

ANSWER KEY & MARKING SCHEME · CBSE CLASS 11**Doing Sociology: Research Methods**

Sociology Cl-11 · Chapter 5 · Use this with the Board Paper · Companion to Quick Drill

HOW TO USE

Attempt the Board Paper first (closed-book, full time). Then come here. For 2-mark+ questions, compare your answer to the model. For 3-4 mark questions, also consult the **Topper Templates** below — these show the exact step-by-step structure that scores full marks per CBSE marking-scheme conventions.

MODEL ANSWERS · BOARD PAPER**Section A — Very Short Answer**

Q1. Name the sociologist who pioneered participant observation through the Trobriand Islands study. [1 mark]

Ans: Bronisław Malinowski.

Q2. What is meant by 'value-neutrality'? [1 mark]

Ans: Max Weber's principle that the researcher must separate factual description from personal value-judgement while writing.

Q3. Name any one type of sampling that ensures representation of small sub-groups. [1 mark]

Ans: Stratified sampling.

Q4. Define reflexivity in one line. [1 mark]

Ans: Reflexivity is the researcher's open reflection on how their own identity (caste, gender, class) shapes the data they collect.

Section B — Short Answer

Q5. State any two ethical pillars of social research with one line each. [2 marks]

Ans: (1) Informed consent — respondents must know the study's purpose, that participation is voluntary, and that they may withdraw any time. (2) Anonymity — real names and identifying details must be disguised in any publication so respondents are not exposed to social or legal harm.

Q6. Mention two limitations of the survey method. [2 marks]

Ans: (1) Surveys capture surface-level data and miss context, meaning, and the 'why' behind behaviour. (2) Respondents may lie on sensitive topics (caste, income, voting), and a biased sample frame produces misleading large-N results.

Q7. Why is participant observation considered time-intensive? Give two reasons. [2 marks]

Ans: (1) The researcher must stay months or years with the group to learn the language and build rapport — Malinowski spent 4 years in Trobriand. (2) Daily field notes, cross-checking informants, and reflexive writing all take ongoing effort throughout the stay.

Section C — Long Answer

Q8. Distinguish between quantitative and qualitative methods of sociological research, citing one Indian example each. [4 marks]

Ans: Quantitative methods deal with NUMBERS — large samples, statistical analysis, surveys/census — and answer 'how many, how often'. Example: NSSO consumption surveys. Qualitative methods deal with MEANING — small samples, interpretive analysis, participant observation/in-depth interviews — and answer 'why, how'. Example: M.N. Srinivas' Rampura village study. Quantitative offers breadth and generalisability; qualitative offers depth and context. Modern good practice is triangulation — using both on the same problem to balance scale and meaning.

Q9. Explain any four types of sampling techniques used in social surveys. [4 marks]

Ans: (1) Random sampling — every member of the population has equal probability of selection; needs a complete sampling frame; ensures unbiased generalisation. (2) Stratified sampling — population is divided into strata (caste, gender, age) and random samples are drawn within each; guarantees representation of small sub-groups. (3) Purposive sampling — the researcher hand-picks respondents fitting a defined profile; useful in qualitative work but bias-prone. (4) Snowball sampling — one respondent introduces the next, building a chain; ideal for hidden populations such as undocumented migrants.

Section D — Essay

Q10. Explain participant observation as a method of sociological research. Discuss its features, strengths, limitations, and illustrate with one Indian example. [6 marks]

Ans: Participant observation is a qualitative field method in which the researcher lives with and shares the daily life of the group being studied while systematically observing and recording. **FEATURES** — (i) prolonged stay (months or years), (ii) learning the local language for unmediated communication, (iii) detailed daily field notes, (iv) building rapport with key informants and cross-checking their accounts, (v) reflexivity — openly reflecting on how the researcher's caste, gender or class shapes the data. **STRENGTHS** — captures the insider's (emic) view; catches what people don't think to say to a stranger; reveals meaning, ritual and conflict. **LIMITATIONS** — time- and cost-intensive; observer effect (people perform for the observer); findings are deep but hard to generalise. **INDIAN EXAMPLE** — M.N. Srinivas' study of Rampura village (Mysore, 1948 onwards). He lived in the village, learnt Kannada idioms, attended rituals and recorded caste interactions; from this lived experience emerged the concepts of Sanskritisation and dominant caste — now staples of Indian sociology. Participant observation thus remains the gold-standard qualitative tool, complementing (not competing with) surveys through triangulation.

Q11. Discuss objectivity, value-neutrality and reflexivity as the three anchors of scientific sociology. Why is reflexivity considered the 'honest update' to objectivity? [6 marks]

Ans: Objectivity, value-neutrality and reflexivity are the three intellectual anchors that distinguish sociology from common-sense opinion. **OBJECTIVITY** is the ideal of studying society without letting personal likes or dislikes distort observation; total objectivity is impossible for any human researcher, but the discipline of method (sampling, recording, peer review) brings findings closer to it. **VALUE-NEUTRALITY**, articulated by Max Weber, is the writing discipline of separating factual claims ('what is') from value-judgements ('what ought to be'). A sociologist can describe untouchability without endorsing it; can study religion without believing or disbelieving. Weber asked researchers to declare their stance openly and then bracket it while presenting evidence. **REFLEXIVITY** is the modern update: contemporary sociology recognises that the researcher's caste, gender, class and language ALL shape what they notice and what informants say — a male researcher gets different answers from village women than a female researcher would. Rather than pretend this influence away, reflexivity asks the researcher to **OPENLY REFLECT** on these influences in the final report. Reflexivity is the 'honest update' because it abandons the pretence of god's-eye neutrality and replaces it with disclosure — readers can now judge findings knowing who produced them. Together the three anchors keep sociology checkable, contestable, and trustworthy.

★ TOPPER ANSWER TEMPLATES

2 TEMPLATES · MEMORISE THE FORMAT

★ TOPPER TEMPLATE — Explain participant observation as a method of sociological research. Illustrate with one Indian example. (6 marks)

Common

COMMON LOSS OF MARKS:

- Skipping definitions or terminology mid-answer
- No clear paragraph/point structure
- Conclusion absent or one-line

★ TOPPER TEMPLATE — Distinguish between quantitative and qualitative methods of sociological research with examples. (4 marks)

Common

COMMON LOSS OF MARKS:

- Skipping definitions or terminology mid-answer
- No clear paragraph/point structure
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MARKING SCHEME — GENERAL NOTES

- Section A: 1 mark for a correct one-line answer. No partial marks.

- Section B: 1 mark for each correct sub-point. Naming without explanation = 0.5 marks per sub-point.
- Section C: 4 marks split as — 1 mark for definition/framing, 2 marks for the four sub-points/contrasts, 1 mark for examples or concluding remark. Indian example is mandatory in comparison questions.
- Section D (6-mark essays): 1 mark — definition/opening; 2 marks — features/structure; 1 mark — strengths; 1 mark — limitations; 1 mark — Indian example AND closing remark. Missing the Indian example caps the answer at 5/6.
- Hindi-medium answers carry equal marks; technical terms may be retained in English with Hindi explanation in brackets.
- Diagrams (e.g. funnel for sampling, triangle for ethics) earn 0.5 bonus within the question's cap if drawn clearly.