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Sociology of Education

Duration : 2 Hours

100 Marks

EXAMINATION PANEL AS APPOINTED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

Closed book examination.

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Multiple choice answers:

1. **3**
2. **1**
3. **4**
4. **1**
5. **3**
6. **1**
7. **4**
8. **1**
9. **3**
10. **3**
11. **1**
12. **1**
13. **2**
14. **2**
15. **3**
16. **3**
17. **4**
18. **3**
19. **3**
20. **2**

QUESTION 1

Answer the following compulsory multiple-choice questions and write the answers in your examination book, e.g 1. 5; 2. 6 etc

INDICATE THE CORRECT ANSWER (S)

1. The sociology of education:

a) Examines the relationship between the school, politics, economics and culture
b) Is not really sociology
c) Is critical of discipline in schools
d) Ignores the role of teachers in schools

1. (b)
2. (d)
3. (a)
4. (c)

2. Which of the following are aspects that Ballantine and Hammock (2012) consider should be part of education?

a) The ability to think creatively
b) The cultivation of a global mind-set
c) The provision of training in problem solving
d) Respect for others

1. (a), (b), (c) and (d)
2. (a) and (c)
3. (a) and (d)
4. (b), (c) and (d)

3. At a macro level sociologists see schooling through the following lens:

a) Small-scale, classroom practices
b) Teacher/learner interactions
c) Large scale social forces such as politics and the economy
d) Scientific study.

1. (a) and (b)
2. (c) and (d)
3. (a)
4. (c)

4. Functionalists suggest that schools have a latent function which is to …

a) produce people who share the same economic and political practices.
b) produce institutions.
c) teach traditional school subjects.
d) produce people who share the cultural practices and norms of society.

1. (a) and (d)
2. (b) and (c)
3. (a), (b) and (c)
4. (b), (c) and (d)

5. Highly complex, industrialised societies tend to …

a) establish a system of universal, compulsory public education
b) abolish the family
c) ensure that role differentiation is achieved
d) make education non-compulsory

1. (a), (b) and (d)
2. (b) and (d)
3. (a) and (c)
4. (b), (c) and (d)

6. The family plays an important role in society because it …

a) is a macro institution.
b) provides society with new members.
c) plays an important socialization role.
d) is critical of tradition.

1. (b) and (c)
2. (c) and (d)
3. (a) and (c)
4. (a)

7. Norms are portrayed as the following:

a) Organizational patterns
b) Transmitted through participation in school life
c) Standards that people use to govern their conduct in appropriate situations
d) Compulsory

1. (a) and (b)
2. (c) and (d)
3. (a) and (d)
4. (b) and (c)

8. Dreeben believes there are essential norms that learners should learn at school. Two of these norms are the following:

a) Independence
b) Liberalism
c) Good intentions
d) Universalism

1. (a) and (d)
2. (c) and (b)
3. (d)
4. (c)

9. Conflict theorists argue that …

a) society is dynamic and that there are tensions between interest groups.
b) society is in a state of equilibrium.
c) conflict is dysfunctional.
d) society is static.

1. (b)
2. (c)
3. (a)
4. (b) and (d)

10. Conflict theorists argue that schools …

a) are not a social benefit.
b) provide opportunities to those who work hard.
c) reward students.
d) prepare people to become compliant workers in a capitalist economy.

1. (a), (b) and (c)
2. (b) and (c)
3. (a) and (d)
4. (b), (c) and (d)

11. Conflict theory suggests that IQ (Intelligence Quotient) tests …

a) favour the working class.
b) favour the affluent class.
c) favour the intelligent.
d) are culturally biased.

1. (b) and (d)
2. (c)
3. (a) and (c)
4. (b), (c) and (d)

12. For a symbolic interactionist, gender is considered to be …

a) an attribute of different people.
b) innate.
c) up to the individual.
d) constantly made up and reproduced through social interaction.

1. (d)
2. (b)
3. (c)

4. (a)

13. Which of these is not an aspect of symbolic interactionist theory?

a) Everyday contact
b) Social interaction
c) Class struggle
d) Constructed identity

1. (a) and (b)
2. (c)
3. (d)
4. (a) and (d)

14. In ancient Athenian democracy, citizenship included the following:

a) Active participation in public affairs
b) Women
c) Slaves
d) Following instructions

1. (c)
2. (a)
3. (b)
4. (d)

15. Which of the following were <u>not</u> components of apartheid 'citizenship' in South Africa:

a) The classification of South Africans into different race groups
b) The denial of full civil, social or political rights for black people
c) Equality for all citizens
d) The establishment of the 'homeland' system

1. (a)
2. (d)
3. (c)
4. (b)

16. Citizenship education in post - apartheid South Africa is best described as the following:

a) Promoting participatory democracy
b) Confined to matric students
c) Promoting the necessary skills for active citizenship
d) A waste of time

1. (b) and (d)
2. (b), (c) and (d)
3. (a) and (c)

4. (a), (b) and (d)

17. In terms of the United States of America, the country …

a) does not have an official national curriculum.
b) has an official national curriculum.
c) has a mix of state and national curricula.
d) is an autocracy.

1. (c)
2. (d)
3. (b)
4. (a)

18. Social stratification can be defined as …

a) the way of life of people.
b) a tradition.
c) when an individual in society only acquires a certain part of culture.
d) a process of categorising people according to their ranks within the family and society.

1. (a), (b) and (c)
2. (b), (c) and (d)
3. (d)
4. (b)

19. Achieved characteristics are attributes that …

a) people have at birth.
b) people inherit.
c) develop over time like height and weight.
d) are learnt through hard work, choice and perseverance.

1. (a), (b) and (c)
2. (b) and (c)
3. (d)
4. (a)

20. From the perspective of symbolic interactionism, gender is constructed and reproduced by:

a) Fixed differences between men and women
b) Ongoing social interaction
c) Male dominance
d) Social stability

1. (c)
2. (b)
3. (d)
4. (a)

[20]

QUESTION 2

2.1 According to the theory of functionalism, explain how schools function in society. In your answer draw on the works of Durkheim and Parsons. (10)

Response:

Functionalists argue that society is made up of different parts (or subsystems) which are all linked (students might discuss the body as analogy). Because societies institutions are all interlinked, this contributes to the equilibrium and order of a society. An example would be that the schooling system is linked to the economy in that schools are required to teach computer literacy to fit in with the needs of society. The role of education is to socialise leaners to become viable citizens and employees. Learners learn skills in schools (such as literacy). They also learn moral principles, so they pick up norms and values from school. Society relies on the consensus of its citizens for it to function and learners learn this at school. In that they 'agree' to fit into society and become part of the workforce. Organic solidarity is the type of cohesion we find in our current modern, industrialised, urbanised environment because even though social systems are interlinked, we subscribe to a wide range of beliefs and engage in many different types of employment.

Durkheim: education plays an important role in the achieving order and equilibrium in society. Education prepares leaners for specialised jobs. Education prepares leaners to become moral beings. Education assists learners to understand the wider world and to accrue knowledge about subject content and about norms and values. Education is a social construct and it is directed towards the greater good of society and is not necessarily about the individual and her/his needs.

Parsons: developed the AGIL model in relation to society:

"Adaptation: the problem of acquiring sufficient resources (economic system)

Goal attainment: The problem of setting and implementing goals (political system).

Integration: The problem of maintaining solidarity…among the sub units of the system [schools, media, police etc]

Latency: the problem of creating, preserving and transmitting the system's distinctive culture and values (kinship, family and marriage)." (SoE, page 9)

Parsons applied these points to societies levels of organisation (such as schools).

Parsons also argued that families are particularist (they focus on the individual) and that schools are universalist. Children need to be exposed universalist values in schools because there they are required to interact with strangers (other members of society) and they need to learn universal values (not just those that the family conveys).

See from pages 6- 10, SoE.

2.2 Conflict theory argues that society and schools are fundamentally unequal. Discuss how conflict theory justifies this position. Provide an example of an inequality in the schooling system. (10)

Response:

Conflict theory is often associated with the theory of Marxism which focuses on conflict and divisions between social classes and social and economic inequalities in society. Marx also argued that dominant groups have the power to organise society in ways that benefit them. So, people with money and social standing usually send their children to high-status, fee-paying schools. Marx believed that conflict is embedded in society as there will always be conflict between capitalist and workers.

Weber argues that conflict also occurs in society around issues of "power, prestige and property" (**Page 14, SoE**). Conflict also has an emotional aspect such as the solidarity that trade unions espouse and create.

John Wright Mills: wealthy people in society are in control of the social structures and the interests of the 'have-nots' are marginalised.

Conflict theorists argue that families also display inequalities especially in relationships between men and women in that men are often hold dominant positions over women.

Conflict is pervasive in society and finds expression in education as well. The myth that education is equal is criticised by conflict theorists who argue that some learners come from privileged homes and go to well-resourced, middle class schools whereas working class learners go to under-resourced, working- class schools. Schools are also ideologically skewed towards the dominant middle class in that many of the values that schools transmit are middle class ones.

See pages 12- 19, SoE

Examples at markers' discretion but any pertaining to how schools present themselves as neutral but in fact they perpetuate inequalities by providing very different levels of schooling for leaners. Also, access to good schooling is limited if the leaners are under-privileged financially. High drop out rates are usually found in impoverished communities.

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QUESTION 3

3.1 Define socialisation and indicate how it operates in schools. Provide an example of socialisation that you have encountered in your school. (10)

Response

Definition: all societies socialise their members. It is a continuous process whereby members of society acquire language, norms, values social skills so that they can fit into society and fulfil its expectations. Members of society also need to be socialised so that they can be integrated into a community. Schools socialise learners so they can adapt to the social, economic and political institutions in society. Learners are socialised into accepting social stratifications (it is assumed some learners will access higher education whereas others will drop out of school). Schools play an important role in perpetuating gender roles: boys are often encouraged to do maths and science whereas girls are subtly or not so subtly discouraged. Functionalism and conflict theory both present theories of socialisation. Functionalism believes that socialisation is necessary to maintain social order and that children should learn the dominant norms and values in a society, Conflict theorists argue that much of the socialisation in schools is designed to perpetuate inequalities.

Page 39, SoE.
Examples at markers' discretion but they should flow from the definition and be related to schooling.

3.2 Discuss THREE of the principles of symbolic interactionism and point out how these principles support teachers to understand how learners construct meaning in the classroom.

Response: (10)

Three principles from those below:

People have the ability to think
Thinking skills are shaped by social interaction.
People make meaning of symbols through social interaction.
Meanings and symbols can lead to humans taking action.
People modify their meanings through interpretation of a situation.
People have the ability to reflect on their practice and change their ideas and their behavior.
Human action can lead to the development of groups and communities with similar interests.

Page 46 SoE.

Examples at markers' discretion: but they should flow from the principles. So, for example, if a teacher assumes that a learner can think, interpret symbols and make meaning, then they are capable of working independently, problem solving and interpreting their own progress. Is a learner doing badly at maths? Can the learner think of a way to modify her behavior/thought processes? Symbolic interactionists propose that learners can construct their own meanings and should be encouraged to do so.

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QUESTION 4

2.1 Discuss the two types of citizenship education and indicate which approach (active or passive) do you think is the better one for learners? Substantiate your answer.(10)

Response

Active citizenship education: citizens play an active role in democracy. The personal and the political are linked and not separate. Active citizenship learning is linked to 'hard' learning and refers to learning by doing, problem solving, active participation in activities within the school and without. For example, learners go on a parliamentary tour and discuss the processes of representational democracy from their observational experience. Or learners get involved in community activities such as environmental issues. Hence, citizenship is 'caught' not 'taught'.

Passive approaches to citizenship centre on learners being taught passively from a formal curriculum and implies that learners are not thinking for themselves but are learning by rote. Their political literacy will be limited because they are not being taught to be critical thinkers. So, knowledge is 'taught' not 'caught'.

Choice and support of choice at markers' discretion. However, if they argue that citizenship should be active – they need to demonstrate that learners should learn outside of the school environment as well as within it.

If they think passive approaches are better then they might argue that the learners are receiving substantial, teacher-centred knowledge and they are less likely to come up with individualised, shallow solutions. Also, the curriculum is standardised.

Pages 62- 63, SoE

2.2 Explain what a cosmopolitan approach to citizenship education entails and indicate how learners could benefit from this approach. (10)

Response:

Cosmopolitan approach: a belief in a world state to which all human beings belong. This means that learners are not only taught about their own community or country but develop a grasp of globalization. So they understand that he world is increasingly interconnected through economic ties, technology and the migration of people. Learners would benefit from this approach because they would be less parochial and more in touch with events that occur beyond their communities. Benefits: Learners need to see that their lives and those of others are linked morally and politically. Global warming would be a good example here. It is not just about one country but is a worldwide problem. Xenophobia is also pertinent. Cosmopolitan approaches are underpinned by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Markers to use their discretion.

Pages 70 – 71 SoE.

[20]

QUESTION 5

5.1 Discuss the guidelines for gender-fair teaching in schools. Explain why there might be problems in schools with the implementation of some of the guidelines. (10)

Response:
Guidelines:

Gender fair teaching should be continuous and integral to learners' daily instruction in class.
It must direct attention to stereotypes and problems that affect both boys and girls.
It must include other forms of discrimination such as disability, race, age.
It should be a partnership amongst teachers, parents and the community.
It is at total process that involves the classroom and the school.
It must include emotional and cognitive dimensions.
It must be active and affirmative.

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Use marker discretion but possible problems could be that schools and communities are reluctant to pursue gender -fair policies. The learners themselves might be unwilling to change their attitudes. Stereotyping is deeply engrained and could affect classroom discipline (boys are aggressive, girls are chatty etc) It also could affect pedagogy such as the teaching science and maths because schools are often reluctant to change the structure of classes. Stereotyping in sport and recreation would also be a good example.

5.2 "Access to schooling is largely dependent on race, class and gender." Briefly discuss the term "access". Then argue the notion that access is dependent on the race, class and gender of the learner. (10)

Response

What is access? Access: who is able/allowed to attend schools and why they can attend certain schools. Functionalists argue that access to schooling is equal and schooling is necessary to create stability in society. Hence all children should have access to schools that are similarly funded and resourced. Conflict theorists tend to look at who is admitted to schools and who is not. So, they argue that learners from privileged families have easier access to well resourced, fee paying schools than disadvantaged learners. Access to schooling is also dependent on race, class and gender. Girls are sometimes discouraged, through stereotyping and social norms from going to schools and universities. The apartheid legacy has also played a role in limiting access as many learners are confined to the schools in the former apartheid group areas.
Use marker discretion for any pertinent examples.

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[20]
[20 x 4 = 80]
TOTAL: [100]

Examiners:

First: **Mr ND Ndwandwe/ Dr M. Baker**
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