishment. It was biased towards 'Operant Conditioning'. This is perhaps the most used aspect of behaviourism. Pritchard, (2006) described it, going on to say that 'It is more flexible than classical conditioning and therefore seen as more powerful'. The whole gamut of behavioural methodologies was used. The training consisted of very physical training and in depth tactics and weapons training, the intention being to make you capable of surviving in a hostile environment. At all times actions were reinforced either positively or negatively using simple responses to actions that got more complicated as you became competent at the lower levels. A good example of this is coming under simulated mortar fire. The initial reaction to explosions happening around you is to fall to the floor and make yourself as small as possible. This is the opposite of what is required. You must run out of the target area to clear the area under attack. The reaction of the trainers in this situation was to praise the ones who ran away from the explosions and to abuse the ones who fell to the floor.

Shaping was also used; in weapons training very simple moves would be taught first until competent through repetition. After the simpler tasks had been achieved it would gradually get more complex until the ability to do very complex tasks became second nature. Of course, as Schunk, (2004), in his critique of operant conditioning states, it does have many positive points but, as I discovered, you have to maintain your own integrity of thought as well and allow yourself to be 'conditioned'. Your own thought processes will still influence your behaviour, you can of course walk away in the society we live in and many did from the military training. Hergenhahn, (1976), identifies what is a concern about classical conditioning, that is the issue of brainwashing, it is possible to influence a person to do things that they would normally not consider doing, this is why your own personal integrity has to be maintained. Perhaps this is why the furthest that the State is allowed to use conditioning as a tool is in the training of its military forces.

Conclusions

It is worth looking at my experiences in the military in relation to Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory. There is no doubt that I had moved through the first two stages of Maslow. I had somewhere to live and sleep that more often than not was reasonable so I had the basic physiological needs. The safety needs are a little bit more complex as I accepted that I might get killed. The conditioning had taught me to accept that as a possibility and not see it as a problem as the methodology had moved me through to love and belonging. I belonged to what was one of the best

fighting units in the British armed forces. I had esprit de corps; I was prepared to die for my colleagues and my Regiment. The esteem of colleagues was there, as they knew I had also gone through some of the toughest physical training the RAF had to offer. I understood what I would fight for and I had meaning and predictability in my life. My cognitive needs had been met. This overcame the safety needs. I cannot say at this stage in my life that aesthetic needs had been met nor self-actualisation. I had though, moved up the scale.

It also suited my learning need and was the ideal world for an 'activist'. There were continual new experiences. I did not have time to reflect or theorise. It should be mentioned that whilst the main thrust was behaviourist there was also elements of cognitive theory in the training.

Learning theories are used in educating all of us as we go through our childhood and education and into our adult life. They can be effective tools, they can also be destructive. Because of this they need to be used with care. It is an important aspect of educational theory to understand the theories of learning so that they can be effectively and sensitively applied.

The essence of learning theories, as can be seen from my personal experiences and the following interview with a head teacher is that they all tend to have some validity. The good teacher will take from each what suits there teaching style and the needs of their pupils. Only by doing this will a teacher successfully help their students to reach their potential.

Reflection:

Consider how learning theories have impacted on you as you have experienced your life so far?

Have they been effective in helping you to learn?

An Interview with a Head Teacher about Learning Theories

This interview took place in October 2007. The subject is the head of a Primary school in North Yorkshire. They have been teaching for 15 years, 13 of which was as a classroom teacher and Deputy Head and two years as a Head Teacher. She obtained a B.Ed. at St John's College, York.

Q.   When you were at College did you study learning Theories?

A.   Not that I can remember...we did, certainly, child psychology type lectures, but I don't remember looking at theories of learning.

Q. So you didn't do anything like behaviourism or cognitive learning?

A. Not that I can remember.

Q. So have you done anything since?

A. Occasionally I have done bits throughout my time at school, certainly things to do with multiple intelligences, we've looked at in various settings. But that has been usually through a staff meeting, you know where somebody else has been along to a course and disseminated back to staff.

Q. And is that how staff keep up to date on modern learning theories?

A. Yes, I would say so, usually what happens is the Deputy Head or another member of staff has gone along to some sort of training event and picked up something and they bring it back into staff meetings.

Q. So you have done multiple intelligences, what do you know about multiple intelligences?

A. Well we did a fair amount of training...(at College)... on how the brain works, I have to say it was a long time ago. Also about children learning through audio, visual and kinaesthetic ways. Basically the only training I have really is about looking at children and assessing their preferred learning styles. And how you might then think about that in applying it to your lesson.

Q. Have your views changed at all, you say you didn't do it at college but do you see a need or a niche for teachers to be educated in different theories of learning?

A. I think it is useful and it makes teachers look at their teaching styles and makes them think about if their teaching styles are suiting all the individuals in their class. So I do think it is important that teachers revisit those theories quite frequently because like with me I did it quite a long time ago and I remember planning for it quite closely. But as you move on other things become more important and you sometimes forget that, you do need to be revisiting them regularly I think.

Q. Do you find teachers generally, I mean classroom teachers, I don't mean Heads who have got responsibility for policy, but your average teacher is on top of learning theories and does actually revisit their teaching practice?

A.   I don't think they would do it of their own accord. I think they need to be brought back by the senior management of the school.

Q.   So you see that as the role of the Head, to make sure teachers are up to date and revisiting their teaching styles?

A.   I do see it as the role of the Head.

Q.   So why do you think teachers don't do this?

A.   Because I think the day-to-day job is absolutely manic, you know they have got so much going on it is finding the time, it is a very very busy

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2

Piaget VS Vygotsky in the 21st Century

Hannah McGimpsey

Hi, I am a student at the University of York. It really interests, as well as scares me that even today we can not agree on how best to educate children and how best children learn. That is why I have chosen to look at child development. I am constantly changing my mind about what I think so I hope you will find the topic as challenging as I do!

"And the first step, as you know, is always what matters most, particularly when we are dealing with those who are young and tender."

Plato 428 – 348 BC

Introduction

Thinking about how a child develops should play a major role in how the education system is structured. Although developmental psychology has only been around for the last 200 years or so (Berryman 1991), it is still seen to be very important. In fact members of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (1996) described education as being at the heart of personal development. In this chapter I will look at two major developmental psychologists, considering the benefits and disadvantages of each of their theories and the impact they have had on our own educational system. I will also focus on other educational systems, giving attention to which theorist they favour and compare this to the English system.

The battle between Piaget and Vygotsky has been carried on and debated over for many years. However, I want to take a fresh look at the differences between them, testing which is the most dominant in our society and questioning whether or not they should be in that position.

To do this I need to introduce you to the two men whom this chapter is centred around. The first is Jean Piaget and the second, Lev Vygotsky.

Jean Piaget was born in 1896 in Switzerland and died in 1980. During his life he focused his studies on how knowledge develops, writing around fifty books and five hundred papers tackling this topic before he died. He also had a Ph.D. in Biology and an honorary degree from Harvard which was then followed by over forty other honours including an Erasmus Prize in 1972 (Smith. 2001).

Lev Vygotsky was born in Belorussia the same year as Piaget but only lived a short life dying in 1934. However he achieved many things during his life and has been named as *'one of the most important Russian psychologists of the first part of the twentieth century,'* (Ardichvili, 2001 p.33).

I will discuss what these two men believed in more detail later in the chapter. Before I do this I feel that it is important to pose a number of questions for you to consider while you read about the debate between Piagetian and Vygotskian theories, I will address these questions later on.

The questions are as follows:

1. What are the problems with the theories?

2. Can you see how these theories have influenced our own National Curriculum?

3. Is it acceptable to focus on one theory of development and not on the other?

I will now take a closer look at each of these two men.

Piaget

Piaget believes that children are active in their own learning. He calls them "little scientists." This means that they construct their own understanding, adapting to the world around them. Piaget wants to create individuals, people who can create and find things out for themselves. He does not want

> **Examples of Schemes**
> - Looking
> - Holding
> - Tasting
> - Picking up

replications of the adults. However, he believes that this active learning happens in stages and the shift from the **sensorimotor stage** to when a child can achieve complex mental **schemes** happens through the operation of three basic processes (Bee, 2004). These processes are **assimilation**, **accommodation** and **equilibration**. Assimilation is an active process and involves taking in an event to a scheme e.g. when a baby sees a mobile and then reaches for it. Accommodation is when you change the scheme you use because of some new information you have obtained and according to Piaget this is the key to developmental change. Equilibration is when the child makes sense of or makes a balance of the world around them. They create internally consistent models or theories (Bee, 2004).

Piaget believes that children progress in their development in certain stages and that they cannot progress to the next stage until they have mastered the previous one. The four stages are split up into different age groups and are, the sensorimotor stage, the preoperational stage, the concrete operations stage and finally when the child reaches their teenage years they enter the formal operational stage. Piaget also talked about three different stages. The first stage being with the mouth, the second where thought is influenced by adults and the third is when the child understands thought themselves (Piaget, 1929).

These are some facts about each of the four stages.

> **Sensorimotor Stage**
> - Birth to 18 months.
> - Child only responds through sensory and motor schemes.
> - Only functions in the direct present.
> - There is no internal representation of objects.

Preoperational Stage

- 18 months to 6 years.

- Piaget focused on what the child could not do at this stage.

- Child is very egocentric (this does not make them selfish they are just not aware of the concept that others see things differently from what they see.)

- Tests carried out by Piaget showed the egocentricity of the children.

- Children are unable to classify objects into groups.

Concrete Operations Stage

- Five to seven years.

- The child discovers concrete operations which are the general rules used for interacting with the world around them.

- An operation is a powerful scheme such as multiplication and serial ordering.

- The child begins to use inductive logic but can not yet perform deductive logic.

Formal Operational Stage

- Twelve to teenage years.

- The teenager can apply complex mental operations to the world around them.

- They can search systematically and methodically for answers to problems.

- Deductive logic can be used which is when they know what the theory for something is so they can deduce what the outcome will be.

There is much strength to Piaget's research into child development. If anything it opened the doors and created paths for many other researchers to follow, providing new and stimulating ideas that sparked much debate (Hetherington et al., 2006). However there are also many faults with what Piaget has suggested. Current work suggests that he may have underestimated what both the younger and the older children know when they are certain ages. It is suggested that the onset of

children's abilities happens sooner than Piaget put forward. We must also consider whether or not development does actually take place in stages. Piaget clearly believed that it did, but it seems that whether or not development is continuous or discontinuous depends on the way it is studied. If the study takes place over a long period of time and is only measured at certain stages then obviously the results are going to look like the development has occurred in stages. This needs to be considered when looking at Piaget's research.

Piaget's conclusions were based on numerous tests carried out on children of varying ages. However, a number of problems and inconsistencies have been discovered in his research, discrediting his results. Bryant (1974) uses the example of Piaget's inferential tests to show this. Piaget tested children to see at what ages they could begin to make transitive deductive inferences. To do this he gave the children a test representing the equation below using sticks:

If A>B and B>C then is A>C or is A<C?

We know because we can use deductive inferences that A must be greater than C. However Piaget found that children below seven and eight could not make this connection. He therefore claimed that these children could not use their deductive skills. Bryant (1974) pointed out that there could have been a number of reasons why some children got the answer wrong, when other older children got the answer right. For example, they may have had a lapse in memory and not remembered the lengths, which does not demonstrate an inability to use deductive inferences. On the other hand the children that got the answer right may have only been guessing or may have just chosen the words they had heard the most since they had been told the first number was the greater one twice in a row. This shows that problems can occur from tests and that the results should be looked at with scepticism and not always be taken as accurate. Margaret Donaldson (1987) also points out some problems with Piaget's research in her book Children's Minds. She looks at his experiments and compares them with similar ones carried out by other people. An example of this is when she looks at Piaget's experiment with the model of three mountains (p. 20) and contrasts it with Martin Hughes policeman task (p.21). She points out their differing results stating that Hughes does not find any of the difficulty in 'decentring' that Piaget finds. This is just another example of how we should look at all test results with a sense of scepticism.

Another problem with Piaget's research is that he ignored the social aspect of cognitive development and its effects on development (Hetherington et al., 2006). This is why we must now look at Vygotsky and his sociocultural development theory of cognitive development.

Vygotsky

Vygotsky's studies seem to focus on an area that Piaget never addressed. He looked at the influence of the social world on a child's cognitive development. He said that cognitive development is mainly influenced by a child's interaction with more experienced peers/adults. He believed that it was beneficial for children to work with partners who were above their intellectual aptitude so that they can participate in academic actions beyond their own ability. Vygotsky suggested that this would enable the child to function in a more advanced way when left by themselves (Hetherington et al., 2006).

Vygotsky also put forward that children were born with certain innate capabilities such as attention and memory, and that these were then directed through communication with peers and adults.

He believed that shifts in development were results of the emergence of different **mediators**. Mediators are psychological tools that facilitate the thinking process. A central point of Vygotsky's theory is the transition between the **elementary mental functions** and the **higher mental functions**. The elementary mental functions are those we are born with and have naturally, whereas the higher mental functions

Examples of Mediators
• Language
• Counting
• Writing
• Mnemonic devices

are psychological functions that we obtain through sociocultural origins. Examples of these higher mental functions include voluntary attention, complex memory processes and problem solving.

Another important theory to come out of Vygotsky's research is the Zone of Proximal Development. Vygotsky defines the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as the difference between what a child can do by themselves and what a child can do with the help of a more experienced peer (Donaldson, 1987). This means that with the help of an adult a child can easily increase their own level of competence in a task. In terms of a child's education I think it is important to take into consideration the ZPD and assessment. According to Donaldson (1987) 'Vygotsky argued that it is educationally more informative to know what a child can do with some assistance than to know what he succeeds at unaided.' It is also important to consider what this means for a teacher in the classroom; Vygotsky sees teachers as having an interactive role in the child's learning, as opposed to just being a facilitator (Alexander 2000).

Just like Piaget's theories there are also problems with Vygotsky's ideas. One problem with the ZPD is that the line between a child's own work and the teachers help can be thin so when does the teachers help become too much. There is a danger that the teacher could mistake how well the pupil is doing because the

work is not their own. Another danger with Vygotsky's ideas, is that if the child is to learn language, etc. from their peers and the adults around them then they can only ever be as good as the people they are learning from.

So before we move on I think it is important to compare what Piaget and Vygotsky have said.

The main difference between Vygotsky and Piaget is that Vygotsky believes that our higher mental functions (what Piaget refers to as the formal operational stage) are achieved through social interaction, whereas Piaget believes that these will be achieved regardless of this as it is a stage we must all go through. There are other differences between what these two men believe, but I think that this point is the most important in terms of children's education.

I will now look at our own National Curriculum to see if either theory is more prevalent, and what this means for school children.

Piaget's Influence: The English Curriculum

According to Cunningham (1990) Piaget's work was used as theoretical support for certain primary practices such as activity based learning. Pollard (1990) also suggests that Piagetian psychology, along with the Plowden Report, was taken as legitimating for child centred learning. Already we can see that Piaget must have influenced our National Curriculum.

The Plowden Report, although quite outdated as it was written in 1963, still gives us a good idea of how much Piaget has influenced the National Curriculum. The Report was carried out as a way to look at all aspects of primary education, and to look at the transition between primary and secondary schools. Since it was written the term "Plowdenism" has been used to describe schools that can be seen as, "child-centeredness, school as a micro-community, individualisation, learning by discovery and experience...etc," (Alexander 2000 p.140). The report begins by stating that the child is, 'at the heart of the educational process,' making the Piagetian view visible right from the beginning. Lady Plowden also relies on Piaget's four stages theory and suggests that children cannot read until they can discriminate shapes (Gillard 1987). Sylva (1987) also points out how much Plowden relies on Piaget's claims when she refers to the children as 'Piagetian Learners'. There is also a Piagetian emphasis that children are active learners who will find things out by themselves. Sylva however, feels some resentment towards Piaget and believes that he had little use for the teachers who he thought were only there to facilitate the learning. Is this how we really want our pupils to learn? If Piaget believes they will learn for themselves, should they just be left to their own devices, simply moving from one stage to the other.

As we have already discussed, Piaget believes that children progress in stages. Is this not how our whole education system is structured? We are all put together with

children who are the same age as us, and we all move up together to the next stage at the same time, because it is assumed we will all have developed at the same pace. We progress through our education in stages that are similar to those exact stages that Piaget suggested. There are different key stages in school and pupils must sit SAT exams at the end of each key stage to see if they are at the correct level.   These levels are set out in the Education Reform Act 1988 (http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1988/Ukpga_19880040_en_1.htm).   Children between the ages of five and seven are grouped together into Key Stage One. Is this not the same as the concrete operations stage? The key stages fit closely with the stages that Piaget set out. I am not suggesting that they are intentionally linked but it is interesting to note the similarities between the Key Stage levels and the stages of development laid out by Piaget.

Primary aged pupils are bombarded with attainment targets and baseline testing from the very beginning of their education as it is assumed they will progress in the same way. Can this be detrimental to their learning? Recent findings from a study carried out at Manchester University on 802 of England's primary schools have found that 51% of teaching in schools was in maths and English due to the pressure the government place on achieving raising standards (BBC News, 2007) Therefore 49% of time must be split between numerous other subjects such as science, I.C.T. and art. This demonstrates just one of the problems that can occur due to the increased target setting and exams being given. Another problem is the stress that this puts on pupils. A report in the Cambridge - based Primary Review revealed recently that children suffer from 'deep anxiety' and that this is quite frequently due to exam stress. Surely it is a clear sign when children are under so much pressure from exams that maybe exams are not the best way to monitor children's progress?

So much time is taken up by testing and preparing for exams that the social aspect of school can get lost.

In 1997 when the new labour government came into power they set out their aims for education. These aims were things such as to focus on standards not structures and to have a zero-tolerance for underperforming. There was nothing at all in these aims about developing the social interaction between children.

Considering all the problems that have been raised concerning Piaget's theories, should our National Curriculum be so highly influenced by his ideas? I will now look at a curriculum that is highly influenced by Vygotsky's theories, comparing and contrasting it with the English system.

Vygotsky's Influence: The Welsh Curriculum

Being influenced greatly by the Effective Provision of Pre-school Education (EPPE) project, the Welsh Assembly proposed the **Foundation Phase** in Wales (Aasen and Waters 2006). According to the Welsh Assembly Government (2003) they wanted to

create a new curriculum that would be rich and would focus on the well being of the child. It has been said that the Welsh Government were worried about how the formal setting of early years education and baseline testing were having a detrimental affect on the child's, *'natural curiosity, creative expression, confidence and love of learning,'* (Aasen and Waters 2006, p.123).

A main point that came out in the EPPE conclusions was that there should be lots of interaction made between the children and the staff not only in the classroom but also in an informal environment. This mirrors Vygotsky's view that children should have interaction with those older than themselves, especially when they are acquiring language. The Welsh Assembly believe that interaction between a child and their early years professional will play a key role in their lifelong learning, and have made this relationship a central aspect of the Foundation Phase in Wales.

> What was the EPPE?
>
> The EPPE was a study on child development. They investigated the effects of pre-school education by collecting data fr
>
> m 3000 different 304 year old children.
> (www.surestart.gov.uk)

The Welsh Curriculum is rejecting the idea of the developmental child and is focusing on the sociocultural view of the child, emphasising the importance of interaction with others. This is especially critical considering they focus on the fact that a child learns through participation with others. Another emphasis the new curriculum makes is that of play as they think that this form of interaction will also help the pupils to develop socially. (Aasen and Waters 2006).

The following quote describes how different the Foundation Phase will be, showing how Piaget's ideas are being rejected while Vygotsky's are being welcomed:

> *'The Foundation Phase proposals in Wales require a way of thinking, acting and being within the early years classroom that is substantially different from the requirements of previous statutory curricula.'*
>
> *(Aasen and Waters 2006 p128).*

Vygotskian influences can be seen in other countries too. Formal education in Norway does not begin until the age of six giving the child a chance to spend more time at home interacting with adults and developing socially. When the child finally does begin to attend school the social aspect of schooling is seen as essential and much time is spent on this. Many other educational systems do not begin until the child is slightly older, e.g. in France formal education begins at the age of six and in Russia it does not being until the child is aged seven (Alexander. 2000). Another distinction between the English and French systems is the way the school years are split up. Where England only splits children into separate age groups, France has

three learning cycles (Alexander. 2000). These three cycles still split the children into different age groups but the groups have a wider age range allowing for children of the same age to be at different levels and children of differing ages to be at the same level. While this is not necessarily a Vygotskian idea, it does seem to be an anti Piagetian one.

Another interesting distinction is that according to Alexander (2000) teachers in France have recently been encouraged to begin using group work more often in their lessons, whereas in England, teachers are being pushed to shift the balance away from this.

Conclusion

If we look at the questions asked at the beginning of the chapter we can see how far we have come.

1.   What are the problems with the theories?

We have identified some problems with Piagets's theories in that some of his conclusions are inaccurate but that these inaccuracies can be explained. We also noted that one of his main problems was that he does not look at the social aspect of development.

On the other hand, If one was to follow Vygotskian theory completely they may run into some problems, e.g. what if your peers have more limited language than you do? What if the adult you are listening to is wrong? You can only ever be as good as who you are learning from in this case.

From this then I think that it is important that both theories be used when teaching young children. Time should be allowed for personal experimenting along with time for group/ pair work.

2.   Can you see how these theories have influenced our own National Curriculum?

It is clear that the English National Curriculum is driven by target setting and attainment objectives. The whole education system is structured around levels and stages that the pupils are expected to reach at certain times in their primary and secondary careers. There is not as much focus given to collaborative learning and social interaction as there is to exam results and raising standards. However group/pair work does occur and is seen to be important, so it is not fair to say that the social side of learning has been completely ignored. On the other hand social learning is not given as much time as learning for assessment and this is not fair. What happens to the children who come from less privileged areas or who have parents who do not give them the same amount of attention as other children receive? Are children who do not get the social interaction they need at home underachieving in school because our National Curriculum is dominated by

Piagetian theories? Surely both aspects of development should be incorporated into the curriculum.

3.   Is it acceptable to focus on one theory of development and not on the other?

Those countries such as Wales and Norway who focus on social interaction seem to have their priorities in order. If Piaget is right and children are active learners who develop in stages then this will happen regardless of their social interaction. However if it is true that social interaction is key to child development then without it what will happen to these children?

Therefore, whether or not you are pleased by Piaget or follow Vygotsky surely social interaction should still be a key aspect in the way we teach pupils.

My Own Experiences

My Own Positive Experiences:

A Vygotskian Experience

The primary school I attended was very small and so two different year groups would all be in one classroom and be taught by the same teacher. We would often be given work to carry out in pairs or groups. Sometimes the two classes would be mixed and so Year 4's and Year 5's would be working together. One example of this was a technology experiment we had to carry out. I was placed with a Year 5 girl named Megan whereas I was in Year 4. Megan helped me with the experiment when I was stuck and then I was able to help another Year 4 girl named Claire who could not finish the experiment. This is an example of an older peer enabling a younger child to advance their own intellectual ability through social interaction.

A Piagetian Experience

When I was in Year 1 and Year 2 I attended a different Primary School to the one mentioned above. In my second year of Primary school my teacher did not let us talk during her lessons and we were therefore made to sit at single desks. We were forced to be, 'little scientists' and discover things for ourselves as it was our only option since we could not ask our neighbour for help. In some ways this made me a more independent and confident pupil as I had to learn for myself and could not rely on my buddy who sat beside me.

Reflection

There is one key point that should be reflected on after reading this essay. Where do you stand? What are your own views? When you are teaching (whether as a profession or not) is it crucial that you know what you belief about how a child learns.

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3

Education in Literature

Rosie Abbotts

I am a 21-year-old Educational Studies student from York University. I chose to study this course because I have always been interested in looking at subjects such as Education in a new and different way, and this course has allowed me to be free to do this.

Writing a book is no walk in the park-this project has been harder than I had imagined, however there has always been a great deal of support and helpful feedback to rely on from my fellow "Book Project" students, and a lot of discussion to get to where we are now.

All in all this has been an amazing experience which I would really recommend-the other writers of this book are very interested in a certain issue or aspect of education, as am I, and working alongside them has been a really memorable and original time of learning.

I hope that this chapter shows one of the many ways in which education can be looked at-not just education in the traditional sense, but how our surroundings and interests can and do shape our perception of education as a whole, and I hope that it stimulates any interest that you the reader have in Literature and Education.

Introduction

In this chapter I want to discuss the importance of education in literature, in particular its representation within novels and plays, and the effect that this has upon our own perceptions of education. I will look at a total of four books and plays that show education as it is represented in literature-these will be from a variety of genres and periods, but all will be from English fiction writers and focus on an English view of education. The works that I will look at will be from both children's and adult literature, in order to compare and contrast how education is shown in each. Whilst examining the portrayal of education within these texts I will also try to answer the question of how literature effects our perceptions of education, and how the importance of learning as education, (i.e. not necessarily education in the formal sense) is shown.

It is important to give a brief overview of the books and plays which I will be looking at, in order to give you the reader a fully comprehensive view of the literature I will be examining:

Othello

This play was written in around 1603, by William Shakespeare. The play is set in Venice and Cyprus, and its main themes are racism, deception, corruption, misplaced trust and jealousy. The main characters are Othello- an intelligent general in the Venetian Army, his new young wife Desdemona, Iago Othello's ensign, Cassio Othello's lieutenant, and Emilia Iago's wife and Desdemona's handmaiden.

Although very intelligent, Othello is not perceptive of the issues and politics around him (this is due in part to his military background). He is recently married to a beautiful woman who is much younger than him and because of their age differences he is insecure about their new union; he is led to believe that his faithful lieutenant Cassio is having an affair with his new wife Desdemona. This jealousy is engineered by his trusted ensign Iago (whom Othello relies upon in social situations) in order to undermine Othello, Cassio and Desdemona's authority and love. The play ends with the tragic deaths of Othello, Desdemona, and Emilia, Cassio's wounding, and Iago's imprisonment and trial. We are left contemplating the unnecessary lengths Iago has gone to in order to extract an undeserved revenge, for which he has no remorse, and which he himself has no real passion for or understanding of "Virtue? A fig! 'Tis in ourselves, that we are thus, or thus," (Absolute Shakespeare 2007)

Frankenstein

This book was written in 1818 by the then 19-year-old Mary Shelley (Burton R. 1965). It is a novel very much in the Gothic tradition-with emphasis upon the macabre and death, as well as love and creation, and is a startlingly mature and profound novel when one considers the youth of the writer. The main themes within the book are education, good versus evil, birth, isolation, disorder and ruin, the power of knowledge, hubris, God's absence, and responsibility. The novel is written in a complex frame narrative, and is told to us by three important characters. The main characters in the novel are Victor Frankenstein, a young, ambitious and extremely intelligent student at University in Germany, his Monster (who is never given a real name) a creature made by Frankenstein from the remains of the dead, who is then abandoned by his creator, Clerval, Frankenstein's less ambitious, wiser school friend, and Elizabeth, Frankenstein's love.

The novel is extremely complex-with interwoven themes and deep issues upon close examination, it charts Frankenstein's journey along the road of discovery until all his hubristic hopes are realised in the creation of his Monster-who Frankenstein quickly abandons upon viewing his ugly and ill-proportioned physique. Frankenstein returns to his home in Geneva after this rejection, followed by his unhappy and desperate Monster-who then, out of fear, loneliness, anger and hate proceeds to destroy his creator's family. The book culminates in their mutual destruction, and the reader is left questioning who the real "monster" was.

Emma

This novel was written in 1816 by the well known female author Jane Austen.

The main themes within the book are family, love, the pursuit of happiness, appearance and reality, self-knowledge and education (Hughes R. E. 1961).

The novel is set in rural England, and its' main characters are Emma Woodhouse-the beautiful but spoilt heroine, Mr George Knightly her neighbour and friend who is older and wiser than Emma and takes it upon himself to teach her how to behave, Frank Churchill-Emma's dashing and cruel suitor, Harriet Smith-a pretty but unworldly girl who Emma takes under her misguided wing, and Jane Fairfax-an accomplished and graceful orphan who is the only woman Emma envies who eventually marries Frank Churchill.

The novel charts Emma's journey to self-discovery through her mistakes and knowledge of herself through these; convinced of her own brilliance at matchmaking Emma begins to manipulate those around her, ruining her young charge Harriet's chances of happiness with the man she loves (Mr Martin) by blindly trying to match her with an ambitious young vicar Mr Elton, who is in fact enamoured of Emma herself. Her own heart is trifled with by young Frank Churchill, who ends up marrying the one woman Emma truly resents-Jane Fairfax. Finally, Emma sees that the man she loves has been by her side all the time-Mr Knightly, who eventually proposes, and Emma, Mr Knightly, Harriet and her new husband Mr Martin all live happily ever after.

Harry Potter

As most people know, the incredibly successful Harry Potter series of seven books began with "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone" which was written in 1995 by J K Rowling, and the final book in the series "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows" was written in 2007 and released in July of the same year. The main themes of the books are education, friendship, and good versus evil, the power of knowledge, family, death, magic and isolation (Adams, R. 2003).

The main characters are Harry Potter-an orphan with a tragic, fateful past, Ron Weasley Harry's best friend the youngest son in a poor family of five brothers, Hermione Granger, an extremely intelligent (and slightly pompous) girl from a non-wizard family, Draco Malfoy Harry's nemesis at school, who takes every opportunity to annoy, ridicule and humiliate Harry, Professor Dumbledore, the headmaster at Hogwarts School of witchcraft and wizardry and Harry's most important teacher, Hagrid, the half-giant school gamekeeper and Lord Voldemort, or "He Who Must Not Be Named" Harry's arch enemy, the evil wizard who murdered many people including Harry's parents, but whom Harry somehow defeated at the age of one. There are many other characters that we are introduced to throughout the books; however these are the seven characters most important to the plot within the series.

I will mainly be focussing on the first book in the Harry Potter series "Harry Potter and the Philosophers stone", since this was the book that launched the series, and the phenomenon that followed it worldwide.

The book shows an 11-year-old, confused and nervous Harry Potter in his first venture into the Wizarding world-he knows nothing of this place (a place where he is famous for something he cannot even remember), since his

parents are both dead, and he has been brought up by his pig-headed and narrow-minded aunt and uncle in the "Muggle" world. The book follows his adventures at Hogwarts, as he learns about magic, makes friends and enemies and eventually faces the wizard who killed his parents, and survives. Along the way we learn more about Harry's personality and see him struggle with many of the issues that we ourselves have struggled with as children.

In summary, I have chosen a play from the 1600's, two novels written by women from the 1800's, and a children's book from 2007 in order to show contrast in how Education is represented throughout literature, even within the same century, by similar writers.

Personal Experience

I first became interested in this topic at the age of 13, when I changed schools for the second time-I was moving to an all girl boarding school, one which bore a striking resemblance to the school represented in Enid Blyton's 'Malory Towers', and I noted this with excitement-I had been a huge fan of those books and the characters within them when I was younger-I was very much looking forward to attending the kind of school I had read about. However, of course, the reality was very different to Blyton's idyllic representation of a boarding school, in both positive and negative ways. I realised then that many people must have had similar experiences of education-not realising the influence that their reading material has had upon their perceptions of school, teachers, pupils and education in general. It is possible to say that authors can be more outspoken on the subject of education than journalists and politicians, since they are able to use their greatest asset-their readers' imagination, in order to decontextualise and thoroughly examine specific areas of schooling, in a way that a journalist or historian cannot.

In each of the following sections I will analyse the works that I have selected in relation to the subheadings given, thereby looking at schools and schooling, pupils, teachers, and education in Literature, and then moving onto drawing conclusions from this analysis in relation to the underlying question of how portrayals of education in literature can affect the reader.

Schools and schooling in literature:

The ways in which schools are portrayed within both adult and children's literature are integral to this chapter. As I have already mentioned, my own experience of school has been affected by the books that I have read. It is important to show the difference here between schools and schooling-I have drawn this distinction in order to include books and plays which do not occur directly within a school-such as Othello. It is important to look at the portrayal of schooling within literature since this contributes to the reader's understanding of education as a whole-clearly not all

education comes from school-social, emotional, moral, and self-education often take place outside of the shelter of the school environment, and necessarily must do so-there are things that cannot be learnt in a classroom.

'Othello' addresses the issue of naivety and mis-placed confidence in a teacher. Iago represents a worldly, knowledgeable teacher and confidante for the socially inexperienced, naïve and trusting characters of Othello, Desdemona and Cassio-and he uses this misplaced trust to educate Othello in lies, and to destroy them, in order to gain himself authority, (although we are never told exactly why Iago performs these deceitful and ultimately tragic actions, his only explanation of his actions is the immortal line *'Demand me nothing; what you know, you know"* V.ii.303 as cited in Zender, K.F. 1994).

'Frankenstein' deals with the lack of a credible teacher and the effects of this upon potential pupils-the corruption of their innocent wish to learn, Frankenstein has only himself to blame as he rejects the schooling to which he used to cling, in order to complete his macabre experiments; and, with his debatable moral compass, this leads only to his ruin. His 'Monster' must rely on self-education in order to satisfy his thirst for knowledge, after his Creator's rejection-and this in itself is what leads to both their downfalls, as the Monster himself says, *'sorrow only increased with knowledge'* (Shelley, M. 1992, p123)..

'Emma' shows the importance of schooling in the class system of the time (1861), and also its irrelevance in relation to social and emotional intelligence. Emma Woodhouse (the heroine) is a rich, highly educated girl (in the traditional sense), who destroys the happiness of her socially inferior friend Harriet, with her naïve manipulation and senseless matchmaking. 'Emma' makes it clear that as well as having a traditional scholarly education, one needs a social, emotional and moral education in order to use this.

'Harry Potter' is classed as a children's book, and therefore often ridiculed as many books within that genre are (Rose, J. 1984) – perhaps this is partly due to its setting – it begins with the main characters entering the first year of secondary school at the young age of 11. The boarding school setting allows us to relate to the books – the lessons correspond with ones we may have experienced ourselves. However, it is outside of these lessons, and the protective bubble that these provide that Harry and his friends actually learn the most about themselves, the outside world, and their peers (Anatol, G. 2003).

Pupils and teachers in literature

I will now examine the place of the pupil, and the teacher in English literature and how the reader can be influenced by the writer in their perceptions of the characters portrayed as pupils and teachers. Often the pupils within literature are not necessarily 'students' as we would think of them, even those officially cast in the

teaching role can also be seen as pupils who are in fact learning from those that they are supposedly teaching. The roles of pupil and teacher are, in some cases, actually interchangeable.

'Othello' shows an older man, who has little social experience or acceptance, but who is socially superior, and who puts his trust in a less senior but apparently good and trustworthy character, in order to learn the ways of the world from him, since Othello's lack of experience and education is a hindrance to him, leading to a stigma which is emphasised by the fact that he is black. Iago uses this misplaced trust and Othello's goodness, and his utter reliance upon him, to destroy his superior (Zender, K.F. 1994). This is a good example of miseducation, which the pupil allows; despite his own sense and social education telling him to disregard the new knowledge he is being fed. Iago also ruthlessly performs this miseducation on other characters to the detriment of all.

'Frankenstein' shows another interchangeable teacher/pupil relationship, in which the successful, powerful creator of life is shown to be flawed and lacking the knowledge and foresight to see that his actions are morally reprehensible, and who abandons the pupil that he has made for himself. The 'Monster' that he creates, is in fact his better-in that it is born innocent of its hated status in the world. He wishes to learn and approaches his creator for knowledge, but is rejected. The Monster is a clear portrayal of the effects a poor teacher can have upon a pupil-he must rely upon himself in order to learn about the world, and, when he finally learns that he is a "monster", he seeks revenge upon his creator.

'Emma' shows a spoilt, smug girl who is far too confident in her own (rather limited) social abilities as she plays with other people's lives, *"The real evils, indeed, of Emma's situation were the power of having rather too much her own way, and a disposition to think a little too well of herself"* (Austen, J. 2003, p2). She casts herself as the teacher to her younger, less educated friend Harriet (Hughes R. E.1961 in 'Educating Emma Woodhouse' p69-74); however, she soon discovers that she has no real knowledge of human nature or of herself, and it is in realising this that she finally understands both of these things. She is helped along this road of understanding by Mr. Knightly, her older-brother-type friend, who constantly points out her shortcomings and lack of knowledge and understanding, in order to help her better herself-he himself is utterly in love with his flawed pupil, and so we can see that he is himself a flawed teacher in that his education of Emma is taken on not out of a sense of duty to educate, but from love and fascination with his pupil.

'Harry Potter' clearly shows pupils and teachers-in this case in the traditional sense of the school setting. We follow the three main characters (Harry, Ron and Hermione) as they learn from their teachers (Professor Dumbledore, Professor McGonagol, Professor Snape) (Eccleshare, J. 2001) The pupils often discover that, in fact, their teachers are flawed-in the first 'Harry Potter' book, it is revealed that the teacher in

charge of instructing them in how to defend themselves against the evil in the 'real' world is in fact himself evil-possessed by Voldemort himself-, and the teacher whom they suspect of evil is in fact trying to preserve all of their lives. Rowling toys with the importance of perception in childhood. 'Harry Potter' also shows the close relationship that is possible between a teacher and pupil, when there is mutual trust and respect, in the relationship Harry maintains with his wise headmaster Professor Dumbledore (Anatol, G. 2003). Dumbledore teaches Harry by letting him figure out answers for himself, and then adding to the knowledge he creates.

In all of the above we can see the reoccurring theme in literature of the 'flawed teacher', and of the pupil's eventual overthrow of their misguided educator. It is important to ask ourselves why this theme is so persistent within literature; using the selection above as an example, it can be seen that flawed teachers have preoccupied many of our greatest and most respected writers. This could be due in part to the fact that we have all had some experience with false, flawed or disappointing educators at some point in our lives, and there is nothing so disheartening as the discovery that someone whom you relied upon for answers and knowledge is fallible and may even have an agenda when they impart information to you.

Education in literature

Education in the classical sense is shown with varying degrees of fondness within these texts, as is self-education. It is interesting to note that often it is the character that is mainly self-educated who we feel the most empathy and affection towards (Othello, Harry Potter, and Frankenstein's Monster for example), this is perhaps due to the fact that we must all learn certain facts in life for ourselves, and because of this we can all relate to a character who also does this.

'Othello' as a play shows the dangers of a lack of a certain amount of social knowledge, and the risks of putting your education in another's hands, and seems to warn against false teachers. As an audience we see the snake-like Iago weaving a web of lies, masked as undeniable truths, which the socially inexperienced Othello becomes trapped within, since he is not equipped through worldly education to decipher and disregard them. Othello is shown as a good man, who has made his own way to the top of the Army-he is educated in warfare and combat and little else, but in his innocence of the world he is better than those around him (but not better off). He shows good judgement, is very loving and generous, and is even called upon by the Senate to advise and direct them (an unheard of event for someone of his race). He trusts his own instincts at first, however we, like Iago, can see his flaw-that he is too trusting, naïve, and even childlike in his innocence of the world; Iago then takes advantage of this, and begins to manipulate his superior's judgement to suit his own (very unclear) ends. We can see from the start of the play that Othello has unknowingly entrusted his social education to a highly immoral and

devious teacher-this is clearly a warning to us all that we ought to take care and be cautious when digesting what appears to be imparted advice or wisdom.

'Frankenstein' shows education's potential as a catalyst for evil. Frankenstein receives a high quality, thorough and extensive education; however he is clearly left morally under-educated, and is not informed of the responsibility that comes with knowledge (to impart it carefully and dutifully) and this is why he never questions his hubristic quest of self-education; to create a new species. Once he succeeds in creating this new life form, acting the part of God, he belatedly sees the error of his ways, and abandons his invention-again we can see his lack of moral and social responsibility which comes from a solid moral education-he denies his responsibility to educate the Monster, which, as its creator he is morally bound to do, not just for his own sake, or the Monsters', but for those who must share the earth with his creation (Sherwin, P. 1981). As a consequence to this, we are shown how the Monster's self-education leads to his own misery and destruction, and also the misery and destruction of his flawed creator and his creator's family and friends. Mary Shelley clearly meant this book as a comment upon God's absence in our world-she asks the reader the question that if we are made in God's image, and God is our creator, He therefore bears us the responsibility of education; He may also have abandoned His flawed creation (which then leads to the inevitable question of whether God himself is flawed).

'Emma' shows the importance not just of a classical education, but also the social and moral education which we can gain for ourselves, often, as Emma finds out, only through trial and error. Emma's main educator is her eventual husband, and older brother-figure Mr Knightly, who is the only character within the book to point out Emma's flaws and shortcomings, and to scold her when she is cruel and thoughtless; Knightly treats Emma like the child that she is when it comes to knowledge of the world and herself, until she finally comes to the realisation that she has known all along what the answer to her bored tampering is-that she is in love with the man who has taught her to think. The novel also seems to say that it is only when we admit to a lack of knowledge and education that we can truly begin to learn (Hughes R. E 1961).

'Harry Potter' with its obvious school backdrop, can clearly be seen to be in favour of traditional education-and the book shows it in a highly positive light, but one must concede that Hogwarts is hardly a traditional school (Tucker, N, 1999). However, 'Harry Potter' also portrays its three main characters gaining education from each other, the outside world, and from within themselves. JK Rowling clearly sees it as important for the reader to see this, and to recognise this within their own education, whether that is mainly traditional or due to self-education.

Conclusion

Unfortunately there is not enough room within this chapter to address the way in which literature portrays education throughout history; however I would hope that this chapter has brushed the tip of this fascinating subject. As has been shown, there are many different ways in which education can be portrayed (for instance, as authoritarian, as traditional, as free, as a personal journey), and this evolves within every publication. The roles of the school, schooling, pupils and teachers can be found throughout literature in many different guises, and can be made to represent many different agendas- it is up to the reader to note whether these portrayals create influence upon them or not. One can say that to some extent authors are educational historians, only with the use of imagination also available to them, and it is this skill which allows them to portray the types of education needed and provided by literature; moral, social, instruction, using the faculty of reason and learning alone, as can be seen in each one of the chosen plays and books.

To address the question of how literature effects our perceptions of education, and how the importance of learning as education, (i.e. not necessarily education in the formal sense) is shown, it is important to consider our own experiences with education in literature, how we have been influenced, perhaps unknowingly by the literature we have been involved with-perhaps not even through reading, it could also be through dramatic adaptations of plays and books that our ideals of education, pupils, teachers and school are shaped; we learn how not to behave once educated (i.e. not like Iago, Voldemort and Frankenstein, for example) how we ought to use our innate sense of reason to filter the information we are given by those we allow to teach us (like Othello, Harry Potter and Emma), how we should take responsibility for how and who we ourselves educate-whether on purpose, or through conscious acts of schooling, as Mr Knightly does, and unlike Victor Frankenstein. Literature itself teaches us, through use of heroes, themes, villains and drama, how we ought to use our schooling-both within the education system, and outside of this, and through use of the great tool of imagination we are able to relate the tales and the morals within them to our own lives.

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4

Academies – The Future of the British Education System

Sophia Thacker

I'm in my second year at the University of York studying Education. My home is in the Midlands in a small village called Knowle.

This chapter looks at Academies. I chose to write on this initiative because of an internship I went on this summer for a company in Birmingham. They were employed by schools to assess Academies and whether they were the correct choice of school to help deal with low achievement levels. Whilst on this placement I had to do research on Academies and assess whether becoming an Academy would be a feasible option for the school.

During my research I found that a lot of the information I came across focussed on problems that the Academy initiative was going through.

I found this very interesting and have thoroughly enjoyed researching deeper into the scheme and looking at it with a critical eye. It is a subject that we do not really hear enough about but is something that will potentially change the education system forever.

I hope you enjoy reading my chapter as much as I have enjoyed studying it.

The conventional schooling system for which the United Kingdom is renowned is being transformed, allegedly into a new dynamic and active force to help children from different backgrounds, faiths and cultures enjoy their education more and introduce them to a world where the primary aim of education is to cultivate a the desire to learn. It promotes the philosophy that a child can use the education system to better themselves and whatever their upbringing, they can build upon their knowledge in an environment which is a suitable learning ground.

This is one chapter in a book for student written by students. Until my studies at university I had no idea what an Academy was and this holds true for other student authors of this book. Academy schools are held up as an area of educational revolution that is changing the way that Britain works. I chose this topic for my chapter because it is new, exciting, relatively unknown to the public as a whole but possibly the most significant change to the British educational system for several generations.

There are many misconceptions concerning Academies and the alternatives and I aim in this chapter to address these new and explain why the Government feels that these schools are the right path to follow when looking to resolve problems within the education system. I also address whether they are, in fact, the best way to go about solving them. This new initiative of schooling is such a fresh theory that there is very little written information about it in book format. Therefore this chapter is based on my own research from newspaper articles, Government documents and DCSF (DfES) research reports. This chapter will also review the evidence to date from Academies and assess whether this initiative is a revolutionary idea or an infringement of the human right to education because the British education system is being privatised and therefore not fully accountable to Government, unlike the standard private school. This chapter also aims to guide the reader down a path where alternative avenues to education are assessed, educational boundaries are reinvented and the effect of social class in the system is considered. Finally I will consider the potential outcomes of this changing system. Firstly I shall look at what an Academy actually is, how one works and what the aims of them are.

Academies – The 21st Century Grammar School

The title of this section, "the 21st century Grammar school", leads one to believe that Academy schools are for those of a higher academic level, much the same and the word "Academy" does. The traditional meaning of the word Academy is *"a school for training in a particular skill or, in Scotland, a secondary school."* (The New Collins Concise Dictionary, Page 5) however this is not the case in the British 21st century meaning of the word. "Academy" means a type of secondary school which is independent but publicly funded and publicly run, Academies *"aim to bring a distinctive approach to school leadership drawing on the skills of sponsors and other supporters. They aim to give staff new opportunities to develop*

educational strategies to raise standards and contribute to diversity in areas of disadvantage." (Wikipedia accessed 15/11/2007).

When she came to the post of secretary of education and skills in 2004, Ruth Kelly made two interesting assumptions about education and training for the 14-19 year old. A-levels and GNVQ's were considered *"untouchable because they were an educational brand recognised by parents, employers and higher education institutes, and the main problem with the English education system is that training should lay with vocational education."* (Journal of Education Policy, 2007, page 657-673). This demonstrates the landscape of education at the start of the 1990's and that the problem many people faced in recognising the great attributes that other forms of education had to offer. Something that the founder of Academy schools, Lord Adonis hoped the new initiative would solve.

Academies are all ability schools, established by sponsors from business, faith or voluntary groups working in partnership with central Government. Sponsors and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) provide the capital costs for the Academy. Running costs are met in full by the DCSF.

The Academies programme aims to challenge the current educational culture and looks to provide new resources to help schools regenerate their success. These types of schools were formally called 'City Academies' but the word City has been dropped because the Government wants these schools to be placed in rural areas as well as city areas. All Academies are located in areas of disadvantage. They either replace one or more existing schools facing challenging circumstances or are established where there is a need for additional school places. The areas where Academies are generally situated are places cited as in need of regeneration.

Academy schools were created in the Learning Skills Act of 2000 and the Government has planned for 200 schools to be opened in Great Britain by 2010. So far in Great Britain as of September 2007 there are 83 Academies with 50 more projects planned for September 2008 (Academies Prospectus, DCSF, accessed 11/11/2007).

The Process

- A preliminary meeting is organised between the school, the DCSF and the Office of the School Commission

- A sponsor is found

- An EoI (expression of Interest) is put forward to the DCSF

- It is then assessed and the Secretary of State either accepts it or rejects it

- If accepted, the sponsor provides £2,000,000 and the Government provides £20,000,000

- The Academy is then built

Academy schools use sponsors who are supposed to provide *'qualities of success'* (Academies Prospectus, DCSF, accessed 3/12/2007). These sponsors come in different forms, such as independent companies, individual sponsors (e.g. Sir David Garrard who sponsors the Business Academy, Bexley), larger companies (e.g. Vodaphone) and also the ULT (United Learning Trust- a subsidiary of the United Church Schools Trust) which is involved in developing Academy schools.

Academy schools can select 10% of their pupils based on aptitude. They are not bound to follow the National Curriculum other than for GCSE's and Key Stage 3 exams. The majority of the board of governors is made up of the Academies sponsors and Academy schools can also decide the staffs' salaries. All of these factors have the potential to be very dangerous, these are ideas I shall raise later.

A professor at the University of York, David Jesson who specialises in the 'value-added' field of Academy schools for the 'Specialist Schools and Academies Trust' spoke to me about the political view of these schools:

> *"Academies are now the preferred vehicle for improving performance in schools, particularly in areas which have suffered in the past from multiple deprivation and low expectations. All political parties are committed to their extension and further development, so in one sense we must ask why there is such an unexpected political consensus around this issue"*

"The proof is in the tasting"- The evidence that Academy schools are successful

- Between 2005 and 2006 the percentage of Academy students gaining 5+ A*-C's at GCSE (including English and Science) rose 6% (The PricewaterhouseCooper (PwC- see below) report states that it has not compared the progress of Academies to the progress of other comprehensive schools because they are two incomparable factors due to the extreme disadvantage that Academies face.)

- 16 Academies have been fully assessed by OFSTED and all have passed with at least satisfactory reports with one receiving an outstanding result.

- Academies are over subscribed with 3 applicants for every 1 place which suggests that they are sought after by parents.

- These schools are generally in areas that qualify for free school meals and have a greater need for SEN teachers. The report put forward by PwC found that Academies took a higher proportion of these disadvantaged students than other schools living in the local catchment area.

The Report – PricewaterhouseCooper (PwC)

In 2003 PwC was commissioned by the new DCSF to conduct an independent study and evaluation over the course of 5 years to assess the Academies initiative. It was designed to calculate the effectiveness of the initiative and to gauge its contribution to educational standards.

Four annual reports have been submitted so far and the fifth is due in at the end of 2007 to complete the study.

The evidence I will be assessing comes from the 4th Annual Report issued in July 2007.

One of the key conclusions that are contained in the report is the need to highlight the diverse and complex situation of Academy schools. *"Caution should be exercised when comparing Academies average pupil profile with that of the comparator schools."* (PwC Fourth Annual Report, Page 8) This highlights again the emphasis that Academy schools are in areas of regeneration and are primarily for disadvantaged pupils.

Other key conclusions from PwC are that Academies are succeeding in achievement levels. Be it large or small the schools are still achieving a greater percentage point increase compared to a pupil's previous school or a comparable school. PwC believe that this is due to 6 reasons (Page 11):

1. Exertion of independence, the school being allowed to take on a wider selection of pupil (10% are admitted by aptitude test)

2. Introduction of vocational subjects and GNVQ's, giving a wider choice of subjects, often suiting the specific needs of Academy pupils.

3. Strong and stable leaders, the monetary investment from the sponsor encourages a stronger interest in the schools achievement, and helps to provide support for staff and pupils.

4. New building, new areas to study, more resources and a higher quality of equipment to assist the learning process

5. Academy sizes and classroom sizes. Due to the level of funding, more teachers mean smaller classes.

6. The chances that the children are given by the sponsors and the new school compared to the previous school. Academies can be seen as a 'fresh start'.

However the report goes on to highlight a small number of Academies that still have high levels of absenteeism. This was highlighted in previous Annual Reports and is therefore something that some schools have not yet tackled effectively. Academies in these areas also face external problems to do with the support pupils receive outside the classroom from their parents.

Some interviewees highlighted a weakness in communication between the Academy itself and the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) including the lack of support the SSAT provided for sponsors when planning succession. These is obviously a real concern since the SSAT are a huge controlling factor for the Academy and if the issues with communications between the two are poor then the outcome from the Academy will be low.

In conclusion the report found that there were high satisfaction rates amongst both parents and teachers but that *"some individual Academies (had) genuinely struggled, and (had) experienced a significant deterioration in performance."* The flip side of this is that other Academies have managed to improve performance at a much greater rate.

The issues raised in this PwC Annual Report have demonstrated that there are still teething problems in the new scheme of Academy schools but we must remember that the policies of Academies are constantly changing and will continue to change. As Bowe describes, *"Policy is not simply received and implemented within, rather it is subject to interpretation and then 'recreated'."* (Bowe, Ball, Gold, page 21) Therefore the issues that Academy schools face can be rectified and the strengths that they have can be built upon.

Academies, neither state nor private

When I first read about Academy schools I thought of a new school that had been taken over and had gained a sterling reputation overnight. My train of thought then lead me to the question of how it had improved so much, to which the answer was money. This is primarily what an Academy is, a school that on average had £23 million spent on it. The more I looked into what these schools were and what their aims were I soon found that the majority of information I could find came from the Government, be it because it is such a new initiative and there is a lack of information on them, or that there is now, in late 2007, only recent evidence for their progress. The one thing I could deduce from this select information is that these schools are privatising education; revamping the education system, painting over the problems with copious amounts of money, without having any hard concrete evidence for the success of these schools.

Academy schools on average cost £23 million each with, on average, 1,200 students. This equates to a cost of almost £21,000 per place, compared to the Government's basic need cost of £14,000 per place for any other state school. (The fifth report from the House of Commons- online, 2005, accessed 14/12/2007). There is also no costing document in the Government's 'Five Year Strategy' in which the policy of Academies is outlined. The fifth report from the House of Commons on the 17th March 2005 states:

> *"We recognise that secondary education has failed in some inner city areas and we understand the temptation to believe that Academies are the solution. Yet 5 billion is a lot of money to commit to one programme. The Government could have limited the number of Academies to 30 or 50 and carried out an assessment of their effectiveness before expanding the programme so significantly. Whist we welcome the Government's desire to invest resources in areas of educational underachievement, we consider that the rapid expansion of the Academy policy comes at the expense of rigorous evaluation."*

The 'rapid expansion' of Academies is concerning because it displays a willingness to pursue expansion without proper evidence. The report recognises that the areas in which these schools will be placed are disadvantaged but suggests that "the Government should ensure that the current programme of Academies is thoroughly evaluated, both in respect of the performance of individual Academies and the impact on neighbouring schools, before embarking on a major expansion of an untested model. Further assessment of figures from the report's research also shows that of the 11 Academy schools assessed, 5 had not improved in GCSE's and in some instances the percentage of 5 A*'s-C's actually decreased.

I had difficulties with the issue of sponsorship. While looking through the list of Academy schools I found many Academies sponsored by charities and children's trusts, but also I found a lot of faith sponsors such as St Paul's Academy in Greenwich which is sponsored by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Southwark, and other sponsors such as the Diocese of Ripon and Leeds and at Sandwell Academy, HSBC and West Bromwich Albion Football Club. This concerned me because the idea of these schools being government funded but with the Government then being involved with a company such as HSBC or West Bromwich Albion Football Club did not strike me as acceptable. Academies are institutes of education. Education is a human right, something that should not be paid for by a company whose specialist area is not education. Academy schools by definition are neither private schools nor state run schools. They are a halfway house, where the sponsor chooses the board of Governors and the curriculum. The education system has been privatised for centuries but never sponsored by businesses such as HSBC or a football club. Where the majority of the money invested is taxpayer's money that is being spent by an unaccountable private sponsor.

Positive press highlights the advantages of these sponsors with their "drive and commitment", "life experience and networking" This displays the accepted advantage of the business knows best, but should education for 11-16 year olds be a business run by business minds? It would be a lot harder to criticise these schools if the results displayed from them had shown a dramatic increase in success, from across the board. One success highlighted by Lord Adonis (the founder of

Academies) was the Academy in Hackney, but as Roy Hattersley points out, *"the existence of some Academies that succeed does not prove the whole system is a success... One success does not confirm that claim. But one failure certainly disproves it."* (June 6th 2006, "And now, over to our sponsors" The Guardian online, accessed 14/11/2007)

One of the key investors in the Academy initiative is religion. Four out of 10 schools that were opened in September 2005 were backed by Christian organisations and almost half of the schools under development in 2005 were sponsored by a religious group of some sort. Some campaigners warned that Academies were being used as Trojan Horses by some Christians. Keith Porteous Wood found that *"Given that only 7% of the population are in church on any given Sunday, this is a disproportionately high number of Academies."* (September 5th 2005, "New Academy schools fuel education row", The Guardian online, accessed 17/10/2007.)

The same article goes on to reveal the existence of a confidential Government assessment which warned, *"Academies could create two-tier education based on social class."*

A huge disadvantage that these schools face, despite the support from the sponsor and the money from the Government is the lack of jurisdiction the LA holds over them. All support provided by the LA would stop and the Academy would have to go through the SSAT for help, which has already been outlined above in the PwC report as having very unstable communication links. The support from the LA would stop because of the SSAT specialist experience in Academies, Trust and Foundation schools. The government believe that the LA will then be able to provide more focus for other comprehensive schools.

Another problem that the Academies initiative faces is something that is highlighted above, namely the media's reception of the schools. Academies only have to follow the core national curriculum (English, Science, Maths, ICT GCSE and Key stage 3); other than that the board of governors has complete control of the schools curriculum. On the surface this appears to be a blessing for the schools as they can have a wider variety of courses and qualifications available, but to the critical eye one can see that the wider choice of courses and qualifications could be a scapegoat to produce better grades for the league tables. Often these other forms of assessment are more accessible to students in deprived areas because they focus on hands on skills and more vocational areas of study. They are also seen by public opinion to mean less than logocentric education and the 'standard 10 GCSE's'. The public's reliance on league tables and the sway that league tables have on parents resonates in the faith that some parents have in Academy schools.

The National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) contributed to a TUC report which was studying the Academy initiative:

> *"Academies are based upon a flawed premise that the involvement of private sponsors, serving democratic accountability from the local authority and incurring risks and the public purse will in themselves raise standards and tackle disadvantage...*
>
> *In fact, the quasi-independent school status of Academies only serves to reinforce the arguments of the detractors of public services that state education is a service of default for those who cannot afford private education rather than the sector of choice."*

At the TUC congress meeting in September 2007, Jerry Bartlett from NASUWT told delegates that Academies *"exemplified the creeping 'marketisation' of public services."* He goes on to reiterate a point I raised earlier about the privatisation of a human right. *"Education is a human right... it should not be dependent on the varieties of commercial sponsorship. Academies are a threat to the public services ethos and comprehensive community education for all."* (Teaching Today, Page 10)

Social Class and Schools

The reason the government founded and is currently funding Academy schools is due to the failure of schools in disadvantaged areas. These schools are in areas of the country where the parents often cannot provide the support and funding their children need at school. These disadvantaged areas consist of disadvantaged people and in 1998, the UN published that Britain was *"one of the most unequal and poverty stricken of the developed countries."* (Cole, page 182). For Britain, wealth and income have always been very unevenly distributed, getting progressively worse over the past two decades. This certainly has a knock on effect in education. Hatcher's chapter in Cole's book goes on to place emphasis on the correlation between the wealth of schools, students' families and the pupil's success in the school system. This is a correlation that we can also transfer over to the situation concerning Academies and their purpose of aiming to help underachieving schools in disadvantaged areas.

The idea of inequality in education is targeted at race, gender and disabilities; it is only recently that social-class inequality has been addressed. This is an issue concerning money and power (Wood, page 77) and therefore the Government has had to approach it with caution and tact. This can be demonstrated by the time period that Academies have been set up in and the research and reports that have been issued.

> There are target levels for raising attainment but not for reducing inequality, why is this? And is this fair?

> Is teaching to blame for the widening gap between middle class schools and working class schools? Is it the parent's support system? Or is it the 'postcode debate' with the class composition playing a key factor?

> Is there too much focus on the outcome of education than the process of education? Maybe because of the 1944 reform that stated everyone had to go to school, we now only perform the duties we are required to perform.

> Is more focus placed upon those who can perform to A*-C grades at GCSE? And the less able left to the wayside?

Moreover, class is also not just an economic issue; class also affects other areas of social life. The social class impact on education is displayed by the learning that carries on outside the classroom. The support that children receive from their parents is dependent on the amount of time the parents can spend with their children and that time is dependant on their jobs and the hours that they have to work. All these constraints that are on working class families can often lead to a home environment where the child's education may not be a priority.

Bob Connell argues that social class positions people (students) in different relationships to knowledge. *"Class differences in relationships are rooted in the social division of labour. Capitalism disposes the working class of knowledge, in both the economic and the political spheres, as worker, and as citizen...knowledge is a function of power relationships."* (Cole, page 186) this describes how a process in industry works and the distinction between mental and manual function. Manual work is practical, learnt on the job knowledge and mental knowledge often refers to academic, logocentric knowledge learnt in schools. The workers who do the manual work are by definition those who did not get the qualifications at school or are working class. To be in the mental category the workers have to have academic qualifications in subjects such as maths or science at varying levels of staged attainment. The Government is trying to merge these two types of workers by giving those in deprived areas, those who by tradition or maybe habit have become manual workers a chance to be a mental worker, with qualifications and further learning experience.

Conclusion

It is too early to form a view as to the likely long term success of Academies particularly as the 5th PwC report is still not complete. Furthermore we must remember that the Academy initiative is still in a state of change. The policies are

ever developing and evolving and will continue to strive for improved standards of education. These schools are a physical display of the Governments' active role in assisting failing schools and deprived families by giving the students a chance to succeed and break free from the constraints that society puts on low achieving and disadvantaged pupils.

However the propaganda put forward to convince us about the current and predicted success of Academy schools is I still believe that Academies will promote a divided education system whereby there are private schools, comprehensive schools and specialist schools. What about schools which are only slightly above the low achieving schools, the schools which are not quite deprived enough to become Academies? Will they now just be the low achieving local comprehensive school? The successes claimed for Academies to date does not, as yet, justify the expenditure of £5 billion (to date) of taxpayers' money. For many people, progress has been to slow and patchy.

This chapter aims to urge the reader to ignore the propaganda and view the Academy initiative with a critical eye. The concept of Academies is at least an active display of action taken by the Government to improve low achieving schools, but the long term impact of these new schools needs to be assessed further.

The reader is urged to keep a close eye on future statistical data to see if a partly privatised state educational system can indeed deliver more effective results in disadvantaged areas of the community. If it does, then industry, religious groups and even football clubs may yet earn the thanks of the nation.

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5

When Learning Leaves the Classroom

Sarah Watts

For as long as I can remember I have been part of out-of-school learning activities. From Sunday school to holiday camps, my most vivid memories of my childhood are of fun times spent with family and friends outside the classroom. As I came to university, one part of the course that really caught my eye was 'Education otherwise - beyond the formal curriculum'. In the past few years I have worked at a youth club, in a museum and for a church, and so as we started to think about this project, it seemed only natural for me to talk about an area that I am so interested in.

This project has been an exciting and challenging time for me. Meeting new people, attempting new things, eating free food — if you ever get the chance to do something different, something unique, do it! Because, the most significant learning experiences really do happen outside the classroom!

Eddie's day at the zoo

Eddie and Daniel chatter excitedly as they grab their bags and hurry to the door. The room is filled with excitement. They walk down the corridor, out into the playground and towards the school gates.

"26...27...28..." Miss Hayward counts her class onto the bus.

It is only a short ride to the zoo.

"Look an elephant" exclaims Seeta. "I can see the lions den," declares Daniel. Eddie knows today is going to be a day to remember.

I could not tell you about the time my teacher taught me how to spell crocodile, or when I learnt how to add two to four, but ask me about the time I went to the zoo and I could tell you every detail of the day. I may remember the mathematic equations I needed to pass my exams, and the different literary techniques Shakespeare uses in Romeo and Juliet, but my lasting memories are of visiting museums, camping in the forest, and that weekend away by the beach.

School trips are events that stick in the memory; the day that I did something different. The day I didn't have to write in my book and listen to my teacher talking; the day I could find out about something new and explore a different place. But school trips are not just a fun day out. They are times of learning.

The majority of school trips take place in informal (or non-formal) learning environments such as museums, zoos, farms and art galleries. Informal learning is what Frank Coffield (2000) describes as the hidden iceberg of education; learning through experiences outside the formal education system. In their book Learning from Museums, John Falk and Lynn Dierking (2000) looked at the way we learn in such environments, particularly focusing on museums. They put forward a contextual model of learning consisting of three overlapping contexts which affect our learning experiences. The personal context, the sociocultural context and the physical context, interact with one another to create a learning setting, the value of which changes depending on the nature of these contexts.
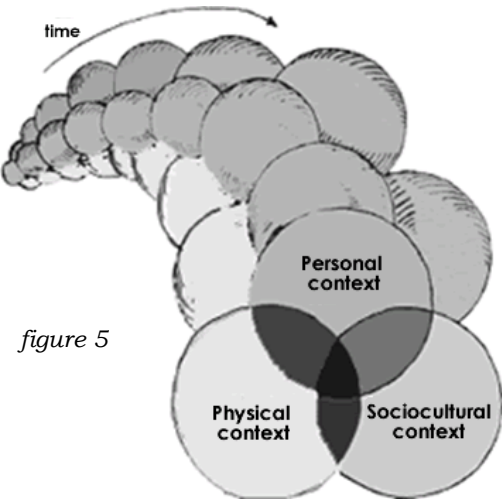

figure 5

The **personal context** is what we as an individual bring to a learning experience; our motivation and expectations, our prior knowledge, our interests and beliefs. It is important that students going on a school trip are enthused and excited about the excursion for maximum learning to occur. The teacher plays a vital role in a school trip and the preparations that they make will have a significant affect on learning outcomes. Before a visit students should have some background knowledge of the place they are going to, as well as the subjects they are going to explore. Another important contributing factor to the personal context is how the individual chooses to spend their time. A school trip should allow students appropriate freedom of choice to explore and focus on different topics, whilst also maintaining some structure to the visit. It is important that the experience brings variation to the highly controlled and monitored environment of the school classroom. However, it is also essential that learning agendas aren't completely lost in the excitement of the day.

Case Study – The practical outworking of a school trip

Bradfield and Dungworth Primary School, Sheffield visit Kelham Island Museum, Sheffield

In the spring term, the Year 6 class at Bradfield and Dungworth School look at 'The Great Sheffield Flood of 1864'. After 3 weeks of classroom teaching, the story is reinforced when the class takes part in a 'Living History' day at Kelham Island Museum.

Before the trip the school receives an information pack from the museum, which includes a number of worksheets to be used in the classroom. As the day of the trip approaches the children are already familiar with the story of the flood, and begin to prepare their costumes for the day (children are encouraged to dress up in period clothing for the visit). The teacher also prepares for the visit, completing risk-assessment forms, briefing other staff, and making a preliminary visit to the museum.

On the day of the visit the children assemble at the school and travel by minibus to the museum. In the Upper Gallery the day begins with a short drama performed by museum staff which introduces the characters and the programme for the day to the children. This is followed by a number of different workshops, each with a different focus, led by a different character. In the first workshop, 'John Gunson', the Engineer at the Waterworks company uses drama, role play and demonstrations to explain the use of the dam and how it burst. This is followed by a drama and mime activity telling the stories of the people affected by the flood led by 'Keziah Eaton'. In the afternoon the class learn about Victorian life by the river in a hands-on workshop led by 'Eliza Armitage', a landlady of the time. At the

end of the day, the children come back together with the other groups for a 'Public Meeting' to discuss what is to be done in the aftermath of the flood. There is also an opportunity to visit the shop, before going home.

Back in school, the visit is followed up by further study across the curriculum. The children create films on the Great Flood using computer software, and write diaries as if they were witnesses to the events. These different activities work with the museum visit to extend the children's knowledge and understanding of the topic, creating a learning experience that is memorable, interesting and valuable.

Group dynamics and the interaction that takes place on school trips is an important aspect of learning according to Falk and Dierking. The **sociocultural context** is made up of the interactions the learner has with others. The relationships and discussions students have with each other, whilst on the trip and afterwards, will have an affect on the learning process. Researcher Sue Tunnicliffe examined the conversations of school groups in zoos and farms, investigating the effect of group dynamics on conversational topics. She found that in a group of all male students the discussion was more factual, whereas in groups made up of all female students there was more emotive discussion (Tunnicliffe, 1998). The presence of an adult also has a significant effect on conversation by focusing the discussion on relevant observations (Tunnicliffe, 2004).

The staff working at an institution such as a museum or farm also contribute to the sociocultural context:

> *'interactions occur with museum explainers, docents, guides, and performers, and they can either enhance or inhibit visitor learning experiences.'*
>
> *(Falk and Dierking, 2000; p.139).*

After lunch outside the monkey enclosure, Eddie and his friends are given a special talk by a lady who works at the museum. She tells them all about elephants, and they get to see a real baby elephant.

Later in the day they go to a show all about birds. The man presenting the show has a snake, and at the end they can touch it. The snake doesn't feel slimy like Eddie thought it would.

The third section of Falk and Dierking's Contextual Model is the **physical context**: the quality of the learning environment, its familiarity and its relation to the outside world. This is the aspect in which the type and quality of the institution visited has the most significant effect (alongside the competence of the staff as mentioned above). A good institution will support learners by creating an environment which is accessible and friendly, but also innovative and different from the norm. Many institutions

provide for schools, meeting with teachers in advance to prepare the trip and ensure that they are familiar with the site and the program of the day. Different events may take place throughout the day that the group can participate in, and many institutions run special activities and classes for school groups. For example the British Museum (2007) has numerous resources for teachers planning a visit, including fact sheets, worksheets and special courses for teachers. They also provide ideas of activities to run in the classroom before and after visiting the museum. This ensures that the visit is integrated into the school curriculum, and that the learning that has taken place at the museum is reinforced back at the school. The DfES manifesto, Learning Outside the Classroom (2006) highlights the importance of curriculum related planning and the need for school trips to *'extend learning before and after the event'* (p.13).

Although specialist resources can be used in the classroom, taking children out of the familiar school environment to learn has many benefits. The change in setting gives opportunity for a fresh attitude and perspective towards education, stimulating and inspiring pupils (DfES, 2006). Students have the freedom to express themselves in ways they may not be able to in a classroom (Braund and Reiss, 2004). For example, activities such as geography fieldtrips *'provide direct and relevant experiences that deepen and enrich learning'* (DfES, 2006; p.4). Taking learning outside the classroom provides a link to the wider world, exposing students to real life situations and risks. Such environments often have a striking impact, as experiences lead to deep and personal learning:

> *'...learning is not some abstract experience that can be isolated in a test tube or laboratory but an organic, integrated experience that happens in the real world.'*
>
> *(Falk and Dierking, 2000; p.10)*

From a young age school trips can encourage students to explore their local environment, and as they grow take them further a-field, challenging perceptions and introducing them to new surroundings and situations. Residential trips can be particularly beneficial *'developing key life skills, building confidence, self esteem, communication and team work.'* (DfES, 2006; p.5)

School trips can also challenge the stereotypes and attitudes of students. 'Children Challenging Industry' is a project that runs school trips to industrial sites. The project teaches children about industrial processes with the aim to improve views on science and industry. Research carried out by 'Children Challenging Industry' found that over half of the students who visited industrial sites could recall the trip 5 years later, and 40 per cent claimed that their experience of the programme helped with subsequent science and other subject work (Evans et al, 2004).

The students are not the only people to benefit from a school trip; such an experience can also have an impact on the teacher. Seeing children learning in a different context helps a teacher to understand what they are motivated by and how they learn. There is opportunity for the teacher to interact with children in a different way, to see them grow, and in many cases observe another professional in action. Such experiences can often motivate and encourage a teacher, giving them new ideas and a fresh perspective on education.

Swimming lessons, Scouts and Self-development

Eddie runs to the school gates; "Mum, Mum, guess what I did today! I went to the zoo!" He gets into the car, and shows his little sister Joanna his lion mask. Joanna dives into her book bag and pulls out a picture; "I drew this, Mummy! Look Eddie, it's a tree!"

After dinner, Mum drops Eddie off at the Church Hall for Scouts, and takes Joanna to the Sports Centre. Joanna has a swimming lesson.

Using settings other than the school within the formal education system is highly beneficial, but learning does not end when the school bell rings. Learning is an on-going process, a process that never ends, and there are many opportunities to develop our learning experiences outside the school environment. *'…school-aged children spend only about a third of their waking lives in school'* (Braund and Reiss, 2004; p.3) and a number of groups and activities exist to encourage active learning outside of this time.

In 2006, ninety one per cent of primary schools in the United Kingdom provided some form of after-school activity (Gilby et al, 2006). However, schools are not the only institution to provide after-school services. The choices for young people and their carers are endless, with activities being provided by a variety of organisations including charities, faith-based organisations, businesses, museums, and local councils. The activities on offer are diverse, with differing values and strategies, aiming to reach people from a variety of backgrounds (Petrie et al, 2000).

The motivations and reasons each group has for running such activities differ. Petrie et al (2000), draw attention to three key reasons that might lead an institution or group to make provisions for children and young people outside school hours.

1. The first reason is to protect children 'at risk'. Neighbourhoods may be seen as hostile places which the young need protecting from. The opposing view, that the young are *'a nuisance to society… a danger to themselves'* (Petrie et al, 2000; p.9) is also seen as part of protecting children; protecting them from becoming involved in deviant activity.

2. Secondly, after-school activities can be used to care for a child whilst their parents are at work. The timetable of schooling differs from the timetable of

employment, with the gap between the end of school and the end of the working day increasing with industrial developments. This leaves a significant section of the day when parents are unable to care for their children as they are still at work. Some after-school programmes are provided to bridge this gap, and even those that are not, are often used by parents for this reason.

3. The third reason for developing an after-school programme highlighted by Petrie et al is to provide opportunities for play and recreation. With growing concern for children's health and fitness, sports clubs and activities are seen as key to encouraging young people to keep fit. Adams and Osborne (2005) claim there is *'a clear distinction between the aerobic fitness levels of children attending out of school sports clubs, compared with those who do not'* (p. 24) arguing that a greater effort should be made to support such activities.

However, after-school activities do not solely exist to keep children safe and healthy while their parents are at work. They can also be valuable learning experiences. Some activities, such as homework clubs are directly related to the school curriculum, often being run by school teachers in a school environment. However, many activities offer students opportunities to explore and discover topics of interest that do not feature in the school curriculum. The opportunities are endless: from swimming to street dancing, basketball to ballroom dancing, circus skills to canoeing. Institutions can offer courses and activities that broaden opportunities for students, using resources that are not available in a school setting. Young people are given the freedom to explore matters of personal interest in more depth, without being restricted by the school context (Bentley, 1998).

Case Study – When the out-of-school club really matters

Klub Novi Most, Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina

The education system in Bosnia is still suffering the effects of war. With ethnic divisions in schools (Walton, 2006), poor provisions and frequent teacher strikes (lasting more than 7 weeks in some situations) children and young people's education is shaky at best. Many teenagers missed a significant period of their education due to the fighting, causing various learning difficulties as students struggle to engage with the school system.

Mostar, a city physically divided on the grounds of ethnicity, has only one school with a mixed ethnic intake. With little to do and no jobs (there is 45 to 60 per cent unemployment among young people in many areas of Bosnia (John, 2006)) young people often become caught up in gang culture and criminal activity.

It was in this environment that charitable organisation Novi Most International opened Klub Novi Most in 2001. Klub Novi Most is an open youth club for young people aged between 12 and 21. Young people can go to the centre and participate in a variety of activities run by the 6 full-time workers. Courses are run in computing, dance, and English, and a music tutor runs drum and guitar lessons. The centre is placed between the two sides of the city, and welcomes young people from all ethnic groups. There is no charge for activities, and in the summer teams travel from the UK, South Africa, America and other destinations to run special programmes and events throughout the summer holiday. These include weekly trips to the local swimming pool, trips to the beach, an English camp and an activity camp.

Klub Novi Most offers children and young people opportunities for personal and educational development, and courses in computing and English are particularly popular as they widen opportunities for the young people. The centre also acts as a meeting point for children from different backgrounds, working for reconciliation in this divided city. In a bleak environment, Klub Novi Most offers hope to a generation of teenagers who find themselves in hopeless situations.

As well as working with 12-21 year olds, Novi Most workers are developing a school programme for children living on a rubbish dump on the edge of the city, teaching basic literacy to children aged from 4-18 who have never had the opportunity to go to school. In 2007 a new Klub Novi Most centre was also opened in the neighbouring town of Čapljina, offering English lessons, computer courses, Scouting activities, and aerobics!

(Visit www.novimost.org for more information)

One key difference between learning in a formal setting and the opportunities an after-school environment can provide is the element of choice. It is not a requirement that the student attends; an active choice has been made to participate. A significant number of out-of-school services are day-care centres; activities where this element of choice has been taken away from the child. The parent or carer has arranged for the child to be cared for, possibly whilst they work, and the child has no opportunity to leave. Petrie et al (2000) found that such environments are often more restricted than open-door services and activities, where the element of choice is given to the child. Open-door services give students independence, letting them take control of their own learning, and teaching them self-motivation.

After-school programmes offer the opportunity to develop skills that may not be covered in the school curriculum. Some activities focus on specific skills, such as football and other sporting clubs, whereas others focus on life skills. 28 million young

people across the world are part of the Scouting movement (The Scout Association, 2006), an organisation that provides *'valuable opportunities for young people to develop skills and qualities which will serve them well in later life'* (Bentley, 1998; p.33).

> Joanna and her best friend Rachelle sit together on the edge of the pool and wait for Sandra, their instructor. Before too long, Sandra appears on the other side of the pool. There is a little girl holding her hand. "Joanna, Rachelle. This is Anesa. Anesa is new here. Do you think you could look after her for me?"

Developing social skills is also a key aspect of after-school activities. As students meet and interact with other participants of the activities, they develop their inter-personal skills and broaden their social experience (Bentley, 1998). *'For many… children and young people, out-of-school services [are] valued as spaces to make and meet friends and to maintain established friendships'* (Petrie et al, 2000; p.115). By working together on various projects or activities students learn the importance of communication, relationship negotiation and community spirit. Interaction with other children teaches the concepts of sharing and 'taking turns' (Petrie et al, 2000), particularly in less formal play-based situations.

Out-of-school services can be an important environment for building the self-confidence of students, particularly performance based activities, as children learn to speak out and present themselves to large groups of people. They also provide opportunities for students to work in smaller groups with a lower student to teacher ratio than in a classroom situation.

This social developmental role of after-school activities is often complemented by a 'social curriculum' (Bentley, 1998; p.35) teaching children and young people important life lessons such as racial equality, environmental responsibility, and good citizenship. This 'social curriculum' is taught through games, activities and play, as children discover for themselves important lessons that will aid them later in life.

A day at the beach

> It's Saturday. Mum and Dad are taking Eddie and Joanna to the seaside. Eddie fetches the bucket and spade, while mum packs the lunch. Dad searches the whole house for a camera, and Joanna puts the towels and the football in the back of the car.
>
> The car journey seems to last forever, but eventually they arrive at the beach. Joanna runs straight into the sea. It's really cold. Mum and Eddie start making a sandcastle.

Both school trips and after-school activities are examples of intentional informal learning; the activities are planned and have some kind of learning aim.

Unintentional informal learning happens as *'a by-product of everyday activities'* (OECD, 2006); the aim is not to learn, but learning takes place as the activity is carried out.

Play is an essential part of early childhood and a key source of informal learning; it is *'a creative activity and through it children become aware of their place in the world'* (Smith, 1997). Children imitate the adults around them, playing games based on real life situations, and through these games begin to understand the norms and values of society (Berk, 2004). It is through make-believe play that they learn conflict resolution techniques, understand the dynamics of relationships, and begin to comprehend the structures of society. Marjorie Shostack (1990) looked at the life of Nisa, a woman from the !Kung tribe in Botswana, and how she learnt about life through play;

> *'And that's how we grew up. We would leave our parents' village and set up a small, "grown-up" village of our own nearby. We played at gathering food from the bush, at bringing it back and eating it. Then we "married" and played sexually together. We played like that all day.'* (p.116)

The relationships we develop with the people around us are also an important source of learning. Social development depends on the successful negotiation of our early relationships. Understanding of accepted behaviour and practices, as well as development of general knowledge, is passed on from one human to another through learning relationships. Rousseau's model of education was based on an ongoing deep relationship with a mentor or tutor. In Emile he gives examples of how a child should be brought up and taught the lessons of life on a one-to-one basis (Rousseau, 1956). He uses the example of the boy Emile to illustrate how a tutor can develop a good relationship with their student and teach them the lessons of life.

This relationship between student and tutor in Rousseau's Emile is more akin to the relationship between child and parent at home, rather than student and teacher relationship apparent in today's education system. Parents have a significant role to play in the life of their children, not only acting as provider of human and material resources, but also as a teacher and mentor (Sigel, 1982). The most significant arena for learning is the family; it is the 'crucible of all learning', (Bentley, 1998; p.26) regarded as the primary source for learning about daily life. As a parent interacts with a child, playing, conversing, teaching and involving them in everyday activities, the child grows in knowledge and understanding;

> *'...children acquire wide-ranging knowledge about their physical and social worlds, ways of relating to other people, strategies for surmounting challenges, a sense of family and community belonging, and a personal history imbued with cultural beliefs and values. They also become adept at using*

> *powerful symbolic tools for communicating and thinking, which open up virtually unlimited "zones" for learning.'*

> *(Berk, 2004; p.246)*

In his book, Emotional Intelligence, Daniel Goleman (1996) explores the impact parents have on emotional development. It is in the family environment we learn to effectively express thoughts and feelings, and put the concept of empathy into practice. Children whose parents act as an emotional mentor are better at handling their own emotions and interacting successfully in social situations (Hooven et al, 1994 in Goleman, 1996). They are also more effective learners. As parents spend more time with their children, children develop into young people with vast skills, socially as well as mentally.

Conclusion

At the end of a great day at the beach, it's very quiet in the car; Joanna and Eddie are sleeping. They've had a busy week; school trips, scouts, sandcastles. They've learnt so much, but now it's time for bed. I wonder what learning experiences are in store next week.

In today's society the word 'education' is often used interchangeably with the term 'schooling'. But when we leave the classroom at 3.30 we do not switch off learning until 8.30 the next morning. Learning is an ongoing process. Our education is affected by many things that have nothing to do with school: trips to the zoo, swimming lessons at the local pool, and days at the beach with the family. These are just three examples of learning situations, but the educational opportunities are endless: family holidays, museum services, faith based activities, industrial experiences, personal computerised learning. Every experience is a learning opportunity waiting to be explored. What will you learn this week? And how will you learn it?

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6

Home Education: Who, What, How and Why?

James Fox

I am currently studying Education at the University of York. I have always been interested in alternatives to the traditional forms of education and after much discussion, decided to focus my chapter on home education. This gave me a great chance to look into an area that I believe, could benefit from more research. I have learnt a lot from putting together this chapter and I hope you enjoy the results.

Why do some parents choose to home educate?

In the United Kingdom, there are approximately 150,000 children being home educated. There are many different reasons why some people choose to home educate their child and therefore many different approaches to methods of home education. For some people it is just not feasible to send their child to school; some people live a long way from the nearest school and might not have transport available to make the journey. Others are not happy with state education in their local area and believe they can provide more for the child through home education.

One of the main concerns of parents is the large number of children in a class, meaning the teacher's time and attention is divided between more pupils needing help. This can sometimes mean that some children, especially the quieter ones less inclined to shout out, often do not receive the help they need, which can severely hinder the child's progress. Classroom assistants do help the situation, but there is only so much they can do; with their attention often going to help keep the less able members of the group on track. Parents can have problems with the quality of teaching in some schools, as well as with the attitudes and behaviour of the other children attending the school, which could undeniably have a negative impact on their child's education. Studies regularly show that home educated children often outperform the average results for their peers in state education (National Home Education Research Institute, 2007). However, this is only a comparison with average results, so does not show how the child performed in relation to children of the same ability.

Parents may choose to home educate because they want to improve the rate of their child's progress, they may believe that they can develop their child's education to a higher level or simply want to affirm their values on their child. By home educating a child, you can have a lot more influence on their beliefs and values, lessening the effect of peer and teacher beliefs. If the child is shown a well balanced and socially aware view to the world, it can prove to be beneficial, but this is not always the case. A parent's experiences can have a negative impact on the child before they ever encounter a similar situation. Parents have to try and remain objective about life, support their children into allowing them to do what they want with their lives. Having just your parents as main influences means you can lead a very sheltered upbringing. This problem is often exaggerated if being taught by a single parent, as there is usually less social communications for the child to observe, which could lead to developing a shy and reserved character that might not be as successful in group situations. Single parents need to be especially careful that they are keeping their child's education on target, as a partner can usually offer a vital second opinion and different views about the material covered.

Some families choose home education as they want their child to be more individual, to avoid indoctrination and conformity to what they see as the social norm. Some people may home educate for religious reasons, such as *"to give them a true Christian education"* (Miller, 2007). Parents may also choose to home educate their child if they have been having problems at school, either with the national curriculum, the way it is covered, or other people in the school. If the child has been a victim to bullying, the child can be put off school completely, especially if the bully is still around. To be successful in education, a child needs to find an interest in the material, enjoy the way it is taught, but more importantly, feel safe and secure. The teacher's job is to adapt their style of communicating the material to a method that suits the pupils best. This is where one of the benefits of home education is clear, you do not have a class full of children to communicate with, it is just direct communication between you and the child, which means less distractions and therefore, hopefully, faster development.

What does home education involve?

The first step to home education is to withdraw your child from school; by writing a letter to the head teacher informing them of your intentions. However, to remove a special needs child from a special school, you must obtain consent from your local council to deregister your child from school, by showing you can cater for his or her special needs. You then need to consider the cost of paying for the materials required, the educational visits and the cost of any examinations, which have to be paid for. In terms of the law, home educating is open to anybody that wants to do it, but in reality it is a lot easier for some than others.

Parents should show "equality of consideration" (Meighan, p22, 1988) in that their child's opinion is as valid as an adult's would be. There is no set way to home educate, each home educator will have their own way adapted to their child's own individual style of learning. The question raised by these different methods is, which technique works best for each individual? Whereas education in school has to be aimed at a wide variety of pupils with a mix of interests and abilities, home education can be tailored specifically for one individual and it is up to the parent in charge, which approach they use.

Home educating can require as much or as little work as you put are willing to put in. It is recommended that anybody withdrawing their child from school is observed in the process of home educating through home visits by inspectors to check that the child is being taught in accordance with the child's age and ability. However, this cannot be done if the parents refuse entry to the inspectors or do not inform the council of a change of address.

Through speaking to different families involved with home education, it is clear that they had problems finding the relevant literature about getting started. The most helpful source of information is the internet and the many websites detailing

people's different approaches to home education. However, the best way of getting a feel for home education is to sit in and observe different teaching methods in action.

Home education can be as formally structured as you choose to make it, with rigid lesson plans being used by some people whereas others choose not to have specific lessons, and just learn through the processes of life. *"I have brought up and not 'educated' all my four children with varying results"* (Pringle, 1992). These two approaches are very different and produce very different results, but this is not to say that one is better than the other. After all, education is all about providing you with the intellectual capabilities to successfully deal with whatever you may encounter in later life. If you are living in a forest in the highlands of Scotland, then simultaneous equations are not going to be much use to you, but practical skills and knowledge of the local area will be.

By observing others, you can see which aspects of education you value most, before adapting your own method relevant to your own personal aims. An important choice has to be made with regards to the amount of time you spend working through the material each day. Some people work for a certain amount of time a day and work through the year's material step by step. Most people choose not to do as many hours as a typical school day as they believe they are getting through the material more efficiently. However, some prefer a more flexible approach, where the child is set a series of tasks to work through each day; it is important that a challenging yet realistic amount of work is expected from the child to maintain progress.

One area in particular that most people doing home education enjoy is the "freedom to choose" ('Cathy', 2007). It is completely up to the parent what they teach in home education, they do not have to put their child through any examinations at any stage of home education. This means that learning can be directed by the child if the parent is happy to go along with things. Self directed learning from an early age means that home educated children are often very successful when they come to study at university, because of their independence in learning and not being reliant on a teacher for guidance.

Home education is all about child-centred learning, in a way such as Montessori schools, where the teacher is not simply a method of passing on information, but a person to nurture enthusiasm and potential. In one of the families I observed home educating; they combined different subjects to make an interesting case study working through a topic on Ancient Greece. Whereas in a traditional school, different subjects are taught in a different classroom at a different time by different teachers, home education mean that you can include the geography in the history, along with art, science and literature. This may not be the traditional way of doing

things, but it means you can pick up a much better idea about a topic such as Ancient Greece by understanding all the different aspects involved.

Another method I observed was to use Bible passages to improve memory skills and develop an understanding of morals. The child would read through the story and then try and work out what the moral of the story was trying to tell you. Physical demonstrations can also play a big part of a child's understanding showing how facts relate to real life. With topics such as muscles, it can be very helpful to be shown on your own body, not only where the muscles are, but how they work. Simple things like this can make the difference about being able to answer examination questions on it, and fully understand how it works and what it does in order to work, which proves to be much more useful in life outside education.

The internet provides home educators all over the world with the same resources. The BBC provides good educational games, where the user is able to select the level of difficulty in accordance with their ability and see their own progress. This means that the children are able to see the progress themselves rather than just being given a number of different activities to complete. Having something to work through gives the child a sense of achievement and the feeling that they are doing something worthwhile, where they can see the benefits.

How to keep track of home education

 Most people doing home education will have some sort of plan to remind them what they are going to do. However, it is good to realise that it does not always have to be followed precisely and that you can move away from it if needed. This is another difference between home education and the rigid structure in schools following the national curriculum and it allows a lot more flexibility. Two of the families I observed kept a record of what had been done, as well as planning out what they intend to do, they said it provided a good way of keeping track of how they deviated from their semi-structured plan. These records also provide a good way of showing any inspector what sort of material you have covered.

An important aspect in home education is that the child is able to focus whilst still being part of the home environment. This is why a dedicated study room is very useful to help maintain a certain level of structure; there are a lot of distractions around the house so it is important to keep away from anything that is likely to hinder progress. The home educated children I've met have been very forthcoming in explaining that they know what they have to do; they appear much more focused than a class of children at school do. Being home educated with a brother or sister will also affect your concentration levels, as well as your relationship with them. I was told "it's good being able to work together" ('Ben', 2007) but it is important that this relationship, which will have primarily been about having fun, allows you to concentrate on the tasks required.

There are both benefits and drawbacks to being home educated with a sibling. The first negative that should jump to mind is the split in the parent's time, meaning the parent's attention now has to be shared. Being home educated with somebody else can have a positive effect, but it could also be negative. It gives the opportunity for you to learn together, bounce ideas of each other and gives experience working with a partner. However, another person can also provide a distraction from work and will inevitably use up some of your tutor's time with their own queries and problems. Another problem that can be caused by home educating two children at a time is that in most cases, they are different ages and therefore at different stages of development. This can have many different effects on both children's development, and if care is not taken to treat each child as an individual, it could be very detrimental to the level of progress of the older child. On the other hand, the older child could also benefit from having somebody younger alongside him, it means he gets to play the role of the mentor, and can help explain problems and solutions to the younger sibling. Teaching others can provide the clarity sometimes required in your own mind to set things straight and is a very good way to remember information.

There are a number of different modules of learning, put forward through the internet by websites such as the BBC, that detail the same learning experience, but at different levels. Moral stories are sometimes written at two different levels, with one retaining the complex lexis and another simplified version with pictures for the younger child. The younger child enjoys reading the words and linking them to the pictures, whereas the older child can work through the material with help from the tutor to understand the complex vocabulary and phrases. Some home educators use things like this so that both children can be working on the same subject but at their own level. However, this is constrained by the fact that you are very dependant on the material that is released and it is difficult to take it further. It can be much more beneficial, for both children, to have their own routine of study and to progress at a rate suitable to their own age and ability.

What is it like to be home educated?

"It's more fun than school" ('Alex', 2007). I think that the children I observed in the home schooling situation, were all very aware of their own level of progress and what they need to do in order to maintain it. I saw two occasions where the younger of the two, felt that he was not being challenged enough by the tasks laid out and asked for it to be made more complicated. From my experience in schools, this would rarely happen in the classroom, but this child's awareness of the reasoning behind his education meant he knew what he had to do to make it worthwhile. It had helped to put him in control of his education and gives him the opportunity to be part of the decision making process. He had been involved with his parents' discussions on home education and understood why he and his parents had made the decision to withdraw him from school.

When asked how he felt about being home educated, I was surprised with the maturity of his answer for an eight year old. He understood that he was missing out on some of the social aspects of school, but still remained happy to be home educated as it meant he was open to other things. I think that as the child matures, it is important that he becomes involved in different groups or clubs, as it is important that he develops the social skills required for meeting new and different types of people. Other people have recognised the social side of home education as a potential drawback so have got together with other families home educating to create a group of people in the same situation. I tried to find out how he truly felt about these groups with a casual chat rather than formal questions, so he felt comfortable that he could be honest in his response.

A home educated view on home education.

He had made new friends in the home education groups and he was enjoying his education alongside his older brother. It is a very different type of education to state schooling and he was enjoying the freedom that came with it and not being constrained to the time periods of a traditional school. He recognised that if he got his work done quickly, he would be allowed to go and relax sooner, but understood that he could not just rush it to get it done. He knew he had to work hard to get things done but realised the rewards from doing so. Being home educated did not mean that he could no longer see his friends from school, but he admitted it did make things harder and that he had not seen them as much as he could have done. ('Alex', 2007)

Who is there to help you home educate?

There is an increasing number of resources available to those looking to home educate their child. However, as there is no set way that you have to do it and no stringent guidelines that you have to adhere to; most books just show a particular way of doing things. There are general guides on how things can be done, but none of them are specific about saying what is right and wrong. I do not think that we know enough about home education to change this, but I do think that more research should be conducted and more help available to those that choose to home educate. The internet is where most of the information can be found, with most information about home education held by individual parents. There is so much information to be found on relatively basic websites or blogs, created by families who have chosen to home educate, designed as a guide to other people thinking about doing the same. Personal blogs can be very informative and provide a great insight into the many different ways in which people teach their children as well as the resource material they used. The websites from companies like the BBC and the Home Education Authority Service (HEAS) can provide a lot of material and links to other home educators. The BBC has a lot of interactive video games and

puzzles that the child can work through; it is a very valuable resource for keeping the child interested as it makes learning into an interesting game (Cathy, 2007).

However, there are drawbacks and risks from using the internet, young children need to be protected from some of the content found on the internet and there is also a risk of computer virus's whilst browsing the internet. The other problem with using the internet is trusting the content; anybody can create their own website and anybody can submit articles to sites such as Wikipedia. These sorts of sites can be a useful resource for information and pub quizzes, but should not be used as a basis for education. There is a problem that people, especially children, are likely to trust and believe anything they see on television, printed in a book or published on a website. Studies into the 'hypodermic needle theory' and studies dating as far back as the 1930's (Payne Fund) have shown this to, which is why parents must research thoroughly and be careful about the resources they use.

If the child enjoys the process of learning, he will be a lot more engaged with the task and take more of it in. One game on the BBC website puts you in control of a space ship that has to shoot at multiples of a given number, you can customise the numbers, the range of numbers and the speed at which they pass, making it interesting and fun, yet educational. There are also a number of different puzzles available online to help with learning prime, triangular and square numbers. Puzzle book games such as sudoku, which may not seem educational, but can be encouraged in order to develop problem solving skills and logical thinking. The type of learning usually associated with home education is known to develop self directed learners who understand that they have to put effort in to do well. This contrasts with some school situations, where the teacher gives instructions about what to do at every moment, in order to just keep the class on track. In most cases, the child sees the amount of preparation that the parents have done for their lessons and because of this, they understand that they too must put in a lot of effort. The success also depends a lot on the quality of teaching from the parents which derives from their ability to communicate information.

What can be missed from home education?

Some people argue that through home education, the government has lost its delivery of a specified standard education to all. Assessment is often an area of dispute in home education, with varying opinions. The government would like all children to take standardised tests in order that they could monitor progress more easily. However, there is no such requirement to make children take tests such as GCSE's; the government do not encourage people to put their children through these tests and they charge for each examination taken. These examinations would be government funded if the child were in school, but not for home educated children. Parents receive no financial support for any of the examinations or material required. They still continue to pay taxes, but are not benefiting from the money put

towards the state school system and receive no support for their home educating. This could help to put some people, who may have liked to be more involved with their child's education, out of reach from home education. I think that this should be changed; although giving financial aid for home education could push some people into home education for the wrong reasons, there would be no such drawbacks with not charging for the examinations.

"I don't see my friends as much as I did" ('Alex', 2007). The main aspect of school life that home educated people can miss out on is the social aspect and communicating with peers. Social skills are important through all ages of life and education, especially if living at university away from your family. You will need to be able to mix with new people socially as well as being able to work as part of a team for the university course. Team work is a vital skill in the world of work and bouncing ideas of peers is another valuable way of learning. People skills are very important in life after education in all types of work, you need to be able to communicate effectively with those around you and good leadership skills are essential for anybody wanting to enter management.

By withdrawing your child from school, you are greatly reducing the number of opportunities they have to interact with peers of the same age. However, this is where home educating groups can help; the HEAS puts people starting to home educate their children in contact with local people in a similar situation and those who have gone through the whole process. This means that not only can they meet to discuss approaches to teaching and find out what material different people use, but it can provide more of the all important social link with peers. There are group trips to do things such as ice skating, in order for the children to socialise with others in a new environment as well as providing a means of exercise. Most home educators recognise that *"physical education is an important part"* (The Jubilee Academy, 2007) so cannot be ignored. A lot of home educated children are also encouraged to join clubs, I spoke to two children who went sailing as part of a club and had found it a good way to meet new people, learn new skills as well as keeping physically active. Not regularly socialising with peers and being brought up around a lot of adults can mean you mature very quickly and can often miss out on some important aspects of childhood.

Is home education worthwhile?

Home education is attempted by many different people for many different reasons and inevitably some will be more effective than others in their methods. But what exactly makes a good home educator? Well there has to be the basic level of knowledge in all the subject areas covered, as well as good organisational skills to be able to keep track of the different things being done at the same time. However, I strongly believe that the most important skill in home education, as well as teaching, is communication, which is *"a vital part of teaching and learning"*

(Institute of Teaching and Learning, 2007). Understanding it yourself is good, but useless unless you can take it to the next step by explaining it clearly to the child so that they too can understand.

There is information available to help you home educate your children, information packs on teaching are sometimes provided with subject books but the internet has a lot of advice and contact information of people willing to help. Home education conferences are also held, so families from all over the world can come together to listen to educational speakers and exchange theories and ideas with people in the same situation. There are a few different stereotypes that are associated with people who have been home educated, one being that they are all quiet and reserved characters. My research has shown that this is definitely not the case in all of them, in some cases it has been the opposite, where the support of individuality has led to some rather outspoken characters. I have no doubt that they would do very well in any social situation they find themselves in, because of their expressive ability and high level of confidence.

Home education can provide a means to which you can be more in control of your own education. As the child becomes older, they can take on more responsibility in deciding what they want to do. An important decision has to be made about whether to complete any standard examinations for the chance to study at an institute of further education. By realising the path that a child wants to take with their life, you can help them to reach their goals by choosing to focus their learning around particular subjects which will be useful. They need to work backwards from their goal, in order to work out what needs to be done. An example being that if you wanted to do physics at university, you would have to obtain the relevant A levels to get you onto such a course and to do that you would have also need to have done the appropriate GCSE's.

There are lots of different methods used to educate our future generation in a number of different institutions. This means that there will always be a lot of decisions to be made about education. How someone decides to educate their child is one of the biggest influencing factors on their lives, so it needs to be considered carefully. Whether you make the choice of state education, private education or home schooling, you need to understand and be able to explain your reasoning to the child when they are old enough to want to know why you did things the way you did. Home educating gives you and your child the freedom to be able to dictate what happens in their education. The main drawback for home education is cost, in both time and a financial sense, because as a parent home educating, you have to be willing to donate a significant part of your working life to developing your child's education and not all parents would be willing to do this. The big financial strain is not through the expense of books and materials, but through the lost income of the partner choosing to home educate their child. Ironically, because of the lost income through home educating, private schooling can often present a cheaper

alternative which should not be overlooked. These factors can put a lot of stress on your family; so home education is definitely not something that should be rushed into, but definitely not something that should be overlooked.

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Interviews

(The names used are not the names of the actual individuals interviewed)

'Alex' Male, aged 8, in the process of home education.

'Ben' Male, aged 13, in the process of home education.

'Cathy' Female, Home educator and mother to 'Alex' and 'Ben'.

7

Sticks and Stones May Break My Bones: Combating Bullying

Lucinda Hawkes

At first I really struggled to find something I wanted to write about for this chapter because I had so many different ideas. The idea of bullying came about through a discussion with one of my friends about when she had been bullied. Much of what she said concerned me, how her school dealt with her problem for example, and so I began to look into news stories about how schools had dealt with bullying problems. Few news headlines showed schools actively combating bullying, which I couldn't believe so I began to look into it much further and this chapter is the result of all my findings.

> *'Last year more than 31,000 children and young people called
> ChildLine about bullying'*
>
> *(ChildLine, 2007)*

These figures (referring to 2003-2004) are staggering. It is clear that bullying is a major problem in the UK and on a global scale. It takes place in schools, the work place and everywhere in society. Its consequences are continuously reported in the media: but what is being done to prevent bullying?

The purpose of this chapter, for me, was to find out more about anti-bullying work being done by schools and the Government. So many people have experienced or witnessed and been affected by bullying in some way that I really wanted to look into it further.

As part of my research I have interviewed two people who had been bullied during their school years: 'Alice' and 'Becky'. Both suffered 'indirect bullying' (which will be explained in *What is Bullying?*) which, in both cases, progressed into more 'active' bullying. From these interviews I was able to get a clearer picture of how I wanted to progress with the chapter. I decided to explain bullying and the different types to illustrate how serious a problem bullying is and to highlight that it exists in areas and in ways that people do not realise.

The chapter then looks at why people might bully and the consequences of bullying: this is important if one is exploring how bullying might be best combated. I then look into previous bullying interventions and determine how successful they were in their aims. After this I look into alternative approaches to combating bullying: integrating anti bullying policies into the curriculum and dealing with the bully and any problems they may have causing them to behave in this manner.

What is Bullying?

Bullying occurs when there is a significant imbalance of power (Olweus, 1993 and Rigby, 1997) either physically or psychologically. The act of bullying can be malicious and intended but it can also be unintentional (Rigby, 1997).

Malicious or 'malign' bullying (Rigby, 1997) is when the victim is targeted either by an individual or a group of 'stronger' people and *'exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions'* (Olweus, 1993). The 'negative action' is intentional and meant to hurt the victim and often the bully or bullies will choose a particular aspect to use against their victim. These 'reasons' range from race, culture, and religion to weight issues, sexuality and academic success or failure: the list is endless. Wherever there is an imbalance of strength or power the bully can thrive.

It must be noted, however, that there is a difference between bullying and teasing. In the playground there is a certain amount of playful joshing and friendly banter but it cannot necessarily be labelled as bullying (Olweus, 1999). It is only when the

teasing becomes *'degrading'*, *'offensive'* and *'continued in spite of clear signs of distress'* (Olweus, 1999, pp.11).

A sub- category of malicious bullying is **'indirect bullying'** (Olweus, 1993, pp.10). This is when a bully spreads rumours about their victim or excludes them from a group (Sharp and Smith, 1994) causing upset and with the intent to do so without openly attacking the victim.

There is also another kind of bullying: **'non-malign bullying'** or **'mindless bullying'** (Rigby, 1997). There is a general perception that one requires a particular mindset to be a bully. (Rigby, 2002) This type of bully may not set out with the intent to hurt others. They are generally part of a gang, taking part in some 'harmless' (Rigby, 1997, pp.18) teasing, almost always they are only joining in with the laughter: they are conformists (Rigby, 1997). The Government has recognised this as a form of bullying and recognised its seriousness. This is revealed in their campaign against cyber bullying. The slogan that is being used is: *'Laugh at it, and you're part of it'* (DirectGov, 2005). This type of bullying can be as damaging as intentional bullying and is not always among peers. Mindless bullying often occurs in a classroom and involving no malevolence or intent to hurt and can be seen as 'for the victim's good' (Rigby, 1997, pp.18) It can occur during class or reviewing work where a teacher is repeatedly finding fault with the pupil causing the pupil to feel victimised (Rigby, 1997). This can be very serious indeed as it can affect a student's self esteem academically causing their work to decline and eventually could cause them not to achieve in the way that they should be doing so. I believe that this is a particularly dangerous form of bullying because it is not meant with malice and so it will continue and may only be recognised by the pupil involved.

Why Bully?

When one considers how to deal with an incident of bullying the answer seems clear: punish the bully and help the victim. However I do not think that it is that simple. In fact I think the act of bullying raises the question: Why Bully? In the Olweus anti-bullying programme part of the individual intervention was to talk directly to the victim and the bully and work out a specific individual plan for both of them to help them (Olweus, 1995).

So is there a typical bully? Olweus (2004) argues that a 'typical bully' is *'characterized by a strong need to dominate others'* (Olweus, 2004, pp.16). He also argues that, although there is no strong evidence to suggest it, bullies are insecure and acting under a façade of self confidence (Olweus, 2004). It must also be remembered that a lot of bullying is indirect and by a group of people so Olweus' theory is just that and is not a definition of a bully. In my interview with 'Alice' I found it interesting that when she was talking about being bullied in secondary school she defended the bully. She spoke of how aggressive the bully was and how she was in trouble a lot with the police because of her background

and the dysfunctional nature of her family life. 'Alice' reiterated this point several times as if she wanted me to know that there was a reason behind the bullying. This could of course be a defence mechanism caused by the bullying itself: 'there was a reason she bullied me, and it wasn't my fault.' However, even if this is the case it still illustrates that she knew that the bully had problems of her own and almost pitied her for it.

Many children bully to regain some control of their own lives and if this was recognised and dealt with by schools (or other authorities) it would prevent some children from bullying others. Rigby (1997) uses the example of the horrific murder of James Bulger in 1993 to further illustrate this point. The two boys who killed him came from dysfunctional families, and the police described one of them as *'not used to being touched'* (Rigby, 1997, pp.89). Although what these boys did was terrible, if they had had some support and attention somewhere along the line this atrocity may have been averted. I strongly believe that in any case of bullying the bully must be taken aside and spoken to, to discover the meaning behind their behaviour. It is entirely possible that the bully is in fact a victim crying out for help.

It must be remembered however that not all bullies are abused or neglected at home or come from a dysfunctional family background. Elliot (1997) argues that there are two kinds of bully: one being a neglected or abused child, the other being a child who is spoilt and who can do whatever they please when their parents are around. These cases must still be dealt with in the same way as any other. The bully must be sat down and talked to, if only for them to realise how serious a matter bullying is. I also believe that the bully should be punished, no bully should ever be led to believe that they can bully without punishment. I would however argue that one cannot successfully deal with a problem without a clear understanding of the whole situation (Pearce, 1997).

Consequences of Bullying

Bullying is an extremely serious problem, one that affects many children throughout their school years. In 2003-4 **ChildLine** received over 31,000 phone calls regarding bullying (ChildLine, 2007).

> **ChildLine** is a charity that provides a free helpline for children and young people who feel threatened, bullied, or distressed in any way. The 24 hour helpline provides trained counsellors at the end of every phone line.

Before bullying became so high profile people believed it to be a part of growing up: children teasing other children in the playground is normal and only a game. However, if bullying is ignored it could ferment into a situation beyond the control of the victim and the bully. In 2004 two girls one aged 13 and one aged 14 made a suicide pact and one of them succeeded (The Telegraph Online, 2004). It soon transpired that both girls had been severely bullied. This is not the only story of suicide as a consequence of bullying. Many young people are made to feel worthless,

unattractive and ashamed (Olweus, 2004) and become depressed. Although suicide is an extreme consequence of bullying, it does happen. However, many of the factors that can lead up to suicide are just as serious and can be life long.

Bullying can cause a victim to have low self worth or self esteem. There is an argument that claims that low self esteem is a cause rather than an effect of bullying (Rigby, 1997) because it can be seen as 'advertising…vulnerability' (Rigby, 1997, pp.50). I do not subscribe to this view, this may happen in a selection of cases but systematic bullying can cause a feeling of failure and shame about who you are (Olweus, 2004). Low self esteem can also lead to other problems such as having very few, or no, friends (Rigby, 1997): being bullied can cause trust problems and people who have been bullied often find it hard to believe that someone could like them and want to be their friends making it very difficult to form relationships (Smith and Sharp, 1994). Some children are bullied as a result of this difficulty forming relationships which, in a way, this supports the view that some people 'advertise' themselves to bullies. However, having low self esteem does not necessarily mean that you will find it hard to make friends; it may make one quieter and actually actively avoid the bullies.

 'Alice' who I interviewed about this topic, was bullied systematically throughout her school years. When I asked why she thought that was, she answered *'I guess I just didn't fit in.'* This isolation whether a cause or effect of the bullying can cause depression (Rigby, 1997) which can spiral out of control and can affect people their whole lives. 'Becky', who I also interviewed, was bullied in year seven by people she considered to be her friends. She became hugely depressed at the time of the bullying and still suffers from depression today.

Bullying can also have a significant effect on academic work: the child may worry about going to school, or break times and may not sleep at night. In the extreme they may also not wish to go to school and become truants (Rigby, 1997). 'Becky' and 'Alice' both spoke of how they tried to get out of going to school. 'Becky' said that she would 'spend days crying begging not to go to school' and 'Alice' said she would pretend to be ill.

All of these issues arising from bullying are serious and can be life long, bullying and the bully must be dealt with, that is clear. What about the victim? The victim must also be helped, it is not enough to stop the bullying. The victim may well need counselling and further help with social interaction after the bullying has stopped and this must be recognised.

Bullying Interventions: Are they successful?

Bullying has always existed, and it has not been ignored however many people believed that to be bullied was a rite of passage, and simply part of growing up (Candappa and Oliver, 2003). The view was that bullying toughened people up and

as a result bullying was rife in public schools in the mid-nineteenth century. However, since Olweus' work in the 1980s looking into the nature of bullying (Smith et al, 2004): it has become more high profile and condemned for what it is: a cruel act. The suicide of three young Norwegian boys in 1983 as a result of bullying sparked the *'first major anti – bullying intervention by schools'* (Smith et al, 2004 pp.1) The intervention took place in Bergen and after two years the study illustrated that there was a 50% decrease in bullying in the schools (Smith and Sharp, 1994, pp.10). In this section I intend to look at how successful interventions can be and what can be done to improve them.

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme

This programme was developed in the University of Bergen in Norway in the 1980s and then implemented in schools surrounding Bergen (Olweus, 2004). It has since been implemented in other countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany (SAMSHA, date). The programme consists of three components and is aimed at *'restructuring the existing school environment and focusing on developing peer relationships'* (SAMHSA DATE, pp.1).

The three components to the programme are:

Whole School Intervention

- Olweus Questionnaire filled out anonymously by students

- Development of 'staff discussion groups'

- Development of 'whole school' rules against bullying

- Development of supervision during break times

Classroom Intervention

- Classroom meetings about bullying and peer relations (PSHE)

- Class creates rules against bullying

- Parents attend meetings

Individual Interventions

- Individual sessions with children who bully

- Individual sessions with children who are victims

- Sessions with both sets of parents

(SAMHSA, DATE and Olweus, 2004)

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme has been successful in a number of cases: two good examples are the intervention in Bergen and the intervention in

Oslo. In both cases there was a 50% reduction of cases of bullying (Olweus, 2004, pp.22 and pp.24). The interventions carried out in Germany, the UK and the USA illustrated 'similar' but 'somewhat weaker' results (Olweus, 2004, pp.24).

I think a key point in the Olweus Bullying Programme is that the focus is not solely on the victim, but on the bully as well. It is important to note that most children are not just violent nasty people, but that if they are bullying they may have reasons as to why they are doing it: and to stop bullying this must be addressed otherwise the bully is likely to move on to another victim, who maybe weaker and they may be more subtle.

In the early 1990s people became more aware of bullying in schools as a problem in the UK. Britain had been labelled the 'bullying capital of the Europe' by the media due to the results of a study illustrating that bullying was far more rife in the schools that took part in the UK than in the Norwegian schools of the Bergen study Eslea et al, 2004, pp. 99). It became clear that something had to be done and so, the Sheffield Project was devised.

The Sheffield Project was based on the Olweus anti-bullying programme and adapted for British schools. It involved a whole school policy, a classroom policy, and work with the children themselves (Eslea et al, 2004, pp. 104) The Project itself was a success: there were reductions in all incidents of bullying in both primary and secondary schools (Elsea et al, 2004). However, I believe that the most successful aspect of this project was the awareness being raised that something could be done. In the aftermath of the project a special guidance pack was published and made available to any school, which was updated and re-released by the DFES in 2000 (Eslea et al, 2004); and a practical guide on how to deal with bullying was written especially for teachers (Eslea et al, 2004). Perhaps the most important aspect, most Local Authorities now have individual bullying policies, illustrating that bullying will not be tolerated and that it is taken extremely seriously. The law also states that schools must take measures to *'[prevent] all forms of bullying among pupils'* (DCSF, 2007, pp. 7)

None of these aspects actually stop bullying but they are a step forward in changing the bullying culture of today's society and hopefully in the future further reducing bullying.

Solutions- Schools, Teachers and Trust

It is clear from my study of the consequences of bullying that the issue needs to be addressed and the victim helped. However, many victims, despite the Governments' warning, do 'suffer in silence' (DFES, 2007). Candappa and Oliver conducted a study of young people's views on bullying in 2003. The results were surprising: the majority of year eight students (62% of those asked) said that it would not be easy to tell a teacher if they were being bullied (Candappa and Oliver, 2003,

pp.72). The reasons given were varied: some thought that they might not be believed but perhaps the most disturbing reason was that the pupils feared what the bully would do if they found out. This illustrates that many pupils do not feel that their school can protect them from bullies nor do they trust their teachers enough to tell them that they are being bullied (Candappa and Oliver, 2003). The results are much the same when asked whether they could tell a parent: some pupils felt they might overreact and go to the school and complain thus making the situation worse (Candappa and Oliver, 2003). This once again illustrates that the pupils do not trust their schools enough to help with the problem effectively if they fear the consequences of speaking out more than the bullying itself. These results throw the Government's 'Safe to Learn' guidance pack into question: are schools really embracing it? Or is the advice given in the chapter 'how to create and implement a whole school anti-bullying policy' realistic and practical? (DCSF, 2007) This is a difficult problem to assess because the Government is clearly trying to tackle bullying but what else can be done? When I asked 'Alice' how effective her schools had been at dealing with her bullying problem she answered: *'they couldn't really do anything about it because nothing direct was being done....so they couldn't challenge them and they can't really force children to be friends with you'*. I have argued that all cases of bullying need to be taken seriously and dealt with. Tackling this indirect bullying is far easier than tackling direct and vicious bullying because anti-bullying strategies can be introduced into the curriculum.

When The Sheffield Project was implemented part of the whole school policy was to incorporate anti-bullying ideas into the curriculum (Eslea et al, 2004). This doesn't necessarily mean teaching about bullying in lessons such as PSHE, although this is obviously important too. But by teaching about social interactions and building relationships in the classroom through learning it is possible to break down barriers and prejudices that are harboured in the playground.

For example, allowing students to work in groups on something that will produce an end product that they can all see that they have achieved together is a good way of creating an atmosphere of respect for each other and each others ideas and opinions (Cowie and Sharp, 1994).

Tower of Power

An example of getting pupils to work in groups while creating an atmosphere where the group will all contribute and achieve something is the Tower of Power.

'A plane crashes in the middle of a jungle (with very tall trees) on a deserted island in the middle of the ocean. You have a transmitter but the

battery will only last about half an hour so you must build a tower that is strong enough to hold the transmitter (a juggling ball) and tall enough to support the transmitter above the trees (as tall as the tallest in the group). The materials that you have are: newspaper sheets, sellotape, and straws. You have 20 minutes to build the tower.'

This activity is not easy and so will mean that all members need to think and as there isn't long all members will have a job to do. Also as the groups must not be too large there will be several and they will be in competition with each other. With only 20 minutes to build there will be tension, raised voices, and conflicting ideas, but in order to succeed they must work through all issues. Also the class will be monitored by a teacher and so the problems are being dealt with in a controlled environment.

After the activity the class should talk through what emotions they felt during the twenty minutes and voice concerns or aspects of the task that they enjoyed or found easy or difficult. It is also important to talk through why they think they were successful or why they failed and what they could have done to have improved how they worked together.

An activity like the Tower of Power helps children to feel comfortable around their peers and comfortable sharing ideas around them. They gain a respect for each other and this should be encouraged and developed by the teacher. A way of doing this would be to encourage constructive criticism of each others ideas (Cowie and Sharp, 1994). This must be controlled at first or one could have an end result of educational bullying, where children are constantly picking on one child's ideas and work. This type of activity allows children to develop their relationships with each other: to be able to feel comfortable with someone adapting and amending your ideas depends on a lot of trust. Children will begin to establish where they stand with one another (Cowie and Sharp, 1994). Both 'Alice' and 'Becky' encountered indirect bullying: where they felt left out and isolated. 'Becky' said that she became paranoid because she thought that the other children would not play with her because there was something wrong with her or different about her, and would not share their secrets with her because the secrets were about her. If this kind of isolation was eliminated in the classroom with the use of activities such as the Tower of Power at some point every day with the children working in different groups each time then these problems would be greatly reduced in the playground to start with.

Another way of helping children through the curriculum is in Drama (Gobey, 1997). In Drama pupils can experience working through emotions and confronting difficult issues under the safety of role play (Cowie and Sharp, 1994 and Gobey, 1997) and under the guidance of the teacher. Drama is also a subject where one exposes oneself in a much different way to other subjects: by allowing others to witness and then voice an opinion (whether it be a teacher or peer) on an expression of

creativity that is so personal can be extremely daunting whether hidden under the guise of role play or not. If managed in the correct way it can once again create an atmosphere of trust and inclusion. It can also promote self confidence and worth in a way that is less easy to achieve in other subjects because that expression is so personal (even when acting or directing roles nothing like ones own character) and it is performed.

However, there are issues that arise by implementing this kind of learning: why would a quiet person with low self esteem suddenly change in this environment and feel able to put forward their ideas? I believe that the teacher must play an active role in these sessions to make sure that this is not happening: gradually confidence will grow and inhibitions will die. I have witnessed this in many drama classes: encouragement can be a great motivator, but it needs commitment from the teacher on a classroom level and the whole school on a community level.

It is also important to raise the subject of bullying in sessions such as PSHE because by raising the awareness of bullying within classrooms the majority of students will begin to understand the different types of bullying and may then not join in laughing and teasing with the bullies. Instead they may stand up to them or report them. However, I think that these sessions would have more of an impact if they were combined with a programme of building a community within the school, with a zero tolerance to bullying.

Conclusions

Bullying is a problem that cannot be ignored, or put down to 'part of growing up'. No one should have to go through bullying and the process does not necessarily make someone tougher or stronger; in fact in the majority of cases it causes low self esteem and depression that often last a lifetime.

After determining what bullying is, it seems clear that it is a serious problem. This is especially true as many people do not realise they are contributing to bullying. It is my belief that bullying will always exist. However, there are ways of combating it and if children are taught that bullying is unacceptable from an early age then the majority of them will not participate. For children who will bully, despite any learning that they may receive, there should be consequences and help.

As I have shown there has been some positive work carried out in the last 20 years in the field of combating bullying, and the results that have come from this have been encouraging. However, I think that it is clear that although the Government is providing initiatives and information for teachers and schools on how to prevent and combat bullying, there needs to be a stronger 'push' to actually implement programmes.

If there is a whole school movement towards an anti-bullying campaign it would help children to feel safer in their school environment. If they can see that there is

work being done by the teachers and the whole school community to help prevent and stop bullying they may begin to trust the school more to help if they are being bullied.

Reflection

What are the reasons for a bully's behaviour?

Can bullying be prevented by creating more of a community feel in a school environment?

Can anti-bullying work integrated into the curriculum help create the community feel within schools?

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8

A Safer Place for Everyone?

Do government directives on sexuality education and homophobic bullying make a positive difference in schools?

Rob Sharman

I am 20 years old and currently studying BA Education Studies at the University of Plymouth. I have decided to write my chapter on the topic of 'homophobic bullying' and 'sexuality education' within secondary schools. There are many reasons for wanting to write about this area, but the main one being the effect that this form of bullying has on its victims. I wanted to gain a deeper understanding of these effects and to see if anything was actually being done to combat bullying on grounds of sexuality. I hope you enjoy reading this and will take away a few thoughts from the points I have tried to raise, and think about the here and now factor of homophobic bullying.

Introduction

'I was asked to leave my school for my own safety. I never got to sit my GCSE's and would have loved to. People who pick on me don't understand what being gay is' (Department for Education and Skills, 2007), just one of the young gay students who have been failed by the education system and the seemingly lack of measures to help fight homophobic bullying within secondary education.

Schools have a crucial role to play in teenagers' development of knowledge about their sexuality (Thomson, 1997), however in contrast their is a growing feeling that in many schools homophobia is a major problem within the school culture (Epstein and Johnson, 1998).

Gay and lesbian pupils are a 'vulnerable' group, with a higher suicide rate amongst young gay and lesbian pupils in comparison to rates among the general population (Trenchard and Warren, 1984; Rivers, 2001). To what extent is it a lack of knowledge or an ignorant attitude that leads to homophobic bullying within a school environment? What are the government trying to do to combat homophobic bullying? How is this information interpreted within schools, both through informal pastoral care and more formal anti-bullying policies? What do schools and the government class as homophobic behaviour and bullying? How will the zero tolerance of any anti-gay language be policed and punished within individual schools?

The final area I wish to look at is how both staff and students tackle the bullying itself within the school, and whether the fear of recrimination and lack of teacher power is the driving force behind bullying of this nature, whilst not forgetting the students thoughts and feelings towards an extremely sensitive subject.

Good old government… or not!?

Pupils look to teachers, teachers look to headteachers but who do the headteachers look to for support and guidance? Well the obvious choice would be the local authority or guidelines from central government, but is the support and advice given to schools about sexuality education sufficient and of any use? If we look at the governments 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' (2000) it does not seem to offer a great deal of help within the general overview of sexuality education, for example saying that 'secondary pupils should learn to understand human sexuality' (DFES, 2000). It also states that they should be helped to develop skills to enable them to understand difference and respect themselves and others, and for the purpose also of 'preventing and removing prejudice' (DFES, 2000).

Within the section entitled 'sexual identity and sexual orientation' we begin to see how there is more guidance on how sexuality education can be problematic rather than how it can help students. For example the guidance talks about there being

'*no direct promotion of sexual orientation*' (DFES, 2000), still we must bear in mind that this report was produced whilst the Local Government Act Section 28 was still legal policy, of which I will speak about a little later on. Other issues raised are that parents may feel that it is inappropriate for this subject matter to be addressed in schools and also the resources and materials being used within the PSHE structure for this topic may be thought of as unsuitable.

Although this publication is now 7 years old, it does make some positive contributions to the debate by raising key points that gay campaign groups such as 'stonewall' are still talking about today. For example, in saying that '*young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs.*'   It goes on to say that '*the Secretary of State for Education is clear that teachers should be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support*' (DFES, 2000).

The burning question that arises here is that are we expecting too much from teachers who may have little or no experience of the subject matter and more to the point no specific training in how to deal with questions and highly sensitive and emotional situations?

More recently the government has been trying to be proactive in bringing the serious issue of homophobic bullying to the forefront and an example of this is the guidance released in 2004. It is significant in the fact that it brought together 2 of the largest governmental departments, those being the Department for Education and Skills (DFES) and the Department of Health (DH) to produce a white paper on the issue. The paper entitled 'Stand up for us: Challenging homophobia in schools' provides some very beneficial information, for example giving clear definitions of homophobia and homophobic bullying and also giving schools a step by step guide on tackling homophobic bullying.

Nevertheless I am still very concerned because although, in parts, the guidance seems very helpful, their still seems to be an emphasis on teachers being able to achieve these goals on their own, which in my opinion, and I am sure in many teachers eyes, is just not accomplishable. Within the guidance there are comments made by teachers and students that only seem to confuse matters even more, for example a 16 year old boy said '*teachers with street cred need to stand up for us; if you have respect for your teacher what they say is ok*' (DFES + DH, 2004). This again puts the onus on the teacher and within the paper there is no reference on how to help them individually, just as a whole school environment which, for me, is very worrying.

Section 28…What's all the fuss about?

As previously mentioned 'Section 28' was introduced to prevent local authorities from promoting homosexuality. This seemed to confuse many schools by way of if, how and what should be taught and discussed in relation to sexuality within a school setting. It also seemed to have an adverse effect on tackling homophobic bullying as many schools felt that by trying to tackle this form of bullying it would be seen as accepting and even promoting homosexuality.

The act, which was passed in 1988 during the Thatcher government, also specifically stated that local authorities must not promote the *'teaching of in maintained schools of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretend family type'* (House of Commons, 2000). This view within many schools today would totally go against what most schools would regard as effective sex and relationship education. Epstein (1994) found that four out of five teachers wanted further clarification on Section 28, and 56% said that its continued existence made it difficult to meet the needs of lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils.

However, the act did not actually state that schools could not approach the subject at all and because of this, during a report of sex and relationship education, inspectors reported that *'in many schools nothing was being done to challenge homophobic attitudes'* (Ofsted, 2002). This attitude can be so detrimental to the lives of many young gay people, although their voices were heard through 'homosexual organisations' that see *'section 28 as a hindrance to providing children and young people with information and support'* (House of Commons, 2000).

Due to concerns of most people, not only teachers and headteachers but also politicians, on February 7th 2000 the House of Lords voted by 210 votes to 165 to replace the original section 28. The new clause stated it would *'leave section 28 in place but state that it should not prevent the headteacher or governing body of a maintained school, or a teacher employed by a mainstream school, from taking steps to prevent any form of bullying'* (House of Commons, 2000).

Gay campaign groups never stopped fighting for the whole withdrawal of Section 28, and in 2004 the House of Commons and House of Lords agreed that there was now no need for the act to remain in place. Mounting evidence was beginning to show how it was effecting young gay pupils in schools as *'Section 28 continues to stifle attempts to deal effectively with homophobic bullying through fear of litigation or parental criticism'* (Chambers, C, van Loon, J and Tincknell, E, 2004). The main argument that was put to the government and, subsequently, the House of Lords was that no local authority had ever been punished because of complaints about the breach of Section 28. Although the act has been non-existent now for

more than 3 years there are still teachers that are concerned by what they say in terms of sexuality.

Inside school walls…Fairness or phobia?

> *'I went to see the head about it.   He said…basically…"There is nothing I can do about it because it's such a large group.   If it was two or three boys then I could sort it out, and I could have them in the office".   And then he sent me to the counsellor who didn't know what to do'*
>
> (Liam, aged 16, DFES 2004).

When I came across this comment by a 16 year old I was shocked not only was it from a member of staff, but the headteacher of the school. This is what made me want to look at homophobic bullying from a top down approach looking at anti-bullying policies and then filtering down to the class teachers themselves and how a lack of effective leadership can only make the other staff members feel anxious about approaching the subject. This will then inevitably have a negative effect on young gay students who want to tell someone about what is happening but may feel too scared to.

Many feel it is important to have an anti-bullying policy that is updated regularly, in line with new legislation and guidelines. However one study found that while all schools had an anti-bullying policy only 6% referred specifically to homophobic bullying (DFES, 2002), why is this? One reason maybe the fact that the school does not think or wish to acknowledge that there is homophobic behaviour and/or bullying occurring within, what is thought of as, a 'safe environment'. There are very few schools which do not have some form of problem with homophobic attitudes, for example *'ninety eight percent of young gay people hear the phrases "that's so gay" or "you're so gay" in school'* (Stonewall, 2007). This may be thought of by many as just 'what teenagers say', however because the casual use of homophobic language is rife within schools *'if it is not challenged, pupils may think that homophobic bullying is acceptable'* (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2007). The National Healthy School Standard (NHSS) identified *'10 areas in which action should be taken, which combine to create a supportive ethos and shared ownership across the whole school community'* (DFES, 2004), these areas included are as follows:

- Policy development
- Curriculum planning and resourcing including working with external agencies
- Teaching and learning
- School culture and environment
- Giving pupils a voice

- Provision of pupils' support services

- Staff professional development needs, health and welfare

- Partnerships with parents, carers and the community

- Assessing, recording and reporting achievement

- Leadership management and managing change

School ethos is, in my opinion, a big factor in determining the level of homophobic activity that occurs in secondary schools, the phrase above 'whole school community' can be very important when trying to tackle homophobic attitudes. For example if young people are given the opportunity to get involved in making up anti-bullying policies alongside the staff then this means they also will take greater care in ensuring that if anyone does break these rules then it will be reported and not just swept under the carpet, the next example is key to improve the school ethos. *'Less than a quarter (23 per cent) of young gay people have been told that homophobic bullying is wrong in their school. In schools that have said homophobic bullying is wrong, gay young people are 60 per cent more likely not to have been bullied'*, what is it that still prevents the other three quarters of schools explicitly saying that homophobic bullying is wrong? A school that *'does not support all the members of its community is likely to feel unsafe to every person in it'* (DFES, 2004)

Imperative to my argument is the fact that there seem to be inequalities within equality, whilst all schools must have specific report cards for incidents of racial abuse or bullying on the grounds of race, why is this not the case for incidents of bullying on grounds of sexual identity? Is it that homophobic bullying is not as severe as racism or that schools don't feel the need to protect these pupils as much? There is growing evidence showing that homophobic bullying can be far more damaging than other forms of bullying. This evidence is striking: a survey carried out with a group of gay and lesbian adults were asked about their experiences at school, and of them 40% had attempted to commit suicide on more than one occasion (Rivers, 2001).

As a result of the growing evidence and pressure, the government, within the 'Stand up for us' publication has suggested that some form of audit is a good way to help schools deal with homophobia. For instance it states that *'it is important to develop an incident log that records all homophobic language and homophobic violence by any pupils or staff.* **This includes calling someone or something 'gay' with a derogatory meaning or comments that question an individual's masculinity or femininity***'* (DFES, 2004 + 2007). However, as yet there is still little evidence to show if this initiative is helping or even being used at all in schools, because if it is still not being taken seriously now, then what hope do we

ever have in helping schools to combat homophobic attitudes and consequently bullying?

One of the effects on young people that homophobic bullying has is that it leads to underachievement of pupils who may otherwise be very high achievers. One survey showed that *'seven out of ten pupils who experience homophobic bullying states that this impacts on their schoolwork'* (Stonewall, 2007), and seven out of ten is a very high proportion of young gay pupils who are being bullied. The report goes on to say that half of those who experience homophobic bullying 'skip school' because of this, and one in five have skipped school more than 6 times. A total of 34% of all young gay and lesbian pupils have skipped school at some point (Stonewall, 2007), and further research underlines the impact this has as they are more likely to leave school at the age of 16 (Rivers 2000). The figures highlight the need to tackle this issue now and with thirty five per cent of young gay people disagreeing that their school is an accepting, tolerant place where they feel welcome. This then rises to 40% among those who have experienced homophobic bullied (Stonewall, 2007).

There are questions as to whether an insufficient and inconsistent curriculum can also play its part in fuelling homophobic bullying within schools, for example *'seven in ten pupils have never been taught about lesbian and gay people or seen lesbian and gay issues addressed in class'* (Stonewall, 2007). This is significant in the fact that from the Every Child Matters initiative Ofsted inspectors are required to report how a school is promoting the five outcomes, one of those is *'being physically and mentally healthy'* (DFES, 2004) and if issues around sexuality are not mentioned then how can young gay pupils be mentally healthy?

The question that arises from this is who should address these issues, and in more cases than not it is down to the class teacher who may not even feel comfortable talking about such subjects. This lack of openness to discuss the issue of sexuality is then seen in dramatic consequence with 58% of pupils never telling anyone they are being bullied because of their sexuality. As if nothing being done by the schools was bad enough, over 60% of young gay pupils feel there is neither an adult at home or at school that they feel comfortable to talk to about being gay (Stonewall, 2007). However it is not just the pupils that feel they can't talk to anyone about sexuality because *'teachers expressed anxieties about supporting or protecting gay identity'* (Chambers, D, Loon, J and Tincknell, E, 2004). This may have been because of the confusion of Section 28, which was still in place and teachers didn't want to leave themselves open to criticism, or may be they were made because teachers would not know how to deal with situations when they arise.

The situation is not helped when there are students who hear homophobic language from members of staff or that the staff members join in, for example one 14 year old girl said *'the staff join in with the joke'* (Stonewall, 2007). There are

many teachers themselves that feel these areas should be taught by members of staff who have had some form of training, of which it is freely available to schools, if they so wish to use it. For example this secondary school teacher, who said 'teachers with no formal training on dealing with these kinds of situations and subject matter will struggle'. So what can be done to help teachers in terms of understanding what young people are going through emotionally?

There is a DVD that was released by the mayor of London and the gay campaigns group Stonewall last year in 2007. It was produced as a guide to help teachers in what to do if a pupil 'came out' to them or also divulged information about homophobic bullying. The DVD, although very blunt, is very to the point and raises a lot of the questions that many teachers would not otherwise know the answers to. It is also very good at showing the point of view from the young person and how confusing it can be, and the difficulties and courage it takes of actually risking your anonymity to report homophobic bullying. If I was to put myself in the position of a secondary school teacher, I would be feeling a lot more reassured in dealing with these situations if I had watched the film. However, there are many that will not be able to gain vital information on these issues due to the simple fact that it was only issued to schools within the capital, due to it being funded by the Mayor of London, is this fair to all the other confused teachers across the country?

In my opinion this is no way fair, and although I say this, I do not in any way lay blame at the Mayor of London's door because he is doing what is good and right for his citizens, but questions then need to be asked about the government. Why, when the government have many departments, pro-active people and money to spend on providing better resources, do they not wish to either contribute to the good work of the Mayor, or even wish to take it further in wanting it to be distributed to all schools regardless of their geographic location? Their may be many reasons behind it, but I feel that one of those underlying reasons may be that there is still some disagreement within the government itself over how far they should go to protect and reassure both young LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) people and also the thousands of teachers that have to deal with the consequences of homophobic bullying. To conclude this section I want to refer to a previous subheading that of 'Good old government...?', in my opinion government as a whole have a very long way to go to ensure the eradication of homophobic bullying from all schools, and at the current rate may see the problem getting worse rather than better.

Coming back into the classroom, there are some schools that do not attempt to discuss the issue of sexuality in class at all, and they are managing to do this because there is no specific rule that states they must raise it. However they leave themselves open to criticism from Ofsted inspectors, as by not mentioning it, they are effectively denying that there may be any young gay or lesbian pupils in the

school, which is extremely unlikely and so does not ensure that *'all pupils are physically and mentally healthy'* (Ofsted, 2000).

Changing times, Changing minds

In this section I want to look at how, in this ever faster moving world can we change the minds of not only government or reluctant teachers who do not wish to talk about such issues, but more importantly how do we change the minds of parents and carers that feel these issues are inappropriate for a school to be discussing.

I will start by addressing the reluctant teachers, and it seems to me that we do not need new advice because there have been countless studies on the role of educational psychologists in helping staff and students. For example Comely (1993) raised the point that *'professionals should be aware of the issues surrounding this area from day one of their careers'*. Comely goes onto talk about lesbian and gay issues should be made part of the equal opportunities component of training courses and also as part of the post-qualification training.

As mentioned earlier within the 'Section 28' chapter there is still confusion between many teachers and schools about what they can and can't talk about. Imich, Bayley and Farley (2001) said that educational psychologists, through their work within schools, should inform schools of how legislation does and does not limit them in their work and how to explore whole schools approaches and school policies in relation to bullying and equality. These two suggestions as you can see from the dates are not brand new, so why still have they not been listened to when they seem to provide some very worthwhile advice?

Some of the hardest people to please are going to be the parents, and the main preconception seems to be that they think the teachers are going to 'teach their child to be gay', which from reading this can be seen as not the case at all. Although attitudes are generally changing within young people that it is ok to be different, the older generations need a little more support in thinking that there is every possibility that their son or daughter could be gay, lesbian or bisexual, and that they would want them to be protected. This is where the use of effective communication comes in and the government is looking to release new Sex and Relationship guidance later in 2008, with particular reference on how to help young gay students and parents of those students through new support networks and information to **all** parents and carers about the issue.

Although this is a step forward for the government, they need to firstly make sure the teachers feel comfortable in the classroom, because it's of no use if the parents are happy for their children to talk about it but the teachers are still unsure and anxious. *'We are all in this together'* (Stonewall, 2007).

One for all and All for one – Conclusion

Throughout this chapter I have tried to answer the key questions that I felt were important to this subject matter and to try and further contribute to the feeling that things are beginning to change. However, maybe not as quickly and as in much detail as many would like, meaning many young LGBT people will still be suffering homophobic bullying within secondary schools today! In this day and age, where the government are asking for tolerance over immigration issues, shorter prison sentences and people using the National Health Service inappropriately or not being entitled to its benefits, why can they not stand up for the next generation of potential politicians, doctors, nurses, teachers and police men and women? Young people who are suffering mostly in silence because no one will stand up for them. Even those who want to stand up for them like many teachers do, feel powerless and unable to deal with sensitive issues such as this through a lack of support, guidance and training.

People are beginning to take the seriousness of this issue in hand, but it is already too late for many young people who have felt so bad and have been bullied so badly, that they become one of the suicide statistics that I mentioned earlier! Sometimes I think if it were the politicians and policy maker's families who were affected by the following headlines, would they be more pro-active? *'Lonely teenager was driven to suicide pact by school bullying'* (The Times, 2005), *'Suicide wish of gay bullying victims'* (BBC News online, 2000).

As I said people are starting to listen to the damaging effects of homophobic bullying but there is still a long way to go and I want to leave you all with this statement;

> *'All schools, by law, have a duty to protect all pupils from all forms of bullying'*
>
> *(Stonewall, 2007)*

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9

Let's talk about Sex

Claire Jones

I am a Plymouth Student, based at the Exmouth Campus. I am currently in my 2nd year studying BA Education Studies. The reason why I have decided to study Sex Education in Schools, is because I feel that this is an very important topic, as what we our ever rising pregnancy and STI rates, I felt as if this was a good basis to start with whilst also looking at how it is taught in our schools and what we could do so as to better it for our children of today.

We've all been there sometime or other, twiddling with our thumbs and our hair, giggling at the back of the classroom every time the teacher mentioned the word Sex, but how many of us actually paid full attention to what they were saying and took it into account for our future? There are so many questions to be asked.

In this chapter I will be discussing on Sex Education in England and Wales and Scotland for children aged between 0-14 years of age, but I will also be looking at how the Netherlands teach the subject in their schools, and then comparing it to our own schooling system and see what works best for teaching this subject to children; should we be an open society where it is acceptable to talk about this subject, or should we be a society in which we must try and keep this subject away from our children until they are old enough to understand the concept more thoroughly? Who decides what age is old enough?

The offering of sex education in schools is often a key debate, as there are often questions on what the main aims are, and on what should and shouldn't be taught.

According to Halstead and Reiss (2003), there seems to be a lack of consensus on sexual values when it comes to peoples' opinions about sex: many people all too often inhabit different worlds and speak different languages, so there seems to be a bashfulness and an awkwardness which then gives us divergent views . This is totally true, as whenever people seem to have to speak and express their own opinions on 'sex', everyone seems to go all shy and coy about the subject. Could this be because of our society, making people feel uncomfortable whilst talking about this subject, leading it then to be a taboo subject?, In which case, does this also mean that we as a society do not know how to address this matter to our youngsters?

What is Sex Education?

Sex Education is just like any other subject that we get taught at school. It gives and explains specific information that we need to know, maybe not now but later on in life, and it also contributes to the development of our personal autonomy as well as promoting the interests of both the individual person as well as the society that we live in today. The only differences between this subject and that of others are that it talks about the different kind of human relationships that we can have with one another, the changing of our bodies and the start of all new things to come, the intense emotions that you may experience whilst having relationships- maybe the whole issue of intimacy with others, i.e. the pleasure and affection that you may receive, but often also the anxiety, guilt and embarrassment sides of it too. Is there something in our culture that creates inhibition and avoidance on the subject of sex? This is something that will come up again later on in the chapter.

How should we define sex education?

> *'According to Halstead and Reiss (2003) Sex education is more often than not the early study of human sexuality in a biology or*

> *social science course Or Sex education can be a broad term used to describe education about human sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexual intercourse, and other aspects of human sexual behavior.'*
>
> *http://en.wikipedia.org (15/10/2007)*

If a school wishes to teach Sex, Relationship Education (SRE) in their school, then it is down to head-teachers and governors who are responsible for making decisions about the teaching styles and materials that they want to use, but whilst doing so, they most also take into account the Government's guidelines, as well as the children's parents' views, as well as ensuring that the teaching and materials are appropriate for the age and cultural background of pupils.

What are the Aims?

As stated in the DFEE Guidance (0116/2000, p.5) document, the main aim of Sex Education is a *'lifelong learning experience about physical, moral and emotional development'* and it is also about the *'understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care'* for one another. The whole notion of Sex Education being taught in schools is not just about teaching sex, sexuality or sexual health, nor is it down to the promotion of the sexual orientation, it is also about making people become aware of their and others feelings.

Halstead and Reiss (2003) also consider that the main aim of Sex Education in British schools is to try and build students' understanding and knowledge of human sexuality and to provide young people with the confidence, knowledge and the skills to make more informed and responsible choices. It is very important for people to learn how to make informed choices and decisions, as when one becomes older one is faced with more and more situations, in which you may have to decide from one or another scenario.

As stated in the Ofsted publication (2007,p.19) *'effective SRE should help pupils to develop the personal skills they will need if they are to establish and maintain relationships and make informed choices and decisions about their health and well-being'*.

A further aim of teaching sex education is not to increase sexual activity, but to try and teach students about having safe sex and to also make them more aware of the consequences if they were not to do so.

Values in Sex Education

When it comes to Sex Education moral, culture and social 'values' play a vital role, as there should be a close link between the values which might underpin the conceptualization, planning and the implementation of Sex Education and the

values which the students are taught in Sex Education. One of the main values that is important in 'Sex Education' are the moral values as these are the things held to be 'right or wrong' or 'desirable or undesirable'('Sex Education', 2007).

Halstead and Reiss (2003), point out that when we talk about values, we must be aware that we are talking about the common values, as there are many different types of values that all have different and varied meanings .i.e. moral, intellectual, and aesthetic values.

The Ofsted (2002, p.10)   'Sex and Relationship' guide also states *a critical objective of SRE is to help pupils to develop their vales and their attitudes to relationships within a moral framework, and this may involve dealing with misunderstandings and challenging assumptions'*. This quote is stating that the advantage of SRE is to help pupils to learn and develop about their own values, as well as taking into account other peoples values.

Statistics

Political agendas that seem to drive discussion on single sex education are: the rate of teenage pregnancy and single parenthood.

As stated in the Britain: Sex Education Under fire (2000), with 65 conceptions per thousand in women aged between 15 and 19 in 1998, and that figure rising by an astonishing 4% within a year, England and Wales still has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the whole of Western Europe.

Perhaps no other change in family structure has been more controversial other than the rising number of non-marital births in Western industrialized societies.
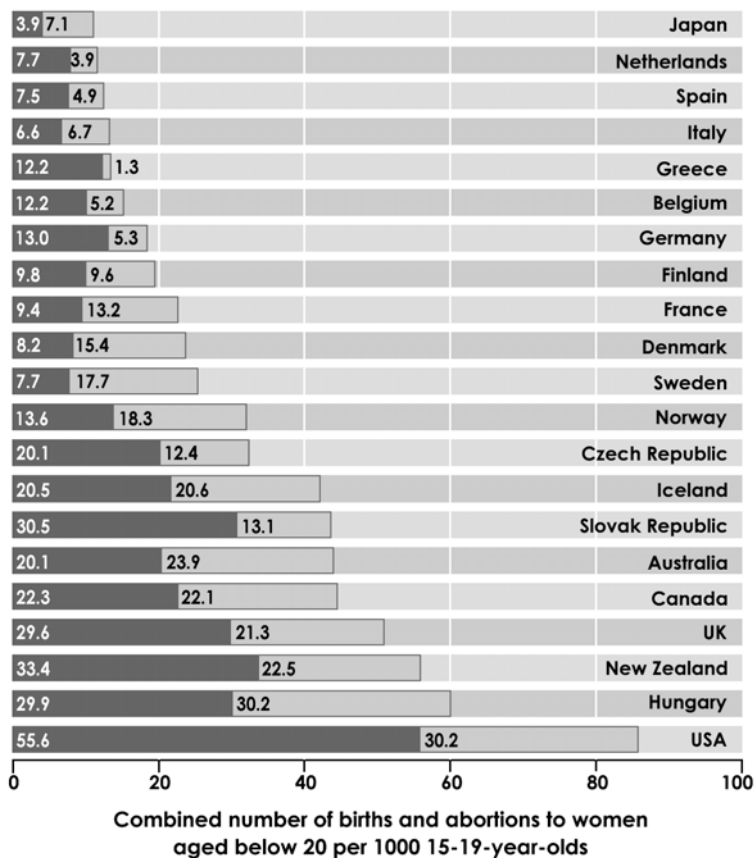
> *'Non-marital births seem most disturbing to those who hold traditional; values regarding family structure, because they are seen as a rejection of the two-parent family, however the issue is intensified by the growing number of the non-martial births of adolescent girls, most especially poor minority youth'.*
>
> *Corsaro, (1997, p.231)*

The Office for National Statistics reported (2005 in Brook 2007), 39,683 young women under the age of 18 became pregnant. It also reported that figures from 1998-1999 that 24% of young people preferred to use the pill whilst 18% said that they regularly used condoms.

However the Schools Health Education Unit reported that in 2006 almost a quarter (45%) of 14-15 year olds young women knew about local birth control service for young people whilst a staggering 54% of young men did not know about the service (Brook, 2007).

Figures reported by Womack (2007) state *'Teenage girls living in the poorest parts of Scotland are four times more likely to become pregnant than those in the country's most affluent areas'*. Recent statistics published by the NHS, show that there were more than 9,000 teenage girls that became pregnant in Scotland in 2005, including 678 aged under 16, and however figures for 2005 showed a slight drop in the total number of girls under 16 who became pregnant. Dundee remained Scotland's teen pregnancy capital, with 80 pregnancies for every 1,000 teenage girls. NHS Tayside had the highest pregnancy rate for all age groups in Scotland, as well as the highest abortion rate, and almost one in 10 teenage girls living in the poorest areas became pregnant in 2005, compared to one in 40 in the most affluent.

Country	Births	Abortions
Japan	3.9	7.1
Netherlands	7.7	3.9
Spain	7.5	4.9
Italy	6.6	6.7
Greece	12.2	1.3
Belgium	12.2	5.2
Germany	13.0	5.3
Finland	9.8	9.6
France	9.4	13.2
Denmark	8.2	15.4
Sweden	7.7	17.7
Norway	13.6	18.3
Czech Republic	20.1	12.4
Iceland	20.5	20.6
Slovak Republic	30.5	13.1
Australia	20.1	23.9
Canada	22.3	22.1
UK	29.6	21.3
New Zealand	33.4	22.5
Hungary	29.9	30.2
USA	55.6	30.2

This graph shows statistics of teenage pregnancy throughout the world, and as you can see from the data, the Netherlands birth and abortion in comparison with the UK's (includes Scotland and Wales) is almost half.

Combined number of births and abortions to women aged below 20 per 1000 15-19-year-olds

figure 6   ■ **Births**   ▨ **Abortions**

An SRE expert Anna Martinez, Co-coordinator of the Sex Education Forum and consultant on 'Let's Talk Sex' television documentary (2006) states that teenage

pregnancy rates are slowly going down, but the UK still has the highest pregnancy rates in Western Europe.

This is a worrying factor, and in addition there is also the fact that sexually transmitted diseases/infections (STIs) are becoming more common: the number has increased dramatically over the years and it is affecting more and more young people, who are the group mostly at risk.

- STIs – 1.5 million new cases are being diagnosed each year

- 42% of females with gonorrhea, under the age of 20 years of age

- 38% of females with Chlamydia under the age of 20

- 41,951 teenage pregnancies in 2002, which leads to the statistic that one in 10 babies are born in Britain from a teenage pregnancy

    Terry, A (2006)

What is the connection between this type of Sex Education program and these statistics?

Britain today has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates, and it has been known that we as a nation have the highest government and media reports on this topic. Does this high exposure and media coverage add to the problem?

In many parts of England and Wales, Sex Education is not compulsory in schools, and it is up to the parents whether they wish to allow their child to sit in these types of lessons or not ('Sex Education', 2007) whereas in other countries such as Holland it is compulsory.

Holland has a much lower teen age pregnancy and STIs rate than what we do, and young people tend to delay their first experiences until they are older and are ready to.

We do however need to exercise caution when comparing two countries with different cultures.

The curriculum plays a vital role in a child's learning and for this particular subject it focuses on the following things:

- reproductive system

- fetal development

- the physical and emotional changes of adolescence, where information about contraception and safe sex is discretionary

However in the DFES (2006) report, it does state that the government guidelines make it clear to all schools what SRE lessons should consist of:

- recognize the importance of marriage and stable relationship;

- be age-appropriate

- help to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy

Then at an appropriate age, children should then be taught on the following issues:

- How to recognize and avoid abuse and exploitation

- Skills to avoid being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex

- The benefits of delaying sexual activity and avoiding risky behavior

- Safer sex

In 2000, The Learning and Skills Act made it compulsory for all schools to consult all parents when developing the SRE program, which means if they are not happy with what the school proposes to do, then they can then take their children out of the lesson.

The OfSTED report (2002), offers useful statements of learning outcomes for sex and relationship education for each key stage.

How is Sex Education taught?

One key thing that we must point out, that those teaching sex education also have attitudes, values and beliefs of their own about sex and sexuality and I think it is difficult but very important for them not to let their own views and feelings to interfere and influence the minds of others. It's a subject that demands tact, sensitivity, respect and a non-judgmental approach.

Not only that, but many Faith schools will not allow Sex Education to be taught in their schools as it is against their religious beliefs.

There are many different ways that sex education can be taught, and at different ages you tend to learn different things.

In the DFEE Guidance (0116/2000) it goes on to break the teaching methods into 3 key elements:

- people's attitudes and values, whether they be individual or family life values or the learning value of respect, love and care, the personal and social skills that we learn from it

- the understanding of the physical changes and development of our bodies or the understanding of human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health

- emotions that we may experience whether they be good or bad

One thing that we do need to make clear is that not everyone is the same, and in some circumstances some children maybe more advanced than others.

Same Sex or Mixed Sex Teaching?

Many of the studies have focused specifically on the differing responses of boys and girls in single-sex and mixed-sex classes when it comes to being taught Sex Education, and it has often been suggested that girls prefer and respond better in single-sex groups rather than mixed.

In Measor (1996 in Halsted and Reiss, 2003) and some of his colleagues found that girls often requested single-sex, sex education and described that these sessions are more engaging, interesting and less embarrassing when discussing sensitive issues such as puberty. According to Woodcock (1992 in Halsted and Reiss 2003), girls in mixed-sex groups say they could not ask questions due to feeling intimidated by boys and were put off condoms by the boys' negative reactions to them.

However researchers such as Kreuse, (1992 in Strange, Oakley and Forrest, 2003) have argued for a mixed approach, with single-sex groups working separately, followed with mixed sex sessions, supporting one another and also sharing their own views.

This is also supported by Halsted and Waite (2002).

Personally, I agree with Kreuse (1992), as I think that all children should be taught the same things, but I also think there comes a time when people reach puberty, that they should be taught in single sex groups, and then to all come together to share each other's ideas because it seems to make it more likely that issues would be discussed openly and comfortably.

How is it taught in England and Wales?

However, as it stands, the framework for teaching Sex and Relationship Education tends to vary from age to age, but not including those with Special Educational Needs.

As stated in the 'Guardian Unlimited' article, (2005, linked onto the Qualification and Curriculum Authority- http://www.qca.org.uk/libraryAssets/media/QCA-05-2185_KS1-2_end_of_KS_statements.pdf) these are the most recent kind of framework to teach children certain things at certain ages.

Here are the different stages that it is recommended that children are taught at different ages:

Key Stage 1 (aged 7)

At this age children are taught the basics, especially in science, as this is the time when they start to learn about our changing body as we get older. At this age, it is also one of the key learning areas where children start to begin to recognize the effect of their OWN behavior on others, as well as being able to cooperate with others. They can also identify and respect the differences and similarities between

people, as well as explaining and distinguishing the different ways that family and friends should care for one another.

Key stage 2 (aged 11)

Many children at this age will be able to discuss some of the bodily and emotional changes at puberty, and can demonstrate some ways of dealing with these in a positive manner.

Children should hopefully be able to make choices on their own about how to develop a healthy lifestyle- for example knowing that having a healthy diet and regular exercise is important, and they should also hopefully being able to identify some factors that affect our emotional health and well-being.

Key stage 3 (aged 14)

At this stage in time pupils will be able to recognize some strong emotions and they will be able to identify many ways of managing these emotions in a positively manner.

A recent Ofsted (2006 in Terry, 2006) report condemns our current provision as being poor, and that many schools are failing to provide young people with appropriate sex and health education to equip them for adulthood, with some schools not providing it in "any form".

> *'Ofsted state that sex education is being taught by form tutors who lack appropriate training'*.
>
> Terry, A. (2006)

In an Ofsted (2002) report its main findings were that education about HIV/AIDS was receiving less attention as well as the impact of parenthood. Some secondary schools didn't even cover it, and another area of weakness was that there were few schools that engaged with pupils through discussions, planning and evaluating the issue.

Here are just some of the things that Ofsted suggested that schools should do:

- Schools broaden their coverage and clarify their definition of achievement
- SRE should be taught by teachers with specialist knowledge and expertise
- Further guidance to be given on teaching about sexuality and parenthood
- Pupils are given better access to individual advice from specialist professionals

> *'Sex and Relationships'*, (2002)

In a more recent Ofsted's SRE (2007) report this was still one of the main issues as one of the key findings were that many schools gave insufficient emphasis to teaching

about HIV/AIDS, despite the fact that it remains a significant health problem. Although most secondary schools recognise the importance of effective parenting education, they rarely give it sufficient attention and it was quiet obvious that teachers, governors and parents needed more detailed advice on how to deal with some of the more sensitive aspects of SRE, such as sexuality, as many schools have not received the guidance and support that they need on these issues.

Over the years Sex Education in schools has come under scrutiny as to how some schools decide to teach 'Sex Education' as a subject. Some of the most strongest opposition to school sex education comes from many 'right-wing thinkers' who claim that contemporary sex education challenges the law or that it somehow damages family values and that it quite often enough encourages the behavior which results in outcomes such as those likely teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (Halsted and Reiss, 2003, p.21).

In a 2000 study by the University of Brighton, it states that many 14 to 15 year olds have recently reported disappointment with the content of sex education lessons that they receive within their school, and they also felt that the lack of confidentiality prevents teenagers from asking teachers about contraception ('Sex Education', 2007)

Sex Education in Scotland

In Scotland, they have a sex education program called 'Healthy Respect', and this program mainly focuses not only on the biological aspects of reproduction but, it also focuses on relationships and the emotions that come with it as well as the different varieties of contraception but not necessarily highlighting the dangers of sexually transmitted diseases and their consequences.

However, not all schools in Scotland like England are prepared to teach sex Education in schools, as many Catholic schools have refused to commit to the program as it is against their religious beliefs; however, a separate sex education program has been devised and developed for them to use in these types of schools that is funded by the Scottish Executive. This program is called 'Call to Love', and its mains focus is on encouraging children to delay sex until marriage. However, this program does not cover about the different types/methods of contraception that are widely used nor does it cover the complications that it could lead to, if children have unprotected sexually activity ('Sex Education', 2007).

How it is taught in the Netherlands

One thing that we do know about the Netherlands is the fact that they are so open about this topic, and that there are always open discussions regardless of the age.

Education in the Netherlands is compulsory under the principle of leerplicht (learning obligation) between the ages of 5 till the age of 16 for all children who reside in the Netherlands or may stay there for long and prolonged periods of times.

All Dutch Education is regulated by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, which then sets out the national framework covering educational objectives, admission requirements and funding arrangements for the schools, however private schools are only funded until the child reaches 16 and thereafter it is then down to the parents to pay the annual tuition fees. If the child wishes to stay on to do further education after the age of 18, it is then the child's own responsibility to pay (Global Relocation Advice, support and community, 2007).

After watching a short video on Sex Education, called 'How Do They Do It in Holland?' (Teachers.TV 2007) - about secondary schools, it was clear to see that the all the students in the class were very relaxed with each other including the teacher as they were all being themselves. It was very informal discussion between the teacher and the students, but yet it still addressed the issue directly and it seemed to have worked in this case. For example: the teacher states *'I like to be touchy and feely with my students and just to be myself.....but you would never dream of doing this in an English school.'*

Effectiveness of programs

In order to have effective Sex Education in schools many researchers suggest that it is better to teach children at a young age, as this will help them later on in life. If it is learnt at young age then it will be easier for the child to remember such important things. But, is it really necessary, and yet the correct thing for children to be taught such things at such a young age- i.e. 5 years old?, or are we forcing this upon them so as to make us, the 'society' look as if we actually me care about our children' future's and well-being rather than being statically mad?

Brook and the Family Planning Association believe that teaching Sex Education at a young age is beneficial (Terry, A, 2006).

Over the years a variety of studies have evaluated the effectiveness of school Sex and Relationship education programs, and their impact on adolescent sexual knowledge, attitudes and behaviours.

Kirby (1980) found that instruction of sex education increases the learner's sexual knowledge, while the research that was conducted by Hoch, (1971) on sexual attitudes was less positive as to whether the course on sexuality actually increases the tolerance of the students' attitudes towards the sexual practise of others (Somers and Eaves, 2003).

Parcel and Luttman (1981 in Somers and Eaves, 2003) found that many of the programs did not change student's attitudes towards pre-marital sex, birth control and other sexuality issues, and also Dawson, (1986 in Somers and Eaves, 2003); Mckay (1993 in Somers and Eaves, 2003); Masclach and Kerr (1983 in Somers and Eaves, 2003) also found out that formal sex education had little or no impact on sexual behaviors when they were at this age.

Due to this research, Cheryl L. Somers and Matt W. Eaves then decided to conduct some research of their own on the 'analysis of the timing of sex education and adolescent sexual behaviors. The main purpose of this study was to see whether the timing of sex education was predictive of onset sexual intercourse and the frequency of sexual behavior generally.

These are the questions that they asked:

1. Is timing of sex education related to age to the onset on sexual intercourse.

2. Is timing of sexual education related to the frequency of the sexual behavior?

They used 158 adolescents - 63 boys and 95 girls between the ages of 14-18 and they conducted a questionnaire.

The findings found for both boys and girls showed that earlier learning about various sexual topics was generally not related to earlier initiation of sexual intercourse, thus confirming the earlier enquires.

Religious Values

Often the strongest grounds of opposition to Sex and Relationship education are the religious beliefs.

Religions have much in common when it comes to the issue of human sexuality and how/what they think should be taught and included within schools sex education.

Schools with a religious character will have an ethos and values that reflects their particular beliefs, and the values promoted in SRE should reflect this.

There are many factors that can unite and yet divide people, but for some people religion is their life and for others it is just something that they strongly believe in.

For example 'The Ring thing' US Evangelical sex education program.

This is where both boys and girls are encouraged to pledge publicly to stay virgins until they are married by buying an inscribed ring, that they must wear all the time as well as being given a "chastity Bible" (Firth, M, 'US chastity evangelist targets Australian kids', 2007).

This has caused controversy in some areas, for example, a girl in an English Secondary School had to go to court in order to wear the ring at school.

What is effective sex education?

> For 'effective sex and relationships education, it is essential for young people to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives.'
>
> Piercy and Haynes, (2006)

The Forset, (2007) website thinks that *'effective education also provides young people with an opportunity to explore the reasons why people have sex, and to think about how it involves emotions, respect for oneself and other people and their feelings, decisions and bodies'*.

This is very important and I think that this makes it clear, that it is important to learn and respect others. Not only that, but in the Ofsted (2002, P.11) document, they too feel strongly about respecting others. Effective SRE lessons can make a *'significant contribution to the development of the personal skills'* that are needed by pupils. This will then enable pupils to make strong relationships and friendships with others, and they will also then be able to make informed choices and decisions about other important issues that may arise later on in the future.

One main aspect that teachers need to remember whilst trying to deliver an effective lesson is the following:

- be confident in what they are teaching-not to show fear.

- must have a clear focus and aim on their lesson planning.

- the teaching methods used must be interesting and it must include good resources that will give opportunities in reflecting on their learning.

- must be able to encourage pupils to be able to express their own views and feelings, whilst respecting the views and values of others-showing that it is ok to talk about Sex.

    Ofsted (2002, p.23)

Over the years many things seem to have changed and children now seem to be growing up a lot faster than before.

Could this be down to our growing population and our new technological society that we live in today? Are we as a nation trying to make our children of the day grow up too fast?

We most see and note that as a society, children are not as silly as we may think they are. They are fully aware of the on goings of every day to day life, and children not only learn from their parents, but they also learn through their peers, radio, magazines/newspapers, internet and television.

Conclusion

At the start of this investigation I was unsure whether sex education should be taught at a young age as I thought that this was too much for young children to take in, but my findings suggest that the younger they are the better the success rates are.

After comparing the UK to the Netherlands it is clear to see that where this subject has less taboo, stigma and embarrassing factors are missing. It is noticeable that the pregnancy rate is far lower.

As to my findings about whether Sex education should be taught in mixed sex or single sex classes many of the studies found that there were different responses from boys and girls in single sex classes to what there were in mixed sex classes. Kreuse's findings state that if they are to be taught about the same topic separately then to conclude together as a whole then it is easier for both parties to talk openly and confidently whilst still benefiting from the same factor and then that way nothing will be held back.

The teaching in the Netherlands is compulsory. It is also conducted on a more personal level. Whilst cultural attitudes have to be taken into account, it is clear that their record regarding teenage pregnancies and STIs are far better.

After conducting this research is it clearly states that not enough is being done to help our children in Britain and as result of this many youngsters are falling pregnant or having more and more sexually transmitted diseases. The statistics are disturbing, and it is about time that we as a nation start taking a leaf of the Netherlands so as to try and combat this issue for our sakes as well as our future generations.

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HIV/AIDS: The Myths, Realities and Importance of Education

Pete Tunnicloffe

This project has been quite an experience for me. I've never reread or checked my own work so much. Going down to Exmouth opened my eyes up to a world where you could play beach football before meetings and go for a late night naked dip in the sea and I like to think I made nine new friends down there (I hope I counted that correctly and I'm including Dominic Martignetti for having such a cool name) as well as growing closer to my fellow students and lecturer from York.

The reason for writing about HIV has too long a story to fit on this page. I've never got so emotionally involved in a piece of work, some of the reading was very upsetting at times and has led me to attempt running from York to Chester to raise money for UNICEF.

HIV and AIDS has become a global epidemic. It is estimated that in 2007 33.2 million were living with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). It is also estimated that over 25 million people have died of AIDS since 1981 (Avert 2007). AIDS is incurable and it is believed that a cure is still years away. Bill Gates has invested heavily in the hope of finding a cure (BBC NEWS 2003) (Hood 2007) but so far this has been a fruitless search. Until a cure is found it is believed, "education is the best AIDS medicine we have. Spread it around."

(PANOS Institute, 1988, p52)

The Importance of Education

Before people can behave in a manner that will reduce the risk of contracting the disease people need an awareness of HIV/AIDS. People cannot be expected to behave in a 'safe' way if they are not aware of how HIV transmission occurs. Ignorance is one of the biggest reasons for the spread of AIDS. In Togo only 64.1% of people had heard of AIDS, in Guinea Bissau only 75.3% (Ingham 1995). How can people who have never heard of AIDS be expected to avoid behaviour which may cause HIV transmission? It is important to try to reach people with no knowledge of HIV/AIDS with education.

AVERT (2007a) highlight the main reasons for HIV/AIDS education taking place. These being;

- to prevent new infections taking place

- to improve the quality of life for HIV positive people

- to reduce stigma and discrimination

Empowering people with knowledge is vital in preventing new infections happening. This is a two stage process where people are first told about HIV/AIDS, how transmission occurs and how to protect themselves. Then they learn to put their knowledge into action, for example by learning how to have safe sex or to use clean needles.

HIV education can help to improve the quality of life for people who are HIV positive by informing them where to access medical services and drug provision, as well as providing emotional and practical support through counselling. Teaching HIV positive people how to live without passing on the virus is an important step in stopping the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Reducing stigma and discrimination also helps improve the quality of life of HIV positive people. Research has shown that even where people are aware of how HIV transmission takes place, often they are unaware of how HIV is not transmitted, such as sharing clothes, touching someone with AIDS and sharing food (Ingham

1995). This can leave someone HIV positive feeling isolated. In India there have been cases of HIV positive people being burnt to death and in the United States families of a HIV positive person have been forced to leave their homes. This sort of stigmatisation can prevent people from going for HIV tests, at the fear of being 'labelled' HIV positive.

The following table highlights why education is so important in the fight against HIV/AIDS:

STRESSING THE NEED FOR EDUCATION
- One in five prostitutes in Karachi couldn't recognise a condom and one third of those questioned had never heard of AIDS (Davies & Laurance 2005)   - In India 42% of sex workers believe they can tell if a client has AIDS by their physical appearance. This is not the case as people can be HIV positive without any physical effects (Da'an 2006)   - The Catholic Church is telling people in countries stricken by AIDS not to use condoms because they have tiny holes in them through which HIV can pass. Condoms reduce the risk of HIV being passed by 90%. In Lwak, near Lake Victoria, the director of an Aids testing centre says he cannot distribute condoms because of church opposition. The Guardian 9/10/2003 (Bradshaw 2003)   - Gambian President Yahya Jammeh claims he can cure HIV/AIDS on Mondays and Thursdays. Mr Jammeh's cure is based on seven herbs that are mentioned in the Koran The Independent 03/02/2007 (Smith 2007)   - In the Khartoum region of Sudan only 2% of men knew that condoms prevented HIV transmission (Abdelwahab cited in UNAIDS 2006)

Acting on Education

Teaching people how to act upon the HIV education they receive is vital. HIV education is reaching more people, yet new infections continue to take place. AVERT (2007a) give some necessities to allow people to act on their knowledge. People need motivation to act or change their behaviour. They need to realise what they are learning is personal to them but too often this motivation comes too late, for example when they see a friend die.

Empowerment to act is vital. People need to be in a position to control their sexual behaviour or drug use. AIDS education should help people to take control of their own lives and teach people to evolve strategies to avoid risky situations, such as prostitution or drug use. Unfortunately poverty and low self-esteem have a large part in this and attempts need to be made to address these conditions.

Condoms need to be available. It is pointless preaching about the importance of condom use if people do not have access to them. Condoms should also be available to young people regardless of whether they are over the age of consent or not as they are still likely to take part sexual activity. There are reported shortages of condoms in some sub-Saharan African countries such as Ethiopia, Namibia, Chad, Nigeria and Angola (BBC NEWS 2000) but the United Nations Population Fund is working to address this.

In many parts of the world a person found in possession of drug injecting equipment can be prosecuted. This leads to a dangerous sharing of needles because of fear of prosecution. It is important that drug users are able to use clean needles to avoid HIV transmission. Needle exchanges have been a successful way of providing injecting drug users with clean needles but there is still not enough done to encourage them to behave in a 'safe' way.

Approaches to HIV Education

Different cultures will require different approaches in order to be effective. In some places leaflets and posters maybe effective, but in countries where literacy rates are low street theatre maybe a more appropriate way of educating people. It is therefore extremely important to consider cultural and social characteristics when planning HIV/AIDS education.

HIV/AIDS and Schools

Basic school education can have such a powerful preventative effect that it has been described as a 'social vaccine' (Boler & Jellema 2005). In schools it is possible to educate a large number of children at once, but HIV is having a negative effect on schools as teachers are taken ill by the virus. In Zimbabwe a study found that 19% of male teachers and 28% of female teachers were HIV positive (Daly & Price-Smith 2004). Students may also not be able to attend school to care for sick relatives or they themselves may be sick.

The diagram below (figure 7) shows the vicious cycle that HIV/AIDS has on schools:

Dr. Peter Piot (2002) the head of UNAIDS highlights the seriousness of this cycle saying, *"Without education, AIDS will continue its rampant spread. With AIDS out of control, education will be out of reach."* (Piot cited in UNESCO 2002)

Education is vital in stopping the spread of AIDS but many schools may not survive the AIDS epidemic. This is worrying especially since schools are an ideal place to educate children about HIV/AIDS because of efficiency of both costs and time. School age children are very impressionable so HIV/AIDS education at a young age is likely to stay with them throughout life. Studies have shown that the HIV prevalence of an area is likely to decrease as education increases and primary education can half the risk of infection amongst young people (Boler & Jellema 2005).
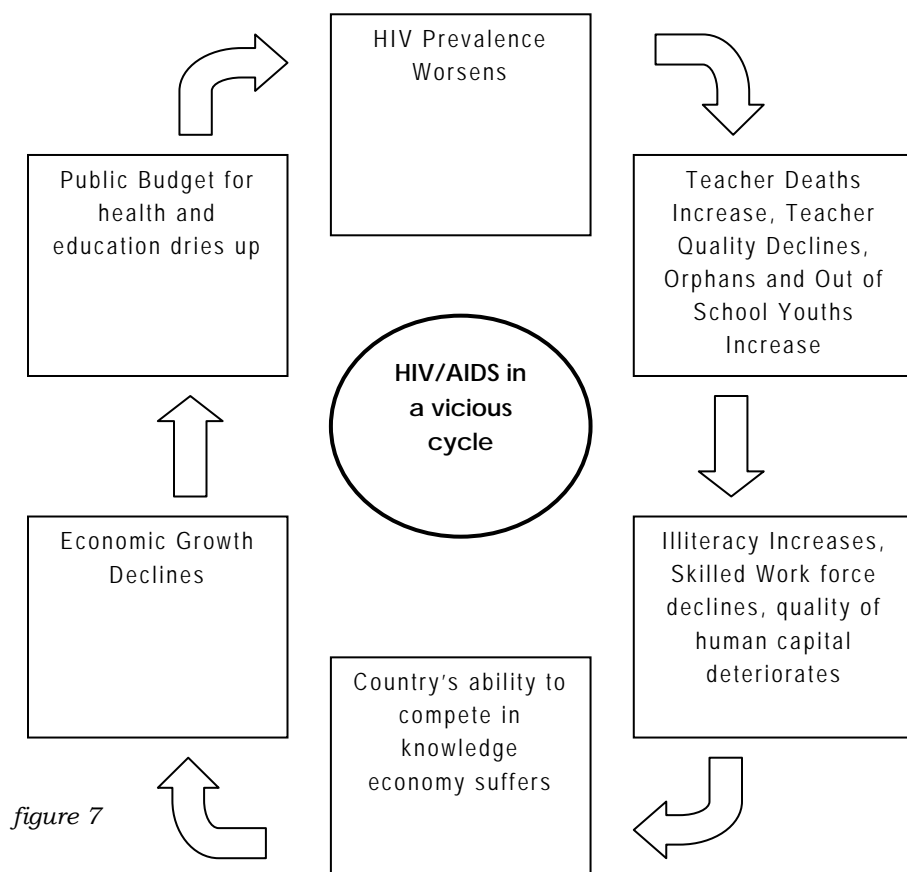
HIV Prevalence Worsens

Public Budget for health and education dries up

Teacher Deaths Increase, Teacher Quality Declines, Orphans and Out of School Youths Increase

HIV/AIDS in a vicious cycle

Economic Growth Declines

Illiteracy Increases, Skilled Work force declines, quality of human capital deteriorates

Country's ability to compete in knowledge economy suffers

figure 7

Examples of AIDS education in schools

Kenya

Kenya has a declining HIV prevalence rate. A weekly HIV education lesson has been added to the curriculum for primary and secondary schools. AIDS education is taught using a 'life skills' approach focusing on the relationship and social side of HIV. The children receive simplified scientific facts about HIV/AIDS. There have also been efforts to integrate AIDS into other lessons at school. A concern is that the teachers do not know enough to teach about AIDS. A survey showed that only 45% knew HIV had no cure, 24.4% believed herbs could cure the infection and 12.4% believed traditional medicines and the witch doctor could rid someone of HIV. The study found that Kenyan children were happy to learn about HIV, with 55.7% having a positive attitude towards the topic, and only 14.4% having a negative attitude (The Nation cited in AVERT 2007d).

Uganda

The Ugandan government has invested a lot in AIDS education. This appears to have been successful with HIV prevalence rates falling (Cohen 2006). In primary schools they hold an assembly once a week about HIV/AIDS and teachers are given manuals to give full guidance. This was launched in 2001 and called the Presidential Initiative on AIDS Strategy for Communicating to Young People (PIASCY). There are similar initiatives in colleges and universities but worryingly AIDS education in secondary schools is practically non-existent.

Difas Munywa, from the Ugandan National Teachers' Union, highlights a key concern of AIDS education that teachers are not knowledgeable enough. Difas says, *"Except in large assemblies, teachers fear to talk about HIV/AIDS because pupils may ask difficult questions."* (Education International, 2006, p. 19)

India

In India there is a lot of effort invested in HIV/AIDS education on a national level but not so much in schools. In states where HIV prevalence is low the government doesn't see the point in investing in HIV education but it is not guaranteed to stay low if young people are not educated about HIV. AIDS education in Indian schools is integrated into science lessons, providing children with the biological facts about the disease (Boler & Jellema 2005) but fails to discuss the social side of HIV/AIDS.

Policy makers in India decided to introduce HIV/AIDS education to children as young as five. A sex education programme designed by the Ministry of Education, aimed at 15 to 17 year olds, has come up against widespread opposition from parents, politicians and teachers who believe it goes against Indian cultural values.

FIRST HAND EXPERIENCE

The following are extracts from two interviews that I conducted with Julie Aulds and Jennifer Weatherall who both have first-hand experience of HIV education in schools.

Julie Aulds taught life skills in a school in Malawi, which included teaching sex education. Here are some of her thoughts;

"Students knew most of the facts about HIV/ AIDS, as they are taught the theory in school. It was when we talked about the emotional side they found it hard to understand how AIDS victims feel and practical ways of helping. There are a lot of myths surrounding the disease. Peer pressure is a big problem particularly between boys and the image that to be a man you have to sleep with lots of girls. One boy asked me, 'If I have sex will it get rid of my spots?'"

"Sex education is invaluable but making it relevant, informative and interesting is the key not just a lot of dos and don'ts"

"The government are providing strong support and the issue of AIDS is becoming much less of a taboo. They have many advertising and publicity campaigns surrounding it. Free condoms are available from clinics."

(Aulds 2007)

Jennifer Weatherall taught in a primary school in South Africa, this involved teaching HIV awareness classes. Here are some of her thoughts;

"Although the kids were too young for sex education there was HIV education in the primary schools. The schools obviously saw the value in HIV education to put school time aside for it"

"The teachers were reluctant to teach about HIV. They would ask us to teach the HIV classes so it wasn't even in the kids' native tongue. There were communication problems which potentially could have stopped the message getting across"

"There were non-government organisations available to come into schools. We didn't see this and I'm not sure how available these programmes are"

(Weatherall 2007)

Peer Education

Peer education is a social form of education, outside the classroom and without textbooks. Peer educators are often from the group being educated or someone with the same social background, age or gender as the group that needs educating in the hope they will be able to relate to one another. Peer education sessions take place when and where it is convenient. It could be workmates in a bar after work or a group of women gathered to wash clothes.

Peer education is an ongoing process. The educator meets with those being educated at least weekly. Peer education allows the people being educated to ask questions without apprehension, unlike the daunting feeling many get in a classroom setting. It has been effective in reaching people who did not attend school and with people that prefer being taught by someone from the same social background due to the feeling of mutual understanding.

An example of a peer educator is Annie, who teaches fellow truck drivers about HIV. Annie is part of a campaign in the Democratic Republic of Congo called 'Roulez-Protégé!' (Drive-Protected!). Truck drivers are at high risk from HIV because they are away from their families for long periods of time and often take part in sexual activity whilst on the road. They are in desperate need of HIV education as highlighted by the comments of Gogo, a truck driver, who explains, *"most truck drivers don't*

wear condoms," and Eky, another truck driver, who explains, *"We thought it [HIV] was just a made up disease that the elders invented to stop us having sex."* (DFID 2007) Annie's work has proven to be successful. Some of the truckers even ask Annie *"Why haven't you told us about this before?"* (DFID 2007) Her work has helped educate a group that otherwise would have been difficult to reach.

A further example of the importance of Peer Education can be seen in the Congolese capital of Kinshasa. The Democratic Republic of Congo has already been devastated by war and misrule and it is thought an AIDS epidemic would be one battle too far for the country. This is why high risk groups like prostitutes have been targeted for education. A sex industry has developed around the docks in Kinshasa as women turn to prostitution to cover the cost of food and shelter. The Department for International Development (DFID) is funding a huge awareness campaign, part of which is the peer education of prostitutes. Volunteer peer educators teach groups of sex workers about HIV, and provide week long courses on how to use condoms, how to get tested for HIV and how to manage men's resistance to wearing protection. Peer educators in this project teach a different group of sex workers each week and over 11000 women who would otherwise have been difficult to reach have now received HIV awareness education (DFID 2007a).

Entertainment Education

The media has been key in educating people about AIDS. Research has shown that a higher level of exposure to the media has a positive impact on HIV awareness (Ingham 1995). This has been taken into consideration and the media has been used in different forms to spread the message of AIDS leading to what is known as 'entertainment education' to develop.

'Entertainment education' has proven to be an effective way of reaching a wide target audience. One of the most famous examples of AIDS Entertainment Education would be the movie Philadelphia, but other examples include soap operas, such as Soul City in South Africa and Málhacáo in Brazil, the Congan singer Franco Luambo's song "Beware of AIDS" and condom blowing contests in Thailand (an attempt to erase the social taboo about the contraceptive).

In Japan the television programme 'Kamisama Mo Sukoshidake' ('Please God just a little more time') told the story of a high school pupil who became infected with HIV through sex work. The programme raised the issue of HIV prevention and teenage prostitution. In the three months the show ran it was Japan's second highest rated programme. During and following the show's success HIV tests and counselling for the virus doubled, showing how the TV show helped raise awareness of the virus.

Rogers & Signal (2003) believe entertainment education is essential in the battle against HIV/AIDS. Soap operas that allude to HIV give the public the opportunity to discuss, what can be taboo subjects, through fictional characters. The characters in

the show are like friends to be gossiped about, allowing people to discuss issues freely in hypothetical situations.

Women and HIV Education

Research has shown that men show greater awareness of HIV than women in the developing world (Ingham 1995). The number of women that are HIV positive is increasing. Evidence shows that women are almost twice more likely to catch HIV from heterosexual sex than men are (Health Protection Agency 2006). Cultural attitudes and traditions place women on a much lower social standing than men in many countries in the developing world. This makes it difficult for women to demand their sexual partner uses a condom.

For a woman to demand condom use requires empowerment and self-esteem. This can come from education. Barbara, a HIV and health promotion consultant tells how *"HIV education is far more than the delivery of education, it's all part of different life skills, communication skills."* Barbara stresses the need for self-esteem work (Gibson 1995). Women need to be empowered to demand their partner wear a condom, and education has the ability to provide empowerment.

Another difficulty women face is prostitution. Poverty is the largest cause of prostitution. Tom Miller from Plan International highlighted the reason why poverty leads to prostitution saying, *"When the only choice you have is the chance you might catch AIDS and die in a few years' time, or the certainty of starving to death in a few weeks, there is no choice."* (Miller cited in BBC NEWS 2006). Female sex workers are at high risk of spreading the virus. It is important sex workers are targeted for HIV/AIDS education and women are included in education, giving them the opportunity to work their way out of poverty and raise their self-esteem, hopefully leading them away from careers as sex workers.

A danger in the spread of HIV is sexual abuse of women. Women are often coerced into sex. In some African countries there is a belief that having sex with a virgin can cure HIV (Leclerc-Madlala 2002). This has led to a growing number of rapes on young women by HIV positive men. It is vital that people are educated about the disease to stop 'Virgin Cleansing' rapes.

HIV can be transmitted from mother-to-child. There were 2.3 million child infected with the virus by the end of 2005, the majority caused by mother-to-child transmission. Drugs can reduce the chances of passing on the virus from 40% to 2% but these drugs are scarce in the developing world (AVERT 2007b). The virus can also be passed during breast feeding. There are substitutes for breast milk available but women need to be educated about this.

Girls

More than 113 million school-age children in developing countries do not attend school; two thirds of those are girls (The World Bank 2002). School education can

have an empowering effect on girls. Education can contribute to family independence, delayed marriage and family planning. A study in Zambia showed that women with a secondary education were less likely to be HIV positive than women without a secondary education (Delamonica and Vandemoortele, 2000). A study in Uganda showed that HIV infection rates were falling faster among women with a secondary education and rates were not falling among women with no primary education (UNESCO 2004 cited in The World Bank 2007).

Unfortunately not all is rosy in many schools in the developing world. Sexual abuse actually occurs within schools against girls by male pupils and teachers. Male teachers have been known to exchange sex for food or offer good exam results. These teachers are destroying the message they are supposed to be spreading and furthering gender inequalities.

Case Studies

I have decided to look at two countries histories of HIV and their approaches to the epidemic in the hope of showing how important HIV/AIDS education is in the fight against the epidemic.

CASE STUDY: BRAZIL

Brazil was governed by a military dictatorship until 1985 when a democratically elected government took over. The first case of AIDS in Brazil was reported in 1982 (Ministry of Health of Brazil 2001) but because of the dictatorship it was difficult to speak openly about HIV let alone educate people about the virus. In 1985 the government set up the National AIDS Program (NAP), which aimed to educate high risk groups, particularly homosexuals. In the same year the AIDS prevention and support group was set up as the first Brazilian HIV/AIDS organisation.

Instances of the disease continued to rise. Over the next few years more groups began to form, including 'Grupo Pela Vidda' ('Group for Life') which was founded by individuals who saw the AIDS epidemic as a threat to society as a whole and GAPA who promote educational strategies for the prevention of AIDS, fight discrimination of people with HIV/AIDS, advocate for efficient public health policy on AIDS, and offer services to people living with HIV/AIDS and their families. Groups like this pressurise politicians to improve treatment and care for people with HIV.

There were concerns that the government were not doing enough. In 1993, Herbert Daniel, a HIV positive activist spoke out about the government's approach to the disease claiming *"the government has taken no significant action in response to the epidemic, continuing the five-year record of inaction and indifference of the previous administration. There is today no*

adequate national programme for controlling the epidemic." (Daniel & Parker, 1993, p 36). This changed dramatically when it was discovered that HAART (a treatment combining antiretroviral drugs (ARV)) benefitted the health of people living with HIV. The Minister of Health announced that ARVs would be free for all people living with HIV that required treatment (Foreman 1996).

Along with the government's impressive approach to combating HIV/AIDS, there have been successful campaigns to prevent new infections. There is evidence that educating people about HIV and how to prevent it has been successful in Brazil. The World Bank estimated that by the year 2000 there would be 1.2million people living with HIV in Brazil. Due to the effectiveness of prevention campaigns the number of people living with HIV was estimated to be 600,000 in the year 2000 (Ministry of Health of Brazil 2001). Despite evidence of success there is still concern that those at risk of the virus are the poor and those with a low level of education (Berkman et al 2005). Education needs to reach these groups of people so they are aware of how to prevent the spread of HIV and to raise the quality of their lives.

HIV Prevention

Condom Use

In 1986 it was reported that only 4% of Brazilians used a condom for their first sexual experience but by 1999 this had dramatically increased to 48% (Ministry of Health of Brazil 2002 cited in AVERT 2007c). Both male and female condoms are widely available and being promoted and encouraged by the government. A study in 2005 showed that 35% of adults used a condom during the year, an increase compared to the 1998 figure of 24% (Okie 2006). Between 1998 and 2005 condom use increased by 50% for Brazilians of all ages (UNAIDS 2006b). A staggering figure considering Brazil is predominantly a Catholic country.

The Brazilian government has amply promoted the use of condoms in media campaigns, adverts and other initiatives. At large events, such as carnivals, free condoms are handed out. In 2006 The Brazilian Ministry of Health handed out 25 million condoms at parades, dances, parties and the annual carnival (UNAIDS 2006a).

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are also working in the favelas of Brazil's cities educating people about using condoms and encouraging them to do so. They also run initiatives educating the young people of the favelas about AIDS and encourage them to pass on the message to their peers creating a peer education system. The poor and often uneducated live in the favelas so these initiatives are crucial in reaching these people.

Media Campaigns

The government has used the media to raise awareness about HIV. They have used television, newspapers and put adverts on bus stops and billboards. The messages from the Brazilian government are regarded as the most explicit put forward by any government causing controversy in some groups but the adverts should be judged by their effectiveness not by their content. They raise issues including condom promotion, rights of HIV positive people, the stigma attached to being HIV positive and homosexuality.

Celebrities are getting involved. A famous Brazilian singer Kelly Key encouraged her audience to *"Show how you've grown up. This Carnival, use condoms"* (Okie 2006). Soap operas are also being used to educate people about HIV. One show 'Malhação' has characters living with HIV and demonstrates how ARVs should be taken (Rogers and Singhal 2003).

These initiatives are important in Brazil. They are attempting to reach all sectors of society with HIV education.

Preventing Mother-to-Child transmission (MTCT)

Educating HIV positive mothers has resulted in fewer cases of the virus being passed from mother to child. HIV positive mothers are routinely recommended not to breast feed. A replacement for breast milk is provided to all children with HIV positive mums but they need to be educated about this risk before they can change their behaviour.

Although a lot has been invested into this area there still remains much work to do. The government has recognised this and attempts to reduce the rate of MTCTs from 8.5% in 2004 to 1% in 2008 (UNGASS 2005 cited in Avert 2007c).

Educating the groups at most risk

Although all sectors of society are at risk from HIV there are some groups that are at more risk than others. The government and NGOs are making an effort to reach and educate men who have sex with men, sex workers and injecting drug users.

The group SOMOS which is run jointly by the government and the Brazilian Gay, Lesbian and Transgender association promotes gay rights and spreads HIV prevention messages. It also provides support to gay men living with HIV.

Sex work is not illegal in Brazil and the government has shown support in reducing the spread of HIV in this group. There have been a number of campaigns to educate sex workers. The most notable one was a cartoon called 'Maria without Shame'. The character appeared on posters, leaflets and stickers in women's toilets. The campaign was aimed at raising the esteem of sex workers and encouraging them to take care of their health, emphasising the use of condoms (Ministry of Health of Brazil 2002 cited in AVERT 2007c).

Injecting drug users accounted for a large number of HIV cases in its early years so the government set up a needle exchange programme. They also provide counselling and information for drug users to help them stop using. This has proven to be successful, cases of AIDS caused by drug injection has declined over the last decade (Okie 2006).

Success

Brazil's approach to combating AIDS is regarded as a success. Lee Jong-Wook (then head of the World Health Organisation) asked the chief of Brazil's National AIDS programme to visit Geneva to help formulate new policies around the world (Jones 2003).

CASE STUDY SOUTH AFRICA

After breaking off the shackles of the oppressive apartheid government South Africa faces another major problem. South Africa has the sixth highest prevalence of HIV in the world with figures estimating that 18.8% of the population is infected. UNAIDS 2006 Global Report estimated there were 5.5 million South Africans HIV positive by the end of 2005 and 320,000 South Africans suffered AIDS related deaths in 2005 (UNAIDS 2006c). The Medical Research Council, as cited by Cohen (2000), explain how AIDS has become such a huge epidemic in South Africa. *"The government's confused response to the epidemic, combined with a large migrant workforce, high rates of sexually transmitted diseases, a thriving sex worker industry and widespread poverty, provided a perfect breeding ground for HIV"* (p. 2168). It is possible for some of these conditions to be overcome through education

President Mbeki

A worry for many people regarding South Africa's HIV epidemic is President Mbeki's stance on HIV - a stance which saw the country spend only half its AIDS budget in 1999. President Mbeki has long been a HIV denier. While

surfing the internet in the late 1990s, Mbeki read the thoughts of Peter Duesberg, a professor of biochemistry and molecular biology at the University of California. Although nearly all scientists with any knowledge of AIDS were in no doubt that the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) was the cause, Professor Duesberg took an opposing view. Duesberg claims that AIDS is caused by poverty and illegal drug taking, which damage the immune system so much it eventually collapses.

Mbeki has argued that the poverty of South Africa and the prevalence of diseases such as Malaria and Tuberculosis are more the cause of AIDS than HIV. Mbeki believes the AIDS epidemic in Africa is an African problem and requires an African solution. This stance has led to Mbeki ignoring expert advice to provide pregnant women with the drug AZT, which potentially could have stopped the HIV being passed from mother-to-child and millions more have been refused drugs which potentially could have kept them alive. Mbeki claims the drugs are toxic despite reports proving otherwise.

Campaigns

Despite the stance of the president there have been some notable campaigns aimed at educating people of the risk of HIV.

The Soul City Project

This project started in 1994 and educated people about AIDS through radio, print and used dramas and soap operas on television to promote its message.

'Khomanani' or 'Caring Together'

The AIDS Communication Team (ACT), a group set up by the government in 2001, set up 'Khomanani' which uses mass media and celebrity endorsements to spread messages about HIV prevention. This campaign has an emphasis on encouraging HIV testing.

LoveLife

Targeted at young people, loveLife attempts to integrate HIV prevention messages into their culture. The campaign was launched in 1999 and was also aimed at lowering teenage pregnancies and other sexually transmitted infections by promoting sexual responsibility through the media. The campaign operates a network of telephone lines, clinics and youth centres that provide sexual health facilities. It also provides an outreach service that travels to remote rural areas, to reach young people who are not in the education system.

It is difficult to judge the success of these campaigns since numbers infected with the virus have continued to rise. This could suggest that people could be receiving the information and not acting upon it or the message isn't reaching those who need it most. There are difficulties with implementing large scale education campaigns in South Africa. There are 11 official languages spoken, as well as, different dialects and many people live in crowded cities and remote rural areas.

Children

It is estimated that 240,000 children aged below 15 are living with HIV in South Africa in 2005. Along with this it is estimated that 1.2 million children have been orphaned by HIV (UNAIDS 2006c). Being orphaned is likely to force children into poverty, poor living conditions and reduce their educational opportunities.

Along with these statistics there is also the worrying fact that schools have fewer teachers because of the epidemic. It is estimated that 21% of teachers aged between 25 and 34 are HIV positive (UNAIDS 2006d). Many will have to leave the profession because of the illness and many will sadly die. This leaves the country with a shortage of teachers putting a huge strain on the education system.

A lot left to do

South Africa's response to the HIV epidemic has been criticised. There are recent signs that the government are beginning to respond more effectively. There are education programmes being implemented and the government has created a new framework to counter the AIDS epidemic over the next four years.

The Future

It is difficult to predict what the future holds. Scientists believe a cure is still years away although there have been recent breakthroughs (AFX News Limited 2007). While the future is unclear what is clear is the important role that education plays in fighting against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Whether it be used to spread prevention messages, to raise the status of women in developing countries or even to educate scientists in the hope of finding a cure, education is vital.

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11

An Obese Issue with Slim Results

Keil Brown

How's it going? I am currently 23 years old. I was born and raised in a small town outside of Dudley in the Black Country, and I am currently studying at the University of Plymouth. I chose to write my chapter on childhood obesity because as a child I was overweight and never really received any support to help in my battle to loose weight. Also I was not allowed to write a chapter about Surfing! Hope you enjoy and maybe even be inspired.

Peace Love and Respect

Introduction

> "*Obesity has become an epidemic and the need is there to identify a solution to an ever-increasing problem*"
>
> *(Steinbeck, 2001).*

Being obese is a serious health risk and there are many other medical conditions that obesity can lead to, a few examples of these are:

- Type 2 Diabetes

- Heart Conditions

- High Blood Pressure

- Hypertension

- Skeletal Damage

- Depression

Obesity also can result in an individual having no confidence, low self esteem, being targeted by bullies and can even distance individuals from society.

Child obesity in schools is becoming a current and very serious issue. Statistics recently proved that levels of child obesity are rising all the time and are becoming catastrophic.

A study in 2006 by The Information Centre (2006) published in conjunction with NHS and the Government Statistic Services, called 'Statistics on Obesity, physical activity and diet: England 2006', reported the following statistics.

"Among boys aged 2 to 15, the proportion who were obese increased from 10.9% in 1995 to 18.0% in 2005, and among girls from 12.0% in 1995 to 18.1%, over the same period."

"In 2002-2004 the proportion of children who were obese generally increased with age. For example, 11.6% of children aged 2 to 3 were obese compared to 22.0% of children aged 11 to 12, and 19.5% of children aged 13 to 15."

"Children aged 2 to 15 from the most deprived quintile had a higher prevalence of obesity than those in the least deprived quintile (19.3% and 13.8% respectively)."

"Forecasting Obesity to 2010 estimates that 19% of boys and 22% of girls aged 2 to 15 will be obese by 2010, compared with 17% and 16% respectively in 2003."

These statistics alone prove the growing issue of childhood obesity but how are we to tackle it? What measures are currently being taken to prevent this rise is childhood obesity and are these measures working?

In this chapter I will critically analyse the interventions being taken to prevent this growing issue, looking at work currently being done by the government, the media, and how the interventions in place to tackle this issue are being implemented. Whether it is on the individual or whether it is on society as a whole to take responsibility.

I will also critically analyse the results of the current intervention in place to tackle childhood obesity. Looking at whether current efforts to reduce obesity are working, if so what is being done right and if not what is being done wrong. I will also reflect on my personal experiences, thoughts and ideas and also of others in my analysis.

What is being done for the Intervention of Childhood Obesity?

The Government of the United Kingdom is greatly aware of the explosive rate of child obesity and obesity in adults and over the last few years they have began to place in urgent measures to tackle the growing waistline of the nation.

A lack of information and research into childhood obesity has been stalling the efforts to begin to take action. John J. Reilly argues that *"at present there are no 'off the shelf' preventive interventions which might be adopted in the UK"* Reilly, 2006). But in my opinion action has to be taken now, waiting is not an option as this problem grows. C.M Doak agrees that there is argument for greater research when he states *"There is a dearth of data into specific causes of childhood obesity"* (Doak, 2006) but he also agrees that the time to take action is now even without greater research when he argues *"We cannot continue to wait for more studies and more research while the epidemic continues to unfold unabated"* (Doak, 2006).

In March 2004 the government set themselves a target through an obesity public service agreement that they plan to *"halt the year on year rise in obesity amongst children aged under 11 by 2010 in the context of a broader strategy to tackle obesity in the population as a whole"* (Obesity Guidance for Healthy Schools Coordinators and their Partners, 2007)

Using a number of the Government bodies including the Department of Health, Department for Education and Skills, Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Transport to as the foundations for the intervention of child obesity. With these "Foundations" laid the Government plans to use Schools, NHS Trusts, Early Years schemes, private care contractors and Leisure Facilities to delivery the interventions to society.

The Government and many academics have stressed the importance of eating healthy and becoming more physically active as the most important method of

combating obesity. Many interventions you will read about in this chapter are based around this theory.

What role are Schools taking in the intervention of child obesity?

Schools are taking an enormous role in the intervention of child obesity and obesity in general. This is because it is believed that obesity is more easily prevented whilst a child is still growing. C. M Doak suggests that *"Prevention and treatment of obesity and overweight may be somewhat easier in children than in adults because children are still growing in height"* (Doak, 2006). In contrast to this I personally feel as though I would need to see results before I agreed with this theory because not all children will outgrow there weight. I do believe though that it is correct for children to be targeted for the prevention of obesity. A Child spends most of their time at a school or some other educational setting. A school is where a child is sent to gain an education and learn skills which will assist them in whichever choice they choice to take late in life. If children can be educated on a wide range of subjects at an early age, why can they not be taught lessons in staying healthy? Steinbeck agrees and suggests that children are more adaptable than the older generation when being taught a healthy education, she claims *"Moreover, children learn lifestyle behaviours from an early age and may be more flexible in their ability to change behaviours than adults"* (Steinbeck, 2001).

The Government also believe that we must tackle the issue of obesity at an early age so they created the National Healthy Schools Programme. The National Healthy Schools Programme was first established in 1999 as a joint project between the Department Of Heath and the Department for Children Schools and Families. Back in 1999 the project was greeted by a very casual approach, because each local authority could implement which ever themes and criteria they wanted from the programme. This caused there to be no consistency in the programme throughout the nation. So in 2005 the National Healthy Schools Programme was restructured to become more consistent over the nation and to provide better results. More than 90% of schools have now joined the Healthy Schools Programme and nearly 50% have met the programmes criteria and have been awarded the Healthy Schools status.

> *"We want all children and young people to be healthy and achieve at school and in life. We believe that by providing opportunities at school for enhancing emotional and physical health, we will improve long term health, reduce health inequalities, increase social inclusion and raise achievement for all"*
>
> *(Healthy Schools, 2007).*

This is the vision of the National Healthy Schools Programme. By 2009 the target is that all schools will have enrolled on this programme and that 75% of schools will have achieved the Healthy Schools status.

The way in which schools will implement this programme is split into four areas:

- Personal, Social and Health Education including Sex, Relationship and drugs education.

- Healthy Eating

- Physical Activity

- Emotional Health and Well Being, including Bullying

The areas which have been put in place to specifically tackle the issue of child obesity are Healthy eating and physical activity.

Healthy Eating in Schools

The area of Health Eating in schools is one which has been highly publicized in all forms of the media recently. Especially as the government is using TV Celebrity Chef Jamie Oliver to back and advertise their campaign. In a manifesto he published on his website he writes:

> *"For the past couple of years I've been campaigning to ban the junk in schools and get kids eating fresh, tasty nutritious food instead. I can't do it without your help though – so start a revolution in your school and help us prove that school meals can be better."*
>
> *(Jamie Oliver, 2007).*

By using Jamie Oliver's reputation as an excellent chef with award winning restaurants and his charismatic appeal to a new younger generation, he was seen an asset to the campaign. With a strong media backing, changes to increase healthy eating in schools began.

A senior member of staff is now assigned to oversee all the aspects of food in schools, this being so there is some one leading the programme in schools. Staff Members are now evaluated and trained to meet standards of food education, if members of staff are trained with the knowledge of a "Healthy Food" education, they will be further prepared to pass their knowledge onto the pupils.

A radical change to school dinners has been implemented, gone are the days of children eating unhealthy food such as Chips, Pizza and processed meats such as the highly criticised "Turkey Twizzler" On the menu at schools now are healthy balanced meals including Fruit, Vegetables, and freshly cooked meat.

These measures are being guided by specific nutritional standards for all school meals and even the food sold in vending machines. These nutritional standards are to be made mandatory by September 2009.

There is also a pressure for schools to no longer serve "pre cooked ready meals" where they just heated in the kitchen before being served to the pupils. Also the healthy schools programme insists that schools improve their facilities where children eat, by providing pupils with a comfortable area to eat, fresh water, and also give children enough times to eat their meals without being rushed. The Government made 5.5 million pounds available in 2006-07 for the investment into School Kitchens and dining areas. This is to be increased to 8 million pounds by 2009-10.

The theory of providing a health diet in schools has been backed by many politicians and academic writers. CM Doak writes, *"Using such a treatment approach at a young age can be achieved without drastic behaviour changes"* (Doak, 2006)

There is no argument against the fact that eating more healthily will reduce levels of obesity in schools. In my opinion healthy eating is our greatest asset in the battle against childhood obesity. The more positive we can be with our children's diets the more positive the results will become.

Physical Activity in Schools

It has been discovered that individuals who do not partake in regular physical activity are at a higher risk of becoming overweight or obese. This is a risk which both adults and children must not take. Klem (1997) agrees that physical activity has a role to play in diminishing obesity, he states, *"the characteristics of successful weight loss in the adult – namely adherence to a restrictive and carefully monitored eating plan and regular physical activity"* (Klem, 1997). In contrast he also claims great deal of discipline is needed to keep to this method of intervention, he suggests that, *"those who change lifestyle can be successful, but that an extremely consistent effort is required"* (Klem, 1997). Can this theory of intervention therefore be used at a young age? Physical Activity is great way for people who are obese or overweight to begin to lose weight and become healthier, but how is physical activity being used to stop obesity at a young age?

The role of physical activity is a great importance in the ever increasing task of combating the rise of obesity in all children and adults. Physical activity is a an asset in the intervention of obesity, as it is a common fact that physical activity increases your heart rate, which helps you to burn away the your energy intake and fat.

The Government have made physical activity a top priority in the intervention of childhood obesity and included it in the National Healthy Schools Programme. The National healthy schools programme has set guidelines in which schools have to meet to be awarded Healthy Schools status.

Again schools will assign a member of staff to oversee and lead a policy of physical activity in each school. The policy should support the curriculum for Physical Education and wider a wider range of school sports and activities. The policy should be created with the input of members of staff, governors, parents, carers and young people.

The programme requires Physical Education curriculum should include health related fitness in and out of the classroom. I agree that Physical Education is an excellent resource in how to teach children to keep a good standard of fitness and become more health conscious.

Pupils are able to access a number of different activities, in which they have consultation on, to ensure they take part in a minimum of 2 hours physical activity each week. Allowing student involvement in deciding which activities they partake in and how they are going to meet their minimum of 2 hours physical activities is a great way to keep the pupils interested, and really wanting to partake in the activities.

The idea of allowing students to be directly involved in decision making throughout their education is one which is seen as an innovation by many academics and theorists. Many believe that there are many positive outcomes from empowering the students.

Kohn (1993) concludes that *"meaningful student involvement in school decision-making has four distinct outcomes on school climate"* (Kohn, 1993)

These four positive outcomes are:

- Effects on general well being

- Effects on behaviour and values

- Effects on Academic achievements

- Effects on teachers

Kohn insists that, *"If we want children to take responsibility of their own behaviour, we must first give them responsibility, and plenty of it"*. (Kohn, 1993)

I do also believe that by students to become empowered through self-determination this would lead to a happier and more motivated pupil. Therefore if we were to allow students to become involved in their own "Health Education", through determination and motivation we could see great results in the health of our youth.

I also believe that the idea of empowering students may have some negative effects in the education in schools, but also be a very difficult practice to but in place.

The sheer amount of students to take consideration of their ideas and opinions is enormous. I see the only way of tackling this problem would be to appoint a student committee in which they can take the most popular ideas of all students into consideration. But again I believe this could also result in a segregation of students, with some students feeling that they are not being involved in the practice. Academic writer Alexander W. Astin agrees that the practice of student involvement can cause segregation when he writes, *"Such an approach clearly favours highly motivated students"* (Astin 1999).

Also if students do not take their involvement in their own education seriously, maybe more at a young age, their ideas and thoughts could result in a lack of structure and not be put into any practice in their education.

Therefore I can only imagine that the best way for students to get involved to ensure a greater education for themselves is to be encouraged students to take part in discussion in their studies. By allowing the students voice their views and opinions whilst being taught, they are becoming directly involved in their education.

Another method being used is to encourage pupils to take part in more out of school activities and joining school teams. Schools have linked up with Major organisations such as Sport England, the School Sports Partnership and the Youth Sport Trust. By associating themselves with these organisations it will increase the reputation of out of school activities, and allow schools to provide a wider range of activities.

They way in which schools are combating obesity is through almost an individual approach, even though the National Healthy Schools is aimed at whole community of schools, its prime goal is still to cut the risk of each individual child becoming obese. The programme gives each child opportunity to eat more healthily and to take part in physical activity but is this enough? Do we not only need to tackle obesity by the individual in schools or do we need to tackle it through society as a whole?

Tackling Obesity as a Society

Obesity is an issue not only just in children but in society as a whole. An obesity epidemic is sweeping the nation, what chance do we have in lowering the rate of obese and overweight children, when the lifestyle they lead and the community they live in are their own worse enemy?

Now in the year of 2008 we are living in a society dubbed as the "Fast Food Nation". Where more and more people are living on poor diets of junk food such as chocolate and crisps, and fast food from local takeaway restaurants and corporate giants such as McDonalds and KFC.

A large part of the blame has to be put on advertisements, everywhere you look be it on the TV, newspaper or local billboards you will see and advertisement for a new

chocolate bar or a fast food restaurant. The companies responsible for these advertisements target a younger audience. By using a promotion such as a free toy with fast food or using a popular children's cartoon character for promotion they draw in the younger audience. This problem is acknowledged by many politicians, scientists and academics. M.B Schwartz (2003) states that, *"As children enter the elementary and middle school year's societal messages about the role of non-nutritive foods become increasingly prevalent and confusing. Candy and sweets are strongly associated with holidays and parties."* (Schwartz and Puhl, 2003). In contrast to this others are cannot see a negative effect to poor nutritional food on television. In a recent BBC article Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell reveals that, *"She is sceptical about the merits of such a ban"*. (BBC News Online, 2007)

The debate over whether advertisements of poor nutritional food should be allowed to be aired on television is still ongoing, and becoming more popular and more prevalent in the media. Personally from my experience this advertisements are targeted at children and children are very susceptible of being drawn in by these adverts. As a child when advertisements of fast food and chocolate were all over TV and magazines, the talk of the playground was always about a new chocolate bar or a new promotion in a fast food restaurant.

The National Health Service is also playing their part in helping combat obesity in communities. They have recently started prevention programmes that advertise and encourage healthy eating. The most popular one being the "5 A Day Scheme", which encourages society to eat a minimum of 5 portions of fruit and vegetables every day.

The National Health Service have also formed partnerships with local councils so that Healthy Eating Co-ordinators employed by the national health service visit schools and local community centres promoting healthy eating. The National Health Service also offers more drastic treatments to people who are beyond the level of obesity where these prevention methods can make a difference. These include appointments with dieticians, weight loss and appetite suppressing drugs, and operations such as stomach stapling and the fitting of a gastric band, these are a very drastic measure though.

To tackle obesity head on we need to change our lifestyle to begin to create results. In agreement to this Doak writes, *"It is the environment rather than the genetics that have changed. Thus we focus on population based prevention childhood overweight and obesity programmes, particularly interventions that address environmental determinants that can be applied on a large scale and are sustainable."* (Doak, 2006).

What Doak is saying is correct the fact that we need to combat obesity throughout social communities using a method which is accessible and sustainable. But how do we even begin this notion of changing the environment we live in? I suggest we use the idea of Social Empowerment.

Social Empowerment is a process in which members of society are empowered with responsibility, authority and trust to make decisions regarding their community. The ideas of social empowerment were promoted in the 1970's by visionary thinker and Brazilian educator Paulo Freire.

Freire had the strong beliefs that *"human beings are subjects, able to think and reflect for themselves, and in doing so transcend and recreate their world."* (Ledwith, 2005).

By allowing all society to be given responsibility to make their own decisions which regard their community, would fill society with a confidence to make these decisions and be happier with the results and outcomes of their actions. Social Empowerment also encourages equality, everyone will have there opinions voiced and be given equal responsibility. This idea of equality would be an advantage in the battle against the rising levels of obesity.

A huge problem with obesity in the lower classes is that healthy food is not cheap and also not accessible to some families, where as unhealthy snacks and high produced reconstituted are readily available and cheap. We I was tackling obesity as a child we had no opportunity to go to the supermarket and buy organic fruit and vegetables, and high quality free range meat, when all these foods were being advertised to us as a healthy option. Can only middle class and beyond afford to eat healthy meals?

By allowing equality in all decisions made, a view of obesity as a whole society, not only the middle and upper class can provide a real view of the devastating effects of obesity and then action can be taken to provide real results.

The ideas of Paulo Freire and Social Empowerment are not seen by all as a positive step forward. When his work was first published many thought his views were seen as very narrow minded, his ideas aimed mainly at social classes. Shor writes that, *"Freire's original work emphasised class while ignoring gender, he did conceive his pedagogy in singular 'class terms' growing out of his experiences among peasants and workers in impoverished Brazil."* (Shor, 2000)

Freire understands these negative views of his work and will look to make them accessible to all, this is observed by Margaret Ledwith when she reveals, *"He stresses that his pedagogy is not universal, that it emerged from his own experience, and needs to be adapted for other contexts."* (Ledwith, 2005)

If we were to adapt Freire's ideas to radically change society through empowerment, to rid this current label of being a "Fast Food Nation" could this be the catalyst that helps to begin to find results in the fight against obesity?

Are the interventions we have set in place working, do we have any results?

When first researching whether the interventions placed in schools are working the first piece of information that I discovered was that the government have changed their deadline for halting childhood obesity from 2010 to 2020, a whole decade.

This change has brought about a backlash from many politicians and health organisations. Peter Hollins the chief executive of the British Heart Foundation was quoted in the Guardian Newspaper saying, *"Setting new targets for 2020 is presumably a tactic to buy the government more time to get its act together, but it risks making the problem seem too distant to force through the bold measures in this term."* (Boseley, 2007).

Ofsted have also reported that the Schools interventions towards Childhood obesity have also shown little results, and have shown there is much negativity towards the interventions put in place. Inspectors discovered that in the 27 schools they visited which had implemented the National Healthy Schools Programme, 19 of them had significantly reduced numbers of pupils eating school dinners.

The reasoning behind the lack of results are still unconfirmed maybe it is just that the intervention methods put into place were not accessible for schools. Maybe tests and experiments in select areas could have been used before the interventions were put in place nationally.

TV Celebrity Chef Jamie Oliver's role in providing better school meals has also come under scrutiny. The cost of these new and improved schools meals were at the centre of the problems. Reporting on the recently published Offsted report The Independent newspaper writes, *"The report indicates that the 'High Cost' of healthier dinners has put off some parents from less well-off homes."* (Independent, 2007)

The Guardian newspaper reported that, *"Pupils frequently said that the portions were small and left them still feeling hungry"* (The Guardian, 2007)

Jamie Oliver has yet to defend the reasons why his healthy school dinners have not been a success, but he has always been aware to the fact that this was never going to be an easy job. If Jamie Oliver's campaign proves to be a failure in the long run and his healthy dinners are taken out of schools. At least his campaign has made society more aware over the growing problem of childhood obesity, and that providing healthier meals is a great way to begin to combat it. This in effect is a

positive result in contrast to the many negative results that current obesity interventions have resulted in.

Conclusion

In this essay I emphasised the growing problems of childhood obesity and obesity in general. I looked into what schools are doing to help prevent this epidemic increasing on a large scale. Also what role is society playing in helping tackle obesity and if current interventions put into place whether it be in schools or into the community are working.

My initial findings were that schools are using a whole range of methods in the intervention of obesity. Using the Healthy Schools programme in which all schools should meet a standard in which a school becomes a healthy environment. Also the uses of Physical activity, by making students take part in physical activity and promoting it throughout the school with the help of organisations outside of the school setting.

Society's role in the intervention of obesity was a very tricky subject matter. The sheer scale of British society made it very difficult to discover one problem area. Its is a common known fact that the environment we live does not help with obesity epidemic, in our current "Fast Food Nation" obesity will just thrive.

The idea of using Social Empowerment as a intervention will always be viewed as a radical idea. But as all other interventions are not showing positive results, then why should we not try something radical?

The fact that social empowerment would allow all members of society to have their voice heard, no matter who they are, where they are from or how old they are? By allowing this you will only get the true voice of society and then the real issues and problems can be identified and dealt with accordingly.

By the time I came to research the results of the current interventions in place, I knew that the results would not be great. This is such cloudy topic that is only greeted with negativity. All media coverage on this subject matter is very negative, there seems to be no emphasis to succeed. At this moment in time there is not enough adequate research into the causes and positive preventions, and I also feel that this maybe the reason why current results are not good. I also feel that current interventions in place were rushed by the way the problem escalated.

We cannot move forward until we are clear on what the problem areas are and using methods of experimentation begin to find an intervention method which can be accessible to all schools and communities. Until this method is found I can only see the rates of obesity increasing.

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ADHD

Laura Joyce

I am 21 years Old and I am currently in my second year at the University of Plymouth. I decided to do a degree in Education studies because I really wanted to learn about education as opposed to how to educate. I love it and was glad to have the opportunity to do this book as a part of it. I chose to do ADHD because it really is a rising issue in this country and something that we still just don't know enough about to be able to really deal with.

> '*After Parents, Teachers are probably the adults who have the most impact on the development of all children*'
>
> *(Cooper & Ideus, 1996)*

Children spend approximately 6 hours a day, 5 days a week in school from as young as four years old (over 14430 hours in compulsory schooling alone). Therefore it would indeed seem that the teachers with whom they spend this time have a huge impact on their academic and social growth. It is, then, the responsibility of that teacher and the institution in which they work, to provide each child with the emotional, academic and any other resources required to reach their full potential.

The average size of a primary school class in the United Kingdom is 26, which is the 7th highest in the developed world (telegraph.co.uk 2007). So then, imagine if a child who has ADHD ('*easily distracted...does not follow instructions...does not seem to listen... often fidgets... gets up from [his or her] seat...*' (CDC 2000)) Is just one of those 26 children. When one of those children needs extra attention, how is the teacher to best deal with this? It is, of course important that every child has his or her own needs met, so if a child needs more than another- is it not the responsibility of that child's school to make sure this is possible?

So what is ADHD?

It is often at school that a child is first seen to have symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity disorder. As you can see briefly above there are several indicators that a child may be an ADHD sufferer. Below are the main symptoms of ADHD as listed by the NHS:

- Short attention span, inattention, difficulty concentrating, easily distracted, restless,

- Disorganised, difficulty completing a specific task, difficulty in sitting still,

- Hyperactivity - overactive, high activity levels,

- Impulsive behaviour, suddenly doing things without thinking, little sense of danger

- Learning problems due to lack of attention, language and speech problems, although ADHD is not related to intelligence, and

- Delayed social skills, difficulty making friends, disruptive in play, find it hard to await their turn in games

Before a child can be diagnosed the NHS state that the child must have at least 6 symptoms of hyperactivity and 6 of attention deficit. All of these must have developed before that child was seven years old, and have been apparent for at least 6 months. If this is not the case, it most likely means the child is suffering from Emotional and Behavioural difficulties which is more of umbrella term used for

people who, *'display patterns of behaviour and/or emotional that have negative effects on their own learning…the learning environment of others'* (Cooper and Ideus 1996)). Once this is established in the home and school environment of the child, it is taken to the school specialist and then to doctors and external specialists.

What's it got to do with me? The teacher's responsibility…

It would be reasonable to assume that it will be the teacher that has the responsibility to recognise signs of ADHD. Then, importantly, communicate with parents with regards to behaviour at home and take appropriate action. The way that the teacher responds to a child with ADHD can make or break the school experience for the child; this alone is a huge responsibility. If a child is classed as being 'trouble' or a pain, then that child will stay that way. It would be very difficult for other teachers to openly challenge the routes of this behaviour risking the previous teachers' judgement to be undermined.

It is imperative that the diagnosis and action taken as a result are to benefit the child completely. So the teacher is to speak to parents, specialists and the child. They then make a joint decision with the parents and doctors as to what action to take.

What then?

According to the SEN coordinator in my old primary school in Kent and an information booklet produced by Somerset county council, there are a number of drugs that a child can be put on. The most common is a drug called Ritalin (Methylphenidate hydrochloride). This is a drug related to amphetamines and is a stimulant drug. There seems to be no absolute answer as to how it works but it seems to help nerve cells work more productively. There are also related drugs such as Dexedrine- which is a very similar drug but affects some who may not respond to Ritalin. If these do not produce the desired affects some children may be treated with anti depressants or even medication that usually treats high blood pressure in adults. However, these are only in extreme circumstances, generally, teachers deal with Ritalin. Because the effects only last for a limited time, there is a need for the drug to be taken during school hours. There is option for the child to carry and administer his or her own medication- but generally this is only the case among adolescents.

Do we just have to make sure they take their pills?

Cooper and Ideus talk in their book, 'ADHD- a practical guide for teachers'(1996), about the role of the teacher as not just someone to identify symptoms but to actively monitor the effect that medication has on the child in the classroom environment. Ritalin is never (or should never) be used on its own to deal with symptoms of ADHD, but *'In conjunction with other strategies'* (Ideus and Cooper

1997 pg 57). It is, however one of the key components. The teacher needs to be able to look at the effect on the child's own social and academic development- as well as the effect on the other children on the classroom. They need to then be able to look at the effects of the medication on the child's previously positive characteristics- something that can generate concern and cause a teacher to question the validity of such medication. In their information pack, Somerset County Council provides examples of monitoring sheets for key stages 1, 2, 3 and 4. The information required from the monitor differs through the key stages, but are fundamentally the same. They deal with level of good behaviour, visible side affects, social relationships observed, progress and actual learning of the child. It is also important that the child and parents are kept involved and informed as much as possible. This is the teacher's job, which, what with the ever increasing class sizes, is a huge responsibility.

But what's the best thing to do?

The real battle for the teacher is the conflict between what is better for the class as a whole and the child as an individual. If a child has originally been disruptive and difficult to handle in a large class, it would have a huge effect on the rest of the children in that class- hindering their learning and limiting the time that a teacher can give them. Then for this child, once medicated to be quiet, calm and much less disruptive, in spite of the negative effects it may be having on his or her own positive characteristics; it must be near impossible for a teacher to be able to judge how to deal with this. On the one hand can it really be justified putting a primary school child on medication that may cause children to become *'too controlled or socially aloof'* (Ideus & Cooper 1997 pg74) before the have even really developed social skills. On the other, however, when such immediate responses to the medication include (it has been reported that even peers notice after just one dose of medication) *'Calmer, more organizing, cooperative behaviour'* (Idius & Cooper 1997 pg74) can one justify taking the child off the medication if it will benefit the academic and social aspects of lives of all his or her peers and the child themselves?

This is not to say that a child will not benefit from using the medication. Many children who are using Ritalin speak of how much it benefited them not only in their own academic work but also when it came to developing inter personal relations. It is very much about the individual and how their bodies deal with medication. We cannot, however forget that when a child is so young his or her own ability to grow in all senses as a person is still very much in infancy. There is no doubt that medicating this child for ADHD alters this process in some way. In an Article on BBC news website is the story of a 14 year old boy who suffered from terrible night terrors and aggressive behaviour when on Ritalin. We see here the devastating story of a child who is put on medication that doesn't work and nothing else is done. The child who so desperately wants to be 'normal', live normally and succeed in school like

his peers. Yet, because he can not really see what is wrong with him he seems to go in vicious circles. This very much supports my view that we need to give these children the chance to understand ADHD.

Bearing in mind the unpredictability of the effect that Ritalin would have on young children, we must remember that the teacher has to be able to deal with any change in behaviour- or lack of change in a way that the child in question is always getting the best treatment possible. If a child whose reaction to the drug therapy is not a positive one- how can a teacher deal with this? It is very important that a teacher communicates with Parents fully about what he or she sees in the classroom and any concerns they may have. A fully informed decision about the best path to take is the only way we can get it right for the sake of the child. Indeed, relating to my earlier point, this would increase the already demanding workload of the teacher.

As I spoke to the SEN Coordinator at my old primary school, she made me aware of the many packages available to parents and teachers alike to help them deal with children with ADHD. The sheer variety of methods available to deal with ADHD must cause confusion in their own right. Dupaul and Stoner (2003) discuss the types of 'intervention strategies' that could be used in a school setting. It is important for the teacher to provide a classroom where other children feel safe to learn and interact in an environment they know and expect. I would suggest that the teachers responsibility to the child with ADHD is to use the therapies I will be discussing to facilitate the promotion of this kind of environment for the child and their peers. DuPaul and Stoner (2003) make it clear that it is important we do not use a 'one size fits all' approach the condition and all teachers should have professional training to deal, not only with the standard approaches but their own attitudes towards children with ADHD.

Strategies for helping the child succeed

Research, as discussed by DuPaul and Stoner, suggest that there are a number of basic components when dealing with academic limitations of children with ADHD. The child should have a thorough assessment looking at what aspects of their school work are affected by the disorder. Then the teacher should work with them to create time for regular feedback and direction (typically this is one of the things that a child with ADHD requires much more of than a child without). This is to aid them in a structured, easier learning environment. Positive reinforcement should be used when a child is completing tasks, there is concern that reliance on positive reinforcement alone could distract from the completion of tasks and so a small amount of mild punishment (such as withdrawing positive reinforcement) should be used on a conditional basis. The teacher should set the child much smaller tasks when it comes to independent work and complex tasks should be broken into smaller sections- creating an environment where a child is not expected to

concentrate for extended periods of time. Aspects of school work such as completion of tasks set are used preferentially as targets. Attention to task and keeping still are seen as less important. This makes it easier for the teacher to monitor the work as a whole and focuses on the organizational and academic progress of the child. Teachers should be careful of the nature of the positive rein forcers used. Rather than gifts such as stickers, more time spent on a preferred activity should be used and also rotated so as not to promote disinterest in said activities. Teachers should have a time with the student before an academic task is set, to look at a list of 'classroom privileges' with the child so that he or she can make a decision about the reward they will receive at the end of the task. Finally it is the responsibility of the teacher to monitor the *'integrity or fidelity with which an intervention programme is implemented'* (DuPaul and stoner 2003 pg147). This is so that extra training or resources can be accessed if required.

Above are just some of the large amounts of suggested strategies to deal with day to day classroom activities. It does concern me greatly that it is clear that we are only talking about the academic growth of the child. Things such as peer mentoring or parent and teacher mentoring should, as a part of daily life be made accessible to the child. Young sufferers of ADHD need to be given the opportunity to learn about their disorder and understand the implications it could have on their own academic and social lives. The social growth of a child is just as important. Monitoring and promoting their academic progress is a start but if a child is unable to have a successful relationship with those around him or her- this can be wasted. Of course we are preparing the child for later life- for getting a good education and succeeding after school years. But a teacher needs to be able to help the child understand the nature and importance of good communication and relations in the social world. If, when a child goes for his or her first job interview and is unable to communicate, straight away their likelihood of success is limited.

I believe it is also vital that the children in the class are made aware of what ADHD is and the way it affects the individual. The other children need to become aware that 'misbehaviour' by a child with ADHD is not an excuse for others to misbehave. As well as this, if the disorder is fully understood by the child and his or her peers there will be less stigma attached to being a little 'different'. It should also be the responsibility of the school to prepare children with ADHD for how their disorder could affect them in secondary school and later life.

One could argue that this 'priming' action would create more work for the teacher, and the possibility that the older the child with ADHD gets the more likely they are to be able to blame their condition for anti-social behaviour in more serious form. It could, however, also be argued that it is our basic human right to be provided with the information (whatever form it comes in) to be able to understand who we are and work with our own limitations to survive.

Break Time!

School break and lunch times are what most school children look forward to. It is a time where social interaction between friends and peers happens. A child learns about themselves within a social situation and others. What about the child who no one understands? It is fair to assume that children who are impulsive and 'odd' can appeal to other children initially. Everybody likes the class clown. However when a child who is often not able to understand the concept of 'successful communication' (O'regan 2002) other children can grow very weary of them in a short time. When a child has been disruptive or agitated in the classroom, he or she cannot just stop that when it comes to break time- causing a greater likelihood of conflict on the playground.

I think the most important thing is for teachers who are responsible for the children at break time are aware of the mood of the child when the break begins- so that they are able to look out for warning signs before conflict begins. This need not be a difficult thing- simply say hello child and see his or her response. From my experience children do not even try to hide the kind of mood they are in.

O'regan (2002) discusses that, for children with ADHD, even the break time should be structures. He talks about the concept of having a sport of the child's choice available and ready for them to play at break times. Games where there may be exclusion (for example football where often the children pick their own teams) should be avoided as well as slow games. If a child feels like he or she has been rejected or gets bored then they will stop paying attention and turn to something else. Which could threaten the rest of their school day, as change is not something they adapt to easily and if their mood is compromised this will be brought back into the classroom.

ADHD- the new dyslexia?

When I was talking to a learning support assistant from a school in Kent, she said to me, *'Oh yes but Parents of children with ADHD get money from the Government now don't they?'* When I asked what she was implying she said, *'I only talk from my experience, but from what I can see ADHD is just a way to excuse children who just cant behave'*. She talked about how easy it is in our society to have children who cause trouble in the classroom identified as having 'some disorder or other'. I would assume that most, if not all of us have something that limits some part of our life, and which requires us to concentrate and work much harder on aspects of, for example, our learning. So then one must question whether in fact labelling someone with ADHD as opposed to disruptive or inattentive actually does benefit the child, his or her parents or the school.

What about the parents?

Any amount of guidelines for teachers would say that it is vital parents are kept informed about the progress of their child in schools. A parent of a child who suffers from ADHD has a difficult job when the child is at home. The parent has many guidelines about keeping routine and keeping medication up, observing behaviour and many other things. It is always in the interest of the parent that a child's academic life is as successful as it can be. A teacher needs to keep them involved so that they are able to see if and how the child is progressing. However I believe it is very important, vital, for a teacher to be upfront and honest about the change (if any) in a child's social behaviour. Even if a child is not on medication, a parent needs to work in conjunction with the school to teach the child how to work in a social situation. If a child is getting academic support in school then, even more so, it is imperative that he or she gets the other side of things as well from somewhere. A child who is very bright may not have any inter personal relations, which, as I mentioned earlier could in no way aid their bid to do well in society.

Gibson and Blandford (2005) discuss in the book 'Managing Special Educational Needs' the importance of establishing and maintaining a good relationship with parents. When there is strong cooperation between schools and parents the child is more likely to reach their potential. If a child performs well in their school environment and, as a resulted is able to discuss this positively with a parent or guardian he or she is surely more likely to want to carry on this progress. Gibson and Blandford recommend strategies such as weekly meetings between parents and teachers and contracts between the home and school are written up. Thus ensuring the parent and teacher know what is expected of them by the child and each other.

I believe also that it is important that teachers and schools make an effort to support parents. If a child wears parents out or is 'difficult' it may be very hard for a mother or father to keep on top of their own feelings and behaviour towards the child. One must question their own ability as a parent or role model when their child is behaving badly. Alan Train (2000) talks in his book 'Children behaving badly' about how some parents may even think that the behaviour of a child who has a disorder is genetic. He talks about how parents may feel worn out or disappointed by the behaviour of their child and the effect this will have on the child themselves. If we are so tired of trying to keep our child happy or stop them throwing 'tantrums' or behaving aggressively towards others, our opinion of our own child could change. Also it is possible that parents have high expectations of their child or *'a mental picture of how they would like themselves and their child to be'* (2000 pg22). If this expectation is completely different to reality, no matter how much we try to rationalise it, there may still be a part of us that is disappointed with the turn out. If schools and parents work closely then the positive things about the child could be brought to the forefront for the parent and make things easier when it comes to

home time. If a parent is encouraged by how well a child is doing in school and can bring some of that positive attitude home with them, surely the relationship they have with the child will benefit.

There have been many debates about whether it is fair on the child to give them the label of ADHD, for social reasons. Being labelled as having this kind of disorder and therefore being 'different' could result in bullying, or even low self esteem due to being not like the other children. Also there is the medical question as to whether we are prescribing drugs to children who really are suffering from ADHD. In 2005 the UN even warned against being too quick to label children as having ADHD due to the prescription of drugs that change them, especially in the light of evidence that in later life these drugs could cause severe paranoia among other things.

If we are all too often blaming a disorder on unruly children, what are we trying to cover up? Bad parenting? Bad schooling? Or simply a society that looks too lightly on unruly behaviour? I do not think that we are necessarily covering up anything, or that even a percentage of those diagnosed with ADHD are just badly behaved. However it is a little unsettling to know that only two years ago we were warned about mis-diagnosis and that many people believe that ADHD is but a way of explaining unexplainable behaviour.

I have spoken to people who work within the primary education sector, some of whom believe that having the ADHD label is a godsend. If a child displays bad behaviour to the extent that he or she is not allowed to join in with simple activities- how can dealing with this is some way be a bad thing? For children like this, being diagnosed as having ADHD and, even, being medicated, could improve the quality of life and ease the already difficult process of growing up. However, there are also many teachers and parents alike who believe that diagnosis of ADHD and medication is just a way to deal with children who are difficult and the parents of these children who cant understand why the child is behaving like this. In The Daily mail in 2007 Mrs Harrison- the mother of a child with severe ADHD described how her son was diagnosed and medicated- and nothing else. She said the drug quietened him down but *'sometimes he would sit and do nothing'*. The author of the article condemns the amount of children being diagnosed and treated for ADHD with Ritalin, saying that (although not in all cases) ADHD is being over diagnosed used to gloss over underlying factors of badly behaved children.

In 2003 there was a debate on Ritalin in the U.S and a well known psychologist called Dr. Bob Jacobs told a youth conference that pharmaceutical companies and doctors had turned behavioural issues into medical issues just by giving them a name. From his own experience he said that he saw how the 'disease' would cease after a simple structure is put in place or dietary change. He also pointed out that millions of dollars are made by pharmaceutical companies through the sale of Ritalin – money that would not exist if ADHD didn't. He said that once the child is

given the label- and the medication, school and home life become easier for all involved- in spite of the effect on the child.

Bob Collier, author of ADHD-report.com is very much a non-believer of ADHD. He truly believes that there is *'There is NO 'disease', 'disorder', 'dysfunction', 'disability', 'deficiency', 'abnormality' or 'condition' to be 'treated' with drugs or anything else.'* Of course this sort of extreme belief is neither fair nor helpful. The point is that if a child is displaying these terrible symptoms, it affects the child, parents teachers and peers. Without the label of ADHD, maybe we just would do nothing. Undoubtedly this would cause greater harm for a large number of people than dealing with ADHD.

This, to me is the biggest issue. How can we be sure that a parent does not want a medicated child in the home and a teacher does not want a medicated child in the classroom- if it means an easier life for everyone else?

How can a parent want a 'drugged' child?

Schools can play another important part in the moral argument for a parent. If a mother is looking after three children, one of which requires an enormous amount of extra attention, how can she truly know if she is agreeing to medicate her child for the sake of the other people in her life? On top of this, how can she justify not medicating the child if it has adverse effects on her other children? If every day there are expected struggles for the parent, such as the child having *'difficulties sitting at meals'* or being *'particularly unresponsive to everyday conversation in the morning'* (Kewley, G, D 1999); a parent has to find the best way to deal with this, as well as normal everyday struggles in a family. It may also be seen as the parent's responsibility to make sure the child arrives at school in good form, if a school is not fully supporting a parent and a child is having a bad day- imagine the guilt that parent may face knowing what they have left a teacher to deal with. G D Kewley (1999) recommends that, in some cases a parent may want to give a child medication as soon as he or she wakes up in the morning to avoid the day starting badly. If a parent has a choice between doing this and not, could it be possible to choose not to? Knowing that the success of the school day for their child and those around them depends on how the day starts. Although there has been no evidence to indicate that a child may become addicted to the drugs that they are taking (Holowenko 1999) I can imagine that a parent cannot help but worry that their child could become dependant on ADHD drugs to lead a 'normal' life- especially as they get older. With these concerns, and so many others weighing on the parents mind- it would be impossible for them to be sure that they are doing the right thing for their child and those others that may be affected by his or her behaviour. So, as I said above, the only way that we can help a parent through the difficulties is by establishing a strong relationship between the home and school environments. Holowenko (1999) stresses the importance of a 'tight and clear' handover between

schools and parents of young children before and after school. This is so that any changes that need to be made are made quickly and each carer knows exactly the child's mood.

Is there an answer? How do we know what to do?

ADHD has been researched since the 1950's and, once the child has been diagnosed can often be a godsend for children who's behaviour caused them nothing but trouble in earlier life. But what concerns me is that we focus so much on the medication and making the most of the child's academic ability; but what about them? What about their feelings? Are we truly meeting the emotional needs of the child? Also, who are we relying on in the school to provide the child with everything he or she needs? Are we expecting too much of teachers, who, after all are only human? Is it too much for a teacher to have to make life altering decisions on behalf of the child with regards to medication? How can we expect the teacher and parent to objectively monitor the effects medication when it is often not just that child that they are responsible for; when there are so many other people (including themselves) to consider.

One could very well argue that it is the responsibility of the teacher to do what is best for that child and that child only, but that is also the case for the 26 or more other children in the teacher's classroom. It is possible that class sizes will grow and then the teacher will have added pressure. There is also the possibility, with the evidence that diagnosis is becoming more frequent, a teacher will have more than one ADHD child in the classroom, doubling the pressure on the teacher.

When a child is displaying symptoms of ADHD it affects many other people. Medication affects the child and no one else… in theory. The pain a parent and a teacher must go through when they have to make a decision that could fundamentally change the characteristics of a child is unimaginable. Each mother and father and teacher has his or her own reason for wanting a child to be medicated. As research has shown there is no right or wrong answer and the stress caused by all decisions made must be astronomical. The only thing we can all be sure of is that each child deserves to be given the best opportunity to succeed in life. It is our duty as teacher, parents, and carers to do the best we can to provide that-whatever form it comes in.

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The Evolution of Autism in Education

Martin Stepney

I'm 28, came into university some ten years late but I am loving it all the same. It was a tough decision to take leaving full-time work and head down the education route again but I knew I wanted to study teaching and education. I decided to write this chapter because all that I have learnt within the first 18 months of my BA Hons Education Studies has really inspired me to learn more about all aspects of teaching and the education system, in particular disability studies.

In the beginning

In this chapter I will discuss and analyse the background of autism and how it has evolved in education through changes in attitude, awareness and training for teachers. How people had begun to understand and accommodate autism in schools will become visible during this chapter, but it may surprise you to hear that only in the last seventy years has progress been achieved. In fact, when put into perspective, the term 'Autism' was not acknowledged specifically until the 1930's when a pioneer in child psychiatry, Leo Kanner from Boston USA, began a study on a child bought into his practice with incredible memory abilities.

> "[At the age of] only two and a half the boy could list the names of all the US presidents, say the alphabet backwards and recite the 23rd Psalm – although he was unable to carryout a normal conversation."
>
> Cumine et al (2000, p1).

Leo Kanner's paper was published in 1943 and it began to raise the awareness of autism worldwide and just how widespread it was amongst children and adults. There is little doubt people have always lived with autism throughout history but only since the publication in the 1940's has it begun to have it's own voice and therefore allow assistance and development of attitudes towards people with autism to change for the better arguably. In fact autism is now known to have many different forms, effecting both boys and girls and can vary from severe learning disabilities, moderate learning disabilities to those who were average or above in intelligence. The Camberwell Study of Autism 1979, found that sixty per cent of children with autism had severe learning disabilities, twenty five per cent were moderate and fifteen per cent were above average intelligence (Wing & Gould 1979 pp11-29). I find this fifteen per cent of average or above intelligence a staggeringly large number as I believe people are less aware of how it can in fact enhance learning abilities with memory and skills like numeracy. I believe in our society we can all to easily label an illness or disability and then it begins to carry a negative response in peoples mind, for instance in the past HIV or Aids. Very few people understood it or how it was contracted, so those who had the disease were seen as dirty or even dangerous. So is the labelling and lack of understanding of autism having a negative effect on children in education? I would hope further training with parents and teachers would see these views change over time. I will discuss this argument throughout the chapter.

As mentioned previously the forms of autism began to increase in identification after Kanner's study and the Camberwell study by researchers Lorna Wing and Judith Gould, who set a precedent by always assessing autism by three defining impairments. Referred to now as the "Autism Triad" of impairments, the three elements are,

- Impairment of Social Interaction

- Impairment of Social Communication

- Impairment of Social Imagination

    Cumine et al (2000, p2)

The triad of impairments was described as being most appropriate in facilitating educational approaches to autism by Jordan (1999).

Attitudes

The social attitudes were not always what they are today towards people with ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder), or any disability for that matter. For example those seen with a disability were excluded from any education in the early 1900's however the current government's policy is inclusion, inclusion, inclusion. Only in the last twenty years or so has this begun to develop through government policies and practice like the Disability Equality Duty (DED), which gives standards for promoting equality in the classroom. This is a real step forward in education I feel, but is it enough? I will discuss the new DED further in the chapter and how far it should go.

During the early 20th century, society's attitude to disability was referred to as the Medical Model. The Medical Model applied to disabled people or anybody who appeared to be not of sound mind, whether it was a mental or physical dysfunction. The Medical Model separated people out into two categories, of which there were the able-bodied and the disabled. If the disabled could not be cured by medical intervention and practice then they would be separated from the able-bodied through the stigma of labelling, exclusion from society and the vast majority of available education. As an example in labelling, which seems astonishing now, here are the five categories given for children in the 1921 Education Act:

- Blind

- Deaf

- Mentally Defective

- Physically Defective

- Epileptic

Those that could be cured medically would be accepted back into social life and no longer deemed uneducable.

A leading researcher in disability Mike Oliver says of the medical model,

> "*It conserves the notion of impairment as abnormality in function, disability as not being able to perform an activity considered*

> *normal for a human being, and handicap as the inability to perform a normal social role."*
>
> *Oliver cited by Johnstone (2001 p17)*

I feel Mike Oliver's interpretation is correct of the medical model. It is very much emphasising and encouraging the discrimination a disabled person would have suffered socially, and their ability to interact physically with the world as it was in the early 1900's. However I also believe, in some circumstances, the medical model would still have its uses today with medicinal advances in cures continue to be discovered. The early belief in the medical model meant adults and children were being excluded from the fundamental basics in life of an education, the chance to develop skills in socialising, communicating and understanding. I emphasis again this is an attitude which was prevalent one hundred years ago and only began to change less than forty years ago.

An interesting view from the academic Finkelstein:

> *"Models should not be confused with theories or hypotheses […] models on the other hand, work best when they are used as tools to give us insights into situations which are difficult otherwise to begin explaining."*
>
> *Finkelstein cited by Johnstone (2001 p16)*

I understand this quote from Finkelstein as meaning that models should be the subject of constant scrutiny and improvements. Though they may imply exclusion, without these we would not then learn to adapt, learn from what we have done wrong and therefore improve on what has been.

It is during the last forty years that this scrutiny has developed and changed attitudes into what is now referred to as the social model, which is practised today. People began to realise the impact and discrimination the medical model placed on the disabled as a personal tragedy, so through disabled people having their own voice in books and papers, society began to adapt and remove barriers of participation physically and mentally. It allowed society to accept that there are limitations to a medical professional's expertise and therefore a voice for disabled people should be heard and participation of everyone in decision-making should be encouraged.

So here we are

How has this affected autism and the approaches taken in education today? During this reform into the social model, perhaps the most influential British female in education was Mary Warnock. Lady Warnock's research in disability and education led to her report in 1978, which is still very much, the foundations of today's education for autistic children. The Warnock report 1978 provided

recommendations to the government, which were, applied to our education system in the 1981 Education Act 'Special Educational Needs'. The Education Act 1981 abolished the discriminating labels of uneducable, which had excluded children from regular education for so long and introduced the term SEN (Special Educational Needs) instead. The Act also introduced the recognition of individual assessment for an SEN child along with consultation with parents. The era of inclusion had finally begun and within a few years the Education Reform Act 1988 established that all pupils, including those with SEN were entitled to access the same National Curriculum.

In July 2007 the Children's Minister Beverly Hughes said, *"special educational needs were one of the labour governments key priorities and that it was proud of its record."* BBC News (2007). The number of children today with ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder) is particularly difficult to examine precisely without the implementation of a national autism register or a sound epidemiological study of the situation, however a report done by the NAS (National Autistic Society) in 2002 surveyed five Local Education Authorities in England and Wales which return a startling number in eight year olds and under. The NAS estimates a prevalence rate for autistic spectrum disorders of 91 per 10,000 in the total population, 1 in every 110 people (Barnard 2002 p11). To me this is alarmingly high, and particularly more than I imagined. I think back to when I was at school in the early 1990's and there were approximately eight hundred pupils. I do wonder whether there were even two or three teachers in the whole school who would have been trained or had had sufficient knowledge to understand and adapt their pedagogy for pupils with autism? I would question, is this number from the NAS perhaps down to the broad criteria from which children could fall into ASD after diagnosis, including all those from extremely mild to severe? I would also question whether this is a true reflection of a nationwide number? With only five LEA's approached, the additional LEA's may vary increasingly. Despite this, it is still a staggering number when you perhaps consider the difficulties a school without sufficient training and resources will face in meeting the needs of even a single child with ASD. I will go on to discuss these thoughts on resources later in the chapter.

The current schooling provisions for a child with autistic spectrum disorder is made in the following settings, still allowing access to the National Curriculum: mainstream schools, special schools, autism specialist schools, residential schools, autism units attached to schools and resourced classes in mainstream schools. No matter what establishment a child is placed in, the government today has a vision of a 'whole-school approach' as being the most effective way of meeting the needs of a child with ASD. This involves all staff having an understanding of ASD, parents being involved and where possible the child's view being interpreted. The National Curriculum contains a statutory statement:

> *"Inclusion: providing effective learning opportunities for all pupils"*
>
> *teachernet (2007)*

Two points have really struck an important chord with myself in the previous paragraph, that of 'providing effective learning for all pupils' and having 'an understanding of ASD'. Autism is a lifelong condition and I believe the earlier, or at least at the earliest opportunity, it can be recognised and diagnosed the more positive effect it can begin to have on a child's education. Fears from a teacher's perspective, taken from my own placement in a primary school year six class and discussions with the teacher, *"if there is not a diagnosis of autism then there can easily be the mistake made of assuming the child is naughty, lazy or non-compliant."* Lake (2007). Does this not also show the pressures placed on a teacher, doctor or specialist to have give some diagnosis on a child's behaviour when it may not be truly autism, and simply bad behaviour or lack of social skills? Here is a contrasting point of view from an interesting study by Howlin and Moore on parents with autistic children and a parent who believes it is perhaps timidity on the part of professionals when it comes to diagnosis,

> *" I was fed up with professionals pussy-footing around, afraid to say the dreaded word 'autism'. It seems that the very word 'autistic' is taboo."*
>
> *Howlin and Moore (1997 pp135-62)*

This trepidation, which is felt, by teachers and professionals alike would appear to be down to the increasing pressure on early intervention in a child's life. Once a diagnosis is made, naturally a parent will want the best and most affective guidance available for managing ASD and the child's early education, Guralnick (1997) cited by Jones (2006 p543). The recommendation from NAS (National Autistic Society) comes form their National Action Plan for Children (NAPC 2003) which advises that intervention should follow no later than six weeks after diagnosis. This short time scale increases the stress of beginning to understand ASD. As mentioned previously in the study of LEA's, they will differ in experience, knowledge, understanding and practical guidance. What is available to some parents in their education authority's resources does not mean it is readily available in another. Unfortunately this shows both strengths and weaknesses in the system as some families will flourish on what is known and what expert guidance is offered but others may fall short. To assist combating this irregularity the DfES (Department for Education and Skills) and DoH (Department of Health) convened a working group of experienced practitioners and parents to produce the 'Autistic Spectrum Disorders: Good Practice Guidance (2002). The government guidance is hoped to help establish a centre for good practice, a reliable source of information and save time, which could otherwise have been wasted by parents and teachers doing endless

research with material that may not be reliable (Jones 2006 p543). The guide covers many aspects from family support, policy and planning, to teacher training and development. Through my own experience working alongside a family with two autistic children I believe this is a valuable resource to call upon for anyone, whether you are a teacher or parent. A series of best practices and advice can really help even if no two cases of autism are identical.

How much should we learn?

As you may be reading this chapter and considering teaching yourself, like myself you will realise that continuous training and understanding is vital in being able to excel as a teacher. Teaching staff are often challenged by children with ASD in terms of knowing how best to teach and provide for them (Balfe cited by Jones 2006). Not all children will require the same level of interventions but it cannot be denied all parties would benefit from a teacher with specialist knowledge of ASD, the ability to adapt to a different teaching pedagogy and even a modified classroom environment. There is a question to be raised here, which is should teachers be able to use these skills obtained to adapt to all children in the class and not just to help those with autism? It is a much larger argument, which is certainly worth thinking about. However for this chapter I would argue that being able to adjust your pedagogy to assist a child with autism is benefiting those without autism indirectly. A skilful teacher who can include an autistic child is causing less disruption to a class and therefore improving the learning environment for every child.

All these teaching benefits are largely self-motivated when it comes to training. Evidence suggests that children with ASD need much more time to process information than other children (Happe 1999 p216: Lawson 2001), also the use of visual timetables, Mesibov and Howley (2003) cited by Jones (2006 p544) can be beneficial. Both of these examples require additional preparation and that adaptable pedagogy. However not all teachers are this adaptable or perhaps struggle with time constraints and additional learning constraints. As is the case in Scotland where it was reported in The Scotsman newspaper in 2006 that an increase of sixty two per cent of children with ASD was excluded from mainstream schools compared to the previous year 2004/2005 McDonald (2006). The article considered the lack of teachers trained to cope with the condition and also the pressures the schools are under to provide a curriculum and achieve good results. Other factors may be a school is not equipped properly with resources for additional learning or inadequate funding from local authorities. However in response to the article parents have said that through experience, schools tend to do all they can to assist an ASD child and adapt their classes to include all children no matter what their SEN may be. They also reaffirm there is support in place for parents and if the autism is particularly severe then there a number of special schools to assist. For example a child may spend half the day in a special school for greater focus then the other half in mainstream so there is some mainstream social skills still developing. I believe

this newspaper article is biased in its headline of, *"Schools are failing pupils with autism"* as it is a striking headline which we help to sell papers and the child which is referenced in the article had since been offered other educational settings but the parents refused, McDonald (2006). However, the public voices and responses to it all show a leaning towards a common problem of cash available for training, additional staff, also the argument of class sizes, Lu (2006) cited by McDonald (2006). An idea for solving these issues is to simply employ more staff, which would then reduce class sizes. However the cost involved would mean it is an unlikely solution so perhaps we should concentrate on training all existing staff to a sustainable level of knowledge? Another concerning argument is this from a parent in Scotland, *"I recently complained about my son's one-to-one support for lunchtimes being used as a general playground assistant instead of supervising him solely, only to find my sons school is budgeted for one playground assistant per approx. three hundred children"*. Anon (2006) cited by McDonald (2006)

Educate, Educate, Educate

In England it has been recognised for sometime that there is a lack of training for new teachers, along with existing ones, to assist in the education of an SEN child. The Advisory Committee on the supply and education of teachers phased out specialist Initial Teacher Training in 1984. It was felt that the training was far to narrow an approach and by stopping it hoped of a more generic approach would be adopted towards special educational needs training (Thomas & Smith 1985, Robson & Sebba 1991). This however didn't happen and gradually teachers began to lose out on that training opportunity. This loss is seen in a survey done by the DfEE, Department for Education and Employment, carried out in 1995. The DfEE found that almost 46 per cent of teachers in schools for children with severe learning difficulties had no specialist training Miller and Garner (1996) cited by Jones (2006). As I had mentioned previously in the chapter, when I look back at my own schooling in the early 1990's I can see very little evidence of teachers having the training to manage an SEN child. We had one Special Educational Needs Co coordinator and she had an assistant but that was all for a school of nearly eight hundred pupils. Would she have had the time to carry out training with staff members as well as her own administrative work? I don't think it would have been feasible.

Within the UK today there are a number of accredited continuing professional development courses and modules in autistic spectrum disorder, as advertised in the Good Autism Practice Journal, published by the British Institute of learning Disabilities (Jones 2006). The current labour government introduced these as part of their commitment to education and inclusion for SEN children, but how many teachers have the chance to attend or participate? Do teachers have the additional hours available above their existing workload? It is evident that practitioners have little time to access research papers or journal articles to learn from, so how are they expected to attend ongoing training programs? A recent survey done with schools

known to have autistic children in their classes found that only 22 per cent received any autism training and those that had were between only one to four hours long, Barnard et al (2002). If we can imagine what this does to a classroom where there is no training or resources, then the government's stance on inclusion is worthless. The child is placed into this school and the lack of resources lead to extremely unfair pressure on the teacher. A teacher needs to know the basics of autism to know how to adapt their classes. A physical disability is easier to acknowledge and understand but autism is often hidden, making the understanding much more difficult. Confusion can become part of a teacher's reaction if they don't understand what to look for in an autistic child. The child may seem to be naughty or hyperactive, over sensitive or unresponsive, which will lead the teacher into disciplining the child. One of today's leading academics and researchers into autism Simon Baron-Cohen says, *"Much of the behaviour characteristics of autism may reflect a deficit in 'theory of mind', in that the individual cannot readily appreciate the feelings, knowledge or beliefs in other people or recognise their own thought process."* Baron-Cohen (1998 p10). An example of this misunderstanding is very well devised in the Code of Practice for Schools (1995) cited by Batten (2005 p94), a pupil with autism goes to the front of the dinner queue. A teacher standing nearby tells him not to 'barge in'. The pupil becomes anxious but does not move. The teacher insists that the pupil must not 'jump the queue'. The pupil becomes more agitated and hits the teacher. The pupil is then excluded from the school.

Avoiding Misunderstanding

The government have set out a 10-year vision for special educational needs entitled "Removing Barriers to Achievement". The government aims to make clear its expectations of teachers, starting with the notion that everyone should expect to teach a child with SEN at some point in their career and must therefore have the skills to do so confidently. An 'all school' approach is expected, so all staff members will have basic knowledge and skills in noticing and handling an SEN child, in particular a child with ASD. There are then additional tiers to which some teachers will have specialist skills and in local schools have advanced skills, Batten (2005 p94).

A number of skills that can be learnt to further understand an autistic child would be early intervention and behavioural modification. Diagnosis of autism is now often at a very early point in a child's life, so early intensive intervention, as described by Lovaas in 1957, can be identified as dietary treatment (commonly vitamin or mineral supplementation), […] auditory integration therapy (designed to reduce sensitivity to particular sound frequencies), music therapy and sensitivity treatment (Connor 1999 p83). A teacher's vital role would be to monitor diet at school, maintain structure in the classroom activities, direct teaching of chosen skills, and the use of visual clues to highlight tasks to be done. I witnessed this simple form of maintaining structure myself when the teacher I worked with would provide the autistic child with

their own small white board with the days lesson plan on. This meant the child understood from the start what would be expected of them. Change would only occur if absolutely necessary so to cause as little disruption as possible. Sudden change would cause agitation and anxiety in the autistic child because their routine was broken. Other skills I witnessed were focussing the child's attention before any other communication took place by using her/his name or a pre-arranged signal. Focus meant at least the teacher knew the child was listening to them. The use of simple instructions one at a time, and also peer mentoring for small jobs like returning the daily register to the main office of the school after it had been checked off by the teacher. The mentoring allowed a visual aid for the child to see how the job should be done with good behaviour and also to be told how to behave when in the corridors of a school. Finally a very effective skill was to reward the child with some access to obsessive behaviour like playing a board game or reading, after the child made positive efforts on a task set. All these examples are becoming expected of teachers today and they can surely all be adopted to enhance a child's learning and reward a teacher's achievement.

Conclusion

If you are still considering becoming a teacher then I hope you have picked up an understanding of autism and its evolution in education. In only sixty years we have learnt so much and there is plenty more to come from the voices of those who are growing up with autism. *"Children who are capable of forming views, have a right to receive and make known information, to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken into account in any matters affecting them."* DfES (2001 p.27)

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES)/Department of Health (DoH) (DfES 2002) guidance on ASD was devised by working groups which contained many experts along with those with ASD. Their thoughts and findings are constantly being revised, which means we will continue to evolve in ASD and education and our attitudes will continue to change. Intellectually able adults with ASD ask to be viewed as *"different not deficient"* Lawson (2001) and Jordan (2001 p.6) points out that as in other areas of disability, autism is no longer viewed as a pathological state but as,

> *"A feature of normal biological variation which may have evolutionary advantages as well as disadvantages and where problems arising from the condition are seen as the result of social attitudes rather than actual disabilities."*

Further research will bring fascinating results within ASD,

- The short and long term effects of particular interventions at an early age;

- The costs and benefits of these interventions;

- Forms of training that are most effective in influencing practice in schools

It is accepted there is no cure for autism, the diagnostic label of autism does not mean a narrow educational approach should be adopted. It means that teachers should begin to individualise an educational program to encourage an autistic child to learn social skills and follow the national curriculum to the best of their abilities.

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