4.9 Measuring Religiosity: Defining and Operationalising Religious Belief: Test Pack

AQA 7192 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. For the longer, levels-marked question, write full sentences and give a brief conclusion. Show application to the Items where asked. Use sociological terms where appropriate.

1 Which one of the following is an operationalisation of religious behaviour in survey research?

- ☐ A) Asking respondents whether they feel they belong to a faith community
- ☐ B) Measuring weekly attendance at a place of worship in the last month
- ☐ C) Interpreting a respondent's private prayer as sincere belief
- ☐ D) Assuming nationality equals religion

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

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2 Explain one way cultural or nominal identification can make census religion questions overstate active religiosity.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

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3 Define what sociologists mean by 'belonging' when using the believing, belonging and behaving framework to measure religiosity.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

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4 Item A: Official attendance figures for a mid-sized UK town, year 2025. Local council publishes aggregated weekly attendance: Church A average weekly 240, Church B average weekly 40, Mosque average weekly 180, Synagogue average weekly 30. Council notes these figures use place-of-worship registers and event sign-ins, but do not separate regular worshippers from visitors.

(a) Using Item A and your knowledge, identify two limitations of these official attendance figures for measuring true religiosity in this town. **(2)**

(b) Using Item A and your knowledge, explain one way these attendance figures might overstate the number of committed adherents in the town. **(2)**

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

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5 Give one reason why census self-identification of religion may under-record private belief, even when people are not affiliated to a formal religion.

(Total for Question 5 is 2 marks)

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Mark scheme · 4.9 Measuring Religiosity: Defining and Operationalising Religious Belief: Test Pack

Question 1

B (measuring weekly attendance is a straightforward operationalisation of religious behaviour) **B1**

Answer: B

Question 2

identifies the effect, e.g. many people mark a religion out of cultural identity rather than current practice **B1**

development, e.g. this can produce high numbers of 'belonging' without corresponding 'behaviour' or 'believing' indicators **B1**

Answer: Many people mark a religion out of cultural identity rather than current practice, producing high numbers of belonging without corresponding behaviour or belief indicators.

Question 3

identifies 'belonging' as identification with a religious group or tradition, often expressed through self-identification or membership **B1**

development, e.g. it can include cultural or family identification without active practice **B1**

Answer: Belonging is identification with a religious group or tradition, often expressed by self-identification or membership and sometimes including cultural or family ties without active practice.

Question 4

(a) identifies one limitation drawn from the item, e.g. figures do not distinguish regular worshippers from visitors or one-off attendees **B1**

(a) identifies a second limitation, e.g. private practice or non-attending believers are not counted **B1**

(a) Answer: The figures do not distinguish regular worshippers from visitors or one-off attendees, and they miss private practice or believers who do not attend a place of worship.

(b) identifies how overstatement can occur, e.g. event sign-ins and festival visitors inflate weekly averages **B1**

(b) development, e.g. special services or tourists can raise numbers temporarily, making averages misleading about regular commitment **B1**

(b) Answer: Event sign-ins and festival visitors can inflate weekly averages; special services or tourists can raise numbers temporarily, making averages misleading about regular commitment.

Question 5

identifies a reason, e.g. social desirability or stigma may lead people to say 'no religion' even if they privately believe **B1**

brief development, e.g. people may avoid labels or fear discrimination so census categories understate private spirituality **B1**

Answer: Social desirability or fear of stigma may lead people to record 'no religion' even if they privately believe, so census categories can understate private spirituality.

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