

1. Outline and explain two ways individuals are socialised into gender identities [10]

One way individuals are socialised into their gender roles is through primary socialisation. Traditionally, males and females were socialised into gender roles through their same sex parent into the instrumental role (for males) and the expressive role (for females). Oakley suggests that the family reinforces these roles through a range of different methods. Firstly, manipulation whereby parents encourage gender-appropriate behaviour from their children. Second, through canalization, providing toys and games that are gender-based, such as boys having cars and construction kits, while girls have dolls. This is then reinforced through verbal appellations, such as 'good girl' and 'brave boy' which reinforce expectations of boys' and girls' behaviour. Finally, parents differentiate the activities they do with their children based upon their gender – for example, boys will help their father with DIY and maintenance tasks, while girls help with baking. However, critics would suggest that perhaps these ideas are outdated, and that gender socialisation in the home is more gender neutral in the 21st century.

A second way in which individuals are socialised into their gender identities is through secondary socialisation, in particular education. In schools, girls are expected to be passive and obedient and often find themselves subject to negative attention from teachers when they deviate from this expected behaviour. Alternatively, boys have lower expectations and so teachers are less likely to intervene when boys display low level disruptions. Within education, peers also perform the role of secondary socialisation, with boys being ridiculed for showing interest in education as it is seen as part of the feminine domain, whilst girls are subject to being called masculine if they engage in sports – something in the masculine domain. Skelton argued that education creates and maintains these stereotypes and that they form part of the individual's gender identity as pupils go through the process of secondary socialisation.

Item A

Sociologists have argued that individuals often define themselves through their role in the process of production. Their ability to afford consumer goods as well as what they contribute to society, form part of their identity.

2. Applying material from item A, analyse two ways in which employment forms part of an individual's identity. [10]

One way in which employment forms part of an individual's identity is through what they 'contribute to society' (Item A). Individuals' self-esteem is part of their identity, and this is often empowered by their role in the workforce. Many individuals define themselves by their job title and evidence for this impact of this can be seen through the lack of employment. Riach and Loretto argue that individuals who are unemployed suffer from a loss of self-esteem, which they termed a 'crisis of personal confidence' due to their inability to contribute effectively towards society. Furthermore, they argue that older workers are often unwilling to take a step down due to the importance they place upon the status of their employment. Both of these concepts can help to explain the importance of employment in an individual's identity formation.

A second way in which employment forms part of an individual's identity is through their 'ability to afford consumer goods' (Item A). Employment generates income and this enables individuals to purchase the goods and services which form part of their identity, not only as a consumer but as somebody who has a particular status within society. Gini argues that employment shapes identity, not only through the interactions with those in the workforce, but also through the individuals' ability to consume goods. Gini also argues that this impacts on other aspects of identity, such as lifestyle and leisure pursuits. This is supported by Parker's research into the connections between occupations and leisure time, suggesting that employment is a prime motivator in providing individuals with the means through which other aspects of their identity are formed.