

Worksheet 8: Patterns and trends answers

Explain what the statistical pattern or trend stated shows. How might it be interpreted in relation to sociology?

Pattern or trend	What does this show?
Rising rates of divorce	<i>Decline in the importance of marriage. Shows change in social attitudes.</i>
Difference in educational attainment between ethnic groups	<i>Different lived experience of ethnic groups and so linked to home factors. Different treatment of ethnic groups in the education system and so linked to in-school factors.</i>
Relatively constant suicide rates	<i>The existence of social facts. Society acts on the individual.</i>
Rise in single parent families	<i>Link to increase in divorce. May also link to women's changing position in society. Women are better able to support themselves or use government policies that support single parent families.</i>
Rise in the numbers of women working	<i>Shows the changing position of women in society. Links to family diversity and the rise of single parents or childlessness.</i>
Differences in pay between genders	<i>Evidence of gender inequality. Links to feminist views of women's oppression.</i>