Your notes

GCSE Sociology: revision notes

The sociological approach and socialisation

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Key concepts

- Culture: the shared way of life of a group, including its **norms**, **values**, language and customs.
- **Norms** are unwritten rules about behaviour, such as queuing. **Values** are beliefs about what is important, such as honesty.
- Roles are the expected behaviour of a position, such as a parent or teacher. Status is a position in society: **ascribed status** is given at birth (such as royalty); **achieved status** is earned (such as a doctor).
- Identity is how we see ourselves and how others see us, shaped by gender, ethnicity, class, age and more.

Socialisation

- **Socialisation** is learning the **norms** and **values** of society.
- Primary **socialisation** happens in the family in early childhood.
- Secondary **socialisation** happens later, through agencies such as school, peer groups, the media, religion and the workplace.
- Cases of feral children, raised with little human contact, suggest that much human behaviour is learned (nurture) rather than inborn (nature).

Social control

- **Social control** is the way society makes people follow its **norms**.
- Formal **social control** uses written rules and official agencies, such as the police and courts.
- Informal **social control** comes from family, friends and peers, through approval or disapproval.
- **Sanctions** are rewards (positive **sanctions**, such as praise) or punishments (negative **sanctions**, such as a detention).

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Key terms

Socialisation	Learning the norms and values of society.
Norms	Unwritten rules about how to behave.
Values	Beliefs about what is important.
Ascribed status	A position given at birth.
Achieved status	A position earned through effort.
Social control	The ways society makes people follow its norms.
Sanction	A reward or punishment that encourages people to follow norms.
Agency of socialisation	A group or institution that socialises people, such as the family.

Quick questions

Cover the answers and test yourself: remembering is what makes it stick.

1. What is socialisation?
2. Where does primary socialisation take place?
3. Which is an agency of secondary socialisation?
4. What are norms?
5. What are values?
6. What is ascribed status?
7. What is achieved status?
8. Which is an example of formal social control?

Answers

1. Learning the norms and values of society
2. In the family
3. School
4. Unwritten rules about how to behave
5. Beliefs about what is important
6. A position given at birth
7. A position earned through effort
8. The police

What to do next

Practise 10 questions on this topic

Try 4 exam questions, with mark schemes

Read the lesson, one step at a time

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