SOCIOLOGY

> **Paper 9699/11**
> **Socialisation**

Key messages

- Candidates showed limited knowledge and understanding of questions focusing on socialisation and identity.
- Many responses did not use sociological material (concepts/theories/research evidence) to support the points made.
- Greater observance of the new examination's rubric is needed in **Section A**. Candidates need to adhere more closely to the requirements of some questions, notably **2(a)**, **3(a)** and **3(b)**.
- In **Section B** essay responses could be improved with greater application of supporting material to support points.
- Some candidates left insufficient time to focus on **Section B.**
- Essay evaluation was primarily delivered via juxtaposition.

General comments

The standard of responses overall was quite low. In particular, some candidates found questions which focused on cultural issues and the media challenging. For example, in **Section A** many candidates struggled with **Question 3(a)** and **3(b)**. Very few responses made appropriate links between the media as a socialising agent and an individual's identity. Answers tended to focus on media 'effects' or used common-sense.

In **Section A** Questions **2(a)** and **2(b)** required methodological knowledge. In both questions there was evidence of a fairly sound knowledge base although responses could be improved by closer adherence to the wording of each question, this was especially the case with **2(a)**. Centres should note that the marks for these questions are accumulated on a points-based approach as demonstrated by the mark scheme. In **Question 1** a number of candidates did not make a clear identification. Without an identification point no marks can be awarded. Candidates would benefit from practicing the skills required for all of the questions in **Section A**.

In **Section B** there was some evidence that candidates had not left enough time to complete the essays. **Question 4** was the most popular though slightly less well done with a notable tendency for the arguments presented to be unbalanced. The use of key methodological concepts in **Question 5** could be improved on. Validity, reliability and representativeness were often used interchangeably or incorrectly. This trend was also evident in **Questions 2(a)** and **2(b)**. Centres would be advised to concentrate on the differences between these concepts and to emphasise them as different aspects of research.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This question was answered well by the majority of candidates. In most cases, candidates correctly identified a type of qualitative interview and the majority could develop these. Nearly all candidates registered at least one or two marks from this question with the majority scoring three or four. Unstructured interviews featured heavily, usually with a satisfactory description of this type of interview. Semi-structured and group interviews were divided fairly equally though the descriptions of these were less convincing, especially group interviews where some developments did little more than state that multiple interviewees were present; this was not sufficient to score an additional mark. Centres should emphasise to candidates that they need to identify and describe in their response to **Question 1**.

Question 2

(a) Many candidates produced good answers to this question. The best responses clearly identified a way, explained it, selected relevant sociological material and then showed how the selected material supported the point. The ways most frequently identified were interviewer bias, an aspect of how data is collected, and also the presentation or interpretation of findings. A number of responses identified the Hawthorne effect as a way that values may lead to bias. This approach was not rewarded as the explanation is not focused on researcher values. There was a notable tendency for some candidates to see sociologists as corrupt individuals consciously acting in fraudulent ways to misrepresent findings. The least effective responses demonstrated some general knowledge of the topic area without clearly explaining the effects of researcher values on the research process. Such approaches were not rewarded. In many responses there was a tendency for candidates to repeat their identified point when showing how their selected material supported the way, hence losing the last available mark.

(b) This question was reasonably well answered by candidates. The most frequently identified limitations were low response rate and the lack of opportunity to expand on answers and give more detail. A number of candidates made the assumption that postal and email questionnaires are the same method. This is not the case. The first two marks were achieved by most candidates but development of why an identified point was a limitation was sometimes missing. Candidates might benefit from ensuring they complete their answer by stating that 'this is a limitation (or strength) because.'

Question 3

(a) This question seemed to be the most problematic for candidates with few offering valid responses. The majority wrote predominantly common-sense responses, or ones that contained sociological content focused on the impact of the media in terms of its 'effects'. Only rarely did candidates link their understanding of the influence of the media to an individual's identity. Those candidates that did use appropriate sociology referred to areas such as how media platforms contributed towards the social construction of an individual's identity, for example via gender, age, class or ethnicity. The few who adopted this approach very often only made one point. Hence, not many candidates achieved the higher levels for their response. Many candidates wrote long introductions without making concrete points. It is worth reiterating that this question does not require an essay response and that to achieve full marks candidates need only provide two clear and developed points.

(b) Although candidates produced slightly better responses in this question than 3a, the lack of appropriate knowledge also hampered answers. Better responses made direct reference to the media and showed how any given alternative agent was more influential than the media at shaping identity. The overwhelming majority of responses simply outlined the influence of an alternative agent and simply asserted its greater importance in shaping identity. Typically this involved describing the role played by a given agent with few if any links to the idea of individual identity or the media. This meant that the majority were not able to reach the higher level. Many responses also gave more than one argument in their answer. In these cases, only one was rewarded.

Section B

Question 4

By far the more popular of the two essays. Overall, the responses to this question were rather weak. Effective answers used a range of arguments to shape their essay. These included: Durkheim's study on suicide indicating cultural variation in behaviour; interactionist approaches represented in the form of Mead and Cooley although the significance of their ideas were invariably not drawn out effectively. Many candidates also cited cross-cultural variations in gender roles in support of the argument. The incidence of feral children was ubiquitous although very often the accounts given were descriptive and not developed in terms of the question. A notable feature of many responses was the inclusion of lengthy descriptions of the agents of socialisation with little application made to the question. Candidates tended to be more comfortable outlining arguments against the view; typically these included sociobiological and psychological accounts of human behaviour. However, the points made were often underdeveloped. Typically these arguments were delivered through juxtaposition, so centres may wish to work on the use of more focused evaluation. There was some evidence that candidates were leaving insufficient time to focus on this question.

Question 5

The most successful responses focused on the positivist approach and its scientific rationale. These candidates focused their attention directly on positivist methods and the key concepts underpinning them, using these to explore what counts as valid and reliable sociological knowledge. The strongest answers used research studies to good effect. In challenging the view, good responses mostly outlined the interpretivist approach although there was a great deal of juxtaposition. Most candidates did not address the question head on and invariably just described the advantages and disadvantages of certain quantitative methods. These types of answers were typically at a tangent to the debate with the points made either underdeveloped or lacking breadth. There was some evidence that candidates were leaving insufficient time to focus on this question.

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Paper 9699/12
Socialisation

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Key messages

- Candidates showed greater knowledge and understanding of methods of research than socialisation and identity.
- Many responses did not use sociological material (concepts/theories/research evidence) to support the points made.
- Deficit in knowledge of the meaning of some key concepts (femininity and cultural deprivation).
- Lack of knowledge that class is an important influence shaping individual identity.
- Greater observance of the new examination's rubric is needed in *Section A*. candidates need to adhere more closely to the requirements of some questions, notably **2(a)**, **3(a)** and **3(b)**.
- To achieve full marks in **Question 3(a)** candidates need only provide two clear and developed points.
- Some candidates left insufficient time to focus on *Section B*.
- Essay evaluation was primarily delivered via juxtaposition.

General comments

Candidates showed greater confidence when answering methodological questions and conversely found questions focused on cultural issues more challenging. For example, in *Section A* many candidates struggled with **Question 3(a)**. Very few candidates understood the meaning of cultural deprivation and of those that did, even fewer where able to make the link to the deviance element of the question. Similarly in **Question 1** a large proportion of candidates did not know the meaning of the term femininity. Essay **Question 4** addressed the issue of class and identity and, although it was answered better than 3a, there was still a lack basic knowledge of content appropriate to the question, especially in respect of sociological material supporting the view.

Questions 2(a) and **2(b)** require methodological knowledge. In both questions there was evidence of a fairly sound knowledge base, responses could be improved by closer adherence to the wording of each question. Centres should note that the marks for these questions are accumulated on a points-based approach as demonstrated by the mark scheme. Candidates would benefit from practicing the skills required for all of the questions in *Section A*. **Question 5** in *Section B* focused on the use of secondary data. Most responses made appropriate use of the key concepts of validity, reliability, representativeness and generalisability as tools to support their points. However, many essays used these terms interchangeably or incorrectly. The same could equally be said of **Question 2**. Centres would be advised to concentrate on the differences between these concepts and to emphasise them as different aspects of research.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

A significant number of candidates interpreted the question incorrectly and wrote responses identifying and describing different types of feminisms. Better responses used contingent, complicit and autonomous femininities and were able to develop these examples. Some candidates correctly described a type of femininity, but did not explicitly identify it in their response, so could gain no marks. Centres should emphasis to candidates that they need to identify and describe in their response to **Question 1**. Without a clear identification no marks can be awarded.

Question 2

(a)   Many candidates produced good answers to this question. The best responses clearly identified a reason, explained it, selected relevant sociological material and then showed how the selected material supported the point. The reasons most frequently given were to overcome the weaknesses of one method by the strengths of another and to check the validity/reliability of the approach taken. Many referred to gathering quantitative and qualitative data and also to mixing positivist and interpretivist approaches. Less effective responses tended to simply outline the advantages and disadvantages of a range of methods without addressing the question directly. This approach gained few if any marks. In many responses there was a tendency for candidates to simply repeat their identified point when showing how their selected material supported the reason, hence losing the last available mark. This reduced the number of candidates who received full marks for this question.

(b)   This question was well answered by many candidates. The most frequently identified strengths were avoidance of the Hawthorne effect and the ability to study groups that would not otherwise give access to a researcher. The most frequently identified limitations were that such research is potentially unethical, the difficulties of recording data, and potential dangers to the researcher. Some candidates did not understand the term 'covert' and wrote about participant observation in general. A number of responses confused overt and covert participant observation. The first two marks were achieved by most candidates, many did not go on to explain why an identified point was a strength or limitation. Candidates might benefit from ensuring they complete their answer by stating that 'this is a strength/limitation because.'

Question 3

(a)   To achieve full marks candidates need only provide two clear and developed points. If these points are made with good reference to concepts, theories and evidence and directed towards the question a response can achieve 10 marks. This question was problematic for most candidates with some not answering it and many doing so incorrectly. A significant number of candidates were not familiar with the concept of cultural deprivation in the context of deviant behaviour. Many referred to points such as marginalisation, peer group pressure or cultural relativity rather than discussing cultural deprivation. Those candidates that did use the appropriate sociology referred to Bourdieu/cultural capital and functionalist/new right ideas. Many only made one point in their response and hence, very few candidates achieved the higher levels for their response. Some candidates wrote long introductions without making concrete points. It is worth reiterating that this question does not require an essay response and that to achieve full marks candidates need only provide two clear and developed points.

(b)   Overall, this question produced better responses than 3a. Many referred to marginalisation, peer group pressure, sub-cultures and resistance. A number of responses offered some evidence in support of their point, such as Marxism and sub-cultural studies such as Hodgkinson, Hebdige and Cohen. Despite this most candidates only had partial success in this question because they were unfamiliar with the term cultural deprivation. Many responses also gave more than one argument in their answer. In these cases, only one was rewarded.

Section B

Question 4

The quality of responses to this question was mixed with many candidates producing unbalanced accounts. Many answers described social class inequalities rather than focusing on social class identities and juxtaposed this with descriptions of gender/age/ethnic identities. Most responses were more comfortable providing evidence against the view than in support of it. Some good responses showed awareness of the arguments put forward by Marxists that class remains the dominant factor, i.e. consumption patterns are based on class position. Others referred to Savage's point that despite change there are still social class differences. The best answers understood that it is difficult to come to any conclusion about whether social class largely shapes identity because classes are no longer as distinctive as they once were. The postmodernist perspective and concepts such as blurring and fragmentation and increased choice were cited in support of this argument. Many argued that factors other than class are far more important in shaping identity – gender ethnicity and age being frequently cited. A few insightful responses argued that all factors including class are interrelated. There was some evidence that candidates were leaving insufficient time to focus on this question.

Question 5

Overall, the standard of responses to this question was marginally better than with **Question 4**. Most candidates were able to demonstrate knowledge of the different forms of secondary data and their connection to theoretical perspectives. Good responses referred to comparative analysis, the ability to identify patterns and trends, and the fact that they may be the only sources available. The most successful approaches often divided their discussion into quantitative and qualitative secondary data and used the methodological concepts of validity, reliability, representativeness and generalisability to underpin their points and form a basis for evaluation. However, many responses either lacked these concepts or used them incorrectly/interchangeably. Weak responses tended to lack detailed knowledge of secondary data and just described some examples. Many interpreted the question as an invitation to compare and contrast secondary data with primary data, often writing a great deal about primary methods but with minimal evaluation. There was some evidence that candidates were leaving insufficient time to focus on this question.

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Key messages

- Candidates showed limited knowledge and understanding of questions focusing on socialisation and identity.
- Many responses did not use sociological material (concepts/theories/research evidence) to support the points made.
- Greater observance of the new examination's rubric is needed in **Section A**. Candidates need to adhere more closely to the requirements of some questions, notably **2(a)**, **3(a)** and **3(b)**.
- In **Section B** essay responses could be improved with greater application of supporting material to support points.
- Some candidates left insufficient time to focus on **Section B.**
- Essay evaluation was primarily delivered via juxtaposition.

General comments

The standard of responses overall was quite low. In particular, some candidates found questions which focused on cultural issues and the media challenging. For example, in **Section A** many candidates struggled with **Question 3(a)** and **3(b)**. Very few responses made appropriate links between the media as a socialising agent and an individual's identity. Answers tended to focus on media 'effects' or used common-sense.

In **Section A** Questions **2(a)** and **2(b)** required methodological knowledge. In both questions there was evidence of a fairly sound knowledge base although responses could be improved by closer adherence to the wording of each question, this was especially the case with **2(a)**. Centres should note that the marks for these questions are accumulated on a points-based approach as demonstrated by the mark scheme. In **Question 1** a number of candidates did not make a clear identification. Without an identification point no marks can be awarded. Candidates would benefit from practicing the skills required for all of the questions in **Section A**.

In **Section B** there was some evidence that candidates had not left enough time to complete the essays. **Question 4** was the most popular though slightly less well done with a notable tendency for the arguments presented to be unbalanced. The use of key methodological concepts in **Question 5** could be improved on. Validity, reliability and representativeness were often used interchangeably or incorrectly. This trend was also evident in **Questions 2(a)** and **2(b)**. Centres would be advised to concentrate on the differences between these concepts and to emphasise them as different aspects of research.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This question was answered well by the majority of candidates. In most cases, candidates correctly identified a type of qualitative interview and the majority could develop these. Nearly all candidates registered at least one or two marks from this question with the majority scoring three or four. Unstructured interviews featured heavily, usually with a satisfactory description of this type of interview. Semi-structured and group interviews were divided fairly equally though the descriptions of these were less convincing, especially group interviews where some developments did little more than state that multiple interviewees were present; this was not sufficient to score an additional mark. Centres should emphasise to candidates that they need to identify and describe in their response to **Question 1**.

Question 2

(a)   Many candidates produced good answers to this question. The best responses clearly identified a way, explained it, selected relevant sociological material and then showed how the selected material supported the point. The ways most frequently identified were interviewer bias, an aspect of how data is collected, and also the presentation or interpretation of findings. A number of responses identified the Hawthorne effect as a way that values may lead to bias. This approach was not rewarded as the explanation is not focused on researcher values. There was a notable tendency for some candidates to see sociologists as corrupt individuals consciously acting in fraudulent ways to misrepresent findings. The least effective responses demonstrated some general knowledge of the topic area without clearly explaining the effects of researcher values on the research process. Such approaches were not rewarded. In many responses there was a tendency for candidates to repeat their identified point when showing how their selected material supported the way, hence losing the last available mark.

(b)   This question was reasonably well answered by candidates. The most frequently identified limitations were low response rate and the lack of opportunity to expand on answers and give more detail. A number of candidates made the assumption that postal and email questionnaires are the same method. This is not the case. The first two marks were achieved by most candidates but development of why an identified point was a limitation was sometimes missing. Candidates might benefit from ensuring they complete their answer by stating that 'this is a limitation (or strength) because.'

Question 3

(a)   This question seemed to be the most problematic for candidates with few offering valid responses. The majority wrote predominantly common-sense responses, or ones that contained sociological content focused on the impact of the media in terms of its 'effects'. Only rarely did candidates link their understanding of the influence of the media to an individual's identity. Those candidates that did use appropriate sociology referred to areas such as how media platforms contributed towards the social construction of an individual's identity, for example via gender, age, class or ethnicity. The few who adopted this approach very often only made one point. Hence, not many candidates achieved the higher levels for their response. Many candidates wrote long introductions without making concrete points. It is worth reiterating that this question does not require an essay response and that to achieve full marks candidates need only provide two clear and developed points.

(b)   Although candidates produced slightly better responses in this question than 3a, the lack of appropriate knowledge also hampered answers. Better responses made direct reference to the media and showed how any given alternative agent was more influential than the media at shaping identity. The overwhelming majority of responses simply outlined the influence of an alternative agent and simply asserted its greater importance in shaping identity. Typically this involved describing the role played by a given agent with few if any links to the idea of individual identity or the media. This meant that the majority were not able to reach the higher level. Many responses also gave more than one argument in their answer. In these cases, only one was rewarded.

Section B

Question 4

By far the more popular of the two essays. Overall, the responses to this question were rather weak. Effective answers used a range of arguments to shape their essay. These included: Durkheim's study on suicide indicating cultural variation in behaviour; interactionist approaches represented in the form of Mead and Cooley although the significance of their ideas were invariably not drawn out effectively. Many candidates also cited cross-cultural variations in gender roles in support of the argument. The incidence of feral children was ubiquitous although very often the accounts given were descriptive and not developed in terms of the question. A notable feature of many responses was the inclusion of lengthy descriptions of the agents of socialisation with little application made to the question. Candidates tended to be more comfortable outlining arguments against the view; typically these included sociobiological and psychological accounts of human behaviour. However, the points made were often underdeveloped. Typically these arguments were delivered through juxtaposition, so centres may wish to work on the use of more focused evaluation. There was some evidence that candidates were leaving insufficient time to focus on this question.

Question 5

The most successful responses focused on the positivist approach and its scientific rationale. These candidates focused their attention directly on positivist methods and the key concepts underpinning them, using these to explore what counts as valid and reliable sociological knowledge. The strongest answers used research studies to good effect. In challenging the view, good responses mostly outlined the interpretivist approach although there was a great deal of juxtaposition. Most candidates did not address the question head on and invariably just described the advantages and disadvantages of certain quantitative methods. These types of answers were typically at a tangent to the debate with the points made either underdeveloped or lacking breadth. There was some evidence that candidates were leaving insufficient time to focus on this question.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 9699/21
The Family

Key messages

- Good responses applied relevant sociological theories, concepts and research to demonstrate sociological knowledge and understanding.
- Candidates should ensure essay responses include competing views, looking at different sides of the issue in the question and apply relevant sociological material. Less successful responses tended to be descriptive and/or one sided.
- Candidates should familiarise themselves with question structure and ensure they understand the requirements of the questions prior to the examination. The mark schemes can be used as teaching and learning tools, particularly for **2(b)**.
- Candidates should ensure they focus their responses on the family rather than wider society, as this is the focus of the unit.
- Schools should support candidates where possible with access to laptops/computers to type their exam responses, where handwriting is a concern.

General comments

In general, it appears that candidates/teachers have to some extent, adapted reasonably well to the new question paper format. Most candidates provided a response to all questions set. However, it is evident that others may not have been fully prepared in understanding the requirements of the question (*see comments for individual questions below*). Candidates in general appeared to demonstrate a reasonable understanding of New Right and feminist ideas, whilst less successful candidates often demonstrated a more basic level of sociological knowledge and understanding.

The more successful candidates produced responses that met the requirements of the question and applied relevant sociological material to support their responses. Candidate responses that achieved lower marks, tended to produce descriptive responses which lacked application of sociological material in providing evidence of analysis and assessment. They often relied more on common sense and general knowledge. Some responses did not answer the question set.

Most candidates were able to name relevant sociological concepts; less successful candidates did not apply these to develop their response, often simply stating them or defining/describing them rather than applying them in a way that engages with the question. This was particularly noticeable within essay responses. Any rubric errors tended to occur within **Questions 2(a)** and **3(b)**, whereby candidates provided more points than were required.

In general, candidates need to be more aware of their use of time reflecting the marks available. For example, in **Question 1** a lengthy introduction and conclusion are not necessary; this used up valuable time that could be utilised on other more challenging questions e.g. several candidates appeared to run out of time providing essay responses, these were sometimes cut prematurely short. The majority of candidates answered the questions in order; some perhaps could have benefitted from answering the essay first.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

The majority of candidates answered all questions in *Section A*. However, questions that candidates did occasionally fail to provide any response to, were **2(b)** and **3(b)**.

Question 1

The majority of candidates were able to identify at least one relevant way the family benefits society, with the more successful candidates identifying and explaining two relevant ways. Most responses tended to focus on the idea of '*primary socialisation/teaches children the common norms and values of society*', and '*economically/provides the future workforce* or, *spends money when providing for the family's needs*'. Occasionally, candidates focused their responses on the application of Marxist ideas e.g. '*acts as an ISA/provides obedient workforce to perpetuate capitalism*'.

Less successful candidates either demonstrated repetition and therefore at most achieved half the marks available, or occasionally did not answer the question, providing ways *society benefits the family* e.g. provides welfare or education. Occasionally candidates provided more than the two responses required. Unfortunately, there were a few examples of candidates writing far too much, with responses including introductions and conclusions, which is not required.

Note: *Candidates should be encouraged to structure their **Question 1** responses as two bullet points or numbered 1/2, avoiding introductions and unnecessarily lengthy answers. Also provide just the two responses required.*

Question 2

(a)   Most candidates were able to provide at least one appropriate way and relevant explanation, with the majority of those able to provide two. There were some very good answers that achieved full marks. In the main, candidates appeared to focus responses on the impact of under-socialisation/dysfunction, and the burden of welfare provision. The more successful responses clearly demonstrated two ways lone parent families can have a negative impact on society, supported with the application of appropriate sociological material, namely Murray, welfare dependency, and underclass.

Less successful candidates whilst able to provide two relevant reasons, did not apply sociological material, therefore at most were awarded half the marks available to them. To improve, candidates need to apply appropriate sociological material e.g. concepts, studies, relevant policies etc. and apply these in supporting the original point made.

Too often, candidates wasted valuable time providing lengthy introductions and definitions of lone-parent families, or why lone-parent families exist, as well as provided more than the two reasons required. There were a few candidates that provided an assessment, by discussing how lone parent families can have a positive impact. All of these issues raised are not required; candidates should be encouraged to get straight into the response, and only give the two points requested.

Poor/incorrect responses focused on how lone parent families can have a negative impact upon the individual, or why functionalists/the New Right favour the nuclear family, which is not what the question asked of candidates.

Note: *Candidates should be encouraged to structure responses as two separate paragraphs identified as 'The first…. The second….' for clarity and only provide the two points required.*

(b)   Generally speaking, candidates did not perform particularly well on this question. The most successful responses provided an identifiable limitation and explained why it was a limitation. Rarely did responses demonstrate *why* the New Right have this as a limitation. Weaker responses demonstrated minimal understanding of the limitations of New Right views of the family. Quite often, the limitation was left implicit and not clearly identifiable or explained. Some candidates confused the New Right with post-modernism, discussed the limitations of single parent families, or asserted that New Right views have destroyed the family. These responses were not awarded marks.

Note: *Candidates may benefit from using the mark schemes to create a table of strengths and limitations of the key theoretical stances in relation to the family during their studies, to aid their learning and revision.*

Question 3

(a)   In the main, candidates were able to discuss how gender is the most important factor affecting the experiences of children in the family, and tended to discuss the ideas of gender socialisation and Oakley's ideas of canalisation, and/or imitation of parents in roles associated with their gender. Occasionally there were some culturally specific examples e.g. female genital mutilation, or being married off at a young age. The more successful candidates, developed their responses with the application of relevant sociological material to support their points. However, in the main, candidates often relied on description or common sense observations, giving examples of the colours boys/girls wear or the toys they play with, thus limiting the marks awarded to them.

Occasionally, responses focused purely on gender in the family, through a discussion of the roles carried out by men and women, and occasional responses discussed gender in wider society e.g. the workplace, completely neglecting to provide any discussion of the experiences of children.

Note: *a very small number of candidates wasted time by providing an unnecessary evaluation of the claim; this is not a requirement of the question (they have the opportunity to do this in 3b). Furthermore, lengthy introductions and conclusions are unnecessary and candidates should be discouraged from doing this on this question.*

(b)   Most candidates were able to provide a response to this question. The majority of successful responses discussed social class in a Marxist context as more important, whilst other successful responses discussed the declining influence of gender within a post-modernist context. A small number of candidates continued to discuss how gender is the most important factor (i.e. the response became a 3a response) and did not gain marks for their responses.

Note: *a minority of candidates wasted time by providing more than one argument against the claim, using up time that could be useful elsewhere.*

Section B

All candidates provided a response to either **Question 4** or **5** in *Section B*.

Question 4

Candidates produced a mixed response to this question. The more successful responses were clearly focused on an assessment of the different feminist perspectives on equality in the family, largely through radical and Marxist feminism versus liberal feminism. They successfully provided some evaluation/assessment of feminist perspectives on the family.

Where difference and black feminism was cited, this tended to lack a focus on the family. A minority of responses used functionalism to assess radical and Marxist feminist points. However, only a few responses explicitly engaged in an evaluation of these feminist approaches, often relying on juxtaposition of alternative or opposing viewpoints.

Less successful responses were those that did not recognise the different branches of feminism, putting them under the umbrella of 'feminism', thus limiting AO1 and to some extent AO2 awarding. Alternatively, some candidates knew the different branches of feminism but simply presented their ideas, some presented feminist viewpoints as a list, stating what the different feminisms thought about the family, not evaluating them against each other to create an assessment, thus affecting AO3 awarding.

Weaker responses tended to rely on description rather than a clear engagement of material, whilst further weaker responses relied on common-sense, and/or discussed feminism in the context of society rather than the family e.g. work, the internet.

Note: *candidates need to be more aware of the importance of assessment/evaluation (AO3) within essays, given its weighting in the mark scheme.*

Question 5

This question was the more popular option, but not overwhelmingly so. Most candidates demonstrated a reasonable knowledge and understanding of family diversity, however were not necessarily able to apply this to directly answer the question. It often felt that candidates were reciting set answers to a different question, for example whether there is an ideal type of family, rather than the actual exam question set.

Stronger candidates discussed Rapoports and reasons for the growth in diversity. Candidates often simply stated and described different family types rather than explicitly engaged with the question.

There were examples of candidates who did not focus their response on 'today' as per the question, instead discussing pre-industrial society. Many used Parsons and the debate over whether the nuclear family existed in pre-industrial society or not, with assessment provided through Murdoch, with little or no contemporary evidence applied. Further weak responses, were those that only gave one side of the discussion, tending to support the view that there is no dominant family type today due to diversity, or vice-versa, failing to provide the counter argument.

Note: *candidates need to be more aware of the importance of assessment/evaluation (AO3) within essays, given its weighting in the mark scheme.*

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 9699/22
The Family

Key messages

* Good responses applied relevant sociological theories, concepts and research to demonstrate sociological knowledge and understanding.
* Candidates should ensure essay responses include competing views, looking at different sides of the issue in the question and apply relevant sociological material. Less successful responses tended to be descriptive and/or one sided.
* Candidates should familiarise themselves with question structure and ensure they understand the requirements of the questions prior to the examination. The mark schemes can be used as teaching and learning tools, particularly for **2(b)**.
* Candidates should ensure they focus responses on the family rather than wider society, as this is the focus of the unit.
* Schools should support candidates where possible with access to laptops/computers to type their exam responses, where handwriting is a concern.

General comments

In general, it appears that candidates/teachers to some extent have adapted reasonably well to the new question paper format. Most candidates provided a response to all of the questions set. However, it is evident that others may not have been fully prepared in understanding the requirements of the question (*see comments for individual questions below*). Candidates in general appeared to demonstrate a reasonable grasp of Marxism and functionalism, however wider sociological knowledge and understanding appears rather limited, particularly of post-modernism, often demonstrating confusion. Less successful candidates often demonstrated a more basic level of sociological knowledge and understanding.

The more successful candidates produced responses that met the requirements of the question and applied relevant sociological material to support their responses. Candidate responses that achieved lower marks tended to be descriptive and lacked application of sociological material in providing evidence of analysis and assessment. They often relying more on common sense and general knowledge. Some responses did not answer the question set.

Most candidates were able to name relevant sociological concepts; less successful candidates did not apply these to develop their response, often simply stating them or defining/describing them rather than applying them in a way that engages the question. This was particularly noticeable within essay responses. Any rubric errors tended to occur within **Questions 2a** and **3b**, whereby candidates provided more points than were required.

In general, candidates need to be more aware of their use of time reflecting the marks available. For example, in **Question 1** a lengthy introduction and conclusion are not necessary; this uses up valuable time that could be utilised on other more challenging questions e.g. several candidates appeared to run out of time providing essay responses, these were sometimes cut prematurely short. The majority of candidates answered the questions in order; some perhaps could have benefitted from answering the essay first.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

The majority of candidates answered all questions in *Section A*. However, questions that candidates did occasionally fail to provide any response at all, were **2(b)** and **3(b)**.

Question 1

More successful candidates were able to clearly identify two ways fatherhood has changed with relevant explanations. Most responses tended to focus on the idea of '*new man*', '*taking on the expressive role*', or work/life balance, with explanations focused clearly on fatherhood. Less successful candidates did not focus their explanations on fatherhood (as per the question), rather were general to men in the household/domestic chores and therefore did not achieve the additional mark for explanation.

Occasionally candidates provided more than the two responses required and some that provided unnecessary introductions and/or definitions of fatherhood. Occasionally, responses discussed motherhood rather than fatherhood, thus not answering the question. There were also occasional responses in which the second way provided was a repetition of the first, with wording slightly altered. Therefore, these candidates at most achieved half the marks available.

Note: *Candidates should be encouraged to structure their **Question 1** responses as two bullet points or numbered 1/2, avoiding introductions and unnecessarily lengthy answers. Also provide just the two responses required.*

Question 2

(a)   All candidates were able to provide at least one appropriate reason and relevant explanation, with the majority able to provide two. There were some very good answers that achieved full marks. In the main, candidates appeared to focus responses on the impact of secularisation and/or greater freedom of choice. More successful responses clearly demonstrated reasons for the growth in family diversity, supported with the application of appropriate sociological material. Less successful candidates whilst able to provide two relevant reasons, did not apply sociological material, therefore at most were awarded half the marks available to them. To improve, candidates need to apply appropriate sociological material e.g. concepts, studies, relevant policies etc. and apply these in support of the original point made.

A small number of candidates appeared not to understand diversity, with their responses discussing the shift from extended to nuclear family (Parson's Fit Thesis).

Too often, candidates wasted their time providing lengthy introductions and definitions of family diversity, and/or provided more than the two reasons required. All of these issues raised are not required; candidates should be encouraged to get straight into the response, and only give the two points requested. A small number of candidates gave lengthy critiques of family diversity. Again, this was not a requirement of the question,

Note: *Candidates should be encouraged to structure responses as two separate paragraphs identified as 'The first…. The second….' for clarity and <u>only provide</u> the two points required.*

(b)   Generally speaking, candidates did not perform well on this question, demonstrating minimal knowledge of the limitations of post-modernist views of the family. However, there were examples of candidates showing some good comprehension, with responses largely focused on how post-modernists exaggerate the extent of diversity, as well as how their views are limited to predominantly western societies.

Where candidates tended to go wrong, was to critique family diversity e.g. a New Right critique of single parent families, or to critique issues of increased choice. There were instances of candidates confusing post-modernism with functionalism, New Right, or feminism. Other weak responses focused on what post-modernists think, rather than on limitations of their views, or discussed post-modernism within the context of wider society rather than focussing on the family.

Note: *Candidates may benefit from using the mark schemes to create a table of strengths and limitations of the key theoretical stances in relation to the family during their studies, to aid their learning and revision.*

Question 3

(a) In the main, candidates were able to recognise ideological control as a Marxist or feminist idea, and tended to discuss the ideas of Althusser and the family as an ISA. Some candidates had the knowledge and understanding to extend this to discuss the notion of creating false class consciousness, or how the family perpetuates capitalism by buying in to false needs which fuels consumerism. Those candidates that understood it in feminist terms, discussed the family's role in perpetuating patriarchy through radical feminism. Less successful candidates, whilst understanding the question in the context of Marxism, did not focus their responses on ideological control, rather just described general roles of the family according to Marxists.

However, there were candidates that did not fully comprehend the term, and simply described general socialisation or functions of the family e.g. stabilisation of adult personalities. Furthermore, there were candidates that gave unnecessary definitions of the family and occasionally a candidate would discuss within the context of wider society, rather than the family as required.

Note: *a very small number of candidates wasted time by providing an unnecessary evaluation of the claim; this is not a requirement of the question (they have the opportunity to do this in 3b). Furthermore, lengthy introductions and conclusions are unnecessary and candidates should be discouraged from doing this on this question.*

(b) Most candidates were able to provide a response to this question, with the majority of successful responses discussing functionalism and functions of the family. Some responses critiqued Marxism and the idea of ideological control as being too deterministic. Less successful responses, either did not provide relevant sociological material to support their point, largely relying on description or common sense.

Note: *a small number of candidates wasted time by providing more than one argument against the claim, using up time that could be useful elsewhere.*

Section B

All candidates provided a response to either **Question 4** or **5** in *Section B*.

Question 4

Slightly more candidates answered **Question 4** than **Question 5**, with those candidates who answered **Question 4** tending to demonstrate more of a sociological knowledge and understanding throughout *Section A* than those who opted for **Question 5**.

The more successful responses were clearly focused on an assessment of the view conjugal roles continue to be unequal. They demonstrated good application of relevant sociological material in supporting key points e.g. women continue to undertake the bulk of domestic labour, that men continue to dominate the power sharing etc. predominantly through radical and Marxist feminism, whilst then providing counter argument to suggest that conjugal roles are more evenly shared, with varying degrees of detail and development. This tended to focus on liberal feminism and the more dated work of Young and Willmott. Occasionally a candidate would expand this to include more post-modernist arguments about choice and negotiated relationships.

However, few responses explicitly engaged in an evaluation of the question, often relying on juxtaposition of alternative or opposing viewpoints. Weaker response tended to simply present viewpoints or relied on description rather than a clear engagement of material, whilst a few relied on common-sense or anecdotal evidence. Occasionally, candidates only addressed one side of the debate, either agreeing that conjugal roles continue to be unequal, **or** that they do not, thus hugely limiting the AO marks that the response can be awarded. The tendency to simply present material limited the marks that candidates could be awarded, they earn some AO2 acknowledgement, but not AO1 or AO3.

Note: *candidates need to be more aware of the importance of assessment/evaluation (AO3) within essays, given its weighting in the mark scheme.*

Question 5

The majority of candidates who answered this question, relied on common sense observations or anecdotal evidence. Only a very small minority discussed sociological concepts/theorists e.g. dual earner families, sandwich/pivot generation. Stronger responses discussed whether the position of grandparents had improved or not. Discussing the impact of having both parents working was the popular approach taken in support, however there was an overwhelming tendency to just discuss grandparents in general terms of what they can do e.g. pass on culture, buy birthday presents etc.

A small number of candidates discussed the elderly in society rather than grandparents in the family, thus not providing a focus on the question set. Some responses focussed on how things used to be in pre-industrial times, with no notion of how things have changed to bring it back to the context of the question. Further weaker responses, were those that only gave one side of the discussion.

Note: *candidates need to be more aware of the importance of assessment/evaluation (AO3) within essays, given its weighting in the mark scheme.*

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 9699/23
The Family

Key messages

- Good responses applied relevant sociological theories, concepts and research to demonstrate sociological knowledge and understanding.
- Candidates should ensure essay responses include competing views, looking at different sides of the issue in the question and apply relevant sociological material. Less successful responses tended to be descriptive and/or one sided.
- Candidates should familiarise themselves with question structure and ensure they understand the requirements of the questions prior to the examination. The mark schemes can be used as teaching and learning tools, particularly for 2b.
- Candidates should ensure they focus their responses on the family rather than wider society, as this is the focus of the unit.
- Schools should support candidates where possible with access to laptops/computers to type their exam responses, where handwriting is a concern.

General comments

In general, it appears that candidates/teachers have to some extent, adapted reasonably well to the new question paper format. Most candidates provided a response to all questions set. However, it is evident that others may not have been fully prepared in understanding the requirements of the question (*see comments for individual questions below*). Candidates in general appeared to demonstrate a reasonable understanding of New Right and feminist ideas, whilst less successful candidates often demonstrated a more basic level of sociological knowledge and understanding.

The more successful candidates produced responses that met the requirements of the question and applied relevant sociological material to support their responses. Candidate responses that achieved lower marks, tended to produce descriptive responses which lacked application of sociological material in providing evidence of analysis and assessment. They often relied more on common sense and general knowledge. Some responses did not answer the question set.

Most candidates were able to name relevant sociological concepts; less successful candidates did not apply these to develop their response, often simply stating them or defining/describing them rather than applying them in a way that engages with the question. This was particularly noticeable within essay responses. Any rubric errors tended to occur within **Questions 2a** and **3b**, whereby candidates provided more points than were required.

In general, candidates need to be more aware of their use of time reflecting the marks available. For example, in **Question 1** a lengthy introduction and conclusion are not necessary; this used up valuable time that could be utilised on other more challenging questions e.g. several candidates appeared to run out of time providing essay responses, these were sometimes cut prematurely short. The majority of candidates answered the questions in order; some perhaps could have benefitted from answering the essay first.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

The majority of candidates answered all questions in *Section A*. However, questions that candidates did occasionally fail to provide any response to, were 2b and 3b.

Question 1

The majority of candidates were able to identify at least one relevant way the family benefits society, with the more successful candidates identifying and explaining two relevant ways. Most responses tended to focus on the idea of '*primary socialisation/teaches children the common norms and values of society*', and '*economically/provides the future workforce* or, *spends money when providing for the family's needs*'. Occasionally, candidates focused their responses on the application of Marxist ideas e.g. '*acts as an ISA/provides obedient workforce to perpetuate capitalism*'.

Less successful candidates either demonstrated repetition and therefore at most achieved half the marks available, or occasionally did not answer the question, providing ways *society benefits the family* e.g. provides welfare or education. Occasionally candidates provided more than the two responses required. Unfortunately, there were a few examples of candidates writing far too much, with responses including introductions and conclusions, which is not required.

Note: *Candidates should be encouraged to structure their* **Question 1** *responses as two bullet points or numbered 1/2, avoiding introductions and unnecessarily lengthy answers. Also provide just the two responses required.*

Question 2

(a) Most candidates were able to provide at least one appropriate way and relevant explanation, with the majority of those able to provide two. There were some very good answers that achieved full marks. In the main, candidates appeared to focus responses on the impact of under-socialisation/dysfunction, and the burden of welfare provision. The more successful responses clearly demonstrated two ways lone parent families can have a negative impact on society, supported with the application of appropriate sociological material, namely Murray, welfare dependency, and underclass.

Less successful candidates whilst able to provide two relevant reasons, did not apply sociological material, therefore at most were awarded half the marks available to them. To improve, candidates need to apply appropriate sociological material e.g. concepts, studies, relevant policies etc. and apply these in supporting the original point made.

Too often, candidates wasted valuable time providing lengthy introductions and definitions of lone-parent families, or why lone-parent families exist, as well as provided more than the two reasons required. There were a few candidates that provided an assessment, by discussing how lone parent families can have a positive impact. All of these issues raised are not required; candidates should be encouraged to get straight into the response, and only give the two points requested.

Poor/incorrect responses focused on how lone parent families can have a negative impact upon the individual, or why functionalists/the New Right favour the nuclear family, which is not what the question asked of candidates.

Note: *Candidates should be encouraged to structure responses as two separate paragraphs identified as 'The first…. The second….' for clarity and only provide the two points required.*

(b) Generally speaking, candidates did not perform particularly well on this question. The most successful responses provided an identifiable limitation and explained why it was a limitation. Rarely did responses demonstrate *why* the New Right have this as a limitation. Weaker responses demonstrated minimal understanding of the limitations of New Right views of the family. Quite often, the limitation was left implicit and not clearly identifiable or explained. Some candidates confused the New Right with post-modernism, discussed the limitations of single parent families, or asserted that New Right views have destroyed the family. These responses were not awarded marks.

Note: *Candidates may benefit from using the mark schemes to create a table of strengths and limitations of the key theoretical stances in relation to the family during their studies, to aid their learning and revision.*

Question 3

(a) In the main, candidates were able to discuss how gender is the most important factor affecting the experiences of children in the family, and tended to discuss the ideas of gender socialisation and Oakley's ideas of canalisation, and/or imitation of parents in roles associated with their gender. Occasionally there were some culturally specific examples e.g. female genital mutilation, or being married off at a young age. The more successful candidates, developed their responses with the application of relevant sociological material to support their points. However, in the main, candidates often relied on description or common sense observations, giving examples of the colours boys/girls wear or the toys they play with, thus limiting the marks awarded to them.

Occasionally, responses focused purely on gender in the family, through a discussion of the roles carried out by men and women, and occasional responses discussed gender in wider society e.g. the workplace, completely neglecting to provide any discussion of the experiences of children.

Note: *a very small number of candidates wasted time by providing an unnecessary evaluation of the claim; this is not a requirement of the question (they have the opportunity to do this in 3b). Furthermore, lengthy introductions and conclusions are unnecessary and candidates should be discouraged from doing this on this question.*

(b) Most candidates were able to provide a response to this question. The majority of successful responses discussed social class in a Marxist context as more important, whilst other successful responses discussed the declining influence of gender within a post-modernist context. A small number of candidates continued to discuss how gender is the most important factor (i.e. the response became a 3a response) and did not gain marks for their responses.

Note: *a minority of candidates wasted time by providing more than one argument against the claim, using up time that could be useful elsewhere.*

Section B

All candidates provided a response to either **Question 4** or **5** in *Section B*.

Question 4

Candidates produced a mixed response to this question. The more successful responses were clearly focused on an assessment of the different feminist perspectives on equality in the family, largely through radical and Marxist feminism versus liberal feminism. They successfully provided some evaluation/assessment of feminist perspectives on the family.

Where difference and black feminism was cited, this tended to lack a focus on the family. A minority of responses used functionalism to assess radical and Marxist feminist points. However, only a few responses explicitly engaged in an evaluation of these feminist approaches, often relying on juxtaposition of alternative or opposing viewpoints.

Less successful responses were those that did not recognise the different branches of feminism, putting them under the umbrella of 'feminism', thus limiting AO1 and to some extent AO2 awarding. Alternatively, some candidates knew the different branches of feminism but simply presented their ideas, some presented feminist viewpoints as a list, stating what the different feminisms thought about the family, not evaluating them against each other to create an assessment, thus affecting AO3 awarding.

Weaker responses tended to rely on description rather than a clear engagement of material, whilst further weaker responses relied on common-sense, and/or discussed feminism in the context of society rather than the family e.g. work, the internet.

Note: *candidates need to be more aware of the importance of assessment/evaluation (AO3) within essays, given its weighting in the mark scheme.*

Question 5

This question was the more popular option, but not overwhelmingly so. Most candidates demonstrated a reasonable knowledge and understanding of family diversity, however were not necessarily able to apply this to directly answer the question. It often felt that candidates were reciting set answers to a different question, for example whether there is an ideal type of family, rather than the actual exam question set.

Stronger candidates discussed Rapoports and reasons for the growth in diversity. Candidates often simply stated and described different family types rather than explicitly engaged with the question.

There were examples of candidates who did not focus their response on 'today' as per the question, instead discussing pre-industrial society. Many used Parsons and the debate over whether the nuclear family existed in pre-industrial society or not, with assessment provided through Murdoch, with little or no contemporary evidence applied. Further weak responses, were those that only gave one side of the discussion, tending to support the view that there is no dominant family type today due to diversity, or vice-versa, failing to provide the counter argument.

Note: *candidates need to be more aware of the importance of assessment/evaluation (AO3) within essays, given its weighting in the mark scheme.*

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 9699/31
Education

Key messages

* Response time should be divided between the questions according to the marks allocated for each.
* Candidates should read each question carefully and respond to the command words.
* Responses should be fully explained and supported where required.

General comments

Candidates should aim to show detailed and accurate sociological knowledge. To gain high marks they must use relevant sociological evidence in the form of studies, theories, and concepts. Responses should be related to the question asked and their relevance clearly demonstrated.

In **Question 3** candidates need to use evaluation in their responses and argue against a given statement. They do not need to give any arguments supporting it. Arguments against can include criticisms of the logic or the evidence on which it is based, as well as presenting alternative points of view.

In **Question 4** candidates should give a balanced essay which will include arguments from both sides equally. The strongest responses evaluated each argument, looking critically at the evidence used on both sides, whereas less successful responses often just presented two opposing arguments. Evaluating a view means 'weighing it up'. The strongest responses finished with a conclusion weighing up the evidence included within the response.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The most common ways that candidates referred to were not having the language of the school as one's first language or being part of a minority having to learn through an ethnocentric curriculum. The pupil's culture being viewed in a racist way was also an acceptable point. To gain the second mark students had to describe how it influenced their experience of education (e.g. being bullied by other pupils, labelled negatively by the teacher, or forming a subculture in the school). Some candidates referred to positive experiences (e.g. success following the family's emphasis on educational achievement, or even the advantages of being part of the dominant culture).

Question 2

Most candidates could identify some aspect of middle-class culture that benefitted pupils, the most successful were able to support this with sociological material. Some candidates used Bernstein's linguistic codes well, explaining *how* the elaborated code can help towards educational success. Bourdieu's work was used successfully by some candidates, and a few candidates drew on more recent empirical studies such as Sullivan's linking of home experiences to school attainment.

Question 3

There was widespread awareness of how both boys and girls can each face both advantages and disadvantages in education today. Common points included gender socialisation, cultures of femininity and masculinity, teacher expectations and interaction, the gendered curriculum and the impact of the job market. Candidates who referred to countries which still had traditional values or rural economies that disadvantaged

girls' access to education were rewarded. Candidates who simply stated that things were unequal in the past, or just agreed with the point of view in the question were less successful. The strongest responses were those who could back up their points with specific sociological studies, it is encouraging to see awareness of more recent ones.

Question 4

Most candidates either supported the view with functionalist theories of how meritocracy, role allocation and social order maintain a healthy economic system or Marxist theories of how education maintains an exploitative capitalist system. A few focused on social democratic theories. An opposite point of view usually presented the alternative theoretical perspective. Some also pointed out failures in the meritocratic system, in terms of unequal opportunity by class ethnicity or gender or limits to the imposition of capitalist control in terms of resistance in the school and subcultures. Some credit could be gained for pointing out that educationalists can have more idealistic purposes. To score highly for evaluation, a candidate must show an attempt to be critical of the arguments presented and their supporting evidence rather than simply juxtaposing alternative points of view. Some strong responses showed awareness that all of the perspectives acknowledge that *one* purpose of education is to maintain the economic system, but they vary both in what they mean by this and in how far they see it as central.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 9699/32
Education

Key messages

- Response time should be divided between the questions according to the marks allocated for each.
- Candidates should read each question carefully and respond to the command words.
- Responses should be fully explained and supported where required.

General comments

Candidates should aim to show detailed and accurate sociological knowledge. To gain good marks they must use relevant sociological evidence in the form of studies, theories, and concepts. Responses should be related to the question asked and their relevance clearly demonstrated.

In **Question 3** candidates need to use evaluation in their responses and argue against a given statement. They do not need to give any arguments supporting it. Arguments against it can include criticisms of the logic or the evidence on which it is based, as well as presenting alternative points of view.

In **Question 4** candidates should give balanced essays which will include arguments from both sides equally. The strongest responses evaluated each argument, looking critically at the evidence used on both sides, whereas less successful responses often just presented two opposing arguments. Evaluating a view means 'weighing it up'. The strongest responses finished with a conclusion weighing up the evidence included within the response.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The most successful responses clearly identified two examples of *what* could be learned through the hidden curriculum. To gain the second mark, candidates needed to describe *how* these were learned/taught in school, whereas less successful responses stated the example without showing how it is learned/taught in school and this prevented them from gaining the second mark. Some candidates embarked on rather lengthy explanations of the meaning of 'hidden curriculum' that the question did not require. The most common responses were references to respect for authority or hierarchy, followed by punctuality, gender roles and social solidarity.

Question 2.

Most candidates were able to identify and explain two points. The most common points were in relation to gendered role expectations from parents, teacher stereotypes, gendered curriculum and changing girls' priorities. Many candidates showed awareness of how the significance of gender has changed and developed in recent years, with some candidates identifying that this can adversely affect boys. Candidates were also rewarded for material on unequal opportunities in countries where more traditional gender roles persist. Less successful responses did not include relevant sociological material and some responses lacked structure and contained two or three rewardable points in the same paragraph. These responses tended to have less developed explanation and prevented responses from scoring more highly. More successful responses were structured with a clear point in each paragraph and these allowed for a fuller development of appropriate sociological material.

Question 3

Arguments against the quotation mostly referred to alternative purposes of education from the Marxist and functionalist perspectives. Functionalist ideas were used to counter the view by suggesting that individuals were secondary to the main role of education to create consensus. Most Marxist arguments cited Bowles and Gintis as well as Althusser's work. These could be used as two arguments showing how education's main role is either ideological control or reproduction of the capitalist relations of production. Many candidates successfully argued that there were limited opportunities for personal development because of inequalities based on class, gender or ethnicity. Less successful responses simply listed inequalities in educational opportunities without making reference to the question or gave a reason against the statement based on common-sense assumptions rather than applying sociological theory.

Question 4

Most candidates were able to demonstrate a reasonable knowledge and understanding of in-school factors and were able to identify relevant social processes, mainly labelling, the self-fulfilling prophecy, and to a lesser extent, setting/banding and subcultures. Several responses referred to a range of studies, such as the work of Becker, Hargreaves, Ball, Rist or Keddie to support their descriptions. Most students were able to refer to arguments associated with cultural and material deprivation. Less referred to the work of Bourdieu and Archer or concepts such as habitus, symbolic capital and symbolic violence.

The most successful responses made references to Marxist arguments and the work of Bowles and Gintis and Althusser, and applied these theories to explain how in-school factors led to working class underachievement. Some students were also able to categorise factors, in terms of whether they were internal or external and this proved helpful in their evaluation of the impact of in-school factors. Some weaker responses lost focus on the working class and drifted into discussing gender, ethnicity or classroom interaction in general.

Evaluation was largely by juxtaposition, with most candidates able to identify the other side of the debate. To score highly for evaluation, a candidate must show an attempt to be critical of the arguments presented and their supporting evidence. The most common specific evaluation point was on how students could reject teacher labels or that labelling was deterministic. Some strong responses were able to identify links between internal and external factors, for example how the external factor of language codes interplays with internal factors such as teacher labelling and the school curriculum and critically assess the impact of these factors and the relationship between them.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 9699/33
Education

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 9699/41
Globalisation, Media, Religion

Key messages

- High scoring responses made good use of relevant sociological concepts and theories.
- Good answers combined detailed sociological understanding with sustained evaluation.
- Some answers discussed the general topic raised by the question while lacking focus on the specific wording.
- Low scoring answers often relied on assertion and general knowledge rather than relevant sociological material.
- Higher marks could be gained by making more use of relevant sociological evidence.

General comments

The overall standard of the scripts continues to improve and more candidates are demonstrating the higher order skills of analysis and evaluation. Good answers 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. There continue to be a few candidates who rely on assertion and general knowledge as a basis for their answers. The marks awarded for responses that lack references to appropriate sociological material are inevitably low. It is important therefore that candidates have the opportunity to study the recommended textbooks and are encouraged to use references to sociological sources in their answers.

Most candidates answered two questions in the time available. 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 the Media proved most popular, with those on Globalisation less frequently attempted.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Good answers to this question provided a detailed account of how modernisation theory attempts to explain global inequality. High-quality responses also included a sustained evaluation of the view expressed in the question. Some candidates made good use of examples of global inequality to support their analysis. Likewise, contrasting theories of development were used to highlight strengths and limitations in modernisation theory. Lower scoring answers were often confined to a few basic points about modernisation theory with no evaluation. There were also a few responses that discussed global inequality without referring to modernisation theory.

Question 2

There were relatively few answers to this question. Good responses discussed several ways in which Global migration may have given people in developing countries more freedom and better life chances. High scoring answers also considered the arguments and evidence supporting the alternative view that global migration has had a detrimental effect on life chances. Some candidates made good use of references to particular examples of global migration to support their analysis. Lower scoring answers described some consequences of global migration without a clear focus on whether migrant groups specifically have benefitted from the experience.

Section B

Question 3

This was a popular question that was answered well by many of the candidates. High quality responses provided a detailed account of different ways in which editors and journalists may influence media content. This was complemented by a sustained evaluation of where power lies in terms of influencing media content. Some candidates made good use of the Marxist and pluralist theories of the media to develop their analysis. There were a few low scoring responses that discussed influences on media content with little or no reference to the role of editors and journalists.

Question 4

Good answers to this question discussed several ways in which the new media may have given people more power to challenge existing power structures. High scoring responses also provided a sustained evaluation of the view expressed in the question. Some candidates made good use of references to relevant sociological studies of the new media to support their analysis. Similarly, examples of where the new media has been used to challenge governments often featured in well-constructed answers. Lower scoring responses were often limited to a few basic points about the social significance of the new media with few links to issues of power and protest.

Section C

Question 5

Good responses to this question demonstrated a detailed understanding of the radical feminist view that women are oppressed by religion. This was complemented by a sustained evaluation of arguments and evidence supporting the view expressed in the question. Some candidates made good use of examples to show that the position of women varies between religions and may also have changed over time. Lower scoring responses were limited to a few basic points about how women may be oppressed by religion, with little use of relevant sociological material and analysis. There were a few answers that discussed gender inequality in general rather than focusing on the part that religion may play in female oppression.

Question 6

This was a popular question that was answered well by many of the candidates. Good responses discussed several reasons why people may be less religious today. Links to the secularisation thesis were made in many of the higher scoring answers and evidence from appropriate research studies was used to support the analysis. Strong evaluative responses considered a range of arguments and evidence that has been used to refute the claim that people are less religious today. Lower scoring responses lacked references to relevant sociological material and relied mainly on personal opinion and assertion in answering the question.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 9699/42
Globalisation, Media, Religion

Key messages

- Good answers provided a detailed analysis and evaluation of the issues raised by the question.
- Most candidates demonstrated good knowledge of sociological theory.
- Some answers discussed the general topic raised by the question while lacking focus on the specific wording.
- References to concepts and studies were lacking in some responses.
- Some answers relied too much on general sociological knowledge at the expense of analysis and evaluation.

General comments

The standard of the scripts overall was high. Good answers combined detailed sociological knowledge with sustained analysis of the issues raised by the question. There were a few exceptional answers that exceeded the standard that can reasonably be expected at A Level and the candidates concerned deservedly achieved high marks. Some candidates wrote long answers where the material was poorly linked to the question and there was a lack of relevant evaluation. Candidates who fall into this category would be better advised to write shorter answers and take more time to think about the requirements of the question and how best to structure their response. Many of the answers made good references to theories, but sociological concepts were less widely used and a lot of answers lacked references to relevant studies. More use of evidence, from sociological studies and other appropriate sources, would be one way in which candidates could gain higher marks.

There were no rubric errors and most candidates were able to answer two questions in the time allocated.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

There were some good answers to this question that identified a range of ways that globalisation has been a positive development. High quality responses discussed specific groups who may have benefitted from globalisation and also considered the alternative view that globalisation has proven detrimental to some or all social groups. Some candidates made good use of theories of development to argue the case for and against the view expressed in the question. Likewise, examples of the impact of globalisation were often deployed in support of a relevant argument or line of analysis. Lower scoring answers often lacked reference to particular social groups and/or provided only a limited account of the possible benefits of globalisation.

Question 2

There were relatively few answers to this question. Good responses discussed several ways in which transnational organisations may have helped to reduce global inequalities. High scoring answers also considered the arguments and evidence supporting the alternative view that transnational organisations may help to maintain or exacerbate global inequalities. Some candidates made good use of references to particular countries where transnational organisations have made a positive contribution to reducing inequality or the opposite. Lower scoring answers described the main features of transnational organisations without making clear links to the role of these organisations in reducing or increasing global inequality.

Section B

Question 3

This was a popular question that was well answered by many of the candidates. High quality responses provided a detailed account of what research evidence suggests, about the impact of the media on behaviour. The evidence cited was evaluated in terms of whether or not it supports the claim that the media has little impact on behaviour. Some answers that merited the middle of the mark range relied on a discussion of different models of media effects, without linking this well to a consideration of the available research evidence. There were a few low scoring responses that relied primarily on personal observation about the impact of the media rather than discussing relevant sociological material.

Question 4

Good answers to this question discussed several examples of how media representations of men and women are influenced by gender stereotypes. High scoring responses also provided a sustained evaluation of the view expressed in the question. Some candidates made good use of references to relevant sociological studies of gender and the media. Similarly, insights from feminist theory were often used to support the analysis in well composed answers. Lower scoring responses were often limited to a few basic examples of how gender stereotypes may influence media representations of men and women. Evaluation was lacking at this level and few links were made to relevant sociological studies and theory.

Section C

Question 5

This was a popular question that was answered well by many of the candidates. Good responses demonstrated a detailed understanding of the Marxist view that religion is a form of ruling class ideology. This was complemented by a sustained evaluation of the possible links between religion and ideology, with candidates often discussing theories of religion (functionalist, interactionist, feminists) that make contrasting claims to those associated with Marxist analysis. Some answers used examples from particular countries and religions to challenge or support the view expressed in the question. Many lower scoring responses discussed the role of religion in general, with only limited links to Marxist theory specifically. Some answers at the lower end listed a few examples of where religion may serve the interest of the ruling class, but offered no further development in relation to the question.

Question 6

There were relatively few answers to this question. Good responses examined a range of reasons for the growth of religious fundamentalism, including the impact of the spread of western culture. Examples of fundamentalist religions were cited to good effect in some answers. High scoring responses also included clear explanations of why the spread of western culture might have resulted in greater support for fundamentalist religions in some parts of the world. Lower scoring answers were often unclear about the possible links between the spread of western culture and growth of religious fundamentalism. There were also a few responses that demonstrated little understanding of the meaning of religious fundamentalism. These answers were usually confined to a discussion of trends in religion generally, with little specific relevance to the question.

SOCIOLOGY

Paper 9699/43
Globalisation, Media, Religion

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.