

Boys underachievement in education essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

My hypothesis is ' Boys underachieve in education due to laddish behaviour'.

This subject is important for me as I see ' laddish' behaviour in most of my days at sixth form. Its also important as no one knows why boys

underachieve so doing this study will help me understand why they do.

Another reason for me choosing this area of study is because there is great

concern over boy's achievement which show sit is an important area to

indentify the reasons for why this is happening in education. Wastage of

talents is a big concern for schools currently as so many boys are talented

but are scared to do well in case they don't seem ' cool'.

Context and Concepts

My first concept is ' achievement'; this is to succeed in doing or producing something. This is relevant to my hypothesis because I'm trying to find out

by boys achievement is low.

My second concept is ' laddish behaviour'. This is because I feel this is the reason for boys underachieving as stated in my hypothesis. This concept is important to my study as it's the factor that will essentially be proven or disproven.

My first context for the study is taken from Eirene Mitsos and Ken Browne-

Boys' underachievement. Mitsos and Browne (1998) believe that boys are underachieving in education, although they also believe girls are

disadvantaged. The evidence of boy's underachievement, according to

Mitsos and Browne, is that:

” Girls do better than boys in every stage of National Curriculum SAT results in English, Maths and Science, and they are now more successful than boys at every level in GCSE, outperforming boys in every major subject.... except Physics.”

Mitsos and Browne suggest a range of reasons for why boys’ underachieve. Two stood out to be in particular.

1. While boys run around kicking footballs, playing sports or computer games and engaging in other aspects of ” laddish” behaviour, girls are more likely to read or stand around talking, which means girls tend to develop their linguistic skills more than boys.

2. The culture of masculinity encourages boys to want to appear macho and tough. They are therefore more likely to develop an anti-education, anti learning subculture, where school work is seen as unmacho. This is the sort of subculture adopted by the ‘ lads’ in Paul Willis’s classic study.

This therefore brings me on nicely to my second context which is Paul Willis’s study. His main focus of his study was a group of 12 working-class boys whom he followed over their last 18 months at school, and their first few months of work. The 12 pupils formed a friendship grouping with a distinctive attitude to school. The lads had their own counter-school culture, which was opposed to the values espoused by the school. When Willis followed the lads into their first job, he found important similarities between shop-floor culture and the counter-school culture.

Main Research Method and Reason

<https://assignbuster.com/boys-underachievement-in-education-essay-sample/>

For my research I am going to use an overt interpretivist approach.

Interpretivists see the world from their point of view and I have chosen this because I can get feelings from them. My proposed method in conducting my study will be to use unstructured interviews. I am using this method because this type of interview gives the interviewee a comfortable relationship with interviewer which would lead to more open answers. I will pick a group of boys from a year 9 class and interview them about their subjects and interview their teachers about them and their achievement, I will then do the same in yr 11, so see if they have improved in their achievement.

I will get qualitative data as this will be rich, descriptive data. I have chosen this because it's more personal and gives in-depth feelings and meanings which relates to my interviews. It's also more personal which the approach I want in my interviews is. However one down side to it is that it isn't measurable and also that it is subjective, however I still feel this is the best choice. Within my qualitative data I have chosen to use primary data. This is because it's first hand, up to date and relevant to the research questions.

My type of study is a comparative method. This is when two or more groups are analysed for similarities and differences. This is a suitable type of my method as it's a natural experiment that can establish casualty without manipulating the independent variable. It is also longitudinal as it am reviewing the boys once in year 9 and again in year 11.

I will do a pilot study before hand to make sure I can practice the interview technique and questions. I will use a quota sampling method. This is so I can select the pupils that I will review. The reason for this is that it is a

representative of a large amount of people. I will access my sampling and writing to the school. I will record the data by tape recorder to ensure the information is all recorded and none is missed out by writing down anything. I will use male interviewers from different backgrounds to reduce interviewer bias.

I will measure my first concept of achievement by GCSE results compared to SATS. For my concept of Laddish behaviour I will look at school reports of the boys and look at detentions received, discipline slips etc.

Potential Problems

A critique of using an interpretivist approach is by positivists who believe that they can be unreliable. The method is a problem for my hypothesis as it can not be easily measured as it is difficult to interpret. This is due to my data being qualitative; this is therefore a problem as people may not see my hypothesis as being reliable or accurate.

A problem with unstructured interviews is that they are difficult to generalise. This is because the data only has answers to my hypothesis statement which does not relate to other subjects as qualitative data is in depth and specific.

I may also have an interviewer bias as my interviewees could bend the teachers and lads into saying what they think before the interview takes place, also when tape recorders are listened too the information could be miss interpreted.

In my quota sample I am only sampling lads from one school so this could be a downfall as it's not a full representative. Using 2 or more schools from different areas would have been more sufficient. When I get my sample it is the school that gives it to me, they may give me students that make their school look good, which would give a sample bias which wouldn't help my study.

A problem I have with the operationalise of my concept of 'Achievement' through GCSE and SATS results is that in the space of the 2 years between them the boys could have had family issues or other problems outside or inside school such as bullying, death, divorce which could therefore affect their results.

A problem with the operationalise of my second concept is that it is sometimes hard to distinguish between laddish behaviour and other forms of behaviour, so this concept cannot be measured fully enough.