

MARK SCHEME for the May/June 2008 question paper

9699 SOCIOLOGY

9699/02

Paper 2 (Data Response), maximum raw mark 50

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began.

All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes must be read in conjunction with the question papers and the report on the examination.

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1 For social order to exist, it is necessary that individuals conform to generally accepted patterns of behaviour, *at least to some extent*. Without a degree of conformity, life would be chaotic. Imagine, for example, if all the teachers and pupils in a school arrived one morning and did exactly what they wanted instead of carrying out their normal roles, order would quickly disappear. Social order largely depends on people fulfilling the roles they have learnt to play in a given situation. Pupils are expected to behave as pupils and teachers as teachers, and so on.

Rewards and sanctions play a key part in encouraging conformity. Individuals who are seen to perform their roles well may receive rewards such as a higher salary, job promotion, an official honour or title, or some other form of praise and esteem that is seen as desirable. People who behave in a way that is socially unacceptable may be punished with sanctions such as ostracism, loss of privileges, telling-off, and fines or jail sentences if they have broken the law.

There are essentially two types of explanation of social order, one of which can be linked with functionalism and the other with the Marxist perspective. Functionalists like Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons focus on the role of shared norms and values in maintaining cohesion in society. Parsons argued that social order is created through the process of socialisation whereby people come to internalise the same views about what is acceptable behaviour. By contrast, Marxists claim that weaker groups are pressured into accepting the rules of society by the powerful. Conflict rather than consensus underpins society in this view. For Marxists, order is maintained through the exercise of economic power and the influence of ruling class ideology.

(a) What is meant by the term *ideology*? [2]

At the most basic level, ideology refers to a *set* of ideas or beliefs. Two marks for an answer along those lines. One mark for an answer that demonstrates partial understanding of the concept e.g. 'ideology refers to the beliefs people have' or 'ideology includes the ideas we have about the world'.

(b) Describe two reasons why school pupils generally conform to their expected roles. [4]

Reward examples of relevant punishments and/or rewards that might encourage school pupils to conform to their expected roles. One mark for each reason identified and a further mark for describing each reason.

(c) Explain why some individuals and groups may fail to conform to generally accepted patterns of behaviour. [8]

0–4 Answers at this level are likely to make limited use of relevant sociological concepts and theories. A few commonsense observations about why people may reject social norms and values would be worth 2 or 3 marks. Some attempt, partly unsuccessful perhaps, to use the notion of sub-cultures to tease out the issues raised by the question might be worth 4 marks.

5–8 One way to trigger this band would be to analyse the reasons for non-conformity through a discussion of deviance and sub-cultures. Lower in the band the response may be somewhat descriptive. Higher in the band the reasons why some people may fail to conform to accepted patterns of behaviour will be made explicit.

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(d) Assess the functionalist theory of social order.

- 0–4 Answers at this level are likely to focus on functionalism in general rather than the concept of social order specifically. A few simple points about functionalist theory would be sufficient to trigger the top of the band.
- 5–8 A sound reprise of functionalist theory, with links to social order perhaps left largely implicit, would be worth 5 or 6 marks. A good descriptive account of the functionalist theory of social order i.e. with little or no assessment, could reach the top of the band.
- 9–11 At this level, answers must include some evaluative commentary that identifies strengths and/or limitations in the functionalist theory of social order. Lower in the band the assessment may be delivered mainly through juxtaposing functionalism with other theories of social order. To reach the top of the band, however, the assessment of functionalist theory must be explicit and sustained.

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2 The social survey is a type of research that involves collecting information from a large number of people. While this information is typically gathered from questionnaires or interviews, a survey is not limited to any one technique of collecting information. In contrast to qualitative research which provides a more in-depth study of social life, surveys tend to produce information that is less detailed but which can form the basis for making statistical generalisations over broad areas.

The data collected in surveys is seen as high in reliability, though critics argue that it lacks a great deal in terms of validity. Well-known examples of social surveys include the studies of poverty in the early years of the twentieth century undertaken by Booth and Rowntree, the Oxford Mobility Studies of the 1970s and the British Crime Surveys that have been carried out since the early 1980s.

In conducting a large-scale survey it is clearly impossible to investigate every single case or person, which raises the issue of sampling. The key problem with taking a sample is making it representative; sampling is essentially the process of selecting people or information to represent a larger population. Different types of sampling are available to the sociologist.

Surveys involving the collection of information at one point in time are referred to as cross-sectional surveys; they provide a snapshot picture. Longitudinal surveys provide data about different stages or periods in the life of an individual or group. This data can be used to analyse change at the individual or micro-level. The National Development Study in the UK is an example of a longitudinal study. In this survey a sample of children born in 1958 have been followed from birth and interviewed at various stages of their lives.

(a) In sociological research what is meant by the term *reliability*? [2]

Reliability refers to the ability for other researchers to repeat a research study and come up with the same or similar results. Two marks for a definition along these lines. One mark for demonstrating partial understanding of the concept e.g. 'reliability is where other people are able to replicate the original study'. No marks for a non-technical definition of reliability e.g. 'reliability means that the research data is accurate and can be trusted'.

(b) Describe two types of sampling used in sociological research. [4]

Types of sampling include: random, systematic, stratified random, quota, multi-stage, and snowballing. One mark for identifying each type of sampling (two marks maximum) and one mark for describing accurately each example.

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(c) Explain the problems that a sociologist might experience in making a sample representative.

0–4 An answer that is confined to one or two simple points about the difficulty of making a sample representative would trigger this band. Reasons why it may be difficult to achieve a representative sample include, for example, the following: problems in obtaining a sufficiently large sampling frame; high drop out rate from the chosen study group; difficulty in gathering sufficient information about the sampling frame to divide the population into representative groups; and reluctance of some groups to take part in sociological research. An answer that simply lists the strengths and/or limitations of different types of sampling, with little or no direct reference to the issue of representativeness, would be worth no more than 3 marks at best.

5–8 Answers at this level will cover a wider range of problems that a sociologist might face in making a sample representative. Lower in the band the response may be somewhat list-like. To go higher, the problems identified will be explained clearly and fully. At the top of the band, answers will demonstrate a good understanding of the concept of representativeness and its links to the sampling process.

(d) Assess the strengths *and* limitations of longitudinal surveys. [11]

0–4 Answers that confuse longitudinal surveys with other research methods are unlikely to be worth more than 1 or 2 marks. However, a response that conflates longitudinal studies with participant observation may justify a slightly higher mark within this band. Alternatively, an answer that is confined to one or two accurate observations about longitudinal studies would fit the top of the band.

5–8 The focus here must be on longitudinal studies and not other research methods. A descriptive account of the method and/or a few references to relevant longitudinal research studies would trigger the bottom of the band. To go higher, there must be some discussion of the strengths and/or limitations of longitudinal surveys. However, any assessment at this level will be limited in range and depth.

9–11 At this level, answers will cover a range of strengths and limitations of longitudinal surveys. Higher in the band the research method will be assessed explicitly and balanced conclusions reached about its usefulness in sociological research.

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- 3 Although women are a growing proportion of the paid labour force, it is still far from the case that they are paid equally to men or are evenly distributed in the labour force. In the UK, for example, women's earnings as a proportion of men's earnings in all sectors has hovered around 70% since the passing of the Equal Pay Act in 1970.

An examination of the location of women in the workforce helps to explain why they earn less than men. It remains the case that the top positions in most workplaces are dominated by men. In 2004 in the UK, women still constituted only around 2% of chief executives and members of board of directors, 5% of all judges, 15% of senior managers in the private sector, and 22% of senior school head teachers. The low representation of women in these top positions is seen by feminists as evidence of a 'glass ceiling' that women encounter as they progress in their careers but beyond which very few go.

The sexual division of labour is also reflected in the type of paid work that women undertake. While men dominate professional and managerial posts in general, as well as jobs in science, engineering, technology, construction and transport, women form the vast majority of lower grade workers in education, health, office work, catering, and cleaning. One consequence of this is that women not only earn less than men on average but that they dominate the worst-paid jobs. Of the total of all workers classed as low-paid in the UK in 2004, 67% were women.

Studies also reveal that the vast majority of domestic labour in the home is undertaken by women. Culturally, domestic labour has a low status in most societies and that may be the key to understanding the poor position of women in paid employment. Indeed, some writers argue that the paid work that women do can be seen as an extension of their domestic role, providing for and cleaning up after men.

- (a) What is meant by the term *sexual division of labour*?** [2]

The sexual division of labour refers to the distribution of work roles and statuses on the basis of gender differences. Two marks for a clear definition along these lines and one mark for partial understanding, such as 'sexual division of labour refers to men and women doing different jobs'.

- (b) Describe *two* similarities between domestic labour and the work that women typically undertake in paid employment.** [4]

Appropriate similarities that candidates might comment on include, for example, the high percentage of women employed in caring roles and in cleaning work, the low status of both domestic labour and many of the jobs that women typically undertake in paid employment, and the subservience of women to men in many employment situations. One mark for each similarity noted and a further mark for accurately describing each example.

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(c) Explain why women still earn less than men in the UK despite the passing of the Equal Pay Act in 1970.

0–4 Answers at this level are likely to be confined to a few simple points about why women are disadvantaged in the workforce relative to men. There may be no direct discussion of the reasons why the Equal Pay Act has proved inadequate.

5–8 Lower in the band the answers may provide sound coverage of some general reasons why women still earn less than men e.g. dual labour market, reserve army of labour, impact of career breaks, predominance of women in part-time employment, etc. To go higher, there also needs to be some commentary on why the Equal Pay Act has had only a limited impact in reducing inequality in earned income between men and women. This might include, for example, noting that it is relatively easy for employers to get around the provisions of the Act and it is difficult for the authorities to police the Act; it is also the case that the main underlying reasons for low pay among women fall outside the scope of the Act.

(d) ‘Sexual inequality in the workplace is best explained in terms of Marxist theory.’ Assess this claim. [11]

0–4 A few reflections on Marxist theory with little or no linkage to sexual inequality would be worth 2 or 3 marks. Some general comments about the causes of sexual inequality in the workplace without any clear reference to Marxist theory would fit the top of the band.

5–8 A simple descriptive account of the reserve army of labour idea would creep into the bottom of the band. A more developed reprise of Marxian explanations for sexual inequality in the workplace would merit the top half of the band. At this level, any assessment is likely to be rudimentary and may be in the form of juxtaposition through references to non-Marxian explanations of sexual inequality in the workplace.

9–11 Answers will demonstrate a good understanding of the different strands of Marxist thinking about sexual inequality in the workplace and this might include references to Marxist feminists. There will be a concerted attempt to assess the claim on which the question is based. The analysis will be a little basic at the bottom of the band, but sustained and thoughtful in answers that merit full marks.