

**MARK SCHEME for the October/November 2013 series**

**9699 SOCIOLOGY**

**9699/22**

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, 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.

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1 Functionalists use a biological analogy to compare parts of society to parts of the human body. In terms of this analogy, both humans and societies have certain needs that must be met if they are to survive. Social institutions exist to meet these basic needs and to ensure social order. For example, families provide socialisation, which helps meet the basic need for a *common culture*. The function of an institution is studied by examining its contribution to the survival, or harmonious running, of society. Some functionalists accept that there may be aspects of society that are dysfunctional, but they generally pay more attention to studying the functional parts of society. This has led critics, such as those in the Marxist tradition, to claim that functionalist theories support the maintenance of the existing social order.

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

Common culture refers to a set of values and beliefs that is shared within a community of people and which creates a social cement between different groups and interests. Two marks for a clear and accurate definition; one mark for a partial definition, such as 'a set of values' or 'a shared way of thinking'.

(b) Describe two agencies of secondary socialisation. [4]

Agencies of secondary socialisation include education, religion, media, peer group, workplace. One mark for the example plus one mark for development (2 × 2 marks). In order to gain the development marks, the points made must be specific to the particular agency under discussion. If the points made could refer to any agency of socialisation, then no marks for development should be rewarded.

(c) Explain the functionalist view of social order. [8]

0–4 A few simple observations about social order, with no direct reference to functionalist theory, would fit the lower part of the band. Some observations about functionalism, with links to social order left implicit, would merit 3 or 4 marks.

5–8 A basic account of the functionalist theory of social order, perhaps limited to explaining the idea of value consensus or distinguishing between organic and mechanical solidarity, would be worth 5 or 6 marks. To go higher, the explanation should have greater depth and/or cover a wider range of functionalist ideas on the subject of social order.

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**(d) Assess Marxist criticisms of the functionalist model of society. [11]**

0–4 Some limited comments on Marxist theory, with no direct reference to the critique of functionalism, would fit the lower part of the band. A summary of the functionalist model of society, without reference to the Marxist critique, would be worth 3 or 4 marks.

5–8 Lower in the band, answers will demonstrate, implicitly or explicitly, a sound understanding of the functionalist model of society, and there will be some limited reference to the Marxist critique of that model. Higher in the band, a more developed account of the Marxist critique will be offered, though it may still lack depth of understanding. An answer that provides a good account of the Marxist theory, but fails to make links with the functionalist viewpoint, implicitly or explicitly, can gain no more than 6 marks.

Answers that fail to assess the Marxist critique can gain no more than 8 marks.

9–11 Answers at this level will demonstrate a good understanding of the functionalist model of society and criticisms that Marxist theorists have levelled against the functionalist perspective. There will also be an attempt to assess the Marxist critique of functionalism. At the bottom of the band, the assessment may in the form of juxtaposing Marxist theory with one or more other theories of society (but not the functionalist theory). Higher in the band, there will be an explicit evaluation of the strengths and/or limitations of the Marxist critique of functionalism.

**2 Data that is collected from interviews is often viewed by positivists as revealing the attitudes and behaviour of people in everyday life. However, interpretivists would argue that an interview creates a situation that is very artificial and unlike everyday life. They think that this is particularly the case with *structured interviews*. The answers that people give in an interview may have little to do with their real or normal behaviour. There is no guarantee that people will tell the truth in interviews, and they may forget or mislead the interviewer. People may also interpret the wording of the questions in interviews differently to what the interviewer intended. For these reasons, interpretivists question the validity of the data obtained using interviews. They believe that participant observation is the best method of obtaining research data that is valid.**

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

A structured interview is an interview based on a set of questions that are chosen in advance and asked in the same way and the same order to all those who are interviewed. Two marks for a clear and accurate definition; one mark for a partial definition, such as 'a formal interview' or 'an interview based on a questionnaire format'.

**(b) Describe two qualities that positivists look for in a research method. [4]**

Qualities positivists look for in a research method include: objectivity, reliability, comparability of results, ability to quantify data and to generalise results, and a preference for larger scale research. Accept validity too as a quality that positivists would look for in their research. One mark for the example plus one mark for development (2 × 2 marks).

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**(c) Explain why interpretivists think that participant observation is the best way of obtaining valid data. [8]**

0–4 Lower in the band there may be a few simple observations about the advantages of participant observation in general, with no clear reference to validity. A description of what participant observation involves as a research method, on its own, would be worth no more than two marks. Higher in the band, there will be some reference to validity, though the links with participant observation will be discussed only in a very simple way and there may be no reference to the interpretivist perspective.

5–8 A sound account of why the data collected using participant observation may be high in validity will trigger the lower part of the band. To go higher, the account needs to be more sophisticated in terms of explaining the links between participant observation and validity, and this should include relevant links to the interpretivist perspective.

**(d) Assess the view that the answers that people give in an interview may have little to do with their real or normal behaviour. [11]**

0–4 An answer that demonstrates some limited knowledge about research methods, with directly responding to the question, would fit the lower part of the band. A few simple points about strengths and/or limitations of interviews, with no direct links to the question, would be worth three or four marks.

5–8 A general account of the strengths and limitations of interviews, with no direct application to the question, would fit the lower part of the band. To go higher, there must be some attempt to address the issues raised by the wording of the question. However, at this level any assessment will be very limited.

9–11 To reach this band, the answer must include a clear and accurate explanation of the idea that the answers that people give in an interview may have little to do with their real or normal behaviour. There will also be an assessment of this claim. At the bottom of the band, the assessment may be confined to a simple juxtaposition of different theoretical contributions to the debate about the value of using interviews in sociological research. To go higher, candidates will offer an assessment that addresses directly the issues raised by the question. This might include good use of the distinctions between different types of interview, together with well made references to different theoretical perspectives and/or relevant sociological concepts.

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3 There are many more opportunities for social mobility in modern industrial societies than in traditional societies. For this reason, modern industrial societies may be described as 'open' or meritocratic. A meritocracy is a system in which people are rewarded on the basis of how hard they work and how much ability they possess. Functionalists argue that a meritocracy is essential for the smooth running of a modern industrial society. However, conflict theorists question whether a meritocracy actually exists. They claim that there are structural inequalities in modern industrial societies that prevent many able and talented people from achieving upward social mobility. Feminists, for example, argue that *gender discrimination* is an obstacle to many women succeeding in high status occupations.

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

Gender discrimination refers to the unfair treatment of people on the basis of their sex. Two marks for a clear and accurate definition; one mark for a partial definition, such as 'treating men and women differently' or 'unfairness to women'.

(b) Describe two obstacles that a working class person may face in achieving upward social mobility. [4]

Difficulties that a working class person might face in achieving upward social mobility include: lack of educational opportunities; lack of cultural capital; social exclusion in relation to middle and upper class groups; lack of inherited wealth; structure of the labour market (primary and secondary). One mark for the example plus one mark for development (2 × 2 marks).

(c) Explain why it may be difficult to measure the extent of social mobility. [8]

0–4 A few simple observations about social mobility, with no direct references to issues of measurement, would trigger the lower part of the band. One or two simple observations about the measurement of social mobility, might be worth three or four marks.

5–8 Problems with measuring social mobility include changes in the way occupations are defined over time, different classifications of occupations, issues relating to the measurement of female mobility, and distinctions between short and long range mobility. A basic account of a few factors that might make it difficult to measure social mobility would be worth five or six marks. To go higher, there must be more depth to the explanation and/or a wider range of relevant factors will be considered.

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**(d) Assess the claim that structural inequalities prevent many able and talented people from achieving upward social mobility. [11]**

0–4 A few general points about inequality or social mobility, with no direct links to the question, would fit the lower part of the band. A basic account of a few ways of achieving upward social mobility would be worth three or four marks.

5–8 An outline of the meritocracy thesis, with no further application to the question, would fit the lower part of the band. To go higher, there must be some reference to structural theories of inequality, or some other demonstration that the candidate is aware of the existence of structural constraints on opportunities for upward social mobility.

9–11 Answers at this level will include a good account of the idea that structural inequalities may form a barrier to upward social mobility for some groups in society. There will also be an attempt to assess the view that structural inequalities prevent many able and talented people from achieving upward social mobility. At the bottom of the band, the assessment may be expressed in the form of a juxtaposition of functionalist and conflict theory perspectives on social inequality. To go higher, the assessment must include some more direct engagement with the view that structural inequalities act as a constraint on opportunities for upward social mobility.