
SOCIOLOGY

9699/23

Paper 2 Theory and Methods

October/November 2017

1 hour 30 minutes

No Additional Materials are required.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

An answer booklet is provided inside this question paper. You should follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

Answer Question 1 and **either** Question 2 **or** Question 3.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.

This document consists of **2** printed pages, **2** blank pages and **1** insert.

Section A

Answer Question 1.

- 1 A questionnaire is a set of written questions designed for self-completion that is usually given or posted to respondents. Questionnaires produce quantitative data. As it is not practical to send a questionnaire to everyone that the researcher is interested in studying, it is necessary to select a sample of individuals from the wider research population. Various sampling techniques may be used to select this sample. The aim of sampling is usually to select a group of people with characteristics similar to the wider research population. This is known as a representative sample.

Questionnaires are commonly used in sociological research because they allow a large number of respondents to be asked a range of questions in a short space of time. Numerical information can therefore be collected on a large scale and, if a representative sample has been used, the information should accurately reflect the views of the wider research population. This approach is supported by *positivist sociologists*. However, interpretivists argue that questionnaires have little value in sociological research because they fail to reveal the complex nature of human behaviour.

- (a) What is meant by the term *positivist sociologists*? [2]
- (b) Describe **two** sampling techniques. [4]
- (c) Explain the difficulties for a researcher of achieving a representative sample. [8]
- (d) Assess the view that questionnaires have little value in sociological research. [11]

Section B

Answer **either** Question 2 **or** Question 3.

- 2 Explain and assess the postmodernist view that individuals no longer conform to traditional social identities. [25]
- 3 Explain and assess the strengths and limitations of using official statistics in sociological research. [25]

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