



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level

CANDIDATE
NAME

CENTRE
NUMBER

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SOCIOLOGY

9699/21

Paper 2 Principles and Methods 2

May/June 2010

1 hour 30 minutes

Candidates answer on the Question Paper

No additional materials are required

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

DO **NOT** WRITE IN ANY BARCODES.

Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

You may use a soft pencil for any diagrams, graphs or rough working.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **two** questions.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.

This document consists of **10** printed pages and **2** blank pages.



Answer **two** questions.

For
Examiner's
Use

- 1 The process by which individuals learn the *culture* of their society is known as socialisation. Primary socialisation takes place during childhood, usually within the family. Socialisation is not, however, confined to childhood. It is a lifelong process. Agencies of secondary socialisation include the education system, the media and the workplace.

Socialisation is reinforced through sanctions and rewards that encourage the individual to behave in socially acceptable ways. There are different views, however, about the extent to which socialisation produces conformity in society. The functionalist perspective views socialisation as the process through which people internalise values and learn to follow the norms of society. But this view has been criticised for implying that society has more influence and control over the individual than may be the case.

Sociologists who favour the interpretive approach disagree with the view that socialisation is a one-way process in which individuals learn to fit into society. They argue that people are free to negotiate their social roles and obligations and choose alternative courses of action. Society is not an all-powerful force that determines how the individual will behave. Rather, for the interpretivists, the individual is a skilled social actor capable of influencing the social environment in which he or she operates.

- (a) What is meant by the term *culture*?

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- (b) Describe **two** examples of sanctions that encourage people to follow the norms of society.

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(c) Explain how children learn the norms and values of society.

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PLEASE TURN OVER FOR QUESTION 2

2 Interviews can be of three main types: structured, semi-structured and unstructured. Although they are all types of interview, there are very significant differences between them. Structured interviews are similar to questionnaires in that they contain pre-set questions that are asked in the same order every time. Whereas a questionnaire may be given to a respondent to complete privately, a structured interview consists of a spoken question-and-answer session between interviewer and interviewee. The presence of the interviewer in this process involves benefits and limitations when compared to questionnaires. Structured interviews are one of the research methods that sociologists consider to be high in reliability.

A semi-structured interview is a mixture of structured and unstructured interviewing methods, where a number of questions may be pre-set, but the interviewer is free to ask additional questions in order to explore issues raised by earlier answers.

Unstructured interviews are more like conversations than the tightly structured interview schedules of the structured interview. The purpose of unstructured interviews is to gain an in-depth understanding of what an interviewee thinks and feels about particular subjects or issues.

Usually, the interviewer will allow the conversation to develop freely around these subjects, and the interview session may last for several hours or even several sessions stretched out over a number of days or weeks. Unstructured interviews are designed to produce *qualitative data*, and as such are likely to be favoured by sociologists from an interpretivist perspective.

(a) What is meant by the term *qualitative data*?

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(b) Describe **one** benefit and **one** limitation of structured interviews when compared to questionnaires.

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(c) Explain why sociologists from an interpretivist perspective are unlikely to use structured interviews.

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- 3 The main sociological perspectives each view the nature, extent and causes of poverty differently. Functionalists believe that if poverty is a widespread feature of society, then it must be functional, although it is clearly *dysfunctional* to those in poverty. Functionalist sociologists have different views about what social functions are served by poverty.

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Other theories of poverty focus on the norms and values of those in poverty, rather than the social functions that poverty may serve. After studying the lifestyles of the poor, Oscar Lewis concluded that a 'culture of poverty' exists that is passed on from generation to generation through the family and the community. This view draws attention to the negative aspects of the way the poor live, their defeatism and apparent lack of organisation.

A different type of explanation views poverty as part of the structure of inequality in society. This view emphasises the powerlessness of the poor, and their inability to help themselves or influence a society that is organised in a way that means some people will always be poor. Sociologists within the Marxist tradition have even claimed that poverty plays a key part in supporting the capitalist economic system, with the poor providing many benefits for the wealthy and powerful members of society.

- (a) What is meant by the term *dysfunctional*?

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- (b) Describe **two** social functions that may be served by the existence of poverty.

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(c) Explain how the existence of poverty might benefit the wealthy and powerful members of society.

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