

# SOCIOLOGY

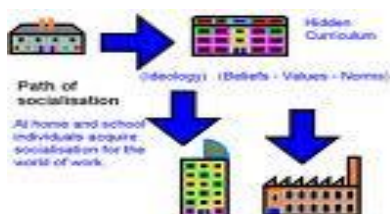
## INTRODUCTION UNIT

### REVISION



This booklet is to help you answer Question 1 which the first part of the exam is. The questions will have sources to help you answer them. You should use your knowledge from Sociology lessons to help you answer them.

You should be able to use the terms in this booklet, explain them clearly and use examples and case studies to help you do this. The examples that you use can be from TV, magazines, books, newspapers or your own experience. This will breathe life in to your answers.





## Key Sociological concepts

**Norms** are the unwritten rules which guide how we behave. E.g. eating with a knife and fork, covering your mouth when you cough, putting large amounts of money in a bank.

**Sanctions** are punishments or rewards put in place by other people to encourage people to follow social norms, rules and laws. What examples of sanctions can you think of used by parents? peers? School? Police? Courts? Work?

**Values** are the beliefs and ideas about what people see as important in life and often shape norms.

E.g. politeness, working hard, cleanliness, wanting to be rich and successful are all values.

**Socialisation** means learning your culture and how to be a member of society. A baby has to learn all the norms, values, customs, language, beliefs etc of its society.

**Culture** is a shared, learned way of life. E.g. British culture includes the English language, football, fish and chips, curry, going to the seaside, Christmas. And many other things.

Culture and behaviour—Culture helps to shape the way that people act. Culture is a person's way of life. It includes norms, values, beliefs, language, customs, traditions, dress etc. These all shape our behaviour. E.g. In Britain people traditionally get married and have children in their 20's or 30's. Therefore, people feel a pressure from society to do these things at that time. This has been changing and some people may now delay or never get married and/or have children.

**Deviance** = Actions which breaks social norms and values.

Remember that deviance changes over time and from place to

place e.g. homosexuality, smoking, drinking alcohol in Muslim countries is forbidden.

**Cultural Diversity** is the wide variety of differences in culture found in a society or between different societies. E.g. Different types of food, music, clothes, language, norms and values.

This is about the huge differences in human cultures. The differences are amazing even in something as basic as food. Look at all the different styles, ways of eating and tastes. Clothing also has incredible differences over time and from place to place.



Some sociologists believe that American culture is now taking over from other cultures. Think about all the ways that Americanisation is happening. E.g. McDonalds, MTV etc.



## Part 2 Debates about how we get our identity

Identity is a person's idea about who they are.

**Nature versus Nurture** debate, is about how far our identity and behaviour are decided by nature or nurture. Nature means that our behaviour is natural (we are born that way) and Nurture means that we learn to be a certain way through socialisation.

If David Beckham's son Brooklyn becomes good at football, is it because of nature. He has the same genes as his father. Therefore, you could say it was Nature.

On the other hand Brooklyn was encouraged and taught to be good at football. So was his dad by his dad who was a good footballer. Therefore, it could be Nature.

In the documentary Dr. Money the boy was born male, but in an accident he had his penis removed. A psychologist and his parents decided to try to teach him to be a girl. This was about finding out whether nurture could overcome nature. In this case it looks as though Dr. Money was wrong and that gender roles cannot be changed. Nature is more important in gender roles according to this case.



This may not be true for other aspects of a person's behaviour. E.g. Whether they are a criminal, how intelligent they are.

Three really good arguments that sociologists use for nature nurture are:

1. **Feral children.** Feral children prove that without socialisation (nurture) we would not be fully human.
2. **History.** The wide range of ways that humans lived in the past shows that the way we live is shaped by society. Think about how differently men and women acted in Victorian or medieval times.
3. **Cultural examples.** Different cultures show that people will act in very different ways depending on their culture. Look at the work of Margaret Mead.

**Status** is about a person's position in society and how important they are.

There are two kinds of status **achieved** and **ascribed**. Achieved status is one you have earned, such as being a doctor. A doctor has to study and gain qualifications.

Ascribed is a status that you were born into. Examples of this would be being a son, daughter or being the queen. Can you think of others?

**STATUS** is to do with how important a person's position in society is. E.g. A judge has a higher status than a refuse collector and a doctor higher than that of a nurse. A person's status will affect their identity.

**ROLES** are the sets of norms that go with a person's **STATUS** or



position in society, e.g. There are a set of norms that go with being

a teacher, father, police officer, footballer. A person's role will have a strong effect on their identity.

**Stereotyping** is when people have a fixed, exaggerated view of a group of people. E.g., Italians make great lovers, All French people wear onions around their neck. Whilst stereotypes can be funny we must be aware that they can be dangerous as in the case of Hitler and the Jews,

**Agencies of socialisation** refers to the institutions that help to socialise us. e.g. Family, Education, Religion, Mass Media, Work.

## CULTURE AND CULTURAL VARIATIONS

**Different cultures have different norms, values, beliefs, traditions, dress and language.** E.g. Aborigines believe that the land is sacred and will not plough the land. In 1950's Britain homosexuality was illegal and now it is legal and accepted. Women in the 19th Century could not vote and were dominated by men. Today's women may vote and have much more equal rights, we have even had a female prime minister.

In countries like Kenya the practice of having several wives. **Polygamy** is still allowed.

## VARIATIONS IN GENDER PATTERNS

**Anthropologists** study human societies often first hand. **Margaret Mead** found three tribes in new Guinea. In the **Arapesh** tribe both sexes are gentle, passive and what we would see as feminine. Even men are described as giving birth!!

The **Mundugumor** tribe are very different. Both sexes are like our idea of men. Both boys and girls are hostile and independent.

In the third tribe, the **Tchambuli**, both sexes are very different. Women are practical, bossy and in control of the household. Men like to gossip, wear lovely ornaments, shop, paint and dance!!



Margaret Mead sitting between two Tchambuli.

This shows how cultures vary and gender roles vary. Sociologists say that **gender roles are socially constructed**. They are made up by society.

## IMPORTANT IDEAS

### CULTURAL RELATIVISM.

This means that cultures need to be understood in their own terms. Norms and values are different, and we should not judge others as being better or worse. E.g. In medieval England girls as young as 12 would be married. We would now see this as child abuse. Medieval people were not wrong but their norms and values were different. There have been other societies who have done similar things.

### CULTURAL UNIVERSALS



This is the ideas that there are some things which are true in all human societies e.g. all societies have language, religion, property, and incest is seen as wrong. Even this covers massive differences. In ancient Egypt Pharaohs were seen as Gods and could not marry ordinary people, so had to marry close relatives, such as sisters!!

**REGION** refers to the part of the country a person comes from. E.g. whether you come from the north or the south may influence the way you dress, speak and act. Being a Scouser, Geordie, Black Country, Brummie or Cockney may be an important part of your identity.



**NATION** refers to the country you belong to. People may be very influenced by this and it may affect identity. British identity has become more and more complex as people have moved here from other countries. Many people may feel a sense of belonging to more than one country. E.g. Chinese people living in London.

### HOW IS IDENTITY DECIDED?

A person's identity may be decided by many things. We have already mentioned Nation, and Region. Also important are the following:

**LABELLING** is when a person gets a label attached to them like being clever, naughty, a criminal or a liar. These can be good or bad but may have an effect on people's behaviour and how they see themselves.

**STEREOTYPES** can also affect people's behaviour and identity. They are similar to labels and can be harmful. E.g. the police who investigated Stephen Lawrence's murder saw black young men as troublemakers or gangsters. This is an example of a stereotype being very harmful.



**STEREOTYPES** tend to be based on gender, age and ethnicity. Being young or old has an important effect on identity, but also important are the ways that people see these groups. E.g. all young people wearing hoodies may be seen as criminals.

Ethnic groups may be stereotyped in a certain way which can be harmful. **Gender** may also have an important effect on how people see themselves and others.

Gender also has an effect on people's identity. They may be stereotyped and expected to do traditional girls and boys roles. E.g. Billy Elliot was not expected to like dancing by his father, a miner, who is a very traditional male character. The film Billy Elliott also explores this idea.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUmT-T6n4PA>



### 3. The process of socialisation

PRIMARY SOCIALISATION takes place in the family.

SECONDARY SOCIALISATION takes place outside the family and

is done by agencies of socialisation, such as family, school,  peers,

religion  and the mass media.



Children who are not socialised may never become fully human. There are case studies of people living with wild animals called **feral children** who are



**unsocialised.** They find it difficult to ever learn human language and how to get on with others.

**FERAL CHILDREN**—Children who are unsocialised and haven't learned their culture or norms.

Examples are HORST the puppy boy who was found in a flat in the 1980's being neglected by his parents and brought up by an Alsatian dog. He walked on all fours and cocked his leg like a dog. Also Genie is the one you will find in the textbook.

One day in 1991, a Ugandan villager called Milly Sebba went further than usual in search of firewood and came upon a little boy with a pack of monkeys. She summoned help and the boy was cornered up a tree. He was brought back to Milly's village. His knees were almost white from walking on them. His nails were very long, and curled round and he wasn't house-trained. A villager identified the boy as John Sesebunya, last seen in 1988 at the age of two or three when his father murdered his mother and disappeared. For the next three years or so, he lived wild. He vaguely remembers monkeys coming up to him, after a few days, and offering him roots and nuts, sweet potatoes and kasava. The five monkeys, two of them young, were wary at first, but befriended him within about two weeks and taught him, he says, to travel with them, to search for food and to climb trees. He is now about 21 years old, and in October 1999 went to Britain as part of the 20-strong Pearl of Africa Children's Choir.

There are lots of youtube clips to be found on many of these topics. Some you will recognise when you see them. This will make revision more varied.

## AGENCIES OF SOCIALISATION

**FAMILY**—The most important for the first few years. Children copy adults and older brothers and sisters. Adults also guide children and encourage them to play with certain toys. They will smile and encourage good behaviour and tell children off for bad behaviour.

**PEER GROUP**—Outside of the home the peer group can be important and as children get older the peer group may influence them even more. The peer group can reward and punish its members. Children who do not follow the peer group may be left out. The peer group can be a very important part of someone's identity.

**EDUCATION**—In Britain all children receive secondary education. School teaches many skills and knowledge. Schools also teach the **Hidden Curriculum**. This includes doing as you are told, getting on with others and learning right from wrong. Until



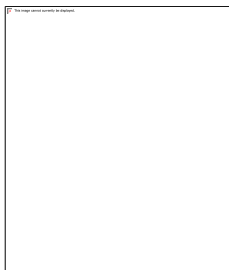
the 1970's schools tended to teach girls and boys in very



different ways and girls were encouraged to study subjects that fitted what were seen as **feminine roles** and careers e.g. domestic science, needle work.

Believe it or not the school you went to can shape your identity.

**MEDIA**— People spend many hours watching TV, reading books and magazines, listening to radio, playing computer games and going on the internet. This may influence young people to copy what they see. People copy celebrities who are **role models**.



Some sociologists believe that people use the media in a much cleverer way now. They are able to decide what to believe and use the media in different ways.

When Jamie Bulger was murdered the media said that the boys who killed him had been influenced by a horror film called *Child's Play*. Later this was said not to be true

## **SOCIAL CONTROL**

In society we have written rules of behaviour (laws) and unwritten rules of behaviour which includes norms. Values, morals and societies expectations have

power over individuals and stop them breaking the rules.

**Social control** means the ways in which society makes sure that society follows its norms, rules and laws. **Informal social control** happens through the agencies of social control (**family, peer groups, education, religion, work, mass media**).

People who do not conform may be sanctioned. **Sanctions** include being ignored, dirty looks, sarcastic comments, being sacked, detentions, tellings off, exclusion.

**Informal social control** works so well that most people do not think about it. People who break the rules are seen as deviant. They may suffer sanctions like those above.

At worst they may have a **stigma** attached to them. **Stigma** means that society strongly disapproves of a person's actions or beliefs. Stigma is like a **negative label** that is very hard to shift. E.g. a paedophile would suffer from stigma because their actions are so strongly disapproved of. Being a murderer would be the same but there are less severe kinds of stigma which may be to do with a person's identity, such as being disabled or being from a particular ethnic group.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpHcTGXy76l>  
Useful clip on Deviance and Social Control

Stigma is an extreme form of labelling which is like a mark of shame on a person. E.g. a Paedophile.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KHQiY4rZC0w>

## QUESTIONS

Most of the stems (starts) of questions are very similar in this section e.g.

Identify a social norm. (1)

Explain what is meant by status. (2)

Explain why nurture is important (2)

Explain why some children are feral. (2)

Identify and explain two ways that the media socialises people in our society. (4)

Explain two reasons why sociologists believe that socialisation is important. (4)

Identify and explain two ways that people learn gender roles. (4)

Explain two types of social control. (4)

### **Two mark questions**

0 marks for no relevant points.

1 mark for basic answer

2 marks for development, use of accurate sociological terminology or further explanation/examples.

### **Four mark questions**

0 marks for no relevant points accurately applied to the question.

1 mark for identifying a way/reason/ explanation

2 marks for development, use of accurate sociological terminology or further explanation/examples

A further 2 marks for a way/reason/ explanation.

Try and create some of your own questions.