

# An analysis on the development of sociology of education in USA and England

Cengiz Aslan

Faculty of Educational Sciences, Ankara University, Ankara, Turkey.

---

## ABSTRACT

Sociology of education is a matter of discussion in terms of whether it is an independent field or it is a subdiscipline of educational sciences or sociology. In this respect, the development of sociology of education is challenging process which goes through some never-ending continuity and discontinuity, and it is sometimes considered to be a process that consists of blurrines, fluidity, and sometimes it is regarded as a complex process. In this regard, the fundamental purpose of this study is to find out the development of sociology of education in England and the USA. This study is designed as a historical research. As a result of the study, It can be said that sociology of education as a discipline in these countries has not been established upon a joint developmental process as it has had some continuity and discontinuity in its relationship with education or sociology departments. It may be stated that from time to time macro subject matters gained a popularity and sometimes micro issues become important in the agenda of sociology of education because of the fact that different understandings of the field and different traditions.

**Keywords:** Sociology of education, educational sociology, USA, England.

---

E-mail: cngzaslan@gmail.com. Tel: 90-505-626-8086.

---

## INTRODUCTION

The development of sociology of education is challenging process which goes through some never-ending continuity and discontinuity, and it is sometimes considered to be a process that consists of blurriness, fluidity, and sometimes it is regarded as a complex process. The presence and consideration of the academic discipline of sociology of education as a profession will be made explicit in parallel with the development in different countries. In this respect, the main problem of this study is to determine development of sociology of education in England and the USA.

Sociology of education is still a matter of discussion in terms of whether it is an independent field or it is a sub-discipline of educational sciences or sociology. According to Saha (2008), educational sociology is one of the major subfields in sociology and also in the development and production of educational research and teaching. Defining sociology of education is a concern of the core of education and it may also set its agenda accordingly and shape educational domains. After all, sociology of education as a field is devoted to understanding educational systems; the subject matter ranges from

teacher and student interactions to large educational systems of countries (Ballantine et al., 2017). Sociology of education at the very early period of the twentieth century was a collective effort between sociologists and educators in different countries and it was made possible by their shared efforts and dedication to improving societies (Walters, 2007). In spite of that, thanks to those efforts and attempts by a variety of educators and sociologists, it differed from country to country depending on their economic, political and sociological conditions. Owing to these differences, sociology of education as a field improved and developed in different countries with different academic understandings and traditions in different time periods. According to Saha (2015), educational sociology occupies a central place in the disciplines of education and sociology. In terms of both theory and research methods, it has made important contributions to the studies of education and also to wider fields of sociological research generally.

The conceptual definition, research area and studies, implementation and the interaction with other scientific fields of sociology of education not only made different

progresses in different countries with different policies in different times but also progressed differently within the same country in different periods. In other words, the significance of sociology of education, its agenda and interactions with different fields or similar domains improved in different countries and in different times divergently. Moreover, Lauder et al. (2009) claimed that academic fields are regularly made to meet the expectations and needs of institutions and their practices in general. However, academic fields should not be depicted by their questions, inquisitions, theories, techniques and methods to only serve the needs of institutions. The theories including the 'discipline' are a lot and they completely differ from each other. So, it would be quite hard and argumentative to determine what common bases, assumptions and grounds that they may have in terms of sociological theories. Additionally, theories are always known to contradict with disciplinary boundaries in their essence. According to Sözer and Sever (2012) postmodern approaches ruin disciplinary boundaries like a virus and makes it hard to have a clear understanding of what is sociology of education, what is philosophy or what is political sciences. Due to such aspects and reasons, the flexibility, contiguity and fluidity of a scientific field determines the focus/center of education or educational settings, and it makes the process ambiguous and difficult to understand. This state does not correspond to a historical discontinuity, but it definitely corresponds to a historical continuity (Aslan, 2020). Depending on the studies conducted by Apple (1999), the institutional development of sociology of education in different countries and academic boundaries are a product of culture; they are culturally produced and put into practice and effect. Besides, it may be stated that sociology of education may be regarded as a divergent, functioning and moving field, considerably difficult to understand and as a constantly argumentative field of work (Apple et al., 2010).

Although today, the field called as 'sociology of education', in its historical development, the name of the discipline was known to be "educational sociology". In addition to it, in today's world, in some countries, some scholars and researchers claim that educational sociology has been used for a long time when compared to the other name. But it should be known that the distinction between these two names may be a product and result of academic traditions and approaches as well as culture. What is more, according to Saha (2008), this distinction between these two naming is much more than academic because it reveals some differences and efforts in how sociology of education made progress and made itself available in some different universities in a variety of countries, especially in the United States and the United Kingdom. Apart from being taught as another subfield in sociology departments, sociology of education was taught in departments of education for teacher training education in the United States.

According to Snedden (1937), the term, "educational sociology," has come into existence and been used for more than two decades. It was aimed to create a subfield both for the implementation of theory and knowledge of educational practices and activities. Educational sociology has emerged not only from educational philosophy but also from modern sociology. In other words, it has based its root on two different sources. On the other hand, Baltacıoğlu (1924) indicated that before Durkheim, educational sociology is mostly based upon psychology science. According to him, Durkheim was the first sociologist who saw education as social institutions. Baltacıoğlu suggested the term "Sociologie de l'éducation (*sociology of education*)" instead of using education of sociology. Roucek (1956) stated that the fast and continuous development and growth of almost all types of teacher training settings throughout the current century made those educational institutions to provide something tangible and acceptable for their students regarding how to teach and what to teach in certain situations. Educational psychology has become the first educational tool for many educators to direct and manage educational processes; however, the concerns including what to teach and the connection between method, content, and social utility of educational processes were left unsolved and not explained clearly. According to Clement (1927), one of the first pioneers of the field educational sociology is regarded as the science seeking to figure out what sorts of behavior may be acceptable and appropriate in the social situations commenced by the modern world as well as the effects of some different deterrents in the social settings in contrast with or for the future of the educational processes. After all, according to Ellwood (1927) educational sociology is not considered to be a fundamental sociological study area of educational institutions and processes. It should be essentially and predominantly sociology which should primarily focus on education. It is fundamentally sociology which tries to find out some solutions to every problem and issue of education. Smith, one of the earliest sociologists in the field (1917) tries to put forward a broad explanation of educational sociology focusing on the implementation of three very important determinants such as scientific spirit, methods, and principles of sociology for the study of education. Similarly, Zorbaugh (1927) also claims that educational sociology is the key field which includes the implementation of the sociological techniques and methods to cure the human problems as well as issues emerging from education. According to Demiashkevich (1932), educational sociology is that sociology through which fundamental educational problems can be sorted out. In this respect, Hoyme (1961) indicated that the early educational sociologists were predominantly and basically educated to be sociologists while today's educational sociologists (1960's) are primarily and essentially trained to be educators in education. Contrary to this view, Roucek (1958) stated that during the years

between 1920 and 1940, a well-defined and well-structured "school" of American educational sociology did not come into existence. In other words, it did not exist because of the fact that writers put most of their attention not only on social values, norms and sociological adaptation in education considering educational sociology to be a sub-branch of education (rather than of sociology) but also they offered assistance to educators to identify and to make its goals and methods clear and comprehensible. They are known to be "educationists" rather than being known to be sociologists in the field. Due to such reasons, social philosophy was mixed with sociology and it got hard to differentiate them from each other. As the number of educators who are prone to be more like a sociologist increased in "Applied School", they attempted to bring sociological principles into prominence; they believe and suggest, in general, that educational sociology is a sub-division of sociology.

As it may be understood, the understanding of educational processes and the educational data are generally shaped depending on the ecocultural and his/her thoughts. Walters (2007) stated that upon the turn of the century, the limitation between sociology and education was comparatively adjustable. On the other hand, by the 1920s, any work that could demolish that limitation between sociology and education was significantly low in number, and it led American sociologists to distance themselves from conducting any study of education in some ways. According to Hoyme (1961) educational sociology keeps itself in between social and educational sciences like a period between daylight and darkness. In this regard, from the beginning of the 20 century, the relationship between education and society starting with Emile Durkheim was investigated by many sociologists. Swift (2017) believed that sociology of education as Durkheim improved it with the understanding of socio-psychological theory and research built our understanding of the social nature of human beings. Morrish (1972) asserted that some different university departments of education attempted to regard the discipline as 'educational sociology' despite the fact that in today's world many scholars prefer the usage of the term 'sociology of education'. Wexler (1976) stated that it was first called sociology of education, and by time it was started to be known as educational sociology, then it improved itself and made promising progresses which ended up with its academic institutionalisation throughout the advancing and continuing period. Roucek (1958) indicated that at the end of 1950, the term, marginal field was known as "Educational Sociology", rather than as sociology of education rarely. Walters (2007) pointed out that sociology of education (or educational sociology, as it was first called) came into existence as a quite significant speciality immediately after the establishment of American sociology; however, its location as to its forerunner fields—sociology and education—and its fame within sociology demonstrate a high number of

compelling continuities and discontinuities. During the years between 1950 and 1965, educational sociology was observed to progressively transform itself into a scientific specialty quite closely connected with sociology rather than education; throughout that process, it was started to be called "sociology of education". According to Card (1976), "sociology of education" gained the most promising popularity as a term immediately after it was rejected to be called "educational sociology" by the American Sociological Association, which was believed to try to develop and control and manage the field in the United States in the 1960s. Walters (2007) indicated that between and during the 1950s and the mid-1960s, the sub-division went through a compelling and radical transformation due to structural developments and some changes in the intellectual level of sociology. Similarly, on the other hand, sociologists constituting the core of discipline were significantly turning their steps towards educational processes and improvements. This transition was known to be marked by two fundamental developments as follows; in the first place, in 1960, the Sociology of Education department of the American Sociological Association (ASA) was constituted, and then in 1963, the ASA took control of the Journal of Educational Sociology which resulted in renaming and regarding it as sociology of education. Saha (2008) pointed out that it is the scientific character of the journal changed into Sociology of Education, not the normative character of the journal.

In the meantime, in England, a habit emerged among scholars to refer to sociology of education instead of using the previous term as well as the doubtful term of educational sociology (Banks, 1971). According to Lauder et al. (2011) sociology of education has gone through a high number of very important changes since the 1950s from when British sociologists started to be highly interested in education thanks to the foundation of an acknowledged field in the late 1970s, to the current situation. In this process, Taylor (1967 as cited in Swift, 2017; Morrish, 1972) recommended using these two terms, 'educational sociology' and 'sociology of education' separately and if this separation can be taken into consideration, the distinction between educational or social problems and sociological problems can be easily understood. *Educational Sociology*; the general principles and findings of sociology that can help us understand the regulations or any educational practices and activities appropriately in the field of education. In other words, such an approach helps us implement the general principles of sociology to educational settings as a separate societal unit. *Sociology of Education*; it is claimed to be an inquiry of the sociological processes associated with the educational institutions. This field of the study is known to have emerged from the field of Educational Sociology and attempts to carry out the study and research *within* the institution of education, *Social Foundations of Education*. It is a field of study which

usually includes history, philosophy, and sociology of education and comparative education. Obviously, the field is broader than either Sociology of Education or Educational Sociology (Stalcup, 1968).

As is seen and understood, there seems to be no agreement on how to call the field because the field is designated depending on how it is institutionalized in sociology and educational sciences in different countries and in different times. In other words, it is called either with the term “educational sociology” or the term “sociology of education” based on the context in which it is used for some specific purposes including cultural and traditional aspects. According to Saha (2015, 2008), one of the modern researches in the field, “educational sociology” can be regarded as a major sub-division of sociology. Moreover, it is still in its developmental process and construction process of educational research, study and teaching purposes. Sociology of education may be considered to be a study field of educational constructions, processes, and practices from a sociological point of view. These two very important names are still used and even they are sometimes used interchangeably. Yet, it can be said that while the former is mostly used by sociologists in education, the latter is used in sociology. Sometimes, tension can increase because of the differences between those regarding sociology of education as a pure science and those who consider it to be an applied field of study area. Sociology of education is used by those who regard the discipline as an objective science, whereas “educational sociology” is used by those who consider it to be a policy.

### **Theoretical perspective**

Unlike the other scientific disciplines, sociology of education also attempts to obtain the necessary theoretical information or data associated with its aims in a scientific framework. The conceptual and theoretical origin of sociology of education emerged and developed by virtue of the efforts and contributions by very important pioneers in the field such as Marx, Weber and Durkheim. In this regard, according to Blackledge and Hunt (1985) three fundamental sociological approaches to education came forward as follows: (1) Durkheim and the functionalist tradition, (2) the Marxist perspective and (3) the interpretive approach. According to Dworkin et al. (2013), Marx established conflict theory and then later the ideological role of the state in education was discovered because of the fact that it provides the continuation and reproduction of class statuses. The idea of creating a multidimensional approach to combine structure, human agency, the material and the normative was developed by Weber. Karl Marx and Max Weber established the basis for contemporary conflict theories (Ballantine et al., 2017). According to Blackledge and Hunt (1985), it was not possible to see sociology of education as a distinct

area of examination until the 1950s and early 1960s. Between those years, it was directed and managed by functionalist sociology.

According to Sadovnik and Coughlan (2016) in opposition to popular belief, the inspiration of most of the studies of sociology of education did not directly come from Marx and Weber, but the inspiration was derived from the traditions and characteristics of Marxism and Weberism. Within this framework, it may be stated that the discussion in sociology of education was shaped around two very important determinants, Macro and Micro theories. According to Ballantine and Spade (2009), functionalist theory of education, one of the macro theories, was developed by Emile Durkheim and by means of his continuous efforts. Functionalist theory tries to picture how educational systems work with a focus on what types of aim education serves in societies and it explains how societies survive and continue to exist. According to Blackledge and Hunt (1985) the fact that functionalism, with its major empirical and logical difficulties and obstacles, is found to be political and conservative paved the way for an alternative sociological approaches entitled ‘social action theory and phenomenology’. Hereby, two very important interpretive approaches emerged. Those sociologists were highly interested in micro social processes in class and at school. Upon the publication of M. F.D. Young’s *Knowledge and Control* (1971), a new sociology of education which focuses on the social construction of information emerged. According to Ballantine and Spade (2009) the other micro approaches are interaction theories. Interaction theory is known to be a micro-level theory which concentrates on the experiences of individual and small-group in the educational systems and settings: the processes and interactions are known to take place in schools. Interaction theorists claim that people socially try to build their lives depending on where they live and how they communicate with each other in an interpersonal manner. Among these aforementioned theories, Symbolic Interaction Theory, Labeling Theory, Rational Choice Theory can be mentioned. Symbolic interaction theory was originated in the works of G. H. Mead and C. H. Cooley with a focus on the development of oneself through having social interactions either in school or in the other areas of life. On the other hand, Goffman (1967) suggested the process of “labeling theory”. Rational choice or exchange theory is established upon the idea that our interactions with others may end up with costs and rewards. In education, theorists of rational choice claim that students, teachers, and administrators measure the costs and benefits while they are making decisions regarding and concerning teaching in the management and guidance of everyday school experiences. It should be emphasized that the costs and benefits are not only established upon finance, but they may include physical well-being, emotional health, relationships, self-esteem, or other determinants.

According to Blackledge and Hunt (1985) the interaction between students and teachers, the definitions of situation, the role of the language were analyzed in detail based on the assumptions by interactionism, ethnomethodology and phenomenology. In addition to this, the recognition of the limitations of ethnography and the reemergence of Marxism aroused the interest in macro social processes. In this process, contrary to the correlation in Functionalist theory, the correlation of education between economy and political order with a quite important distinction aroused interest again. According to Hurn (2018) at the very beginning of 1970s, as people awakened on the subject of education, skepticism started to spread and the optimism in the essence of functionalist theory weakened. According to Tan (1990) in contemporary society, conflict theory is regarded as an approach that evaluates the role of education suspiciously and in a judgmental manner. Conflict theorists studying education systems argue that differences in achievement of students is not based on their ability or intelligence; rather schools reflect the needs of the powerful, dominant groups in society and serve to perpetuate the capitalist system (Ballantine and Spade, 2009). Weber and Marx established the basis for the many subfields of conflict theory supported by theorists today. Some of these are reproduction and resistance theories. In general, cultural reproduction and resistance theories insist that those who control capitalistic systems design and force individuals to serve for their own purposes. Cultural capital and social capital are especially two fundamental deterministic concepts for the development process of reproduction and resistance theories. The introduction of the term of cultural capital as a concept came into existence in the 1970s firstly by Pierre Bourdieu while the introduction of the term social capital as a concept was established by Coleman (1988). Resistance theorists came to the fore of Reproduction Theory with their claim that students and teachers are not passive participants in school. According to Sözer and Sever (2012) the publication of *Learning to Labour*, based on an ethnographic research and written by Paul Willis who adopted the Neo-Marxist perspective, in 1977 played a significant role in the emergence of Resistance Theories/Approaches. Henry Giroux became one of the most important figures of Resistance Theories in the USA. Additionally, according to Dworkin (2013), conflict theories, Pierre Bourdieu's (1984) theory of practice, Basil Bernstein's (1996) theory of language codes and Randall Collins's (1979) Weberian theory of social exclusion are believed to have put a fundamental and compelling impact on modern sociology of education.

It is an undeniable fact that sociology of education has undergone a high number of fundamentally breathtaking progresses since the 1950s for the development of empirical research, but on the other hand, the development of theories concerning schooling was behind. Sociologists of education have improved and developed appropriate ways for the analysis of empirical

data more than in the formulation of theoretical models for schooling processes in general. Three reasons may explain this empirical progress. In the first place, since the 1960s, to speculate appropriate statistical models for schooling processes, sociologists of education have established some analytical techniques and made them available in econometrics and in other applied fields progressively. A second factor that promoted empirical work in sociology of education was the effort begun in the 1960s and the 1970s that has continued to the present; the collection of large, carefully designed, nationally representative surveys of schools, teachers, and students. A third reason for the strong emphasis on empirical work in the sociology of education was that sociologists of education were becoming increasingly more aware that their empirical research could play a role in informing and shaping educational practice and policy (Hallinan, 2000). Until the 1970s, sociology of education was not only believed to be an acknowledged sub-division of sociology but also it was believed to be controversial and contested field, sometimes interrupted and disturbed by outsiders and even it was highly debated within. As it can be understood from the study that there were a plenty of disagreements in sociology of education; particularly, between those who regarded sociology as a science and those who considered it to be more in interpretive terms rather than in scientific terms (Saha, 2008). According to Walters (2007) since the 1980s, sociology of education has been believed to survive to be an active as well as dynamic field. However, it is claimed that there are some changes in it because it is not regarded as close to the center of sociology as it was before any more like in the 1960s and 1970s, when a reform agenda started to direct sociology (and much of the social sciences). In addition to this, as sociology increasingly became more professional in itself, it started to gain a very strong place in sociology of education. In this regard, according to Tan (1993) the improvements of sociology reflected in sociology of education starting with the end of 1960s paved the way for some changes in the focus point of research and methodology.

### **Sociology of Education in the USA**

In the USA, the conceptual and structural development of sociology of education in parallel with the development of sociology demonstrates some significant continuities and discontinuities. More than half of a century, the field has been widely known to be 'educational sociology'. The lecture of educational sociology was taught by Henry Suzzallo (Cook and Cook, 1960) at Teachers College at Columbia University in 1907 for the first time (Bolton and Corbally, 1941). Besides this, in 1901 colleges and universities attempted to provide some courses for sociology of education (Tolman, 1902). Furthermore, Walter R. Smith's *Introduction to Educational sociology* was believed to consist of the term and concept

'educational sociology for the first textbook for the field (Roucek, 1958). Gillette (1914, as cited in Roucek, 1956) discovered that "Educational Sociology" courses were given in American higher institutions of learning and a new branch of sociology was being shaped and emerging which is known to be called Educational Sociology or Sociology of Education. Smith (1917) pointed out that only two sociology departments at the University of North Dakota and at the Kansas State Normal School in the USA were offering and giving regular courses in the field of educational sociology. It appears to be an undeniable fact that sociologists were a lot less eager to incorporate their work with the field of education. Contrary to this, Szreter (1980, as cited in Walters, 2007) in the middle of 1920s, nearly in one third of sociology departments in the country, educational sociology were offered and taught. The introduction of the name of sociology of education emerged in the late 1920s by Robert Angell (1928) (Ballantine et al., 2017). According to Szreter (1980, as cited in Walters, 2007; in Morrish, 1972), the emergence of the National Society for Study of Educational Sociology (NSSES) came into existence in 1927 in the School of Education at New York University. Another indicator is that the NSSES began a new journal called *the Journal of Educational Sociology*, it was established in 1927, and then placed in the School of Education. However, the management of the journal became a fundamental part of the sociology department at NYU. Immediately after 1940, the entire development of *Educational Sociology* was found to be complicated and as it was proved to be confusing in the publication policy of *Journal of Educational Sociology*, it was found to be complicated in the entire field (Roucek, 1958). In this period which can be called the institutionalisation period, according to Bolton and Corbally (1941, as cited in Sözer and Sever, 2012), it was discovered that the field was more close to Educational Sciences rather than being a sub-division of sociology. Due to such reasons, among the educational departments, it got more attention when compared to the other sociology departments. According to Esgin (2013), it is known that since the emergence of sociology of education, it has been shaped and established upon the American sociology trend in the country where it underwent its first institutionalisation period. In contrast, according to Morrish (1972, as cited in Sözer and Sever, 2012), the early American educational sociology was established and thought to be as a field and it tried to sort out social problems and attempted to enhance school conditions rather than Durkheim's work which regarded Education as a social institution and focused on its relationship with society. According to Clement (1927), unless Educational Sociology enables the teacher to do her job better, unless it functions definitely in interpretation of educational situations, it hardly merits inclusion in teacher training curricula.

In the years between 1950 and 1960, sociology of education as a field, a course as well as a lecture was offered and given in teacher and education colleges and

it was given at faculty of education as a bachelor and master's degree in the USA. Sociology of education is among the main courses at Teacher College of Columbia University, Education College of Illinois University, at George Peabody Teacher College and Iowa State College as well as at Indiana State College. The development of sociology of education at faculty of education is as following: it is offered and taught as a main course at Harvard University, Expert School of Western Reserve University, at Chicago University, at Social Sciences Department, at Faculty of Education, at Sociology Department and at Faculty of Education of Cornell University, at Faculty of Education of Florida University, and at Faculty of Education of Boston University. The main courses of sociology of education and educational sociology at Faculty of Pittsburg University and at the departments of Higher Education are one of the courses offered and taught at Bachelor Degree Departments at Faculty of Education of Virginia University, whereas it is taught at Faculty of Education at Washington University in "master of arts" and "master of education" as a separate area of expertise. Educational sociology is one of the master's quarters at Faculty of Education, Psychology and Special Education of Ball State University (Ankara University, 1967).

According to Karabel and Halsey (1977, as cited in Sözer and Sever, 2012), a group of intellectuals, whose roots and origin date back to Frankfurt School, started to conduct some pioneering studies which could enhance the critical perspective and thinking for the relationship between education and society in 1960. In 1966 Coleman by publishing a report called *Equality of Educational Opportunity*, he claimed that there is a direct correlation between social and cultural backgrounds of students in the emergence of inequality of educational opportunity. Moreover, his report became a complete breakpoint in American educational sociology. The identity crisis in educational sociology researches gained a reputation which is believed to continue up to today. These aforementioned years may be considered to be the years shaping and influencing the Neo-Marxism and French Structuralists as well as American educational sociology significantly. In this respect, two very important advocates of the neo-Marxist American political economy established sociology of education by means of 'Schooling in Capitalists America'. This book created a deterministic interpretation of the place of schooling in capitalist class structures and it gave rise to the reproduction of inequality and social control at the same time (Lauder et al., 2009). Walters stated that (2007) with the rapid institutionalization process of the American research, study and university throughout the first decades of the twentieth century, it became dramatically hard for pioneering sociologists and educators to maintain a mutual intellectual attempt and effort. Due to the important development of sociology departments and professional schools of education, much stronger identities came into prominence, and a more firm

distinction between sociology and education was emerged. Therefore, this strong distinction and the profound organizational limitation between these two fields made it a lot much harder for the pioneering scholars and scientists in both areas of study to have an identity that can go beyond any division even though it did not disappear the emergence of education as a fundamental and essential study area for the leading scholars and sociologists. In addition to this, according to Apple (1996) sociology of education in the USA is believed to be dramatically different in terms of its theoretical and methodological trends, its view of what research is for as well as its political awareness. Actually, this view again, as Apple (1999) mentioned before, shows that the tension always increased in the multiple traditions or usages of sociology of education in the USA.

### **Sociology of education in England/UK**

Before the Second World War, educational sociology as a field of study was increasingly improving in England. However, it was quite controversial whether the consultation of Mannheim, known to be an important social theorist, later a chairman of Education, helped establishing the sub-division of sociology of education or it was the University Institute of Education that founded the field within the English academia (Whitty, 2012). It is claimed that the study of sociology of education started in the early periods of the 1950s and much of the work done was attributed to the London School of Economics in the UK (LSE) (Waller, 2011). Warwick and Williams (1980) pointed out that sociology of education was dramatically affected by American sociology in the period of the late of 1950s when the emergence of functionalism came to fire, was criticized and held responsible for it. The book, called "An introduction to the sociology of education" was published under the guidance of Mannheim with Stewart in 1962, may be evaluated within this context. In the name of this book, 'sociology of education' was used rather than 'educational sociology' as it is used in the American Sociology Association in those years. Furthermore, in general, in Britain, it is claimed that educational sociology did not catch the attention of the educational theorists even after the Second World War. In those years, it was almost impossible to hear that it was taught in Teacher Training Colleges or in any departments of education at Universities. By time, in the 1960s, it was made available and recognizable as an important part of teacher training educational settings (Banks, 1971). Besides this, as for the institutional context, teaching and research in the field of sociology of education were getting more and more available throughout the 1960s in teacher training setting/colleges and at departments of education in which it existed barely before (Young, 1998). The real and most important development came into prominence by the arrival of

Bernstein in 1963 and it was believed to have a very significant place in the encouragement of the establishment of a newly designed approach. This approach called "a new sociological approach" in sociology of education which was claimed to put a direct focus on the subject matter of education and the internal management and maintenances of schools. The development and improvement of the first program to offer higher degrees in sociology of education by Bernsein in 1963 at the University of London Institute of Education, had a very special and significant role in the emergence as well as in the development of the interpretive approach (Karabel and Halsey, 1976). Moreover, it is believed that the 1960s underwent a period of extension and development of education at all levels which ended up with a belief that this extension could be utilized by having an extension of making social sciences a part of professional education. In this regard, a more research based agenda was pursued and it established the basis for schedules of teacher training educational settings starting with the late period of 1960s and the enlargement of sociology of education in educational researches and studies became a dramatic part of this development (Young, 1998). It is claimed that most of the University Departments of Sociology in England took some responsibilities for teaching sociology of education either as a part of a main course and or as an elective course. It is also indicated that almost half of those departments offered and gave it as a part of their postgraduate programmes. It is known that it could be widely and highly offered and taught in Education Colleges in which it constituted a part of the educational course taken by all students and it was obvious that it was also included in the majority of Sociology courses (Banks, 1972). Additionally, it is pointed out that sociology of education was among the elective courses at faculty of education, institute of education, college of education in England or at faculty of education of Manchester University while it had a place in the main programme of education at Briston University and a place as a master's quarter at London University as well as an elective course at all master's degree departments (Ankara University, 1967). All of those developments show how it emerged and developed in England. The period between the years of 1960 and 1970 in England, according to Banks(1971), it was not obvious if the teacher training field would be under the control of educationalists or if it would be a separate main part of sociology or not. At the early period of the 1970s, an alternative, claimed to be a more argumentative approach to the field, was established, and it was known to be the so-called 'new sociology of education' (NSOE), and probably it was best enlightened by the very early work of Michael F.D (Waller, 2011). In contrary to this, according to Gorbutt (1973, as cited in Young, 1998), in 1973 a "new sociology of education", was coined and the connection was first made between the sociological analysis of the curriculum and the role of teachers as



potential agents of radical educational change. The most important characteristic part of the 'new sociology of education' was claimed to be its interest in the school curriculum (Young, 1998). NSOE's fundamental concentration stayed a lot more determined and persistent on the social class inequalities in the education systems with an important similarity to the political arithmetic tradition; however, it was believed that their cure was dramatically different from each other (Waller, 2011). The sociological approach focusing on knowledge claimed to be in accordance with the 'new sociology of education' not only made it hard for the old sociology of education and its association with the political arithmetic tradition of policy-based educational research and study; but it also defined the knowledge base construction of the liberal academic curriculum that was more dominant over the grammar and public schools and the universities. The political movements aiming at fundamental changes in the structure of this sociological approach to knowledge was believed to be well-defined and depicted in its interpretation of the continuous school inefficiency and a lack of success of large groups of pupils with working-class backgrounds (Young, 2008). The fact that it is almost completely a British establishment may be regarded as the most distinguished characteristic of the "new" sociology of education. However, it is stated that it caused some troubles and a penetration of problems into American educational research (Karabel and Halsey, 1976). The 'new sociology of education', as a collection of ideas as well as opinions and as an explanation of the privileges of some researchers and teachers did not live long just because of the reasons that it was limited in terms of its theory and due to some important changes in the political and economic structure meaning that a focus on teachers thought to be possible agents of making fundamental changes turned out to be dramatically unrealistic and indecisive (Young, 1998). As a matter of fact, the 'new' sociology of education was not able to survive very long. A better term for it was needed and it was started to be called the neo-Marxist perspective (Banks, 1982). Interpretive analyses and Marxist perspectives approaching the more traditional sociological investigation and its constructive base and orientation with a rejection became the most fundamental sources of the theoretical and conceptual structure of the NSE (Buschman and Carbone, 1991). Starting with the later half of the 1960s and finishing with the early 1980s, sociology of education was against most of the powerful conceptions of education of the time. From the beginning of the 1980s, educational opportunities for the sociology of education started to decline significantly because of the belief that by the end of the 1980s, sociology of education was not made a part of the initial training and further professional development of teacher education. Sociology of education has been more unfavourable since the 1980s in the UK, mostly because of some important opposition in political climate of the country (Young, 1998).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the work of Durkheim up to now, sociology of education has undergone some different processes and stages depending on the developments in the field as well as the country in which it is in a developmental process and a matter of discussion. It is an undeniable fact that immediately after the studies and research of Durkheim, under the titles of formerly known to be educational sociology and later called sociology of education; a quite number of studies were conducted and produced in the related field. Besides this, it may be stated that educational sociology or sociology of education both in the USA and UK where the field has both of these names has survived and maintained its existence and development as a consequence based on the social, economic and political conditions from period to period in sociology and in education. Due to such aspects, the definition and the boundaries of sociology of education or educational sociology may be said to have gone different and challenging stages in order to come into prominence both in the UK and USA. Without doubts, it may be indicated that as it is an interdisciplinary field, such conditions might have been derived from the fact that it took the necessary data and fundamental advantages of some departments such as particularly educational sciences, sociology, psychology, philosophy and science of economy. Throughout its historical development, sociology of education has been undergoing a challenging process to be accepted as a separate field apart from the following fields: sociology, pedagogy and comparative education and it has been trying to have a place among the normative, practical and empiric methods as well as approaches, and trying to discover its own method and technique (Bilhan, 1996). Furthermore, it is believed that the field of sociology of education has demonstrated a high number of magnificent progresses and developments since the beginning of the 1950s, particularly around the empirical research; however, its development of theories fell behind about schooling (Hallinan, 2000). Moreover, most of the questions investigated in the field of sociology of education today are claimed to be dramatically practical, or policy based (Buchmann, 2011). The number of the works about the field of sociology of education or educational sociology has become more abundant basically after the Second World War (Topçuoğlu, 1971). Additionally, sociology of education or educational sociology as a separate field of study did not demonstrate important developments until the beginning of the 1960s (Tan, 1991). Undoubtedly, such a delay, according to Tan (1981) has shown itself due to the distinction because of the qualitative characteristics between sociology and the purpose of education and because of the fact that it is regarded as applied sciences and it gives more importance to practical consequences. Furthermore, it examines the process of causation, which is also a reason for this distinction.



It is claimed that both functional and conflict theorists have been in a hotly debated position and have been attempting how to explain what has been happening in schools and educational institutions since the emergence of the work/s of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim and their times (Ballantine et al., 2017). It is stated that modern time sociologists who are mostly interested in education, focus very little attention on the questions of school developments that distracted the attention of American educational sociologists and constituted the basis for sociologists who are highly interested in education and education scholars throughout the Progressive Era. It is also claimed and emphasized that sociologists of today who put their focus on education in general choose to study how schools work in some conditions rather than attempting to understand how to make schools better educational settings (Walters, 2007).

The agenda of educational sociology/sociology of education, the 1960s: the interactionists, The 1970s: the new sociology of education, The 1980s: an external ideological attack (Waller, 2011). The 1960s, 1970s, and into the 1980s, create a challenging time and process for sociology of education, a period that shows some fundamental scholarly struggles in the field (Weis et al., 2009). Furthermore, the 'new sociology of education' was regarded as more interpretive rather than being quantitative and it firstly came into existence in England between the years of 1960s and 1970s, and it is stated that it never gained an important place among the American sociologists who are interested in studying in the field of education (Karabel and Halsey, 1977) despite the fact that it took the attention of a number of scholars interested in education in the American schools of education (Walters, 2007; Karabel and Halsey, 1977). It is said that since the 1980s, the NSE has become closely and highly distinguished from "radical" or "critical" sociologists of education (Buschman and Carbone, 1991). Sociology of education of the late 1970s and 1980s from the Marxist perspective (Sharp, 1975; Young, 1998) and the post-modernist variants that came then, they seem to have a basic principle to regard knowledge as 'socially constructed' (Young, 1998). Since the mid-1970s, the approach dominating the American sociology of education has been the focus of research (Davies, 1995). On the other hand, it can be said that the development of sociology of education within sociology in Britain is considered to be highly limited and to have very little interest (Davies, 1994).

A collection of the six key determinants below which reveal some problems regarding those interested in sociology of education starting with the mid-20th up to today: the first key factor is the role and the function of education in society, then the second one is reducing any inequality in education. The third one is social mobility and the political arithmetic approach from meritocracy to the marketplace which is followed by the social impact of post-war changes in educational policy, schools and gendered identity and the last one is the education and

the middle classes. Furthermore, the HE choice – habitus, risk and the self are believed to play a very important role in the aforementioned six very important factors (Waller, 2011).

It can be said that sociology of education as a discipline, both in America and English, has not been established upon a joint developmental process as it has had some continuity and discontinuity in its relationship with education or sociology departments. It may be stated that sociology of education has survived in parallel with the approaches and methods of education and sociology in these two countries. In this regard, it may be stated that from time to time macro subject matters gained popularity and sometimes micro issues become important in the agenda of sociology of education. It should be emphasized that it is the result of the origin of solutions that some researchers applied and because of the fact that they had different understandings of the field and they came from different traditions and cultures. According to Walters (2007), sociology of education in the American Academy today is regarded to be made up of two parts, with one based in sociology studying and working on promoting educational processes in the process of theory development and the second part in schools of education dedicated to developing and promoting education. Even though sociology of education, when it was established, was a mutual effort between sociologists and educators, now it can be said that it is disunited internally today. That is to say, at the present time, it is impossible to find out a college in which the pioneering scholars can come together. It is claimed that and according to Saha (2008) sociology of education, as a subfield both of education and sociology, has added more value the understanding of educational processes and promoted it constructively. As known, the tensions within sociology of education increased in the past and it is assumed that it will continue undoubtedly; however, the sub-field as a whole is so diverse, flourishing and booming that it is considered to be an indication of its power and determination (Saha, 2008). Similarly, Apple et al., (2010) pointed out that the modernistic and contemporary history of sociology of education reveals a combination of mutual worries, some deliberate omissions and some different elements of society that are not directly connected by interpersonal channels. It is believed that a promising amount of contemporary work may be regarded as diverse (in the best sense) and uniting.

## REFERENCES

- Ankara University (1967).** Educational institutes, colleges, departments and faculties in higher education in different countries. Ankara University Publications: Ankara.
- Apple, M W., Ball, S. J., and Gandin, L. A. (2010).** Mapping the sociology of education: social context, power and knowledge. The Routledge International Handbook of the Sociology of Education (Eds. M. W. Apple, S. J. Ball and L. A. Gandin). Routledge: New York.

- Apple, M. W. (1996).** Power, meaning and identity: Critical sociology of education in the United States. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 17(2): 125-144.
- Apple, M. W. (1999).** Power, Meaning, and Identity: Essays in Critical Educational Studies. Peter Lang: New York.
- Aslan, C. (2020).** An analysis on the development of the sociology of education in Turkey. *Turkish Studies - Education*, 15(3):1499-1520.
- Ballantine, J. H., and Spade, J. Z. (2009).** Social science theories on teachers, teaching, and educational systems", *The new international handbook of teachers and teaching* (Eds. A. G. Dworkin and L. J. Saha. Springer: New York.
- Ballantine, J. H., Hammack, F. M., and Stuber, J. (2017).** The sociology of education: A systematic analysis. Newyork: Routledge.
- Ballantine, J. H., Spade, J. Z., and Stuber, J. (2017).** Schools and society: a sociological approach to education. SAGE Publications: Los Angeles.
- Baltacıoğlu, İ. H. (1924).** Education in sociological approach. Matbaa-ı Amire.
- Banks, O. (1971).** The sociology of education. Batsford: London.
- Banks, O. (1972).** Sociology of education in the United Kingdom. *International Review of Education*, 18(1): 95-99.
- Banks, O. (1982).** The Sociology of education, 1952-1982. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 30(1): 18-31.
- Bilhan, S. (1996).** Sociology of education (Eğitim sosyolojisi). Ankara University Publications: Ankara.
- Blackledge, D., and Hunt, B. (1985).** Sociological interpretations of education. Routledge: London.
- Bolton, F. E., and Corbally, J. E. (1941).** Educational sociology. American Book Company: New York.
- Buchmann, C. (2011).** Frontiers in comparative and international sociology of education: American distinctiveness and global diversity. *Frontiers in sociology of education* (Ed. M. T. Hallinan). Springer: Dordrecht.
- Buschman, J., and Carbone, M. (1991).** A critical inquiry into librarianship: Applications of the "New sociology of education". *The Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy*, 61(1): 15-40.
- Card, B. Y. (1976).** A State of sociology of education in Canada: A Further Look. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 1(4): 3-32.
- Clement, S. C. (1927).** Educational sociology in Normal Schools and Teachers' Colleges. *The Journal of Educational Sociology*, 1(1): 31-36.
- Cook, L. A., and Cook, E. F. (1960).** A sociological approach to education. McGraw-Hill Book Company: New York.
- Davies, B. (1994).** Durkheim and the Sociology of Education in Britain. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 15(1): 3-25.
- Davies, S. (1995).** Leaps of faith: Shifting currents in critical sociology of education. *American Journal of Sociology*, 100(6): 1448-1478.
- Demiashkevich, M. J. (1932).** Educational sociology and sociology. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 9(4): 226-233.
- Dworkin, A. G., Ballantine, J., Antikainen, A., Barbosa, M. L., Konstantinovskiy, D., Saha, L. J., Essack, S., Chang, J., Vryonides, M., and Teodoro, A. (2013).** The sociology of education. *Sociopedia.isa*, DOI: 10.1177/205684601312.
- Ellwood, C. A. (1927).** What is educational sociology? *The Journal of Educational Sociology*, 1(1): 25-30.
- Esgin, A. (2013).** The crisis of the sociology of education and its reflections in Turkey: On the Critique of Functionalist and Eclecticist Pragmatic Tradition, *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 50: 143-162.
- Hallinan, M. T. (2000).** Sociology of education at the threshold of the twenty-first century. *Handbook of the sociology of education* (Ed. M. T. Hallinan). Springer: New York.
- Hoyme, R. G. (1961).** The current status of educational sociology. *The Journal of Educational Sociology*, 35(3): 128-133.
- Hurn, C. J. (2018).** Eğitim sosyolojisi, okulun imkan ve sınırları (Trans.Ed. M. Sever). Pegem Akademi Yayıncılık: Ankara.
- Karabel, J., and Halsey, A. H. (1976).** The New Sociology of Education. *Theory and Society*, 3(4): 529-552.
- Lauder, H., Brown, P., and Halsey, A. H. (2009)** Sociology of education: a critical history and prospects for the future, *Oxford Review of Education*, 35:5, 569-585.
- Lauder, H., Brown, P., and Halsey, A. H. (2011).** The sociology of education as 'redemption': a critical history. *Disciplines of education, Their role in the future of education research* (Eds. J. Furlong & M. Lawn). Routledge: Newyork.
- Morish, I. (1972).** The Sociology of education: An introduction. Routledge: London.
- Roucek, J. S. (1956).** The Roots of American educational sociology. *The American Catholic Sociological Review*, 17(3): 195-205.
- Roucek, J. S. (1958).** Changing concepts and recent trends in American Educational Sociology. *International Review of Education*, 4(2): 240-244.
- Sadovnik, A. R., and Coughlan, R. W. (2016).** Leaders in the sociology of education, *Intellectual Self-Portraits*. Sense Publishers: Rotterdam.
- Saha, L. J. (2008).** Sociology of education. 21st. century education: A reference handbook. SAGE Publications.
- Saha, L. J. (2015).** Educational Sociology. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 2nd edition (Ed. James D. Wright). Elsevier: Oxford.
- Smith, W. R. (1917).** The foundations of educational sociology. *American Journal of Sociology*, 22(6): 761-778.
- Snedden, D. (1937).** The field of educational sociology. *Review of Educational Research*, 7(1): 5-14.
- Sözer, M. A., and Sever, M. (2012).** Sociology of education in the United States. A Memento of the 1st International Symposium on the Sociology of Education (Ed. İ. Doğan). Nobel Yayıncılık: Ankara.
- Stalcup, R. J. (1968).** Sociology and education. Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company: Ohio.
- Swift, D. F. (2017).** The Sociology of education introductory analytical perspectives. Routledge: London.
- Tan, M. (1981).** Introduction to sociology: Basic concepts. Ankara University Publications: Ankara.
- Tan, M. (1990).** Different approaches in sociology of education: Functional and Conflict paradigm. *Ankara University Journal of Faculty of Educational Sciences*, 23(2): 557-571.
- Tan, M. (1993).** Different approaches in sociology of education: Interpretive paradigm. *Ankara University Journal of Faculty of Educational Sciences*, 26(1): 65-89.
- Tolman, F. L. (1902).** The study of sociology in institutions of learning in the United States. *American Journal of Sociology*, 8(1): 85-121.
- Topçuoğlu, H. (1971).** Sociology of education. Ankara University Publications: Ankara.
- Waller, R. (2011).** The Sociology of education. Studying education an introduction to the key disciplines in education studies. (Eds. B. Dufour and W. Curtis). Open University Press. McGraw.
- Walters, P. B. (2007).** Betwixt and between discipline and profession: A history of sociology of education. *History of Sociology in America*. (Ed. C. Calhoun): University of Chicago Press: Chicago.
- Warwick, D., and Williams, J. (1980).** History and the sociology of education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 1(3): 333-346.
- Weis, L., Jenkins, H., and Stich, A. (2009).** Diminishing the divisions among us: Reading and writing across difference in theory and method in the sociology of Education. *Review of Educational Research*, 79(2): 912-945.
- Wexler, P. (1976).** The sociology of education: Beyond equality. Bobbs-Merrill: Indianapolis.
- Whitty, G. (2012).** A life with the sociology of education. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 60(1): 65-75.
- Young, M. F. D. (2008).** Bringing knowledge back in: from social constructivism to social realism in the sociology of education. Routledge: New York.
- Young, M. F.D. (1998).** The curriculum of the future from the 'New Sociology of Education' to a critical theory of learning. Falmer Press: London.
- Zorbaugh, H. (1927).** Research in educational sociology source. *The Journal of Educational Sociology*, 1(1): 18-24.

---

**Citation:** Aslan, C. (2020). An analysis on the development of sociology of education in USA and England. *African Educational Research Journal*, 8(2): S186-S195.

---