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

CANDIDATE NAME

CENTRE NUMBER

CANDIDATE NUMBER

8565242868

SOCIOLOGY **9699/23**

Paper 2 Principles and Methods 2 **October/November 2011**

1 hour 30 minutes

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

No additional materials 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.
You may not need all the answer lines for your answer.

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.

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Answer **two** questions.

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1 There are two main theories of social order. One theory is linked with functionalism and the other with the Marxist perspective. Functionalists, like Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons, refer to the role of shared norms and values in maintaining cohesion in society. Durkheim distinguished between organic and mechanical solidarity and he developed the concept of *collective conscience* as a way of explaining the forces that unite people in society. Parsons argued that social order is created through the process of socialisation whereby people come to share the same views about what is acceptable behaviour.

By contrast, Marxists emphasise the importance of understanding conflict in society. They claim that weaker groups are pressured into accepting the rules of society by the powerful. For Marxists, social order is maintained through coercion and the influence of ruling class ideology. Althusser has written about the role of the repressive state apparatus (RSA) and the ideological state apparatus (ISA). Gramsci introduced the concept of hegemony as a way of developing the Marxist analysis of how social order is achieved in capitalist societies.

(a) What is meant by the term *collective conscience*?

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(b) Describe **two** reasons why people generally conform to their expected social roles.

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(c) Explain the role of the state in the Marxist theory of social order.

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(d) Assess the strengths and limitations of the functionalist theory of social order.

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2 An experiment is used to test a hypothesis by controlling a variable in order to discover which factor or factors are important in bringing about an effect. Experimental results are usually presented in numeric, quantifiable form. *Correlations* and causation can be identified, and the method is regarded as having a high degree of reliability.

To better control and isolate the different variables, experiments often take place in a laboratory. However, the use of laboratory research in sociology raises complex ethical and practical issues. Field experiments are a less problematical alternative. Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) used the field experiment approach in a widely cited study examining the importance of teachers' attitudes to pupils' performance. Sociologists in the positivist tradition are most likely to favour the use of experiments in sociological research.

(a) What do sociologists mean by the term *correlations*?

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(b) Describe **two** problems in using laboratory experiments to study people.

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(c) Explain why a positivist might favour using experiments in sociological research.

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(d) Assess the claim that in sociological research quantitative data is superior to qualitative data.

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3 Many studies of social mobility have been carried out by sociologists in order to assess the extent to which class barriers are breaking down and *life chances* improving for less privileged groups such as the working class and some ethnic minorities. These studies usually distinguish between long-range and short-range mobility, and between inter-generational and intra-generational mobility. Occupation is often used in social mobility studies as an indicator of social class. However, there are various problems associated with using occupation as an indicator of class for the purposes of studying social mobility.

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Some studies of social mobility have failed to include data on women's mobility. This represents a weakness with these studies, as patterns of female mobility tend to be different from men's. Likewise, ethnicity has not always been identified by researchers as an independent variable that may affect opportunities for social mobility.

Age is another factor that has not always been taken into account in studies of social mobility.

(a) What is meant by the term *life chances*?

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(b) Describe **two** reasons why using occupation as an indicator of social class may give rise to problems when studying social mobility.

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(c) Explain why it might be difficult for a working class person to achieve upward social mobility.

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(d) Assess the view that class barriers are breaking down in modern industrial societies.

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