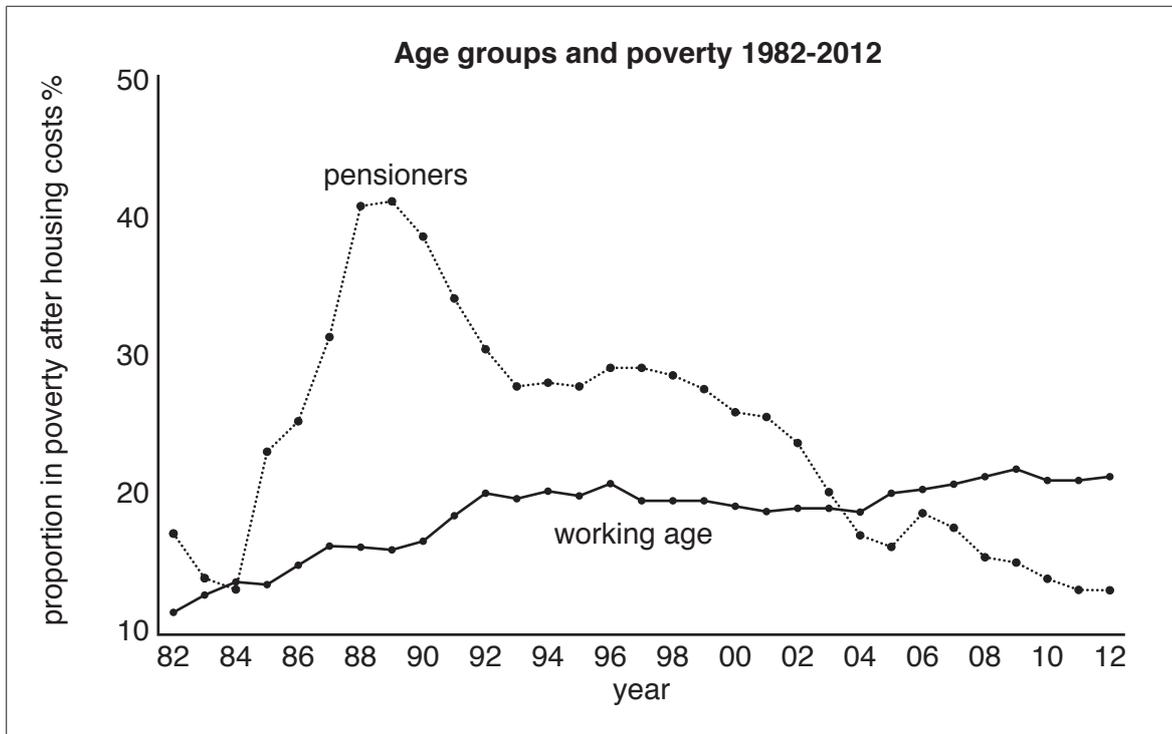


SECTION A

Read the source material and answer **all** the questions.

Source A



Source: Tom MacInnes et al. (2014) *Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion 2014*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Source B

Gary Crawford and Victoria Gosling carried out a study into women's participation in digital gaming. The research was based on a questionnaire distributed to 392 undergraduate students at Sheffield's two universities studying on Sociology, Social Work or Cultural Studies degrees at the end of 2003 and beginning of 2004. This questionnaire consisted of 30 short, mainly closed-ended, questions. This was then followed up via 23 (11 male and 12 female) face-to-face interviews with students, who were selected simply on the basis of their willingness and availability to participate in a follow up interview.

The researchers admitted that their sample was not fully representative as it was based on an opportunity sample of undergraduate social science students. For instance, though the age of respondents in the questionnaire sample group ranged from 18 to 55, 91% of these were between the ages of 18 and 21. It is also notable that nearly 99% of respondents indicated their ethnicity as 'white'. Due to social science degrees generally attracting a high proportion of female students, 63% (of the total 392) questionnaire respondents were female. However, significantly fewer women (only 50% of women, compared with 93% of men) indicated that they had played a digital game 'in the last three months'. This meant that of the original sample 133 men (from an overall sample of 143) and 124 women (from an overall sample of 249) had recently played digital games and were able to answer further questions about their experiences of this.

The research indicated that women appeared a lot less likely to play digital games, and those who did, played these a lot less frequently than their male peers. While many men actively encourage women to play digital games, games continue to be designed and targeted primarily towards men. The study supports other research which found that gaming continues to be frequently controlled and regulated by male family members. Hence, many women still do not see gaming as 'theirs'. The research suggests that when women leave the family home, such as to go away to university, they appear significantly less likely than their male counterparts to continue playing these games.

The study also showed that some women do play digital games, and for some this can be both an important and sociable leisure activity. For instance, some women enjoyed playing genres of games that would have primarily been designed and marketed towards men, such as sport related games, while some gamers preferred more 'feminine' or gender neutral games, such as dance mat games, while others had no interest in gaming at all. There still appears to be a significant divide in the experiences of many male and female gamers. In particular, what proved quite notable in this research is the tendency for many women to play games on mobile telephones. The reason offered for this, is that mobile telephones tend to be less gendered than many other information and communication technologies; hence, these are often more readily accessible to women and less controlled by men. However, this does not mean that these were necessarily less sociable, and for some, could prove a popular source of conversation and interaction between friends.

Adapted from G. Crawford and V. Gosling (2004) 'Toys for Boys? Women's Marginalization and Participation as Digital Gamers' *Sociological Research Online*, Volume 10, Issue 1.

- 1 Summarise the data shown in **Source A**. [4]

- 2 Explain **two** possible problems with the representativeness of the samples used in the research summarised in **Source B**. [6]

- 3 With reference to **Source A**, explain **one** advantage and **one** disadvantage of sociologists using quantitative data to study poverty. [10]

- 4* Using **Source B** and your wider sociological knowledge, explain and evaluate the use of a combination of questionnaires and in-depth interviews for researching women's involvement in digital gaming. [25]

SECTION B

Answer **all** the questions.

- 5*** Outline ways that age is a form of social inequality in British society today. **[20]**
- 6*** Assess the view that in the UK status and financial rewards are based on individuals' talents and efforts. **[40]**

END OF QUESTION PAPER

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