4.8 Class, Gender, Ethnicity and Age: Patterns of Religiosity

AQA 7192 · about 60 minutes · Write-in edition

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. For short answers one or two sentences are sufficient. For the final 12-mark question write in full sentences and include named studies where possible. Spend about 60 minutes in total.

1 Using Item B and your own knowledge, analyse two reasons why women are often found to be more religious than men.

(Total for Question 1 is 6 marks)

2 Describe two differences between formal religious membership statistics and measures of private belief when studying religiosity.

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

3 State one way in which Heelas and Bruce's work on the spiritual market differs from a more traditional view of class and religion.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

4 State one finding from Modood's research on ethnicity and religiosity in Britain. Give a brief development or example.

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

5 Explain one reason why working-class people might be more attracted to high-commitment religious groups than middle-class people.

(Total for Question 5 is 2 marks)

6 Discuss how far sociologists would agree that differences in religiosity between social groups are mainly the result of socialisation and cultural identity, rather than structural factors such as class-based economic disadvantage or life-cycle effects. In your answer use named studies and reach a supported conclusion.

(Total for Question 6 is 12 marks)

7 Define what sociologists mean by 'religiosity' when studying class, gender, ethnicity and age patterns of belief and practice in Britain.

(Total for Question 7 is 2 marks)

8 Identify and explain two patterns of religiosity linked to ethnicity in the UK.

(Total for Question 8 is 4 marks)

9 Describe one way in which age affects patterns of religiosity in contemporary Britain.

(Total for Question 9 is 3 marks)

10 Item A: Survey results from a hypothetical local survey of 800 adults in a British town in 2025. 40% report attending a place of worship at least monthly; 30% identify as 'strongly religious'; 20% are members of a formal religious organisation; 60% say religion is important in maintaining cultural identity for some ethnic groups. Using Item A and your own knowledge, identify two limitations of these self-reported measures of religiosity.

(Total for Question 10 is 4 marks)

11 State one finding commonly reported by researchers about gender and religiosity in Britain. Give a brief development or example.

(Total for Question 11 is 2 marks)

12 Name four social-group patterns of religiosity that sociologists often study, as applied to Britain in the 21st century.

(Total for Question 12 is 4 marks)

Mark scheme · 4.8 Class, Gender, Ethnicity and Age: Patterns of Religiosity

Question 1

identifies a first reason, e.g. socialisation: women are socialised into caring roles and religious socialisation **B1**

develops first reason with application to Item B, e.g. Priya's community role reflects socialisation into communal and caring religious activities **B1**

identifies a second reason, e.g. connection to life events: women have closer ties to birth, death and family rituals **B1**

develops second reason with application to Item B, e.g. Erin's private practice could reflect personal family or emotional ties even without public attendance **B1**

provides sociological support or named study, e.g. refers to Miller and Hoffman or Davie to support the point **B1**

accurate application across both reasons, showing how Item B illustrates the two explanations **B1**

Answer: Answers should analyse two reasons, for example: (1) Socialisation, where women are often encouraged into caring and community roles that link to religious participation, as seen in Priya helping at the mosque; (2) Closeness to life events and family rituals, where women may be more involved in birth, baptism and funerals and so maintain religious ties even in private, as Erin does with occasional prayer. A correct answer will support points with a named study such as Miller and Hoffman or Davie and apply them to both women in Item B.

Question 2

identifies one difference, e.g. membership records measure formal affiliation while private belief measures personal conviction **B1**

development or example, e.g. someone may hold religious beliefs without formal membership, so the measures need not give the same picture of religiosity **B1**

identifies a second difference in how the measures are collected or defined, e.g. membership statistics may use organisational records with varying inclusion rules, whereas private-belief measures usually use respondents' accounts of their beliefs **B1**

development or example, e.g. membership totals depend on who is included in the records, while private-belief results depend on the wording and interpretation of belief questions; membership must not be assumed to require active joining **B1**

Answer: First, membership statistics record formal affiliation, whereas private-belief measures capture personal conviction. Someone may believe without being a formal member, so the measures need not give the same picture of religiosity. Second, membership statistics may come from organisational records with varying inclusion rules, whereas private-belief measures usually rely on respondents' accounts. Membership totals therefore depend on who is included in the records, while belief results depend on the wording and interpretation of belief questions; no particular membership rule, such as active joining, can be assumed.

Question 3

identifies a genuine difference, e.g. they focus on consumerist, New Age spirituality among middle classes rather than class-based church membership alone **B1**

brief development **B1**

Answer: Heelas and Bruce emphasise a spiritual market and New Age consumption among the middle classes, rather than viewing class differences only in terms of formal church membership or sect attraction.

Question 4

identifies a genuine finding, e.g. some minority ethnic groups report higher levels of religious belief and practice than the white British majority **B1**

brief development or example **B1**

Answer: Modood found that some minority ethnic groups show higher levels of religious belief and practice than the white British majority. Religion can help maintain cultural identity and community support among migrants, although religiosity varies between and within minority groups.

Question 5

identifies a reason, e.g. such groups offer community, support and a promise of meaning which compensates for economic disadvantage **B1**

brief development or link to Weber's theodicy of disprivilege **B1**

Answer: High-commitment groups offer community, support and a promise of meaning or future reward that compensates for economic disadvantage, consistent with Weber's theodicy of disprivilege.

Question 6

Level 1 Simple assertions about causes of group differences with little sociological support, limited use of studies or examples, and a weak or no conclusion. **1-3**

Level 2 Some balanced points referencing relevant ideas, with at least one named study or concept applied, limited evaluation and a basic conclusion. **4-6**

Level 3 Clear comparison of competing explanations, using several named studies or concepts such as Modood, Davie, Miller and Hoffman, Heelas and Bruce, Weber, Voas and Crockett, with reasoned evaluation and a supported conclusion. **7-9**

Level 4 Well developed, balanced analysis of socialisation and cultural identity explanations against structural and cohort/life-cycle accounts, accurate use of multiple named studies, consideration of measurement issues, and a convincing, well-supported conclusion. **10-12**

Indicative content:

- Socialisation explanations: gender socialisation leading to women's greater religiosity; Miller and Hoffman on socialisation into caring roles; Davie's ideas about believing without belonging and vicarious religion as cultural patterns.
- Cultural identity explanations: Modood on religion's role in maintaining cultural identity for some ethnic minorities; religion as community cohesion and cultural marker among migrants.
- Structural explanations: Weber's theodicy of disprivilege and attraction of the working class to sects or high-commitment groups; Heelas and Bruce on middle-class spiritual consumption linked to resources and lifestyle.
- Age and cohort explanations: Voas and Crockett on cohort effects and generational decline versus life-cycle change where individuals become more religious with age.
- Methodological issues: differences between self-reported belief, attendance, and formal membership; dark figure of private religiosity; survey and sampling limits.
- Evaluation: strengths and limits of each explanation, how they can be complementary (for example socialisation operates within structural contexts), and a supported judgement on which explanation is most convincing overall, with reference to evidence.

Question 7

identifies religiosity as the degree of religious belief, practice and involvement, including worship attendance and private belief (oe) **B1**

development, e.g. this can include formal membership, frequency of attendance and strength of personal belief **B1**

Answer: Religiosity is the degree of religious belief, practice and involvement, including worship attendance and private belief; it covers formal membership, frequency of attendance and strength of personal belief.

Question 8

identifies one pattern, e.g. some minority ethnic groups show higher levels of religious practice and attendance **B1**

explains why, e.g. Modood and others argue religion can help maintain cultural identity and community support among migrants **B1**

identifies a second pattern, e.g. differences exist between and within minority groups, not a single uniform pattern **B1**

explains why, e.g. generational change, ethnicity, and the role of religion in community life mean religiosity varies by age and acculturation **B1**

Answer: Some minority ethnic groups show higher religious practice and attendance, because religion helps maintain cultural identity and community support (Modood); but there are important differences between and within groups, since generational change and acculturation affect levels of religiosity.

Question 9

identifies a genuine pattern, e.g. older people attend religious services more often than younger people **B1**

development, e.g. congregations are often ageing, with fewer young regular attenders **B1**

further development or example, e.g. Voas and Crockett argue this is partly a cohort effect, with younger cohorts less religious **B1**

Answer: Older people generally attend religious services more than younger people, so congregations tend to be ageing; Voas and Crockett argue this reflects cohort change, with younger generations being less religious.

Question 10

identifies one limitation, e.g. social desirability or exaggeration in self-reporting **B1**

explains or gives example drawn from Item A, e.g. 'strongly religious' may be overstated in a local survey where respondents want to appear committed **B1**

identifies a second limitation, e.g. differences between behaviour and belief, or membership vs practice **B1**

explains or links to Item A, e.g. only 20% membership but 40% monthly attendance suggests measurement differences **B1**

Answer: Answers may note social desirability bias, so the 30% saying they are 'strongly religious' could be overstated; and that different measures capture different things, since 40% report monthly attendance but only 20% formal membership, showing behaviour and membership do not always match.

Question 11

identifies a genuine pattern, e.g. women report higher levels of religious belief and practice than men **B1**

brief development or example **B1**

Answer: Research commonly finds that women report higher levels of religious belief and practice than men. For example, practice includes attending services or praying privately, so the finding concerns behaviour as well as belief; it is a general pattern rather than a rule for every individual.

Question 12

one correct pattern named, e.g. class	**B1**
second correct pattern named, e.g. gender	**B1**
third correct pattern named, e.g. ethnicity	**B1**
fourth correct pattern named, e.g. age or generation	**B1**

Answer: Class; gender; ethnicity; age (generation).