

Key Sociology concepts



Norms and Values

Norms are something that is considered to be normal within society and come from our values which we think are important. For example, in Britain we value punctuality therefore, a norm is for us to be on time. We also value politeness as a culture therefore it's a norm for us to use please and thank you. Norms and values are different in every country / religion / culture. What each country values is important. It is a norm for us to eat food with a knife and fork in the UK but in China it is a norm for them to eat with chopsticks and consider it unusual to eat with a knife and fork.

Norms and values can not only change due to the country or religion but they can also change in the same place over time. For example, going to university was considered a rare thing 50 years ago but today, education is more valued by society therefore it is a norm for people to stay in education longer.

1. Give examples of a value and the norms that come from it

Value	Norm
e.g. Politeness	e.g. Using please and thank you

Culture

A culture is shared norms and values between a group of people. Feature of a culture could be shared language, religion, beliefs or ways of living. These norms and values are passed down to the next generations by the parents and therefore your culture can move with you when you move around different countries. In England we have lots of different cultures because we have lots of people immigrating into the country who have brought their cultures with them. This is called cultural diversity - one society that has lots of different cultures within it.

1. Give three features that a culture share

a).....

b).....

c).....

2. How can you define cultural diversity?

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Conformity and Deviance

If you are following the norms and values of society, this is called conformity. You are conforming to the norms and values. If you go against the norms and values of society, this is called deviance. Examples of conformity are going to school, wearing trousers if you're a boy, having long hair if you're a girl, short hair if you're a boy. Examples of deviance are farting in public, boys wearing dresses and high heels, being rude to people, constantly skipping school.

1. Explain the difference between conformity and deviance

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Sanctions

Sanctions are put in place to either praise following the rules of society (conformity) or punish for breaking rules. There are two types of sanctions: formal sanctions - a punishment for breaking a law or written rule and informal sanctions - a punishment for breaking an informal rule, imposed by people around you. Positive sanctions are things that are used to reward positive behaviour. For example in schools positive behaviour is rewarded through trips, behaviour points.

1. **What is a sanction? Give an example of a positive and a negative sanction**

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2. **Name as many agencies of formal control as you can in the space below:**

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Identity

Your identity is what makes up who you are and how you behave. You gain your identity through socialisation and the learning of norms and values from your parents.

1. **How do we form our identity? What can affect it?**

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Gender roles

These are the stereotypical roles that are taken by males and females within society and the family. Gender roles change over time and between countries and cultures. For example in Asian families women predominantly take the expressive role in the family which means that they are nurturing and caring and take the main role of the housewife. In comparison, it can be fairly common in some parts of India to have matriarchal families - where women are the head of the household instead of the man.

1. What is a gender role and how might it be formed?

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Task: Complete the mind map below that demonstrates your 'perfect' society. Think about what you would want each of the factors to include/look like/be like.

