



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

SOCIOLOGY

9699/02

Paper 2 Principles and Methods 2

May/June 2009

1 hour 30 minutes

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.

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.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

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

This document consists of **4** printed pages.



Answer **two** questions.

- 1 Social order is possible because each individual member of society plays specific roles. Each role carries a *status* and a set of expectations about how the person performing the role will behave. These expectations reflect the values and beliefs that form the culture of the society.

It is mainly through interaction with other people that the individual learns the expectations associated with his or her roles. This process is known as socialisation. Through socialisation people learn that social sanctions exist to encourage behaviour appropriate to their roles and to discourage inappropriate behaviour. These sanctions may be negative or positive.

Among sociologists there are different views about what is meant by socialisation and how this process takes place. Functionalists view socialisation as a one-way process in which society, through agencies such as the family, the education system and peer groups, ensures that individuals perform the roles already defined for them by those agencies. However, this view has been criticised for implying an 'over-socialised' concept of the relationship between the individual and society. Interactionists argue, for example, that socialisation is not a one-way process because people are free to negotiate their social roles and obligations.

- (a) What is meant by the term *status*? [2]
- (b) Describe **two** examples of sanctions that might be used to discourage inappropriate behaviour. [4]
- (c) Explain how social order is maintained in a closed institution, such as a mental asylum or a prison. [8]
- (d) Assess the functionalist theory of socialisation. [11]

- 2 In sociological research there is a distinction between primary data and secondary data. Information that is collected by the sociologist through his or her own original research is known as primary data. Secondary data refers to information that already exists, and which sociologists can analyse or re-analyse with their own concepts and models in mind.

Any data used for sociological purposes, whether derived from primary or secondary sources, can also be described as quantitative or qualitative in form. Quantitative data is usually presented in numeric form and derives from large-scale survey methods. Qualitative data deals directly with people's experiences, as well as their feelings about, and interpretations of, the situations in which they find themselves.

Sociologists working within the positivist tradition often use quantitative data because of its numeric form, allowing trends, patterns and correlations to be identified. By contrast, sociologists working within the interactionist tradition have questioned the value of quantitative data. They see greater *validity* in qualitative data, allowing them a deeper understanding of the small groups and individuals they study.

- (a) What is meant by the term *validity* in sociological research? [2]
- (b) Describe **two** examples of secondary data. [4]
- (c) Explain why interactionists question the value of quantitative data. [8]
- (d) Assess the usefulness of secondary data in sociological research. [11]

- 3 Sociologists have noted that what counts as poverty changes as average living standards rise. Poverty should be seen, therefore, as a relative phenomenon rather than something that can be defined in *absolute* terms. People are poor in relation to the standards of the society around them and with which they compare themselves or with which the researcher compares them. Furthermore, what is needed for physical survival varies according to age, sex, occupation, place of residence and climate.

Sociologists have reached different conclusions about the causes of poverty. Some have drawn on the 'culture of poverty' thesis derived from the work of Oscar Lewis. Lewis claims that poverty is passed on and perpetuated through families, socialisation and community attitudes. This view tends to stress the negative aspects of the way the poor live, their defeatism and apparent lack of organisation. The deprivation and inadequacy of one generation is passed on to the next.

A different type of explanation regards poverty as part of the structure of inequality in society. This view stresses the powerlessness of the poor, and their inability to help themselves or to exercise influence in a society that is organised in such a way that 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 *absolute* poverty? [2]
- (b) Describe **two** examples of relative poverty. [4]
- (c) Explain how the existence of poverty might benefit the wealthy and powerful members of society. [8]
- (d) Assess the 'culture of poverty' thesis. [11]