YEAR 11 GCSE SOCIOLOGY EXAM REVISION GUIDANCE

UPDATED

UNIT 2 TOPICS:

Social Inequality

- **Definition of/concepts:**
  - social inequality
  - stratification
  - power
  - wealth
  - prestige
  - ascribed status
  - achieved status
  - life chances
  - gender
  - ethnicity
  - social exclusion
  - absolute poverty
  - relative poverty

- **Types of Stratification** (division of society into different levels) based on :
  - social class
  - gender
  - ethnicity
  - age
  - closed systems of stratification e.g. caste system
  - open systems of stratification e.g. class system
  - examples of **differences in life chances** within each type of division,
    - e.g. between male and female within gender divisions;
    - related to education, employment, housing, income,
    - life expectancy, gender roles within the family;

- changes AND the **causes** of the changes **e.g.**

  Equal Pay Act 1970, Sex Discrimination Act 1975,

  Equal Opportunities Commission, related to gender issues;

  (The Equal Opportunities Commission **later merged with**

  The Commission for Racial Equality to form)

  The Equality and Human Rights Commission to tackle

  sexism, racism, and discrimination,

  Race Relations Act, and Commission for Racial Equality

  related to race/ethnicity issues.

  Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, to tackle

  Discrimination in employment and training.

  - Functionalist view of social class;
  - Marxist view of social class;
  - Weber's view of social class;

- **Social Class**:
  - how it can be measured e.g. The NS-SEC class scale i.e.

    The National Statistics Socio-economic Classification based on

     occupations;
  - problems in trying to measure social class;
  - importance of social class on – **LIFE CHANCES**;
  - **changes** AND **causes** of the changes to social classes, e.g.

    Changes in the occupational structure, skilled manual jobs have decreased and

     there had been a growth in professional and managerial jobs, but this has now

     slowed down.

- **Income and Wealth**:
  - definition for income, and wealth;
  - importance of income and wealth on **LIFE CHANCES**;
  - how income and wealth are distributed between the social

    classes within Britain.

- Social Mobility

  - definition of social mobility;

  - in<u>ter</u>-generational, and in<u>tra</u>-generational social mobility;

  - problems in trying to measure social mobility – long-range, short-range, self-recruitment;

  - influences on social mobility e.g. changes to the occupational structure;

  - routes to social mobility e.g. educational achievement;

  - barriers to social mobility, **e.g. glass ceiling**.

- Poverty

  - what is poverty? - absolute poverty, relative poverty

  - government's definition/measurement of poverty

  - measurements of poverty – related to:

    - **income levels,**

    - **a lack of items seen as necessities by the majority of the population**

      - **subjective measure, where people consider themselves to be poor.**

  - **social exclusion**

  - the **different social groups** likely to experience poverty;

  - the **life cycle of poverty;**

  - explanations of poverty: - The culture of poverty;

    - The cycle of deprivation;

    - Welfare dependency and the 'underclass';

    - The Marxist Approach;

    - Unemployment and the inadequacies of the

      Welfare state;

Social Control and Deviance

- Definition of/concepts:

  - crime;

  - deviance;

  - social order – lack of chaos, smooth functioning of society;

  - social control - maintaining order;

  - formal social control - (e.g. police enforcement, police caution,

    verbal warning/reprimand, community service, fines, probation, ASBO, prison

  - informal social control – (e.g. family, peer groups,)   3

- Consensus (Functionalist) view of social order – based on agreement;
- Conflict (Marxist) view of social order – the ruling class impose their views on others;

- **Statistics on crime**:
    - Types of statistics -
        - Official statistics (from police records, courts etc.);
        - Victim Survey (e.g. BCS);
        - Self-report Studies.
    - Strength and weakness of the different types of crime statistics;
        - Problems of - identifying crime, reporting, and recording crime, policing methods.

- **Social characteristics and crime** – how crime is related to :
    - age,
    - Gender,
    - Ethnicity,
    - Area.

- **Sociological explanations** for why crime is committed :
    - Inadequate **socialisation** within the family
    - peer group pressure and **sub-cultures**
    - **relative deprivation** – feeling poorly off compared to others
    - Marxists – **materialism** - capitalist society valuing material possessions
        - **consumerism** – wanting more and better goods
    - the **opportunity structure-** the types of legal and illegal opportunities available
    - stereotyping
    - Labelling and the self-fulfilling prophecy

- **Gender and Crime** – explanation for the differences:
  - different gender socialisation
  - different opportunity to commit crime
  - different social control of behaviour and activities
  - chivalry thesis – the police and courts maybe easier on females;
  - the statistics on male and female crime , are not accurate.

- **Social Class and crime** – explanations for the differences:
  - different socialisation – different norms and values
  - material deprivation
  - relative deprivation
  - anomie – feeling of frustration due to lack of opportunities
  - educational underachievement leading to – unemployment,
    - poor job opportunity,
    - low income.

- **White Collar Crime** – is committed by middle class people in the course of their jobs
  - **occupational crime** – this is carried out by individual's in work and ranges from minor theft of property to large scale fraud;
  - **corporate crime** – carried out by executives to increase profit and can include such activities as selling harmful products;
  - **computer crime** – using computer to commit crimes during the course of their job;
  - **professional crime** – carried out as lifetime career, such as drug running.

- **Crime and the Mass Media** – the effect of how the media presents crime;
  - exaggeration and distortion may create a moral panic;
  - stereotypical presentation, may create 'folk devils' e.g. ALL young people wearing a hoodie are troublemakers;
  - deviancy amplification may occur as others are encouraged by the media reports to behave in a deviant/criminal way.

Mass Media

- **Definition of/concepts:**
    - mass media
    - traditional media
    - new media
    - electronic media
    - press
    - broadcasting
    - digital technology
    - interactivity
    - convergence
    - internet
    - quality newspaper
    - middle market
    - mass market
    - hypodermic syringe approach
    - users and gratification approach
    - decoding approach
    - audience
    - socialisation
    - social identities
    - norm referencing
    - stereotyping
    - political socialisation
    - pluralist approach
    - conflict approach
    - power
    - agenda setting
    - democracy
    - deviancy amplification

- **What are the Mass Media:**
    - Types of media - traditional media
        - new media
        - electronic media
        - press
        - broadcasting.

- **Developments** in the media and what it means for the consumers

      – digitalization

      - interactivity

      - convergence

      - internet.

- **Effect of the Mass Media on their Audiences according to**:
  - hypodermic syringe approach
  - users and gratification approach
  - decoding approach

- **The Role of the Mass Media in the Socialisation process**:
  - as an agency of socialisation provide **powerful sources of information and knowledge** about the world, life and relationships;
  - play an important part in the development of our **identities**;
  - provides **'norm referencing'** for outlining boundaries of acceptable behaviour;
  - during **political socialisation**, providing political values, political beliefs and political preferences.

- **Press Ownership and the Content of the Press:**
  - **patterns** of press ownership – the concentration of press ownership;
  - the **pluralist approach** to press ownership, i.e. a range of views and interests exist in society;
  - the **conflict approach** to press ownership – the view that there is a conflict of interest between different groups in society, and that the **owners are a minority group** and are **wealthy and powerful, with a lot of influence;**
  - **agenda setting** by the mass media which focus attention on particular issues and topics.
  - **norm referencing** by the media, which outline **the boundaries of acceptable behaviour; and relate these in positive and negative ways to different groups in society;**
  - **positive and negative images of different groups in society are created;**
  - **the media have the power to shape public opinion.**

- **Other factors that affect how News is Selected and Presented**:
  - **news values** i.e. what is considered 'newsworthy';
  - the **profit motive** i.e. whether the newspapers are likely to achieve a large circulation, and make a lot of money;
  - whether **advertisers** agree with the newspaper's views on particular issues, otherwise they may withdraw their business;
  - **legal constraints** on content to avoid 'libel' for example;
  - **state/government restrictions**, for example in times war or for national security reasons;
  - restrictions placed by **Ofcom,** (British Office of Communication) which deals with complaints about the content of the media, and The **Press Complaints Commission,** which deal with complaints about the editorial content of newspapers and magazines.

- **Representations of different social groups within the Mass Media**:
  - provides **'norm referencing'** for outlining boundaries of what is considered acceptable and is not acceptable;
  - provides **positive and negative images** of different social groups, such as gender, ethnicity, and social class;
  - may encourage **stereotyping** – distorted or exaggerated images of social groups, and **labelling**;
  - may **not represent realistic images** of different social groups.

- **How the Mass Media may influence the distribution of Power and Democracy**:
  - concentrated ownership and control of the mass media may limit the distribution of power and the sharing of power; the **conflict view** as above;
  - the **pluralist approach** to press ownership, i.e. a range of views and interests exist in society and this may help to spread the distribution of power and influence in society, as above;
  - the **internet is seen as increasing the distribution of power and influence** in society as people **can create content on the internet**;
  - the **digital divide** may **restrict the distribution of power and influence** in society, as not all groups in society have access to the internet.
  - see 'Press Ownership and the Content of the Press' above.

- **The Mass Media and Crime** – the effect of how the media presents crime;
    - exaggeration and distortion may create **a moral panic;**
    - stereotypical presentation, may create **'folk devils' e.g. ALL young people wearing a hoodie are troublemakers**;
    - **deviancy amplification** may occur as others are encouraged by the media reports to behave in a deviant/criminal way.

- **Social Issues related to the Mass Media**:
    - the affect of **media exposure and violence** –
        - **The hypodermic-syringe approach – 1963 research by Bandura with nursery school children suggested that there was a link;**
        - Gauntlett 2001, suggests that there are problems with the research into the effect of the mass media on violence; Gauntlett suggest that violent people should be studied;
        - studies of comparing non-offending young people with offending young people, **found that offending young people were less exposed to violence**, which disagrees with the earlier study.
        - Gauntlett points out that **studies which actually interview those involved in violence, fail to show a strong connection between screen violence and real-life violence**.
        - Suggest that the causes of violence and crime are more likely to be found in poverty, unemployment et.

REMINDERS

- Essay Question, at the end of each Topic :

   You need to indicate - the extent of, or **how far sociologists, agree/disagree**,
   and then to give reasons for your answer.

   You will also need to give the arguments For and Against.

- You need to look through the SAMPLE/previous GCSE Sociology Exam Papers,
   which are on the website: www.aqa.org.uk

- If there are any CONCERNS then you need to see your Sociology Teacher.