

SOCIOLOGY – SOCIETY, CULTURE, AND SOCIAL THEORIES PRACTICE TEST (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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THE FULL VERSION STUDY GUIDE**

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

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- 1. A change in one variable coincides with a change in another variable but does not necessarily mean causation is present. This is called?**
 - A. Correlation
 - B. Causation
 - C. Hypothesis
 - D. Empirical Evidence
- 2. Societies classified by their level of technological sophistication.**
 - A. Preindustrial societies
 - B. Hunter Gatherer
 - C. Pastoral societies
 - D. Globalization
- 3. Which term describes the belief that social reality should be studied with attention to subjectivity rather than universal laws?**
 - A. Antipositivism
 - B. Positivism
 - C. Empiricism
 - D. Structuralism
- 4. Change in population distribution describes the rise of which urban development?**
 - A. Rise of urban centers
 - B. Change in wealth distribution
 - C. Post industrial societies
 - D. Knowledge based economy
- 5. An economy centered on services and knowledge-based tasks is described by which term?**
 - A. Knowledge based economy
 - B. Service based work
 - C. Industrial Economy
 - D. Agricultural Economy

- 6. Stress that occurs when too much is required of a single role is known as what?**
- A. Role strain
 - B. Role conflict
 - C. Role performance
 - D. Status
- 7. Which term denotes the lag between when a material item is created and when it becomes widely used?**
- A. Culture lag
 - B. Diffusion
 - C. Globalization
 - D. Preindustrial societies
- 8. Which concept denotes the officially written regulations that govern behavior within institutions?**
- A. Formal Norms
 - B. Informal Norms
 - C. Sanctions
 - D. Language
- 9. Which concept describes accepting dominant explanations that conceal structural causes?**
- A. The Myth of Meritocracy
 - B. False Consciousness
 - C. Class Consciousness
 - D. Alienation
- 10. Which sociologist is associated with the idea that the self is formed through interaction with others?**
- A. George Herbert Mead
 - B. Emile Durkheim
 - C. Karl Marx
 - D. Max Weber

Answers

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1. A
2. A
3. A
4. A
5. A
6. A
7. A
8. A
9. A
10. A

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Explanations

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1. A change in one variable coincides with a change in another variable but does not necessarily mean causation is present. This is called?

A. Correlation

B. Causation

C. Hypothesis

D. Empirical Evidence

The main idea here is recognizing a relationship where two variables move together without proving one causes the other. This is correlation. It describes an association—when one variable changes, the other tends to change in a predictable way, but that doesn't show that one thing makes the other happen. Correlations can be positive (they move in the same direction) or negative (they move in opposite directions). A key caution is that a third factor could influence both, or the apparent link could be coincidental, or the direction of influence could be reversed. Causation would mean one variable directly brings about a change in the other, which is a stronger claim than simple association. A hypothesis is a testable statement about a proposed relationship to be examined with data. Empirical evidence refers to the data and observations gathered to support or challenge a claim.

2. Societies classified by their level of technological sophistication.

A. Preindustrial societies

B. Hunter Gatherer

C. Pastoral societies

D. Globalization

This question focuses on how sociologists categorize societies by their level of technology. Preindustrial societies are the broad label used for communities that have not adopted large-scale mechanized industry. They rely on human and animal labor and simple technologies, with subsistence strategies like hunting and gathering, pastoralism, and other traditional farming methods. This term is useful because it encompasses a range of social and economic arrangements that share a similar level of technological development, before the rise of factories and mass production. Hunter-gatherer describes a specific subsistence pattern within many preindustrial settings, not a separate level of overall technological development. Pastoral societies refer to societies organized around herding, which is one mode of subsistence within the broader preindustrial category. Globalization, by contrast, is a modern process describing increasing interconnectedness worldwide, not a measure of a society's technological sophistication.

3. Which term describes the belief that social reality should be studied with attention to subjectivity rather than universal laws?

- A. Antipositivism**
- B. Positivism
- C. Empiricism
- D. Structuralism

Antipositivism is the view that social reality should be understood through people's subjective meanings, interpretations, and the specific context in which actions occur, rather than by applying universal, law-like statements about society. This stance argues that social facts are shaped by human thoughts and interactions, so researchers aim to grasp what things mean to the actors involved. That's why this term fits best when the question asks for attention to subjectivity over universal laws. In practice, antipositivists favor qualitative methods that capture nuance—interviews, participant observation, and thick descriptions—to reveal how individuals experience and interpret social life. This contrasts with positivist approaches that seek objective measurement and universal laws, empirical-oriented methods that treat social facts as things to be counted or objectively measured, and structuralist approaches that prioritize underlying systems or structures over individual meanings. Therefore, focusing on subjectivity aligns with antipositivism, making it the most fitting description here.

4. Change in population distribution describes the rise of which urban development?

- A. Rise of urban centers**
- B. Change in wealth distribution
- C. Post industrial societies
- D. Knowledge based economy

The main idea here is urbanization—the shift of people from rural areas to cities, changing where the population is distributed. When more individuals and households move into urban areas for jobs, services, and opportunity, the population concentrates in urban centers. That concentration is what we mean by a change in population distribution: the growth and prominence of cities as population hubs. So the rise of urban centers is the best match because it directly describes this shift in where people live and work. The other ideas relate to different phenomena: wealth distribution focuses on who has money rather than where people live; post-industrial society and knowledge-based economy describe economic structure, not the spatial distribution of the population.

5. An economy centered on services and knowledge-based tasks is described by which term?

- A. Knowledge based economy**
- B. Service based work
- C. Industrial Economy
- D. Agricultural Economy

Value in this type of economy comes from knowledge, ideas, and information, not just physical products. When services are driven by expertise, research, design, and high-skilled problem solving, the economy is described as knowledge-based. This sets it apart from an industrial economy, which centers on manufacturing; from an agricultural economy, which centers on farming; and from a generic service-based economy, which may include various services but not necessarily a heavy emphasis on knowledge and innovation. In knowledge-based economies, the main engines are human capital, innovation, and information technologies, with activities like software development, consulting, education, research, and advanced financial services shaping growth.

6. Stress that occurs when too much is required of a single role is known as what?

- A. Role strain**
- B. Role conflict
- C. Role performance
- D. Status

Role strain is the stress that comes from too many demands being placed on a single role. When one position carries a heavy load of expectations—often competing or extensive duties—the individual feels pressure to meet them all within that role, leading to strain. This fits the question because it specifies stress from overload within one role, not from conflicting obligations between different roles. For example, a teacher who must plan lessons, grade papers, supervise extracurriculars, advise students, and handle administrative tasks all within the same teaching role experiences role strain. By contrast, role conflict involves incompatible expectations across different roles (like being both a parent and an employee), role performance is about how well duties are carried out, and status refers to the social position itself and its general expectations, not the overload within a single role.

7. Which term denotes the lag between when a material item is created and when it becomes widely used?

- A. Culture lag**
- B. Diffusion
- C. Globalization
- D. Preindustrial societies

Cultural lag arises when material innovations occur quickly, but the nonmaterial aspects of culture—norms, values, laws, and institutions—adjust more slowly. This creates a delay between the creation of a new material item and its widespread, normalized use in society. The concept captures the tension you see when a invention or technology becomes possible before society is ready to fully incorporate it into everyday life. For example, the automobile changed transportation, but social rules, road laws, urban design, and even work schedules took time to adapt. Diffusion focuses on how a feature spreads from one group to another, globalization on interconnectedness on a global scale, and preindustrial societies describe a type of society, not a timing lag. So the term that best fits the described lag is culture lag.

8. Which concept denotes the officially written regulations that govern behavior within institutions?

- A. Formal Norms**
- B. Informal Norms
- C. Sanctions
- D. Language

Formal norms are the officially written rules that govern behavior within institutions. These are codified in policies, codes of conduct, bylaws, and regulations, specifying what is allowed or forbidden in organized settings like schools, workplaces, or government bodies. Because they are formal, they are backed by authority and enforcement mechanisms, with clear consequences for violations. This distinguishes them from informal norms, which are unwritten expectations learned through social interaction. Sanctions are the penalties or rewards used to enforce norms, not the rules themselves, and language is a means of communication that can reflect norms but is not the set of governing rules.

9. Which concept describes accepting dominant explanations that conceal structural causes?

A. The Myth of Meritocracy

B. False Consciousness

C. Class Consciousness

D. Alienation

The idea being tested is how ideology can normalize inequality by presenting a simple, dominant explanation for why people succeed or fail. The Myth of Meritocracy describes the belief that outcomes come strictly from individual merit and effort, a narrative that hides the real structural factors shaping opportunities—things like class background, access to quality schooling, discrimination, and social networks. By framing success as a fair result of personal effort, this myth legitimizes the existing system and encourages people to accept inequality as natural or deserved rather than the product of social structure. This makes it the best fit for describing accepting explanations that conceal structural causes, because it names the specific, widely held story that masks how society is organized. False consciousness also involves distorted understanding of social reality, but the term Myth of Meritocracy captures the particular, widely endorsed explanation that justifies inequality by merit, which is what the question emphasizes. Class consciousness would imply awareness of shared interests and systemic change, not acceptance of a legitimating myth. Alienation focuses on estrangement from work or society and doesn't address the acceptance of a masking explanation.

10. Which sociologist is associated with the idea that the self is formed through interaction with others?

A. George Herbert Mead

B. Emile Durkheim

C. Karl Marx

D. Max Weber

The self is formed through social interaction, a process in which we develop who we are by taking the perspectives of others and internalizing social norms. George Herbert Mead is the scholar most associated with this view. He argued that the mind and the self emerge as people engage with others, especially through roles we pretend to play in childhood, the way we learn to anticipate others' expectations, and the development of the ability to see ourselves from another's standpoint. Through language and shared symbols, we internalize how others see us, shaping our sense of "I" and "me" and, in turn, our identity. Durkheim centers on social facts and how collective norms shape behavior, but not the micro-process of self-formation through interaction. Marx focuses on class relations and economic structures that influence ideology and social life. Weber emphasizes rationalization and the varied meanings people attach to actions. These perspectives are valuable, but Mead uniquely links the emergence of the self to ongoing social interaction.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://sociologysocietyculture.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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