**Introduction to Sociology**

Chapter 10 “Resources”: Assignments

**10.1 Human Capital**

**Q1.**

Sociologists are interested in the role of social capital and discrimination in understanding inequality in the labor market. Why is it, when studying the role of social capital and discrimination, important to consider the role of human capital?

**10.2 Social Capital**

**Q1**

Suppose a student just graduated from her education to become carpenter. According to sociologists, social resources are important for her in finding a job. But what kind of social resources help her best finding a job as a carpenter? Can you decide which of the following three type of connections in her personal network may be most helpful to her for the purpose of finding a job as carpenter: (a) lawyers and CEO’s, (b) carpenters, (c) having a highly occupational diverse network.

**10.3 Group affiliation and discrimination**

**Q1**

Suppose that employers systematically discriminate job candidates who have tattoos. This is because, after having been exposed to media messages and stories about criminal gangs in which people with tattoos played a prominent role, employers acquired the belief that people with tattoos are less likely to work hard at their job, and more often involved in criminal activities. Which type of discrimination is this?

**Q2.**

Suppose that an employer has a lot of tattoos and prefers to hire people who have tattoos as well. Which type of discrimination is this?

**10.4 Inequality of outcomes, opportunities and returns**

**Q1**

Family structure is part of people’s social background. Explain how differences in the labor market may emerge between on the one hand children of divorced parents, and on the other hand children whose parents are together. Use the concepts ‘inequality of opportunity’ and ‘inequality of returns’ in answering this question.

**Q2**

Suppose we study a certain authoritarian society, in which the power is in the hands of a single political party (‘Party’). It appears that members of the Party have privileged positions in the labor market –higher earnings, more authority and higher status jobs. Children born in families who are Party members inherit the privileged positions of their parents.

Q2a. Can we speak of ‘inequality of outcomes’ in this case? If so, in which way?

Q2b. Can we speak of ‘inequality of opportunities’ and ‘inequality of returns’ in this case? If so, in which way? You may speculate about how the processes in this imaginary society in answering this question.

Q2c. Suppose someone challenges the claim that in this authoritarian taste-based discrimination based on Party membership is so important. Rather, this person argues, it is human capital that causes the inequality to arise between children whose parents are Party members and children whose parents are not Party members. How would you go about testing whether children whose parents are Party members are treated favorably in the labor market?

**10.5 Gender Inequality**

**Q1**

A key stylized finding is that, generally speaking, men have better labor market positions than women in contemporary societies. Suppose that you discuss this fact, and the underlying sociological causes, with a friend of yours. Your friend, however, disagrees with your sociological perspective, and instead favors an individual perspective. Your friend argues that these gender difference are due to biological factors instead of social conditions. Specifically, your friend claims that boys are born with more talents for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics –and that these STEM talents give them an advantage in the labor market. In order to find out what the empirics say about this, please visit the website <https://ourworldindata.org/biology-pay-gap> . Scroll to the part on “boys are better at maths.” After reading the report, answer the following questions:

Q1a. What evidence can your friend find in the article for the claim that boys are born with more talents for mathematics?

Q1b. What evidence can you provide in favor of the sociological perspective on gender differences in math scores? Give two arguments.