5.1 Global Development: Theories of Development, Underdevelopment and World Systems: 30-minute Pack

AQA 7192 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Write in full sentences for questions worth 4 marks or more. Spend about 30 minutes in total.

1 Explain two methodological challenges researchers face when trying to test whether colonial history causes present-day underdevelopment.

(Total for Question 1 is 4 marks)

2 Using Item A and your own knowledge, explain two ways dependency theory and world-systems theory offer similar explanations for persistent inequality between countries.

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

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3 Discuss how far sociologists would agree that neo-liberal policies are the main cause of rising inequality in many developing countries today. Refer to relevant theories and use material from the items where appropriate.

(Total for Question 3 is 12 marks)

4 Define what dependency theorists mean by the term 'underdevelopment' in the context of global economic history.

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

5 Outline one distinctive claim of world-systems theory about how the global economy organizes development.

(Total for Question 5 is 2 marks)

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Mark scheme · 5.1 Global Development: Theories of Development, Underdevelopment and World Systems: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

identifies challenge one, e.g. isolating causal effects given many intervening variables over long historical periods **B1**

develops challenge one, e.g. factors like institutions, geography and post-independence policy also influence outcomes making causality hard to establish **B1**

identifies challenge two, e.g. limited or biased historical data and difficulties measuring concepts like exploitation **B1**

develops challenge two, e.g. incomplete records and differing metrics across countries reduce comparability and inference strength **B1**

Answer: Researchers struggle to isolate causal effects because many intervening variables such as institutions, geography and post-independence policy influence outcomes, and they face limited or biased historical data and difficulties measuring concepts like exploitation, reducing comparability and inference strength.

Question 2

identifies similarity one, e.g. both see current inequality as rooted in historical patterns of unequal exchange and exploitation **B1**

develops similarity one with reference to Item A, e.g. Item A's link between colonial history and low GDP fits both accounts of extraction and unequal trade **B1**

identifies similarity two, e.g. both emphasise external, systemic causes rather than solely internal cultural or entrepreneurial failings **B1**

develops similarity two with reference to Item A, e.g. Item A's pattern of raw material supply to rich countries illustrates a systemic external relationship **B1**

Answer: Both theories see persistent inequality as rooted in historical unequal exchange and exploitation, and Item A's correlation between colonial history and low GDP fits this view. They also emphasise external systemic causes rather than internal cultural failings, and Item A's note that former colonies supply raw materials to rich countries illustrates this external relationship.

Question 3

Level 1 Basic and generalised points, limited knowledge of theories. Little or no use of the item. Conclusions are undeveloped or absent. **1-3**

Level 2 Clear knowledge of one or two relevant theories such as neo-liberalism and dependency, some attempt to apply Item A or B. Analysis is present but may be partial. Conclusion is tentative. **4-6**

Level 3 Good range of knowledge and understanding of competing perspectives, including neo-liberal critiques and dependency/world-systems explanations. Applies the items to support arguments and shows analytical balance. Conclusion is supported. **7-9**

Level 4 Excellent analysis and evaluation of multiple theoretical perspectives. Uses Item A and Item B where relevant to support both sides. Considers empirical and theoretical counter-arguments, methodological issues and reaches a well-supported, balanced conclusion about the extent to which neo-liberal policies are the main cause of rising inequality. **10-12**

Indicative content:

- AO1 content: Neo-liberal claim that market liberalisation, privatisation and reduced state intervention increase efficiency, attract investment and can raise GDP; structural adjustment as an example of neo-liberal policy prescriptions.
- AO1 content: Dependency and world-systems criticisms arguing inequality stems from historical colonial exploitation, unequal exchange and ongoing asymmetric power relations between core and periphery.
- AO2 application: Item B shows an empirical example where liberalisation raised GDP but increased inequality and cut public services; Item A links colonial history to low GDP and commodity supply roles consistent with dependency/world-systems accounts.
- AO3 analysis: Evaluate the strength of neo-liberal explanations, noting evidence of faster GDP growth but rising inequality in some countries and the mechanisms by which privatisation and reduced welfare can widen income gaps.
- AO3 analysis: Consider counter-arguments from dependency/world-systems perspectives that place primary causal weight on long-term historical structures, and show how neo-liberal policies may interact with these structures rather than being wholly explanatory.
- AO3 evaluation: Consider alternative causes such as domestic political choices, elite capture, institutional weakness, geography, and methodological challenges in attributing causation, including time lags and selection effects in which countries adopt neo-liberal reforms.
- AO3 synthesis: Conclude with a balanced judgement that neo-liberal policies can be a significant proximate cause of rising inequality in particular contexts, especially where weak institutions and unequal power exist, but many sociologists would argue they operate alongside and interact with deeper historical and structural causes identified by dependency and world-systems theories.

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Question 4

identifies underdevelopment as a condition produced by external relations, not simply internal backwardness **B1**

development, e.g. underdevelopment results from historical and ongoing economic exploitation and unequal exchange between rich and poor countries **B1**

Answer: Underdevelopment is seen as a condition produced by external relations rather than internal backwardness; dependency theorists argue it results from historical and ongoing exploitation and unequal exchange between rich and poor countries.

Question 5

identifies a core claim, e.g. the world economy is structured into core, semi-periphery and periphery zones **B1**

development, e.g. core zones extract surplus from peripheral zones so development and underdevelopment are linked processes in one system **B1**

Answer: World-systems theory claims the global economy is structured into core, semi-periphery and periphery zones, with core zones extracting surplus from periphery zones so development and underdevelopment are linked within one system.

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