



**ZIMBABWE SCHOOL  
EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL  
(ZIMSEC)**

**SOCIOLOGY  
2252**

**ORDINARY LEVEL SYLLABUS**

**EXAMINATION SYLLABUS FOR 2013- 2018**

# SOCIOLOGY

## ORDINARY LEVEL/SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

### SUBJECT 2252

Subject 2252 is available in the **November** examination only.

#### *Scheme of Examination*

1. All candidates will offer Paper 1 and paper 2.
2. Paper 1 will be of **2½ hours** and candidates will **be** required to answer any **four** of the ten questions which will be set.
3. Paper 2 will be **1¾ hours**. Candidates will answer **three** questions from Section **A** to **F**, with no more than **two** chosen from **any one** section. **Three** questions will be set in each section.
4. Paper one will be worth **60%** of the total marks for the subject, and paper 2 will be worth **40%**.

### Syllabus for Paper 1

#### *Introduction*

Paper one attempts to ensure that all candidates understand the distinctive nature of sociological explanation and that they appreciate something of the contribution of other disciplines to social understanding.

One major section of the syllabus for this paper is concerned with the relationship between the individual, culture and society. This inevitably involves an extended consideration of socialization (as a process of 'making social' and as a process of becoming a competent member of a social group). In order to encourage students to become critical of things, which may be taken for granted in the context of their own culture, the syllabus explicitly requires students to engage in cross-cultural comparison where this is appropriate.

The other main section of the syllabus focuses on the analysis of political and economic institutions and their relationship with social stratification.

1. The individual, Culture and Society.
  - (a) *The relationship between the individual and society.*
    - (i) *Individual and Society.* Conceptualizations of the individual/society relationship. The problem of 'socially structured action' and the 'creative individual act'. The nature of sociological and psychological explanations compared.
    - (ii) *The Social in human nature.* The pre-social infant. The unique extent to which human beings *learn* their behaviour.

- (iii) *Primary socialization as a process.*
  - The development of language and a sense of social structure. Criticisms of behaviourist accounts of learning in early childhood.
  - The development of the individual through communicative interaction with others. The child as an active interpreter of his environment; the importance of the context of social interaction. Social role, role-expectations, role-taking, role-making. The development of the 'self' in social interaction.
- (iv) *Secondary socialization as a process.* The 'self' as precarious, as constantly changing, as dependent upon particular sets of social relationships in which the individual is involved at various stages in his life.

The idea of 'career' as a way of thinking about the individual's passage through a succession of social institutions each of which can be regarded as offering the individual range of possible 'identities'. The importance of 'significant others' in developing and sustaining a sense of identity.

Pear groups and group constraints on the ideas, opinions and values of the individual; the emergence of shared 'definitions of the situation'. The development of 'subcultures' within social institutions.

(b) *Cultural Experience and Conceptions of Reality*

- (i) Socialisation as the process through which children learn the language and stocks of 'knowledge' of their particular social group, thereby learning to think about and experience the world in terms of their concepts and categories. The problem of 'ethnocentric' thinking – that culturally relative patterns may be experienced as absolutes.
- (ii) Comparative studies as a way of examining variations in what counts as 'normal' behaviour in different cultures. For example, comparative studies of:
  - cultural differences in conceptions of childhood and adolescence.
  - cultural differences in conceptions of normal sex-role behaviour and gender characteristics.
  - cultural differences in conceptions of beauty and ugliness.
  - cultural differences in perception: the idea that cultural experience may in some ways affect how we perceive the world.
- (iii) Ethnocentric thinking about groups within one's own society – (people like us who are 'normal' and 'those other people' who are 'odd', 'queer', 'not civilized', etc).

Stereotyping as an example of an ethnocentric way of seeing members of social groups other than one's own. Hostility towards stereotyped minorities, e.g. racial minorities, sexual 'deviants'.

‘Some are more equal than others’ – the existence of differences in power and influence as between different sections of society; the significance of such differences in relation to the capacity to sustain some interpretations of social reality as more plausible or correct than others. Examples might include ‘obvious’ cases of propaganda, the manipulation of language, e.g. in some aspects of advertising, professional ‘expertise’ and the power to ‘define the situation’ within the recognized area of expertise: psychiatrist, teachers, sociologists as examples.

## 2. **Social Stratification, Politics and Power**

The aim of this section of the syllabus is to encourage students to explore different sociological interpretations of the relationships between economic institutions, political institutions and patterns of social stratification, primarily with reference to Developing countries. (The main focus will be on Zimbabwe).

One main objective of this section is to discourage approaches which treat the analysis of social stratification or of policies merely as separate sociological specialisms. Here the emphasis will be on the examination of the basic character of developing societies and the nature of the relationships between the fundamental social institutions of those societies. More specifically, it is expected that students will have been introduced to the basic concepts and relevant empirical evidence concerning:

- (a) The process of industrialization in Western societies (particularly Great Britain); changes in the form of the division of labour which accompanied industrialization; changes in patterns of social stratification.
- (b) Patterns of social stratification in contemporary developing societies with particular reference to analyses and empirical studies of patterns of social stratification in African countries and beyond.
  - the distribution of wealth and income;
  - elites, their membership and patterns of recruitment;
  - the definition and incidence of poverty;
  - changes in patterns of social stratification, e.g. the embourgeoisement thesis.
- (c) The nature and distribution of political and economic power in Western industrial societies; competing interpretations:
  - democratic pluralism within a framework of liberal-democratic political institutions;
  - dominant elites (including the idea of the ‘power elite’);
  - dominant social classes and the bases of their domination.

This section should involve some consideration of differing interpretations of the role of the state in contemporary Western societies and developing countries.

## **SYLLABUS FOR PAPER 2**

The aim of this paper is to allow teachers and their students greater freedom to examine a limited number of more specialized areas of sociological study in greater detail than is normally possible in an Ordinary Level Syllabus.

### ***SECTION A. The family and Kinship***

Family and kinship in small-scale, traditional societies (kinship and other social relationships: 'multiplex' relations; exchange, reciprocity and obligation among members of kinship groups: main types of descent-system; varieties in patterns of marriage and marital dissolution), changes in the structure and functions of the family and the process of industrialization, kinship connections and membership of social elites; changes in relationship within the family in contemporary industrial societies: e.g. parents and children, the elderly, the changing position and consciousness of women, conjugal relationships, marital dissolution, alternatives to the nuclear family.

### ***SECTION B. Education***

Education, social mobility and social stratification: competing interpretations: e.g. education as a sub-system functionally adapted to the needs of advanced industrial society or education as a mechanism in the reproduction of a system of class domination.

The concern about equality of educational opportunity and research into social influence on educational achievement; the debate about 'cultural deprivation'. Power and authority in educational institutions. The curriculum and the 'hidden curriculum'. Educational Alternatives.

Youth and the idea of youth culture.

Education and sex-roles, women's education and the relative educational performance of boys and girls.

### ***SECTION C. Culture, Communications and the Mass Media***

Language, other symbolic systems and communication; the stratification of forms of cultural expression: 'high culture', 'mass culture', 'popular culture', etc. The mass media – their ownership, control and organisation. The influence of the mass media, e.g. in relation to political consciousness, in relation to patterns of consumption. The role of advertising.

The idea of repressive and manipulative forms of communication: indoctrination, propaganda, bias, and distortion.

Youth culture, 'popular' culture and the role of mass media.

#### ***SECTION D. Occupations***

Industrialization and occupational specialization; occupational groups and sectional interest; the development of occupational associations: trade unions, the professions and the phenomenon of professionalisation.

Occupation, social class and politics, e.g. institutional and less formal relationships between occupational organisations and political parties. Occupational strategies: e.g. monopolization of provision of a particular service, industrial action; changes in the strategies of occupational groups. The position of women and the occupational structure of industrial societies.

#### ***SECTION E. Population***

World population growth; patterns of mortality and disease in different types of society; patterns of fertility in different types of society; the relationship between demographic trends and other socio-economic factors in developing societies including comparative studies of attempts to reduce the birth rate in various 'third world' countries.

#### ***SECTION F. Crime and delinquency***

Law and law breaking in traditional society; crime and delinquency in industrial society, including an examination of official statistics of crime and delinquency and their interpretation; theories of delinquency (including for example; 'labelling theory', sub cultural theories of juvenile delinquency).

N.B. It is recognized that there is some overlap between various sections of this paper and paper 1. This is intentional: some teachers may wish to teach certain elements of the syllabus for Paper 1 via a consideration of some of the more substantive issues in paper 2.