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SOCIOLOGY **9699/22**

Paper 2 Theory and Methods **May/June 2016**

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 50

Published

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Section A

1 Primary socialisation usually takes place within the family during infancy. Socialisation is not, however, confined to childhood. It is a lifelong process. In modern industrial societies, other important agencies of socialisation include the educational system, the media, the occupational group and the peer group. The process of growing out of childhood and maturing into an adult is often seen as something that happens naturally to people once they reach a certain age. Yet this commonsense assumption is challenged by sociologists who point out that, far from being natural, the identities associated with the roles of 'child' and 'adult' are socially constructed.

Most societies have sanctions to support the socialisation process and to ensure that individuals conform to socially acceptable behaviour. This process is known as social control. Functionalist sociologists believe that *value consensus* is also an important outcome of socialisation.

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

One mark for a partial definition, such as 'shared agreement in society'. (1)
Two marks for a clear and accurate definition.
The idea that general agreement exists about the beliefs and guidelines that are desirable and by which society is organised. (2)

(b) Describe two ways in which the peer group encourages appropriate behaviour. [4]

Two marks available for each way. One mark for identification OR explanation only, two marks for identification AND explanation.

The ways offered can include:
Positive, negative or informal sanctions, praise, language use, laughter, ostracism, criticism, threats, withdrawal of status or privileges, role modelling, peer pressure.

- Responses may make use of age/gender/ethnic /class peer groups to identify and explain a way but it is not necessary to cite a specific peer group.
- Identifications might be developed in relation to: peer norms, values and attitudes that enforce group identity
- A development that restates appropriate behaviour e.g. 'good' or 'correct' should not be rewarded

One mark for a relevant way and one mark for a brief description/development of the way in terms of how it encourages appropriate behaviour e.g. encouraging healthy/unhealthy behaviour [smoking]; hard work/not working (1)

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

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(c) Explain why some individuals may not conform to socially acceptable behaviour. [8]

Reasons might include:

- Alternative socialisation that deviates from 'accepted' social norms (reference to any agents and how this might take place permissible though peers may feature as a useful example)
- Subcultural explanations
- Failure of social control mechanisms
- Deviant behaviour
- Theoretical explanations may be applied usefully, e.g. social action approach on identity construction; over-socialisation. Functionalist (e.g. Merton) Marxist and feminist.

0–4 Answers at this level are likely to show only limited appreciation of the issues raised by the question and make little use of relevant sociological concepts and theories.

Lower in the band there will be a few observations about why people may reject social norms and values, or about the nature of social control and conformity.

Higher in the band there will be an attempt to develop the issues raised in the question, perhaps by reference to the notion of subculture or via the role of one of the agents of socialisation. The most likely agent being the peer group.

5–8 Answers at this level will show some sociological knowledge and understanding of the question.

Lower in the band the response is likely to give reasons for non-conformity via reference to socialisation, deviance and subcultures but the answer may be somewhat descriptive. There may be some reference to the relative strength of value consensus about acceptable behaviour.

Higher in the band (7–8) the reasons why some people may fail to conform to socially acceptable behaviour will be well developed and made explicit. The explanation will be developed and well informed, either covering a range of points or fewer points in detail.

A good list of undeveloped points may gain up to six marks. To go higher, there needs to be development of three or more points.

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(d) Assess the view that interactionists offer the most convincing understanding of socialisation. [11]

0–4 Answers at this level are likely to be assertive and show only limited appreciation of the issues raised by the question.

Lower in the band, there may be a few simple points about socialisation, with no clear links to the interactionist account. Answers that offer an exclusively methodological account of interactionism should not be credited.

Higher in the band, there may be a few observations about interactionism in general, but with little or no reference to socialisation.

5–8 Answers at this level show some sociological knowledge and understanding of the question.

Lower in the band, a simplistic account of the processes of socialisation that includes some reference to the importance of social interaction, but without explicit links to interactionist theory. Answers that focus on interactionism as a perspective but make only a few links to socialisation should go no higher than this level.

Higher in the band, there will be a sound account of the interactionist perspective's understanding of the socialisation process as a negotiated process outlined but perhaps lacking in full detail or clarity.

Expect to see reference to thinkers such as Mead, Cooley, Blumer or Goffman.

A descriptive answer cannot gain more than 8 marks.

9–11 Answers at this level will demonstrate good sociological knowledge and understanding applied to the question and there will be some assessment.

At the bottom of the band, the assessment may rely on a simple juxtaposition of the interactionist view with another theory of socialisation, such as the functionalist or Marxist accounts, or may be confined to just one or two evaluative points.

Higher in the band, the assessment may have more range or depth. The proposition will be evaluated explicitly and address directly what is meant by 'convincing'. There is likely to be some overall evaluative statements about the debate. This might be achieved by a discussion of just how much the interactionist view takes of those structural elements in the socialisation process. However, it is not necessary for this to be exhaustive or very developed to achieve the highest marks.

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Section B

2 'Unstructured interviews are too subjective to be useful in sociological research.' Explain and assess this view. [25]

Level 1 0–6 Answers at this level are likely to be assertive and focus on a few common sense observations

Lower in the band, answers may be confined to one or two simple points; for example, a few comments about the interview method in general.

Higher in the band, there may be a wider range of simple points based on assertion/common sense understanding with no further development in relation to the question.

Level 2 7–12 Answers at this level will show some sociological knowledge and understanding of the question.

Lower in the band, the answer may be confined to a narrow range of points, lacking detail and possibly with some inaccuracies. There may be a basic description of unstructured interviews as a research method, perhaps supported by references to one or two relevant studies.

Higher in the band (10–12 marks), answers may either cover a narrow range of points in reasonable detail or cover a wider range of points in limited detail. For example, a fairly accurate account of a few limitations or strengths in using the unstructured interview approaches. Answers at this level are unlikely to address the specific wording of the question i.e. the purported problems of subjectivity may not be discussed directly.

Level 3 13–18 Answers at this level will show good sociological knowledge and understanding. The material used will be interpreted accurately and applied effectively to answering the question.

Lower in the band (13–15 marks), answers are likely to make use of concepts/theory but the range of knowledge demonstrated may be limited and the points covered may lack development. Whilst the focus of the response should be on unstructured interviews, expect to see sound knowledge and understanding of other interview methods in the overall discussion.

Higher in the band (16–18 marks), answers will use a wider range of knowledge, supported by the use of concepts/theory where relevant and include some well-developed points. There will be a clear attempt to explain the ways unstructured interviews might be adversely affected by a lack of objectivity. Links to sociological theory and relevant concepts are likely to be included in the discussion, particularly at the top end.

There is no requirement for assessment at this level.

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Level 4 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; and
- **third**, there must also be some evidence of assessment.

Lower in the band (19–21 marks), the assessment may be largely delivered through juxtaposition of contrasting arguments/theories. Alternatively, the assessment may be limited to just one or two evaluative points that are explicitly stated. There will be a clear and detailed account of the strengths and limitations of unstructured interviews and the lack of subjectivity will be addressed. There will also be a sustained attempt to assess the usefulness of unstructured interviews in sociological research; the issue of reliability is likely to feature in the analysis.

Higher in the band (22–25 marks), there will be sustained assessment and the points offered will be explicit and well-directed towards the question. To reach the top of the band, the assessment will be more developed and, possibly, less tied to a basic comparison between types of interviews. References to relevant studies might be used to good effect, for example, to demonstrate the type of context in which unstructured interviews might be a particularly appropriate choice of research method.

There is likely to be a well formulated conclusion.

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3 'Social order is rarely challenged because people are fearful of breaking the rules of society'. Explain and assess this claim. [25]

Level 1 0–6 Answers at this level are likely to be assertive and focus on a few common sense observations.

Lower in the band, answers may be confined to one or two simple points, for example, a few vague remarks with about socialisation may trigger the lower half of the band.

Higher in the band there may be a wider range of simple points about the nature of social order, with little or no sociological foundation.

Level 2 7–12 Answers at this level will show some sociological knowledge and understanding of the question.

Lower in the band, the answer may be confined to a narrow range of points, lacking detail and possibly with some inaccuracies. Responses here are likely to be descriptive accounts of functionalist theory and/or the concept of consensus.

Higher in the band (10–12 marks), answers may either cover a narrow range of points in reasonable detail or cover a wider range of points in limited detail.

For example, the idea of coercion may be hit upon indirectly by candidates who provide a general summary of the Marxist perspective on social order. However, answers will be largely descriptive at this level.

Level 3 13–18 Answers at this level will show good sociological knowledge and understanding. The material used will be interpreted accurately and applied effectively to answering the question.

Lower in the band (13–15 marks), answers are likely to make use of concepts/theory but the range of knowledge demonstrated may be limited and the points covered may lack development.

Expect to see some distinction between conflict and consensus theories of social order most likely via a sound contrast of functionalist and Marxist accounts.

Higher in the band (16–18 marks), answers will use a wider range of knowledge, supported by the use of concepts/theory where relevant and include some well-developed points. Here, answers are likely to adopt a more analytical approach to the wording of the question by reflecting on why people may be afraid to disobey the rules of society. This approach might take the candidate into debates about the nature of social control and the mechanisms through which conformity is encouraged and imposed.

There is no requirement for assessment at this level.

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Level 4 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; and
- **third**, there must also be some evidence of assessment.

Lower in the band (19–21 marks), the assessment may be largely delivered through juxtaposition of contrasting arguments/theories. Functionalist or interactionist critiques of the Marxist approach may feature. Alternatively, the assessment may be limited to just one or two evaluative points that are explicitly stated. There is likely to be a focus on the question of why people might be afraid to disobey the rules of society. Empirical examples/studies countering the idea that rules are not broken may be cited. An accurate and detailed evaluative account of different theories of social order would merit a mark at this level.

Higher in the band, the assessment will be sustained and the points offered well-directed towards the question. To reach the top of the band, answers might further explore the concepts of ideology and/or hegemony to address the question.

There is likely to be a well formulated conclusion.

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