SOCIOLOGY

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<tr><td>Paper 9699/11
Paper 11</td></tr>
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Key messages

1   Evaluation is only required in **Questions 1(d), 2 and 3.** It is not required in **Question 1(c).**
2   Sociological evidence, such as theory and studies, should be used to support answers.
3   Candidates should read questions carefully, noting the key concepts and the command words used.
4   Candidates should allocate time appropriately, taking account of the marks available for each question.

General comments

Most candidates seemed well prepared for the demands of this examination. A number of candidates wrote more than is required for the shorter questions, meaning that their essay appeared rushed. On many papers the answer to **1(d)** was longer than the essay, despite it being worth less than half the marks. A number of candidates spent some time answering one essay only to cross it out and start again. Careful reading of the whole paper, before spending some time thinking about which essay to choose and what to include, is time well spent. A number of the more successful essays were preceded by useful plans.

The lower tariff questions were well-answered by most candidates. For **Questions 1(d), 2 and 3,** which required evaluation, the most successful candidates were able to include different approaches and contrasting evidence to indicate that there is a debate, with different views on the question.

Candidates need to be fully aware of the need to allocate appropriate time to the questions; marks should indicate where most time needs to be spent.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

(a)   The term Empty-shell marriage was well-understood by the majority of candidates, most of whom were able to gain full credit by stating it referred to a couple who stayed together, despite there being a lack of or no love in the marriage. Common errors included overlong answers that explained why couples did not get divorced or separate, which was not what the question required. Other overlong answers included unnecessary information explaining why couples stay together, e.g. 'to look after the children'. The time spent on this could have been used more effectively on higher scoring questions. Less common errors were to define 'empty nest' families or 'confluent love'.

(b)   The majority of candidates described two appropriate households, most frequently cohabitation and single parent families. Some candidates identified an appropriate household but did not describe any features of that household. A small number of candidates identified and described two versions of the same household, e.g. 'cohabitation, living together but not married' and then offered 'two adults who live together in a relationship'. Uncommon errors were to identify relationships based on marriage, such as a 'same sex *married* couple', or to describe 'beanpole' families, which is not a type of household.

(c)   There were some excellent and well-developed answers to this question. These tended to offer detailed and supported accounts of several reasons for the decline in marriage, with the best answers explicitly developing the point by explaining how it may have resulted in a decline in

marriage. Less successful responses tended to leave this link implicit. In particular, many were not clear how the process of 'secularisation' may have resulted in less people getting married, other than to state that people were less religious. Some candidates called this 'de-secularisation'. Of the reasons identified for a decline in marriage, the growth of cohabitation, secularisation and the changing status of women were amongst the most popular. The most successful answers identified three or four reasons and wrote a paragraph on each, explaining how it had influenced marriage rates, followed by a supporting description with a sociological theory, empirical data or sociological concepts. Good use was made of the growing gender imbalance in China resulting in fewer marriages, as well as inter-generational change resulting in the decline in arranged marriages in Britain among Asian communities. Many candidates made reference to domestic violence as a reason for not marrying or ending a marriage. When this was linked to changed attitudes and reduced tolerance to domestic violence, it was creditable. However, many candidates seemed to think that domestic violence is growing in modern industrial societies. An uncommon error was to include evaluation in the answer, which is not required for this question. Although candidates do not lose marks by doing this, they do penalise themselves by using time that could be better spent on other questions.

(d) The most successful answers directly addressed the issue of divorce rate in relation to marriage and whether it had increased because individuals expected more from their marriage or for other reasons. Factors that were considered included changes in divorce law, changing social attitudes and why expectations of marriage may have changed. Many contrasted the difference between arranged marriage and marriage based on romanticism or love. Some candidates argued that people may have had high expectations in the past and been disappointed but could do little about it, as well as others who had no expectations of rewarding relationships. A successful assessment noted that individuals may have had high expectations in the past, but these might have been different from expectations in modern industrial societies. Less successful answers often described general societal changes that may have led to an increase in divorce but without explicitly linking these reasons to divorce. A number of responses stated that factors other than high expectations were most important, but failed to say what these other factors were. Some responses were less focussed on the question, for example, describing reasons why people do not marry, or commenting on the good and negative aspects of marriage. Few candidates considered the issue of whether marriage is valued or not in different societies.

Section B

Both questions were attempted by candidates but **Question 3** was more popular than **Question 2**.

Question 2

A number of candidates offered some good discussions of what it means to be an extended family. They looked at how extended families have changed in relation to modified, dispersed, attenuated and beanpole families, and they linked this to the greater possibility of grandparents surviving for longer. Many candidates offered overlong descriptions of how nuclear families replaced extended families in the Industrial Revolution, rather than directly addressing the reasons for today's resurgence of extended families. A range of reasons were suggested for the recent rise, based mainly around common sense points, such as avoiding the expense of care homes for elderly relatives and free babysitting from grandparents. The part played by migration or ethnic variations was occasionally mentioned and gained credit. Assessment was usually limited to common sense alternatives to 'people living longer' as the cause of the increase in extended families. However, many responses made no reference to theory or studies, which would have improved performance. It is vital that candidates use sociological evidence to directly address the question.

Some responses lacked focus on the specific question, and instead discussed the nuclear family more generally. An uncommon misunderstanding evident in some candidates' responses was to argue that extended families had caused people to live longer.

Question 3

There were a number of excellent responses. Different feminist approaches were outlined, highlighting how family life damages women and children, as well as detailed exploration of the meaning of 'damage'. In the most successful answers, candidates included appropriate theory and studies. When conclusions were included, less successful responses tended to consist of very brief reviews of what had been covered in the essays. In order to improve performance, candidates should use conclusions to make a summative point which directly addresses the question.

The majority of candidates were able to put forward some examples of 'damage', most commonly domestic violence committed against wives or female partners, and child abuse by parents or other family members. Responses rarely mentioned men as victims, except implicitly as casualties of the capitalist system. A small number referred to the elderly being cast aside or disrespected, but they were not seen as a group that could be victims.

Some concepts were not well understood, for example 'helicopter parents' were often interpreted as those who were distant from their children or neglecting their children because they were always travelling. Similarly, 'toxic childhood' was mentioned by some candidates but rarely in a way demonstrating sociological understanding.

Less successful responses tended to present potentially relevant points about family life; however they provided no explanation about how they damaged (or benefited) family members. For instance, there were detailed and well-supported accounts of segregated conjugal roles, but with no explicit statement of which family members were disadvantaged. Similarly, there was a tendency in some responses to present generic material on the functions of the family with no explicit link to the question.

Many candidates successfully evaluated the view in the question through using the functionalist perspective to argue that the family benefits its members. However some less successful responses instead argued that the family benefits society, which demonstrates a lack of focus on the specific question. Candidates should be advised to read questions carefully, taking care to note key words.

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| Paper 9699/12 |
| Paper 12 |

Key messages

Candidates should read questions with care, taking note of the key and command words in the question.
Candidates should keep in mind how many marks a question carries – answers to low mark questions should be brief.
Responses should be developed by using appropriate concepts, theory, studies and data.

General comments

The lower tariff questions were answered successfully by most candidates. For higher tariff questions, candidates need to substantiate their points and show they have studied sociology by using relevant evidence. The best responses supported points with relevant studies and theories and also used sociological terms and concepts in their responses. For higher tariff questions, candidates may find it helpful to use key words from the question, and return to them throughout their responses. In this way they should be able to avoid list-like essays that may repeat their points.

It is important that candidates write an appropriate amount for the number of marks available. This is particularly important with lower mark questions. The most successful responses focussed on the exact question that had been set. Less successful responses wrote more generally about the topic of the question.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

(a) Most candidates understood that the term related both to labour undertaken in the home and the way this labour is apportioned between family members, most frequently husbands and wives. Errors were made by some candidates who ignored 'domestic' in the question and redefined it as the division of labour in the work place, describing forced overtime work or paid/unpaid employment. A common error was to recognise that it related to tasks in the home, but not mention how the tasks were divided. Some candidates made the task harder than it should have been by equating this term with symmetrical or segregated domestic roles, and then defining/describing the division of labour within them. This resulted in some very long answers. There were also many lengthy descriptions of a women's role in the house or focus on 'sharing'. Candidates should keep in mind the number of marks carried by a question and save long answers for high scoring questions requiring assessment.

(b) Most candidates answered this question well and patriarchy, male socialisation, the 'breadwinner role' and men being seen as the head of the household were amongst the most popular answers. The most successful responses set out two clearly different reasons in separate paragraphs, rather than selecting two where there was the possibility of overlap. There was good use of concepts/terminology and many focused explanations. An uncommon error was to only develop one reason. A common error was to explain why women cannot take decisions, or why they lack power by describing female submissiveness or lack of education, which was not the focus of the question. Other candidates wrote unnecessary introductions, setting the scene about gender socialisation prior to answering the question. Although this did not lose marks, it did mean that candidates used up time that would have been better utilised elsewhere. Some answers were very long for a 4 mark question.

(c) Many candidates identified several reasons for an increase in the sharing of household tasks in families today. Amongst the most popular reasons were the changing status of women, female employment and the growth of symmetrical roles. Reference was made to feminism, the new man, the symmetrical family and the change from extended to nuclear families. The most successful answers identified three or four reasons and wrote a paragraph on each, explaining what the reason was and then supporting that description with a sociological theory, empirical data or sociological concept. One way in which candidates can improve performance is by supporting their points with appropriate concepts, theory or research. Some candidates included explicit evaluation in their responses but this is not required for this question and gains no marks.. In order to improve performance, candidates need to address the 'why' in the question and support their answer with sociological evidence. For example, many candidates described the concept of the 'new man'. However few related this to changing attitudes to gender roles. The best candidates made use of more recent research on conjugal roles and the domestic division of labour. In order to gain the most credit, candidates should develop three or more reasons for a question such as this.

(d) Many candidates made good use of feminist theories, displaying good knowledge of the different strands of feminism, although their accounts of Marxist feminism often lacked focus. Answers could be improved upon by using correct examples of different feminists. For example, when quoting Marxist feminists, they should ensure that they have identified the correct key thinker as a Marxist feminist. Also candidates could lose focus on the key feature of the question, in this case, the contribution of feminism. Some candidates wrote generalised answers, describing some form of continued oppression of women, frequently starting with a historical overview. Some candidates misinterpreted the question, explaining how feminists have changed relationships between men and women or what they would like to see happen in the future, rather than focusing on today. The most successful answers described relationships, rather than just describing inequality. The best of these tended to outline different feminist theories or views supported by studies and concepts, many referring to the dual burden, triple shift as well as Marxist, radical and liberal feminism. In more detailed responses, candidates evaluated through discussing the new man, symmetrical family, post modernism, feminism and the changing roles of men and women. A number of candidates used functionalism to evaluate feminist views. The most successful answers were sophisticated and made evaluations with reference to post-modernism. Less successful responses gave vague reference to feminists who have argued that there is gender inequality, but gave little explanation for this, e.g. no reference to different feminisms, studies or concepts. Others were often descriptive or assertive.

Section B

Question 2 was the most popular essay on this paper.

Question 2

This question was well answered by a number of candidates who had a sound grasp of the theories relating to marriage in societies today, as well as understanding the impact of divorce legislation. The most successful of these referred to changes in the law and changes in societal attitudes to divorce, as well as the rise in cohabitation, emancipation of women, secularisation, individualism post modernism as reasons for the decline in marriage. Some candidate responses evaluated the importance and significance of marriage today as seen in relation to the reconstituted family. Most approached the essay by discussing reasons why divorce is easier, although this first argument was often weak and unsupported. Candidates then explored reasons for a decline in marriage, demonstrating much more understanding.

Some responses demonstrated confusion about the reasons why people divorce today. For example, some argued it was because the husband was a poor provider, drunk or abusive, as if these were new phenomena, with no acknowledgement that this could have been the situation in the past when individuals lacked the ability to escape from marriage. The same applied to extra-marital affairs and domestic violence, which many asserted were growing but without noting what this may mean in relation to divorce. Many approached this as an essay on the decline of marriage and therefore did not fully engage with the question. In such responses, there was little discussion of divorce and attempted evaluation tended to focus on criticisms of the arguments that marriage is in decline. Another common error was to assess whether the decline of marriage was a good or a bad thing, rather than looking at why the situation may be changing. Candidates need to read the questions carefully in order to focus on the question asked. Some candidates answered a question about the family and not marriage, and others made reference to the Nayar who, as an extinct society, cannot be relevant for a question about today. The majority of candidates approached this question either by including divorce as one reason for the decline in marriage, or by outlining reasons for the rise in divorce and/or decline in marriage.

Question 3

There were some good responses to this question which outlined ethnicity as one reason for family diversity. However many lacked detail and focused on other aspects of family diversity, such as class. Many answers tended to conflate ethnicity with culture/society, presenting only assertive examples of family types associated with particular societies. Few candidates actually referred to ethnic family research, and there were a lot of broad-sweeping generalisations and discussions of functionalism. The most successful answers made use of appropriate studies, such as Bhatti and the Rapoport's, and some answers made good use of postmodern theories. Some good responses evaluated successfully by discussing factors linked to diversity other than ethnicity. A small number of responses did not seem to understand the meaning of ethnicity, in some cases talking just about religion and in others cases class, with no mention of ethnicity. A common error was to talk about. Other responses focussed on family functions rather than diversity.

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Key messages

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General comments

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Comments on specific questions

Section A

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(b)   The majority of candidates described two appropriate households, most frequently cohabitation and single parent families. Some candidates identified an appropriate household but did not describe any features of that household. A small number of candidates identified and described two versions of the same household, e.g. 'cohabitation, living together but not married' and then offered 'two adults who live together in a relationship'. Uncommon errors were to identify relationships based on marriage, such as a 'same sex *married* couple', or to describe 'beanpole' families, which is not a type of household.

(c)   There were some excellent and well-developed answers to this question. These tended to offer detailed and supported accounts of several reasons for the decline in marriage, with the best answers explicitly developing the point by explaining how it may have resulted in a decline in

marriage. Less successful responses tended to leave this link implicit. In particular, many were not clear how the process of 'secularisation' may have resulted in less people getting married, other than to state that people were less religious. Some candidates called this 'de-secularisation'. Of the reasons identified for a decline in marriage, the growth of cohabitation, secularisation and the changing status of women were amongst the most popular. The most successful answers identified three or four reasons and wrote a paragraph on each, explaining how it had influenced marriage rates, followed by a supporting description with a sociological theory, empirical data or sociological concepts. Good use was made of the growing gender imbalance in China resulting in fewer marriages, as well as inter-generational change resulting in the decline in arranged marriages in Britain among Asian communities. Many candidates made reference to domestic violence as a reason for not marrying or ending a marriage. When this was linked to changed attitudes and reduced tolerance to domestic violence, it was creditable. However, many candidates seemed to think that domestic violence is growing in modern industrial societies. An uncommon error was to include evaluation in the answer, which is not required for this question. Although candidates do not lose marks by doing this, they do penalise themselves by using time that could be better spent on other questions.

(d)   The most successful answers directly addressed the issue of divorce rate in relation to marriage and whether it had increased because individuals expected more from their marriage or for other reasons. Factors that were considered included changes in divorce law, changing social attitudes and why expectations of marriage may have changed. Many contrasted the difference between arranged marriage and marriage based on romanticism or love. Some candidates argued that people may have had high expectations in the past and been disappointed but could do little about it, as well as others who had no expectations of rewarding relationships. A successful assessment noted that individuals may have had high expectations in the past, but these might have been different from expectations in modern industrial societies. Less successful answers often described general societal changes that may have led to an increase in divorce but without explicitly linking these reasons to divorce. A number of responses stated that factors other than high expectations were most important, but failed to say what these other factors were. Some responses were less focussed on the question, for example, describing reasons why people do not marry, or commenting on the good and negative aspects of marriage. Few candidates considered the issue of whether marriage is valued or not in different societies.

Section B

Both questions were attempted by candidates but **Question 3** was more popular than **Question 2**.

Question 2

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Some responses lacked focus on the specific question, and instead discussed the nuclear family more generally. An uncommon misunderstanding evident in some candidates' responses was to argue that extended families had caused people to live longer.

Question 3

There were a number of excellent responses. Different feminist approaches were outlined, highlighting how family life damages women and children, as well as detailed exploration of the meaning of 'damage'. In the most successful answers, candidates included appropriate theory and studies. When conclusions were included, less successful responses tended to consist of very brief reviews of what had been covered in the essays. In order to improve performance, candidates should use conclusions to make a summative point which directly addresses the question.

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Some concepts were not well understood, for example 'helicopter parents' were often interpreted as those who were distant from their children or neglecting their children because they were always travelling. Similarly, 'toxic childhood' was mentioned by some candidates but rarely in a way demonstrating sociological understanding.

Less successful responses tended to present potentially relevant points about family life; however they provided no explanation about how they damaged (or benefited) family members. For instance, there were detailed and well-supported accounts of segregated conjugal roles, but with no explicit statement of which family members were disadvantaged. Similarly, there was a tendency in some responses to present generic material on the functions of the family with no explicit link to the question.

Many candidates successfully evaluated the view in the question through using the functionalist perspective to argue that the family benefits its members. However some less successful responses instead argued that the family benefits society, which demonstrates a lack of focus on the specific question. Candidates should be advised to read questions carefully, taking care to note key words.

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Paper 9699/21
Paper 21

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Key features

–   Good answers showed sound knowledge and understanding of a range of sociological ideas, theories
    and concepts.
    Candidates tended to perform better in the data response section than the essay section.
    Some misunderstanding of key methodological concepts, in particular, validity and reliability.
    Low scoring answers were often overly descriptive and lacking empirical and theoretical depth.
    Some core theories were understood better than others.

General comments

High-scoring answers were characterised by good application of a range of relevant sociological evidence
and theory. A number of key concepts, notably validity and reliability, are only partially understood and are
often applied with a lack of precision across a range of questions. This suggests that centres would benefit
from careful revision of some of the key concepts in this unit, especially in relation to methodology

A great deal of evaluative content is in the form of juxtaposition. Those candidates who focus their responses
on the wording of a question invariably produce assessment of higher quality.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

(a)   The majority of candidates answered this question well and gained full marks. Those that scored
         one mark typically omitted explicit reference to the scientific element of the term.

(b)   Most responses were able to able to identify two techniques and many were able to develop these
         with sufficient clarity to gain 3 or 4 marks. Snowball, volunteer and stratified sampling were the
         most common. Less successful responses described different research methods instead of
         sampling techniques.

(c)   Only the most successful candidates provided a convincing response to this question and most
         candidates either misunderstood the question or lacked a sufficient knowledge base to answer it
         effectively. Candidates typically discussed why particular methods may not lead to representative
         research, rather than focusing on the difficulties that researchers might encounter in obtaining a
         representative sample. This led to many responses that were, at best, only partially relevant.

(d)   Most candidates produced sound responses to this question, with many writing effective answers
         that directly addressed the issues implicit in the question. Candidates receiving the highest marks
         focused their attention fully on questionnaires as a research technique and made careful links to
         relevant theoretical concerns. They were also prepared to engage with the wording of the question
         i.e. the idea that questionnaires are of 'little value'. Less successful responses were side-tracked
         into discussing the general merits of quantitative versus qualitative methods or the broader debate
         as to whether or not sociology should follow scientific principles.

Question 2

Responses to this question varied significantly. There were a number of very good answers that showed
sound knowledge of postmodern thinking. Some candidates were able to apply this knowledge to the notion

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of social identity effectively. This led to some fruitful discussions of the extent to which identities such as gender, class, ethnicity and age may now be less subject to conventional norms. The evaluation of the proposition in the question was often assertive or shaped in juxtaposition to other theoretical approaches. Only the very best responses produced direct evaluation that fully focused on the question. In less successful responses, interactionism was often conflated with postmodernism.

Question 3

Of the two essay questions this one was the more popular and the answers were of marginally higher quality. Most candidates showed sound knowledge of the topic area and were clearly aware that official statistics are an example of secondary data. This led many responses to shape their answers in comparison to primary data, sometimes in a productive way but often leading to lengthy digressions on the merits of each. Good responses were able to identify both strengths and limitations although these were sometimes lacking in range or balance. Although many answers alluded to the theoretical element of the debate this was often not fully developed. A number of responses were content to discuss the question mainly in practical terms. Many candidates cited Durkheim's study but only the very best were successful in drawing out the issues arising from this in relation to the debate over the use of official statistics.

SOCIOLOGY

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Paper 9699/22
Paper 22

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Key features

–   Good answers showed sound knowledge and understanding of a range of sociological ideas, theories and concepts.
    Candidates tended to perform better in the data response section than the essay section.
    There was some misunderstanding of key methodological concepts, in particular, validity and reliability.
    Some core theories were understood better than others.

General comments

High-scoring answers were characterised by good application of a range of relevant sociological evidence and theory. Many candidates demonstrated good knowledge of postmodernist theory in **Question 2**, although this remains the least well understood approach of the core perspectives in the syllabus.

This year, candidates performed better in **Section A** than in **Section B**. This was partly a matter of knowledge base as well as some development needed in essay writing skills. However, there was evidence of progress in attempts to evaluate in questions that demanded this skill. However, a great deal of evaluative content is still in the form of juxtaposition. Those candidates who focused their response on the wording of a question invariably produced assessment of higher quality.

In **Section A**, most candidates were appropriately concise in their approach, especially in respect of **1(a)** and **1(b)**. This economy of effort meant that responses were generally more focused and fewer answers were unnecessarily long. The variable answers produced for **Question 1(a)** might suggest that centres would benefit from careful revision of some of the key concepts in this unit, especially in relation to methodology. Validity and reliability continue to be not fully understood and applied with a lack of precision by a number of candidates in a range of questions.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

(a)   There was a mixed response to this question. Many candidates showed a good understanding of the meaning of pilot study and were able to obtain full marks. Others were clearly not familiar with the term and described a method or sampling technique instead.

(b)   The majority of candidates were able to identify differences between the two methods and many went on to develop their points and gained at least 3 marks and often 4. The majority of candidates who did not gain the extra development mark typically did not make the difference sufficiently explicit. For example, if one way is that in a structured interview the researcher is present, the development in relation to a questionnaire should make it clear that a respondent [usually] completes a questionnaire away from the researcher.

(c)   There were many strong responses to this question with some answers discussing a range of points effectively, while others explained fewer points in greater depth achieving equally high marks. Most candidates also applied their explanations to the theoretical positions of positivism and interpretivism to show a rounded understanding of the question. Less successful responses tended to provide lengthy accounts of qualitative methods without focusing on their usefulness. A more careful reading of the question may have improved some answers. Some responses included evaluation which gains no marks for this question.

(d) Most responses were able to offer a two-sided answer. Successful answers focused attention directly on the merits of structured interviews and offered a balanced account of strengths and limitations. When candidates allied this knowledge to theoretical and conceptual understanding, they invariably entered the higher levels of the mark scheme. Good answers often made use of empirical studies to illustrate their points. Less successful responses provided rather generic accounts of quantitative and qualitative methods and did not distinguish the particular features of structured interviews sufficiently. Usage of key methodological terms, in particular validity and reliability, often lacked precision. A number of answers were assertive in tone.

Question 2

Of the two essay questions this one produced answers of marginally higher quality. There was some good knowledge and understanding of the models of society put forward by the respective theories, particularly Marxism and functionalism. The best answers directly engaged with the question, attempted to assess the relevance of Marxism and functionalism and were able to show how postmodernist ideas have challenged traditional perspectives. Some were able to make use of empirical evidence as well as theoretical arguments. However, a number of responses, whilst showing sound knowledge of each theory were highly juxtaposed in their approach to assessment. Weaker responses largely focused their attention on Marxism and functionalist accounts with little or no reference to postmodernism.

Question 3

This was the more popular of the essay questions but it was answered with varying degrees of success. Stronger answers ranged across different forms of secondary data, noting quantitative and qualitative varieties and linking these to differing theoretical positions. These discussions were often informed and evaluative in tone and well-applied to the question. Weaker responses focused attention on only one form of secondary data, typically officially statistics or diaries, and made little or no reference to other types. This was the main deficit in many answers and it reduced the options for evaluation. There was often an assertive tone with many candidates automatically agreeing with the position stated in the question.

SOCIOLOGY

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Paper 9699/23
Paper 23

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Key features

–   Good answers showed sound knowledge and understanding of a range of sociological ideas, theories and concepts.
    Candidates tended to perform better in the data response section than the essay section.
    Some misunderstanding of key methodological concepts, in particular, validity and reliability.
    Low scoring answers were often overly descriptive and lacking empirical and theoretical depth.
    Some core theories were understood better than others.

General comments

High-scoring answers were characterised by good application of a range of relevant sociological evidence and theory. A number of key concepts, notably validity and reliability, are only partially understood and are often applied with a lack of precision across a range of questions. This suggests that centres would benefit from careful revision of some of the key concepts in this unit, especially in relation to methodology

A great deal of evaluative content is in the form of juxtaposition. Those candidates who focus their responses on the wording of a question invariably produce assessment of higher quality.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

(a)   The majority of candidates answered this question well and gained full marks. Those that scored one mark typically omitted explicit reference to the scientific element of the term.

(b)   Most responses were able to able to identify two techniques and many were able to develop these with sufficient clarity to gain 3 or 4 marks. Snowball, volunteer and stratified sampling were the most common. Less successful responses described different research methods instead of sampling techniques.

(c)   Only the most successful candidates provided a convincing response to this question and most candidates either misunderstood the question or lacked a sufficient knowledge base to answer it effectively. Candidates typically discussed why particular methods may not lead to representative research, rather than focusing on the difficulties that researchers might encounter in obtaining a representative sample. This led to many responses that were, at best, only partially relevant.

(d)   Most candidates produced sound responses to this question, with many writing effective answers that directly addressed the issues implicit in the question. Candidates receiving the highest marks focused their attention fully on questionnaires as a research technique and made careful links to relevant theoretical concerns. They were also prepared to engage with the wording of the question i.e. the idea that questionnaires are of 'little value'. Less successful responses were side-tracked into discussing the general merits of quantitative versus qualitative methods or the broader debate as to whether or not sociology should follow scientific principles.

Question 2

Responses to this question varied significantly. There were a number of very good answers that showed sound knowledge of postmodern thinking. Some candidates were able to apply this knowledge to the notion

of social identity effectively. This led to some fruitful discussions of the extent to which identities such as gender, class, ethnicity and age may now be less subject to conventional norms. The evaluation of the proposition in the question was often assertive or shaped in juxtaposition to other theoretical approaches. Only the very best responses produced direct evaluation that fully focused on the question. In less successful responses, interactionism was often conflated with postmodernism.

Question 3

Of the two essay questions this one was the more popular and the answers were of marginally higher quality. Most candidates showed sound knowledge of the topic area and were clearly aware that official statistics are an example of secondary data. This led many responses to shape their answers in comparison to primary data, sometimes in a productive way but often leading to lengthy digressions on the merits of each. Good responses were able to identify both strengths and limitations although these were sometimes lacking in range or balance. Although many answers alluded to the theoretical element of the debate this was often not fully developed. A number of responses were content to discuss the question mainly in practical terms. Many candidates cited Durkheim's study but only the very best were successful in drawing out the issues arising from this in relation to the debate over the use of official statistics.

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Key messages

● There were some outstanding answers, full of sociological insight and mature analysis.
● Good answers to the **(b)** questions combined detailed sociological understanding with sustained assessment.
● Less successful answers to the **(b)** questions were too descriptive.
● Some low scoring answers relied on assertion and general knowledge rather than relevant sociological material.
● Further marks could be gained by using appropriate sociological concepts and theories to support key points.

General comments

The best answers were tightly constructed in a way that demonstrated clarity of thought and careful attention to the wording of the question. No marks are awarded for the use of evaluation in answering the **(a)** questions, yet some candidates misuse their time in the exam by writing evaluative answers to these questions. Some responses to the **(b)** questions were too descriptive, relying on a summary of relevant knowledge without providing any related analysis and evaluation. More practice in formulating evaluative answers for the **(b)** questions would be helpful for these candidates. A small minority of candidates appeared unprepared for the exam, relying on assertion and general knowledge to answer the questions rather than drawing on relevant sociological materials and argumentation. Attainment for this type of answer was inevitably at the lower end of the range. More use of evidence from sociological studies would help candidates produce better informed and more detailed responses to the questions. Answers would also be enhanced by using appropriate examples to support key points.

Most candidates answered three questions in the time available and there were no rubric errors. Some candidates answered more than three questions, though they appeared to derive no advantage from this strategy in terms of marks achieved. The questions on Education proved most popular, with those on Global Development less frequently attempted.

Section A

Question 1

(a) Successful answers provided a detailed explanation of several ways in which educational performance may be influenced by the hidden curriculum. High quality responses included references to concepts such as stereotyping, gender expectations, ethnocentrism, and Teacher/candidate interaction. There were some low scoring answers that demonstrated little understanding of the term 'hidden curriculum'.

(b) High scoring answers gave a sustained assessment of the view that the purpose of education is to control the working class. Good responses detailed several ways in which social control may be exercised through the education system. Evaluation was often provided through contrasting functionalist and Marxist perspectives on the role of education. Low scoring answers often lacked specific examples of how social control may be exercised through the education system.

Question 2

(a) Good answers provided a clear account of several factors that may influence subject choice for girls. Concepts such as the gendered curriculum, gender socialisation, stereotyping, teacher expectations, and habitus featured in high quality responses. Less successful answers were confined to discussing just one or two relevant factors, with little or no support from relevant sociological sources. Some candidates included references to factors influencing subject choice for males, for which no credit was awarded as that material was irrelevant in terms of answering this question.

(b) High scoring answers considered a range of evidence and arguments relating to the debate about whether cultural capital is the main reason why middle class candidates succeed in education. Effective use of concepts, such as cultural and material deprivation, hidden curriculum, labelling, language codes, and habitus was a feature of answers that reached the top mark band. Lower scoring answers demonstrated only a weak understanding of the concept of cultural capital, and conclusions were unsupported by reference to relevant studies and sociological arguments.

Section B

Question 3

(a) Answers that merited high marks offered a well-developed discussion of several reasons why the rapid development of urban areas may be harmful to development. Some high quality responses included a discussion of different ways of defining development and the importance of those definitions in relation to the question. There were some low scoring answers that did not identify reasons why the rapid development of urban areas may harm development.

(b) The most successful answers used relevant examples and sociological arguments to assess the view that adopting capitalist models of development will make developing countries poorer. Good responses gave examples of capitalist models of development and described the possible negative consequences of those models for developing countries. Some high quality responses distinguished between different developing countries when assessing the impact of adopting capitalist models of development. Lower scoring answers often relied on a simple line of argument, rather than considering different perspectives on this question.

Question 4

(a) A few good answers made several well-developed points about why government corruption in developing countries may make economic growth harder to achieve. Liberal and pluralist perspectives on development were often cited in high scoring answers. Some less successful answers lacked detail and were confined to making just one or two relevant points. There were a few low scoring answers that demonstrated little or no understanding of the impact of government corruption on development.

(b) High scoring answers showed a clear understanding of what is meant by colonialism and how it may impact on standards of living in developing countries. Good responses also included a sustained assessment of the view on which the question was based. Some good responses used case studies to illustrate the effects of colonialism on developing countries. Answers that gained marks in the middle of the range often relied on a simple juxtaposition of different theories of development, with only implicit links to the impact of colonialism. There were a few low scoring answers that showed little understanding of the sociological debates about colonialism and development.

Section C

Question 5

(a) Good answers demonstrated a detailed understanding of how governments may seek to influence the media. Concepts that were used in high quality answers included censorship, media manipulation, cross-cutting elites, media repression, ideological state apparatus, and gate-keeping. Some responses showed a limited or inaccurate understanding of the relationship between governments and the media.

(b) High scoring answers provided a sustained analysis of the claim that the media shape views about what is socially acceptable behaviour. Marxist and pluralist theories of the media were often used

to provide a framework for addressing the issues raised by the question. The distinction between mass culture and high culture featured in some answers. Lower in the mark range, less use was made of relevant concepts and theories. Some answers gave too much attention to discussing different models of media effects (for example, the hypodermic-syringe model), without making the links to the question clear.

Question 6

(a) Higher in the mark range, answers provided several well-developed points about how the media may play a role in gender socialisation. Examples from relevant studies were often used to support key points. Good answers also often distinguished between the new media and the traditional media as different influences on gender identity. Low scoring answers lacked detail and often covered only one or two ways in which the media may influence gender socialisation.

(b) High quality answers examined several ways in which media content may reflect the demands of the audience. Good responses also included a sustained assessment of the view on which the question was based. Theories of the media (Marxist, pluralist, postmodernist) were often used to develop the assessment and some answers included useful references to relevant sociological studies of the factors influencing media content. A few candidates made intelligent use of the distinction between the traditional media and the new media in advancing the discussion. There were some low scoring answers that demonstrated little understanding of how media content may be influenced by audience demands.

Section D

Question 7

(a) Good answers offered several well-developed points about why levels of religious participation are higher among women than men in many societies. Concepts such as patriarchy, gender socialisation, family roles, spiritual compensation, and marginalisation often featured in high scoring responses. There were a few low scoring answers that showed a lack of understanding about what is meant by religious participation.

(b) Most candidates recognised that the question provided an opportunity to discuss feminist theories of religion. Answers that reached the top of the mark range offered a detailed assessment of the arguments for and against the view expressed in the question. Evidence from studies was often used to gauge whether religious organisations remain as patriarchal as ever. Some high quality answers distinguished between different religious organisations, viewing some as less patriarchal than others. Answers that merited the middle of the mark range often relied on a largely uncritical and generalised account of the feminist perspective on religious organisations. There were a few low scoring answers that made assertions about the power of men in religion today, without offering supporting evidence from the relevant sociological literature.

Question 8

(a) High scoring answers provided several well-developed points about the factors leading to the growth of sects. In developing their account, such candidates made useful distinctions between sects and other religious organisations. Specific types of sects were also mentioned in many of the high quality answers. Lower scoring responses often identified one or two features of sects, but failed to make clear points about the factors leading to the growth of this type of religious movement.

(b) Most candidates recognised that the question provided an opportunity to discuss the secularisation thesis. Good answers demonstrated a sound understanding of why the growth of new religious movements might indicate that secularisation is occurring. High scoring responses also included a sustained assessment of the view on which the question was based. The assessment often took the form of a juxtaposition of different explanations for the growth of new religious movements. The best answers often distinguished between specific types of new religious movements and explained the relevance of these distinctions for addressing the issues raised by the question. Some candidates made good use of postmodernist analyses of the links between new religious movements and secularisation to support the evaluation. Answers in the middle of the mark range tended to endorse the view expressed in the question, with little critical analysis or reflection on other possible perspectives regarding the significance of the growth of new religious movements.

There were a few low scoring answers that discussed secularisation in general, with no direct links to new religious movements.

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Key messages

Good answers combined detailed sociological understanding with effective analysis and evaluation.
Some answers to the **(a)** questions included evaluation which was not required.
A few answers lacked references to relevant sociological concepts and theories.
Further marks could be gained by discussing different sides to a debate, rather than relying on one line of argument alone.
More use could be made of evidence from sociological studies as a basis for analysis and evaluation.

General comments

Evaluation is not required in answering the **(a)** questions, but some candidates misuse their time by including evaluation when responding to these questions. Good answers to the **(b)** questions combined detailed sociological understanding, with sustained evaluation of the issues raised by the question. Use of sociological evidence and theories to support the evaluation was a feature of high quality answers to the **(b)** questions. There continue to be a few candidates who rely on assertion and general knowledge to answer the questions. The credit awarded to those answers which lack references to appropriate sociological material are inevitably low. It is therefore important that candidates are taught sociological material, including concepts, studies and theory and utilise these methodically in their answers.

Most candidates answered three questions in the time available and there were few rubric errors. Some candidates answered more than three questions, though they appeared to derive no advantage from this strategy in terms of marks achieved. The questions on Education proved most popular, with those on Global Development less frequently attempted.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

(a) Good answers considered a range of reasons why intelligence might have little influence on who succeeds at school. High quality responses often raised questions about what is meant by intelligence and how it can be measured. There were some lower scoring answers that considered some of the social factors influencing educational achievement, without making clear reference to the importance of intelligence in determining who succeeds at school.

(b) There were some high scoring answers that provided a sustained assessment of the view that the main function of education is to promote the core values of society. Good responses explained how education may promote the core values of society and also considered other functions attributed to the education system, such as social control and preparation of young people to enter the workforce. High quality answers often contrasted functionalist and Marxist perspectives on the role of education. Some lower scoring answers discussed the purpose of education by drawing on general knowledge rather than using references to appropriate sociological theories and concepts.

Question 2

(a) Good answers provided a clear account of several ways in which the educational performance of pupils may be influenced by social class. Examples from relevant studies often featured in high scoring responses, alongside the use of concepts such as social deprivation, cultural capital, language codes and peer group pressure. Less successful answers were confined to discussing just one or two links between social class and educational attainment levels.

(b) High scoring answers considered a range of evidence and arguments relating to the debate about the impact of gender socialisation in the family on the educational performance of females and males. Answers that reached the top mark band made effective use of concepts such as the gendered curriculum, hidden curriculum, teacher expectations, gendered parenting, and labelling. Lower scoring answers lacked references to relevant concepts and theories and they relied on assertion and generalisation rather than appropriate links to sociological arguments and evidence.

Section B

Question 3

(a) Answers that merited high marks offered a well-developed discussion of several reasons why development should not be defined in economic terms. The most successful responses explored the importance of non-economic indicators that impact on a society's overall development, such as education and health care. There were some low scoring answers that mentioned some economic indicators of development without reflecting on their limitations.

(b) Good answers used different theories and explanations of population growth to analyse the key issues raised by the question. High scoring responses contrasted cultural explanations of population growth with structural, economic and environmental explanations. There were some lower scoring answers that showed little understanding of how cultural factors may influence population growth.

Question 4

(a) There were a few good answers that made several well-developed points about how the rapid growth of cities may affect rural areas. Relevant concepts and evidence from studies was cited in the best responses. Some answers towards the bottom of the mark range focused on the impact that rapid urban development has on cities rather than on rural areas.

(b) High scoring answers showed a clear understanding of the argument that economic growth in developing countries only benefits people who are already rich. Good responses also included a sustained assessment of the view on which the question was based. Some good answers used case studies to show how powerful elites may benefit from economic growth in developing countries at the expense of the poor. High quality responses often included some consideration of how the rich and powerful in developed countries may benefit from economic growth in developing countries. Answers that gained marks in the middle of the range were often limited to a basic account of one or two arguments supporting the view that only the rich benefit from economic growth. There were a few low scoring answers that showed little understanding of the sociological debates about who benefits from development.

Section C

Question 5

(a) Good answers provided several examples of how media owners can influence the content of the media. High scoring responses often included references to relevant studies to show how owners may exercise power within the media production process. Some candidates offered an evaluation of how far owners are able to influence media content, though that was not required by the question and so gained no extra marks. Low scoring answers showed only a limited or inaccurate understanding of how media owners may influence media content.

(b) High scoring answers provided a sustained analysis of how far the media are able to control the way people behave. Good responses often drew on the debate between pluralists and Marxists about the power of the media to influence behaviour. Some candidates also considered different

models of media influence, distinguishing between those that see the media having a direct influence over behaviour (the hypodermic-syringe model, for example), and those that see the influence as indirect, such as the cultural effects model. Lower in the mark range, little use was made of relevant concepts and theories. Some answers included a lot of tangential material, including discussion of who within the media is able to control media content.

Question 6

(a) Higher in the mark range, answers provided several well-developed points about how the media may support ruling class interests. Some well-formed answers made use of references to relevant concepts such as ideological control, hegemony, mass manipulation, and hyper-reality. Low scoring answers lacked detail about the mechanisms through which ruling class interests may be represented within the media.

(b) High quality answers examined several ways in which the user may have the power to control the new media. Good responses also provided a sustained assessment of the view on which the question was based. Theories of the media (Marxist, pluralist, postmodernist) were often used to develop the assessment, and some answers included useful references to relevant sociological studies of media control, some with specific reference to the new media. Some candidates made effective use of the distinction between the traditional media and the new media to show how the latter may provide more opportunities for the user to create and influence content. There were some low scoring answers that discussed issues of media control but without reference to the new media.

Section D

Question 7

(a) Good answers offered several well-developed points about how sociologists have attempted to measure religiosity. High quality responses referred to church attendance figures, participation in religious rituals, attitude surveys, and interest in spiritual debates as different ways of measuring the extent of religiosity in a society. There were some candidates who discussed the declining power of religion without making clear links to the issue of how religiosity might be measured – they therefore gained less credit.

(b) Answers that reached the top of the mark range offered a detailed assessment of different views about the role of religion. In good responses, candidates discussed in detail both the idea that religion promotes social cohesion, and the alternative view that it leads to conflict between people. Some candidates made good use of examples to show how religion may lead to conflict and/or play a part in conflict resolution. Some high quality answers distinguished between different religions, questioning whether some are more likely to promote social cohesion than others. Answers that merited the middle of the mark range often relied on a largely uncritical summary of the functionalist and/or Marxist theories of religion. There were a few low scoring answers that made assertions about the role of religion, but offered little supporting evidence from the relevant sociological literature.

Question 8

(a) High quality answers provided several well-developed points about the impact of social class on religious participation. There were some good responses that explained why some social class groups may be more attracted to religion than others. High quality answers made good use of references to relevant studies and concepts. Lower scoring answers were often confined to making just one or two relevant points and were undeveloped.

(b) The most successful answers considered a range of explanations for the growth of fundamentalist religious movements. Good responses also provided a sustained assessment of the view on which the question was based. In the better answers, cultural explanations for the growth of fundamentalism were often contrasted with economic explanations. Some candidates also made good use of postmodernist reflections on the position of religion in contemporary society. Answers in the middle of the mark range demonstrated a sound understanding of some explanations for the growth of fundamentalism, but provided little or no assessment. There were a few low scoring answers that demonstrated little knowledge of the relevant debates.

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Key messages

- There were some outstanding answers, full of sociological insight and mature analysis.
- Good answers to the **(b)** questions combined detailed sociological understanding with sustained assessment.
- Less successful answers to the **(b)** questions were too descriptive.
- Some low scoring answers relied on assertion and general knowledge rather than relevant sociological material.
- Further marks could be gained by using appropriate sociological concepts and theories to support key points.

General comments

The best answers were tightly constructed in a way that demonstrated clarity of thought and careful attention to the wording of the question. No marks are awarded for the use of evaluation in answering the **(a)** questions, yet some candidates misuse their time in the exam by writing evaluative answers to these questions. Some responses to the **(b)** questions were too descriptive, relying on a summary of relevant knowledge without providing any related analysis and evaluation. More practice in formulating evaluative answers for the **(b)** questions would be helpful for these candidates. A small minority of candidates appeared unprepared for the exam, relying on assertion and general knowledge to answer the questions rather than drawing on relevant sociological materials and argumentation. Attainment for this type of answer was inevitably at the lower end of the range. More use of evidence from sociological studies would help candidates produce better informed and more detailed responses to the questions. Answers would also be enhanced by using appropriate examples to support key points.

Most candidates answered three questions in the time available and there were no rubric errors. Some candidates answered more than three questions, though they appeared to derive no advantage from this strategy in terms of marks achieved. The questions on Education proved most popular, with those on Global Development less frequently attempted.

Section A

Question 1

(a)   Successful answers provided a detailed explanation of several ways in which educational performance may be influenced by the hidden curriculum. High quality responses included references to concepts such as stereotyping, gender expectations, ethnocentrism, and Teacher/candidate interaction. There were some low scoring answers that demonstrated little understanding of the term 'hidden curriculum'.

(b)   High scoring answers gave a sustained assessment of the view that the purpose of education is to control the working class. Good responses detailed several ways in which social control may be exercised through the education system. Evaluation was often provided through contrasting functionalist and Marxist perspectives on the role of education. Low scoring answers often lacked specific examples of how social control may be exercised through the education system.

Question 2

(a) Good answers provided a clear account of several factors that may influence subject choice for girls. Concepts such as the gendered curriculum, gender socialisation, stereotyping, teacher expectations, and habitus featured in high quality responses. Less successful answers were confined to discussing just one or two relevant factors, with little or no support from relevant sociological sources. Some candidates included references to factors influencing subject choice for males, for which no credit was awarded as that material was irrelevant in terms of answering this question.

(b) High scoring answers considered a range of evidence and arguments relating to the debate about whether cultural capital is the main reason why middle class candidates succeed in education. Effective use of concepts, such as cultural and material deprivation, hidden curriculum, labelling, language codes, and habitus was a feature of answers that reached the top mark band. Lower scoring answers demonstrated only a weak understanding of the concept of cultural capital, and conclusions were unsupported by reference to relevant studies and sociological arguments.

Section B

Question 3

(a) Answers that merited high marks offered a well-developed discussion of several reasons why the rapid development of urban areas may be harmful to development. Some high quality responses included a discussion of different ways of defining development and the importance of those definitions in relation to the question. There were some low scoring answers that did not identify reasons why the rapid development of urban areas may harm development.

(b) The most successful answers used relevant examples and sociological arguments to assess the view that adopting capitalist models of development will make developing countries poorer. Good responses gave examples of capitalist models of development and described the possible negative consequences of those models for developing countries. Some high quality responses distinguished between different developing countries when assessing the impact of adopting capitalist models of development. Lower scoring answers often relied on a simple line of argument, rather than considering different perspectives on this question.

Question 4

(a) A few good answers made several well-developed points about why government corruption in developing countries may make economic growth harder to achieve. Liberal and pluralist perspectives on development were often cited in high scoring answers. Some less successful answers lacked detail and were confined to making just one or two relevant points. There were a few low scoring answers that demonstrated little or no understanding of the impact of government corruption on development.

(b) High scoring answers showed a clear understanding of what is meant by colonialism and how it may impact on standards of living in developing countries. Good responses also included a sustained assessment of the view on which the question was based. Some good responses used case studies to illustrate the effects of colonialism on developing countries. Answers that gained marks in the middle of the range often relied on a simple juxtaposition of different theories of development, with only implicit links to the impact of colonialism. There were a few low scoring answers that showed little understanding of the sociological debates about colonialism and development.

Section C

Question 5

(a) Good answers demonstrated a detailed understanding of how governments may seek to influence the media. Concepts that were used in high quality answers included censorship, media manipulation, cross-cutting elites, media repression, ideological state apparatus, and gate-keeping. Some responses showed a limited or inaccurate understanding of the relationship between governments and the media.

(b) High scoring answers provided a sustained analysis of the claim that the media shape views about what is socially acceptable behaviour. Marxist and pluralist theories of the media were often used

to provide a framework for addressing the issues raised by the question. The distinction between mass culture and high culture featured in some answers. Lower in the mark range, less use was made of relevant concepts and theories. Some answers gave too much attention to discussing different models of media effects (for example, the hypodermic-syringe model), without making the links to the question clear.

Question 6

(a) Higher in the mark range, answers provided several well-developed points about how the media may play a role in gender socialisation. Examples from relevant studies were often used to support key points. Good answers also often distinguished between the new media and the traditional media as different influences on gender identity. Low scoring answers lacked detail and often covered only one or two ways in which the media may influence gender socialisation.

(b) High quality answers examined several ways in which media content may reflect the demands of the audience. Good responses also included a sustained assessment of the view on which the question was based. Theories of the media (Marxist, pluralist, postmodernist) were often used to develop the assessment and some answers included useful references to relevant sociological studies of the factors influencing media content. A few candidates made intelligent use of the distinction between the traditional media and the new media in advancing the discussion. There were some low scoring answers that demonstrated little understanding of how media content may be influenced by audience demands.

Section D

Question 7

(a) Good answers offered several well-developed points about why levels of religious participation are higher among women than men in many societies. Concepts such as patriarchy, gender socialisation, family roles, spiritual compensation, and marginalisation often featured in high scoring responses. There were a few low scoring answers that showed a lack of understanding about what is meant by religious participation.

(b) Most candidates recognised that the question provided an opportunity to discuss feminist theories of religion. Answers that reached the top of the mark range offered a detailed assessment of the arguments for and against the view expressed in the question. Evidence from studies was often used to gauge whether religious organisations remain as patriarchal as ever. Some high quality answers distinguished between different religious organisations, viewing some as less patriarchal than others. Answers that merited the middle of the mark range often relied on a largely uncritical and generalised account of the feminist perspective on religious organisations. There were a few low scoring answers that made assertions about the power of men in religion today, without offering supporting evidence from the relevant sociological literature.

Question 8

(a) High scoring answers provided several well-developed points about the factors leading to the growth of sects. In developing their account, such candidates made useful distinctions between sects and other religious organisations. Specific types of sects were also mentioned in many of the high quality answers. Lower scoring responses often identified one or two features of sects, but failed to make clear points about the factors leading to the growth of this type of religious movement.

(b) Most candidates recognised that the question provided an opportunity to discuss the secularisation thesis. Good answers demonstrated a sound understanding of why the growth of new religious movements might indicate that secularisation is occurring. High scoring responses also included a sustained assessment of the view on which the question was based. The assessment often took the form of a juxtaposition of different explanations for the growth of new religious movements. The best answers often distinguished between specific types of new religious movements and explained the relevance of these distinctions for addressing the issues raised by the question. Some candidates made good use of postmodernist analyses of the links between new religious movements and secularisation to support the evaluation. Answers in the middle of the mark range tended to endorse the view expressed in the question, with little critical analysis or reflection on other possible perspectives regarding the significance of the growth of new religious movements.

There were a few low scoring answers that discussed secularisation in general, with no direct links to new religious movements.