

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION
MAY/JUNE 2007**

SOCIOLOGY

SOCIOLOGY
CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS

MAY/JUNE 2007

GENERAL COMMENTS

Unit 1 of the CAPE Sociology syllabus was piloted in 2002 whereas Unit 2 was piloted in 2003. Assessment for both Units 1 and 2 is based on three papers. Paper 01 (30 per cent), Paper 02 (50 per cent) and Paper 03 (20 per cent). All three modules of the syllabus were tested in each paper. Paper 01, consisted of nine compulsory short response questions, each carrying 10 marks. Thus, the maximum was 90 marks. Paper 02 consisted of three sections, of two questions each. Candidates were required to answer three questions, one from each section. Each question was marked out of 25. In Paper 03, the internal assessment, candidates were required to do a research project for both Units 1 and 2. Candidates were allowed to carry forward their Internal Assessment marks from Unit 1 to Unit 2. The Internal Assessments were marked by the teacher and a sample (usually of five projects) forwarded to CXC for moderation.

GENERAL COMMENT

The Examining Committee has noted a marked improvement in candidates' overall performance, particularly in Unit 2. Generally, candidates displayed a sound understanding of the concepts, methods and principles of Sociology.

UNIT 1

PAPER 01

Module 1

Question 1

This question was based on sociological research, more specifically on the data collection techniques used in sociology. Parts (a) and (b) were generally well done. The majority of candidates were able to identify data collection techniques. However, part (c) of the question presented some difficulty to students. Very few candidates were able to show how a sociologist's theoretical standpoint influences the choice of technique used to collect data.

Question 2

This question was based on culture and culture change. Many candidates had difficulty in defining concepts such as 'diffusion' and 'innovation'. Many were able to give two examples of culture change in the Caribbean, but many were unable to explain how part (c) was linked to part (b). There is need for students to become more familiar with the cultural features of Caribbean territories other than their own.

Question 3

This question was based on sample selection in research. Many had difficulty in defining the terms 'representative sample' and 'probability sample'. Generally this question was not well done. It appears that many students were not exposed to the theoretical aspects of different types of sampling and their application to the conduct of sociological research.

Module 2

Question 4

This question was based on the family. All parts of this question were generally well done. Most candidates were able to distinguish between the nuclear family and the 'common law' family and to state two functions of the Caribbean family.

Question 5

This question was based on religion. Many candidates were unable to identify an indigenous religion in the Caribbean. Also, a few candidates were unable to show how religion could be harmful to the social order.

Question 6

This question was based on education. Generally candidates provided adequate answers to parts (a), (b) and (c). However, the majority of candidates had problems in stating one reason for the establishment of schools in the immediate post-emancipation period. This highlights the need for candidates to be well equipped with a broad understanding of the history of the Caribbean region.

Module 3

Question 7

This question was based on social stratification. All parts of this question were generally well done. Most candidates were able to define an 'open stratification system' and also demonstrated a sound knowledge of forms of stratification in the Caribbean and the functions of stratification in the Caribbean.

Question 8

This question was based on social mobility. Most candidates were able to define 'upward social mobility'. Also, many were able to state the factors affecting the rate of social mobility and to describe measures taken to encourage upward social mobility. However, the majority did poorly in part (b). They generally had difficulty in identifying one subjective and one objective measure of social mobility.

Question 9

This question was based on education and equality. Most candidates were able to state the Marxist view of equality. However, part (b) presented some difficulty to candidates. Many were unable to give reasons for gender inequality in the Caribbean.

PAPER 02

Paper 02 was generally well done. Candidates were required to write three essays (one from each Module) out of six. They were given two and a half hours to do so. The candidates' performance was generally good and has shown improvement compared to previous years.

Module 1

Question 1

This question was based on sociology as a science and was attempted by approximately two-thirds of the candidates. Most candidates were aware of the characteristics of a science but the candidates' ability to argue their case convincingly and provide the necessary support from the literature was lacking. Synthesis and evaluation could be improved.

Question 2

This question was based on the functionalist and interactionist perspectives in sociology and was attempted by approximately one-third of the candidates. Most candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of the individual perspectives but had some difficulty in comparing them, and showing their applicability to the analysis of Caribbean society.

Module 2

Question 3

This question was based on religion in the Caribbean and was attempted by approximately two-thirds of all candidates. Generally, candidates were able to provide a general description of religious forms in the Caribbean and their basic characteristics. Many had difficulty, however, in identifying and discussing the sociological factors responsible for changes taking place among these groups.

Question 4

This question was based on gender and educational underachievement. It was generally well done, though reference to published work on gender and education, particularly male underachievement, was lacking.

Module 3

Question 5

In this question, attempted by seventy-five per cent of all candidates, they were asked to discuss the phenomenon of meritocracy in Caribbean society. Performance was average; responses generally lacked empirical support, though the important concepts were generally well understood.

Question 6

This question was based on the use of mainstream sociological perspectives in understanding social class in Caribbean societies. Candidates showed a basic knowledge of social class and the various sociological perspectives, but their arguments generally lacked depth.

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

The internal assessment was generally well done. Candidates should be guided by the teacher in selecting the topics. In most instances, the teacher's marks were fair and consistent. The major weaknesses were in the Introduction and the Literature Review. In some cases, the topic was simply re-stated as the problem statement. In most cases, there was no proper background statement in the introduction.

There is need for a proper background to the study in approximately three paragraphs. This provides any general information on the issue, including the need for more information or clarity on the subject, the current knowledge on the topic and some historical background.

This is to be followed by the problem statement which encapsulates the rationale for the study and the general focus of the project. This statement should be in one or two short paragraphs. It is not the topic re-stated. It states the research problem (issue under consideration), and what the candidate proposes to do in the study, based on the background provided.

The next section on the Aims and Objectives was also lacking in some cases. While the Aims are broader in scope, the specific objective should spell out the variable in the study. In some cases no studies, books or articles were cited in the Literature Review. There is need for candidates to be better guided in the review of literature and to cite sources appropriately in the body of the study as well as in the Bibliography.

UNIT 2

PAPER 01

Module 1

Question 1

This question was based on population. Many candidates were able to provide satisfactory definitions for population, but some had difficulty in identifying quantitative measures for population. Many seemed not to be aware that birth rates and death rates are quantitative measures. Most candidates were able to identify the measures governments may take to reduce population growth rates. Candidates did not appear to fully grasp appropriate measures of population. There is need for students to become more familiar with the use of population statistics.

Question 2

This question was based on population growth rates. Most candidates were able to identify three reasons why people are likely to leave the Caribbean to settle in North America. However, many candidates were unable to correctly identify 'natural increase'. Generally candidates were able to explain how life expectancy can be increased.

Question 3

This question was based on population theories. Most candidates were able to identify two population theories apart from the demographic transition theory. However, several candidates were unable to adequately define demographic transition.

Module 2

Question 4

This question was based on deviance. The majority of candidates were able to adequately explain the relativity of deviance. Also many were able to answer parts (c) and (d) properly. In part (c) most candidates gave only two reasons, instead of the three required. Most candidates were unable to differentiate between primary and secondary deviance.

Question 5

This question was based on crime. Most candidates were able to state at least one valid reason for domestic violence in the Caribbean. Most candidates seemed to be familiar with policies relating to drug trafficking. Though many were able to provide examples of corporate crime, many were unable to adequately define the concept 'corporate crime'.

Question 6

This question was based on social control. Most candidates were able to identify 'social control'. Many candidates did not seem to understand the concept "ideological control" hence this question was generally not well done. Responses to part (d) were somewhat weak.

Module 3

Question 7

The majority of candidates were able to define underdevelopment properly. However, many were unable to provide adequate reasons why developed countries will continue to enjoy more favourable trade relations with the developing world.

Question 8

Most candidates were able to define poverty, however, many seemed unfamiliar with the measurement of poverty and the difficulties encountered therein. There is need for practical exercises on the subject.

Question 9

Most candidates were familiar with the concept of urbanization, however, many were unable to define "quality of life" adequately. Many candidates were also unable to adequately address types of reform required for Caribbean development.

PAPER 02

Paper 02 was generally well done. Candidates were required to write three essays (one from each Module) out of six. They were given two and a half hours to do so. Candidates need more guidance and practice in essay writing.

Module 1

Question 1

This question was attempted by 53.6 per cent of candidates. It was based on the Malthusian Theory of population. This theory was generally well known by candidates. They were able to clearly articulate the relevant information. They were also able to identify features of a named Caribbean territory. Some candidates, however, had difficulty applying the theory to the Caribbean. In general candidates need to be given sample questions to apply the theories to the Caribbean.

Question 2

This question was attempted by 46.4 per cent of candidates. It was based on emigration and immigration in the Caribbean. Most candidates were able to identify types of migration and the push and pull factors in migration. However application to a named Caribbean territory for the stated time period presented some difficulty for some candidates.

Module 2

Question 3

This question was attempted by 37.7 per cent of candidates. It was based on labelling theory. The majority of candidates understood the labelling theory and self-fulfilling prophecy, and, therefore, they were able to support or oppose the statement with appropriate justification from the work of various theorists. However, many were unable to provide empirical evidence to support the arguments provided. Activities such as debates could be organized to give students an opportunity to research the topics and present their arguments.

Question 4

This question was attempted by 62.3 per cent of candidates. They were also able to adequately explain why some groups in society make up a greater proportion of criminal offenders. However, many were unable to provide empirical evidence to support the arguments provided.

Module 3

Question 5

This question was attempted by 44.4 per cent of candidates. It was based on the functionalist theory of poverty. Most candidates demonstrated a good grasp of the functionalist theory of poverty, but were unable in some cases to adequately analyze the theory and show its application to the Caribbean.

Question 6

This question was attempted by 55.6 per cent of candidates. It was based on national development strategies. Candidates performed well generally on the knowledge, application and analysis aspects of the question. The question was done reasonably well, but arguments could be better supported.

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

The Internal Assessment was generally well done. Candidates had to do a research project. The Unit II Internal Assessment had similar weaknesses to those done in Unit I. In most instances, the teacher's marks were acceptable by the moderator.

Alternative to the Internal Assessment (for Private candidates)

The Paper 3/02 was generally poorly done. Markers were of the opinion that candidates did not attempt to do an actual project, nor did they seek guidance in doing so. They provided many general, often unclear and inadequate responses to the questions asked. Private candidates are encouraged to conduct an actual study as stated in the syllabus and to get some hands-on experience in research, seeking appropriate guidance in the process.