

GCSE Sociology - Compulsory Core key words

Sociology - The systematic study of the society in which we live

Anthropology – The study of different human cultures

Socialisation - The process of learning the correct behaviour, norms and values in a society

Agency of socialisation - The places or groups of people responsible for teaching individuals norms and values

Primary socialisation – This takes place within the family

Secondary socialisation – This includes school, peer group, mass media, religion and work

Family – A group of people related by blood, marriage or adoption

Mass media – A form of communication that reaches a lot of people at one time; it includes newspapers, tv, radio and social media etc

Peer group – A group of people of the same age and similar interests

Education – Schools are one of the secondary agents of socialisation

Region – An area of a country eg urban or rural, north or south

Nation – A group of people with a shared culture

Norms -The unwritten rules of society that determine acceptable behaviour, which are normally enforced by embarrassment or the disapproval of others

Values - The correct ways of behaving and what is considered important in a society

Mores – Ideas about what behaviour is right and wrong

Society – A group of people who share a way of life and a set of rules

Social rules – Norms and values of a culture or society

Social control - Methods used to persuade people to act according to the norms and values of a society

Formal social control - Written rules and laws enforced by powerful agents such as the police and courts

Informal social control - Controlling people's behaviour using informal methods in everyday situations

Deviance – Behaviour which goes against norms and values, often punished by sanctions

Positive sanctions - Rewards used to encourage acceptable behaviour

Negative sanctions - Punishments used to prevent unacceptable behaviour

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Role model – Someone who is looked up to and imitated by others

Gender roles - Parents encourage their children to behave in a way that is seen to be appropriate for their gender

Imitation – One of the ways in which children learn, this is when they copy the behaviour of those around them

Canalisation – The way in which parents direct their children into particular interests

Manipulation – The way in which children are controlled into certain behaviour

Sex – The biological differences between men and women

Gender – The differences in social roles of men and women

Masculine – Typically male behaviour

Feminine – Typically female behaviour

Status - The amount of prestige a person's position in society gives them

Social role - A part you play that is associated with particular norms and expectations

Role conflict - Where the demands of one role clash with the demands of other roles

Identity - How we see ourselves and how others see us

Labelling – When people are given a label by others and then treated as though it were true

Stereotype – A category into which we put people according to some simple characteristics

Ageism – Discrimination against a person/group on the basis of their age

Cultural identity – A sense of who you are and the culture you belong to

Ethnicity – Characteristics associated with a particular racial group

Inequality - Differences in power, perhaps because of gender, ethnicity, age or social class

Stigma – Something which marks a person out as very different from those around them

Feral child – A wild or unsocialised child

Nature/nurture – The debate about whether we act the way we do because of biology or learned behaviour

Culture - The way of life of a society eg how they dress, what they eat etc

Cultural diversity - Differences between cultures eg of food, clothing, norms and values etc

Cultural relativity – The idea that what is normal in one culture is strange in another

Cultural universal – Social behaviour that can be found in all cultures

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Globalisation – The process whereby ideas, goods and services travel across borders

Sub-culture - A smaller culture within a culture with its own set of norms and values

Youth culture – The norms and values associated with young people in society

New man – A man who is not only masculine, but also willing to do his share of traditionally 'female' tasks

Research Methods:

Data – Information collected by research

Primary research – Information collected by the researcher themselves

Secondary research – Information that has been collected for another purpose by someone else

Census – A questionnaire given to every household in Britain by the government every ten years

Content analysis – A method for a detailed study of secondary data

Sample – A small group of people chosen by the researcher

Sampling frame – The list from which the sample is selected

Random sample – The sample is chosen by pure chance from the target population

Systematic sample – Every 5th, 10th or 100th, or whatever, name on the list is chosen

Quota sample – The researcher asks those who meet the criteria until he has filled his sample

Snowball sample – One person suggests another, and so on

Opportunity sample – Whoever happens to be available is chosen

Representativeness – The idea that the sample should have the same mix of people as the rest of the population

Respondent/subject/participant – Those taking part in the research

Qualitative data – Data in the form of words which has lots of detail

Quantitative data – Data in the form of numbers that can easily be put into graphs and tables

Validity – Whether or not research is a true reflection of what is happening

Reliability – Whether research can be repeated and then compared to other data

Survey – Collecting data from a fairly large group of people

Questionnaire – A list of questions for use in research

Closed questions – Choice of responses is fixed by the researcher, who gives two or more options

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Open questions – Ask the respondent to answer the question in their own words

Interview – When the researcher asks the respondent a set of questions

Structured interview – The interviewer reads out the questions and records the responses

Unstructured interview – Like a conversation, these are informal and flexible. Questions are rarely pre-set, but the interviewer will have points he wishes to cover

Pilot study – A trial run before starting the research

Observation – When the researcher observes the group they are studying

Overt observation – when the researcher is openly observing a group

Covert observation - when the researcher is secretly observing a group

Participant observation –when the researcher joins in with the group he is observing

Non- participant observation – when the researcher just watches the group he is observing

Triangulation - using more than one method to get more valid or more reliable results

Practical issues – These are concerned with how the group to be studied will be found, and how much time/money the research will take

Ethical issues –These are concerned with protecting the respondent during sociological research

Sensitivity – Some respondents may belong to a vulnerable group eg young people, the elderly, disabled etc, or the research may be about a sensitive topic eg sexuality, religion, inequality etc

Confidentiality – This may be promised to subjects in order to obtain more valid data

Informed consent – Subjects should know what the results of the research will be used for, and have agreed to take part

Right of withdrawal – Subjects should be able to end their involvement at any stage

Bias – Where anyone taking part in the research may have pre-conceived ideas which affect their opinions