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Cambridge International Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Level

MARK SCHEME for the October/November 2015 series

9699 SOCIOLOGY

9699/22 Paper 2 (Theory and Methods), maximum raw mark 50

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Section A

1 Socialisation is the process by which individuals learn to become members of society, both by internalising the norms and values of society and also by learning to perform social roles. Social sanctions exist to encourage appropriate behaviour and to discourage inappropriate behaviour. The most intensive period of socialisation occurs within the family during childhood and is called primary socialisation. However, socialisation does not end with childhood, but continues throughout a person's life.

All sociologists emphasise the importance of socialisation, rather than biological instinct, as the key to understanding human behaviour. Functionalists also believe that social order is an important outcome of socialisation. In this view, socialisation teaches people to accept the same norms and values, which leads to *social conformity*. On the other hand, Marxist theorists reject the functionalist idea that social order is based on a value consensus. They consider that dominant groups exist in society who use their power to impose social rules on the less powerful members of society.

(a) What is meant by the term *social conformity*? [2]

1 One mark for a partial definition, such as 'individuals doing what they are told' or 'people obeying authority'.
2 Two marks for a clear and accurate definition;

Social conformity refers to *understanding* what is *socially acceptable* and *behaving* in a way that follows the established norms and values of society

(b) Describe <u>two</u> social sanctions that may be used to encourage appropriate behaviour. [4]

Examples of positive formal or informal mechanisms of social control might include:

- smiling,
- applause, praise and encouragement
- peer affirmation
- medals, 'gold stars', gifts, certifications, honours [e.g. knighthoods] etc.

One mark for a relevant example and one mark for a brief description of the sanction in question or how it encourages appropriate behaviour.

One mark for each example plus one mark for development (2 × 2 marks).

<u>Guidance</u>:
- Types of sanction [formal, informal] are not sufficient as an identification.
- Neither is 'reward' or 'punishment' on their own.
- Negative sanctions may be identified and developed and they do not have to emphasise the positive/encouragement angle of the question.

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(c) Explain why sociologists have emphasised socialisation rather than biological instinct when explaining human behaviour? [8]

0–4 Lower in the band a few general observations about human behaviour, or about different ways of studying humans, might be worth 1 or 2 marks. There may also be a limited outline of the socialisation process.

Higher in the band, answers will contain a basic account of the role of socialisation and may offer some assertions about the part it plays in shaping human behaviour but with little or no reference to biological models.

5–8 Lower in the band answers will demonstrate a good understanding of the question, perhaps with links to relevant sociological perspectives. Those answers that show a thorough understanding of different models of socialisation but do not include reference to biological instinct can reach as far as 6 marks.

Higher in the band, there is likely to be a clear and accurate explanation with links to relevant key concepts. There should be some focus on the evidence that socialisation plays a major part in shaping human behaviour. For example:

- reference to cases of children exposed to little or no human socialisation [feral children];
- cross-cultural differences in human behaviour;
- studies of gender divisions; and
- the sociological critique of biological accounts of human behaviour.

A good list of undeveloped points may gain up to six marks. To go higher, some of the points need to be developed.

N.B. This question asks candidates to ‘explain’, therefore there is no requirement for assessment

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(d) Assess the Marxist theory of social order. [11]

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

Lower in the band, a few simple remarks about Marxism in general might be worth would gain 1 or 2 marks.

Higher in the band, there may be a basic account of, for example, what the process of socialisation involves that might be linked to Marxist theory in a limited way

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

Lower in the band, a sound descriptive account of the Marxist theory of social order, with no further development, could gain 5 or 6 marks.

Higher in the band, if the material on the Marxist theory is accompanied by an account of how social order is viewed in at least one other sociological perspective, most likely functionalism, it may gain 7 or 8 marks. Good responses may discuss theorists such as, for example, Althusser and Gramsci or introduce concepts like ideology or hegemony. Conversely, a one-sided answer that is done very well, could also gain up to 8 marks.

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. There will also be an assessment of the view on which the question is based.

Lower in the band (9–10 marks), a good part of the assessment may be in the form of juxtaposition through, for example, contrasting the Marxist and functionalist views of social order or introducing an interpretivist critique.

Higher in the band, the analysis will be more explicit and conceptually convincing. Use of empirical material to assess theories of social order could be relevant if well applied.

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Section B

2 'Sociologists can feel more confident about their research findings when using research methods favoured by positivists'. 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 based on assertion/common sense understanding. For example, a few simple points loosely linked to the positivist perspective. These points are likely to discuss the scientific approach but with only partial relevance.

Higher in the band, there may be a wider range of simple points based on assertion/common sense understanding. For example, an answer might advance a few limited observations about the differences between the social and natural sciences.

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

Lower in the band (7–9 marks), the answer may be confined to a narrow range of points, lacking detail and possibly with some inaccuracies. At this level we can expect answers to at least recognise that there is a debate to be had. A basic descriptive account of the positivist perspective would prompt use of the lower part of the band. A simplistic description of the positivist and anti-positivist positions would justify a mark at the upper end of the range

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. At this level there may be a more detailed account that reviews positivist methods. The answer may also begin to explore the anti-positivist arguments, albeit still in a largely descriptive manner.

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.

There are various ways in which the methods favoured by positivists may be said to offer greater confidence and these are likely to be explored through links with the concepts such as reliability, experimental control, quantifiable data, representativeness, trends/correlations, and objectivity. Candidates could also gain credit by arguing that greater certainty is achieved using positivist methods at the expense of other required qualities, such as validity and depth.

Lower in the band (13–15 marks), answers may use only a limited range of knowledge, there will be little use of concepts/theory, and the points covered may lack development. At this level there will be an account of the positivist perspective with a basic attempt to analyse its strengths and/or limitations will feature

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.

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There is no requirement for assessment at this level.

Level 4

19–25 Lower in the band (19–21 marks), the assessment may be largely delivered through juxtaposition of contrasting arguments/theories. Alternatively, assessment may be limited to just one or two evaluative points that are explicitly stated. Answers will be based on a detailed and accurate account of the positivist perspective, with a well-informed and sustained assessment that focuses directly on the issue of whether or not the methods favoured by positivists might provide greater confidence in the findings. Assessment may take the form of enquiring to what extent positivist methods deliver, for example, 'more certainty' in relation to some or all of these concepts.

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, there needs in addition to be some further indication of sophistication, such as the ability to argue that the issue of more confidence is very much a matter of interpretation and depends upon what is meant by the term.

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.

There is likely to be a well-formulated conclusion.

3 Explain and assess the strengths and limitations of overt participant observation as a research method

[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 based on assertion/common sense understanding. For example, a few general statements which are of only partial relevance to the question. There is unlikely to be any meaningful mention of strengths and limitations at this level.

Higher in the band, there may be a wider range of simple points based on assertion/common sense understanding. For example, answers that demonstrate some understanding of the features of observation as a research tool, but which make no or only few distinctions between types might enter the higher part of the band.

Level 2

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

Lower in the band (7–9 marks), The answer may be confined to a narrow range of points, lacking detail and possibly with some inaccuracies. A basic account of the strengths and limitations of overt participant observation would feature here, though it is likely to be unbalanced.

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Higher in the band (10–12 marks), answers may cover either a narrow range of points in reasonable detail or a wider range of points in limited detail. There is likely to be a greater focus on more practical issues rather than theory. Here, we might expect answers to include some consideration of relevant theoretical issues, perhaps through references to concepts such as objectivity, validity and reliability.

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. There is no requirement for assessment at this level.

Lower in the band (13–15 marks), answers may use only a limited range of knowledge, there will be little use of concepts/theory, and the points covered may lack development. To trigger this band there must be a good account of the strengths and limitations of overt participant observation, which includes coverage of some relevant theoretical as well as practical issues.

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. For example a response that contrasts the strengths and limitations of overt with covert participant observation.

There is no requirement for assessment at this level.

Level 4

19–25 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. Here both practical and theoretical issues are likely to be explored and better candidates will make relevant use of empirical evidence to support their arguments

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. At this level, the assessment will be more convincing and candidates will engage in an explicit discussion of whether the strengths of overt participant observation outweigh the limitations. The best responses are likely to focus on the concept of objectivity in relation to the merits of observation, perhaps questioning the value of pursuing objectivity in sociological research.

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.

There is likely to be a well-formulated conclusion.

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