

MARK SCHEME for the May/June 2009 question paper
for the guidance of teachers

2251 SOCIOLOGY
2251/01 Paper 1, maximum raw mark 90

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Section A: Research Methods

Secondary data is often used in sociological research. It can be used in different types of sociological study. Sociologists often examine official statistics when they are seeking to gather statistical data about general changes in society. This way of gathering data is often used by sociologists who favour collecting quantitative data.

Other sociologists have a different view of how society should be studied. They seek to collect qualitative data and will often use personal records, such as letters, newspaper articles, television reports and historical documents. Such data helps to provide insights into how individuals make sense of the world in which they live.

Secondary data can support primary data, but there are a number of problems associated with its use. The validity of the data can be called into question and the data may not always provide the exact information required.

1 (a) What is meant by the following terms:

(i) **official statistics** [2]

Evidence that is gathered by government sources which is expressed in the form of numerical data for 2 marks. 1 mark for a partial definition.

(ii) **qualitative data** [2]

Evidence that has been collected and seeks to provide the meanings individuals place on social actions. Reference to detailed or in-depth data is also acceptable. Definitions along these lines would gain 2 marks, 1 mark for a partial definition.

(iii) **validity.** [2]

The ability of the study to present 'true to life' data which is detailed and authentic for 2 marks, 1 mark for a partial definition.

(b) **Explain the difference between *primary* and *secondary* data.** [4]

Primary data refers to evidence that is collected 'first hand' by the researcher. Data that has been previously gathered and published by other sociologists can be said to be secondary, for example a textbook.

0–2 marks A clear definition of one term, or a partial explanation of both.

3–4 marks A clear definition of both terms with appropriate examples.

(c) **Describe *one* advantage and *one* disadvantage of the use of secondary data in sociological research.** [4]

Advantages may include: availability, cost, time saving. Disadvantages may include: data may be out of date, inappropriate or unobtainable. Any other reasonable response. 1 mark for each point, 1 further mark for some form of development.

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(d) Describe two advantages in using primary data in sociological research. [4]

Advantages may include: such data is up to date as it has been recently carried out by the researcher, it may contain less bias than secondary data. In addition, answers may refer to the appropriateness of the data as it has been undertaken specifically for the purpose of the proposed study. Secondary data may not have been undertaken on the proposed subject and therefore primary data may be the only useful research tool. Any other reasonable response. 1 mark for each point, 1 further mark for some development.

(e) Describe one advantage and one disadvantage of using historical documents in sociological research. [4]

Advantages may include: they may be the only source available, relatively cheap and easy to obtain. Disadvantages include: such documents may be biased, they may be fragmentary accounts so an unbalanced view may be obtained, they may be difficult to locate for a specific research topic. Any other reasonable response. 1 mark for each point, 1 further mark for some development.

(f) Identify and explain two advantages and two disadvantages of using official statistics in sociological research. [8]

Advantages may include: cheap and easily available, often it may be the only method sociologists can use to study 'large scale' projects like 'class' health etc. because of the difficulty in collecting data themselves. Statistics are likely to be reliable and representative. Any other reasonable response. 1 mark for each point, 1 further mark for some development.

Disadvantages may include: statistics may soon go out of date, they may lack validity, they may not be totally suitable for the research project, and they may contain bias as governments seek to present themselves favourably. Any other reasonable response. 1 mark for each point, 1 further mark for some development.

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Section B: Culture and Socialisation

2 Sociologists argue that humans are shaped by various agencies of socialisation.

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

Socialisation refers to the process of learning the norms and values of a society. 2 marks for a clear definition, 1 mark for a partial definition.

(b) Briefly describe two *agencies of socialisation*. **[4]**

Answers may focus on: the family, the media, peer group etc. 1 mark for identification, 1 mark for a brief description.

(c) Explain how males and females may be socialised differently. **[6]**

0–3 marks A few general comments about how boys and girls are treated differently will be presented. For example, the toys and dress associated with various genders.

4–6 marks At this level there will be an attempt to demonstrate sociological knowledge, perhaps referring to different activities boys and girls are engaged in, differing parental attitudes towards boys and girls which they may experience. At the top of the band answers will present a range of issues and some level of detail in their answers.

(d) How far is socialisation important in the social development of the individual? **[8]**

0–3 marks Answers are likely to produce limited accounts of socialisation with few specific examples.

4–6 marks Answers are likely to provide quite detailed accounts of socialisation.

7–8 marks Some attempt will be made to address the issue raised in the question by looking at the role of heredity in social development and/or providing some assessment.

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3 For social order to be established, people have to control their behaviour. This is achieved by various forms of social control.

(a) What is meant by *social order*? [2]

A society where individuals share values and norms. A society that has stable patterns of behaviour. 1 mark for a partial definition, 2 marks for a full definition.

(b) Explain the terms *informal* and *formal* social control. [4]

Informal social control refers to ways of control over individuals that are not prescribed by the state or formal bodies. These may include parental sanctions and informal norms at school. Formal social control refers to the official means of regulation in a society, such as the law and the law enforcement agencies. 1 mark for a partial definition, 2 marks for a full definition.

(c) Explain how social control is maintained in modern industrial societies. [6]

0–3 marks A few simple observations regarding the importance of, for example, the law would warrant 2 or 3 marks.

4–6 marks There will an attempt to address the question, perhaps focusing on the increasing importance of the law in complex societies. Better answers may also make reference to informal social controls continuing to play a role. At the top of the band answers may refer to the breakdown of more informal means of control in industrial societies and the need for more formal means of control.

(d) Assess the view that the laws of society benefit the powerful. [8]

0–3 marks Answers at this level will show little attempt to address the question and will limit themselves to a few general remarks about how the powerful can avoid upholding the law.

4–6 marks One or two examples of how social control serves the interests of the powerful groups in society are likely to be advanced. For example, answers may discuss how the law protects property and how 'white collar' crime has perhaps not been focused on by the police to the same extent compared to other crimes.

7–8 marks A range of theories may be discussed. Marxist explanations may be advanced and countered by functionalist views on the general importance of social control to the whole of society. There will be some attempt at assessment.

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Section C: Social Stratification and Inequality

4 Ethnic minorities tend to suffer discrimination in various areas of their lives and people from poor backgrounds are still likely to remain in poverty.

(a) What is meant by *discrimination*? [2]

Discrimination refers to the poor or unequal treatment of a group because of their ethnicity, race or class background. 1 mark for a partial definition, 2 marks for a clear and full definition.

(b) Describe *two* ways in which ethnic minorities may experience discrimination. [4]

Answers may focus on: lower pay, lack of employment or promotion opportunities, lack of housing, unfair treatment at school etc. 1 mark for identification of a way, a further mark for some explanation.

(c) Explain why ethnic minorities tend to earn less than other groups in modern industrial societies. [6]

0–3 marks Answers at this level will provide a basic explanation. This may be limited to one explanation such as: they face discrimination so cannot get well paid employment.

4–6 marks At this level the answer will be more developed and will involve a range of explanations. Responses may focus on issues such as: lack of skills, poorer education and training opportunities, and poorer aspirations.

(d) How far does growing up in poverty affect an individual's opportunities in life? [8]

0–3 marks A simple range of points will be made at this level which will possibly focus on a description of poverty.

4–6 marks At this level answers will attempt to provide a wider range of points which will focus on issues such as: the cycle of poverty, the lack of educational opportunities and cultural support, but there will be little or no attempt to discuss the extent of the opportunities faced by the poor.

7–8 marks Answers at this level will provide some form of a balanced discussion which will suggest that there is at least some degree of social mobility in industrial societies, perhaps emphasising improved educational and training opportunities that is offered to all members of society.

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5 There is much inequality of wealth in industrial societies and the gap between the rich and the poor continues to grow wider.

(a) What is meant by the term *inequality of wealth*? [2]

The difference between the wealthiest and the least wealthy in society in terms of various forms of wealth. 1 mark for a partial explanation, 2 marks for a clear definition.

(b) Describe *two* actions governments can take to reduce the gap between the poorest and wealthiest members of society. [4]

Responses are likely to focus on: higher taxes on the income of the wealthy, the payment of benefits to the poor, the imposition of inheritance and capital gains taxes. 1 mark for identification, 1 mark for some form of explanation.

(c) Explain why the poor are likely to remain in poverty throughout their lives. [6]

0–3 marks At this level answers are likely to outline basic comments about the way the poor live.

4–6 marks At this level a range of explanations may be advanced including: lack of skills and training opportunities, the cycle of deprivation and cultural explanations of poverty. The range of explanations will determine where the answer is placed in the band.

(d) Assess the factors that enable the wealthiest members of society to maintain their privileged position in society. [8]

0–3 marks A few simple observations about the lifestyle of the wealthy are likely to characterise answers in this band.

4–6 marks At this level there will be an attempt to answer the question but there will be a narrow range of explanations advanced.

7–8 marks Answers at this level are likely to attempt to assess the factors. The range of factors identified is likely to be wide, focusing on issues such as: cultural capital which enables them to forge links with other wealthy families; the ability to save and invest thus increasing their wealth. In addition, other factors such as: access to borrowing for investment and the ownership of scarce goods which appreciate in value may be discussed. At the top of the band answers may allude to elite or Marxist theory.

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Section D: Power and Authority

6 In democratic systems governments gain their authority from winning free elections.

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

Reference should be made to open contests between political parties in order to gain some form of political office. 2 marks for a full definition, 1 mark for a partial explanation.

(b) Explain the difference between *power* and *authority*. **[4]**

Reference should be made to how power refers to the ability of individuals or groups to exercise their will. Authority refers to the legal right to exercise a group's will. 1 mark for identification, 1 mark for some form of development.

(c) Explain how political parties attempt to win elections. **[6]**

0–3 marks A limited range of issues will be discussed. The accurate discussion of two issues will place answers at the top of the band.

4–6 marks A more wide-ranging answer will be provided which may discuss campaigning, canvassing, the use of media broadcasts and the use of opinion polls to tailor campaigns and target key areas. The wider the range of issues the higher the answer will be placed in the band.

(d) How far do pressure groups influence government decision-making? **[8]**

0–3 marks Some isolated points about pressure groups and/or decision-making would be characteristic of answers in this band.

4–6 marks At this level answers will outline a number of ways pressure groups influence governments but there will be little in the way of assessment.

7–8 marks There will be an attempt to assess the influence of pressure groups on government. At this level answers will focus on issues such as: the greater importance of some groups, the close relationship some groups have with government and at the top of the band there may well be reference to various theories of power.

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7 The media often plays an important role in elections by having an influence on floating voters.

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

Reference should be made to voters who have little strong connection to a specific party and who are likely to switch their allegiance at elections. 2 marks for a clear definition, 1 mark for a partial explanation.

(b) Describe *two* factors, other than the media, that may influence the way people vote? [4]

Answers are likely to focus on social class, the family, religious, ethnic identity etc. 1 mark for identification, 1 mark for some form of development.

(c) Explain how the media may influence the way people vote. [6]

0–3 marks At this level there will be a simple description of the influence of the media on voting. This will possibly be a description of how voters are informed about policies.

4–6 marks At this level answers will be more developed, outlining a number of ways the media can be influential. These are likely to include issues such as: the importance of biased reporting, the way the media focus on leaders' images, the long term effect of reporting on the perception of voters. The role of opinion polls may also be discussed. The more wide-ranging the answer the higher the answer will be placed in the band.

(d) "Social class is still the main influence on the way people vote in elections." Assess this claim. [8]

0–3 marks At this level there will be a few simple observations about the way class still remains an important factor in voting behaviour.

4–6 marks Answers at this level will be more developed providing an account of how class remains very influential. There will be some understanding of the way the class structure is changing and/or an understanding that class may not be the most important determinant of voting behaviour.

7–8 marks At this level answers will make a direct attempt to engage with the question. Answers are likely to be developed and show a clear understanding of the changing nature of the class structure and the argument regarding class dealignment. There will be an attempt to provide some form of assessment.