**Introduction to Sociology**

Chapter 9 “Stratification and Mobility”: Assignments

**9.1 Happiness**

**Q1**.

Download the *World Happiness Report 2020*, which you can access via this link: <https://worldhappiness.report/ed/2020/>

Q1a. Can you formulate a theoretical question about happiness in Finland as compared to Indonesia?

Q1b. Can you come up with an answer to your theoretical question? Use a theory schema, and specify which is your (1) proposition, (2) condition, (3) observation.

Q1c. Suppose someone states that all people in Finland are happier than people in Indonesia. Would you agree? Use evidence from the report when answering this question.

**9.2 Social class and status**

**Q1.**

Sociologists rank occupations in terms of their subjective prestige or status. Can you compile a list of 10 occupations, and ask five people (e.g., other students, friends, family members) to rank each of these 10 occupations. Make sure that they make a top 10 ranking such that number 1 on their list is the most prestigious occupation in their view and number 10 the least prestigious occupation. Also make sure that they make their judgement independently. So, don’t show them each other’s answers. Are your results in line with the “Treiman constant”?

**9.4 Long-term changes in stratification**

**Q1.**

Visit the following link and view the figure “Inequality in 1990 and 2015” from *Our World in Data*. <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/gini-index-around-2015-1990-2015-countries-vs-gini-index-around-1990-1990-2015-countries>

Q1a. Can you find one country with very high levels of inequality in 1990? And can you name one country with very low levels of inequality in 1990?

Q1b. What does it mean if a country is above the diagonal line? And what if it is below the diagonal?

Q1c. According to the theory proposed by British social epidemiologists Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, ‘the higher the income inequality in a country, the more social problems there are in that country’ (see Chapter 9, Box 9.1). Can you use the figure from Our World in Data (which presents changing income inequality within countries) to derive a prediction from this proposition? Use a theory schema when answering this question, and specify (1) proposition, (2) condition, (3) hypothesis (prediction).

Q1d. One of the indicators that Wilkinson and Pickett used for their ‘index of social problems’ was the homicide rate in a country. Visit the webpage <https://ourworldindata.org/homicides>, and try to find figures about homicide rates in 1990 and 2015. Are the findings in line with the hypothesis (prediction) you have derived?

**9.5 Social mobility**

**Q1.**

Suppose you are employed by the government of a country with high levels of inequality. After the recent elections, the grounds on which the current party rose to power was the promise of enacting policy in favor of an equality principle. That is, in the context of this hypothetical country, the statement that everyone is born equal, and status should be determined by one’s ideas and success (a meritocracy if you will). If you were to advise the policy makers, which type of mobility are you mainly tackling? Intergenerational or intragenerational mobility?

**9.6 Ascription and Achievement**

**Q1.**

Can you relate the concept of ‘ascription’ to the concept of ‘intergenerational mobility’?

**9.7 Modernization and mobility theory**

**Q1.**

The modernization and mobility theory argues that one’s opportunities in getting ahead in the labor market depend on family origin, and the level of modernization in the country. Suppose someone asks you to make a prediction about Japan and Uganda: in which country does someone’s labor market position depend most strongly on their family origin. What would you say, based on modernization-mobility theory?

**9.8 Cultural reproduction theory**

**Q1.**

Cultural reproduction theory states that counterforces emerge as a response to modernization processes. Suppose we want to examine whether this cultural reproduction theory makes sense. We empirically want to test the theory, by making a prediction about Japan and Uganda. In which country, according to cultural reproduction theory, would you expect the strongest level of parental transmission of cultural capital: Japan or Uganda? Explain your answer.