



Cambridge Assessment
International Education

Example Candidate Responses – Paper 1

Cambridge International AS & A Level Sociology 9699

For examination from 2021



Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2021 v1

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Introduction

The main aim of this booklet is to exemplify standards for those teaching Cambridge International AS & A Level Sociology 9699, and to show how different levels of candidates' performance (high, middle and low) relate to the subject's curriculum and assessment objectives.

In this booklet, candidate responses have been chosen from the June 2021 series to exemplify a range of answers.

For each question, the response is annotated with a clear explanation of where and why marks were awarded or omitted. This is followed by examiner comments on how the answer could have been improved. In this way, it is possible for you to understand what candidates have done to gain their marks and what they could do to improve their answers. There is also a list of common mistakes candidates made in their answers for each question.

This document provides illustrative examples of candidate work with examiner commentary. These help teachers to assess the standard required to achieve marks beyond the guidance of the mark scheme. Therefore, in some circumstances, such as where exact answers are required, there will not be much comment.

The questions and mark schemes used here are available to download from the School Support Hub. These files are:

9699 June 2021 Question Paper 11

9699 June 2021 Mark Scheme 11

Past exam resources and other teaching and learning resources are available on the School Support Hub:

www.cambridgeinternational.org/support

How to use this booklet

This booklet goes through the paper one question at a time, showing you the high- and middle-level response for each question. The candidate answers are set in a table. In the left-hand column are the candidate answers, and in the right-hand column are the examiner comments.

Example Candidate Response – middle		Examiner comments
(1)	<p>Two informal social sanctions are faces of disgust and remarks of disgust. When in public, if you were to swear loudly in front of seniors they are more than likely going to give you the facial expressions showing that they're disgusted by your language. Secondly, if once again you were to swear loudly but this time while in a children's park, their parents would make remarks such as 'you're full of shit'.</p>	<p>1 An identification mark is awarded for 'faces of disgust' but the description does not develop the point, it just repeats it.</p> <p>2 An identification mark is awarded for 'remarks of disgust' and in this case, the description given shows that the candidate understands the point.</p>

Answers are by real candidates in exam conditions. These show you the types of answers for each level. Discuss and analyse the answers with your learners in the classroom to improve their skills.

Examiner comments are alongside the answers. These explain where and why marks were awarded. This helps you to interpret the standard of Cambridge exams so you can help your learners to refine their exam technique.

How the candidate could have improved their answer

The candidate needed to ensure that their development points do more than simply repeat the identification. This can often be achieved by an appropriate example.

This section explains how the candidate could have improved each answer. This helps you to interpret the standard of Cambridge exams and helps your learners to refine their exam technique.

Common mistakes candidates made in this answer

- Identification points were sometimes undeveloped.
- Over-long answers for what is a short question.

Often candidates were not awarded marks because they misread or misinterpreted the questions.

Lists the common mistakes candidates made in answering each question. This will help your learners to avoid these mistakes and give them the best chance of achieving the available marks.

Question 1

Example Candidate Response – high

Examiner comments

1	One positive informal sanction would be to reward a sports player for scoring a point by clapping for them.
	One negative informal sanction would be taking your child's phone away for having a bad attitude.

1 Clapping is the identification point which is developed in two ways: first with an example, and second by reference to the term 'positive sanction'. Either development would be sufficient.

2 Removal of the child's phone is the identification which is also developed in two ways: via an example and also by reference to the term 'negative sanction'. As with the first identification point, only one development is needed to gain the second mark.

**Total mark awarded =
4 out of 4**

Example Candidate Response – middle

Examiner comments

(1)	Two informal social sanctions are faces of disgust and remarks of disgust. When in public, if you were to swear loudly in front of seniors they are more than likely going to give you the facial expressions showing that they're disgusted by your language. Secondly, if once again you were to swear loudly but this time while in a children's park, their parents would make remarks such as: "Nasty language" or "You're full of disrespect" etc.
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1 An identification mark is awarded for 'faces of disgust' but the description does not develop the point, it just repeats it.

2 An identification mark is awarded for 'remarks of disgust' and in this case, the description given shows that the candidate understands the example.

**Total mark awarded =
3 out of 4**

How the candidate could have improved their answer

The candidate needed to ensure that their development points do more than simply repeat the identification. This can often be achieved by an appropriate example.

Example Candidate Response – low		Examiner comments
A	1	Two informal social sanctions would be any sanctions uncommon to someone. Depending on who the person will then result in what sanction is informal. Sanctions such as hitting a child for being discipline or taking a child's privileges.
		<p>1 The identification mark is awarded for the use of force, but there is no explanation given.</p> <p>2 An identification mark is awarded for withdrawal of privileges, but no explanation is provided.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 2 out of 4</p>

How the candidate could have improved their answer

The candidate needed to develop each identification point by describing how the sanction encourages people to behave appropriately.

Common mistakes candidates made in this question

- Identification points were sometimes undeveloped.
- Over-long answers for what is a short question.

Question 2(a)

Example Candidate Response – high		Examiner comments
2	(a) practical factors are factors that determine the ability to complete research in the first place. they are arguably the most important research consideration. one practical factor that can influence the choice of research method is funding. Funding has a great impact on the scope of the research that is able to be completed. without large amounts of funding, it would be difficult to complete large research projects that contain thousands of participants in studies like unstructured interviews because it costs money to interview individuals and to pay the researcher to conduct those interviews. low funding would lead itself to questionnaires due to their low cost and ease in which it can be given to larger samples. Another practical consideration	<p>1 The first factor identified (funding) is clearly explained in terms of the impact it has on a sociologist's ability to conduct research on a large scale.</p> <p>2 Relevant sociological material is selected (unstructured interviews) and is used to support the point that interviewers have to be paid for their work. This is usefully contrasted with a low-cost method. For this first practical factor, the candidate is awarded 4 out of 4 marks.</p>
2	(a) that can influence the choice of research method is time. Time can influence the type of study greatly because some methods take much longer than others. those limited on time would likely reach for social surveys while those with ample time would likely reach for longitudinal studies. Time can also influence the ability the research has to go in depth. that	<p>3 The second factor identified (time) is clearly explained by stating that some methods take more time than others.</p> <p>4 Relevant sociological material is selected (social surveys / longitudinal studies) but the explanation of how it supports the point is not sufficiently developed. For this second factor, the candidate is awarded 3 out of 4 marks.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 7 out of 8</p>

How the candidate could have improved their answer

By showing explicitly how the sociological material introduced in their second factor (longitudinal studies) supports the original point made (time).

Example Candidate Response – middle		Examiner comments	
(2)	(a)	<p>Two practical factors that influence choice of research method are time and funding. If a researcher does not have a large amount of time to complete a research he's going to choose a research method that doesn't take a lot of time, e.g. quantitative research methods such as questionnaires or surveys. Also, if a researcher does not have enough funding he's going to use a quantitative rese. On the other hand, if a researcher does have enough funding he is likely going to choose a qualitative research method such as interviews, but, this also depends on the type of sociologist that he is.</p>	<p>1 Time is correctly identified as a practical factor although the explanation could be clearer. Relevant sociological material is introduced (questionnaires and surveys) but there is no attempt to explain how the material supports the point. For this factor, the candidate receives 3 out of 4 marks.</p> <p>2 Funding is correctly identified as a practical factor, but it is not explained. 'Interview' is not credited as relevant sociological material as a type of interview is not specified. For this factor, the candidate receives 1 mark out of 4.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 4 out of 8</p>

How the candidate could have improved their answer

- By greater adherence to the question's rubric, i.e. more careful explanation of the practical factors identified.
- By being more explicit in the identification of relevant sociological material and in demonstrating how it supports the original points made.

Example Candidate Response – low		Examiner comments	
2	a	<p>One practical factor that can influence choice of research method would be evaluating the number of candidates that would take part or what the quantity of what is being debated. Another would be the amount of money that would be needed to evaluate what is being researched.</p>	<p>1 Two factors are accurately identified: the 'number of candidates that would take part' and the 'money needed'. Neither points are explained or developed sociologically. The candidate is awarded 1 mark for each factor.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 2 out of 4</p>

How the candidate could have improved their answer

By attempting an explanation of the accurate knowledge that they have demonstrated.

Common mistakes candidates made in this question

Many candidates demonstrated knowledge of the topic area but did not address the question directly. To achieve full marks, a response must: identify a characteristic, explain it, select relevant sociological material and show how this material supports the point.

Question 2(b)

Example Candidate Response – high	Examiner comments
<p>2 b An Overt observation is when the researcher joins a group and the group knows they are being researched. One limitation of this would be that the researcher can't get into secretive group or organizations. It is impossible to research secret gangs or cults if they don't want to be observed while using overt observation. ①</p> <p>Another limitation of overt observation is the observer effect. Whoever is being researched knows they are being observed so they might act differently than how they normally do. This affects and lowers validity in the study. ②</p>	<p>① Two clear and distinct limitations were required, but in this answer the candidate only identifies one limitation. 2 out of 3 marks are awarded.</p> <p>② For the second limitation, all three elements are present: a limitation (the observer effect); a development (people act differently when observed); and an explanation of why this is a limitation (because it lowers validity). This means the candidate is awarded 3 out of 3 marks.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 5 out of 6</p>

How the candidate could have improved their answer

With the first limitation, the candidate omitted to explain why or how access problems may limit this method, e.g. a lack of representativeness.

Example Candidate Response – middle		Examiner comments
2	<p>(B) Participant observation is a common use of research methods that involve observing subjects in a testing or natural environment to collect data. overt approach is associated with participant observation but limitations can be implemented when using overt participant observation. One limitation that can occur is the event of the Hawthorne effect. This effect is generally about participants who know they are being observed and purposely purposely act different due to observati being observed. This can lead to skewed data because it is not reliable. Another limitation that stems out from the Hawthorne effect is the concept of validity. With participants knowing they are being observed because of an overt overt approach, the validity is decreased. The question arises of if sociologists are really measuring what is meant to be if behavior can be easily manipulated under overt terms. This branches out to decreased reliability because if subjects under participant ob observation were to act differently, it cannot be easily re replicable under a covert approach.</p>	<p>1 This response makes the same point twice, i.e. it identifies the Hawthorne effect as a limitation and explains it in terms of participants acting differently when observed. As such, only one limitation is rewarded. The most convincing development of why this is a limitation of this method is that it decreases validity. The response receives 3 out of the 3 for this limitation, but 0 out of 3 for the second one.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 3 out of 6</p>

How the candidate could have improved their answer

Two clear and distinct limitations were required but, in this answer, the candidate only identified one limitation (although they did receive 3 marks for this point).

Question 3(a)

Example Candidate Response – high

Examiner comments

3	A	<p>The view that the male identity is changing is supported by Post modernist theorists along with Feminists to some extent.</p> <p>This view can be supported by the post modernist concept of the 'New Man'. This concept implies a change from the traditional male identity of only paid work outside the home to a more balanced role in both paid work and domestic labor roles like child rearing. Male identities are are also viewed to be changing in the eyes of post modernists through and liberal feminists.</p> <p>due to government policies. According to both of these ideologies if the male identity is changing, so is the female identity. This concept is supported by the UK's Equal Pay act which allowed women to work for the same pay as men, allowing for women to take over the role of breadwinner in a homosexual household or maintain the role in a single parent household. Both the idea of the 'New Man' and the passing of new government policies depict the changes that are occurring within the male identities.</p>
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1 The first point identifies changes in domestic / childcare roles. Sociological material is used in support of this ('new man' and postmodern theory.) Although rather slight, the point is developed.

2 The second point identifies the role of government policy in promoting change. Equal pay legislation is used as an example. The point is relevant but underdeveloped and less focused on men.

3 The sociological material used is appropriate but not always fully focused on the question.

**Total mark awarded =
7 out of 10**

How the candidate could have improved their answer

- The response contained one clear and developed point and one relevant but underdeveloped point. The answer was concise, and the sociological material used was appropriate, but more depth was required.
- In relation to the second point, there also needed to be greater focus on male identity.

Example Candidate Response – middle

Examiner comments

3 (a) "male identity is changing"
 This view explores the case in which society believes that the men as a whole and their roles in society are beginning to change, this statement is made due to the ways in which society advances and changes their roles for the male gender as time progresses, for instance ~~in~~ in the 1990s men were seen as the more predominant sex due to their influence in society, that being being more commonly recognized as the stronger sex of the household, the breadwinner / provider or the dominant gender, men were more commonly recognized as those who would ~~that~~ work and provide for his family however now in the 2000s, the feminists can argue against this trope. In the 2000s ~~the~~ women began to fight harder for a sense of equality, beating down the general meaning of the word "man", males were now seen as the "unnecessary" sex as women / feminists argued that men were not actually needed in order for society or a family to prosper. Men can be seen doing "women's" jobs, taking up the roles of a stay at home dad and taking care of children and doing more "feminine" coded jobs such as arts and crafts. Males are now encouraged to reveal emotions and are ~~encourag~~ encouraged to be anything than the stereotypical male.

1

2

1 The first part of this answer is rather general and not linked to a clearly made point that is directly focused on the question.

2 A clear point is made: the impact of feminism has led to a redefinition of the meaning of what it is to be a male. Men's roles have been recast in relation to work, home, childcare and emotions. This point is developed but only just.

Total mark awarded = 4 out of 10

How the candidate could have improved their answer

The candidate made one clear and developed point. The first part of the answer lacked a direct focus on the question and could only be seen as general support for the point made in relation to the impact of feminism on male identity. This approach limits the marks that can be obtained. Two clear and distinct points are required.

Example Candidate Response – low		Examiner comments
3	a	<p>The view that that the male identity is changing is a heavily supported statement. Previously, in older decades, males were ONLY seen as providers of the "bread makers" while women took a more passive role in caretaking and doing more housework. However, this is slowly changing as people are beginning to merge these certain predetermined roles. The concept of the "new man" has the belief that a man can do any form of labor and supports women to an equal position of power. Tasks around the house and caring for the children are now being pushed among the "new men" and more men, at younger ages, are beginning to align with this belief.</p>
		<p>1 There is one underdeveloped point made; that men are now more domestic and involved in childcare. The 'new man' is mentioned but is not accurately explained or supported.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 3 out of 10</p>

How the candidate could have improved their answer

The candidate made one clear point, but it is underdeveloped. A concept is mentioned but this is not explained and no sociological material was used to support the point. Two clear and developed points were needed to obtain full marks.

Common mistakes candidates made in this question

- Many candidates only made one point in their answer. To achieve full marks in this question, candidates should provide two clear and fully developed points.
- Many candidates' answers included lengthy historical descriptions of gender roles and did not focus directly on changes to male identity.
- Not all candidates used relevant sociological evidence to support the points they made.

Question 3(b)

Example Candidate Response – high		Examiner comments
3	<p>(b) Feminists tend to argue that despite the fact that males have become the "less important gender", they are still the same as they always were. In the case for where radical feminist argue, they believe that men are still the root of all evil and personally believe that men still have the upper hand over their female counterparts. Feminists believe in the case of family, the males are still being raised in order to overtake females, they argue that boys are typically trained from a young age how to become the bread winner of the household through their parents influence and through the influence of a societies & traditions.</p> <p>for example, in which a boy is taught from a young age by his father that he should not cry as it is not "manly". Feminists believe that males will always continue to believe they are the most dominant gender due to these influences and as such they believe that men cannot or will not change.</p>	<p>1 The point is made that, despite a superficial change, men remain 'the root of all evil' and continue to dominate. This is identified as a radical feminist position.</p> <p>2 The point is developed by reference to the continuing influence of parents in shaping boys' identity – as breadwinners and as being unemotional.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 5 out of 6</p>

How the candidate could have improved their answer

This is a good fully developed answer. However, the candidate could have made better use of relevant sociological material.

Example Candidate Response – middle

Examiner comments

3 b Nonetheless while sociology is significantly improving, it might not ~~others~~ can argue, that it is not moving fast enough. While ~~these~~ some ~~positive~~ and ideologies have changed when it comes to the 'male identity' common values are still instilled in men. For example, common roles are still overpopulated by men rather than women. Women are constantly joining career paths filled with women, while men are doing the same. Most high positions are given to men - these even if it's a woman populated field. For example, although most teachers are ~~base~~ women, their ~~base~~ supervisors, or superintendent's mostly consist of men. The business elites or top 10% of the higher class are a result of men. Most ~~of~~ top businesses and CEOs are owned by men. Therefore it changes the idea that 'Male Identity' is changing. Although some aspects of the male identity is changing, however the key responsibility of men are not. Another aspect that supports this idea is the male physique. Men are significantly encouraged to keep up with their physical appearance such as working out, having a ~~muscle~~ body muscular body is significantly encouraged ~~on~~ upon men because it signifies that they are the sole protector. They can defend a woman, values such as these ~~and~~ remain instilled in men. Therefore the idea that 'Male identity' is changing can be up to debate, as although it is gradually changing, it is not significantly changing.

1

2

3

1 The point is made that men still populate common roles. This is developed with reference to labour force examples.

2 The candidate makes a second point against the argument – that men are still required to maintain a masculine appearance. This is linked to their continuing 'protector role'.

3 As the question requires one argument against the view, only one point is rewarded. Both points have equal merit – they are both clear arguments but, considered separately, each is a little underdeveloped.

Total mark awarded = 4 out of 6

How the candidate could have improved their answer

The candidate should have focused their time and attention on one argument instead of two, as the question required.

Example Candidate Response – low		Examiner comments
3	b	<p>The functionalist would argue that despite the male's shift towards taking on more roles than one, it does not occur at such a magnitude magnitude that the greater identity of a man has changed as well. A single father can fulfill both roles of the family, but still functions as the primary provider in alignment with male identity.</p>
		<p>1 This is a simple assertion that not much has changed, but the point is undeveloped and lacking clarity.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 2 out of 6</p>

How the candidate could have improved their answer

The point made was sound but needed more development and supporting sociological material. The candidate needed to give examples demonstrating that change in male identity is minimal.

Common mistakes candidates made in this question

The most common mistake with this question was the tendency to give more than one argument against the view. Only one argument is required and only one will be rewarded. Attention should therefore be focused on identifying a single point and then developing and supporting it with relevant sociological material.

Question 5

Example Candidate Response – high

Examiner comments

5	<p>quan str in</p> <p>e) pos like them believe sci</p> <p>value free hypo the hypo deductive</p> <p>reliable (trustworthy)</p> <p>clp integ = more & cons sci</p> <p>that deductive (value free)</p> <p>of abstract world like qual conv</p> <p>There is a debate going on about strengths and limitations within a research method. Some sociologists believe that quantitative research methods have more strengths than limitations while others believe the opposite.</p> <p>1 Positivists agree with this view as they like to use quantitative methods for their research. Positivists believe that you can study society from a scientific approach. Positivists as well believe that the research should be quantitative from questionnaires, experiments and more. They focus on the reliability of their data and their attempts to make their research objective.</p> <p>Quantitative research has more strengths than limitations because they are value free. They are objective as there can not be bias because quantitative data is all numerical. This is also within experiments. Circling back to positivists believing society can be studied scientifically this can be seen with the hypothetico-deductive method. Rosenthal and Jacobson used the method for their lab experiment about low education children in Mexico. They created a hypothesis, collected data, analyzed it, and gave a conclusion. 2</p>
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1 The candidate identifies the view in the question as linked to positivism and the scientific approach. Key concepts and methods are introduced.

2 This paragraph takes a central concern of positivism (value freedom / objectivity) and shows how it can be seen as a strength. This is illustrated via a relevant quantitative method (experiments) and sociological study (Rosenthal). This is awarded marks in AO1 and AO2 for knowledge and application.

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

The third reason to support this view is that quantitative methods are reliable. Reliability is very important to positives. Quantitative methods are reliable because they can be tested over and over and still get primarily the same results. For example if you give a closeded questionnaire to people to answer and they give the same exact questionnaire to the same people, ~~the results~~ the results would mostly be the same. Also scientific reliability is important because it shows consistency and allows for generalization. **3**

On the other side of the argument are interpretivists who disagree with this view. Interpretivists do not like quantitative research methods and rather use qualitative research methods. Interpretivists believe that society can not be studied scientifically but rather through interactions on a day to day basis. They prefer not to use quantitative methods because it gives everything but the "why" of behavior. The why is what the interpretivists care in research more than anything. **4**

Another reason why they believe the limitations of quantitative research methods out weigh the strengths is because research can never truly be value free. This is because there is a choice in everything - what you want to study, what you actually study, the method used to study it and more. You can never truly be value free because within topic choice for example you have to think of funding. If the topic makes the government look bad they may not fund it which means you have to change the topic which ~~was~~ now makes the research not objective. **5**

Lastly, the limits outweigh the strengths because quantitative methods are not as valid as interpretivists would like them to be. Quantitative research methods get the what, where, when of behavior but miss the why. The why is what matters to them because they make the research more valid. The why and reasons behind peoples behaviors allows for the question being researched to be answered. The high rates of validity is what the quantitative research methods are lacking. **6**

3 The argument supporting the view continues by showing how quantitative methods are reliable. This is well developed and effective. The concept is carefully unpacked and illustrated, and there is a direct focus on the question.

4 Here, the interpretivist critique of the quantitative method is briefly outlined, but this section is rather undeveloped and juxtaposed.

5 This section provides some good evaluation of quantitative methods and, in particular, argues against the view that these methods are objective by reference to topic choice and funding.

6 There is a final weighing up of strengths and limitations and the candidate comes to a conclusion. This is not fully developed but is awarded more AO3 marks. The responses contain a range of points, some of which are detailed, and there is good use of sociological material. The evaluation points are explicit and direct.

AO1: 7 out of 8
 AO2: 7 out of 8
 AO3: 6 out of 10

Total marks awarded = 20 out of 26

How the candidate could have improved their answer

- This was a good response, but it was rather slight. Points were fairly detailed, but there wasn't a great range provided.
- The evaluation was explicit and accurate, but also rather narrow.

Example Candidate Response – middle

Examiner comments

5 ~~Qualitative~~ Quantitative and qualitative research are both favored and critiqued by these sociologists. The view that quantitative methods have more strengths than limits will be evaluated in this essay from both a Positivist and Interpretivist view.

Quantitative research methods are methods focused on numerical, computable data that can be analyzed. Some examples of quantitative methods are questionnaires, and structured interviews. These methods are favored by Positivists, who believe sociology can be studied like the natural world. A different view is taken by Interpretivists, who favor qualitative methods and do not see the scientific method being useful in sociological research. 1

Positivists believe in ~~qualitative~~ quantitative research, and claim many strengths to the data it collects and more. Most notably, these methods tend to be cheaper than qualitative methods because they are faster, and do not require much person to person connection. As for the data, the big strength is. Another strength is quantitative methods can be easily replicated and falsified by other researchers; these factors make the data more reliable if similar results are found. Quantitative methods are able to produce generalizable data because it is able to be replicated to multiple, diverse groups, and representative samples are able to be collected. 2

1 This is a sound introduction to the debate that introduces theoretical positions and relevant methods.

2 Three strengths are identified (practical, reliable and representative) and are linked to the positivist approach. More development of each point would improve the answer.

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued

Examiner comments

5 On the other hand, qualitative data favoring Interpretivists find limitations to quantitative, scientific-like methods used by positivists. A top limitation of quantitative data comes from Weber's idea of *Verstehen*. *Verstehen* is an empathetic ~~to~~ deeper understanding, which ~~is~~ Interpretivists get from methods like unstructured interviews which allows the open flow of conversation and question-asking by the researcher and interviewee. Interpretivists strive for *Verstehen* in their methods to increase validity of their data, the opposite of reliability positivists want. Validity is a second critique of quantitative methods from Interpretivists because validity valid data proves the research achieved the research question even if it cannot be as reliable data as other data.

In conclusion, quantitative methods have strengths and weaknesses, more or less depending on perspective. I believe the quantitative research methods ~~have~~ have more strengths than weaknesses, but I question their place in studies on humans and their behavior because people are not as predictable as science can be because of agency and the presence of deviance in all societies.

3 Evaluation is mainly achieved by contrasting positivism with the interpretivist approach. Validity is offered as an alternative to reliability, but this is somewhat underdeveloped.

4 The final point contains reference to science and agency but needs greater development. Overall, there is a range of strengths and limitations, but the approach is list-like and lacks development.

AO1: 6 out of 8
 AO2: 5 out of 8
 AO3: 5 out of 10

**Total mark awarded =
 16 out of 26**

How the candidate could have improved their answer

- The candidate introduced a good range of ideas, concepts and methods, but the points made were nearly all underdeveloped.
- There could have been greater application of the material. Only one quantitative method was applied to the methodological concepts.

Example Candidate Response – low

Examiner comments

5 Quantitative research methods follow and gather data which is definitive and given numerically. The strengths which come Quantitative data is easily charted, can be compared and analyzed to draw conclusions, and provides an ~~definit~~ ~~to~~ established boundary and meaning for the data. Quantitative research develops more concise conclusion with little to no room for speculation on the validity of the data collected. However, ~~as a~~ Quantitative research has its limitations. Unlike Qualitative data, quantitative data does not provide deeper explanation of the values being collected. This allows for fewer inferences to be made, and it can ~~all~~ also lead to wrongful conclusions. So long as the Quantitative research methods serve the purpose of the study, then it remains strong amongst ~~the~~ research.

1 A basic overview of quantitative data is given but without links to sociological approaches or methods. The concept of validity is mentioned but not developed.

However, quantitative research alone lacks all the ~~inf~~ information that may be required to draw accurate conclusions. A study can choose to focus on the quantitative data, which can provide a clean, clear answer and association for the study. In ~~reject~~ rejecting qualitative data, the researcher knows nothing else than the actions recorded. Conclusions drawn from such data can be weak and poorly put together as there is no qualitative data to back it up, such as an interview with participants on why they acted in the way that was recorded. This greater insight into the recorded quantitative data can provide for a much stronger conclusion to be drawn.

2 A contrast is made with qualitative data, but this is not developed. Credit is given for a two-sided approach, but the level of knowledge and understanding is low.

AO1: 3 out of 8
AO2: 3 out of 8
AO3: 3 out of 10

Total marks awarded =
9 out of 26

How the candidate could have improved their answer

- The candidate had a basic idea of the shape of the debate but there was little reference to key concepts and methods.
- Evidence of a greater knowledge of core sociological methods and their attributes would be the base line for improving this answer.

Common mistakes candidates made in this question

Many candidates usefully outlined the theoretical context for this question (positivist vs interpretivist approaches) but sometimes this meant that they lost direct focus on the question.

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