

Women and the Labour Market

Jenny Bimrose and Alan Brown, IER, University of Warwick

NGRF Resource 2011

The case for highlighting gender as an issue that continues to be pivotal in overcoming injustice is as strong as ever. Whilst men undoubtedly experience discrimination, it is women who continue to suffer greater disadvantage on the basis of their gender. Below are four sections – the first of which focuses on [context](#), the second examines the issue of [gender mainstreaming](#), the third on [women in the labour market, career theories and implications for practice](#) and the fourth section comprises [resources](#) where you can examine further issues of gender inequality. The first section comprises extracts from and links to four sets of reports which examine why there are so few women in senior positions in the labour market, how lower pay is attributable to concentration of women in lower paid occupations as well as being at lower levels in the hierarchy across occupations, how to encourage more women to enter occupations in science, engineering and technology and how to improve the position of women in the labour market.

1. Context: women and the labour market

1.1 Context: 'missing women at the top of the labour market'

The report, [Sex and Power 2011](#), argues that if women were to achieve equal representation among Britain's top 26,000 positions across business, government, media, the arts, and the public sector then there are about 5,400 'missing' women from influential positions in Britain. Additionally, women's influence is not one of constant upward movement, it is rather a trend of waxing and waning.

"British women are better educated than ever before. They are attending university in ever increasing numbers and achieve better degree results than men. Intelligent competent women are flooding the junior ranks of law firms, accountancies and medical practices. These women step on the career ladder and work hard, with a position at the top firmly in sight. In their twenties they level peg with men and we would expect them to enter the management ranks at the same rate as men. However, several years down the track a different picture emerges – one where many have disappeared from the paid workforce or remain trapped in the 'marzipan layer' below senior management, leaving the higher ranks to be dominated by men" (EHRC, 2011, p. 1).

The report concludes that the "slow pace of change in gender equity, and the sheer number of 'missing women' reflects structural and attitudinal barriers that need to be addressed if Britain is to succeed in the global marketplace" (EHRC, 2011, p. 11).

Access the document in full here EHRC (2011) [Sex and Power 2011](#) – the report also considers how women are missing from boardrooms and other aspects of public life. See also:

EOC (2006) [Facts about Men and Women in Great Britain 2006](#)

EHRC (2010) [Equal pay and the Equality Act](#)

1.2 Context: gender stereotyping

In 2001 a research report on '[Young people and sex stereotyping](#)' was produced by the Equal Opportunities Commission. Sex stereotyping is making assumptions that women and men should play different roles in society. Such assumptions restrict individual choice, which leads to wasted talent and unfulfilled potential, to skills gaps and to lower pay for those jobs which are seen as 'women's work'. In short, stereotyping results in discrimination against both women and men. The findings highlighted how:

- Stereotyping has a huge impact on young people's lives.
- Stereotypes affect what young people do at home and how they are treated, which influences the subjects they choose at school, restricting their choice of future jobs and career, and again contributes to stereotyped views in the home.
- Boys and girls have different attitudes towards computers. Boys, who are more likely to see themselves doing a job which involves computing, describe them as exciting and fun, whereas girls see them as useful for homework.
- The majority of young people think that the jobs of doctors, head teachers, MPs and research scientists are equally suitable for women and men.
- There is a contradiction between what young people think are suitable jobs for women and men, and the choices they make for themselves which often follow traditional stereotypes.
- Older girls and boys are more egalitarian in attitude than younger children, yet this change in attitude becomes apparent at a time when their own subject choices reflect traditional male and female roles.

In 2001 another report was published: [Kingsmill \(2001\) report on women's employment and pay](#). In December 2001 Denise Kingsmill published her independent Report into Women's Employment and Pay. The Report contains a summary of the factors behind the UK gender pay gap, an extensive discussion about the ways in which employers are managing their human capital and statements of evidence from 50 of the companies, trade unions, voluntary organisations and public sector bodies with whom she met during the review. Commenting on the Report, Denise Kingsmill said: 'the Report highlights the demand for better human capital management in the UK. The overwhelming business case for the effective use of the talents and abilities of women offers the greatest potential for reducing the pay gap. My recommendations are aimed at helping organisations to achieve their strategic objectives and develop best practice processes which best serve their needs.' Detailed recommendations contained within the Report relate to five general themes:

Information

A greater level information on human capital management within organisations, through tools such as voluntary pay reviews, which cover all aspects of women's employment.

Reporting

Improved reporting of human capital management information by both public and private sector organisations. In particular, that an inquiry involving business, investors, trade unions, and human

capital management specialists should be asked to provide input to the Standards Board proposed by the Company Law Review.

Research

The commissioning of research on issues such as the loss to the economy of not making best use of women's skills in the labour market and providing practical market driven solutions to business.

Tax credits

The use of training tax credits for employers who recruit and train women who would otherwise be unemployed or on low earnings, notably in occupations in which women are seriously under-represented or who sponsor training that allows people to progress from lower paid to higher paid jobs in their own organisation.

Disclosure

The introduction of improved rights of disclosure for individual employees to determine whether they are receiving remuneration equal to named colleagues. Where appropriate, that employers be required to respond within a given period as to why the work is not similar or of equal value or confirming action being taken to rectify the position.

Summary

The Kingsmill Report concludes that although some evidence remains of unequal pay between men and women doing the same jobs, the remaining gender pay gap can largely be attributed to the concentration of women in lower paid occupations and at lower levels in the hierarchy across occupations. By reviewing the situation on equal pay in some of the UK's key employers it found significant differences in the work experiences of men and women.

The full document is available from here: [Kingsmill \(2001\) report on women's employment and pay.](#)

Other sources include:

EOC (2001) ['Young people and sex stereotyping'](#)

EHRC (2010) [Proposals for measuring and publishing information on the gender pay gap](#)

Scottish Government (2011) [Occupational segregation](#)

House of Commons Trade and Industry Committee (2005): [Jobs for the girls: The effect of occupational segregation on the gender pay gap](#)

Green E. et al. (2004) [Barriers to Women's Employment and Progression in the North East of England.](#)

Miller L, Neathey F, Pollard E, Hill D (2004) [Occupational segregation, gender gaps and skills gaps](#) (May 2004). The Institute for Employment Studies conducted a review of research and an analysis of current labour market and training statistics in five areas: construction, engineering, plumbing, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) (all male-dominated), and childcare (female-

dominated). The report highlighted that occupational segregation remains one of the strongest influences on young people's choice of career, with individuals typically preferring those occupations in which they see their own gender represented. However, this is not a static process; there is evidence that girls (but to a lesser extent, boys) become willing to consider a wider choice of occupations as they become older. Unsurprisingly, ability, attitudes and interest all influence career choice, but attitudes and interest have a stronger influence on job choice than ability.

McQuaid, R., Bond, S. & Robinson, P. (2004) [Gender Stereotyping and Career Choices](#) The project examined gender stereotyping in career choice amongst 12-16 year olds in schools in Edinburgh and West Lothian. It aimed to identify how career choices are formed in young people, the relationship between sex stereotyping in career choice and attainment in education and training and the gendered nature of the employment market and employment practices. School leaver destination statistics show that young people are still following traditional gender stereotyped career choices. Many pupils held gender stereotyped attitudes towards a range of occupations, although some occupations and jobs were much less stereotyped (e.g. teacher, shop worker, police officer). Girls were significantly less stereotyping of jobs and occupations than boys. In order to help break down gender stereotyping, it may be helpful to describe jobs to pupils in terms of groups of job characteristics (e.g. jobs that involve 'working with technology' may include, for example, intensive care nursing). An awareness of differences between groups of pupils (e.g. boys and girls, those with higher and lower levels of achievement) would be helpful. The influence of role models on career choice and parents as a source of careers information should be given greater importance when disseminating advice.

1.3 Context: women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics

In 2002 a review on increasing the representation of women in science, engineering and technology (SET) was set up: [SET fair \(Greenfield report\)](#). The review was conducted by Baroness Greenfield and sought to advise on how to adopt a stronger and more strategic approach to increasing the participation of women in science, engineering and technology. The Terms of Reference of the Greenfield report were to: consider UK activity along with overseas activities and identify priorities for more focused action; advise on what could be done to improve the recruitment and retention of women in SET, and increase the number of women in policy making and recognise women's achievement and contribution to SET. The report looked into the issues surrounding three particular career stages: starting out in a career in science, engineering or technology; mid-career development; and breaking through the glass-ceiling to the top jobs.

This issue continues to exercise policy-makers and in 2011 the Royal Society of Edinburgh set up an enquiry in order "To develop a cohesive and comprehensive strategy for Scotland to increase both the proportion of women in the STEM workforce, and the number who rise to senior positions in universities, institutes, public and professional bodies, business and industry." The scope was drawn so as to facilitate a report which "will address the vertical segregation of women in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) workforce from postgraduate level to senior management/directorship in universities, institutes, public and professional bodies, business and industry. It will also consider the support for women in entrepreneurship." You can follow the progress of the enquiry from here: http://www.royalsoced.org.uk/877_WomeninStem.html.

However, encouraging young women to go into careers where they are under-represented is not without problems, as research into non-traditional occupational areas reveals that there are particularly high levels of reporting of sexual harassment by victims. Bimrose (2004) examines some of the research evidence on workplace sexual harassment and begins to explore implications for guidance practice.

Bimrose, J. (2004) '[Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: An Ethical Dilemma for Career Guidance Practice?](#)', *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 32 (1), 109 – 121.

1.4 Improving the Participation of Women in the Labour Market

An IER report by Bimrose, J., Green, A., Orton, M. Barnes, S. A., Scheibl, F., Galloway, S. and Baldauf, B. (2003) '[Improving the Participation of Women in the Labour Market](#)' was commissioned by Coventry & Warwickshire Learning and Skills Council. It is important to recognise that women do not constitute a homogeneous group and they have diverse labour market experiences, although certain broad trends were apparent:

- women dominate in part-time work, which tends to be low paid, has few promotional prospects and has limited training opportunities;
- the gender pay gap is persistent;
- gender segregation means women are under-represented in many occupational sectors;
- sexual harassment in the workplace is a strong and recurrent theme in women's employment, but is often regarded as not being a significant problem.
- educational subject choices are still influenced by gender stereotypes and there is significant gender segregation in government training schemes;
- a key issue is women's caring responsibilities, but employers in the sub-region appear to have limited awareness of Work-Life Balance policies;
- there are structural explanations of gender inequality in employment but women's participation in the labour market may also be affected by their choices about paid employment and caring responsibilities;
- women's employment experience is also affected by dimensions of ethnicity, disability and age.

It might be argued that the above research was carried out in a particular area and at a time when the labour market is very different from that which obtains today. However, it is worth returning to where we started this review of the context of gender inequalities and how the report [Sex and Power 2011](#) pointed to how women's influence (including participation in the labour market) waxes and wanes rather than continuing in an upward direction. The next section examines whether it is possible to go beyond a commitment to equal treatment and how far European policies have been able to support that process.

2. Gender mainstreaming

2.1 Mainstreaming equality in the European Union

This review draws out some key lessons from the book by Teresa Rees: *Mainstreaming equality in the European Union* (Rees, 1998). It is extracted from Brown, A. and Keep, E. (1999) *Review of VET research in the UK* (Luxemburg: EC).

A key text in this area is *Mainstreaming equality in the European Union* (Rees, 1998). This documents and critiques the development of equal opportunities policies in the European Community/European Union from 1957-1997. Teresa Rees was well placed to write this book as, in addition to researching in this field, she worked as an expert advisor to the European Commission on equal opportunities and training policy for six years. *Mainstreaming equality in the European Union* is a comprehensive account and critique of European equal opportunities policies. Rees points out that, despite the European Community making a commitment to equal treatment for men and women in 1957, today in the enlarged European Union (EU) of 15 states, "gender remains the single most important factor in education, training, job and pay distribution" (pi). The book traces and critiques the record of the EU on equal opportunities through three stages: equal treatment, positive action and mainstreaming equality. That European policies and programmes should be moving in this direction is laudable. However, Rees argues that such progress is undermined by the fact that the three recent EU White Papers on competitiveness, social exclusion, and the learning society, while recognising the importance of equal opportunities, are weakened because the gendered nature of these fields is not incorporated into the analysis upon which the policies are based.

Given that gender segregation remains one of the most entrenched characteristics of the European labour force, then an analysis of the role of education and training policies and practice plays in the reproduction of gender segregation in the labour market is timely. Since the Maastricht Treaty on European Union in 1992, the European Commission (EC) has had the competence to develop education and training policies at a European level which 'complement' the actions of individual member states. One result has been the development of action programmes at a European level, such as LEONARDO (for training) and SOCRATES (for education), which aim to influence practice. Another consequence is felt at the level of national policy, where European concerns have become more important. Rees (1998) successfully manages to offer both a top-down and a bottom-up analysis of European policies and practice in the field of equal opportunities. Indeed one of the strongest arguments illustrating the need to change mainstream policy and practice comes from similarities in the problems faced by individual positive action projects across Europe.

Rees attempts to evaluate the effect, principally on training, of three different models of equal opportunities: equal treatment, positive action and mainstreaming (also labelled 'tinkering', 'tailoring' and 'transforming'). Equal treatment policies are seen as remaining within "a narrow distributive conception of justice, and focuses the debate upon the allocation of positions within a hierarchy which is given The equal treatment approach simply removes the more obvious structural barriers to individual's access to systems which themselves are shaped by those patterns of domination and oppression" (pp. 29-30). This approach results in less overt exclusion and allows some women in particular circumstances to compete on equal terms with some men. The limitations of this approach is that it ignores the significance of societal 'gender contracts', defined by Duncan as "a rough social consensus on what women and men do, think and are" (p. 415, Duncan, 1996).

These societal gender contracts are underpinned by taxation, welfare, childcare and other institutional arrangements.

Positive action recognises the significance of group membership in perpetuation of disadvantage and tries to tackle some of the barriers to fuller labour market participation. Hence it goes beyond the equal treatment approach. It aims to enable women to compete more effectively, but it offers no substantive challenge to the existing framework. The most radical approach to equal opportunities though involves mainstreaming policies, based upon the notion of the politics of difference. Such policies "are those which respect and respond to differences, rather than seeking to assist women to fit into male institutions and cultures by 'becoming more like men'" (p. 40). In particular, male norms of working behaviour should not be regarded as the standard against which to judge 'atypical work' in Europe: rather "an agenda to transform would seek to normalise the plethora of working arrangements followed by many women and some men" (p. 41).

Rees (1998) highlights how European programmes have increasingly engaged with a positive action agenda, through the provision of special skills training, earmarking of budgets for guidance and counselling, and documenting examples of good practice. How to get the EU, and the individual member states, to engage in the next stage and transform training provision, so as to mainstream equality, is a formidable challenge. The 'long agenda' is seen as involving seeking "to tackle deeply-rooted organisational cultures and practices within which inequalities are embedded" (p. 47). There is though a recognition that "introducing policies designed to mainstream equality would require a radical overhaul of praxis and philosophy. The work on this has hardly begun" (p. 48). This book can therefore be seen as an important contribution to widening discussion about policies and practice in this area.

A major strength of Rees' (1998) argument lies in its analysis of the paucity of vision of the recent EU White Papers on competitiveness, social exclusion and the learning society. That these focus mainly on the labour market, and social exclusion is largely defined in these terms, is shown to be hugely problematic, especially as "the forms of inequality which characterise both education and training systems and the labour market" (p. 176) are ignored. In her conclusion, Rees turns to the future and addresses how the equality agenda, overlooked in the White Papers, could be 'mainstreamed'. It sees hope in the creation of a climate at a European level where these issues might be addressed, for women at least. For although "there may be a political will to move some way towards mainstreaming in terms of gender equality, however defined, there are, as yet, few signs of moving beyond it to embrace other forms of inequality" (p. 200).

It is clear that Rees (1998) has concerns about the relative lack of attention given to the importance of promoting equality within education, training and the labour market in Europe. It is a pity this agenda is not fully reflected in EU White Papers, and one of the key tasks of educational researchers should be to play an active part in discussions that may frame policy-making in future. Examples of attempts to apply the different models of equal opportunities in various UK contexts are given in Rees (1998). More generally, Callender and Metcalf (1997) have conducted a literature review of 'Women and training (in Great Britain)', while Brine (1998) has presented a gender, class and race analysis of EU policy as it has been implemented within the UK. Between them, these three sources engage with equal opportunities issues as they relate to education, training and labour market

policies, and could act as a guide for those wishing to find out more about research, training, policy and practice in the UK in this area.

References:

Brine, J. (1998), *Under-educating women: globalizing inequality*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Callender, C. and Metcalf, H. (1997), *Women and training*, DfEE Research Report 35, Sudbury: DfEE.

Duncan, S. (1996), *Obstacles to a successful Equal Opportunities policy in the European Union*, *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 3, 4, 399-422.

Rees, T. (1998), *Mainstreaming equality in the European Union: education, training and labour market policies*, London: Routledge.

2.2 NGRF online discussion about gender mainstreaming.

The NGRF community held an on-line discussion on 'Mainstreaming equality in the European Union' in 2006 and some edited comments are given below:

Comment 1: Equal treatment, positive action & mainstreaming

Rees attempts to evaluate the effect, principally on training, of three different models of equal opportunities: equal treatment, positive action and mainstreaming (also labeled 'tinkering', 'tailoring' and 'transforming').

Equal treatment policies are seen as remaining within "a narrow distributive conception of justice, and focuses the debate upon the allocation of positions within a hierarchy which is given The equal treatment approach simply removes the more obvious structural barriers to individual's access to systems which themselves are shaped by those patterns of domination and oppression" (pp. 29-30). This approach results in less overt exclusion and allows some women in particular circumstances to compete on equal terms with some men. The limitations of this approach is that it ignores the significance of societal 'gender contracts', defined by Duncan as "a rough social consensus on what women and men do, think and are" (p. 415, Duncan, 1996). These societal gender contracts are underpinned by taxation, welfare, childcare and other institutional arrangements.

Positive action recognises the significance of group membership in perpetuation of disadvantage and tries to tackle some of the barriers to fuller labour market participation. Hence it goes beyond the equal treatment approach. It aims to enable women to compete more effectively, but it offers no substantive challenge to the existing framework.

The most radical approach to equal opportunities though involves **mainstreaming** policies, based upon the notion of the politics of difference. Such policies "are those which respect and respond to differences, rather than seeking to assist women to fit into male institutions and cultures by 'becoming more like men'" (p. 40). In particular, male norms of working behaviour should not be regarded as the standard against which to judge 'atypical work' in Europe: rather "an agenda to transform would seek to normalise the plethora of working arrangements followed by many women and some men" (p. 41).

Rees (1998) highlights how European programmes have increasingly engaged with a positive action agenda, through the provision of special skills training, earmarking of budgets for guidance and counselling, and documenting examples of good practice. How to get the EU, and the individual member states, to engage in the next stage and transform training provision, so as to mainstream equality, is a formidable challenge. The 'long agenda' is seen as involving seeking "to tackle deeply-rooted organisational cultures and practices within which inequalities are embedded" (p. 47). There is though a recognition that "introducing policies designed to mainstream equality would require a radical overhaul of praxis and philosophy. The work on this has hardly begun" (p. 48). This book can therefore be seen as an important contribution to widening discussion about policies and practice in this area.

Comment 2: European Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality

Since Rees wrote in 1998, the EU has produced a Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-05) that has been designed to provide a more integrated approach to gender equality. The strategy combines specific measures designed to promote gender equality through appropriate mainstreaming. The strategy uses gender impact assessment to focus on five objectives:

- equality in economic life;
- equal representation and participation in decision making;
- equality in social life;
- equality in civil life; and
- changing gender roles and overcoming stereotypes.

Comment 3: Equal development projects and reducing the gender gap

Another response of the EU has been to introduce the EQUAL programme, a series of development projects aimed at demonstrating ways to mainstream equality. In relation to gender, the following update to its analysis that is to underpin the work projects undertake to identify ways of reducing the gender gap and supporting job desegregation. (Equal Theme H: Promoting gender equality in the work place, reducing gender gaps and supporting job desegregation).

In 2001 the employment rate for women across the EU was 54%, and rising faster than male employment. This increasing participation of women in the labour market is a significant factor in Europe's economic growth. For the EU as a whole, it is estimated that almost a fifth of the annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth can be explained by women's increased participation in the labour force. However many of the jobs created are part time and often low paid.

In the EU as whole:

- one third of all employed women work part-time compared to 6% of all employed men;
- the employment rate for women in the EU is still 18.5% percentage points below the male rate (Recent Trends and prospects 2001);

- the unemployment rate for women is on average 3 percentage points higher than the male rate;
- where women are employed, they earn less than men. Women account for a high proportion of low income employees across the member states, estimated to be 77% of all low paid employees in the European Union.

The EU has already prioritised further increases in the number of women who are economically active in the EU. The European Council meetings in Lisbon and Santa Maria da Feira in 2000 agreed:

- the objective of increasing the percentage of women in employment from 54 % to 60% by 2010;
- the importance of a balanced participation by women and men in family and working life.

Overall, this means drawing an additional 10 million women into the labour market.

The European Council has therefore called on the European Commission and the Member States to develop employment policies that support these targets. The European Council has specifically asked Member States to:

- reduce occupational segregation;
- make it easier to reconcile working and family life;
- improve childcare provision.

The Commission is also already committed to taking gender into account as one of the criteria for admitting additional member states, and Hungary, the Czech Republic and Lithuania are making good progress in bringing Community legislation on gender equality into national law. In its Resolution of 5 October 2000, the European Parliament also expressed the view that any type of aid, funding or benefit granted by the European Union must be subject to the requirement to observe the principle of equal pay for men and women.

Comment 4: The impact of gender mainstreaming policies in vocational guidance and education

Just read the discussion document on Gender Mainstreaming posted by Pamela Clayton. This represents a useful summary of mainstreaming and practical guide to its implementation. For me, it has a particularly interesting section 6 on the impact of gender mainstreaming policies in vocational guidance and education. This highlights the importance of work with systems (e.g. advocacy and dialogue with employers) as well as individual clients (e.g. guiding girls & women to work consider non-traditional career options), though it does not include a discussion of how guidance practice might be adapted.

Note: a copy of the discussion document on Gender Mainstreaming can be downloaded from the references below.

Comment 5: Gender mainstreaming is not a stand-alone policy

I would like to draw attention to the comment in the Gender Mainstreaming discussion Document that gender mainstreaming is not a stand-alone policy. Equal opportunities work must continue alongside gender mainstreaming 'until there is a real culture and consensus regarding gender equality in the whole of society'. It does not, therefore, replace equality legislation, specialist equality units or positive action - all of these need to be instituted as well or to remain in place where they already exist.

Gender Mainstreaming is an issue associated with what Johan Galtung calls 'deep culture' as well as 'surface culture' (link to his contribution on intra-cultural understanding). This means that, in Galtung's terms, there may be tensions between parts of the brain ruled by the head and the stomach over the key issue of work and child care. I wonder whether one way to ease this problem is to move to viewing work over the life-course more holistically, with people being able to (and there being a shared cultural expectation) work more and less intensively at different times. This may be a work-life balance issue, but it is essentially one about values and choice - how to help individuals get a sense of control and purpose regarding work and life. Indeed in the short run you may even choose imbalance in order to get what you perceive as a more appropriate balance over the longer term.

Comment 6: Workplace culture and sexual harassment in the workplace

Workplace culture is something I've recently become interested in through researching the extent and effects of sexual harassment in the workplace. This (sexual harassment) throws into sharp focus both issues related to the 'objectivity' of labour market information (e.g. is LMI on, say, construction that does not include some information on low levels of female applications/survival rates, hostile work environments, etc. really objective?) and practice issues. We now have available new approaches to working with girls and women (e.g. self-efficacy career theory; feminist approaches to careers counselling). Maybe mainstreaming these theories in practice would involve changing training/assessment requirements for guidance practitioners?

Comment 7: Gender equality in careers guidance, the Rolfe report

Question: regarding Gender Equality in Careers Guidance a professional institute in Malta is looking for material related to UK policy and guidelines on gender equality in occupational guidance. I am wondering if any of the forum members can refer me to any material of this sort. Thanks in anticipation of your help.

Answer: are you familiar with Rolfe's publication: Rolfe, H. (1999) [Gender Equality and the Careers Service](#), Manchester, EOC. This may be a useful reference source.

Comment 8: How can gender bias be countered in young people?

Question: a participant remarked in an earlier contribution: 'I have been trying to discover what can be done to counter gender bias before it sets in, before the end of year 11, in schools'.

Answer: Mary Munro and David Elsom did some work on girls [Choosing Science at 16](#) - their results were reported in the linked NICEC briefing and also in Newscheck (2000) and a copy of that article was also reproduced In Science Education Newsletter 149 (May 2000).

Comment 9: Scottish Gender Mainstreaming Report (1998)

The following extract is taken from the [Scottish Office \(1998\) Mainstreaming Equal Opportunities Report](#), produced by The University of Edinburgh in August 1998.

The case for gender 'mainstreaming': there are a number of supporting arguments:

- it is a primary tool for the delivery of public policy objectives on the promotion of equality and the effective distribution and delivery of public services
- it puts people, and their specific needs and experiences, at the heart of policy-making
- it leads to better government through better informed policy-making and a greater transparency and openness in the policy process.
- it makes fuller use of human resources by involving men as well as women in equality work.
- it helps to tackle democratic deficit by encouraging wider participation in the policy process through effective consultation mechanisms.
- it makes equality issues visible in the mainstream of society, demonstrating that equality is an important societal issue with implications for all and for the development of society, and that it is not just a 'cost' or a 'luxury'.
- it tackles the structures in society which contribute to, or sustain, gender segregation and discrimination.
- it can avoid the adoption of policies and programmes which replicate discrimination and exacerbate existing inequalities.'

The following roles have been identified for equality policy machinery in complementing and supporting 'mainstreaming':

- tackling specific issues of inequality with specialist policies and initiatives
- acting as a think tank for developing analyses of inequality
- development of techniques and tools for 'mainstreaming'
- provision of expertise and specialist knowledge
- dissemination of knowledge
- publicising government commitment to equality and its achievements
- training and awareness raising
- acting as an internal lobby
- acting as co-ordinator for 'mainstreaming' initiatives and point of contact
- monitoring overall government performance in achieving equality goals and targets.

References:

- Clayton, P. (2003) Gender Mainstreaming: Discussion Document, Glasgow: Department of Adult and Continuing Education, University of Glasgow.
- Duncan, S. (1996), Obstacles to a successful Equal Opportunities policy in the European Union, *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 3, 4, 399-422.
- Rees, T (1998), *Mainstreaming equality in the European Union: education, training and labour market policies*, London, Routledge.
- Rolfe, H., (1999) [Gender Equality and the Careers Service](#), Manchester, EOC
- Munro, M and Elsom, D (2000) [Choosing Science at 16](#), NICEC Project Report, Cambridge: CRAC
- [Scottish Office \(1998\) Mainstreaming Equal Opportunities Report](#) (produced by The University of Edinburgh), Edinburgh: Scottish Office.

Postscript (2011):

Interest in Gender Mainstreaming also seems to wax and wane, but here are some more resources:

- Bacchi, C. & Eveline, J. (eds) (2010). *Mainstreaming Politics: Gendering Practices and Feminist Theory*. Adelaide: University of Adelaide Press.
- Council of Europe [Gender Mainstreaming](#)
- Daly, M. (2005). Gender Mainstreaming in Theory and Practice. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society* 12(3): 433-450.
- Eveline, J. & Todd, P. (2009) 'Gender Mainstreaming: The Answer to the Gender Pay Gap?' *Gender Work and Organization* 16(5) 536-558.
- Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (2003). *Putting Gender Mainstreaming into Practice*. New York: United Nations (Publication Number ST/ESCAP/2254).
- European Commission & Directorate-General for Employment (2008). [Manual for Gender Mainstreaming](#).
- Gibb, H. (2001). *Gender Mainstreaming: Good Practices from the Asia Pacific Region*. Ottawa: North South Institute.
- UNDP [What is gender mainstreaming](#) and [Gender Mainstreaming](#) and [Checklist of Actions for Gender Mainstreaming](#)
- WHO [Gender Mainstreaming at WHO](#)

3. Women in the labour market, career theories and implications for practice

3.1 Introduction

Theories that inform current practice in the UK were primarily formulated to explain the career development of men. Women's career development is, however, generally different from men. It is often more complex (e.g. conflict between work and family) and is often characterised by different career stages or patterns (e.g. intervals away from full time employment to assume care responsibilities). Various pieces of research (e.g. EOC, 1999) indicate that:

- women's labour market participation is more restricted than men i.e. they are under-represented in a variety of fields and professions, and enter low paying and low status jobs;
- women abilities and talents are underused i.e. they are less likely to advance to higher levels in their occupational fields.

Betz (1994) presents an overview of issues relating to women of particular relevance to careers counselling. Citing numerous research studies, she establishes the importance of employment for the psychological (as well as economic) well-being of women. She charts the nature of women's participation in the labour market in North America (similar to the UK) which has increased dramatically over the past four to five decades, discusses occupational segregation (horizontal and vertical) and highlights the particular implications for career theories. Since the majority of women are employed in restricted occupational areas and at lower status levels, Betz questions whether career theories which are based on the assumption that occupational choice involves either matching jobs to abilities or 'self-actualising' as part of career development apply to women at all (1994, p.8).

In response to the perceived inadequacies of current theories underpinning the practice of careers counselling and guidance, approaches specifically designed to respond to the needs of women are being evolved. Five such approaches are summarised below.

3.2 Approaches to Careers Counselling For Women

3.2.1 Gottfredson's Theory of Circumscription and Compromise

Gottfredson's developmental theory of occupational aspirations (1981) is applicable to both women and men. She set out to explain 'how the well-documented differences in aspirations by social group (e.g. race, sex, social class) develop' (1983, p204). Strongly influenced by John Holland (she was a student in his research centre), and a sociologist by professional training, Gottfredson's theory represents an attempt to reconcile the different perspectives of psychology and sociology (1996, p180).

The theory is concerned with both the content of career aspirations and how they develop. Gottfredson acknowledges the influence of the theories of both John Holland and Donald Super. It is similar to these earlier theories in that it proposes that career choice reflects the process of attempting to implement an individual's preferred self-concept and because it argues that career satisfaction depends on the match or fit with the self-concept (Gottfredson and Lapan, 1997). It is different from psychological theories (Gottfredson, 1996, p181) since:

- it views career development as an attempt to implement primarily a social self and secondarily a psychological self;
- it focuses on how cognitions of self and occupations develop;
- it treats vocational choice largely as a process of eliminating options and narrowing choices;
- it considers how individual compromise their goals in coming to terms with reality as they try to implement their aspirations.

The model contains several basic tenets, summarised by Brooks (1990, p374) as:

- People differentiate occupations along dimensions of sex type, level of work and field of work.
- People assess the suitability of occupations according to their self-concepts (ie. their images of who they would like to be) and the amount of effort they are willing to expend to enter the occupations. Occupations that are compatible with the self-concept will be highly desirable; those that are not will be highly undesirable.
- Elements of the self-concept that are vocationally relevant are gender, social class, intelligence, interests, values and abilities. Occupational aspirations are circumscribed according to these elements of the self-concept.
- Vocationally relevant elements of the self-concept are developed during four stages of cognitive development:

1st stage: **Orientation to size and power** The child develops 'the concept of being an adult. Ages 3-5.

2nd stage: **Orientation to sex role** The child develops a gender self-concept. Ages 6-8.

3rd stage: **Orientation to social evaluation** Is concerned with developing abstract concepts of one's social class and intelligence. Ages 9-13.

4th stage: **Orientation to Internal Unique Self** Involves a refinement of one's distinctive values, traits, attitudes and interests. Age 14+.

As people progress through these 4 developmental stages, they successively reject occupations:

- as unsuitable for their gender;
- then as inappropriate for their social class and ability level;
- and finally on the basis of personal interests and values.

The result is a zone of acceptable alternatives, or a 'set or range of occupations that the person considers as acceptable alternatives' (1981, p. 548). It is only under unusual circumstances that a person will reconsider an occupation rejected as outside this range.

- People's occupational preferences are the product of job-self compatibility (i.e. with the zone) and judgments about the accessibility of jobs. 'Accessibility refers to obstacles or

opportunities in the social or economic environment that affect one's chances of getting into a particular occupation' (1981, p. 548). Perceptions of accessibility are based on such factors as availability of a job in the preferred geographical area, perceptions of discrimination or favouritism, etc.

- Because the jobs people view as suitable for themselves are not always available, they must compromise. The typical pattern of compromise is the following: people first sacrifice interests, then prestige, and finally sex type. In other words, given two choices - one that fits one's interests but not one's sex type, and one that does not fit one's interests but is viewed as sex-appropriate - the latter will be chosen.

Gottfredson's explanation of why women are in lower-status, lower-level positions is that these occupations are compatible with their self-concepts and views about accessibility. Her 1996 formulation of the theory is 'the same in most respects as the 1981 version' (1996, p183). It differs 'in providing a clearer definition and account of compromise, more discussion of cultural change and/or race and gender differences, and more guidance on counseling applications' (Gottfredson, 1996, p183).

Implications for practice:

i) Individual career counselling should encourage both exploration and realism. In particular:

- why certain options seem to be out of the question or why some compromises are more acceptable or accessible than others;
- by encouraging clients to re-examine the full range of occupations in the economy (challenging circumscription);
- helping clients develop strategies for enhancing the individual's competitiveness in obtaining the preferred option and succeeding at it.

ii) Careers education programmes should span stages 2 (ages 6-8) through to 4 (ages 14+) and should:

- be sensitive to the mental capabilities of the age group;
- introduce students to the full breadth of options in a manageable way;
- display for youngsters their circumscription of alternatives so that its rationale can be explored;
- be sensitive to the dimensions of self and occupations along which circumscription and compromise take place (sex type, social class, ability, and vocational interests) so that their role, positive or not, can be explored where appropriate.

iii) Exploration and constructive realism can do much to free individuals from unnecessary circumscription and compromise. Caution should be exercised in assuming the role of change agent on behalf of the client.

Gottfredson and Lapin (1997) discuss the results of field testing an instrument referred to as 'Mapping Vocational Challenges (MVC)' (1997, p. 432) which is based on the premises of the Gottfredson's theory of circumscription and compromise (1981, 1983 and 1996). It is described as an example of 'theory-based assessments and interventions to counteract inappropriate circumscription' 1997, p. 432) which aims to increase awareness of choices which have been rejected by clients as unacceptable, since circumscription is a question of 'deciding what one wants to avoid' (Gottfredson and Lapan, 1997, p. 429). Findings include that high school and middle girls and boys agreed in their ratings of gender difference for different types of work (p438), that 'one group of seventh grade girls linked their avoidance of careers currently dominated by men to their fears about encountering sexual harassment on the job (p. 439) and 'assessed and expressed interests are often discrepant (p. 440).

3.2.2 Astin's Need-Based Sociopsychological Model

Astin's (1984) primary intent was to construct a theory that would describe more adequately the career-choice process of women, as well as explain recent changes in women's career aspirations. It is also applicable to men. She attempted to develop a model of career choice and work behaviour that attempted to combine both personal (psychological) and social forces as well as their interaction. Her need-based socio-psychological model contains four key constructs:

- motivation;
- expectations;
- sex-role socialization;
- structure of opportunity.

Thus - both psychological and sociological variables are included in the model.

Motivation:

All humans are motivated to expend energy to satisfy 3 primary needs - survival (primarily physiological survival), pleasure (intrinsic satisfactions from work) and contribution (need to be useful to society and be recognised for one's contributions). These 3 needs are the same for men and women - though they can be satisfied in different ways.

Expectations:

Concerned with the individual's perceptions re: kind of work that will satisfy needs and the types of work that are accessible and that the person is capable of performing. They differ for men and women because of the sex-role socialization process and the structure of opportunity (e.g. distribution of jobs, sex typing of jobs, discrimination). During the sex-role socialization process, a person is rewarded and reinforced for gender-differentiated behaviour. The result is that the individual internalizes social norms and values regarding appropriate sex-role behaviours and choices.

Sex-role socialisation and structure of opportunity:

Interacting with the sex-role socialization process is the opportunity structure, which is different for men and women, and is not static. Social changes modify the opportunity structure for all. Thus, the interactive relationship between sex-role socialization and the opportunity structure is what accounts for the changes in women's aspirations and choices in recent years.

The socialization process probably sets limits to changes in the structure of opportunity, whereas the structure of opportunity ultimately influences the values that are transmitted through the socialization process (*Astin, 1984, p. 122*)

Astin's contribution represents the first invited theoretical statement on women's career development (Fitzgerald et al, 1995, p. 85), yet it has had limited impact on practice to date. Fitzgerald et al (1995, p. 86) suggest that it may be 'best thought of as a general conceptual framework rather than an articulated theoretical statement', since its value lay in the way in which it directs our attention to important factors influencing women's career development. Astin's most important contribution, they contend, is the attention she focused on the structure of opportunity.

Implications for practice:

Astin's model suggests some general diagnostic directions that can be pursued by counsellors. For example, women's indecision may result from lack of clarity about which of the three needs is the more important to satisfy, or about which occupations would satisfy these needs.

A client may feel conflict between internalized views of sex-role appropriate occupations and changes in the occupational structure (for example, one woman may feel restricted by the occupational structure, another may feel changes are placing pressure on her to expand her view of sex-role appropriate occupations).

3.2.3 Career self-efficacy theory (Hackett and Betz)

One notable example of an attempt to develop theoretical approaches that are more relevant for women and girls is Hackett and Betz's career self-efficacy theory (1981). They argued for a need to move beyond 'listings of barriers' to women's choices and achievements to an investigation of the mechanisms which are effective in embedding society's beliefs and expectations in women's vocational behaviour and achievement (Hackett and Betz, 1981, p. 327).

A study of twenty occupations was designed to 'investigate the usefulness of self-efficacy theory to the understanding of vocational behaviour and, in particular, to the understanding of women's career development' (Betz and Hackett, 1981, p. 400). The results of this study indicated that there exists 'significant and consistent sex differences in self-efficacy with regard to traditional and non-traditional occupations' (Betz and Hackett, 1981, p. 407). So, women demonstrated more career self-efficacy in relation to jobs that are traditionally female (like dental hygienist, social worker, secretary) and men were more efficacious in relation to traditionally male jobs (like accountant, mathematician and engineer). Betz and Hackett found from this research that the self-efficacy approach to career development for women (and men) provides a potentially useful framework for further study, and could have important implications for practice (1981, p. 410).

Their basic premise is that low expectations of self-efficacy regarding various career areas, particularly those which have historically been male dominated, are a major mediator of gender

differences in occupational choice and subsequent vocational behaviour (Fitzgerald et al, 1995, p. 95). Hence, career self-efficacy theory represents an attempt to apply a theory from one realm (social learning theory) to another. The key concept in the theory, self-efficacy, was defined by Bandura (1986, p. 391) as: 'People's judgements of their capabilities to organise and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances' *Bandura (1986, p. 391)*.

The features of career self-efficacy theory which distinguish it from Krumboltz's social learning theory are that it:

- places a strong emphasis on thinking processes (compared with behaviour);
- focuses on the strength of the individual's belief that they can successfully accomplish something;
- considers that belief is more powerful than interests, values or abilities;
- emphasises that an individual's belief system affects their behaviours (rather than the behaviours themselves);
- focuses more on choice than social learning theory;
- pays less attention (so far) to the implications for practice.

The theory proposes that career behaviour is a result of interaction between self-efficacy, outcome expectations and goals. These are briefly described below:

a) Self-Efficacy:

This refers to a changing set of beliefs about oneself. The way in which individual's view their abilities and capabilities affects academic, career and other choices. If an individual has a low sense of self-efficacy, they may not persist in a difficult task. They may believe they will be unable to do the task well, and they may feel discouraged or overwhelmed by the task. In fact, research indicates (Lent, Brown and Larkin, 1986) that there's only a moderate relationship between an individual's view of their own ability and objective measures. Judgements of 'self-efficacy' influence whether behaviour will be initiated, the degree of effort that will be expended, and how long the behaviour will be maintained in the face of obstacles.

e.g. a woman's belief's about her general capabilities, her confidence in her self-assessment of her abilities and her carpentry skills would affect the choice of beginning and continuing in a job as a carpenter, as well as the choice of maintaining the job in the face of friends, perhaps family and colleagues pressures to find a job more suitable for her gender.

Bandura (1977, 1986) - proposed that self-efficacy expectations vary on three dimensions:

Level i.e. degree of difficulty of task that an individual feels capable of performing;

Strength i.e. confidence the person has in his/her estimates;

Generality i.e. range of situations in which the person feels efficacious.

b) Outcome Expectations:

The variable that interacts with self-efficacy expectations is 'outcome expectations'. That is, an individual's estimate of the probability of an outcome. It's often difficult to distinguish outcome expectations from self-efficacy expectations because often it is thought that outcomes are contingent on performance. However, in some situations, outcome expectations are readily distinguishable from self-efficacy expectations. For example, a woman may believe she is able to perform the role of Chief Executive, but does not expect that she would be selected for the job if she applied. That is, environmental factors are perceived as controlling or influencing the outcome rather than the level or quality of one's behaviour.

Therefore, outcome expectations refer to the estimate of ability to accomplish a task ('I can probably get into University), whereas self-efficacy expectations refer to estimates of whether an individual can carry out the task ('I sure I'm capable of degree level study and am definitely going to apply'). Bandura (1986) identified different types of outcome expectations, as follows:

- Physical (e.g. payment for employment)
- Social (e.g. parental praise for school work)
- Self-evaluative (e.g. satisfaction with own performance).

One other variable influencing whether behaviour will be initiated is incentives (linked to outcome expectations). For example, a man may feel 'efficacious' about his ability to perform the duties of a kindergarten teacher, but does not value the outcomes (e.g. salary and status).

c) Goals:

One other variable influencing whether behaviour will be initiated are goals.

Individuals set goals to organise behaviour and guide their actions, which may result in the identification of sub-goals. For example, 'I want to go into National Health Service Management' represents an overall goal. To achieve that goal, the individual will have to set sub-goals, including successfully completing a first degree, perhaps undertaking further study, applying for the NHS two-year training programme and then applying for a job of NHS manager. Goals are self-motivating and are a source of great personal satisfaction.

Bandura (1986) identified four sources of information important to the process of development and modification of efficacy beliefs. These were:

i) *performance accomplishments*: successful performance of a task or behaviour provides information that increases expectations regarding efficacy. Hackett and Betz (1981, p. 331) argue that gender role socialisation is likely to encourage boys to gain experiences in a wider range of areas outside the home.

ii) *vicarious learning*: that is, by observation. Hackett and Betz (1981, p. 331) suggest that males are exposed to vicarious learning experiences more relevant to career self-efficacy because of the way women are persistently portrayed in the media, books and children's literature in homemaker and mother roles.

iii) *emotional arousal*: for example, anxiety and stress. High levels of anxiety and stress are generally recognised to be debilitating. Hackett and Betz (1981, p. 332) remind us that research indicates that females score higher on anxiety measures than males. This higher level of anxiety increases the difficulty of developing positive efficacy expectations.

iv) *verbal persuasion and encouragement*: for example, towards a behaviour would increase efficacy whilst lack of encouragement or overt discouragement is likely to fail to increase or at worst decrease efficacy expectations. Again, Hackett and Betz (1981, p332) argue that, because of traditional societal views about being male and being female, males have received more encouragement for career pursuits and achievements than females.

Of these four, Bandura suggested that a) & b) are the most powerful influences on self-efficacy expectations, but all provide.

Application of Career Self-Efficacy theory to Vocational Behaviour:

In applying self-efficacy theory to vocational behaviour, Hackett and Betz (1981) stated that where individuals lack expectations of personal efficacy in one or more career-related behavioural areas, behaviour critical to success is less likely to be initiated, or if initiated, sustained. Whilst acknowledging that self-efficacy theory requires research on various key aspects (Hackett and Betz, 1981, p. 334) they suggest that a 'self-efficacy approach to the career development of women appears promising due to its explanatory power, implications for counselling practice, and research potential' (1981, p. 337).

Implications for practice:

Self-efficacy theory has considerable potential for broadening options. For example:

- the practitioner could use a variety of cognitive strategies to help the client view her successes as due to internal rather than to external causes (e.g. 'positive self-talk' - Cognitive Behaviour Techniques);
- the structuring of incremental graded success experiences could also be used;
- in the area of vicarious learning, the practitioner could arrange, for example, shadowing experiences with successful representatives of groups not normally successful in a particular area (i.e. women in career fields that are of interest);
- desensitization procedures could be used to reduce excessive anxiety about career choice or performance (e.g. relaxation techniques);
- provision of high quality information projecting images that challenge common stereotypes.

Betz and Hackett (1997, p. 383) assert that 'Meta-analyses and reviews of 15 years of research.....strongly support the role of career self-efficacy as a predictor of educational and career preferences, academic performance, and persistence in the pursuit of desired career options'. They conclude that both the theory and measures of career-related self-efficacy are useful both in research examining barriers to and facilitators of women's career development and for designing and evaluating the effectiveness of practice grounded in this theory. They advocate the use, by the

career practitioner, of both structured measures of career-self efficacy and informal assessment techniques like the interview to ascertain the extent to which gender role socialisation may have limited the client's range of options. In parallel, a focus on male dominated occupations, mathematics, science and technology should ensure that options have not been limited:

...our job as counselors is not to make a client's decisions or to push a client toward a non-traditional career, but to restore options that may have been de facto removed by sexism and gender role stereotyping as well as by other environmental barriers (*Betz & Hackett, 1997, p. 398*).

Overall, self-efficacy theory is thought by many to have great potential for careers work with groups who have traditionally underachieved in certain areas: for example, girls, women and minority ethnic groups. One of its strengths is that it doesn't ignore biological, social or environmental influences, nor the current context. However, it does assert that as individuals get older, it's more difficult to change interests, goals and performance outcomes.

3.2.4 Feminist Careers Counselling

Feminist counselling is a philosophy rather than a comprehensive theory of practice. Brooks & Forrest (1994) outline some practice implications of applying this philosophy to careers counselling.

i) Socio-cultural conditions as primary source of women's problems

How a problem is defined determines how and where one looks for a solution. Feminist approaches to careers assume that social structures and societal prescriptions have moulded and limited women's career development, experiences and opportunities. It follows from this that in addition to the assessment of abilities, etc., there is a need to incorporate an assessment of the ways in which gender-role issues have affected the client and created barriers within careers practice for women and girls. Two stages are identified which are necessary to achieve this goal, pre-assessment and assessment:

a) Pre-assessment strategies (preparation for the practitioner) Practitioners familiarize themselves with research and scholarship on the relationship between gender and career development, for example:

- interaction between gender and demographic variables such as race and class;
- critical incidents that affect the career development of women such as models, mentors, discriminatory practices, etc. that might occur in education and workplace.

NB: Practitioners with strongly traditional sex-role attitudes should not attempt career counselling with women

b) Assessment Process (with the client) One of the central tasks is to determine how the client has experienced gender-role socialization.

- gather contextual data on the culture of the family of origin, family roles for men and women, client's perception of societal gender-role prescriptions for her age cohort.

- then, inquire how the client transformed and gave meaning to her own life within her sociological culture.

Techniques which can be used for this purpose include structured questions, fantasy exercise and sentence completion. In summary, a key task of gender role analysis is to identify ways in which social structures and gender role prescriptions have affected the client. The conclusions drawn from the assessment then guide the goals and process of careers counselling. Gender role issues are more relevant for some clients than others, though Brooks & Forrest (1994) argue that it is difficult to imagine any situation where they are totally irrelevant.

ii) Personal is political

A focus of careers counselling should be to help clients develop a political awareness of the ways the social structure has moulded and limited them, for example, restricted perceptions of occupational options, focus on nurturing roles to the neglect of achieving roles, etc. Through gaining an awareness of the ways in which the environment has affected women's career choice and development, clients reduce self-blame for condition over which they had no control.

iii) Egalitarian relationship

The practitioner doesn't deny expertise or competence, but rather works to avoid abuse of power and user power sharing strategies. To implement these principles, feminist career counsellors work towards:

- establishing the relationship as collaborative and facilitative rather than hierarchical;
- informing the client about the procedures and goals of counselling and the philosophy of the practitioner;
- urging the client to give feedback to the practitioner;
- encourage the client to be selective about the practitioner with whom they work.

iv) Essentials for women's mental health

Goals: the overall goal is the empowerment of the client towards self-determination (i.e. help clients gain the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to take control over her own life and to begin to influence others). Reaching these goals often requires special techniques and strategies. Various strategies have been suggested (e.g. use of groups, female role models, interventions in the curriculum and other social structures, life planning). Additionally:

- Sex-role analysis: similar to gender-role assessment where the goal is to identify the client's expectations regarding gender roles. It is an activity directed at eliciting the client's views about costs and benefits of pursuing traditional versus non-traditional careers.
- Another technique is the non-sexist occupational card sort, where cards portraying occupational roles free from gender stereotyping are used to explore attitudes to 'gendered work'.

- Life-career planning strategies can encourage women to engage in long-term planning and thereby exert some control over their future.

3.2.5 Farmer: Diversity and Women's Career Development

Using social learning theory as a theoretical framework, Farmer (1997a, 1997b) challenges the viability of current theoretical views for women. They also criticise current careers programmes and practices, offering concrete practical suggestions for addressing these weaknesses.

Farmer developed her ideas from on a longitudinal research study conducted over a period of two decades. The particular focus of the research was women's persistence in science careers (1997a, p. xi). Data collection took place during three time period: 1980, 1990 and 1991-1993, in North America. Questionnaires were used to collect the data during the first two phases. The 'usable' (Farmer, 1997a, p. 21) questionnaires from participants during this first phase (1980) numbered 1,863. By 1990, 459 participants returned usable questionnaire data (p. 26). What appeared to be inconsistencies were found in the data collected during these first two phases and decided to investigate further. For the third phase, 105 participants were interviewed for one to two hours, since Farmer recognised 'that more quantitative data would not suffice to unlock the meaning behind the inconsistencies' (1997a, p. xi).

Theoretical model underlying the longitudinal study (Farmer, 1985, 1997a, 1997b)

For the 1980 phase of data collection, three types of factors were assumed to affect women's behaviour: motivation, personal and environmental variables:

Personal: home role salience; sex role orientation; self-esteem; co-operative and competitive achievement style; success/failure attributions (four dimensions - ability, effort, luck and task difficulty); and achievement values.

Environmental: parent support; teacher support; counsellor support and support for women working.

Motivation: career motivation; achievement motivation and career aspiration/educational level.

For the 1990 phase of data collection, the same categories were used, with some items enhanced (Farmer, 1997a, pp. 14-15). Important assumptions underlying interpretations of the data are identified as (Farmer, 1997b, p. 363):

- that career planning must take place within a life planning framework, and that such plans must take account of other life roles, such as those of spouse or partner and parent, as well as personal roles;
- that choice of a career field should be consistent with a woman's or a man's abilities, aptitudes, values and interests as well as realistic in light of societal opportunities and constraints;
- that the role of people as agents in their learning, choosing and behaviour is an important aspect of the potential for change.

Farmer remains convinced that social learning theory provides the most promising theoretical basis for effective careers counselling with girls and women:

Social learning theory is optimistic in that it allows for behaviours to change over time as a result of new experiences, new ideas, and self-perceptions and plans. ...Operating within many realistic constraints, women still may have much to say about their destinies (1997, p. 9)

Based on her research findings, Farmer makes the following suggestions for careers counselling with 'young women and men to day and in the coming decades' (1997, p. 291):

- Enhanced careers education curriculum in further and higher education, which emphasises sexual equality and addresses issues such as sexual harassment in the workplace;
- Life planning, including exploration of values and how these fit in with their long-term career plans. This would address career-family role conflicts which arise in 'dual-worker couples'(p282) and aim to develop 'multiple role realism' (p284);
- Self-efficacy and career persistence: since these are connected, careers counsellors can contribute much by increasing self-efficacy in clients (see section c) above for strategies;
- Reducing the 'null environment' (p292) in education (i.e. one that is indifferent to women's achievements) is essential if women are to start realising their potential. This requires reduction of the 'chilly environment' (p292) and sexual harassment present in many educational settings, especially non-traditional areas for women (like science, maths and engineering).

3.2.6 Conclusion

From a review of a decade of research into women and career development, Phillips and Imhoff (1997) conclude that 'women's lives are complex' (p. 49). They note that the past decade has seen significant progress towards understanding this complexity. Fitzgerald et al (1995) stress the need to study concepts and variables for women (such as those identified by Betz, 1994) which were previously regarded as unnecessary and irrelevant, concluding that this will lead to a greater understanding of the vocational behaviour of everyone (p. 68).

References

- Astin, H.S. (1967) Patterns of Career Choices Over Time in Personnel and Guidance Journal, 45, p541-546.
- Astin, H.S. (1984) The Meaning of Work in Women's Lives: a socio-psychological model of career choice and work behaviour in The Counseling Psychologist, 12, 4, 117-126.
- Betz, N.E. & Hackett, G. (1981) The Relationship of Career-Related Self-Efficacy Expectations to Perceived Career Options in College Women and Men in Journal of Counseling Psychology, 28, 5, 399-410.

Betz, N.E. (1994) Basic Issues and Concepts in Career Counseling for Women, in Wash, W.B. & Osipow, S.H. (1994) (ed) Career Counselling for Women Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Betz, N.E. & Hackett, G. (1997) Applications of Self-Efficacy Theory to the Career Assessment of Women in *Journal of Career Assessment*, 5 (4) 383-402.

Brooks, L. (1990) Recent Developments in Theory Building in Brown, D. Brooks, L. & Associates Career Choice & Development (second ed), San Francisco: Jossey Bass (364-394).

Brooks, L. & Forrest, L. (1994) Feminism & Career Counseling in Walsh, W.B. & Osipow, S.H. (eds) Career Counseling for Women, Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Farmer, H.S. (1985) Model of Career and Achievement Motivation for Women and Men in *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 32, 3, 363-390.

Farmer, H.S. & Associates (1997) Diversity & Women's Career Development, Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Farmer, H.S. (1997) Women's motivation related to mastery, career salience, and career aspiration: a multivariate model focusing on the effects of sex role socialization in *Journal of Career Assessment*, 5, 355-381.

Fitzgerald, L.F, Fassinger, R.E. & Betz, N.E. (1995) Theoretical Advances in the Study of Women's Career Development in Walsh, W.B. & Osipow, S.H. (eds) (2nd edition) Handbook of Vocational Psychology: theory, research and practice, Mahway, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Gottfredson, L.S. (1981) Circumscription and Compromise: A Development Theory of Occupational Aspirations, in *Journal of Counseling Psychology Monograph*, 28, 545-579

Gottfredson, L.S. (1983) Creating and Criticizing Theory, in *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 23, 203-212

Gottfredson, L.S. (1996) Gottfredson's Theory of Circumscription and Compromise in Brown, D. & Brooks, L. & Associates, (eds) (3rd edition) Career, Choice and Development, San Francisco, California, Jossey Bass.

Gottfredson, L.S. and Lapan, R.T. (1997) Assessing gender-based circumscription of occupational aspirations, *Journal of Career Assessment*, 5, 419-441.

Hackett, G. & Betz, G. (1981) A self-efficacy approach to the career development of women in *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 18, p326-339.

Phillips, S.D. & Imhoff, A.R. (1997) Women and Career Development: a Decade of Research, in Spence, J.T., Darley, J.M. & Foss, D.J. (Eds) *Annual Review of Psychology*, 48, pp31-59

Section 4: Resources

Bibliography and resources relating to gender

Websites with links to other EO resources too:

- Council of Europe [Gender Mainstreaming](#)
- EOC (2001) [Young people and sex stereotyping](#)
- EOC (2006) [Facts about Men and Women in Great Britain 2006](#)
- EHRC (2010) [Equal pay and the Equality Act](#)
- EHRC (2010) [Proposals for measuring and publishing information on the gender pay gap](#)
- EHRC (2011) [Sex and Power 2011](#)
- European Commission (1998) [A Guide to Gender Impact Assessment](#)
- European Commission & Directorate-General for Employment (2008). [Manual for Gender Mainstreaming](#).
- Fawcett Society, <http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk>
- [Greenfield report: SET fair \(2002\)](#) Inquiry into women in science, engineering and technology
- Home Office [Equalities](#)
- House of Commons Trade and Industry Committee (2005): [Jobs for the girls: The effect of occupational segregation on the gender pay gap](#)
- International Association for Impact Assessment (2011) Key Citation Series: [Gender and Gender Impact Assessment](#)
- International Organisation for Migration (2007): [Working Group on Gender Issues](#) and [Gender Mainstreaming in the IOM](#)
- [Kingsmill \(2001\) report on women's employment and pay](#)
- OECD (2000): [Tipsheets for Improving Gender Equality: Participation and Organisational Chance](#) and [Culture, Gender Equality and Development Cooperation](#)
- Royal Society of Edinburgh (2011) [Enquiry into vertical segregation of women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics \(STEM\)](#)
- Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) [Equalities and Human Rights](#)
- Scottish Government (2011) [Occupational segregation](#)
- The Scottish Office (1998), [Mainstreaming Equal Opportunities](#)

- UNDP [What is gender mainstreaming](#) and [Gender Mainstreaming](#) and [Checklist of Actions for Gender Mainstreaming](#)
- WHO [Gender Mainstreaming at WHO](#)
- World Bank [Gender and Development](#)

Other relevant resources:

- Astin, H.S. (1967) Patterns of Career Choices Over Time in Personnel and Guidance Journal, 45, p541-546.
- Astin, H.S. (1984) The Meaning of Work in Women's Lives: a socio-psychological model of career choice and work behaviour, The Counseling Psychologist, 12, 4, 117-126.
- Bacchi, C. & Eveline, J. (eds) (2010) Mainstreaming Politics: Gendering Practices and Feminist Theory. Adelaide: University of Adelaide Press.
- Betz, N.E. & Hackett, G. (1981) The Relationship of Career-Related Self-Efficacy Expectations to Perceived Career Options in College Women and Men in Journal of Counseling Psychology, 28, 5, 399-410.
- Betz, N.E. (1994) Basic Issues and Concepts in Career Counseling for Women, in Wash, W.B. & Osipow, S.H. (1994) (ed) Career Counselling for Women Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Betz, N.E. & Hackett, G. (1997) Applications of Self-Efficacy Theory to the Career Assessment of Women in Journal of Career Assessment, 5 (4) 383-402.
- Bimrose, J. (2001) Girls and women: Challenges for careers guidance practice, British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 29(1): 79-94.
- Bimrose, J. (2004) '[Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: An Ethical Dilemma for Career Guidance Practice?](#)', *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 32 (1), 109 – 121.
- Bimrose, J., Green, A., Orton, M. Barnes, S. A., Scheibl, F., Galloway, S. and Baldauf, B. (2003) '[Improving the Participation of Women in the Labour Market](#)'
- Bradley, H. (2007). Gender. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Brine, J. (1998), Under-educating women: globalizing inequality, Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Brooks, L. (1990) Recent Developments in Theory Building in Brown, D. Brooks, L. & Associates Career Choice & Development (second ed), San Francisco: Jossey Bass (364-394).
- Brooks, L. & Forrest, L. (1994) Feminism & Career Counseling in Walsh, W.B. & Osipow, S.H. (eds) Career Counseling for Women, Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Callender, C. and Metcalf, H. (1997) Women and training, DfEE Research Report 35, Sudbury: DfEE.

- Clayton, P. (2003) Gender Mainstreaming: Discussion Document, Glasgow: Department of Adult and Continuing Education, University of Glasgow.
- Daly, M. (2005) Gender Mainstreaming in Theory and Practice. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society* 12(3): 433-450.
- Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (2003) Putting Gender Mainstreaming into Practice. New York: United Nations.
- Duncan, S. (1996), Obstacles to a successful Equal Opportunities policy in the European Union, *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 3, 4, 399-422.
- DfEE (1999) The Careers service and Young Muslim Women. DfEE
- Dorsett, R. (2001) Workless couples: Characteristics and Labour Market transitions. Policy Studies Institute.
- Equal Opportunities Commission (1997), Mainstreaming Gender Equality in Local Government: A framework, Manchester, Glasgow and Cardiff, EOC
- Eveline, J. & Todd, P. (2009) 'Gender Mainstreaming: The Answer to the Gender Pay Gap?' *Gender Work and Organization* 16(5) 536-558.
- Farmer, H.S. (1985) Model of Career and Achievement Motivation for Women and Men in *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 32, 3, 363-390.
- Farmer, H.S. & Associates (1997) Diversity & Women's Career Development, Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Farmer, H.S. (1997) Women's motivation related to mastery, career salience, and career aspiration: a multivariate model focusing on the effects of sex role socialization in *Journal of Career Assessment*, 5, 355-381.
- Fitzgerald, L.F, Fassinger, R.E. & Betz, N.E. (1995) Theoretical Advances in the Study of Women's Career Development in Walsh, W.B. & Osipow, S.H. (eds) (2nd edition) *Handbook of Vocational Psychology: theory, research and practice*, Mahway, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Francis, B. (1996) Doctor/nurse, teacher/caretaker: children's gendered choice of adult occupation in interviews and role plays, *British Journal of Education and Work* 9 (3) 47-58.
- Gaskell, J. (1992) *Gender Matters from School to Work*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Gibb, H. (2001) *Gender Mainstreaming: Good Practices from the Asia Pacific Region*. Ottawa: North South Institute.
- Green E. et al. (2004) [Barriers to Women's Employment and Progression in the North East of England](#).

- Gottfredson, L.S. (1981) Circumscription and Compromise: A Development Theory of Occupational Aspirations, in *Journal of Counseling Psychology Monograph*, 28, 545-579
- Gottfredson, L.S. (1983) Creating and Criticizing Theory, in *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 23, 203-212
- Gottfredson, L.S. (1996) Gottfredson's Theory of Circumscription and Compromise in Brown, D. & Brooks, L. & Associates, (eds) (3rd edition) *Career, Choice and Development*, San Francisco, California, Jossey Bass.
- Gottfredson, L.S. and Lapan, R.T. (1997) Assessing gender-based circumscription of occupational aspirations, *Journal of Career Assessment*, 5, 419-441.
- Hackett, G. & Betz, G. (1981) A self-efficacy approach to the career development of women in *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 18, p326-339.
- Himmelweit, S. 2002. Making Visible the Hidden Economy: The Case for Gender Impact Analysis of Economic Policy. *Feminist Economics* 8(1): 49-70.
- Hopfl, H. and Hornby P. (2000) The future of Women's career, in Collin, A. and Young, R. (eds.) *The future of career*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Howell, J. (2007) Gender and Civil Society: Time for Cross-Border Dialogue. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society* 14(4): 415-436.
- Johnson, S. (2000) Gender Impact Assessment in Microfinance and Microenterprise: Why and How. *Development in Practice* 10(1): 89-93.
- Lightbody, P. and Durndell, A. (1996) Gendered career choice: is sex-stereotyping the cause or the consequence? *Educational Studies* 22 (2) 133-146.
- McQuaid, R., Bond, S. & Robinson, P. (2004) [Gender Stereotyping and Career Choices](#)
- Miller, L. and Budd, J. (1999) The development of occupational sex-role stereotypes, occupational preferences and academic preferences in children at ages 8, 12 and 16, *Educational Psychology* 19 (1) 17-35.
- Miller L, Neathey F, Pollard E, Hill D (2004) [Occupational segregation, gender gaps and skills gaps](#)
- Mirza, H. (1992) *Young, Female and Black*, London: Routledge.
- Mirza, H. S. (2009) *Race, Gender and Educational Desire: Why Black Women Succeed and Fail*. London, Routledge.
- Mirza, H.S., (2009) 'Plotting a history: Black and postcolonial feminism in 'new times'', *Race Ethnicity and Education* Vol 12, No 1, pp 1- 10.

- Mirza, H.S and Joseph, C., (Eds) (2009) 'Black feminisms and postcolonial paradigms: Researching educational inequalities', *Special issue Race Ethnicity and Education* Vol 12, No 1.
- Mirza, H. S., (2007) 'Multiculturalism and the gender trap: Young ethnicised women and domestic violence in schools', *Education Review* Vol. 20, No 2, pp 46- 56 .
- Mirza, H.S. (2005) 'Transcendence Over Diversity: The dynamics of race and gender in higher education', *Policy Futures in Education*, Vol 4 No 2, pp 101-113 .
- Mirza H. S., (Ed) (1997) *Black British Feminism: A Reader*. London, Routledge.
- Munro, M and Elsom, D (2000) [Choosing Science at 16](#), NICEC Project Report, Cambridge: CRAC
- Phillips, S.D. & Imhoff, A.R. (1997) Women and Career Development: a Decade of Research, in Spence, J.T., Darley, J.M. & Foss, D.J. (Eds) *Annual Review of Psychology*, 48, pp31-59
- Rees, T (1998), *Mainstreaming equality in the European Union: education, training and labour market policies*, London, Routledge.
- Roggeband, C. & Verloo, M. (2006) *Evaluating Gender Impact Assessment in The Netherlands 1994-2004: A Political Process Approach*. *Policy and Politics* 34(4): 615-632.
- Rolfe, H., (1999) [Gender Equality and the Careers Service](#), Manchester, EOC
- Squires, J. (2007) *The New Politics of Gender Equality*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Srinivasan, B. and Mehta, L. (2003) *Assessing Gender Impacts*, in H. Becker and F. Vanclay (eds) *The International Handbook of Social Impact Assessment*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 161-178.
- Verloo, M. (2001) *Another Velvet Revolution? Gender Mainstreaming and the Politics of Implementation*. IWM Working Paper No. 5/2001. Vienna: Institute for Human Sciences.
- Warren, H. (2007) *Using Gender-Analysis Frameworks: Theoretical and Practical Reflections*. *Gender & Development* 15(2): 187-198.
- Whitehead, J. (1996) *Sex stereotypes, gender identity and subject choice at 'A'-Level*, *Educational Research* 38 (2) 147-160.