



GSOC.FAM4 Conjugal Roles and the Domestic Division of Labour

AQA 8192 · Calculators not allowed · about 65 minutes

Total Marks

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Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

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

- 1** Which term describes conjugal roles where a couple shares housework, childcare and leisure time roughly equally?

- ☐ A) Segregated conjugal roles
- ☐ B) Joint conjugal roles
- ☐ C) Ascribed conjugal roles
- ☐ D) Extended conjugal roles

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

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- 2** Define the sociological term 'conjugal roles'.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

3 In 1957, the sociologist Elizabeth Bott studied how couples divided tasks and how this related to their wider social networks.

(a) Explain what Bott meant by 'segregated conjugal roles'. (2)

(b) Explain what Bott meant by 'joint conjugal roles'. (2)

(c) Explain how Bott linked the type of conjugal roles a couple had to the type of social network around them. (2)

(Total for Question 3 is 6 marks)

4 In 1973, Michael Young and Peter Willmott argued that family life in Britain had become increasingly 'symmetrical'.

(a) Explain the main claim of Young and Willmott's 'symmetrical family' thesis. (2)

(b) Give one reason Young and Willmott suggested for this change. (2)

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

5 In 1974, the feminist sociologist Ann Oakley published a study challenging the symmetrical family thesis.

(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)

- 6** The sociologists Jean Duncombe and Dennis Marsden (1995) used the term 'triple shift' to describe some women's workload.

(Total for Question 6 is 2 marks)

- 7** In 1989, the sociologist Jan Pahl studied how couples manage household money, identifying several different systems.

(a) Explain what is meant by a 'pooling system' of money management. (2)

(b) Explain what is meant by an 'allowance system' of money management. (2)

(Total for Question 7 is 4 marks)

- 8** Explain two factors that can affect how equal conjugal roles are within a couple.

(Total for Question 8 is 4 marks)

- 9** Sociologists disagree about how much conjugal roles in the UK have really changed.
Discuss the extent to which conjugal roles have become more equal in the UK. In your answer you should refer to sociologists' views.

(Total for Question 9 is 9 marks)

- 10** For each description below, state whether it is more typical of segregated or joint conjugal roles.
- (a) A husband and wife who each spend most of their free time with their own separate friends. (1)
 - (b) A couple who both cook, clean and look after the children, sharing the tasks between them. (1)
 - (c) A husband who is the only earner and expects his wife to do all the housework. (1)

(Total for Question 10 is 3 marks)

- 11** State one criticism that has been made of Young and Willmott's research on the symmetrical family.

(Total for Question 11 is 2 marks)

12 Explain one way government policy could support more equal conjugal roles.

(Total for Question 12 is 2 marks)

13 Explain one way patterns of paid work outside the home can make equal conjugal roles harder to achieve.

(Total for Question 13 is 2 marks)

14 Give an example of 'emotion work' within a family and briefly explain what it involves.

(Total for Question 14 is 2 marks)

15 State one strength of using in-depth interviews, like those Ann Oakley used, to study conjugal roles.

(Total for Question 15 is 2 marks)

16 State one criticism that could be made of Bott's 1957 research.

(Total for Question 16 is 2 marks)

Mark scheme · GSOC.FAM4 Conjugal Roles and the Domestic Division of Labour

Question 1

- **B1** B (joint conjugal roles)
- **Answer: B**

Question 2

- **B1** the roles/tasks carried out by each partner within a marriage or relationship (oe)
- **B1** development, e.g. including housework, childcare, paid work and leisure activities
- **Answer: The roles and tasks carried out by each partner within a couple relationship, including housework, childcare, paid work and leisure.**

Question 3

- (a) **B1** clearly separate roles for each partner, e.g. the husband as main earner, the wife as main homemaker
- (a) **B1** development, e.g. leisure time is usually spent separately too, for example the husband with male friends and the wife with female relatives
- **(a) Answer: Clearly separate roles, e.g. husband as main earner and wife as main homemaker, with leisure time also usually spent apart, for example the husband with male friends.**
- (b) **B1** shared roles between partners, e.g. both partners contribute to housework, childcare and decision-making
- (b) **B1** development, e.g. leisure time is also usually shared, spent together rather than separately
- **(b) Answer: Shared roles between partners, e.g. both contributing to housework, childcare and decisions, with leisure time also usually shared together.**
- (c) **B1** identifies that Bott linked segregated conjugal roles to 'close-knit' social networks, where a couple's friends/relatives mostly knew each other, e.g. in a tight traditional working-class community
- (c) **B1** identifies that Bott linked joint conjugal roles to 'loose-knit' social networks, where a couple's friends/relatives were more scattered and did not all know each other, for example after a family had moved away from their original community
- **(c) Answer: Bott linked segregated roles to close-knit networks (a couple's friends/relatives mostly know each other, typical of a tight traditional community) and joint roles to loose-knit networks (contacts more scattered and unconnected, e.g. after moving away).**

Question 4

- (a) **B1** identifies that Young and Willmott argued conjugal roles had become more joint/equal over time
- (a) **B1** development, e.g. husbands and wives increasingly shared housework, childcare and home-centred leisure, rather than living separate, segregated lives
- **(a) Answer: Young and Willmott argued conjugal roles had become more joint and equal over time, with husbands and wives increasingly sharing housework, childcare and home-centred leisure.**
- (b) **B1** a correct reason, e.g. more married women taking paid work outside the home
- (b) **B1** development, e.g. or new technology/labour-saving devices reducing the time needed for housework, or families becoming more home-centred/privatised after moving away from close-knit communities
- **(b) Answer: More married women taking paid work outside the home, which Young and Willmott linked to husbands taking on a greater share of housework and childcare.**

Question 5

- **B1** identifies Oakley's study, 'The Sociology of Housework' (1974), which was based on interviews with women in London who were full-time housewives
- **B1** explains that Oakley found most husbands did not share housework and childcare equally with their wives
- **B1** development, e.g. many husbands only occasionally 'helped' with particular tasks, rather than taking equal responsibility for the home
- **B1** development/conclusion, e.g. this directly challenged Young and Willmott's claim that the fully symmetrical family had become the norm
- **Answer: Oakley's 1974 study interviewed London housewives and found most husbands did not share housework and childcare equally; many only occasionally 'helped', which challenged Young and Willmott's claim that the symmetrical family had become the norm.**

Question 6

- **B1** identifies the three elements: paid work, domestic/housework, and 'emotion work' (managing feelings and relationships within the family)
- **B1** development, e.g. Duncombe and Marsden argued many women carry out all three, even when their husbands share some housework
- **Answer: The 'triple shift' describes women carrying out paid work, domestic work and 'emotion work' (managing feelings and relationships in the family), even when husbands share some housework.**

Question 7

- (a) **B1** both partners have joint access to some or all of the household's income (oe)
- (a) **B1** a correct example, e.g. income paid into a shared joint bank account that both partners can use
- (a) **Answer: Both partners have joint access to household income, e.g. through a shared joint bank account.**
- (b) **B1** the main earner gives the other partner a fixed amount for household/family spending, while keeping control of the rest of the income themselves
- (b) **B1** development, e.g. this can leave one partner with less independent control over money than the other
- (b) **Answer: The main earner gives the other partner a fixed allowance for household spending while keeping control of the remaining income, leaving that partner with less independent financial control.**

Question 8

- **B1** one factor, e.g. whether both partners work full-time
- **B1** development, e.g. if one partner works part-time or not at all, they often end up doing more of the housework and childcare
- **B1** a second, different factor, e.g. cultural or religious expectations about men's and women's roles
- **B1** development, e.g. some cultural or religious traditions expect more clearly separated roles, making joint conjugal roles less likely
- **Answer: Whether both partners work full-time (a part-time or non-working partner often ends up doing more domestic work) and cultural/religious expectations about men's and women's roles (some traditions expect more clearly separated roles).**

Question 9

- **Level 3** (7-9): A detailed, balanced discussion that develops evidence for increasing equality AND evidence against it, supported by accurate reference to named sociologists, reaching a supported conclusion. Sociological terminology is used accurately throughout.
- **Level 2** (4-6): A clear discussion of evidence for and/or against increasing equality, with some development and some accurate reference to sociologists. Limited attempt at a balanced conclusion.
- **Level 1** (1-3): One or more isolated, undeveloped points about conjugal roles, with little or no reference to sociologists' views.
- **Level 0** (0): No relevant content.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Evidence for increasing equality: Young and Willmott's (1973) 'symmetrical family' thesis argued conjugal roles had become more joint, with husbands and wives increasingly sharing housework, childcare and home-centred leisure.
 - Bott's (1957) research suggests joint conjugal roles are linked to loose-knit social networks, which have become more common as families have become more geographically mobile.
 - Evidence against increasing equality: Ann Oakley's 1974 study found that most husbands did not share housework and childcare equally with their wives, directly challenging the symmetrical family claim.
 - Duncombe and Marsden's (1995) concept of the 'triple shift' suggests many women continue to carry paid work, domestic work and emotion work together, even in households where some housework is shared.
 - Jan Pahl's (1989) research on money management shows that even where couples pool some income, control over spending decisions is not always shared equally.
 - A balanced conclusion should weigh Young and Willmott's evidence of a long-term trend towards sharing against the feminist evidence (Oakley, Duncombe and Marsden) that full equality has not yet been reached, rather than presenting either as simply correct.

Question 10

- (a) **B1** segregated
- (a) **Answer: Segregated**
- (b) **B1** joint
- (b) **Answer: Joint**
- (c) **B1** segregated
- (c) **Answer: Segregated**

Question 11

- **B1** identifies a recognised criticism, e.g. their research relied on people's own reports of who did what, which could overstate husbands' real participation
- **B1** brief development, e.g. or that occasionally helping with one task might have been counted as 'sharing', overstating real equality
- **Answer: Their research relied on self-reported answers, which could overstate husbands' real participation, since occasionally helping with one task might be counted as 'sharing'.**

Question 12

- **B1** identifies a genuine relevant policy, e.g. shared parental leave, allowing either parent to take time off after a baby is born
- **B1** brief development, e.g. this makes it more possible for fathers to take on childcare, rather than this falling mainly to mothers by default
- **Answer: Shared parental leave allows either parent to take time off after a baby is born, making it more possible for fathers to take on childcare rather than this falling mainly to mothers.**

Question 13

- **B1** identifies a genuine relevant pattern, e.g. a gender pay gap meaning women often earn less than men on average
- **B1** brief development, e.g. this can make it seem more financially sensible for the lower earner (often the woman) to reduce their paid hours and take on more domestic work
- **Answer: A gender pay gap, with women often earning less on average, can make it seem more financially sensible for the lower earner to reduce paid hours and take on more domestic work.**

Question 14

- **B1** a correct example, e.g. noticing when a family member is upset and comforting them, or organising family relationships and keeping in touch with relatives
- **B1** brief explanation, e.g. this is unpaid work managing feelings and relationships, which often goes unrecognised compared with housework
- **Answer: Noticing when a family member is upset and comforting them; this is unpaid work managing feelings and relationships, often unrecognised compared with housework.**

Question 15

- **B1** identifies a genuine strength, e.g. interviews let people describe their home life in detail and in their own words
- **B1** brief development, e.g. this can reveal inequalities within the home that a short questionnaire might miss
- **Answer: Interviews let people describe their home life in detail and in their own words, which can reveal inequalities that a short questionnaire might miss.**

Question 16

- **B1** identifies a recognised criticism, e.g. it is now a very old study, so findings may not reflect family life today
- **B1** brief development, e.g. or that it was based on a small number of London families, which may not be representative of couples across the whole of the UK
- **Answer: The study is now very old, so its findings may not reflect family life today, and it was based on a small number of London families, which may not be representative of couples across the UK.**