

Religious participation by class

Middle-classes are mostly members of the Church and Quaker faith, while working-classes are most likely to be members of the Roman Catholic Church and/or **denomination** such as Methodist. This is mainly because such denominations are linked to industrial societies, e.g. the Welsh Chapel. Some would also argue that this may demonstrate that there are middle-class and working-class denominations.

There has been growth of the middle classes in New Age and New Religious Movements as it suits their lifestyle.

Bruce: cult membership is predominantly middle-class as they fulfil the needs of those with financial pressure.

To the middle-classes, the Church may function as an opportunity to socially network with like-minded people.

Religious participation by gender

Women more likely to be church members due to their role as nurturers and primary caregivers, i.e. raising children to accept religious values.

Gender socialisation also holds a key factor with girls learning values such as conformity and passivity – fitting the behaviour of the more conservative religions.

Women also live longer and are more likely to attend church as a way of socialising and a sense of belonging.

Simone de Beauvoir stated that women suffer on earth only to be rewarded in Heaven.

Religious participation by ethnicity

Modood notes that people from ethnic minority groups in the UK are usually more religious than white individuals. This can be due to a sense of community, strong associations with cultural roots, and identity. He stated that Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims in the UK consider themselves Muslim first instead of British.

Johal supports Modood and explains that even though the UK is a multicultural and multi-faith society, religion is a major part of ethnic minority members' lives, e.g. **Davie** argues that ethnic groups such as Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi, regularly practice their religion as a sense of belonging and a cultural identity that sets them apart from other social groups. Muslim girls consider wearing of the headscarves as a way of liberation and protection from sexual harassment as suffered by other girls and women.

African-Caribbean people base their religion on their ethnicity, e.g. **Rastafarianism** and demonstrating their resistance to racism. Even though predominantly Christian, they were shunned from religious practice after arriving in Britain in the 1960s. As a result of this, they created their own ways of worship, i.e. Pentecostals. This was also true in the case of South Asian immigrants who built their own mosques and gurdwaras – **Bruce** called this cultural transition.

Religious participation by age

People over 65 and under 15 are more likely to be involved in religious activities. Children under the age of 15 often attend Sunday Schools and/or religious playgroups.

Traditionally, people over the age of 65 are usually the most religious. Reasons for their membership may be due to loneliness, socialising or to be part of a community, e.g. part of village life. Yet, many argue that the elderly people are increasingly losing their faith.

Wallis believes that middle-aged individuals often join world-affirming movements such as New Age Movements as it is associated with their lifestyle choices.

Sects often appeal to the young due to friendship and a sense of belonging. Cults also appeal to young adults as their positions are sometimes counterculture. However, young people today look to science and proof rather than spiritual answers. As a result, there is a growth of rationalisation and a decrease of religious participation.

**Don't forget criticism
– this is important for the exam!**

Gender and New Religious Movements

More women are members of sects compared to men according to **Glock and Stark** this is due to deprivation that more women suffer, i.e. economically, physically and mentally. Also, they are more likely to be members of sects due to their 'feminine nature', i.e. healing, caring and loving.

Bruce: men are more interested in NRMs due to the mysterious new knowledge they offer; whereby women have more interest in new science, new ecology, and new spirituality.