



GCE A level

428/01

**SOCIOLOGY – SOC 5α
UNIT 5α - APPLIED SOCIOLOGICAL
RESEARCH METHODS**

P.M. THURSDAY, 5 June 2008

1¼ hours

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

In addition to this examination paper, you will need a 12 page answer book.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Answer **all** questions.

You are advised to spend approximately 15 minutes reading the passage and the questions and then divide your time according to the mark allocations given.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

You are reminded that marking will take into account the quality of written communication used in your answers.

Read the following passage and then answer **all** the questions that follow.

Domestic Violence and the British Crime Survey

The 1996 British Crime Survey included a self complete questionnaire in an attempt to gather the most **valid** data on the extent of domestic violence. This data collection method often benefits from increased anonymity and confidentiality.

The questionnaires were posted in three batches; April, May and July 1996 to 4000 individuals. All questionnaires were accompanied by a covering letter explaining the purpose of the survey.

For each batch, two reminders were sent to those addresses from which there had been no response.

Questionnaires were returned by 77 per cent of those mailed in the first batch - a very encouraging response. Response to batches two and three was not so good. Low response rates are not unusual but such problems could have been caused by some of the address information being incomplete, inaccurate or out of date. Overall, questionnaires were returned from two-thirds of those targeted.

The British Crime Survey estimated that there were around 6.6 million incidents of physical assault in 1995, 2.9 million of which involved injury. Women were more likely than men to have experienced assault by a former partner, 23% compared to 15%. At least 12% of the women had been assaulted on three or more occasions. Young women aged 20-24 reported the highest levels with 34% saying that they had been threatened or assaulted.

The British Crime Survey figures are thought to be more **valid** than those recorded by the police. This is partly because they are not affected by changes in police recording methods and they cover crimes not reported to the police.

Adapted from Marsha Jones et al: "Domestic Violence" Sociology Review September 2006

- (a) Explain what is meant by the term **valid**. [5]
- (b) Outline and explain why using self complete questionnaires was appropriate for the research described in the above passage. [10]
- (c) Outline and explain, using examples where appropriate, why some sociologists are critical of the use of official statistics. [15]
- (d) You intend to carry out a research project to investigate reasons for truancy (unauthorised absence from school) in your local area.
 - (i) Describe your research design *explaining and justifying* your choices at **each** stage of the process.
 - (i) Identify some of the problems that you may encounter **and** the impact that these might have on your research design. [30]