

Anti-school Subcultures

Anti-school subcultures are difficult to access – researchers will be seen as ‘teachers in disguise’, particularly if they come from more middle class backgrounds.



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Conformity to the norms and values of the group is important in studying anti-school subcultures. Some members may not disclose information that goes against the groups ideas of education for fear of ridicule or retribution. This could lead to a lack of validity in the research as members may either exaggerate or omit their opinions on school experience.

Reasons for joining anti-school subcultures are complex and can include a range of internal and external factors. Cultural backgrounds, exclusion, material deprivation, fatalism, feminised education system and the crisis of masculinity are all causes of frustration for young males.

Labelling is often assumed to be a reason for anti-school sub-cultures and as such anti-school subcultures will be wary of researchers. However, a skilled researcher may be able to develop a rapport with students and find out how they feel about education and why they believe that education has failed them.

The nature of anti-school sub-cultures may mean that the researcher observes illegal or immoral behaviour and this becomes an ethical consideration whether or not to inform authorities. There are some legal requirements for working with children that mean the researcher would have to safeguard children which could lead to a loss of trust from the group.