

The Polytechnic  
of North London



## **PLAYGROUND TO POLITICS**

A study of values and attitudes among  
fifth formers in a North London  
comprehensive school

### **USERS' MANUAL**

compiled by  
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## Introduction

This survey was conducted by Paul Ahmed, Harriet Cain and Alan Cook under the supervision of John Hall. They were second year students at the Polytechnic of North London and the survey constituted their group project for Part I of the B.A. (Hons) Applied Social Studies. It was designed to investigate the social values and attitudes of fifth formers, with special reference to racism and sexism.

The sample was taken from a coeducational, multi-racial North London school and comprised all the fifth formers present on one particular day (16th December 1981), yielding a sample size of 142 people. A self completion questionnaire was used (see Appendix A), which had been piloted before the main fieldwork took place. At the pilot the questionnaire had taken about 35 minutes to complete but the final sample tended to take longer which led to some loss of data through incomplete questionnaires (see Note 4).

The majority of questions were fixed-alternative although a few open-ended questions were used which were then coded using the instructions shown in Appendix C. Most were single coded and where multi coding was used the method of transferring the data to the computer is explained in Note 2.

The arrangement of variables in the manual follows the questionnaire and the order of data on the original punched cards is retained apart from questions 12 and 13 where too few columns were allocated to the question at the design stage. The first digit in the variable name indicates the card number and the second and third digits together indicate the start-column of the variable field. Most variables are coded on single columns but where more than one column has been used the first column in the field is used in the variable name. The questionnaire has all card and column numbers clearly indicated on each page thus making cross-referencing easier.

Note 1. Multi coded questions ( Q's 1, 8, 12, 13, 15, 27, 28 & 54)

Answers from questions which were multi-coded were punched on to the appropriate number of columns up to a maximum of five per question. The codes are stored in the equivalent variables. For example question 27 asks for up to three answers, so three columns were allocated and the equivalent three variables contain the codes in the data-file. In order to retrieve the amalgamated information from such questions the SPSS routine MULT RESPONSE must be used

Note 2. Reversal of codes (Q's 10, 16, 22, 37, 38 & 50).

At some questions the code numbers were listed from highest to lowest. This means that the computer output for these questions gives the answers in reverse order to that shown on the questionnaire. The frequency counts are given in this reverse order.

Note 3. Recoding

At questions where letters were coded and in a few other cases the original codes on the questionnaire have been changed. Where this has occurred the original code is given in brackets after the new code.

Note 4. Missing answers.

Codes which designate missing values are denoted by an asterisk in the text. All blanks were treated as 'missing cases'. However, in the same cases where the informant had run out of time and not been able to complete the personal details at the end of the questionnaire, it is possible to determine sex with considerable accuracy through a combination of answers to previous questions e.g. subjects taken at school, job wanted after school, magazine readership etc.

The sample was taken from a cross-sectional, multi-ethnic North London school and comprised all the fifth formers present on one particular day (15th October 1981), yielding a sample size of 142 pupils. A self-completion questionnaire was used (see Appendix A), which has been piloted before the data collection took place. At the pilot the questionnaires had taken about 35 minutes to complete but the final sample tended to take longer which led to some loss of data through incomplete questionnaires (see Note 5).

The majority of questions were fixed-alternative although a few open-ended questions were used which were then coded using the instructions shown in Appendix C. Most were single coded and where multi-coding was used the method of transferring the data to the computer is explained in Note 5.

The arrangement of variables in the manual follows the questionnaire and the order of data on the original punched cards is retained apart from questions 12 and 13 where the two columns were allocated to the question at the design stage. The first digit in the variable name indicates the card number and the second and third digits together indicate the start-column of the variable field. Most variables are coded on single columns but where more than one column has been used the first column in the field is used in the variable name. The questionnaire has all card and column numbers clearly indicated on each page thus making cross-referencing easier.

Note 1. Multi-coded questions (Q's 1, 5, 11, 13, 16, 27, 28 & 29)

Answers from questions which were multi-coded were punched on to the appropriate number of columns up to a maximum of five per question. The codes are stored in the equivalent variables. For example question 27 asks for up to three answers, so three columns were allocated and the equivalent three variables contain the codes in the data-file. In order to retrieve the aggregated information from such questions the 2925 routine MULT RESPONSE must be used.

Note 2. Reversal of codes (Q's 10, 16, 22, 27, 28 & 29)

At some questions the code numbers were listed from highest to lowest. This means that the computer output for these questions gives the answers in reverse order to that shown on the questionnaire. The frequency counts are given in this reverse order.

Note 3. Recoding

At questions where letters were coded and in a few other cases the original codes on the questionnaire have been changed. Where this has occurred the original code is given in brackets after the new code.

Q.1 Apart from English, Mathematics and Social Studies, which FOUR main subjects are you taking? (Please tick)

<u>Response</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Number</u>	(V106-109)
Human Biology	1 (A)	6	
General Science	2 (B)	33	
European Studies	3 (C)	22	
Religious Studies	4 (D)	5	
Design	5 (E)	22	
Drama	6 (F)	12	
Home Economics	7 (G)	12	
Music	8 (H)	5	
Needlecraft	9 (J)	-	
Office Skills	10 (K)	43	
Woodwork	11 (L)	-	
Metal work	12 (M)	-	
Geography	13 (N)	84	
History	14 (O)	87	
Physics	15 (P)	48	
Biology	16 (Q)	28	
Chemistry	17 (R)	23	
French	18 (S)	43	
German	19 (T)	14	
Art	20 (U)	25	
Technical Drawing	21 (V)	39	
P.E.	22 (X)	-	

Blank for all V106-V109

Total number of responses 551

Note Needlecraft, woodwork and metalcraft are not separate subjects the first is included in Home Economics and the others in Design.

P.E. was excluded since it is not a main subject option.

This was an error at the design stage of the questionnaire

Q.2 At what age do you expect to leave school?

<u>Response</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Number</u>	(V110)
16 years old	1	66	
17 years old	2	18	
18 years old	3 (X)	16	
19 years old	4	5	
I am not sure	5 (9)	33	
Blank	-1*	4	

Q.3 Will you be going on to Further and/or Higher Education when you do leave school?

<u>Response</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Number</u> (V111)
Yes	1	55
No	2	37
Not sure	3	46
Blank	-1*	4

Q.4 (If yes) And at what age do you expect to complete your full time education? (Write In)

<u>Response and Code</u>	<u>Number</u> (V112)
15	2
16	10
17	7
18	25
19	6
20	8
21	7
22	6
23	-
24	2
25	-
26	1
Blank -1*	68

Q.5 Which job would you most like to do when you do leave school or college? (Write in)

<u>Response</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Number</u> (V114)
Professional	1	11
Executive	2	5
Higher Supervisory	3	18
Lower Supervisory	4	21
Routine non-manual	5	23
Skilled manual	6	24
Semi-skilled manual	7	14
Unskilled	8	1
Blank/Don't Know	24* (X)	25

