6.4 Power and Authority: 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.

1 Explain two reasons authority can be more stable than power based on force alone.

(Total for Question 1 is 4 marks)

2 State one similarity between Weber's concept of authority and functionalist ideas about social order.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

3 State one way legal-rational authority differs from charismatic authority.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

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4 Explain two reasons the state might be seen as having significant power over ordinary citizens' lives.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

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5 Define the term 'power' as used by sociologists.

(Total for Question 5 is 2 marks)

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6 Max Weber identified different types of legitimate authority.

(a) Explain what Weber meant by 'traditional authority'. **(2)**

(b) Explain what Weber meant by 'charismatic authority'. **(2)**

(Total for Question 6 is 4 marks)

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7 Weber also identified a third type of authority.

(a) Explain what Weber meant by 'legal-rational authority'. **(2)**

(b) Give one modern UK example of legal-rational authority, and explain your choice. **(2)**

(Total for Question 7 is 4 marks)

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8 Explain the pluralist view of how power is distributed in society.

(Total for Question 8 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 6.4 Power and Authority: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

identifies one reason, e.g. people who accept authority as legitimate are more likely to comply willingly, without needing to be constantly monitored or threatened **B1**

development **B1**

identifies a second, different reason, e.g. authority can be passed on through recognised procedures, such as an election or agreed succession rules, reducing conflict over who holds power, unlike power gained purely by force, which may invite challenge from other forceful groups **B1**

development **B1**

Answer: Authority is more stable because people comply willingly without constant monitoring, and because it can be passed on through recognised procedures such as an election, reducing conflict, unlike power gained purely by force.

Question 2

identifies a genuine similarity, e.g. both suggest that widely accepted rules or values help hold society together and make it function smoothly, rather than relying only on force **B1**

brief development **B1**

Answer: Both suggest that widely accepted rules or values help hold society together and make it function smoothly, rather than relying only on force.

Question 3

identifies a genuine difference, e.g. legal-rational authority is attached to a formal office or role and continues regardless of who holds it, while charismatic authority depends on the personal qualities of a particular individual leader **B1**

brief development **B1**

Answer: Legal-rational authority is attached to a formal office and continues regardless of who holds it, while charismatic authority depends on a particular individual's personal qualities.

Question 4

identifies one reason, e.g. the state can make and enforce laws that citizens are required to follow, backed by institutions such as the police and courts **B1**

development **B1**

identifies a second, different reason, e.g. the state can also collect taxes and provide or withhold services, such as benefits, giving it significant influence over people's economic circumstances **B1**

development **B1**

Answer: The state can make and enforce laws through the police and courts, and can collect taxes and provide or withhold services such as benefits, giving it significant influence over citizens' lives.

Question 5

identifies power as the ability of a person or group to get others to do something, even against their wishes or resistance (oe) **B1**

development, e.g. sociologists distinguish power from authority, where authority is power that is widely accepted as legitimate **B1**

Answer: Power is the ability of a person or group to get others to do something, even against their wishes; sociologists distinguish this from authority, which is power widely accepted as legitimate.

Question 6

(a) identifies traditional authority as legitimate power based on long-standing customs or traditions, e.g. an inherited position such as a monarchy **B1**

(a) development, e.g. people obey because 'this is how it has always been done', not because of a formal legal rule **B1**

(a) Answer: Traditional authority is legitimate power based on long-standing customs, such as an inherited monarchy; people obey because this is how things have always been done, not because of a formal rule.

(b) identifies charismatic authority as legitimate power based on the personal qualities of an individual leader, who is seen as having exceptional or inspiring qualities **B1**

(b) development, e.g. this kind of authority depends heavily on the particular individual and can be harder to pass on to a successor **B1**

(b) Answer: Charismatic authority is legitimate power based on a leader's exceptional personal qualities; it depends heavily on that individual and can be harder to pass on to a successor.

Question 7

(a) identifies legal-rational authority as legitimate power based on formal rules, laws and procedures, e.g. an elected government or a bureaucracy **B1**

(a) development, e.g. people obey the office or role, such as 'the Prime Minister', rather than the individual personally, and authority passes to whoever holds the role according to the rules **B1**

(a) Answer: Legal-rational authority is legitimate power based on formal rules and procedures; people obey the office or role, not the individual personally, and authority passes on according to the rules.

(b) identifies a genuine example, e.g. an elected Member of Parliament, a judge, or a police officer acting within their legal powers **B1**

(b) explanation, e.g. their authority comes from the formal rules and procedures of their office, not from tradition or personal charisma **B1**

(b) Answer: An elected Member of Parliament: their authority comes from the formal rules and procedures of their office, not from tradition or personal charisma.

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Question 8

identifies that pluralists, such as the political scientist Robert Dahl, argued that power in democratic societies is spread among many different competing groups and interests, e.g. political parties, trade unions, businesses and pressure groups	**B1**
development, e.g. no single group dominates every area of decision-making, because different groups have influence in different areas	**B1**
identifies that this view sees democratic institutions, such as elections and a free press, as helping to prevent any one group holding all the power	**B1**
development, e.g. pluralists therefore see modern democracies as reasonably open to competing interests	**B1**

Answer: Pluralists, such as Robert Dahl, argued power in democratic societies is spread among competing groups and interests; democratic institutions such as elections help prevent any one group holding all the power.

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