

MARK SCHEME for the May/June 2014 series

9699 SOCIOLOGY

9699/11

Paper 1 (The Family), maximum raw mark 50

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

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Section A

Sociologists frequently use the term 'traditional' to refer to families that are made up of heterosexual parents and their children. These traditional types of family can also be extended to include other kin. When a family structure fits perfectly into this pattern it is called an ideal type, but many families do not fit the ideal type perfectly. Examples of these variations include *beanpole* and lone-parent families in which a growing number of people live in modern industrial societies.

Many households are also made up of an individual living alone; these households are not families even though the individuals living in them may have kin. The development of single person households and other alternative types of living arrangements has led some sociologists to argue that the traditional family is in decline in modern industrial societies.

1 (a) What is meant by the term *beanpole family*? [2]

1 mark for a partial definition such as: multi-generational households when there is only one child.

2 marks for an accurate definition such as: beanpole families are typically when family structures are long and thin and households become multi-generational, and ties between grandparents and grandchildren are strengthened.

(b) Describe two reasons for the increase in the number of lone-parent families. [4]

2 marks are available for each reason. 1 mark for identification **or** development only, 2 marks for identification **and** development.

Points that can be included are: state support for lone parents, changing rates of marriage/divorce, changing attitudes towards females and changing the status of females, improved education of females, lack of male employment, changing attitudes to children born outside of marriage.

1 Identification of points alone without development, such as because the state pays mothers to look after their children, or simple responses such as lack of pressure, changed attitudes, women's employment, divorce rates.

2 A more developed response might be that the social pressures that used to force girls to marry or give up their children are no longer present, so if a girl has a baby by herself she is not looked down upon or shunned by her neighbours as she would have been in the past, thus encouraging girls to keep their babies.

(c) Explain why more individuals may choose to live alone in modern industrial societies than in the past. [8]

L1 0–4 A few simple points about the question with no direct reference to it, could be worth 1 or 2 marks. Descriptions of the types of individuals who live alone, with nothing else, may be worth 1 or 2 marks. Better answers (3–4 marks) at this level would identify one or two points, such as how the changing patterns of marriage are causing individuals to live independently before marriage, or, answers will make reference to changing life expectancies which are causing elderly people to be left on their own. However, there will be little depth in the explanations offered and the answer will rely on description.

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- L2 5–8 A sound explanation of the issue identified in the question which is somewhat implicit or partial would fit the lower half of this level.

At the lower end of the level (5–6 marks) answers may be limited to factors including: changing lifestyles, more people living alone before marriage and more individuals surviving the death of a partner for longer. Other factors that could be referred to include changing values as reflected by less arranged marriage in some societies, changing female education and expectations, with more individuals opting not to marry in some societies and the consequences of divorce.

To go higher, the explanation needs to be explicit and well informed.

At 7–8 marks, answers may consider such issues as: the ability of individuals in some societies to make lifestyle choices as compared to others, the difference between those who have always had to live alone as caused, for example, by bereavement, which has always happened or the parent who is left alone after a divorce as opposed to those, such as young professionals, who opt for singledom. Place at the top of the level according to the depth and/or range of examples explained, and answers that are supported by reference to theory or empirical data.

- NB** This question asks candidates to ‘explain’, therefore there is no requirement for assessment, but do not penalise those candidates who do evaluate.

(d) Assess the extent to which ‘traditional’ families are disappearing in modern industrial societies. [11]

- L1 0–4 Answers at this level are likely to show only a limited appreciation of the issues raised by the question. At this level, a simple answer that identifies a few basic points would gain 1 or 2 marks.

Higher in the level, an answer might advance a few limited observations about the nature of traditional families.

General descriptions of how families have changed from an extended to nuclear structure due to industrialisation and urbanisation may go to the top of the level (3–4 marks). There may be no relevant reference to traditional families in this mark band.

Other answers which offer short descriptive accounts of either the work of Young and Willmott or interpret ‘traditional’ as ‘nuclear’, quote the functionalist theory of fit and argue that they remain in society may go to the top of the level. Answers are likely to consider only one view; that traditional families are or are not disappearing.

- L2 5–8 A limited description could gain 5 or 6 marks.

Answers at this level show some sociological knowledge and an understanding of the question, such as showing a clear understanding of the meaning of traditional family which may be interpreted either as parents and children living together or as an extended family.

A sound description of the way in which family life may have been changing should receive a mark at the lower end of the level. Answers may be supported by ideas

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such as Chester and the Rapoport and the five types of diversity. Answers of this type are likely to concentrate on theorists such as Parsons, Ballard and Allan and Crow. Other answers may wholly or partially reject the idea of traditional families being in decline, in favour of the claim that family life in conventional families remains popular.

A more detailed account that questions the proposition would gain 7–8 marks. Conversely, a one-sided answer that is done very well, could also gain up to 8 marks.

Award 7–8 marks for answers that consider both sides of the argument in that there is evidence of more diversity in family forms such as in same sex relationships, or evidence to show that most individuals live in a conventional family for at least some part of their life. These answers will juxtapose different points of view rather than simply assess them. There should be some use of theorists or empirical data to support points in this level, and answers should offer a sound attempt to contrast views, most probably from functionalist, feminist and New Right positions.

- L3 9–11 At this level (9–10 marks), assessment may be based on a simple juxtaposition of two views, or may be confined to just one view with one or two evaluative points.

Answers at this level should provide a detailed account of the way in which the traditional family can be seen to be disappearing **and** not disappearing. Some differences of what is understood by ‘traditional’ should be noted in relation to family roles and expectations **or** answers which question the existence of a particular structure. Other answers may focus on the ideology of family life. Some answers may highlight the myth of the traditional family as outlined by such theorists as Nicholson.

At the top end of this level, the question will be evaluated explicitly and in reasonable depth.

There should be an attempt to assess the way in which the answer can be interpreted, probably from New Right and functionalist positions. There should be at least a limited assessment to reach this level, and at 11 marks, some signs of weighing up the issue of ‘extent’ and how family life can be interpreted, **or** how snapshot studies can give rise to a different picture to those that study the life cycle of the family.

There should be some attempt to make conclusive points. This may be either by the use of functionalist versus New Right positions or by variations of feminism, such as Somerville, Calhoun and alternative family types and a critique of these views. Other issues may be included, such as an examination of the evidence for the existence of one type of ‘traditional’ family in the past as well as examples of modern industrial societies that have retained traditional structures such as Japan.

Concepts such as life course analysis, family practices, choice and equality, chosen families, the negotiated family, and divorce-extended family may be referred to.

Evaluative answers can be supported by such examples as post modernists, who argue that functionalists, etc. take a top-down view and argue that it is individuals who make choices about life and relationships and so there is no longer one single ‘best’ choice.

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Section B

2 Explain and assess the functionalist view that the nuclear family ‘fits’ the needs of society. [25]

L1 0–6 Answers at this level are likely to be assertive and will most likely focus on a few common sense observations concerning the different sorts of family arrangements found within societies, with no sociological support. A few simple points about how the nuclear family is the ‘best’ sort of family may gain up to 3 marks.

Higher at this level (4–6 marks), there may be a wider range of simple points based on assertion or common sense understanding. For example, an answer stating that the process of industrialisation is seen by the functionalists as being linked to the development of nuclear families as people migrate, may be awarded 6 marks.

L2 7–12 Answers at this level will show some sociological knowledge and an understanding of the question.

Lower at this level (7–9 marks), the answer may be confined to a narrow range of points, lacking detail and possibly containing some inaccuracies. For example, an outline of the functionalist theory supported by the use of evidence such as Parsons and Goode with no counter argument, may gain up to 9 marks.

Other answers may outline the types of families to be found in pre-industrial societies, and maybe supported by examples such as Arensberg and Kimball.

Higher at this level (10–12 marks), answers may either cover a narrow range of points in reasonable detail or may cover a wider range of points in limited detail.

Points that may be covered include a discussion of structural isolation, the links between the family and the economy and status within families, and issues such as geographic mobility and the need for a socially mobile workforce. Other answers may concentrate on different theories and may postulate that the family serves the needs of capitalism rather than ‘fit’ or give detailed descriptions of the work of Young and Willmott. There may be no or very limited assessment in this level.

L3 13–18 Answers at this level will show good sociological knowledge and understanding. The material used will be interpreted accurately and will be applied effectively to answering the question. Assessment at this level may be limited.

Lower at this level (13–15 marks), answers may use only a limited range of knowledge, there will be little or no use of concepts or theory, and the points covered may lack development.

Answers that enter this level can refer to ideas linked to the needs of society that can be seen as consensus or conflict. Lower in the level, the discussion may be limited to the dominance of the nuclear family in industrial societies.

Other answers may display a detailed assessment, but will be unsupported by much knowledge.

Higher at this level (16–18 marks), answers will use a wider range of knowledge, supported by the use of concepts/theory where relevant and will include some well-developed points.

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To achieve marks within the highest part of the level there should be some discussion of the extent to which families, other than the nuclear family, may 'fit' the needs of society, with some interpretation of evidence such as the extent of the emergence of nuclear families and the extent to which families in pre-industrial societies were extended. However, this assessment will be lacking in detail and may rely on the juxtaposition of different examples or reference to different theorists.

L4 19–25 Answers at this level must achieve **three** things:

First, there will be good sociological knowledge and understanding.

Second, the material used will be interpreted accurately and applied effectively to answering the question.

Third, there must also be some evidence of assessment.

Answers at this level will provide a solid account of the functionalist view, including a critique of the theory that could include historical evidence of family diversity as well as including cross-cultural examples of different family structures in different societies. There may also be a sustained and well-informed assessment of the evidence such as Marxist views of the role of the family in supporting capitalism and feminist views of the role of the family in supporting men.

Lower in the level (19–21 marks), the assessment may still predominantly include a juxtaposition of the main sociological theories.

Higher at this level (22–25 marks), there will be a sustained assessment, and the points offered will be explicit and well-directed towards the question. There is likely to be a well-formulated conclusion.

This can include a more direct analysis of the strengths and limitations of the links that functionalists may make between industrialisation and the family. The analysis may take the form of arguing that it is deterministic or that another theory such as the anti-social family is supported by more evidence. Another way of gaining marks at the highest level would be to show that across modern industrial societies, there is much diversity to be found. Concepts such as modified extended family, family networks, symmetrical family, structural differentiation, ideological conditioning, and universalistic/particularistic values may be used. There should be a balanced conclusion to gain full marks.

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3 ‘The elderly are a disadvantaged group in most societies.’ Explain and assess this view. [25]

L1 0–6 Answers at this level are likely to be assertive and will focus on a few common sense observations concerning the activities engaged in by the elderly, with little or no sociological support. A few simple points about increasing life expectancy and the impact this has on the numbers of elderly people, may gain up to 3 marks.

Higher at this level (4–6 marks), there may be a wider range of simple points based on assertion or common sense understanding. For example, an answer showing some limited understanding of the meaning of social position such as the prestige or status of an individual, may gain up to 6 marks. At this level there may be some confusion concerning the distinction between the social position of the elderly within the family and within society.

L2 7–12 Answers at this level will show some sociological knowledge and an understanding of the question.

Lower at this level (7–9 marks), the answer may be confined to a narrow range of points, lacking in detail and possibly with some inaccuracies. For example, an outline of a basic account of the importance of age in defining social position with no reference to issues such as class, gender or ethnicity with no development, may gain up to 9 marks.

Answers which make reference to only one society may be limited to 9 marks.

Higher at this level (10–12 marks), answers may either cover a narrow range of points in reasonable detail or may cover a wider range of points in limited detail.

Points that can be included may refer to a discussion of why the elderly have a high social position in some societies as opposed to a low social position in others, or a discussion of how ‘elderly’ is defined as a social construction, with examples of how this is different in contrasting societies. There may be no assessment at this level or assessment will be made by juxtaposition. A basic outline of the social position of the elderly in contrasting societies (named or generic), with no development, may be rewarded up to 10 marks.

L3 13–18 Answers at this level will show good sociological knowledge and understanding. The material used will be interpreted accurately and applied effectively when answering the question. Assessment may be limited.

Lower at this level (13–15 marks), answers may use only a limited range of knowledge, there will be little or no use of concepts/theory, and the points covered may lack development.

Answers that enter this level may refer to ideas linked to Vincent (or something similar), namely, that strata, class, generation and inequality can influence social position.

Lower at the level, the discussion may be limited to examples of poverty in old age, which can lead to a low status in developed cultures, whereas the elderly are regarded as the font of wisdom in many traditional cultures.

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Higher at this level (16–18 marks), answers will use a wider range of knowledge, which will be supported by the use of concepts and theory where relevant, and will include some well-developed points or interpretations of the evidence.

At this part of the level, there should be some discussion of the extent to which different types of societies value the elderly. Candidates may illustrate their work by using examples of nomadic societies in which the elderly were regarded as a burden; other issues that can be referred to include such examples as; the valuing of knowledge and skills, decline of value of the elderly with the development of literacy, control over economic resources, the Sherbro of Sierra Leone who value incoherence in the elderly as a sign of connection to the afterlife, as opposed to cultures who try to hide the signs of aging with hair dyes. Other answers may display a detailed assessment, but will be unsupported by much knowledge.

However, this assessment may be lacking in detail and may rely on the juxtaposition of different examples or reference to different theorist, such as Pilcher, Vincent, Arber, Gannon, Blaikie, Cumming and Henry.

L4 19–25 Answers at this level must achieve three things:

First, there will be good sociological knowledge and understanding.

Second, the material used will be interpreted accurately and applied effectively to answering the question.

Third, there must also be some evidence of assessment.

Answers at this level will provide a solid account of the social position of the elderly, including both developed and developing societies. There should also be a sustained and well-informed assessment of the meaning of ‘elderly’ as a social construction, such as those shown by attitudes to grey hair which in some societies denote wisdom and are welcomed as opposed to others where it represents decay and is fought.

Lower at this level (19–21 marks), this assessment may still be mainly made by a juxtaposition of the main sociological theories such as the functionalist views of different stages (Laslett and four stages of life), conflict views of stratification and inequality such as dependency, disadvantage and poverty.

Higher at this level (22–25 marks), there will be a sustained assessment and the points offered will be explicit and well-directed towards the question. There is likely to be a well-formulated conclusion.

To achieve marks at this highest level, there must also be a more direct analysis of the social position of the elderly. This analysis may take the form of arguing that, at least for affluent groups, this is a time of choice exercised by wealth in consumer societies.

Another way of gaining the highest level would be to contrast the lack of status experienced by some poor elderly individuals in western societies with the high status given to the elderly in traditional societies.

Concepts such as disengagement, structural dependency, patriarchy, infantilization and age strata may be used. To gain full marks, there should be a balanced conclusion.