3.2 Family Forms and Diversity: 30-minute Pack

AQA 8192 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Show your understanding by using sociological vocabulary and, where asked, your own examples.

Item A: The Kowalski-Bello Household

A hypothetical family scenario, written for Revision Library to illustrate family diversity. Not based on a real family.

Priya and Marcus are not married but have lived together for nine years, raising their two children in a rented flat. Priya works full time; Marcus works part time and does most of the school pick-ups. Two years ago, Priya's mother Grace, aged 78, moved in with the family after a health scare, because moving to a care home would have been very expensive and Grace wanted to stay close to her grandchildren. Priya's teenage niece, whose own parents separated last year, also stays at the flat for several nights most weeks while she studies at a nearby college.

1 Evaluate the view that family diversity is best understood as positive social progress. In your answer you should refer to sociologists' views and consider more than one perspective.

(Total for Question 1 is 12 marks)

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2 State one criticism that has been made of the idea of 'families of choice'.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

3 Using Item A, explain one way Grace's move into the household reflects a real demographic trend affecting UK families.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

4 State one strength of studying family diversity through a specific example such as Item A, rather than only general statistics.

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

5 Explain two ways family diversity in the UK has increased since the mid-twentieth century, other than those already covered in this pack.

(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)

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6 Define the term 'family diversity'.

(Total for Question 6 is 2 marks)

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7 Look at Item A.

(a) Using Item A, identify one feature of the household that shows a family form other than a simple nuclear family, and explain your choice. **(2)**

(b) Using Item A, identify one example of wider kin support shown in the household beyond the couple and their own children, and explain your choice. **(2)**

(Total for Question 7 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 3.2 Family Forms and Diversity: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

Level 4 A detailed, well-balanced evaluation that accurately explains BOTH the case for family diversity as positive progress AND the case for a shared, workable family pattern remaining important, supported by accurate reference to named sociologists. Strengths and weaknesses of each view are analysed, and a reasoned, supported judgement is reached. Sociological terminology is used accurately and consistently throughout. **10-12**

Level 3 A clear evaluation that explains both sides of the debate, with some accurate reference to sociologists. Some analysis of strengths/weaknesses. An attempt at a conclusion, which may be only partly supported. **7-9**

Level 2 Some relevant explanation of one or both sides of the debate, with limited development or accuracy. Little clear evaluation or comparison between views. **4-6**

Level 1 One or two isolated, undeveloped points about family diversity, with little or no sociological terminology or accurate detail. **1-3**

Level 0 No relevant content. **0**

Indicative content:

- Case for diversity as progress: Giddens' (1992) 'pure relationship' suggests modern relationships are based on choice and equality rather than obligation, which many see as positive; Weeks, Heaphy and Donovan's 'families of choice' shows people, particularly in same-sex relationships, building supportive chosen families beyond traditional structures.
- Further support: Brannen's (2003) 'beanpole family' shows extended family ties across generations persisting in new forms, not disappearing, alongside more choice in couple relationships.
- Case for a shared, workable pattern remaining important: Chester's (1985) 'neo-conventional family' thesis argues most people still spend part of their life in a nuclear-type, usually dual-earner, household, suggesting continuity rather than dramatic decline or replacement.
- The New Right perspective argues some shared, stable family pattern benefits children and society, and is concerned that too much instability in family life can cause social problems.
- Evaluation of the 'diversity as progress' case: critics argue it can overstate real freedom of choice, since money, housing and social pressures still limit many people's options.
- Evaluation of the 'shared pattern' case: critics argue it can wrongly treat one family type as more 'normal' or valuable than others, when evidence such as families of choice and beanpole families shows many different arrangements can work well.
- A balanced conclusion should weigh evidence of genuine new choice and diversity against the continuing practical importance many people place on stable, supportive relationships, in whatever form they take.

Question 2

identifies a recognised criticism, e.g. it may be harder to rely on chosen relationships in a crisis, since they do not always carry the automatic legal rights or obligations that marriage or blood relationships often do **B1**

brief development, e.g. or that not everyone has an equally wide or supportive network of friends to draw on **B1**

Answer: Critics argue chosen relationships can be harder to rely on in a crisis, since they may not carry the automatic legal rights of marriage or blood relationships, and not everyone has an equally wide or supportive network of friends.

Question 3

identifies a genuine trend, e.g. increased life expectancy and an ageing population mean more older relatives may need extra support from their family **B1**

development, e.g. or that rising costs of professional care can make some families choose to share a home with an older relative instead **B1**

Answer: Increased life expectancy and an ageing population mean more older relatives, like Grace, may need extra support from family, and the rising cost of professional care can make sharing a home a more realistic option.

Question 4

identifies a genuine strength, e.g. a specific example can show how several kinds of diversity, such as cohabitation and wider kin support, can exist together within one household **B1**

brief development, e.g. this can reveal detail and context that summary statistics alone might miss **B1**

Answer: A specific example like Item A can show how several kinds of diversity, such as cohabitation and wider kin support, exist together within one household, revealing detail that summary statistics alone might miss.

Question 5

identifies one change, e.g. more people living in reconstituted or step-families, following divorce and remarriage **B1**

development **B1**

identifies a second, different change, e.g. greater diversity in family forms reflecting the UK's greater ethnic and cultural diversity, such as different traditions of extended family involvement **B1**

development **B1**

Answer: More people now live in reconstituted or step-families following divorce and remarriage, and family life has become more culturally diverse, reflecting the UK's ethnic diversity, with different traditions of extended family involvement.

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Question 6

the idea that families in the UK today take many different forms, rather than one dominant type (oe)	**B1**
development, e.g. including differences in structure, culture and the roles partners take within the household	**B1**

Answer: Family diversity is the idea that families in the UK take many different forms today, rather than one dominant type, differing in structure, culture and the roles partners take.

Question 7

(a) a correct feature, e.g. Priya and Marcus are cohabiting rather than married	**B1**
(a) brief explanation, e.g. this means the household is not built around a married couple, unlike the traditional nuclear family model	**B1**

(a) Answer: Priya and Marcus are cohabiting rather than married, so the household is not built around a married couple, unlike the traditional nuclear family model.

(b) a correct example, e.g. Grace (Priya's mother) living with the family, or the niece staying regularly	**B1**
(b) brief explanation, e.g. this shows the household includes relatives beyond the couple and their children, giving and receiving support across generations	**B1**

(b) Answer: Grace, Priya's mother, has moved in with the family, and Priya's niece stays regularly. This shows the household includes relatives beyond the couple and their children, giving and receiving support across generations.

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