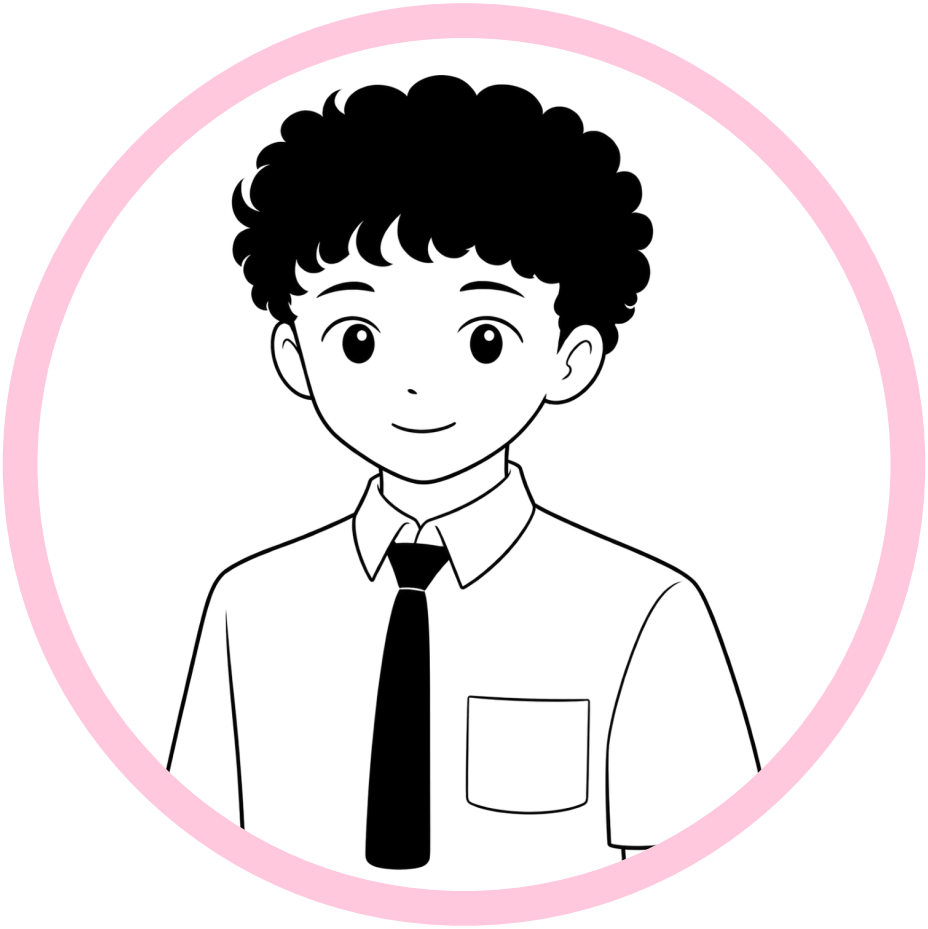
AQA A-LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY · 7182

PSYCHOLOGY



MARK SCHEME

3.3.2 THEORIES OF ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

SCORE	PERCENTAGE
/67	%

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Q1.

[AO1 = 2]

2 marks for a clear, coherent outline of the term with some elaboration.

1 mark for a limited or muddled outline.

Content:

an economic model of relationships based on the idea of fairness for each partner; emphasises the need for each partner to experience a balance between their cost / effort and their benefit / reward.

[2]

Q2.

[AO2 = 4]

Level	Marks	Description
2	3 – 4	Knowledge of the relevant phases of Duck's model is mostly clear and accurate. The knowledge is applied appropriately to both cases. The answer is generally coherent with effective use of terminology.
1	1 – 2	There is limited/partial knowledge of relevant phase(s) of Duck's model. There is some appropriate application. The answer may lack coherence. Use of terminology may be either absent or inappropriate. OR **one** relevant phase of Duck's model is covered at Level 2.
	0	No relevant content.

Application (and selection) of relevant phases:

- intrapsychic phase – one person is privately dissatisfied with the relationship, considering ending the relationship, worrying about problems to come, considering expressing dissatisfaction to partner
- Barbara is in the intrapsychic phase because she wants to end it and is worrying about telling partner who is unaware of how she feels
- social phase – the breakdown has happened, other people are told/it becomes public, there is negotiation about practicalities, eg division of assets, childcare responsibilities etc
- Jamima is in the social phase – friends and mum know, they are taking steps to arrange for children and sort out money.

Q3.

[AO1 = 1]

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1 mark for any of the following: satisfaction, commitment, comparison with alternatives.

Q4.

[AO1 = 1]

B

Q5.

[AO1 = 3]

1 mark for a correctly named stage (intra-psychic, dyadic, social; grave-dressing)

Plus

2 further marks for a clear and coherent outline of the named stage:

- intra-psychic stage partners express their feelings and plans to save the relationship are considered
- dyadic stage partners assess each other's behaviour and evaluate the costs of withdrawing
- social phase partners engage in activities aimed at getting over the relationship breakdown and announce they are splitting
- grave-dressing partners questions their decision and then consider how the break-up has impacted their social network.

Q6.

[AO1 = 3 AO3 = 5]

Level	Marks	Description
4	7 – 8	Outline of social exchange theory is accurate and generally well detailed. Evaluation is effective. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively. Minor detail and/or expansion of argument sometimes lacking.
3	5 – 6	Outline of social exchange theory is evident. There are occasional inaccuracies. There is some effective evaluation. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology mostly used effectively.
2	3 – 4	Outline of social exchange theory is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any evaluation is of limited effectiveness. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1 – 2	Outline of social exchange theory is limited. Evaluation is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole

		lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible content:

- An economic theory of relationships that considers how parties exchange rewards and costs
- Assumes that we are attracted to those who offer rewards (fun, attention, esteem etc)
- And put off a relationship perceived to involve great costs (time, emotional strain etc)
- Relationships that are mutually beneficial will succeed

Possible evaluation points:

- Use of evidence to support or contradict social exchange theory
- Assumes we make rational and calculating decisions about whether or not to pursue relationships
- Different people perceive rewards and costs differently so theory can account for individual differences in attraction
- Explains maintenance better than initial attraction because costs become more significant as the relationship goes on
- Comparison with Rusbult's extension to the theory
- Cultural bias – more suited to individualist culture than to collectivist cultures

Credit other relevant information.

Q7.

Marks for this question: AO1 = 6, AO3 = 10

Level	Marks	Description
4	13 – 16	Knowledge is accurate and generally well detailed. Discussion / evaluation / application is thorough and effective. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively. Minor detail and / or expansion of argument sometimes lacking.
3	9 – 12	Knowledge is evident. There are occasional inaccuracies. Discussion / evaluation / application is apparent and mostly effective. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology is mostly used effectively. Lacks focus in places.

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2	5 – 8	Some knowledge is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any discussion / evaluation / application is only partly effective. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1 – 4	Knowledge is limited. Discussion / evaluation / application is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Please note that although the content for this mark scheme remains the same, on most mark schemes for the new AQA Specification (Sept 2015 onwards) content appears as a bulleted list.

AO1

A variety of theories can be relevant to the maintenance of romantic relationships. Economic models such as social exchange theory, equity theory and investment models focusing on rewards and costs of relationships are all relevant. The matching hypothesis could also be relevant. A similar argument applies to evolutionary approaches; these can be relevant to maintenance of relationships.

AO3

For each of the major models, such as Rusbult's investment model, there is some research support that can be used effectively; in turn some of these studies can be criticised as lacking ecological validity and generalisability. Economic models also suffer from a restricted view of people and what they look for in relationships, ignoring concepts such as fairness. Also relevant is the ability of different theories to explain e.g. people who stay in abusive relationships, the maintenance of gay and lesbian relationships, or gender differences in attitudes to long-term relationships.

Alternative theories may be used to evaluate the target theory, but may receive credit only if used as part of sustained and effective evaluation and not simply discussed in their own right.

Other relevant evaluative points might include cultural differences and biases. Research has been mostly conducted from a Western point of view, ignoring factors more relevant to less developed societies, gender differences and biases, and ethical issues / socially sensitive research.

Q8.

Marks for this question: AO1 = 6, AO3 = 10

Level	Marks	Description
4	13 – 16	Knowledge is accurate and generally well detailed. Discussion / evaluation / application is thorough and effective. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively. Minor detail

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		and / or expansion of argument sometimes lacking.
3	9 – 12	Knowledge is evident. There are occasional inaccuracies. Discussion / evaluation / application is apparent and mostly effective. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology is mostly used effectively. Lacks focus in places.
2	5 – 8	Some knowledge is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any discussion / evaluation / application is only partly effective. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1 – 4	Knowledge is limited. Discussion / evaluation / application is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

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AO1

Marks for outline of relevant theories eg social exchange theory, equity theory, the investment model. Key features should be outlined, eg the role of comparison levels in social exchange approaches. In addition the explicit focus must be on the formation of romantic relationships rather than, for instance, maintenance. This is particularly important for social exchange and other 'economic' approaches.

Other theories may be outlined, such as Murstein's matching hypothesis or explanations based on evolutionary theory. These may receive marks across the scale as long as the explicit focus is on the formation of romantic relationships.

AO3

Marks for the findings of research studies and their support (or not) for a given theory. Some of these studies can be evaluated in terms of ecological validity (can relationships be studied in the laboratory?) and whether they are actually focused on the formation of romantic relationships. For instance, some studies seem more concerned with 'liking' more than with romantic relationships. Methodological evaluation of studies may receive credit if explicitly linked to the discussion of theories. Further commentary might include the issue of understudied relationships and whether theories can be applied to eg gay and lesbian relationships.

If evaluation is restricted to findings of studies on liking as opposed to romantic relationships, students can receive limited credit unless explicitly shaped towards the question.

Relevant discussion in this area includes cultural bias and cultural specificity. 'Economic' theories may be more applicable to Westernised individualised societies, while psychological theories in general may not apply to cultures where arranged

marriages are the norm. Students may also refer to the ethical aspects of research in socially-sensitive areas. The free will / determinism debate is also relevant to this area.

Q9.

Marks for this question: AO1 = 6, AO3 = 10

Level	Marks	Description
4	13 – 16	Knowledge is accurate and generally well detailed. There is reference to at least two theories. Discussion / evaluation / application is thorough and effective. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively. Minor detail and / or expansion of argument sometimes lacking.
3	9 – 12	Knowledge is evident. There are occasional inaccuracies. There is reference to at least two theories. Discussion / evaluation / application is apparent and mostly effective. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology is mostly used effectively. Lacks focus in places.
2	5 – 8	Some knowledge is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any discussion / evaluation / application is only partly effective. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1 – 4	Knowledge is limited. Discussion / valuation / application is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

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AO1

Theories of romantic relationships include: social exchange theory, equity theory and Rusbult's investment model of commitment, satisfaction, comparison with alternatives and investment.
One issue that may arise is the description of particular factors, such as proximity, without an overall 'theory'. If several factors are presented in this way, they could either be considered as aspects of a relevant theory and assessed together, or, if no other relevant material is presented, the two factors best outlined should be considered as two theories.
Economic theories, such as social exchange and equity, can account for both formation and maintenance. Such theories can receive credit insofar as the emphasis is on relationship formation rather than maintenance. Similarly, evolutionary approaches may receive credit if the focus is on relationship formation.

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AO3

Depending upon the theories outlined, relevant research evidence should be a key source of evaluative discussion. General commentary could include the quantitative nature of economic approaches and the failure to address the emotional side of relationships. On the positive side some theories have generated much subsequent research.
Cultural and gender issues are also central to this area, as is the general failure to consider the variety of romantic relationships. Alternative theories may be introduced, but may gain credit if used as part of sustained and effective commentary.

Issues that might be discussed include gender and cultural issues; ethics; free will / determinism etc.

Q1.

Most students gained some credit, although outlines often lacked clarity or were confused, for example, stating that equity meant equal. Quite a number of the outlines sounded much more like social exchange theory.

Q2.

There were many full-mark responses to this question, although a significant number incorrectly identified Jamima's situation as the grave-dressing phase. The simplest route to achieving full credit was to identify the relevant phase, summarise the main aspects, then link this to the stem material. Weaker responses were those where the student contributed no knowledge or understanding of the stage but merely copied whole chunks of the stem, although even then some minimal credit could be achieved by matching the characters with the correct phase. As this was an application question, answers without any links to stem received no credit.

Q7.

By far the most popular theories of the maintenance of romantic relationships were taken from the economic area, usually social exchange or equity models. Weaker answers tended to confuse these. Better answers gave reasonable detail of what might constitute costs and benefits and the role of 'comparisons'. Some students lost focus on maintenance and included material on breakdown, which was not creditworthy. Where more than one theory was presented, both were marked and the best mark recorded.

Although there are many relevant studies in this area, evaluation tended to focus on methodological criticism of any study outlined (often without the implications for the theory being made explicit. Such material did not earn marks), and general commentary on eg cultural relativity. There were many references to 'abusive' relationships, but analysis of the reasons these are maintained was usually superficial. Better answers often used applications of research to, eg relationship therapy, as effective IDA. Alternative IDA credit was earned through, eg an informed reference to cultural differences, or to alternative approaches, eg evolutionary theory.

Q8.

This question represented the most popular topic on the paper. The most popular theories were reward / need satisfaction and filter theory; the matching hypothesis, evolutionary approaches, and social exchange models also featured. A key discriminator for the reward / need satisfaction theory was the extent to which students understood the roles of classical and operant conditioning, and the differences between them. Evaluation via research evidence was usually limited to studies (or study) on 'liking' people associated with pleasant events or rewards. Better students pointed out that 'liking' can lead to romantic relationships and so made the relevance of such studies clear.

A similar problem arose with studies used to evaluate filter theory. Several of these involve maintenance of relationships as well as formation. While weaker answers simply ignored this, better students selected and discussed the material relevant to formation. It is worth noting that in relation to the matching hypothesis many students do not understand the findings and conclusions of Walster's two dating studies.

Weaker students confused reward / need satisfaction and economic models, did not

understand the differences between classical and operant conditioning, and relied less on research findings for AO2 / 3 credit and more on generic evaluation via IDA ('determinism' and 'reductionism' were popular) or methodology. IDA were rarely contextualised and usually did not demonstrate understanding. Methodological evaluation was often rote learnt and list-like, with no reference to theory. Although not common, comparison with alternative theories was an effective source of AO2 / 3 marks.

Q9.

A very popular question with many competent answers. The most popular theories were reward / need satisfaction, matching theory, filter theory, and exchange approaches. Detail was often impressive, especially of the roles of operant and classical conditioning in reward / need satisfaction.

Research findings were the main source of evaluation. There was often confusion over the details and outcome of Walster's dance studies in relation to the matching hypothesis, and in general weaker candidates found it difficult to relate research findings to theories. They tended to spend too much time on methodological evaluation of studies without bringing out the implications for the theories they were supporting or contradicting.

Although exchange / economic theories could be made relevant to the formation of romantic relationships, many candidates who referred to them failed to make them specifically relevant to formation and focused on maintenance instead. At the bottom end models of relationship breakdown were also introduced.

Effective IDA for this question included cultural and gender differences and biases, reductionism, free will / determinism, and socially sensitive research.

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