

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level and GCE Advanced Level

MARK SCHEME for the May/June 2014 series

9699 SOCIOLOGY

9699/22

Paper 2 (Theory and Methods), 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, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge is publishing the mark schemes for the May/June 2014 series for most IGCSE, GCE Advanced Level and Advanced Subsidiary Level components and some Ordinary Level components.

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Section A

Answer question 1.

The process by which individuals learn the culture of their society is known as socialisation. Primary socialisation, probably the most important part of the socialisation process, takes place during the early years of life, usually within the family. Learning plays an essential part in creating social beings and this takes place primarily through interaction with others. At an early age individuals become aware of the existence of others and take this knowledge into account as they form their own identities. Most sociologists suggest that the identities that are formed during socialisation, far from being natural, are linked to social roles and are thus *socially constructed*. For example, gender roles are shaped by learning the forms of behaviour that are thought appropriate to one gender and inappropriate to the other gender.

- 1 (a) What is meant by the term *socially constructed*? [2]
- (b) Describe **two** ways in which the family contributes to the formation of gender roles. [4]
- (c) Explain how infants learn to interact with other people. [8]
- (d) Assess feminist explanations of gender differences. [11]

Section B

Answer **either** question 2 **or** question 3.

- 2 'The Marxist model of how society works has many limitations and few strengths.' Explain and assess this view. [25]
- 3 'All research methods have strengths, but they are most effective when combined together.' Explain and assess this view. [25]

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1. (a) What is meant by the term *socially constructed*? [2]

The term ‘socially constructed’ refers to the idea that social reality is created through the interpretations of individuals and groups interacting with each other. Two marks for a clear and accurate definition, one mark for a partial definition, such as ‘society defines who we are’.

(b) Describe two ways in which the family contributes to the formation of gender roles. [4]

Ways may include:

- play and early learning; role-models within the family
- differential treatment of girls and boys by parents and other family members
- dress codes for boys and girls, differentiated toys and games, forms of discipline and other relevant symbolic influences, etc.

One mark for the example plus one mark for development (2 × 2 marks).

(c) Explain how infants learn to interact with other people. [8]

0–4 Answers at this level are likely to be based on a few mostly common sense observations about the way a child learns to interact with other people. Higher in the band, broad accounts of socialisation with few links to the question are also likely to feature.

5–8 Answers at this level will demonstrate a good understanding of the question, with links to relevant sociological material such as Mead’s account of how children learn through interaction with others. Concepts such as the ‘social self’ may feature. References to psychological theories of cognitive development, such as the work of Piaget, may also provide a relevant backdrop for answering the question but the tone should be sociological. At the top of the band the explanation will be detailed and well focused on the importance of the interaction process itself.

NB This question asks candidates to ‘explain’, therefore there is no requirement for assessment.

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(d) Assess feminist explanations of gender differences. [11]

- 0–4 Poorly informed answers that touch on a few possible explanations of gender differences with little or no reference to feminist perspectives might feature at this level. A very minimal, undifferentiated account of feminist theory would also justify a mark in this band, possibly towards the top end.
- 5–8 Responses at this level are likely to be descriptive rather than analytical. Answers will be clearly focused on feminist theory, although lower in the band they will be somewhat basic and limited in development.
- 9–11 A detailed and accurate account of feminist explanations will be offered. At the top of the band, this will include an awareness of different strands of feminism, such as liberal, radical, Marxist, Black, etc. However, it is not necessary for all of these to feature. The assessment will be incisive and sustained, particularly at the top of the band. For example, this might be achieved by discussing various criticisms of feminist theory and/or by contrasting the feminists with other perspectives on gender inequality, such as Marxist, postmodernist, post-feminist, etc. Reference to studies and pertinent empirical data may feature in a good response, although this is not necessary to achieve the highest marks.

2. ‘The Marxist model of how society works has many limitations and few strengths.’ Explain and assess this view. [25]

- 0–6 An answer based on a few general observations about the nature of society with little or no discernible sociological knowledge would fit the lower half of the band. Higher in the band the discussion will remain weak, but there may be a few basic references to Marxist theory.
- 7–12 A simple explanatory account of the Marxist model of society, with no corresponding assessment, would merit being placed in the lower part of the band. At the higher end, the explanation of the Marxist model will either be more developed and/or there will be a simple attempt at assessment. There may also be some basic recognition that there are different strands of Marxist theory.
- 13–18 The Marxist model is likely to be outlined with references to relevant concepts such as class conflict, ideology, economic determinism, etc. The contributions of relevant Marxist sociologists may figure in well-planned answers. At the top of the band, the analysis will be coherent and sustained, though it may lack depth and could rely mainly on juxtaposing Marxist theory with one or more other sociological theories. Those which are likely to feature in this respect are Weberian, feminist, functionalist or postmodern.
- 19–25 Answers at this level must achieve **three** things:
- First**, there will be good sociological knowledge and understanding.
Second, the material used will be interpreted accurately and applied effectively to answering the question.
Third, there must also be some evidence of assessment.

Answers at this level will demonstrate a detailed and accurate understanding of the Marxist model of society and they are likely to question what is meant by Marxism in contemporary sociology. The assessment will be explicit and detailed; it will also attempt to consider both the strengths and the limitations of Marxist theory. At the top of the band, answers may be distinguished by a sophisticated line of argument in response to the question or possibly by skill

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in contrasting Marxist theory with other sociological perspectives or by distinguishing between different strands of Marxist theory. Alternatively, candidates may reference empirical material to assess Marxist theory; for example, by citing data relating to social mobility, power, poverty etc.

3. 'All research methods have strengths, but they are most effective when combined together.' Explain and assess this view. [25]

0–6 Answers at this level may be characterised by a few elementary observations about a range of methods in general. Mention of the fact that disparate methods can be combined together by some sociologists may justify a mark at the top of the band.

7–12 Lower in the band, responses will outline the use of multiple (mixed) methods to complement and verify one another, in order to achieve robust research results. They are also used to generate a more vivid and complete picture of what is being studied. At this level, responses are likely to be descriptive rather than analytical. At the top of the band, reference will be made to the type of data produced by multiple methods as well as some appreciation that this is related to key methodological concepts such as validity and reliability, and possibly to representativeness. The supporting rationales of positivism and interpretivism are unlikely to be invoked at this level, or will not be convincingly linked to the question. Practical consideration may feature as a reason for researchers opting for this approach, perhaps in relation to the sample and its make-up, and the type of information required by the researcher. Answers that simply describe a range of strengths and limitations of different research methods but do not address the issue of combination should not receive more than 12 marks.

13–18 Answers will provide an accurate and balanced account of the use of combined methods and the rationale for doing so. At the lower end of the band this will be descriptive and mainly achieved by juxtaposition. Theoretical and practical points will be considered, though not necessarily with equal emphasis. Higher in the band, responses will outline some of the benefits of using a combination of methods. For example, Bryman identifies the advantages of triangulation, such as using different types of data to check accuracy, qualitative data generating hypotheses to be checked using quantitative data, combining methods to produce a more complete picture and using qualitative data to explain statistical links. Some responses may distinguish between triangulation and methodological pluralism but this is not a necessary feature of answers at this level. Reward references to relevant studies which illustrate this approach, though it would be possible to answer the question fully without referring to studies. The idea of 'fit for purpose' may be explored.

19–25 Answers at this level must achieve **three** things:

First, there will be good sociological knowledge and understanding.

Second, the material used will be interpreted accurately and applied effectively to answering the question.

Third, there must also be some evidence of assessment.

At this level, answers will provide an accurate, detailed and balanced account of the theoretical and practical context of the use of multiple methods. A distinguishing feature of answers at this level may also be the ability to identify appropriate links to the theoretical perspectives that endorse the use of different methodologies, namely, interpretivism and positivism. The assessment will be explicit and, at the top of the band, will provide coherent and incisive conclusions about the relative merits of using combined method, showing that this reveals that the rather exaggerated division that exists between qualitative and quantitative approaches is

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less apparent in actual research than it is 'in theory', i.e. both positions are rather exaggerated, and in practice most sociologists use a variety of methods.