

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/11

Paper 11

Key Messages

- Candidates need to ensure that they have a strong grasp of key terms
- Candidates need to ensure they address the wording of the question in their responses, especially 'to what extent' in the **(d)** questions.
- Candidates need to avoid pre-rehearsed responses which are not applicable to the question.

General Comments

There were some excellent answers from candidates who were clearly well prepared and showed excellent grasp of both key terms and the major sociological perspectives. Conversely candidates often had poor recall of key terms which made accessing the questions extremely difficult. There was also evidence of over reliance on learning from a single textbook and learning by rote. Candidates need to show better understanding of the strengths and limitations of sociological methods and avoid using 'time' and 'cost' as catch all responses. Evaluation skills were frequently poor or at best evaluation was done by juxtaposition.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) (i)** Many candidates did not know what a cross-sectional survey was. Although there was generally some notion of a sample in responses few understood that a cross-sectional survey was a 'snap shot of the population'.
- (ii)** Generally this was well answered, although there continues to be some confusion amongst candidates about the difference between overt and covert observation, those candidates who understood that overt means 'open' were able to give clear answers.
- (iii)** Most candidates offered some notion of the researcher impacting on the validity of the research.
- (b)** This question was generally well answered, candidates identifying issues around the relevance of secondary data or bias in the already published study.
- (c)** Many candidates failed to score well on this question because they confused ethical issues with methodological issues. Where candidates identified ethical problems the most frequent responses correctly focused on issues of trust, privacy and confidentiality.
- (d)** In response to this question candidates showed evidence of confusion about the difference between overt and covert, where candidates correctly identified overt as 'open' they scored well. Most commonly candidates identified the advantage of being able to openly record events giving greater accuracy and the disadvantage of researcher effect.
- (e)** In response to this question some candidates showed confusion about the difference between qualitative and quantitative. Where candidates understood what qualitative meant they were able to discuss issues surrounding the validity of the research. Many candidates struggled to offer a second reason.

- (f) In response to this question some candidates showed confusion about the difference between qualitative and quantitative. There continues to be evidence of candidates learning 'time' and 'cost' by rote as strengths and limitations, which they use interchangeably without qualification. Candidates need to show understanding that all research costs money and all research takes time and that if they wish to use these as strengths and limitations they must offer some qualification, i.e. method x is less time consuming than method y because..., if they wish to score marks.

Section B

Question 2

- (a) This question was generally answered well however some candidates confused the term 'role' with job.
- (b) Candidates answered this well, most were able to identify two agencies, the most popular being family and school.
- (c) Candidates generally answered this question well, commonly explaining socialisation as a chronological process that started in childhood in the family and progressed through various agencies of socialisation. Many did get stuck after school and failed to consider socialisation in the work place. More sophisticated answers understood that the influence of agencies of socialisation was continual and simultaneous. Some candidates even recognised that socialisation was necessary to know how to be old/retired.
- (d) Candidates generally offered one-sided responses to this question either arguing that adolescent was the same or was different. Some argued that cultural and/or socio-economic factors made a difference. A few argued there is a common biological experience but that social experiences differed.

Question 3

- (a) This was generally well answered, however some candidates confused norms and values.
- (b) Whilst many candidates identified sub-cultures in their answers, few took sufficient note of the word 'deviant' in the question, although there were some attempts to argue that all sub-culture was deviant, for the most part the term 'deviant' was ignored which limited the quality of candidates' responses.
- (c) Many candidates made the basic point that if you do not conform you get punished. Some showed a more sophisticated understanding of what these punishments might be, including shunning and ostracism. However, few acknowledged the view that people conform because they share the basic norms and values of society. Candidates could more usefully have discussed the role of various agencies of social control in ensuring conformity.
- (d) Candidates generally offered one-sided responses to this question either arguing that sub-culture either did or did not influence social identity. Many ignored the term 'social identity' within the question. Some candidates argued that sub-cultures such as youth sub-culture were a phase and that other factors like gender, ethnicity, religion and socio-economic group were more significant factors.

Section C

Question 4

- (a) Most candidates had a clear understanding of this key term.
- (b) Candidates were generally able to identify that young people may find it difficult to find work because they lack experience. Some were able to relate the difficulties young people may face directly to current global economic down turn. Others did not take young people as a homogenous group and considered the reason to be that some individuals may lack qualifications.

- (c) Many candidates displayed the prejudice of youth in answering this question generally sharing the view that older people did not get work because they were sick, weak and mentally deficient. Other more sophisticated answers acknowledged issues like expertise being more expensive, ageism, unwillingness of employers to invest in costly training that they may get limited return from.
- (d) Again there was a general tendency toward one-sided answers, candidates generally accepting the premise of the question as being correct. Some did acknowledge that legislation had been put in place to lessen discrimination whilst others argued that socio-economic factors were the key indicators of discrimination not ethnicity.

Question 5

- (a) Candidates generally answered this question well, showing a clear understanding of the term.
- (b) This was answered well. Candidates mostly described evidence of patriarchy within employment.
- (c) Many candidates made the basic point that women now go out to work. Some candidates clearly recognised that women also had an increasing role in public life.
- (d) Answers to this question were frequently one-sided, candidates generally agreeing and providing what evidence they could find to support the premise of the question.

Section D

Question 6

- (a) Candidates generally answered this well, frequently identifying the ruling class as 'owners of the means of production'.
- (b) Generally this was well answered. Candidates often reversing their response to part (a) i.e. they do not own the means of production, as part of their description.
- (c) Some candidates tended to explain strikes and other industrial action focusing strongly on conflict from a working class point of view, others answered this well looking at both exploitation by the ruling class and protest by the working class.
- (d) Candidates frequently agreed with the assumption of the question. There was a general failure to consider any limitations on the power of the ruling class. Candidates rarely considered the 'how far ...' aspect of the question.

Question 7

- (a) Few candidates considered the qualification required to vote, tending instead to describe voting.
- (b) Generally candidates answered this well, most commonly recognising the patriarchal nature of society in the past.
- (c) Candidates tended to focus on the patriarchal nature of society and the influence of traditional female/male roles.
- (d) Most candidates assumed that gender does influence voting behaviour. Better candidates also considered other social factors.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/12

Paper 12

Key Messages

- Candidates need to have a sound grasp of all key terms
- Candidates need to avoid reproducing pre-rehearsed answers to past questions
- Candidates need to ensure they address the wording of the question in their responses, especially 'to what extent' in the **(d)** questions.

General Comments

There were some excellent answers from candidates who were clearly well prepared and showed an excellent grasp of both key terms and major sociological perspectives. Other candidates would have benefited from more thorough preparation for this examination. Candidates often had poor recall of key terms which made accessing the questions extremely difficult. There was also evidence of over-reliance on learning from a single textbook and learning by rote. Many candidates appeared to have been taught the answers to essays which they reproduced without appropriate application to the question set. Evaluation skills were frequently poor or at best evaluation was done by juxtaposition.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) (i)** A number of candidates failed to respond to this question even though the term was largely explained in the stimulus material.
- (ii)** Most candidates answered this well using appropriate terminology such as sample frame or survey population to support their answers. Some candidates did confuse sample with survey.
- (iii)** Almost all candidates understood this was secondary data from the past. Candidates generally scored well.
- (b)** Many candidates seemed unaware of what a stratified sample is. Others answered well showing awareness that this was a way of selecting from sections of the population to make the sample representative of the groups under study.
- (c)** This was a deceptively simple question which seemed to confuse many able candidates. Many candidates did suggest that a valid reason for research was to solve social problems. Few considered that the purpose of research is to prove a hypothesis.
- (d)** Many candidates ignored the 'apart from historical documents' part of the question. Official statistics and media products were the most popular answers.
- (e)** Many candidates found this question difficult. There is a trend towards identifying 'time' and 'cost' as both strengths and limitations of all methods.
- (f)** Generally this question was not answered well, many misunderstood 'scientific approach', assuming it related to natural sciences and experiments.

Section B

Question 2

- (a) Very few candidates had a clear grasp of social construction, there was a tendency to describe socialisation of children rather than the social construction of childhood.
- (b) Many candidates either did not understand what a 'role' was or described the role without naming it.
- (c) Candidates were able to offer various ways in which children interact with others, however there was less focus on how they learnt this interaction.
- (d) Candidates did not always understand the term 'child-centred', some assuming it related to either a youth club or children's home. Some seemed to assume that child-centred was like self-centred or selfish and talked about children failing to follow the expected norms of behaviour within society. Many candidates offered limited answers which agreed with the question, frequently asserting that as parents spent more money on their children society was more child-centred. Better answers offered a variety of evidence that some societies were more child-centred but also offered evidence that either within or between societies there were limits to this child-centeredness. Many candidates talked about child abuse, child labour and child soldiers as clear evidence that societies are not all child-centred.

Question 3

- (a) Some candidates confused values and norms but generally this question was well answered.
- (b) Generally this question was not well answered; on the whole answers were limited to discussions of the role of value consensus in maintaining social stability. Candidates found it difficult to identify a second reason.
- (c) Candidates often offered a limited view of social conflict, focusing most frequently on actual acts of violence or law breaking. This led to limited responses which focused solely on law enforcement.
- (d) Candidates tended to agree that there was agreement and failed to offer a balanced response. The most common issue with the responses from better candidates was a failure to address the 'to what extent' part of the question.

Section C

Question 4

- (a) Generally candidates found it difficult to differentiate between wages, money and wealth. Few candidates recognised that wealth could be both evenly or unevenly distributed.
- (b) Generally candidates answered this question well. Most popular responses related to access to education.
- (c) Generally candidates were able to identify ways in which low status may be overcome, however they frequently forgot to explain the social process, most often marriage and education were identified as means of overcoming low social status.
- (d) Candidates found this difficult either because they had inadequate grasp of the term 'distribution of wealth' or failed to understand the term 'life expectancy'. There were some good points about how, as societies develop generally, life expectancy improves. Some equally understood that wealth might lower life expectancy i.e. obesity related to over-eating or stress related to high pressure well-paid jobs. Some candidates failed to address the 'to what extent' part of the question.

Question 5

- (a) This question was generally well answered although few candidates recognised that achieved status could be negative, e.g. a criminal, as well as positive.
- (b) Candidates had little problem identifying two ways of achieving upward mobility. Most popular were marriage and good education. Many candidates failed to offer any development to their identification.
- (c) Many candidates only considered the nature of female employment and quite often these answers were pre-rehearsed and not related to the question. Some did discuss the change from pre-industrial methods of work to industrial methods, a few considered the impact of technology on the nature of work although this was frequently simplistic comment about machines taking over and making people unemployment.
- (d) Candidates generally answered this question in relation to fringe benefits or lack of fringe benefits, some candidates discussed deskilling and more able candidates were able to distinguish between the differences in job satisfaction that might be experienced between people in different social-economic groups.

Section D

Question 6

- (a) There were fewer answers to this question but generally candidates were able to define the term accurately.
- (b) On the whole candidates understood that insider pressure groups had better access to government. Candidates who answered this question generally answered it well.
- (c) Many answers showed only a limited range of ways in which pressure groups could influence decision makers; there was a tendency to focus either on direct action and civil disobedience or lobbying and media campaigns. Few candidates looked at a range of methods but those who did answered the question well.
- (d) Answers to this question lacked balance; frequently candidates simply agreed with the pluralist view and showed a lack of evaluation skill.

Question 7

- (a) Candidates need to recognise that dictatorship may offer people some of the trappings of democracy i.e. there may be elections and voting but these need to be free and fair to be democratic.
- (b) Most candidates answered this question well. Most popular responses were monarchy and dictatorship. Some candidates confused political systems with theories, offering Marxist and pluralist as responses.
- (c) Many candidates did not develop their answers further than a discussion of voting and elections, ignoring other aspects of the political process and the ways in which decisions may be influenced.
- (d) Many candidates assumed that democratic systems automatically reflected the will of the people; some better candidates used Marxist and pluralist arguments to address the question. Some candidates considered whose interests were being served by the democratic system. Candidates would have benefitted from bringing the answer to a conclusion that addressed the 'to what extent' part of the question.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/13

Paper 13

Key Messages

- Candidates need to ensure that they have a strong grasp of key terms
- Candidates need to ensure they address the wording of the question in their responses, especially 'to what extent' in the **(d)** questions.
- Candidates need to avoid pre-rehearsed responses which are not applicable to the question.

General Comments

There were some excellent answers from candidates who were clearly well prepared and showed excellent grasp of both key terms and the major sociological perspectives. Conversely candidates often had poor recall of key terms which made accessing the questions extremely difficult. There was also evidence of over reliance on learning from a single textbook and learning by rote. Candidates need to show better understanding of the strengths and limitations of sociological methods and avoid using 'time' and 'cost' as catch all responses. Evaluation skills were frequently poor or at best evaluation was done by juxtaposition.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) (i)** Many candidates did not know what a cross-sectional survey was. Although there was generally some notion of a sample in responses few understood that a cross-sectional survey was a 'snap shot of the population'.
- (ii)** Generally this was well answered, although there continues to be some confusion amongst candidates about the difference between overt and covert observation, those candidates who understood that overt means 'open' were able to give clear answers.
- (iii)** Most candidates offered some notion of the researcher impacting on the validity of the research.
- (b)** This question was generally well answered, candidates identifying issues around the relevance of secondary data or bias in the already published study.
- (c)** Many candidates failed to score well on this question because they confused ethical issues with methodological issues. Where candidates identified ethical problems the most frequent responses correctly focused on issues of trust, privacy and confidentiality.
- (d)** In response to this question candidates showed evidence of confusion about the difference between overt and covert, where candidates correctly identified overt as 'open' they scored well. Most commonly candidates identified the advantage of being able to openly record events giving greater accuracy and the disadvantage of researcher effect.
- (e)** In response to this question some candidates showed confusion about the difference between qualitative and quantitative. Where candidates understood what qualitative meant they were able to discuss issues surrounding the validity of the research. Many candidates struggled to offer a second reason.

- (f) In response to this question some candidates showed confusion about the difference between qualitative and quantitative. There continues to be evidence of candidates learning 'time' and 'cost' by rote as strengths and limitations, which they use interchangeably without qualification. Candidates need to show understanding that all research costs money and all research takes time and that if they wish to use these as strengths and limitations they must offer some qualification, i.e. method x is less time consuming than method y because..., if they wish to score marks.

Section B

Question 2

- (a) This question was generally answered well however some candidates confused the term 'role' with job.
- (b) Candidates answered this well, most were able to identify two agencies, the most popular being family and school.
- (c) Candidates generally answered this question well, commonly explaining socialisation as a chronological process that started in childhood in the family and progressed through various agencies of socialisation. Many did get stuck after school and failed to consider socialisation in the work place. More sophisticated answers understood that the influence of agencies of socialisation was continual and simultaneous. Some candidates even recognised that socialisation was necessary to know how to be old/retired.
- (d) Candidates generally offered one-sided responses to this question either arguing that adolescent was the same or was different. Some argued that cultural and/or socio-economic factors made a difference. A few argued there is a common biological experience but that social experiences differed.

Question 3

- (a) This was generally well answered, however some candidates confused norms and values.
- (b) Whilst many candidates identified sub-cultures in their answers, few took sufficient note of the word 'deviant' in the question, although there were some attempts to argue that all sub-culture was deviant, for the most part the term 'deviant' was ignored which limited the quality of candidates' responses.
- (c) Many candidates made the basic point that if you do not conform you get punished. Some showed a more sophisticated understanding of what these punishments might be, including shunning and ostracism. However, few acknowledged the view that people conform because they share the basic norms and values of society. Candidates could more usefully have discussed the role of various agencies of social control in ensuring conformity.
- (d) Candidates generally offered one-sided responses to this question either arguing that sub-culture either did or did not influence social identity. Many ignored the term 'social identity' within the question. Some candidates argued that sub-cultures such as youth sub-culture were a phase and that other factors like gender, ethnicity, religion and socio-economic group were more significant factors.

Section C

Question 4

- (a) Most candidates had a clear understanding of this key term.
- (b) Candidates were generally able to identify that young people may find it difficult to find work because they lack experience. Some were able to relate the difficulties young people may face directly to current global economic down turn. Others did not take young people as a homogenous group and considered the reason to be that some individuals may lack qualifications.

- (c) Many candidates displayed the prejudice of youth in answering this question generally sharing the view that older people did not get work because they were sick, weak and mentally deficient. Other more sophisticated answers acknowledged issues like expertise being more expensive, ageism, unwillingness of employers to invest in costly training that they may get limited return from.
- (d) Again there was a general tendency toward one-sided answers, candidates generally accepting the premise of the question as being correct. Some did acknowledge that legislation had been put in place to lessen discrimination whilst others argued that socio-economic factors were the key indicators of discrimination not ethnicity.

Question 5

- (a) Candidates generally answered this question well, showing a clear understanding of the term.
- (b) This was answered well. Candidates mostly described evidence of patriarchy within employment.
- (c) Many candidates made the basic point that women now go out to work. Some candidates clearly recognised that women also had an increasing role in public life.
- (d) Answers to this question were frequently one-sided, candidates generally agreeing and providing what evidence they could find to support the premise of the question.

Section D

Question 6

- (a) Candidates generally answered this well, frequently identifying the ruling class as 'owners of the means of production'.
- (b) Generally this was well answered. Candidates often reversing their response to part (a) i.e. they do not own the means of production, as part of their description.
- (c) Some candidates tended to explain strikes and other industrial action focusing strongly on conflict from a working class point of view, others answered this well looking at both exploitation by the ruling class and protest by the working class.
- (d) Candidates frequently agreed with the assumption of the question. There was a general failure to consider any limitations on the power of the ruling class. Candidates rarely considered the 'how far ...' aspect of the question.

Question 7

- (a) Few candidates considered the qualification required to vote, tending instead to describe voting.
- (b) Generally candidates answered this well, most commonly recognising the patriarchal nature of society in the past.
- (c) Candidates tended to focus on the patriarchal nature of society and the influence of traditional female/male roles.
- (d) Most candidates assumed that gender does influence voting behaviour. Better candidates also considered other social factors.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/21

Paper 21

Key Messages

- It is important to spend some time reading the question in order to understand exactly what is required. Candidates should note key points in the question before starting to write an answer.
- Candidates need to be able to clearly define and understand sociological concepts. It would be helpful to provide candidates with a one sentence definition of the concepts listed in the glossary of each topic.
- Each part of a question has a **specific introductory word or phrase** which indicates what is required in the answer to the question. If these words are learnt and understood, candidates should recognise them in the examination i.e. *What is meant by...? Describe.....; Explain...; Explain how; Explain why.....; To what extent....? and How far.....?*
- Candidates should be aware of the main sociological perspectives on all topics, in particular the feminist, functionalist, Marxist and pluralist views. However, listing them out of context will not gain marks. Some topics such as the media have perspectives which are particular to them.

General Comments

The most popular questions were **Questions 1, 2 and 5** and the least popular questions were **Question 7** and particularly **Question 8**. Therefore the most popular topics were The Family and Crime, Deviance and Social Control.

In order to gain high marks candidates need to have a secure understanding of the key concepts in the areas of study. Candidates are still choosing to answer questions on topics, such as the media, about which they have no sociological knowledge. They are also losing marks by not evaluating in **(d)** questions. Practice on past papers supported by mark schemes, and use of the Teacher Guide and other support materials online, can help candidates practise answering techniques and give teachers ideas on how to develop candidates' understanding of the areas of study. Class discussion of issues, such as why some social groups are more likely to be victims of crime than others, would encourage candidates to think around the subject. They would then be better prepared to answer such a question in the examination.

There were some excellent answers when candidates understood the requirements of the question and had sufficient evidence to support the statements made. Candidates should be encouraged to learn one sentence definitions of concepts for **(a)** questions, to write each of the two required answers in **(b)** questions in two separate paragraphs, to aim for three well-explained points in **(c)** questions and to remember that in **(d)** questions they should make points in agreement but then evaluate and present alternative points before coming to a one-sentence conclusion.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A: The Family

Question 1

- (a)** This was generally well-answered, but credit was limited if the idea of *living together* was omitted or if the definition was too specific e.g. description of *nuclear* or other type of family.
- (b)** Well-answered with a range of possible answers, usually *divorce, abortion, one child policy* and *taxation*.

- (c) Most candidates knew China and the *one child policy* and that there are countries where there are incentives to have more children. Also, there was some knowledge of *free birth control* in countries such as India.
- (d) The *functionalist* view of the family was generally well-known but there was a lack of knowledge of the *dark side* of the family and *feminist* views. *Marxist* views were sometimes brought in – often incorrectly.

Question 2

- (a) Well-answered and any two out of several possible descriptions accepted e.g. *does housework, more often at home, child care, equal roles with women* etc.
- (b) This question was answered well with a range of correct answers such as *involvement in child care* and *housework* and the idea of *symmetrical family*.
- (c) Candidates discussed *lack of support from husbands* and *disapproval of families* and *society*. Some expressed an opinion which does not gain marks. *Discrimination* was mentioned as was *domestic violence* and *abuse*. The *dual roles* of women leading them to work part-time also featured.
- (d) Some candidates spent too long describing what happened in the past. The question required knowledge of *changes* and *continuing disadvantages* e.g. most men earn more and women tend to be in charge of the home with men playing a helping role.

Section B: Education

Question 3

- (a) This question caused some difficulty – producing examples such as *middle-class* rather than a definition. Two elements were required denoting *income/wealth* and *status*. Most candidates understood the economic point and gained one mark.
- (b) There was some misunderstanding of *influence*. Candidates focused on school factors such as *streaming* but there is a range of other factors such as *deprivation* and *parental attitudes*.
- (c) The answers were often related to fees and the inability of the working-class parents to pay them. In most European countries education is largely free. There is a range of reasons which could have been raised such as *lower expectations* and *less opportunities*.
- (d) Credit was given for policies specific to some societies such as *scholarships* and *free education*. Some candidates referred to the National Curriculum and compensatory education which is particular to the UK. *Discrimination, gender, setting* and *streaming* and the *private education of the upper class* were generally recognised.

Question 4

- (a) This question proved challenging. The best answers included *order in society* and *conforming to norms and values*.
- (b) This was well-answered, with good understanding of how *rewards, punishments* and *competition* are used to encourage conformity.
- (c) Upper-class pupils were included in some answers, as not needing to work in school, which may have some cultural justification. Most candidates achieved good marks with knowledge of *anti-school subcultures, peer groups* and *poor socialisation*.
- (d) Candidates had a good understanding of the *hidden curriculum* and *secondary socialisation*. There was good knowledge in some answers of *functionalist* views on the *economic* and *selective* roles of the school. Alternative *Marxist* views were also known, as well as other important roles of the school such as *developing the individual*.

Section C: Crime, Deviance and Social Control

Question 5

- (a) Most candidates gained some credit. There were some answers which were too specific e.g. *teenagers* and *pupils*.
- (b) Answers usually focused on *offences being too trivial* so the police did not charge them. Other answers referred to *not being detected* or *not being reported by relatives*.
- (c) Answers showed awareness of the concentration of police in *working-class urban areas* and the large number of *unemployed, deprived young people* living there. Others mentioned *anonymity* as a factor and the *availability of material goods*.
- (d) Question generally well-answered. Candidates categorised young working class males as *underachievers* with *status frustration*, influenced by macho *peer groups* causing them to obtain material goods by illegal means. Alternatively they reasoned that the *middle-class* and *girls* may not have their offences recorded. The *Marxist* view on capitalist society also featured in some answers.

Question 6

- (a) Most candidates gained some credit.
- (b) *Embarrassment* and *fear that the police would not do anything* were the most common answers to this question. Candidates were also aware of the reluctance of some family members and some employers to report crime.
- (c) The groups in *some social groups* were not specifically identified by some candidates. Therefore, they repeated *some social groups* in the answer without identifying them as different groups such as *young men* and *women*. There was also a misconception that it is rich people who are usually the victims of crime.
- (d) This question proved challenging. It required detailed knowledge of *anomie*. In a question like this candidates could list known alternative causes such as *poverty* and *peer pressure* to gain credit.

Section D: Media

Question 7

- (a) Good understanding of term as *labelled as a type* rather than being considered as an individual.
- (b) Well-answered with a range of correct answers including *gang members* and *illegal immigrants*.
- (c) This question was generally misunderstood i.e. ethnic minorities as *subjects* of the media, rather than *working in the media*. Some credit was given for this understanding of the question.
- (d) A good point was made that the media may be the only access to knowledge of ethnic minorities for some people. Evaluation was generally poor in answer to this question. Other agencies of socialisation, such as the family, could have been used.

Question 8

- (a) Most answers relied on examples, which gained some credit, as candidates had difficulty providing a complete definition. Answers required the *use of digital or computer-based technology*.
- (b) Answers needed to be more specific about the ways the lives of young people are influenced by the new media. There are positive and negative influences of social networking and mobile phones etc. but candidates seemed more aware of negative influences rather than positive influences such as the use of the Internet for study.
- (c) It was generally well-understood that access is limited by place and wealth, that young people are generally most active and that some countries limit access for political or religious reasons.
- (d) This question was not well-answered, except by a few well-informed candidates. They indicated the use of the Internet, YouTube, and Twitter communicating celebrity culture, advertising, music and fashion trends. The opportunity for evaluation, including limitations already outlined in the previous question, was usually missed – e.g. digital divide, political restraints etc.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 0495/22

Paper 22

Key Messages

- It is important to spend some time reading the question in order to understand exactly what is required. Candidates should note key points in question before starting to write an answer.
- Candidates need to be able to clearly define and understand sociological concepts. It would be helpful to provide candidates with a one sentence definition of the concepts listed in the glossary of each topic.
- Each part of a question has a **specific introductory word or phrase** (command words) which indicates what is required in the answer to the question. If these words are learnt and understood, candidates should recognise them in the examination i.e. *What is meant by...? Describe.....; Explain...; Explain why....; To what extent....? and How far....?*
- Candidates should be aware of the main sociological perspectives on all topics, in particular the Marxist, Feminist, Functionalist and Pluralist views. Some topics such as the media have perspectives which are particular to them. However listing them out of context will not gain marks.

General Comments

The most popular questions were **Question 1, 2 and 6** and the least popular questions were **Question 7 and Question 8**. Therefore the most popular topics were The Family and Crime, Deviance and Social Control.

In order to gain high marks candidates need to have a secure understanding of the key concepts in the areas of study. Candidates are still choosing to answer questions on topics such as the media about which they have no sociological knowledge. They are also losing marks by not evaluating in **(d)** questions. Practice on past papers supported by mark schemes, and use of the Teacher Guide and other support materials online, can help candidates practise answering techniques and give teachers ideas on how to develop candidates' understanding of the areas of study. Class discussion of issues such as the social consequences of women having fewer children would encourage candidates to think about the implications. They would then be better prepared to answer such a question in the examination.

There were some excellent answers when candidates understood the requirements of the question and had sufficient evidence to support the statements made. Candidates should be encouraged to learn one sentence definitions of concepts for **(a)** questions, to write each of the two required answers in **(b)** questions in two separate paragraphs, to aim for three well-explained points in **(c)** questions and to remember that in **(d)** questions they should make points in agreement but then evaluate and present alternative points before coming to a one sentence conclusion.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A: The Family

Question 1

- (a) There was some misunderstanding of this term as a description of *old people*. The key idea is that the *proportion* of older people is greater than younger people and the average age of the population is *rising/growing*.
- (b) This was generally answered well. Many candidates interpreted it as *because they were getting married later* but there were many other possible correct answers such as *wanting to have a career first* and *spending longer in education*.
- (c) Some candidates misinterpreted this question and answered the question '*Why are women having fewer children?*' Others did not answer the *social consequences* part and explained *consequences for the family*. The best answers discussed the *effect on the size of the working population* and the *tax implications of this, more child-centred families* and *women concentrating on their careers*.
- (d) In this question *ageing population* was sometimes interpreted as *ageing parents* – *i.e. having children* when old. Some candidates did not focus on the problem for *family life* and widened the answer to a problem for *government/society*.

Question 2

- (a) Most candidates understood *nuclear family* as parents and children although some omitted the *living together* part required for full marks.
- (b) This question specified *women's roles within the family* and some candidates lost marks by not **linking** the change in women's roles to the family. However, most candidates could identify two ways such as *working outside the home acting as breadwinner/sharing child care and household tasks with men*.
- (c) Many candidates did not understand *dysfunctional* so they focused on the *nuclear family* part of the question. Credit was given where candidates indicated the *isolation of the nuclear family* and *separation from wider kin*. The best answers showed awareness of the *dark side of the family* and the perceived *inequalities* between men and women in the family – as indicated by feminists.
- (d) Some candidates spent too long describing families of the past. Candidates were aware of changes such as *joint conjugal roles* and the *symmetrical family*, but answers often lacked the alternative evaluative view that families may not be as equal as perceived, *i.e. the triple shift/dual burden* idea and many families still have *segregated roles*.

Section B: Education

Question 3

- (a) This definition revealed most candidates' understanding of *peer groups* as relating to school groups and their positive/negative influence. Candidates gained credit for *age* or *friends* but the idea of *status* was not usually included.
- (b) *Positive* was not always understood and the *educational performance* part of the question was sometimes ignored. Most correct answers covered *co-operation* and *competition*.
- (c) *Language use* was misinterpreted as *bad/foul language used by pupils and/or teachers* in some answers. Many candidates had knowledge of Bernstein's *restricted* and *elaborated codes* but occasionally there was confusion between working class and middle class use.
- (d) *Community background* was mainly interpreted as *differing class backgrounds, differing environments* and *peers/neighbours*. Evaluation was frequently absent *i.e. other influences* such as *teacher labelling, setting, gender* and *ethnocentric curriculum*.

Question 4

- (a) This proved a challenging term to define. *Syllabus* or *formal curriculum* gained some credit. The idea of *required/had to be studied* was frequently omitted and then candidates only gained limited credit. There was some confusion with the *hidden curriculum* in a few answers.
- (b) The application of the *hidden curriculum* to *gender socialisation* proved difficult. Most correct answers referred to *subject choice*, *career advice* and *differing attitudes by teachers*.
- (c) *Anti-school culture* was not always understood. The question asked about some social backgrounds and required identification. The phrase *some social backgrounds* was sometimes repeated without identification. The working class and ethnic minorities mainly featured with an awareness of *social deprivation* and *dysfunctional families*. Some good answers referred to the system of *streaming* in schools.
- (d) This was interpreted as *norms* and *values* transferred by the *hidden curriculum* – in particular values such as *punctuality*, *respect for authority* and *hard work* as required in the work force. School was recognised as an *agency of secondary socialisation*. Most candidates tended to list how successful schools are and failed to evaluate, although they could have used *anti-school culture* from the previous question.

Section C: Crime, Deviance and Social Control

Question 5

- (a) This term proved challenging to define accurately. However, some candidates achieved this. Others gained some credit for partial definitions such as *prejudiced views*.
- (b) Well-answered and credit given for two interpretations of question i.e. *consequences for population* and *consequences for police force*.
- (c) Candidates showed good understanding of urban areas where many ethnic minority groups live *targeted by police activity*. Other valid points made included *status frustration*, *discrimination* and *social deprivation*.
- (d) In this question the term *activities* of the police was not always clearly understood which made it difficult for candidates to link *activities* with *recorded crime*. There are specific concepts such as *targeting*, *labelling*, *stereotyping*, *chivalry thesis* and *police discretion* which relate to *police activity*. A few candidates mentioned *bribery* and *corruption* by police. The question required evaluation by listing other influences such as the *dark figure of crime*, including those not reported through fear and embarrassment, on rates of recorded crime. The high scoring answers included this.

Question 6

- (a) This term was well-understood in most answers as *a law-breaking act*.
- (b) There is a range of possible correct answers for social groups but specific groups such as *robbers* and *drug addicts* did not receive credit – nor did *middle-class*.
- (c) Candidates who understood the process of *primary* and *secondary socialisation* through agencies such as the family and school gained good marks in this question. Concepts in good answers included *norms*, *values*, *reinforcement by sanctions* and *rewards*.
- (d) Defining *lack of social control* proved difficult for many candidates. Some candidates concentrated on lack of control by family and omitted community. There needed to be specific points such as *inadequate socialisation* and *lack of role models*. The best answers evaluated from a range of *concepts* such as *anomie*, *status frustration*, *stereotyping* and *deprivation* as other causes of crime.

Section D: Media

Media questions were not answered well in general. The small percentage of candidates who chose the media questions were often unable to demonstrate specific sociological knowledge of the topic.

Question 7

- (a) The term in this question was not usually clearly defined, but most answers were given some credit. Candidates recognised that it involved *selection of news*.
- (b) There was a lack of knowledge of two ways in most answers. Candidates could indicate *gate keeping, agenda setting* or *fear of losing job*. The relationship between *ownership* and *influence* was not always understood.
- (c) *Bias* was discussed in some answers instead of answering the question *why news reports may contain bias*.
- (d) This question required detailed knowledge which most of those candidates who answered the question did not have. Some used *hypodermic-syringe* and other perspectives but did not link them to political attitudes/concepts. Others talked generally about voting and politics without a discussion of the power of the media.

Question 8

- (a) Most answers gained limited credit, as both parts of the concept required a definition i.e. *mass* and *communication*.
- (b) This was not generally answered well as the link between *democracy* and the *media* was not understood. There were largely commonsense answers which lacked precise knowledge.
- (c) This question produced answers which lacked sociological evidence such as media models and experiments i.e. *hypodermic-syringe model* and the *Bobo doll* experiment. Candidates could have discussed *copying* and *imitation* and *the influence of peer groups* and *role models*.
- (d) There was a lack of range in most answers. Only a few candidates showed awareness of the various *media models* such as *the hypodermic-syringe model, the Cultural effects model* and *the Uses and gratifications model*. Candidates would have knowledge of other influences such as *family, peer group* etc. but these rarely featured.

SOCIOLOGY

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Paper 23

Key Messages

- It is important to spend some time reading the question in order to understand exactly what is required. Candidates should note key points in the question before starting to write an answer.
- Candidates need to be able to clearly define and understand sociological concepts. It would be helpful to provide candidates with a one sentence definition of the concepts listed in the glossary of each topic.
- Each part of a question has a **specific introductory word or phrase** which indicates what is required in the answer to the question. If these words are learnt and understood, candidates should recognise them in the examination i.e. *What is meant by...? Describe.....; Explain...; Explain how; Explain why....; To what extent....? and How far....?*
- Candidates should be aware of the main sociological perspectives on all topics, in particular the feminist, functionalist, Marxist and pluralist views. However, listing them out of context will not gain marks. Some topics such as the media have perspectives which are particular to them.

General Comments

The most popular questions were **Questions 1, 2 and 5** and the least popular questions were **Question 7** and particularly **Question 8**. Therefore the most popular topics were The Family and Crime, Deviance and Social Control.

In order to gain high marks candidates need to have a secure understanding of the key concepts in the areas of study. Candidates are still choosing to answer questions on topics, such as the media, about which they have no sociological knowledge. They are also losing marks by not evaluating in **(d)** questions. Practice on past papers supported by mark schemes, and use of the Teacher Guide and other support materials online, can help candidates practise answering techniques and give teachers ideas on how to develop candidates' understanding of the areas of study. Class discussion of issues, such as why some social groups are more likely to be victims of crime than others, would encourage candidates to think around the subject. They would then be better prepared to answer such a question in the examination.

There were some excellent answers when candidates understood the requirements of the question and had sufficient evidence to support the statements made. Candidates should be encouraged to learn one sentence definitions of concepts for **(a)** questions, to write each of the two required answers in **(b)** questions in two separate paragraphs, to aim for three well-explained points in **(c)** questions and to remember that in **(d)** questions they should make points in agreement but then evaluate and present alternative points before coming to a one-sentence conclusion.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A: The Family

Question 1

- (a)** This was generally well-answered, but credit was limited if the idea of *living together* was omitted or if the definition was too specific e.g. description of *nuclear* or other type of family.
- (b)** Well-answered with a range of possible answers, usually *divorce, abortion, one child policy* and *taxation*.

- (c) Most candidates knew China and the *one child policy* and that there are countries where there are incentives to have more children. Also, there was some knowledge of *free birth control* in countries such as India.
- (d) The *functionalist* view of the family was generally well-known but there was a lack of knowledge of the *dark side* of the family and *feminist* views. *Marxist* views were sometimes brought in – often incorrectly.

Question 2

- (a) Well-answered and any two out of several possible descriptions accepted e.g. *does housework, more often at home, child care, equal roles with women* etc.
- (b) This question was answered well with a range of correct answers such as *involvement in child care* and *housework* and the idea of *symmetrical family*.
- (c) Candidates discussed *lack of support from husbands* and *disapproval of families and society*. Some expressed an opinion which does not gain marks. *Discrimination* was mentioned as was *domestic violence* and *abuse*. The *dual roles* of women leading them to work part-time also featured.
- (d) Some candidates spent too long describing what happened in the past. The question required knowledge of *changes* and *continuing disadvantages* e.g. most men earn more and women tend to be in charge of the home with men playing a helping role.

Section B: Education

Question 3

- (a) This question caused some difficulty – producing examples such as *middle-class* rather than a definition. Two elements were required denoting *income/wealth* and *status*. Most candidates understood the economic point and gained one mark.
- (b) There was some misunderstanding of *influence*. Candidates focused on school factors such as *streaming* but there is a range of other factors such as *deprivation* and *parental attitudes*.
- (c) The answers were often related to fees and the inability of the working-class parents to pay them. In most European countries education is largely free. There is a range of reasons which could have been raised such as *lower expectations* and *less opportunities*.
- (d) Credit was given for policies specific to some societies such as *scholarships* and *free education*. Some candidates referred to the National Curriculum and compensatory education which is particular to the UK. *Discrimination, gender, setting* and *streaming* and the *private education of the upper class* were generally recognised.

Question 4

- (a) This question proved challenging. The best answers included *order in society* and *conforming to norms and values*.
- (b) This was well-answered, with good understanding of how *rewards, punishments* and *competition* are used to encourage conformity.
- (c) Upper-class pupils were included in some answers, as not needing to work in school, which may have some cultural justification. Most candidates achieved good marks with knowledge of *anti-school subcultures, peer groups* and *poor socialisation*.
- (d) Candidates had a good understanding of the *hidden curriculum* and *secondary socialisation*. There was good knowledge in some answers of *functionalist* views on the *economic* and *selective* roles of the school. Alternative *Marxist* views were also known, as well as other important roles of the school such as *developing the individual*.

Section C: Crime, Deviance and Social Control

Question 5

- (a) Most candidates gained some credit. There were some answers which were too specific e.g. *teenagers* and *pupils*.
- (b) Answers usually focused on *offences being too trivial* so the police did not charge them. Other answers referred to *not being detected* or *not being reported by relatives*.
- (c) Answers showed awareness of the concentration of police in *working-class urban areas* and the large number of *unemployed, deprived young people* living there. Others mentioned *anonymity* as a factor and the *availability of material goods*.
- (d) Question generally well-answered. Candidates categorised young working class males as *underachievers* with *status frustration*, influenced by macho *peer groups* causing them to obtain material goods by illegal means. Alternatively they reasoned that the *middle-class* and *girls* may not have their offences recorded. The *Marxist* view on capitalist society also featured in some answers.

Question 6

- (a) Most candidates gained some credit.
- (b) *Embarrassment* and *fear that the police would not do anything* were the most common answers to this question. Candidates were also aware of the reluctance of some family members and some employers to report crime.
- (c) The groups in *some social groups* were not specifically identified by some candidates. Therefore, they repeated *some social groups* in the answer without identifying them as different groups such as *young men* and *women*. There was also a misconception that it is rich people who are usually the victims of crime.
- (d) This question proved challenging. It required detailed knowledge of *anomie*. In a question like this candidates could list known alternative causes such as *poverty* and *peer pressure* to gain credit.

Section D: Media

Question 7

- (a) Good understanding of term as *labelled as a type* rather than being considered as an individual.
- (b) Well-answered with a range of correct answers including *gang members* and *illegal immigrants*.
- (c) This question was generally misunderstood i.e. ethnic minorities as *subjects* of the media, rather than *working in the media*. Some credit was given for this understanding of the question.
- (d) A good point was made that the media may be the only access to knowledge of ethnic minorities for some people. Evaluation was generally poor in answer to this question. Other agencies of socialisation, such as the family, could have been used.

Question 8

- (a) Most answers relied on examples, which gained some credit, as candidates had difficulty providing a complete definition. Answers required the *use of digital or computer-based technology*.
- (b) Answers needed to be more specific about the ways the lives of young people are influenced by the new media. There are positive and negative influences of social networking and mobile phones etc. but candidates seemed more aware of negative influences rather than positive influences such as the use of the Internet for study.
- (c) It was generally well-understood that access is limited by place and wealth, that young people are generally most active and that some countries limit access for political or religious reasons.
- (d) This question was not well-answered, except by a few well-informed candidates. They indicated the use of the Internet, YouTube, and Twitter communicating celebrity culture, advertising, music and fashion trends. The opportunity for evaluation, including limitations already outlined in the previous question, was usually missed – e.g. digital divide, political restraints etc.