4.1 Religious Organisations: Churches, Denominations, Sects and Cults: Test Pack

AQA 7192 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Use sociological vocabulary. For extended answers write in full sentences. At least two extended answers require full sentence responses.

1 Which sociologist originally developed the classical church-sect typology that contrasted large inclusive organisations with small exclusive groups in studies of religion?

- ☐ A) Emile Durkheim
- ☐ B) Karl Marx
- ☐ C) Ernst Troeltsch
- ☐ D) Peter Berger

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 Give two brief examples of organisational changes an established church might make to try to reverse membership decline, detailing each example.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

3 Using Troeltsch and Niebuhr, explain two differences in how legitimacy and authority are claimed by a state-linked established church compared with a small sect.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

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4 Define the term 'sect' as used in sociological typologies, including its typical size, demands on members and relation to wider society.

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

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5 State one feature that distinguishes Niebuhr's denomination from both an established church and a sect in organisational typology.

(Total for Question 5 is 2 marks)

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Mark scheme · 4.1 Religious Organisations: Churches, Denominations, Sects and Cults: Test Pack

Question 1

C (Ernst Troeltsch) **B1**

Answer: C

Question 2

a correct example, e.g. modernising worship style or introducing community outreach programmes **B1**

a second correct example, e.g. more flexible service times or increased use of social media for engagement **B1**

Answer: Examples include modernising worship styles and community outreach programmes, and offering more flexible service times and active social media engagement to attract new or lapsed members.

Question 3

identifies that an established church claims legitimacy through historical ties, law or state recognition **B1**

explains how this formal legitimacy contrasts with a sect's claim to legitimacy through religious purity and member commitment rather than state recognition **B1**

identifies a second difference, e.g. an established church exercises authority through formal, bureaucratic structures **B1**

explains how this institutional authority contrasts with a small sect's often charismatic leadership, where members follow a leader's personal authority and strict demands **B1**

Answer: An established church claims legitimacy through historical ties, law or state recognition, whereas a small sect claims legitimacy through religious purity and member commitment rather than state recognition. A second difference concerns how authority is exercised: an established church uses formal, bureaucratic structures, whereas a small sect often follows a charismatic leader whose personal authority demands strict commitment.

Question 4

identifies a sect as a small, exclusive religious group often in tension with wider society (oe) **B1**

development, e.g. notes that sects demand high commitment and strict behavioural standards from members **B1**

Answer: A sect is a small, exclusive religious group often in tension with wider society, demanding high commitment and strict behavioural standards from members.

Question 5

identifies a distinguishing feature, e.g. a denomination is more tolerant than a sect but lacks the state authority of a church **B1**

brief development, e.g. it maintains a distinct identity without strict exclusivity or official state status **B1**

Answer: A denomination is more tolerant and less exclusive than a sect but does not claim the state authority or official status of an established church.

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