



Education and Poverty: Mapping the terrain and making the links to educational policy

prepared by

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Introduction

The link between educational attainment and poverty in the UK and elsewhere has been clearly demonstrated. Those young people who live in conditions of relative poverty, however defined, are more likely to attain lower educational outcomes than young people living in relative affluence. Conversely those achieving low educational outcomes are also more likely to then experience poverty. As with all aggregated data, there is much debate about those factors that appear to exacerbate or ameliorate both these situations. Within such discussions there are those who talk about the personal and/or social/cultural attributes that individuals and their families and communities possess (sometimes defined as risk factors) which predispose them to low educational attainments, lower life chances and hence greater level of poverty. Others talk about how power and inequality create levels of poverty that in themselves exclude and marginalise young people from mainstream society and the mechanisms of that mainstream society (eg education). This exclusion often generates low aspirations towards formal education and hence low achievement. Such debates brings us to the heart of our research. We were keen to undertake a broad examination of the various disciplinary literatures and their corresponding theoretical perspectives, disciplinary frameworks and epistemic paradigms in order to map out both explanatory reasons for why educational inequality exists and how it links to poverty and also the type of interventions that might be implemented to bring about greater equity with regards to such inequality.

We are pleased to welcome to the School of Education at the University of Manchester a range of delegates from home and abroad to comment upon, affirm, challenge and enable the work we are doing. The purpose of this paper is to scope the project and to provide

conference participants with both an understanding of the project, the journey we have been on so far, and to outline issues for debate.

The paper is divided into four sections which cover

- The aims of the project and research methodology
- The development of the mapping framework
- Map 3 and the research literature
- Map 3 and UK educational policy on schooling and disadvantage

Section 1 – Project aims and research methodology

Aims of the Project

The aim of this study is to review the literature on poverty and education in order to identify the principal conceptualisations which underpin that literature. By doing this, it will be possible to:

- Produce a 'map' of the poverty and education field
- Identify problematic assumptions and gaps in evidence and outcomes evaluations within each conceptualisation.
- Identify potential areas for dialogue between conceptualisations and problematic areas where dialogue is more difficult
- Identify ways in which conceptualisations might be inter-related

Research design, methods and analysis

The study currently involves a number of activities. These include:

- The development of a mapping framework;
- Sensitising seminar to test the framework with academics across the University of Manchester;
- A progress report to the JRF Advisory Panel, together with feedback on the framework;
- An international seminar to examine and challenge the mapping framework so far;
- Use of the framework to structure database interrogation, keywords searching and screening criteria and the development of a database categorising framework; and,
- Use of the framework to explore policy implications.

We see this international seminar as the opportunity to explore the work so far, gain the perspectives of national and international colleagues who work in this area, and to help enable the development of a conceptually rigorous and useful framework for the literature review.

Literature searching

Reviewing the literature constituted a major methodological part of this project. This section describes the specific methodological steps undertaken in identifying, obtaining and reviewing relevant materials. In reading the literature there are four analytical tasks: first, testing and elaborating the preliminary characterisation of conceptualisations; second, making explicit the implications of each conceptualisation for research and policy; third, assessing the state and weight of evidence within each conceptualisation; and, fourth, articulating the actual and potential relationships between different conceptualisations. This section will outline the methods used to identify and select the literature.

Sources of searches

There were five main sources in identifying relevant to the project documents. These were:

(a) Citations in key articles were identified using the research team's prior experiences. These included all potentially relevant subject areas:

- education
- economics
- sociology
- geography
- epidemiology / medicine

A sensitising seminar that was initially held with members of the University of Manchester from different discipline areas (e.g. education, economics, psychology, geography, sociology)

provided possible directions for searches. The group included: Peter Farrell, Marianna Fotaki, Bernard Walters, Fiona Devine and Mike Bradford.

(b) Searches through electronic databases. These covered: journal articles, books & book chapters, reports and key speeches. Since the purpose of the study was to develop a mapping framework rather than an exhaustive literature review, only key papers/articles/books were located, tagged and retrieved.

Searches through the databases involved the identification and combination of sets of search terms that in terms of education included schooling, school performance, educational outcomes, and in relation to poverty included terms such as poverty, social class, disadvantage, deprivation, low income etc. Several combinations of keywords and concepts were attempted in order to achieve maximum sensitivity in the retrieval of as many as possible relevant papers. Keywords' or 'descriptors' were used as identified in the articles' titles and abstracts (rather than 'free text' terms unless the database offered no option). The following databases were searched:

Database	Initial hits
Web of Knowledge (Web of Science) 1985 – 2006	1,521
As above	4,624
As above	2,048
PsycINFO 1985 – 2006	40
As above	118
As above	913
EconLit(2003-2005/12,1969-2002),Social(Policy & Practice, Sciences Index 2/83-9/05)	1,049
EconLit(2003-2005/12,1969-2002),Social(Policy & Practice, Sciences Index 2/83-9/05)	123
International Political Science Abstract, Social Policy & Practice Database, Social Science Index Database)	107
CAB Abstracts database (1994 – 2001 – there was no option to search after 2001) 1994-2001	321
Social Work Abstracts 1977 – 2006 (only searched 1980-2006) – comes under PsycINFO	225

(PY: = 1980-2006)	
Social Services Abstracts (only searched 1980-2006) – comes under PsycINFO	13981
Social Policy & Practice Database	5677
GeoBase Database	852
IBSS Database	694
International Political Science Abstract	49
Social Science Index Database	47
Philosophers Index Database	32
ERIC, BEI, Australian Education Index	6000+

(c) Further key references were identified and located through the citations of the main readings in the area (snowballing). This was to a certain degree crucial in order to ensure that the main conceptualisations/theorisations in the literature have been identified and obtained.

(d) Finally, the websites of relevant bodies and professional organisations were also searched in order to identify key research, reports, reviews etc. For example, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the DfES, the Nuffield Centre, The World Bank Website etc.

(e) Additional searching via the SWETSWISE facility will also be undertaken as this allows for searches of very current journal publications and looks a further useful search framework.

Frameworks used

(a) Reference Manager

All identified articles/studies that were deemed relevant were imported via Reference Manager bibliographic application database. An initial number of 9,300 papers were initially imported. This excluded in the majority of cases the duplicates between different databases. However, when papers had been keyed in 2 or more different databases using slightly different formats (eg. capitals for all title words etc) the Reference Manager was unable to identify them as duplicates and listed them more than once.

Two of the team members undertook the task of scanning the titles and abstracts generated by electronic database searches. Initially, titles/abstracts that appeared to be irrelevant to the

subject area were immediately disregarded. Those titles and abstracts identified as possibly relevant were given a 'Y' code so they could be obtained in either electronic or hard copy format and reviewed at a later point. This is a task in progress.

(b) Access Database

Copies (electronic or hard) of the materials identified as relevant were obtained, read or scanned and annotated in order to prepare for the review. The access database was used to organize and store the main articles reviewed including themes and/or conceptualisations from the mapping exercise.

The main areas included were:

- Study/Paper ID and Paper details (author, date, title and source)
- Country of study
- Summary of study (what the study says, evidence used in the study, main outcomes, explanatory frameworks/concepts)
- How does the study fit with the paradigm / framework and in which quadrant
- Paradigm details. More specifically, details on how the study fits in one or more of the following framework areas, such as:
 - (a) The deterministic/environmental quadrant.
 - (b) Non-deterministic/environmental quadrant
 - (c) Individual/Non-Deterministic quadrant
 - (d) Individual/Deterministic quadrant
- What the study says about the relationship between education and poverty
- Whether the study mainly describes/explains the above relationship or goes on to suggest/describe interventions aiming to alter the poverty-education relationship
- Any other notes

After the Advisory Panel meeting and the reformulation of our mapping framework, we decided that the database was in need of amendments that took into consideration the

changes made. We have decided to use a new method of storing and investigating the literature in Microsoft Word. This new method collects similar data from the literature as before e.g. full reference, study type (e.g. book, journal article, book chapter, review etc), country the study/work originates from, what the study says, type of research evidence, scale of research, main outcomes, what does it say about the relationship between poverty and education, what is the main loci/factors of the study (e.g. individual, peer, family, school, neighbourhood, systemic society/economics etc) and what other loci/levels are mentioned. Alongside this information, we have also formulated some questions to interrogate the literature. These include what the main focus of the research is with regards to the description, explanation or intervention; what secondary purpose there may be with regards to the description, explanation or intervention; how the article suggests ease of change with regards to intervention either implicitly or explicitly and where change would come from and whether the study/piece of literature had an emancipatory or deficit perspective? Finally where interventions are indicated in a study we ask whether the interventions sought are curative or ameliorative?

Question: Do you have any advice/suggestions in regard to the searching process?

Section 2: The development of a mapping framework

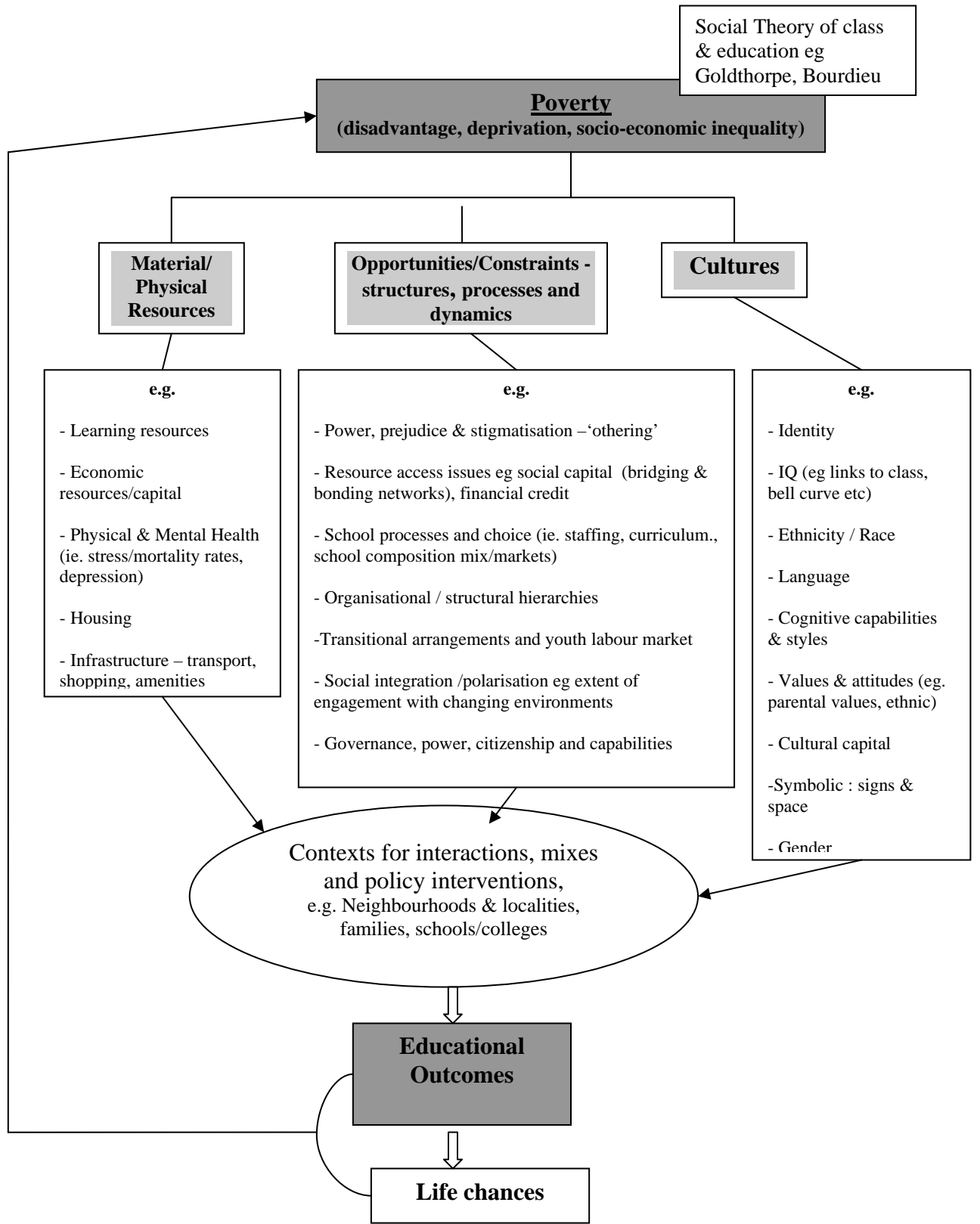
The team recognised that what is needed is a mapping framework that will allow the outcomes of the literature search to be organised. The literature search is not exhaustive but is meant to be illustrative of key trends and knowledge claims within the field. We have been through three iterations of this conceptual map, and in this paper we are presenting the third approach as the one we would like conference participants to focus most on.

Map 1: The initial development of a mapping framework

At the outset the team engaged in reading a variety of research studies, articles and texts that examined education and poverty from a number of perspectives. Based on the team analysis

of these readings we generated a diagrammatic representation of how we, at that particular moment in time, understood the factors that appeared to mediate poverty and educational achievement. We then continued to develop and refine our mapping framework based on an analysis of further readings generated by certain initial database searches. Within a few weeks of developing and refining our initial mapping framework we were ready to share it with other academics at the University of Manchester whose perspectives on poverty and education were informed by their particular academic disciplines. A diagrammatic representation is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Map 1: Initial Education and Poverty Mapping Framework



We used the first map to structure and stimulate enquiry through a sensitising seminar held in the School of Education, University of Manchester. The Project team are fortunate to be located in a Faculty and University where colleagues from a range of disciplines are able to comment upon this type of project. Contributors include:

- Prof. Fiona Devine – Sociology
- Prof. Mike Bradford – Geography
- Dr Bernard Walters – Economics
- Dr. Marianna Fotaki – Health
- Prof. Peter Farrell – Educational Psychologist

Certain contributors from sociology such as Fiona Devine were broadly in agreement with the map and appeared to reflect some of the writings of theorists such as Goldthorpe and Bourdieu who to a greater and lesser extent discussed how the various material, social and cultural constraints that power and class relations engendered impacted on educational outcomes for particular classes/groups of people. Discussions with Peter Farrell, an educationalist from a psychological background, placed the focus very much on the psychological development of young people and how these were affected by the interplay of individual personality traits and cognitive capabilities and environmental variables. His focus was very much on how individual young people psychologically were affected by such factors. Marianna Fotaki from the Manchester Business School with a health background suggested that our model was linear, structural and potentially deterministic and did not take into account individual agency or the emancipatory efforts of communities of practice, particularly with regards to how they enacted health choices and the ensuing impacts of these choices on developmental and educational progress. In addition others argued that the framework depicted a potential outdated view of society – a view that had not fully engaged with issues of post-industrialisation, risk and individualisation. These contributions helped us greatly in that they provided a stimulus to rethink our mapping framework and to broaden our search categories to include a wider set of journals and literatures that reflected some of this breadth.

Map 1: developing our thinking

Based on our ongoing readings of the literature generated through the searches and as a result of our sensitising seminar, we developed some statements about the learning so far. These include:

- Class, race, gender and youth dimensions to poverty that suggests that the young, the working class, various ethnic minorities and women as groups, and the various intersections between these groups, are most likely to suffer poverty, and in particular ways are less likely to achieve educational outcomes.
- A lack of intergenerational mobility in areas of concentrated poverty that suggests high levels of deeply entrenched societal reproduction with continuing levels of low educational outcomes in such areas.
- Power and inequality issues that manifest themselves in reduced opportunities to access resources and to develop capabilities for certain groups that then result in poverty.
- The impact of poverty on self-respect, self-efficacy and morbidity/health issues for families and communities that then result in forms of socialisation for young people that potentially constrain aspirations towards education.
- Spatial dimension to poverty that results in concentrations of poor people being located in particular districts/neighbourhoods that often have poor access to resources and where young people and families may experience concurrently numerous risk factors such as higher levels of crime, drugs, vandalism and general violence that then result in patterns of behaviour amongst some young people that are inimical to education.
- Health dimensions to poverty that result in poor people more likely suffering a variety of ailments and ill health thus impacting on their abilities to access education and achieve.
- Globalisation issues that have resulted in changed forms of employment and skills requirements that have socially excluded, polarised and ultimately created poor individuals, families and communities – individual, families and communities who are then more likely to be without appropriate credentials and capitals for progression and transition into such employment.
- Risk attributes or levels of vulnerability such as family breakdown, drug misuse, violence and low self-esteem for certain individual, families, groups and communities that may be as a result of poverty and low educational achievements that may help to accentuate poverty further.
- Inherited risk attributes such as IQ, personality disorders, disabilities and particular biological responses to stress factors that result in lower educational attainments, reduced life chances and hence poverty.
- The impact of environmental factors associated with poverty on the inherited psychological and biological attributes of individuals that may become genetically hardwired into those individuals thereby reducing opportunities for educational success.
- Educational provision organised and based on the value systems, expectations of those with power and privilege and in contradistinction to those in poverty

In mapping out the terrain we wanted to examine how these ideas helped suggest or explain the links between poverty and low educational achievement. In so doing we recognised that they contained within them the possibility of making links that focused on the various and interlocking sites of reflection and interaction that might influence educational

underachievement. These sites included the individual, the family, peer group, wider community and neighbourhood and the school. We were clear that we wanted to include in our review examples of research that focused on each of these sites as a way of highlighting and exemplifying their importance in making clearer links between poverty and low educational outcomes.

Based on the continuing development of our ideas and thinking we became aware that there was little agreement in the literatures about a linear causal effect between poverty and education. Particular epistemic paradigms suggest that educational inequality is the result of poverty in all its manifestations. There are others that suggest that educational inequality is the result of hereditary difference - ie that hereditary differences create differential natural capabilities in young people that results in varying educational achievements, differentiated work capabilities and hence varying poverty outcomes. And there others again who take a less pathological approach in arguing about the link between education and poverty who highlight the nuances of young people's agency that reflects a mingling of structure, identity, and various communities of practice to which young people belong. In addition we were also aware of many commentators who have blurred the edges between varying disciplines and perspectives and who have examined the variety of pull/push factors on particular perspectives that emanate from different theoretical domains eg the structuring influences of the macro on micro level interactions. Some have specifically focused on the "shatter zones" between perspectives where theoretical differences clash or rub together. In addition we were also aware of the desire by some to retain theoretical purity with the ensuing possibilities of domain entrenchment and reactionary debates between perspectives. At times such debates have contained the possibilities of both overly pathologising and/or romanticising at the extreme the varying experiences of people living in poverty. In recognition of this danger we hope to map out this diversity and ensure that wherever possible we avoid such stereotypes or at least provide balance of argument where such stereotypes exist.

Map 2: developing a new mapping framework

Our new mapping framework emerged from a continuous iterative dialogue between researchers in the team, the issues raised by our colleagues in the sensitising seminar and

the continued reading of a wider array of literatures that the seminar suggested. At one level we recognised, as we had done at the outset of the project, that some of the readings emphasised the structural and macro level economic, social and cultural factors that appeared to explain the link between education and poverty. These factors are referred to in some literatures as distal factors that are seen as informing, structuring, constraining or affording particular individual, group, families and communities capabilities and/or value systems and norms. We recognised that often these literature referred to these factors as both explaining and at the same time structuring or determining, to a lesser or greater extent, the behaviours of various groups of young people towards education. At different level there were other studies that explored the agency and non-deterministic or malleable components of young people behaviours that were influenced not only by social and cultural norms of families and groups but also through evolving personal identities and other psychological influences. Some theorists referred to these as proximal factors in that they are closer to the lived experiences of young people and relate to the core dynamic processes that reflect interactions between young people within a variety of contexts such as family, peer group, school etc. These were also viewed as being generally more amenable to change. At another level again it was also clear that some studies focused more on how individual hereditary traits and identity formations informed young people's behaviours towards education whereas others clearly gave an emphasis to the environmental issues of the social, cultural and historic communities of practice to which young people living in poverty belonged and which informed their actions, behaviours and beliefs about education.

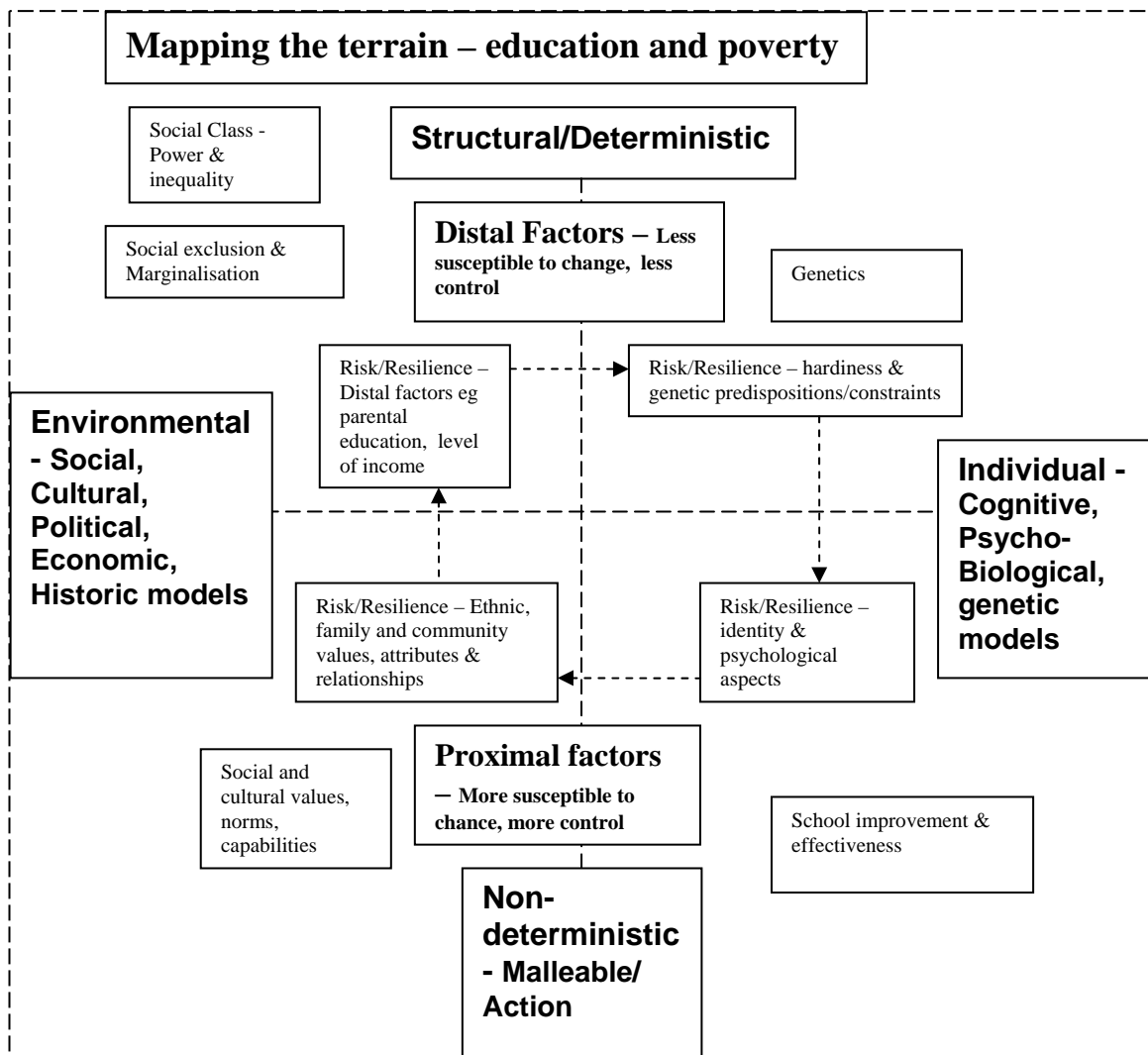
The mapping framework therefore developed to contain two intersecting axes and four broad heuristic quadrants. This is shown in Figure 2. Although cognisant of how particular words have pejorative undertones and create potentially distorted meanings we have used some of them to label our axes. The axes are (a) deterministic (less control, obstinate, distal factors) - non deterministic (more control/malleable and proximal factors) and (b) environmental (social, economic, historic, cultural) – individual (subject, agent). Within each of the four quadrants that were generated by the intersection of the axes we started to place particular epistemic

paradigms/theoretical hubs that appeared to provide some explanation of the links between poverty and education. They included:

- Genetic individual capability paradigms
- Structural and economic social class paradigms
- Various risk/resilience paradigms
- Social and cultural capabilities paradigms
- Choice biographies and individual agency and capability paradigms

Figure 2:

Map 2: Knowledge Production and Positions in Education and Poverty



We also recognised that these epistemic paradigms or theoretical hubs did not necessarily always sit comfortably within one particular quadrant and that interesting extensions and debates within these paradigms were being created by a 'pull/push effect' from theorisations in other quadrants. The axes or boundaries should therefore be seen as permeable or

perhaps viewed as force fields. We were clear, therefore that the quadrants within the mapping framework were not to be seen as a discrete set of meta theoretical narratives that provided a distinct set of epistemological and ontological perspectives on the discussion about the links between education and poverty (c/f Burrell and Morgan). Instead our quadrants acknowledge that knowledge about education and poverty can be stretched and developed through the intersection of ideas from a variety of quadrants. In addition our quadrants allow for radically different paradigms to be developed in each with, for example, both deficit based and choice/emancipatory paradigms as well as normative/radical paradigms represented in the same quadrant. Linked to the previous comment we also recognised that there are different types of knowledges being generated in each of the four quadrants that reflected the different practices, positions and motivations of those producing the knowledge.

Map 2: using the map

(a) The deterministic/environmental quadrant.

Much of the theorising in this quadrant focuses on issues of power and inequality that are manifested through various class, race and gender dynamics that then result in particular forms of poverty for particular categories of young people. Much of the discussion in this quadrant therefore tends to focus on class reproduction and constrained social mobility and theorists such as Goldthorpe suggest opportunities and constraints for various ethnic groups, classes and communities are generated by economic, cultural and social resources over which these classes, groups and communities have a greater or lesser control due to particular levels of power. Other grand theorists within this quadrant would include the work of Bourdieu (1986) and in particular how social reproduction is mediated by the intersection of social, cultural, economic and symbolic capitals. In many respects the quadrant is suggestive of a linear and structural model that shows how poverty is created and then how it structures or ordains the material, social and cultural lives of people that then impacts on educational outcomes. The sociology of education has historically focused its work within this quadrant, particularly in its attempts to explain educational inequality. In 70s ground breaking research such as the work by Jencks (1972) in his comprehensive study, *Inequality*, showed that

whatever type of school children attended, their educational performance reflected the position of their parents. More recently researchers such as Bynner and Joshi (2002) have undertaken an examination of longitudinal data collected over two birth cohorts studies started in 1970 and 1958. They were keen to note whether historically there had been any changes in the percentage of working class children succeeding in education viz-a-viz their middle-class counterparts. Their findings complemented Jencks' research by highlighting the persistence class inequalities in educational achievement and in particular how family poverty also played a significant role in inhibiting educational achievement. In addition Neo-Marxists analysis during the 1970s focused on wider questions of power, hierarchy, social control and cultural reproduction (Bowles & Gintis, 1976, Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977) to explain these enduring inequalities suggesting that the mechanism of capitalism continued to create inequality in educational outcomes.

(b) Non-deterministic/environmental quadrant

One particular set of discussions within this quadrant arise out of the work of educational sociologists during the 1950s and 1960s who predominantly focused on the social distribution of educational opportunity where particular manifestations of social class were seen as major theoretical and policy concerns because of their perceived influence on educational achievement. These researchers were not necessarily interested in the causes of inequality and poverty but they were interested in the correlation between educational achievement and social class that was coded for example through language (Bernstein, 1961), values (Hyman, 1967) as well as parental interest and support (Douglas, 1964). Research at that time was concerned with the improvement of life chances by drawing the attention of policy-makers to the relationship between education, meritocracy and social mobility and how change might be brought about (Halsey, et al 1961).

We could argue that some of these theorisations have deterministic leanings. However they have also provided a means of theorising and developing compensatory education programmes that focus in on enhancing social and cultural aspects of families, groups and communities in order to socialise, prepare and educate young people for success. In other

words they focus on some of the proximal factors that are amenable to change and hence might influence and change the behaviours of young people for the better. These theorisations therefore afford the possibilities of change which in the deterministic-environmental quadrant, although not impossible, is much less likely because of the structural reforms and power shifts that would be required. Many of these theorisations are suggestive of cultural deficits present in those in lower socio-economic classes and particularly those living in poverty. These include parenting capabilities and socialising value systems that are inimical to education.

Writers from within a developmental psychology or psychopathological research paradigms have also developed some of their writings that might link to this quadrant. Although primarily concerned with an examination of those risk factors that impact on the individual psychological development of young people they are clear that many of these are both mediated and moderated by environmental factors associated with the family, peer groups and the community more generally. There are, for example, certain proximal attributes associated with poverty e.g. stressed parenting, experiences of community violence etc that are likely to create risk for individual development. At the same time certain research writings within this paradigm highlight how certain protective factors such as caring and warm adult relationship can at times moderate some of these risk factors. The motivation for many of the researchers working within this paradigm is clearly client based with a focus on developing intervention strategies that might create resilience in young people facing adverse situations.

Both the above sociological and psychological perspectives operate with a deficit or risk notion of young people, families and communities living in poverty. However there are also other writings within this paradigm that take a more radical and critical approach to the victim blaming and labelling of families, communities and young people as being poor, in deficit or at risk (Lister, 2004). Their arguments are that this type of labelling has a tendency to pathologise families and young people and hence have a tendency to do more harm than good (Franklin, 2000) In contrast they highlight the diversity of competencies, attitudes and behaviours that reflect varying bonding capitals, support and engagement activities, and

differently and yet equally prized set of values that have enabled forms of community activism against the material odds of poverty and inequality. At times these actions are strategic and at times they were ways of coping or fighting back. Together they are suggestive of the varying personal, political, everyday or strategic actions that are proactively taken by young people, families and communities dealing with poverty. Within the field of education there is a recognition that such a paradigm is suggestive of how young people actively make use of the social resources, peer networks, family and the informal economy to variously act out forms of emancipation, resistance and accommodation to education (Hodkinson et al, 1996; Willis, 1977).

(c) Individual/Non-Deterministic quadrant

Here much of the work focuses on either (a) a developmental psychological perspectives that focus on self development and identity or (b) the more sociological concerns about identity and its links to agency in a world of 'choice biographies' (Giddens, 1991; Beck, 1992). With regards to the former, poverty is seen as a factor that manifests itself in a variety of contexts (see both above and below) as risk factors that are likely to result for young people in internalised problems of self-awareness, self confidence and various aspects of emotional intelligence and in externalised problems such as dysfunctional behaviour that together may then result in externalised educational failure. The second set of sociological writings link to theories about the emergence of greater levels of individualisation that reflect a risk society where choice biographies inform the actions of young people. Here the discussion is about how new global economic developments that have compressed time and space have also have broken down the structuring influences of bureaucratic hierarchies (Sennett, 2006), community organisations, the church and extended families and that have resulted in greater opportunities for young people to choose their life biographies. However these choice biographies come with an attendant and associated array of extended risks and opportunities for advice, support, work life and new networks. The result of this for young people is that they are viewed and view themselves as being personally responsible for their actions or the agency that they demonstrate. Their actions and agency will then be reflected via the networks of influence of which they choose to be a part and that will then influence ultimately how and whether they get by and get on in education. These arguments suggest that notions

of social class have declined and class identities have been dissipated and replaced by 'individualised social inequality' (Beck, 1992, p88) and so within education:

“Schooling means choosing and planning one’s own educational life course. The educated person becomes the producer of his or her own labor situation, and in this way, of his or her social biography ... Depending on its duration and contents, education makes possible at least a certain degree of self-discovery and reflection. The educated person incorporates reflexive knowledge of the conditions and prospects of modernity, and in this way becomes an agent of reflexive modernisation” (Beck, 1992, p 93)

(d) Individual/Deterministic quadrant

Much of the work that focuses in this domain suggests that the link between education and poverty can be traced back to individual genetic and inherited differences between people as opposed to the social, economic and cultural conditions within which they live. The explanation for low educational success for such theories is that young people who on average do not succeed educationally are those that have inherited poor cognitive capabilities such as low IQ and dysfunctional behavioural traits. The correlation between education and poverty is premised on the notion that those in poverty are more likely to show low cognitive and psychological capabilities which result in them living in poverty. Poverty is concentrated in particular areas because there is a tendency for the reproduction of such inherited traits and capabilities between people of similar genetic makeup who live in such areas

Map 2: Developing our thinking

In March 2006 the Project team met with the Joseph Rowntree Advisory Panel consisting of:

- Dr. Leon Feinstein- Institute of Education, London
- Professor Howard Glennerster - London School of Economics
- Ann Gross - Divisional Manager, Extended Schools & Childcare
- Professor Ruth Lister - Loughborough University
- Diana McNeish - Policy, Research Influencing Unit, Barnardos
- Chris Power – Former HMI
- Ray Shostak - Managing Director of Public Services, HM Treasury
- Helen Barnard – Education and Poverty Programme Director, Joseph Rowntree Foundation

The Project team were fortunate to have such an eminent and critically supportive advisory panel to help our thinking move forward. A number of issues were raised by various individuals on the panel about our classificatory framework.

Firstly the panel positively affirmed the work we had undertaken, given the ambitious nature of the project. They congratulated us on our thinking to date and on the general usefulness of the mapping framework presented. However there were a number of issues that the panel suggested we might consider

At a general level there was feeling from panel members such as Leon Feinstein that our framework as it is constituted above was a two-dimensional grid trying to express things at approximately five different levels. More specifically Feinstein's first concern was with the vertical axis in our mapping framework in that he felt that distal and proximal factors do not map straightforwardly onto notions of less control/more control or deterministic/non-deterministic. Notions of distal and proximal he felt were more relevant to impact. Other issues he raised reflected on the way we had linked deterministic factors to the lack of changeability and control. He suggested that this does not necessarily reflect the possibilities of certain situations. For example certain structural issues associated with income could be changed relatively easily in technical terms through changes in taxation whereas the cultural dynamics of groups and families may be very difficult to change. Perhaps we needed to consider notions of policy amenability and controllability and then we might have questions such as 'changeable by who?'. In addition he felt that we had not fully articulated whether notions of risk were causal explanations or policy mechanisms.

There was also a good deal of discussion about where and why particular research/intervention entities were being mapped. For example there was discussion over whether 'school effectiveness' was rightly placed in the individual/non-deterministic quadrant with a suggestion that it might be better served in the environmental/non-deterministic. There was also a suggestion school effectiveness was more about implementation and policy than about explanation and there was some discussion about the extent to which writers in the field would agree with our classifications of their work.

It was suggested that the framework was missing a level of generalisability within the quadrants in that one couldn't figure out the organising principles that explained the fit within them e.g. individual/institutional level. This was reinforced by Feinstein who suggested that

some aspect of systems theory might help us understand or make explicit the level of aggregation at which we were working. His suggestions are that we might examine different levels of context and different dynamic processes at the micro, meso, macro levels. So for example at the micro level the unit the level of aggregation is the individual. At the meso levels we have contexts such as school, family, neighbourhoods and at the macro level we have structures and aspects of culture (although aspects of culture could also be found at meso level too). He further argued that time, control and aggregation exist at all these levels. A number of maps or classificatory structures might then enable us to express the issues of time and space both for explanatory and intervention/solution purposes.

In addition there was some concern that policy implications/interventions were potentially being sidelined by the mapping exercise because of what appeared to be an over emphasis on the explanatory or descriptive research literature. So for example nuances associated with links between policy intentions and policy outcomes might not be made apparent. So the mapping exercise might fail, potentially, to see how policy is developed, then implemented and where it 'bites' with regards to process and outcome. There was a feeling that policy interventions needed to be examined in a critically detailed way that would therefore require a separate mapping framework developed on similar lines. The notion of the development of two frameworks developed in similar ways with one focusing on policy and the other on explanations would also allay certain fears that we were attempting to map too much onto just one framework. For example Ruth Lister suggested that placing analyses of policy implementations and their amenability to change alongside an explanatory focus was potentially confusing the intent of the framework.

Finally there was a feeling about the extent to which our project was just about mapping and how we were to deal with the weight of evidence that had been generated within particular quadrants and links to particular perspectives.

Map 3: Presenting our current thinking

Based on numerous reflections on this advice and the thinking about the evidence so far generated in the research our project team have rehearsed a slightly changed and, yet we

feel, a more nuanced and fully developed argument for a modified mapping/classificatory framework.

The argument for the new framework is as follows. The premise to our argument at the beginning of the project was that the association between poverty and low achievement is well-established but needs explanation. These varying explanations take the form of 'explanatory narratives'. As we have seen through reading and research these are at times partial, implicit or incoherent. Sometimes, they cohere into 'meta-narratives' which try to link together all the evidence we have on education and poverty. In addition, although the issue of education and poverty is about individuals, it is about individuals' interactions with a whole set of social formations. Hence we should not be surprised, therefore, if these various narratives about why poor young people do badly in education cohere around one of the following:

- Explanations in terms of the characteristics of the individual. For example poor children do badly in education because of their individual characteristics - and these may also explain their poverty.
- Explanations in terms of what we can call 'immediate social contexts' - families, communities, schools, peer groups etc. Poor children do badly because the immediate contexts which are characteristic of poverty (eg parental disengagement from education, poor schools) fail to equip them to do well.
- Explanations in terms of social structures. Poor children do badly because society is structured in a way which ensures that this is the case (eg by protecting the interests of the more advantaged)

Although we might argue that this categorisation is useful for an initial mapping of the field, what it does do is overlook many complexities. We can make it more sophisticated by interrogating particular narratives in terms of the following questions that focus on explanation, possible intervention and legitimacy:

- Within the broad identification of the factors linking education and poverty, what *specific* factors are identified and how are these understood. For example if we examine the micro level of individual characteristics we may ask whether these specific factors are genetic, biological, psychological and in addition we may ask how exactly they operate.
- Although the fundamental explanation may be located at the level identified, how are the other levels taken into account. For example do they make a contribution to that level (as in the case of for example genetic- environmental interaction where environmental factors impact on the genetic) or are they products of the fundamental factor where for example the characteristics of families might be seen to be deeply derived from structuralist accounts.

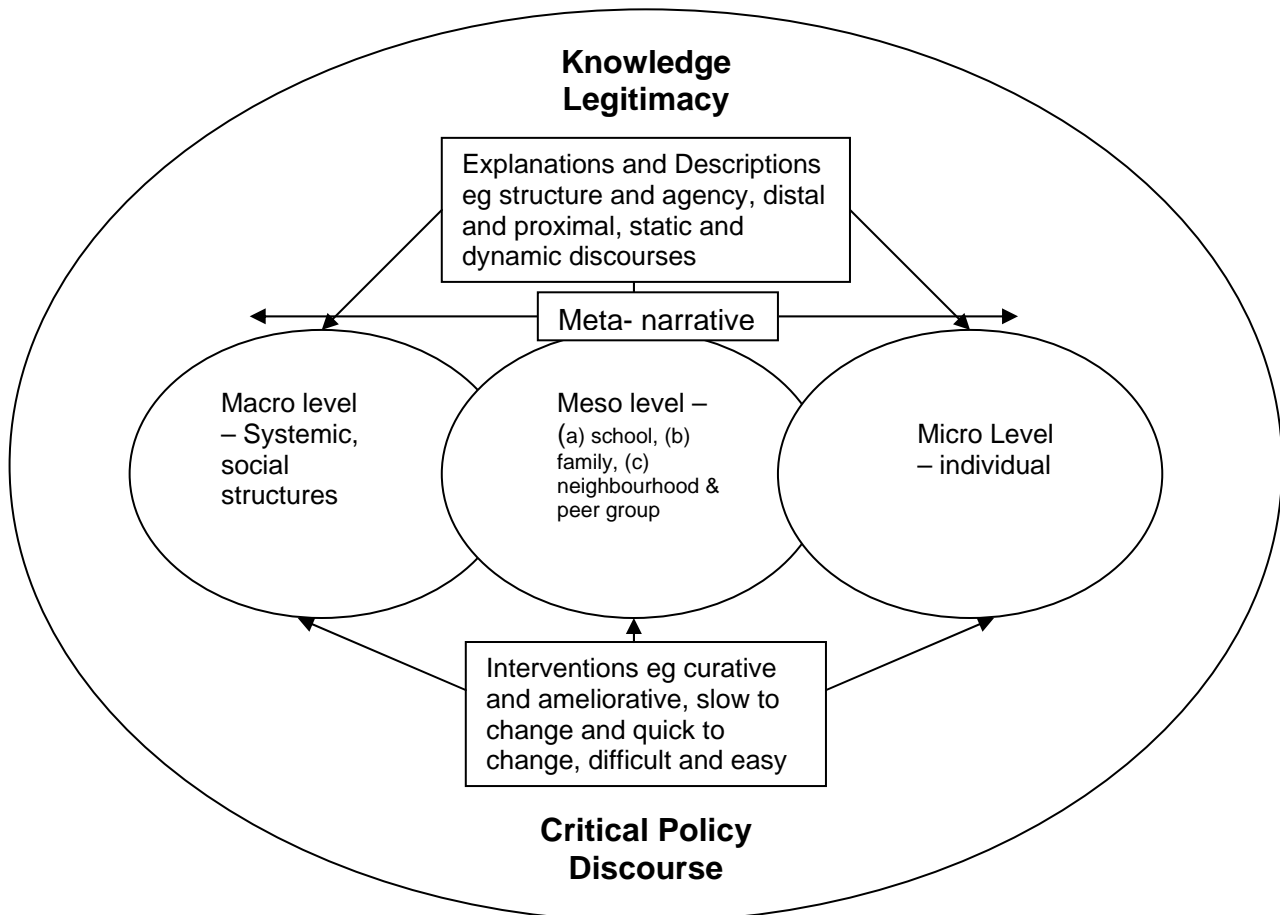
- What are the implications of the narrative for the possibilities of changing the poverty-education relationship? What would need to be changed, by whom, and how easy would that change be?
- What sorts of evidence is used to construct these narratives, and what can we say about the coherence of the narrative, its comprehensiveness, the 'weight of the evidence' and the processes of legitimisation.

What we can then do is present a more detailed analysis of narratives at each level using these questions that then allows us to generate in summary form notions of explanation and intervention:

- a list of factors implicated in the poverty-education relationship
- an analysis of the possibilities for change in each and the theories of change they articulate
- an evaluation of the 'trustworthiness', legitimacy or who makes the strongest claim for particular narratives (and therefore of the change possibilities).
- ways in which the map might be used re policy design and provision
- possible policy discourses that focus on issues between solutions, provision and delivery

We felt that we could encapsulate this argument through our most recently developed mapping framework – map 3.

Figure 3 - Map 3: Mapping education and poverty



Map 3 presents our current mapping framework. At one level it shows the various levels at which explanations for, and/or the description of, the links between education and poverty might be made. So for example some explanations/descriptions will be at the micro level and be in terms of the characteristics of the individual. Other explanations/description will focus on the meso level and examine what we termed 'immediate social contexts' such as families, communities, schools, peer groups as they impact on individual beliefs and actions with regards to education. Other explanations/descriptions again will be at the macro level and examine systemic issues such as how social structures and power result poverty and educational inequality. In undertaking these explanations/descriptions we are also aware that researchers within particularly epistemic paradigms may, for example, focus more on aspects of structure and/or agency, or work within a static or dynamic domain or possibly examine the relationships between distal and proximal factors as they impact on the links between education and poverty. In addition there may be certain explanations or descriptions that utilise a number of different levels of analysis to demonstrate links between particular variables and the actions implicated by those variables. They will describe, explain and theorise to a greater or lesser extent how an integrated set of interlocking factors are generated that seem to provide an explanation for how education and poverty are linked at all levels of analysis. We refer to these as meta-narratives.

The mapping framework also highlights how interventions to break the link between poverty and low educational outcomes might be mapped out at the macro, meso and micro level. So for example at one level the interventions may be about changing societal inequalities through progressive tax reform and enhanced forms of democratic ownership and engagement. At another level it may be about improving schools in challenging contexts, enhancing neighbourhood social capital or supporting parental engagement with education. At another level again it might be about providing targeted and individualised support and advice to individual young people. As well as the levels at which interventions are suggested the mapping framework also asks questions about the extent to which one can infer whether the intervention is ameliorative or curative, whether the intervention is quick to implement and has the potential to generate results quickly or slow to implement and would seem to generate

results more slowly. Finally it will ask how easy or difficult the intervention might be to implement.

Around discussions about explanations, descriptions and interventions will be questions about the knowledge claim and legitimacy of particular narratives/discourse that are being put forward and also critical questions about policy development and interventions.

Section 3 – Map 3 and the research literature

At present our paper makes reference to a limited number of research studies and hence, at times and in particular contexts or at particular levels, there may be an over reliance on particular authors or particular perspectives/studies. This means that our discussions about claims to knowledge or the legitimacy of perspectives within particular sections may as yet not be as fully developed as we would like. We expect a more discursive, critical and explanatory set of narratives to emerge as we generate more studies through our searches. In addition we hope that the seminar will provide us with additional avenues of research to examine.

Map 3: Meta-narratives that link education and poverty and that highlight possible intervention strategies

(a) The descriptive paradigm of risk and resilience

Writers from within developmental psychology research paradigms have developed a set of writings that, when taken together, are suggestive of a descriptive meta-narrative. Although primarily concerned with an examination of those risk factors that impact on the micro level individual psychological development of young people they are clear that many of these are both mediated and moderated by factors associated with the meso level such as family, peer groups and the community more generally. There are, for example, certain proximal attributes associated with poverty eg stressed parenting, experiences of community violence etc that are likely to create risk for individual development. At the same time certain research writings within this paradigm highlight how certain protective factors such as caring and warm adult relationship can at times moderate some of these risk factors. The motivation for many of the researchers working within this paradigm is clearly client based with a focus on developing intervention strategies that might create resilience in young people facing adverse situations.

Writers from within this broad paradigm have produced a number of distal and proximal risk factors that either by themselves or concurrently influence differentially the general self development of young people and by implication the probability of their educational success. At the same time as describing the links between risk and individual vulnerability much research within this paradigm also examines those variables (and the interventions that might generate those protective variables), that create resilience against risk. So for example in much of the risk and resilience literature, at risk factors include both distal and proximal factors such as:

- Community violence
- Maternal depression and anxiety disorders possibly linked to potential drug abuse
- Parental divorce/bereavement
- Negative peer group socialising influences
- Negative neighbourhood influences
- Parental stress related to economic well-being eg housing, access to resources
- Particular processes in families and disturbed family functioning – hostile family environments, effects of maltreatment, ineffective parenting, unresolved discord, insufficient child monitoring and supervision, lack of close relationship with one or both parents
- Racism and discrimination in the lives of ethnic minority families
- Levels of social isolation for families in particular communities
- Inner-city deprivation
- Low individual IQ
- Personality traits, temperaments and disorders
- Gender

Some writers within the risk/reliance paradigm, such as Feinstein et al (2004), focus more on the mediators of risk than on the moderators of risk, and in particular how distal factors are mediated by proximal factors. So for example parental educational credentials, as a distal factor, are clearly seen as a risk (if parents don't have it) or protective factor (if parents do have it) with regards to the future capabilities of young people in such families. He then makes the links to how the distal factors such as parents educational credentials link to various family characteristics that then manifest themselves as proximal factors with regards to attributes such as parental attitudes and capabilities in supporting young people with their education. This then influences the extent to which young people can or want to interact with education.

Others again talk about how childhood resilience factors can moderate risk. Luthar and Zelazo (2003), for example, examine a number of proximal factors at the meso level that can moderate and help protect young people against some of the risks highlighted above. Their main finding, for example, is that resilience rests, fundamentally, on relationships particularly in families, peer groups and schools. For example during childhood years, early relationships with primary caregivers affect several emerging psychological attributes and influence the negotiation of major developmental tasks. Accordingly, serious disruptions in the early relationships with caregivers – in the form of physical, sexual or emotional abuse – strongly impair the chances of resilient adaptation later in life. They are clear that good relationships are built on warmth and support on the one hand and appropriate control and discipline on the other. In the context of families, these skills/attributes are important aspects of parenting and there is a recognition that these skills may be difficult to sustain in the face of major life risks such as chronic poverty and ill health. In addition, where communities are at risk of violence or discrimination, resilience for individuals and families may only be fostered if these are clearly combated to ensure physical and emotional safety. However it also the case that community can provide protective factors when a child's own parents are, for whatever reasons, partially or wholly incapacitated.

Others again within a risk/resilience paradigm suggest that certain distal and proximal risk factors are so endemic in areas of chronic poverty that there are few possibilities for protective factors to intervene positively. The level of analysis in these situations tends to be at a systems level with for example Cauce et al noting (2003) that the riskier the setting the less likely there is to finding protective factors. They point to areas of concentrated poverty in inner-city US where studies have explored the level of observed or experienced violence, individual and peer group dysfunctional behaviour, high risk sexual behaviour or substance abuses and poor educational outcomes. For Cauce et al, the very nature of deprived inner-city neighbourhoods, the dangers they pose, and the sheer grind of living day in, day out under the onslaught of poverty-related stress strongly militates against the development of parenting skills that are reflective of warm and supportive relationships and that in Luthar and

Zelazo's review (2003) suggests can be a moderating factor in creating resilience for young people living in such conditions.

The above literature points to a number of possible interventions depending on the particular starting point of the analysis for those interventions. Some start at the meso, others at the micro and others again at the macro. In many respects the analysis is descriptive in that does not really theorise the reasons for why particular factors act as distal or proximal moderators and/or mediators with regards to risk and resilience. As some authors within this research tradition have noted, there is a requirement for the epidemiologist traditions of model building to examine some the anthropological or sociological explanations for why particular factors impose themselves on individuals and the actions that individuals take.

In terms of knowledge claims, trustworthiness and legitimacy there is a clear sense in which much of this thinking and writing has had impact on policy discourses at both national and regional levels in the UK. For example studies such as that conducted by Newman and Blackburn (2002) for the Scottish Executive Education Department examined notions of resilience of young people and the associated protective factors that helped to create this resilience. They concluded that the following were important protective factors:

- strong social support networks
- the presence of at least one unconditionally supportive parent or parent substitute
- a committed mentor or other person from outside the family
- positive school experiences
- a sense of mastery and a belief that one's own efforts can make a difference
- participation in a range of extra-curricular activities that promote self-esteem
- the capacity to re-frame adversities so that the beneficial as well as the damaging effects are recognized
- the ability – or opportunity – to “make a difference” by helping others
- not to be excessively sheltered from challenging situations which provide opportunities to develop coping skills. (Newman and Blackburn, pp 8-9)

In addition Barnardo' also undertook a literature review on notions of resilience and how resilience might be engendered in certain young people to ward off aspects of risk to which they are vulnerable. The also describe interventions and strategies that appear to show promise in terms of promoting resilience particularly with regards to interventions such as the

Sure Start (birth to four years), The Children's Fund (five to 13 years) and Connexions (13 years upwards).

Although much evidence has been generated within the risk and resilience paradigm, evidence that appears to have been legitimated by many and had an impact on policy discourse, there is a view that these psychological perspectives operate with a deficit or risk notion of young people, families and communities living in poverty. As we have stated earlier in the paper, other writings within this paradigm that take a more radical and critical approach to the victim blaming and labelling of families, communities and young people as being poor, in deficit or at risk (Lister, 2004). Their arguments are that this type of labelling has a tendency to pathologise families and young people and hence have a tendency to do more harm than good (Franklin, 2000) In contrast they highlight the diversity of competencies, attitudes and behaviours that reflect varying bonding capitals, support and engagement activities, and differently and yet equally prized set of values that have enabled forms of community activism against the material odds of poverty and inequality. At times these actions are strategic and at times they were ways of coping or fighting back. Together they are suggestive of the varying personal, political, everyday or strategic actions that are proactively taken by young people, families and communities dealing with poverty. Within the field of education there is a recognition that such a paradigm is suggestive of how young people actively make use of the social resources, peer networks, family and the informal economy to variously act out forms of emancipation, resistance and accommodation to education (Hodkinson et al, 1996; Willis, 1977).

(b) Genetics, low IQ and the underclass paradigm

This particular paradigm is located at the micro in terms of the foundational explanations of the links between education and poverty but then illustrates itself at the meso and systemic in terms of behavioural and structural manifestations. As we highlighted above much of the work in the genetic paradigm suggest that the link between education and poverty can be traced back to individual genetic and inherited differences between people as opposed to the social, economic and cultural conditions within which they live. The explanation for low educational

success for such theories is that young people who on average do not succeed educationally are those that have inherited poor cognitive capabilities such as low IQ and dysfunctional behavioural traits linked to things like neurosis. The correlation between education and poverty is premised on the notion that those in poverty are more likely to show low cognitive and psychological capabilities which results in them in living in poverty.

The work of Herrnstein and Murray (1994) and their thesis in their book the Bell Curve perhaps fits most neatly within this paradigm and at this foundational level. In the Bell Curve, Herrnstein and Murray set out to prove that American society has become increasingly meritocratic, in the sense that wealth and other positive social outcomes are being distributed more and more according to people's intelligence and less and less according to their social backgrounds. Furthermore, to the extent that intelligence is not subject to easy environmental control, but is instead difficult to modify and even in part inherited, genetic differences among individuals, Herrnstein and Murray posit, contribute significantly to their futures. Herrnstein and Murray in many ways follow in the footsteps of Harvard researcher Arthur Jensen. They argue in the book that 1) intelligence exists and is accurately measureable across racial, language, and national boundaries, 2) intelligence is one of -- if not the most -- important correlative factor in economic, social, and success in general in America, and is becoming more important, 3) intelligence is largely to mostly (40% to 80%) genetically heritable, 4) there are racial and ethnic differences in IQ that cannot be sufficiently explained by environmental factors such as nutrition, social policy, or racism, 5) nobody has so far been able to manipulate IQ long term to any significant degree through changes in environmental factors, and in light of their failure such approaches are becoming less promising, and finally, 6) as a country we have been in denial of these facts, and in light of these findings a better public understanding of the nature of intelligence and its social correlates is necessary to guide future policy decisions in America.

Their evidence comes from an analysis of data compiled in the National Longitudinal Study of Youth (NLSY), a study conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics tracking thousands of Americans starting in the 1980s. All participants in the NLSY took the Armed Forces Qualifying Test (AFQT), a measure of cognitive ability comparable to

an IQ test. Participants were later evaluated for social and economic outcomes. In general, IQ/AFQT scores were a better predictor of life outcomes than social class background. Similarly, after statistically controlling for differences in IQ, many outcome differences between racial-ethnic groups disappeared. (see also Significance of group IQ differences)

Economic and social correlates of IQ					
IQ	<75	75-90	90-110	110-125	>125
US population distribution	5	20	50	20	5
Married by age 30	72	81	81	72	67
Out of labor force more than 1 month out of year (men)	22	19	15	14	10
Unemployed more than 1 month out of year (men)	12	10	7	7	2
Divorced in 5 years	21	22	23	15	9
% of children w/ IQ in bottom decile (mothers)	39	17	6	7	-
Had an <u>illegitimate</u> baby (mothers)	32	17	8	4	2
Lives in poverty	30	16	6	3	2
Ever incarcerated (men)	7	7	3	1	0
Chronic welfare recipient (mothers)	31	17	8	2	0

High school dropout	55	35	6	0.4	0
Values are the percentage of each IQ sub-population fitting each descriptor. Herrnstein & Murray (1994) pp. 171, 158, 163, 174, 230, 180, 132, 194, 247-248, 194, 146 respectively					

The Bell curve theory is then suggestive of why an underclass of crime, single parent families and drugs develops in particular neighbourhoods that socialise, reinforce and reproduce a lack of educational aspiration and achievement for young people located in such classes. A simplified causal set of explanations for such a thesis suggests that young people with low IQs leave school without any job skills and are barely literate. The job alternatives to crime or having a baby or the dole are not attractive because most work at this level is poorly paid and insecure. The argument presented then progresses in the following way. Young men who are subsisting on crime or the dole are not likely to be trustworthy providers, which makes having a baby without a husband a more practical alternative. If a young man's girl friend doesn't need him to help support the baby, it makes less sense for him to plug away at a menial job and more sense to have some fun—which in turn makes hustling and crime more attractive, marriage less attractive. Without a job or family to give life meaning, drugs become that much more valuable as a means of distraction. The cost of drugs makes crime the only feasible way to make enough money to pay for them. The interconnections go on endlessly. Hence poverty is concentrated in particular areas because there is a tendency for the reproduction of such inherited traits and capabilities between people of similar genetic makeup who live in such areas.

It terms of legitimacy and claims to knowledge, this particular perspective has been heavily criticised methodologically, statistically and morally. However there is sense in which neo-liberal policies have utilised aspects of this discourse when they have talked about the deserving and undeserving poor, with punitive actions taken against particular individuals and groups of individuals that appear to, in the minds of those in power, to play out this underclass thesis. Hence in terms of critical policy sociology one can point to researchers such as Levitas who highlights how policy intervention to deal with how social exclusion is based on

arguments that examine the effects of moral and cultural impoverishment (Levitas, 1998, Levitas, 2003).

Map 3: Narratives and intervention strategies at the macro /meso interface

(a) Economics, history, politics and power and their impact on education and poverty – some lessons for intervention

One set of studies examine the power dynamics within particular places and at particular times that manifest themselves structurally, economically and culturally on particular groups of people and on how they experience education. The work of Jean Anyon (1997) perhaps most cogently exemplifies or encapsulate elements of this approach. For example her book *Ghetto Schooling* shows that concentrated poverty and racial isolation result from issues of power that link to a long historical evolution, in part the product of political and corporate decisions about which the urban poor had no say. She takes as her focus Newark, New Jersey, the third oldest major city in the United States and among the first to experience industrial decay and a majority black population. She documents that by the 1920s, a decade of economic strength and the crystallization of the modern school, the definitive problems of twentieth-century urban America were already evident. The vast majority of foreign immigrants flooding Newark's schools were not successfully educated. Such failure of the schools at the height of progressive educational reform did not bode well for future efforts in a less prosperous Newark to overcome poverty and "racial" difference. Anyon also notes the lack of corporate responsibility in this decade. She mentions in this connection the absence of capital investment to address the problems that attended industrialization as well as early evidence of business flight from the city. Further, as early as 1918, Newarkers had worried about a diminished tax base as affluent families moved to the countryside. This was important because property taxes were by now established as the principal source of school revenue. Organized crime, which would be a potent destructive force in city and state for the next half century, was enhanced by Prohibition. Corrupt ethnic political machines, whose regimes were defined by mismanagement and graft, filled a growing void as the city became isolated from state and national political power. These were all features of Newark at the end of a relatively prosperous period.

Anyon argues that the educational decline that followed from these incipient problems began most significantly in the 1930s and culminated in the 1960s. Anyon calls the 1930s the "watershed" decade of urban educational decline (p.73). Decreased economic resources in the period lessened city services and left infrastructure to decay. Schools suffered apace, especially those of ethnic and racial minorities. Business leaders fought educational and social spending of any sort. Interestingly, Anyon demonstrates that Newark's decline thus began when it was still a predominantly white and working-class city. Yet, although African Americans made up only 10% of Newark's population in the thirties, the pattern of racial segregation and ghettoization taking shape in that decade would by the 1960s be inextricably bound up with class in defining urban educational inequality. By 1961, 55% of Newark's students were black, and nearly another 4% were Hispanic. Cities such as Newark would thereafter find it very difficult to get financial support from white, suburb-dominated state legislatures. The degree of racial segregation evident by the 1960s meant that, more than ever before, urban children were other people's children, not worthy of educational investment. Anyon shows that the educational deterioration of the 1960s was the culmination of trends stretching back to the Great Depression, trends whose causes were visible in the heyday of progressive urban reform. Anyon's recommendations for present-day reform focus on a renewed war on poverty. She feels that if we are to eliminate ghetto schools, we must ultimately "eliminate poverty" itself (p.164). Such radical proposals, befitting her structural analysis, are redolent of William Julius Wilson's suggestions at the end of *The Truly Disadvantaged* (1987). Like Wilson, Anyon contextualizes educational reform by demonstrating through her analysis that educational inequality is inseparable from class and racial inequality. The history she details explains how poverty has come to be so concentrated in hypersegregated inner cities and their schools. Her vision of reform leaves no doubt that as urban education's failure is rooted in social and historical context, so must its reform be. Hence fundamental interventions are theorised at the systemic level, are curative rather than ameliorative, difficult to change and require forms of political association that may take time to bring about. However she also recognises the need to act at the meso level and she articulates interventions that are located at this level, are more amenable to change, are ameliorative rather than systematically curative and focus on issues of associated with the

renewal of school leadership, improving teaching and learning in schools and developing full-service schooling

(b) Social class and poverty at the macro level, behavioural manifestations at the meso level – some suggestions for interventions

At a more generalised level of analysis Rothstein also make clear links between the structuring influence of systemic issues such as social class/poverty and their links to educational outcomes. His work pays homage to both class based structuralist and class culturalists traditions within the sociology of education. So in his analysis of the link between poverty and low educational attainment he examines the way the macro systemic characteristics that define the social, cultural and economic position of a particular social class are mediated at the meso level through individual, family and community characteristics and behavioural manifestations of those classes. Hence social groups are defined by particular factors that then find expression in the proximal contexts of families, schools, communities, peer groups etc. His message is that those from a lower social class, and particular those in poverty, will demonstrate a collection of occupational, psychological, personality, health and economic traits that have the capacity to predict in a relatively deterministic fashion the average performance in education and other areas of life that is qualitatively different from middle class and relatively well off families/groups. His suggestion is that there are two main aspect of social class, and by implication poverty, that have an influence on educational attainment: (a) proximal cultural dimension that refer to things like child-rearing, role modelling, identity issues and the development of non-cognitive skills (b) the socio-economic conditions of class. Rothstein believes the latter may be more important

For Rothstein the socio-economic conditions of class and poverty are manifested in the way work/unemployment, income/wealth, health and housing contexts create various opportunities and constraints for young people to engage in particular interactions and forms of socialisation that together result in values and norms and experiences that constrain aspirations and attitudes towards education. So for example with regards to work/unemployment Rothstein believes that people living in poverty are less likely to be in work arenas that are challenging. Employment therefore provides less opportunity for

individuals to exercise and/or develop their cognitive abilities. They are more likely to be in disciplined situations and hence not be in a position to effectively question the basis for decisions. They are also more likely to be unemployed which fosters even fewer opportunities to have control over life experiences. These experiences taken together, therefore, are unlikely to provide a positive rationale for education within such families, hindering the development of positive and effective role models for young people. In addition particular cultural values for particular groups who have historically and predominately been located in poverty may have evolved due to the endemic structural disadvantages of, for example, discriminatory labour markets which have influenced the views of black young people and their family towards education.

With regards to income and wealth certain groups of people are more likely to experience poverty most fully over extended periods of time and hence may have less resources/assets to utilise during those periods. This lack of resource is likely to have a chronic impact on families' quality of housing, diet, educational resources and on the general requirements of family living. In addition poverty also manifest itself in social housing with high levels of mobility and hence changes in schools that are likely to have an impact on educational performance. Taken together these factors are likely to impact negatively on the ability of families to support young people in education.

In addition poverty manifest itself in all sorts of ways with regards to young people's health. For example young people in poverty are more likely to experience vision problems that will then impact on their ability to function in school. Hearing and ear infections are also more likely to occur with those in poverty as are oral hygiene and tooth decay problem and asthma which may keep young people awake at night and that may cause extended or frequent absences from school. Other examples include poor nutrition sustained over time, less adequate paediatric care, use of alcohol during and after pregnancy, more exposure to smoke, low birth weights. These separately may not be so important but taken together are likely to have cumulative disadvantage on educational outcomes.

Rothstein then describes how some of those structural factors might be played out in particular proximal contexts of the family, school and peer group situation that may then have a direct influence on educational attainment. For example, Rothstein believes that parents of different social class raise children differently. For example middle class children are more likely to be read to, have books in the home and be able to read before entering school. Also the way they are read to enhances creative and predictive behaviours in children. This is also reflected in the nature of conversations in the home which tend to more open ended with opportunities for elaboration of argument. The same might also be said for the way computers are used in the home. In addition the behavioural expectations of middle class parents and children are more likely to be aligned to the school. Lower-class children living in poverty are often expected by parents to fight back and defend themselves, and these may be to do with the nature of living in poor neighbourhoods. Yet the opposite is sanctioned in school. Homework and the capability to support this work also appear to show differences. In addition middle class kids are more likely to be praised, with young people from poorer backgrounds more likely to receive admonishments than praise. However it also the case that parental aspiration can create some resilience to succeed from groups that on average are less likely to do so. Middle class parents are likely to intervene in schooling if they see it as necessary. Rothstein doesn't suggest that one approach is morally better than another just that the middle class approach is more likely to result in better educational outcomes.

In terms of the interventions to deal with such difficulties Rothstein suggests a number of possibilities that link to both macro and meso level factors. He firstly outlines how to deal with some of the structural factors including income inequality, housing/locational factors and health. With regards to income, he suggests the need to improve the minimum wage and to develop employment opportunities in areas of poverty. With regards to housing his suggestions are for state funds to be increased to establish better and more stable housing but that this be done within a broader housing policy that facilitated the movement of low-income families to mixed neighbourhoods. In terms of health, Rothstein suggests enhancing school-community clinics to enable health provision, support and advice to be more easily and effectively directed to those lower income and poor families and young people that

struggle to access such provision. In terms of the meso level proximal factors that suggestive of the difficulties that people experiencing poverty have in providing supportive educational facilities and environments on a continuous basis throughout the day and more generally throughout the year, Rothstein recommends a variety of interventions. His first is focused on early childhood engagement with formal education from the age of six months onwards so that programmes like Head Start, that commence at 3 years of age, can build on early progress. More extensive after school and summer school programmes would also enable young people to engage with educational activities more of the time during the day and more often throughout the year. These proximal compensatory factors together with attempts to deal with some of the structural dynamics of low income and poverty are costed out in his proposals and he concludes that unless these issues are explicitly confronted and resources made available, schools will continue to fight a losing battle against educational inequality

“... eliminating the social class differences in student outcomes requires eliminating the impact of social class on children in American society. It requires abandoning the illusion that school reform alone can save us from having to make the difficult economic and political decisions that the goal of equality inevitably entails. School improvement does have a role to play, but I cannot shoulder the entire burden, or even most of it, on its own.” (Rothstein, pp 149)

(c) Globalisation, poverty, social exclusion and its impact on education

This particular perspective deriving from researchers such as Maguire (2006) Thomson (2002) and Lipman (2004) attempts to map out how globalisation has exacerbated poverty and social exclusion, particularly in urban contexts, resulting in low educational outcomes in such places.

By globalisation we understand this to mean a process whereby national (and therefore sub-national) economies are located in a global economy which is largely run in accordance with the neo-liberal principles favoured by dominant countries (notably the USA) and dominant institutions (such as the World Bank). The effect of globalisation in this sense is to make it difficult for a country such as the UK to compete on the basis of exploiting natural resources (in the face of competition from much better-resourced parts of the world) or on the basis of low-cost, high-volume manufacture (in the face of competition where labour is much cheaper). As a result, the UK has had to reorient its economy more towards service and high-tech

industries, where the high cost of labour can be justified by the high level of skill deployed by workers.

This in turn has had major implications for those towns and cities in the UK which mushroomed in the industrial revolution and entered the second half of the Twentieth Century as manufacturing centres. Manchester is a case in point (Dyson). As manufacturing industry declined, particularly in the last quarter of the twentieth Century, towns and cities such as Manchester experienced a significant increase in levels of unemployment, poverty and associated social problems. Although the city had long been characterised by inequality, extremes (for England) of disadvantage came to be concentrated in particular parts of the city. The concept of 'social exclusion' for all its problems, captures accurately the sense not only of relative poverty, but of a lack of access to opportunity and participation in common social goods. So, for example, there are researchers who have examined the way geographies of exclusion (Sibley 1995) are emerging both in terms of where people live and where children and young people go to school. These forms of geographical exclusion result in children and young people being constructed as abject and/or considered out of place in specific contexts and in specific schools. Bauder (2002) for instance, uses the notion of cultural exclusion as a way of highlighting how young people from urban neighbourhoods with different reputations (based in part on the ethnic and class make-up of these neighbourhoods) are steered towards particular training and educational opportunities in education. Likewise, Gulson (2004) has suggested that particular forms of urban redevelopment, linked to various area based educational interventions that have focused on developing aspiration towards careers afforded by these developments, have had a debilitating effect on the educational identities of young people and communities in the surrounding areas. At the same time, other social groups, which possess the necessary personal resources, are able to do well out of the new situation, selling their skills for ever-increasing amounts on the labour market. Inevitably, they too congregate in certain parts of the city, contributing to an overall polarisation which was compounded by further divisions along ethnic grounds.

However, the social segregation which has been produced in this way is by no means straightforward. In many towns and cities, communities grew up in the Nineteenth and early twentieth century around major places of employment – factories, mills, coal mines, shipyards and so on – so that many people lived very close to where they worked. Not only had improved transport links changed that situation over many decades, the restructuring of urban economies has relocated places of employment. By and large, concentrations of employment opportunities have moved away from traditional communities and have increasingly been located in city centres or in purpose-built industrial, retail and leisure parks. On the one hand, this has created residualised communities with limited employment opportunities of their own. On the other hand, this has made it more likely that those people who do find work will do so outside their own areas. In that sense, traditional manufacturing areas are both more segregated and better connected than was the case previously.

There have been implications for education too. Whatever the problems with the idea of education as being about ‘learning to labour’ (Willis), even this came to mean little where labour was not needed. On this reading, the problems of urban schools which became so prominent in the political and popular consciousness from the late 1970s onwards can be read partly as a consequence of the social problems consequent upon globalisation and partly as the outcome of a loss of confidence amongst decision makers as to the purposes of education. As Callaghan pointed out in the Ruskin College speech, education may have traditionally been about promoting the ‘flowering of the personality’, but in the new situation, it had also got to contribute to the development of a new high-skills economy. This economic model of education has, of course, driven policy ever since, most notably in the intense focus by New Labour governments on driving up standards of achievement.

As in the labour market, the effects of public sector reforms have been complex and to some extent paradoxical. Service provision is spatially differentiated but the relationship between provision and place is less straightforward. In principle, citizens can exercise some choice over where they access services – which school their children attend, in which hospital they receive treatment, which dentist they go to, and so on. There is, therefore, a highly active

cross-border trade as citizens access services outside their own immediate areas. In turn, service providers compete against one another to recruit users from each other's localities in a way which means that the fate of one provider in the service quasi-market is closely bound up with the fate of others. At the same time, the realities of access and choice mean that different social groups in different places are likely to engage in this trade to greater and lesser extents. Although the outcome of these complex processes are contested – at least in education (Ball, Gorard) – it seems likely that those able to make effective choices do well out of the system, whilst those who are not able are more residualised than might previously have been the case.

One set of intervention strategies suggested by this perspective is to develop community orientated and multi-agency schools that are supportive of the multiple needs of families and young people that have been generated through processes of social exclusion engendered by globalisation. These schools might then provide support structures and skills for those families and young people currently struggling to engage with post-industrialised labour markets. However other perspectives might suggest the need for a more fundamentally-oriented approach. Lloyd and Payne (2003), for instance, argue that progressive education reform aimed at reducing disadvantage is possible, but that it needs to be set in the context of new economic and social models which are themselves less divisive and unequal, including the regulatory frameworks within which schools operate. It is possible, therefore, that changes in schooling to become community orientated and multi-agency can be used simply to mask the worst effects of structural inequalities and educational markets as, some would argue, has been the case in the USA (see, for instance, Moss et al. 1999). This may suggest a more radical agenda for schools, communities and education in poor urban contexts. For schools to be able to make the types of improvements in achievement suggested by Government policy requires that they be part of a much wider set of social and economic reforms aimed at the creation of a more egalitarian society. This might suggest that the social justice challenge for education policy today is one of 'complex hope' (Grace 1994) that Grace defines as 'an optimism of the will that recognises the historical and structural difficulties which need to be

overcome' (Grace 1994: 59).. As the American researcher, Pauline Lipman, surveying successive waves of school reform in Chicago puts it:

...the state of education is deeply embedded in the state of cities and national and global economic and social priorities. Although much needs to be done in schools, putting the onus on them overlooks the impact of the social-economic context. Although much can be done by committed, culturally-relevant, critical educators, the state of education [in urban schools] cannot be separated from the reality of life in deeply impoverished neighbourhoods....Thus, any serious effort to transform public schools ultimately can only succeed as part of a larger local and global social struggle for material redistribution and cultural recognition. (Lipman 2004: 182-183)

Map 3: Narratives and interventions at the meso level (families)

(a) Parental engagement and educational attainment of young people

One study that perhaps examines most fully the impact of parents and families on the educational lives and outcomes of young people is that conducted by Deforges and Abouchaar (2003). They reviewed research findings on the relationship between parental involvement, parental support and family education on pupil achievement and adjustment in schools. Two distinct bodies of literature were discerned. One focussed on describing and understanding the nature, extent, determinants and impact of spontaneously occurring parental involvement on children's educational outcomes. The second body of work is concerned with describing and evaluating attempts to intervene to enhance spontaneous levels of involvement. The latter body of evidence however was too weak to be able to identify firmly which types of intervention worked and which did not. However what they did find was that that recent research on spontaneous levels of parental involvement was generally of a very high quality using advanced statistical techniques to describe the scope and scale of involvement and to discern its unique impact on pupil achievement. Their research highlighted a number of findings.

Firstly parental involvement takes many forms including good parenting in the home, including the provision of a secure and stable environment, intellectual stimulation, parent-child discussion, good models of constructive social and educational values and high aspirations relating to personal fulfilment and good citizenship; contact with schools to share

information; participation in school events; participation in the work of the school; and participation in school governance. Secondly the extent and form of parental involvement is strongly influenced by distal factors including family social class, maternal level of education, material deprivation, maternal psycho-social health and single parent status and, to a lesser degree, by family ethnicity. Thirdly the extent of parental involvement diminishes as the child gets older and is strongly influenced at all ages by the child characteristically taking a very active mediating role. Fourthly parental involvement is strongly positively influenced by the child's level of attainment: the higher the level of attainment, the more parents get involved. Perhaps the most important finding was that parental involvement in the form of 'at-home good parenting' has a significant positive effect on children's achievement and adjustment even after all other factors shaping attainment have been taken out of the equation. In the primary age range the impact caused by different levels of parental involvement is much bigger than differences associated with variations in the quality of schools. The scale of the impact is evident across all social classes and all ethnic groups. However differences between parents in their level of involvement were associated with social class, poverty, health, and also with parental perception of their role and their levels of confidence in fulfilling it. Some parents were also put off by feeling put down by schools and teachers. According to Deforges and Abouchaar the research review affords a clear model of how parental involvement works and in essence is based on the fact that parenting has its greatest influence indirectly through shaping the child's self concept as a learner and through setting high aspirations.

Map 3: Narratives and interventions at the meso level (school)

(a) School improvement and school effectiveness (SESI)

Early work in SESI was predicated on two interrelated hypotheses. One was that educational outcomes were not *entirely* determined by social background. The other (foundational for the movement but less often made explicit) was that it was at the level of the individual educational institution – notably, the school – that the link between background and outcomes could most effectively be broken. For many years, therefore, work in SESI focused on identifying the factors in school organisation and leadership, in classroom practice and

teacher behaviour, and in policies impacting on these which could generate positive outcomes from schools regardless of the backgrounds of those schools' students. Crucially, there was an assumption that these factors would be common to all schools. While, therefore, schools with concentrations of students from disadvantaged backgrounds might have to work harder than their counterparts elsewhere, school context did not change the characteristics that schools needed to develop in order to be effective.

These assumptions carried over into policy in England (and also in the US). The 1988 Education reform Act established a system which significantly increased central – rather than local – control over schools and which made schools accountable for the performance of their students. Although schools in disadvantaged urban contexts were recognised as presenting significant problems (HMI city schools, inner-London literacy), the assumption was that it was the schools themselves – and, in particular, the practices of their teachers, headteachers and supervising LEAs – which created the problem rather than simply the social context in which those schools found themselves. There was, therefore, minimal recognition that context needed to be taken into account other than to find ways of requiring schools and LEAs to adopt universal principles of good practice

From 1997, there was, arguably, a greater recognition of the role of context and a greater willingness to target energy and resources on schools serving disadvantaged populations (for instance, through Education Action Zones and Excellence in Cities – see section 4). There was a recognition that such schools had to work harder than others elsewhere, though the assumption was that what they had to work harder at was developing the same practices as other schools in more advantaged circumstances (HMI Improving City Schools). It remained the case that the fundamental explanation offered by policy makers for the poor outcomes of children in disadvantaged areas lay in the quality of the schooling they were offered. The aim was, therefore, to drive up that quality to the point where those children's disadvantages would disappear. In many ways, the current schools white paper shares these same assumptions, but looks to a reconstruction of the wider structures of school governance.

Lupton's (2005) work, can be seen as useful in helping critique the way in which school improvement and effectiveness takes for granted a particular notion of 'quality' in schools which is then heralded as the way all schools should be. She argues that some of what OfSTED assess through the school inspection protocol is actually outcome rather than process such as attainment and attendance and that the main problem of quality assessment comes from the fact that 'quality' issues are seen as being the responsibility of the schools themselves. Here Lupton summarises the distinctive features of the contexts of high-poverty schools and secondly illustrates how these contexts impact on the processes and practices of the schools looking specifically at quality. In terms of the distinctive features of these schools in high-poverty contexts, Lupton argues they are characterised by an unpredictability in the working environment. She argues that although these schools are differentiated, they have in common many things not shared by schools in less disadvantaged areas, these included: low prior attainment; poverty manifesting itself in poor health and diets, lack of uniforms, equipment and parental contributions for enrichment activities. Lupton also argues that these schools tend to have an emotionally charged atmosphere with children often sharing these emotions with teachers and as such, the teachers she interviewed talked of 'mothering' and 'caring' for the children and the comparative of 'social work' was also used (Lupton, 2005: 594-5).

Regarding how such contexts impacted upon teachers, the following were included: difficulties in staff recruitment and retention due to not only the context but the perceived underperformance of the school and bad local press; pressures on teacher performance whereby daily 'firefighting' would divert teachers' attention away from teaching and learning and could lead to lowered expectations of themselves as teachers as well as of the pupils due to a 'good lesson' being viewed as one whereby the pupils stay on task most of the time; pressure on management performance whereby alongside all of the usual daily managerial jobs, a standard number of heads and deputies also have daily incidents to deal with and the added role of liaising with learning support and LEA individuals (Lupton, 2005: 596-9). Lupton argues that all of these problems stem from inadequate funding arrangements as they on the whole run on the same amounts of funding as schools with none of these additional issues

besides teaching and learning. Lupton argues that things can be changed fundamentally by changing the context of the schools i.e. by altering the intake of the schools. Secondly and more likely she argues, is by providing more resources so in effect, unequal distribution of resources to help equal up quality and alongside this, a review of the problematic decontextualised conceptualisation of quality that takes only raw test scores as the top indicator of quality and which blatantly favours middle class schooling success. She argues a critical understanding of what goes on outside the school is needed to ensure social justice gets on the agenda.

Map 3: *Narratives and interventions at the meso level (neighbourhood & peer group)*

Lupton's (2004) work sets out to review the existing research literature exploring the relationship between high-poverty areas and supposed low-quality schooling. She uses quantitative literature to highlight the links between low-quality schools and high-poverty areas, uses qualitative research studies to help illuminate the various ways this relationship has been explained and lastly, she offers some research findings of her own to show the complexities of the relationship. It is important to point out that Lupton sees poverty as the main reason for the connection between high-poverty areas and low-quality schooling, and sees the main way to raise attainment in poor neighbourhoods is through the alleviation/reduction of child poverty in Britain rather through any processes that focus on the school. However, although Lupton is clear that poverty per se is the problem, she argues that school processes despite only having a small part to play in the attainment levels of children, play a part that is not insignificant.

Lupton makes explicit that existing work clearly illustrates that local environments of concentrated poverty impact on what schools do and she adds that different local contexts impact on their local schools differently which can explain why not all schools in high-poverty neighbourhoods are assessed as being of the same quality. For example, local labour markets, differing social networks and the areas' level of pro-school commitment have an impact over and above individual poverty. Her exploration does however make clear that neighbourhood poverty is not as relevant to a school's assessed quality as is the actual

school-level poverty. Lupton argues that there are quality problems in public service organisations generally too and not just schools in poor neighbourhoods that perpetuate the problems in such areas. Although Lupton's work assumes that the level of the problem is most definitely located at the macro-level, ie through the very existence of poverty, her work explores the impact at the meso level and makes ameliorative recommendations to improve the problem which is largely in the shape of a critique against school improvement genres that do take a contextualised approach to the assessment of quality in schools. She is adamant that differences not only exist between school processes of schools in high-poverty areas and those in relative affluence, but also that they differ between schools situated within high-poverty neighbourhood contexts too.

Lupton argues that notions of 'neighbourhood effects' are usually concerned with identifying characteristics of neighbourhoods that have an effect greater than the aggregate effects of population composition on individuals. She argues that although there was evidence of particular neighbourhood effects such as house prices around schools and schools say investing funds into security to deal with crime, the largest effect was found to be linked to characteristics of the pupils which in turn has an effect on school processes. Lupton also points out however that it is not merely the neighbourhood that effects school populations but rather, the situation is mediated with and through local school markets and via the institutional characteristics of schools.

Interestingly, what Lupton found in her own research was that the schools with the higher levels of poverty amongst pupils as well as the highest ethnic minority intakes may actually have more of a beneficial effect on schools processes than some in lower-poverty areas. For example, in areas with higher concentrations of ethnic minorities where non-English speaking students are common, there could be a more pro-school ethos amongst say Muslim and African Christian pupils or where immigrant families had moved to Britain to improve themselves and thus this helps result in a more supportive home background toward schooling. She found this very different to the white working-class communities she explored where she explained there was less of a pro-school ethos conditioned through several

generations of poor school success. So, Lupton draws a distinction between the ways in which socio-economic contexts creates barriers to learning and the ways in which cultural contexts can enable or hinder learning. She also draws attention to the geographical location of the context and the ways in which different areas are very much shaped by the economic opportunity and local labours which means that opportunities vary significantly. Lupton further adds that the ways in which schools are regarded by local and wider communities i.e. the schools' reputations, also impacts on the self-esteem of pupils as does living in stigmatised areas. Furthermore, Lupton also makes explicit that how staff within schools interpret the context also impacts on their responses and school processes at an individual teacher level as well as an institution level.

So the picture presented by Lupton on neighbourhood effects is that the biggest neighbourhood effect is school composition but within that, there are a whole array of factors that mean that neighbourhood effects are far from simplistic but rather are multiple and complex.

Bauder (2002) approaches the notion of neighbourhood effects through reflecting upon arguments in existing literature and drawing reference to the ideological underpinnings of the notion of neighbourhood effects. He suggests that the idea of neighbourhood effects implies that the demographic context of poor neighbourhoods instills 'dysfunctional' norms, values and behaviours into youths, triggering a cycle of social pathology. It is argued that neighbourhood effects are part of a wider discourse of inner-city marginality that stereotypes inner-city neighbourhoods. In effect, this leads to what Bauder sees as essentialist conceptions of neighbourhood culture among employers, educators and institutional staff which then further contributes to the neighbourhood effects phenomenon. Therefore Bauder is critiquing the use of the term neighbourhood effects and says it is similar to urban underclass theories which essentialises culture and argues it is this that leads to marginality. It implies that residents are ultimately responsible for their own social and economic situation and he argues that the concept of neighbourhood effects has three main mechanisms it uses to place the responsibility for failure within the community: firstly through peer groups,

secondly through concentrated poverty and adult role-models and thirdly through the physical infrastructures and institutional networks (which trigger the first two). Amongst other things. Bauder concludes by arguing that neighbourhood effects discourses are a vital part of the underclass thesis which blames neighbourhoods for dysfunctional cultures that lead to social and economic marginality and problems and links neighbourhood to individual behaviour and social/economic outcomes. He argues that neighbourhood effects discourses are an ideological project that seeks to blame people for their misfortune and neighbourhood effects also provides legitimate stereotypes to employers, educators and so on to continue in this neighbourhood pathologisation.

Map 3: Narratives and interventions at the micro/individual level

(a) Individual (gene) and meso (environment) level interface

Much new and exciting work crosses the boundary between the individual and the environmental and examines the interface between biological processes and environmental factors that generate psychopathological responses. Of particular interest here is what Rutter (2003) refers to as gene-environment interaction (GxE), which refers to genetically influenced differences in individuals' sensitivity to particular environmental factors, and gene-environment correlations (rGE), which refer to genetically influenced differences in individuals' liability or exposure to particular environmental factors. His view is that until very recently, much genetic research was concerned with partitioning population variance into effects attributable to genes and those due to environmental influences, with the implicit assumptions that these effects summed to 100% and that no others could be involved. According to Rutter, both sets of assumptions are mistaken. Segregating genes (ie those that vary among individuals) and specific environments do not account for all variance. Biological maturation (genetically programmed by genes present in all people) may influence resilience. In other words, both normal and abnormal psychological development will be influenced by not only G and E acting independently and additively but also by a combination of G and E interacting through both GxE and rGE. Examples of this include notions of neural plasticity where there is structural and functional re-organisation of the brain in response to environmental inputs such as experiences of violence. Evidence suggests that adverse environmental effects influence

not only the startle reflex, but also the neural network that underlines this response. In addition there is also much evidence that environmental factors over time can also influence children's inherited attributes including IQ and individual temperaments. So for example, young people living in unsupportive and poor stimulating environments are likely to see their IQ diminish over time. There is a view therefore that heritability does not imply intractability but that risk factors associated with certain environmental elements can have very negative influences on apparently heritable traits.

Section 4 - Map 3 and UK educational policy on schooling and disadvantage

Map 3: UK policy on schooling and disadvantage – mapping the initiatives

Up to now we have focused our discussion on particular types of explanations and interventions associated with poverty and education. We now move to examine how current UK educational policy has evolved with regards to this debate and in particular the types of theoretical explanations that are used to underpin particular policy interventions.

Following a period in which issues around disadvantage and the relationship between socio-economic disadvantage and low educational achievement were, arguably, under-played, New Labour policy since 1997 has once again begun to take these issues seriously – whatever the limitations of the government's overall approach may be (Whitty, 2001). Moreover, there has been an attempt to construct a theoretical narrative to explain the background-achievement-life-chances relationship within a wider discourse about disadvantage and equity, drawing particularly on the concept of social exclusion and focused on the work of the Social Exclusion Unit (Unit, 2001b, Unit, 2004a, Unit, 2004b). The concept of social exclusion is, however, by no means entirely clear or coherent, at least as used by policy-makers (Alexiadou, 2002). As Levitas points out, it draws on at least three different discourses – one emphasising the (complex) effects of poverty, one the effects of worklessness and one the effects of moral and cultural impoverishment. (Levitas, 1998, Levitas, 2003).

Whatever the contradictions and ambiguities in the concept of social exclusion, we can see how its different constituent discourses interact to inform policy. In one account of the

government's policies on social exclusion, for instance, Tony Blair focused on the complex interactions between different aspects of poverty:

Social exclusion is a shorthand label for what can happen when individuals or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown. The Government have policies that are targeted at reducing all of these individually, but Government programmes have been less good at tackling the interaction between these problems or preventing them from arising in the first place. The purpose of the unit is to help break this vicious circle and co-ordinate and improve Government action to reduce social exclusion...(Blair, 1997a)

This understanding of complex interactions is suggestive of some of the macro systemic narratives highlighted above. The argument being suggested is that clear economic, social and cultural structures were creating problems of unemployment, poor skills, bad health and family breakdowns.

Elsewhere, however, Tony Blair emphasised cultural effects – what he described as a loss of 'the will to win':

For 18 years, the poorest people in our country have been forgotten by government. They have been left out of growing prosperity, told that they were not needed, ignored by the Government except for the purpose of blaming them. I want that to change. There will be no forgotten people in the Britain I want to build. We need to act in a new way because fatalism, and not just poverty, is the problem we face, the dead weight of low expectations, the crushing belief that things cannot get better. I want to give people back the will to win again. (Blair, 1997b)

Here the focus appears to be on the cultural deficits that families and communities living in poverty demonstrate. One might suggest that this view of social exclusion seems to focus on the meso level with a suggestion that families and communities are socialising future generations into values of dependency and low expectations and these forms of socialisation are amenable to change via particular interventions.

At other times, he has emphasised the role of worklessness and, in particular, the role of the education system in enabling young people to find and keep work:

Why are we so keen to raise standards in our schools? Because the quickest route to the workless class is to fail your English and maths class. In today's world, the more you learn, the more you earn.

(Blair, 1997b)

And this final issue of worklessness appears to focus on individual attainment and the need to create an experience of schooling for young people that develops their aspirations and

abilities to achieve English and Maths, to progress onto further and higher education and then into meaningful employment. This would then enable them to contribute fully to societal growth and well-being. At the same time the focus appears to be about developing environmental opportunities for adults to gain employment which will then make them more effective role models for young people within such families.

Understood in this way, the varied use of the concept of social exclusion goes some way towards identifying the very mixed set of rationales that appear to underpin New Labour's approach to the education and disadvantage relationship. Above all, education seems to be viewed as the pathway to enhanced life chances and to breaking the deterministic effects of social background. As the current Secretary of State for Education, Ruth Kelly, for instance, has recently restated the government's commitment to creating:

...a situation where people don't have their life chances predominantly determined by their background, rather than their own ability and efforts.

(Kelly, 2005)

In this task, she argues:

Sure start centres, schools, colleges and universities are the cradles of aspiration and achievement that embody the hopes we all have for our children. That is why I see my department as the department for life chances. And that is why I see it as my job to boost social mobility.

This view of the centrality of the role of education underpins a policy approach based on what Tony Blair called "an unprecedented crusade to raise standards" (Blair, 1999). The principal features of this approach are well-documented in terms of a focus on the reform of educational structures and practices, the continuing marketisation of the education system and the creation of a culture of performativity (Phillips & Harper-Jones, 2003). Over and above the standards focus on all schools there has been a series of programmes and projects – notably, Education Action Zones and Excellence in Cities initiatives, Connexions and Full Service Extended Schools (FSES) – which have delivered additional resources, flexibilities and accountabilities to schools serving more disadvantaged populations. These initiatives have retained a focus on educational standards as the pathway to enhanced life chances but have acknowledged the spatial concentration of low achievement and the particular difficulties faced by some schools in driving up standards.

Lets look at the main aspects of each one these in turn and examine some of the possible underpinning rationales for each initiative. Excellence in Cities has a number of strands of activity that in many respects focuses on individual pupil development within the school. Funds to support the appointment of Learning mentors provided opportunities for targeting additional guidance and support to pupils most “at risk” of failing within the system. These at risk pupils were often denoted as having dysfunctional families, behaviour disorders, poor aspirations, low self-esteem risk, health difficulties etc factors that developmental psychologist would suggest required protective variables to be put in place to obviate possible vulnerability. As Luthar highlighted above, warm, supported and concerted adult relationships can assist provide some level of protection against these risk factors and in many respects the learning mentor’s role is to provide some aspects of this role. The Talented and Gifted strand within Excellence in Cities recognised that many young people who are naturally gifted are not achieving appropriate educational success within schools and in addition did not have aspirations for further and higher education. Additional targeted curriculum initiatives, after school clubs, and summer schools were provided as way of trying to counter potentially poor environmental factors in the home and community that appeared to be having deleterious effects on pupil IQ over time and on self-esteem The final strand within the Excellence in Cities initiative was The City Technology Centres that were implemented not only to provide additional resources to support resource deficient schools and improve pupil ICT skills but also a community resources to enhancing parental access to education. This might then provide skills and credentials that would then translate into improved work opportunities and ultimately enhanced aspirations towards lifelong learning that would shape the educational support given to children in those families. So these three strands worked at both the individual and meso levels.

The Connexions service was clearly focused on providing both individual support and careers advice to young people. However much of the new service was targeted on young people deemed to at risk of failing within the education system either by drop out or underachieving. The initiative focused on developing in young people reflexivity and rational decision making skills that would help them with their own individual self development, career exploration and

career management. Personal Advisors from the Connexions Service provide access to information, advice and guidance on careers issues that might enable young people to reflect, make decisions and progress. For the most vulnerable, at risk and disadvantaged young people Personal Advisors also undertook a one-on-one support via an 18 point assessment, planning, implementation and review process that attempted to systematically personalise young people's ownership of their careers decision and actions with a view to empowering them to remove barriers and develop resilience and agency with regards to transition. Having made a choice based on this individualised reflexivity, young people were then expected to undertake courses and programmes of study that met their aspirations and needs. Here the focus was very much on choice biographies and the recognition that previous taken for granted transition trajectories for young people had all but vanished. There was also a recognition that young people who were most vulnerable or at risk again required this detailed and on-going support from a Personal Advisor who would not only advise but act as trusting advocate for the young person.

Overall Excellence in Cities and Connexions appear to link most clearly into a discourse of parental, community and individual deficit that in part draw from the risk and resilience paradigm in that many of the strands of activity highlighted by these initiatives attempt to moderate risk factor. One might argue that there is little in these initiatives that moves us beyond using deficit cultural notion or that certainly positively attempted to celebrate forms of agency that constituted the way young people, families and communities in their varying contexts actually went about their lives and the values and orientations and practices that informed the way this was done.

The latest policy development of full service extended schools (FSES) constitutes a focal point at which strategies for raising educational standards overall, strategies for targeting support to schools serving disadvantaged populations, and strategies for tackling neighbourhood and family problems intersect. The first moves in this direction emerged under the aegis of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and were seen as part of a multi-strand

approach to neighbourhood disadvantage (DfEE, 1999a). The rationale for FSES offered by the original Schools Plus report is particularly informative and suggests that:

poor attainment by young people in disadvantaged areas is often reflected in parental achievement and expectations. Disadvantaged areas, while often having a diverse population, have disproportionate levels of workless households and high unemployment, and will too often be characterised by adults with low basic skills and low levels of qualifications. Continuing and adult education can be a crucial factor in improving life chances and employability, as well as in raising parents' expectations for their children, and students' own expectations for themselves.

(DfEE, 1999a): 16)

In this situation, schools can act as,

...a focal point – somewhere where people of all ages can meet. These can use sports and leisure facilities and take part in lifelong learning, also act as a base for community groups. For many communities – particularly where other services have been withdrawn or reduced – schools can act as this focus. Schools, in partnership with others including colleges and local businesses, are often well placed to offer second chance learners opportunities to undertake courses locally. This can help to improve key skills and lead to wider employment prospects. As well as improving adults' employability and general skills, such activity can have a positive effect on young people. Parents act as positive role models for learning, homework is seen as a shared activity and parents' expectations for their children and young people's own expectations can be raised.

(DfEE, 1999a): 16-17)

These arguments relate closely to the government's conceptualisation of social exclusion which we outlined above. Worklessness and education remain at the heart of the analysis. Adults are workless because they lack the skills to make them employable. Worklessness corrodes their 'will to win' and leads to lowered expectations. These are then transmitted to children who expect little of themselves and have no role models for how to be effective learners. FSES can reverse this cycle by re-engaging adults in learning, raising their expectations and creating positive role models for children and young people to follow. However, the multi-dimensional conceptualisation of social exclusion implies a multi-strand role for FSES. The idea of schools as 'focal points' for communities, for instance, hints at some concern with fragmentation as a characteristic of disadvantaged communities and with cohesion (Cantle, 2001) as a desirable outcome. Similarly, the role for community-oriented schools within the more recent *Every Child Matters* agenda (DfES, 2003a, DfES, 2004a, DfES, 2004b) focuses on the delivery of services for children and families which will address their health and social needs rather than – or as a pathway to – raising their expectations and achievements. In the same way, the detailed guidance on FSES proposes no fewer than 23 possible outcomes from community-oriented schools, ranging from improved access to

childcare and ICT, through reductions in health inequalities and the number of unemployed people, to better school security and improvements in students' behaviour (DfES, 2003b). In other words, FSES are expected to intervene in the multiple problems which beset children, families and communities living in disadvantage. However, at the heart of these interventions is a commitment to education as the pathway to achievement and hence to employment and social inclusion – and to raised expectations as a necessary precondition of raised achievement.

Map 3: UK policy on schooling and disadvantage – an over reliance on meso level factors?

If we now return to notions of systemic and meso level factors highlighted above, a number of features of the rationale for Excellence in Cities, Connexions and FSES focus heavily on factors that are meso level and proximal to individual children's educational achievements. As schools within the overall 'crusade for standards', they focus on the classroom and institutional processes which impact most directly on children's learning. They intervene with regards to meso level factors by focusing on family functioning in terms of the health and social needs of families, but also in terms of family expectations and attitudes towards learning. They intervene in neighbourhoods by creating focal points for communities, increasing the skills levels and employability of local people and changing expectations.

Almost totally absent are the more macro level systemic and structuring factors which might be thought to underpin and explain these meso proximal factors. For instance, much is made of the potential impact of FSES on the expectations, achievements and employability of young people and adults. It is clear that these schools are intended to contribute to the (much contested) system-wide drive to create a high-skills economy by driving up standards of educational achievement (Lloyd & Payne, 2003, Robinson, 1997, Wolf, 2002). It is also true that FSES have a reduction in adult unemployment as one of their targets (DfES, 2003b), presumably through piloting the provision of childcare to release parents to work more flexibly, while, like other schools, many of them employ relatively small numbers of local residents in various capacities (Cummings et al., 2005). However, the emphasis is very much on preparing and enabling local people to be more competitive in the existing local labour

market rather than on more direct and radical interventions to change the nature of that market that created social exclusion and poverty in the first instance.

Similarly, although it seems that FSES are expected to make a contribution to overcoming the multiple problems of disadvantaged areas, it is much less clear what they should or could do to prevent those concentrations of disadvantage appearing in the first place. There is no sense in government guidance that schools should be linked to local housing, community development, or regeneration strategies aimed at dispersing concentrations of disadvantage and reducing the incidence of disadvantage overall – much less that they should contribute to sub-regional or regional strategies in these fields. On the contrary, their emergence in areas of disadvantage and poverty seems to indicate an acceptance that such areas must inevitably exist and that the only strategy available is to concentrate service provision to match the concentration of disadvantage. In fact, there are powerful counter-arguments in favour of opening up such areas to the opportunities presented by the wider conurbation (Katz, 2004) and using FSES as a means of retaining more advantaged families in otherwise disadvantaged areas (Silverman et al., 2005). FSES also, of course, sit within and leave unchallenged a marketised school system which, at the very least, does nothing to reduce the hierarchisation of schools and communities (Gorard, 2000) and arguably exacerbates the situation (Ball et al., 1996, Gewirtz et al., 1995)

Perhaps in part because of this apparent lack of concern with systemic factors, it is debatable how far there is any desire by the government to explore the full array of theoretical possibilities and associated intervention opportunities. Certainly, at the level of the activities which schools through the various initiatives highlight above are expected to undertake, there is a distinct sense of multiple, disconnected responses or implementation of mediating resilience variable to deal with multiple at risk factors or problems. The focus on educational expectations and achievements offers a degree of coherence but there is no further exploration of how worklessness arises, how workless people come to be concentrated in particular neighbourhoods, how far 'low expectations' account for differential achievements between different social groups, how worklessness, low expectations and low achievements

relate to poor health outcomes and high levels of street crime - or a host of other questions which arise in respect of disadvantaged people and areas. As with the underpinning 'metaphor' of social exclusion, repeated statements to the effect that problems are multiple and connected take the place of any deeper explanation of process.

It is also noticeable that the rationale emphasises environmental cultural explanations of and remedies for disadvantage. What Levitas (Levitas, 1998, Levitas, 2003) calls the 'moral underclass discourse' tends to predominate in the sense that local people are seen as lacking in appropriate expectations – Blair's 'will to win'. Such a view, of course, constructs communities as lacking in resources, unable to help themselves and therefore as dependent on the energising interventions of their local community-oriented school. It is, as Lister (Lister, 2004) points out, part of a process of 'Othering' the poor whereby not only are they robbed of their dignity by the non-poor, but they are denied their agency through which they might take action in respect of the situation in which they are placed, policy actions that ironically might in fact harden up systemic factors.

Questions: this is where we are up to. In the seminar we would welcome perspectives on this journey: conceptual development, issues raised and carried forward; issues we have raised and lost sight of.

Overall, we would like to test Map 3, and to use a metaphor from the Advisory Group, we would like words, ideas, conceptualisations to be thrown at it so that all aspects of our thinking are subject to review, challenge and affirmation.

Our job after the conference will be to gather thoughts and ideas, and from this develop and use a final Map 4!

Thank you for your anticipated contribution.

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