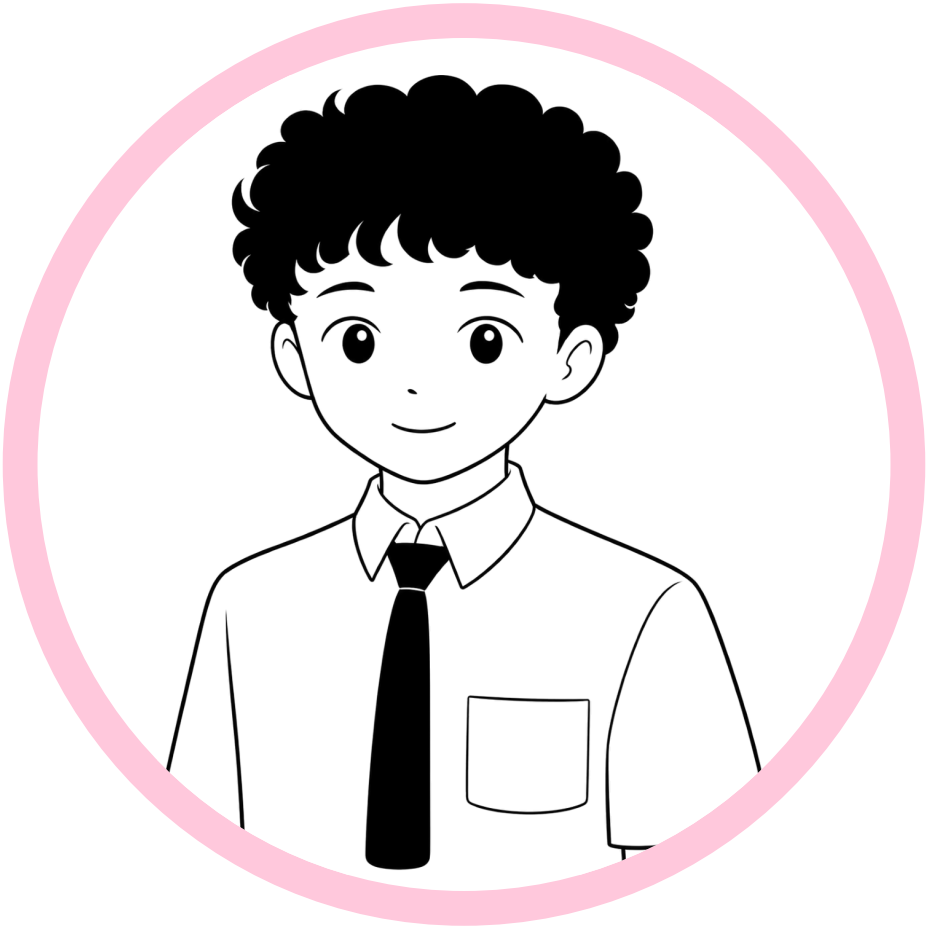
AQA A-LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY · 7182

PSYCHOLOGY



MARK SCHEME

3.3.8 SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPLANATIONS

SCORE	PERCENTAGE
/48	%

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Q1.

[AO1 = 6 AO2 = 4 AO3 = 6]

Level	Mark	Description
4	13-16	Knowledge of **one or more** social psychological explanations for aggression is accurate with some detail. Application is effective. Discussion is thorough and effective. Minor detail and / or expansion of argument is sometimes lacking. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively.
3	9-12	Knowledge of **one or more** social psychological explanations for aggression is evident but there are occasional inaccuracies / omissions. Application and / or discussion is mostly effective. The answer is mostly clear and organised but occasionally lacks focus. Specialist terminology is used appropriately.
2	5-8	Limited knowledge of **one or more** social psychological explanations for aggression is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any application and / or discussion is of limited effectiveness. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1-4	Knowledge of **one or more** social psychological explanations for aggression is very limited. Discussion / application is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology is either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible content:

- frustration-aggression hypothesis – aggression results from goal prevention; psychodynamic theory of aggression as a physiological drive needing cathartic release; aggression as displacement; importance of environmental cues; importance of proximity to goal
- social learning theory – aggression learned as a result of observation, imitation, modelling, identification; vicarious reinforcement; mediating cognitive factors affect likelihood of behaviour being reproduced, e.g. attention
- de-individuation – membership of a co-acting group / crowd leads to reduction in feeling of personal responsibility; loss of personal identity; anonymity; assume group identity; lowering of private / public self-awareness; lowered inhibition; in-group out-group effect
- knowledge of explanations embedded in evidence.

Possible application:

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- frustration-aggression: John's fighting might be triggered by frustration due to his team losing and / or other supporters taunting; John displaces anger at losing match / unfairness onto rival supporters
- social learning: John observes players fighting on the pitch – these are his role models – he identifies with these high status models – observes, imitates; John saw everyone else fighting and imitated
- de-individuation: John is part of a group/co-acting; therefore less likely to feel individually responsible for his aggressive act due to de-individuation; rival groups of supporters leads to ingroup / out-group effect.

Possible discussion points:

- use of evidence to support / refute explanation/s
- not all frustration leads to aggression
- factors such as personality and past experience mediate frustration-aggression effect
- mediating cognitive factors in SLT can explain why people react aggressively in some situations and not others
- de-individuation can result in pro-social as well as antisocial behaviours – depends on contextual cues and norms
- implications for explanation/s – how knowledge of causes might enable aggression to be reduced, e.g. regulating exposure to aggressive media
- comparison with other explanations, e.g. biological
- discussion linked to broader issues, e.g. determinism, role of nurture etc.

Credit other relevant material.

[16]

Q2.

[AO1 = 6 AO3 = 10]

Level	Marks	Description
4	13 – 16	Knowledge of the social learning theory of aggression is accurate and generally well detailed. Evaluation 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 of the social learning theory of aggression is evident. Evaluation is apparent and mostly effective. There are occasional inaccuracies. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology mostly used effectively. Lacks focus on aggression in places.
2	5 – 8	Knowledge of the social learning theory of aggression is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any evaluation is only partly effective. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1 – 4	Knowledge of the social learning theory of aggression 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

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		absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible content:

- emphasis on learning aggression through observation and imitation of role model
- concept of identification and influences on identification – status, attractiveness, similarity etc
- internalisation of aggressive model
- modelling of aggression is influenced by observation of consequences – vicarious reinforcement
- learning of aggression can be internal, taking place without immediate outward demonstration
- concept of self-efficacy – mediational processes, eg attention, retention, motivation, and motor reproduction affect learning, coming between observation of aggressive behaviour and demonstration of that behaviour
- credit detail of Bandura's research on learnt aggression where they contribute to description of theory.

Possible evaluation points:

- use of evidence to support / refute the theory of aggression
- difficulty demonstrating cause and effect – although the Bandura research was able to control variables and did demonstrate that aggression was affected by modelling it is difficult to show cause and effect in real life aggression
- explains some forms of aggression better than others, eg cannot easily explain impulsive aggressive behaviours
- sees behaviour as environmentally determined whereas some behaviours may be innate
- mediating cognitive factors have to be inferred so cannot measure extent of their influence
- comparison with alternative explanations, eg deindividuation or biological approaches.

Credit other relevant evaluation points.

Only credit evaluation of the methodology used in studies when made relevant to discussion of the theory of aggression.

Q3.

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

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		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.

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

Candidates are likely to choose either the frustration-aggression hypothesis, social learning theory as applied to human aggression or de-individuation. However approaches such as cue arousal or relative deprivation would also be relevant. The question requires a focus on *one* social psychological *theory* of aggression.

AO3

Research studies would provide an effective route to evaluative discussion, with a variety of studies relevant to the theories. Commentary could also include the artificial nature of many studies and the ability of the chosen theory to explain aggression in the real world. Comparison with alternative approaches, such as the role of neural and hormonal mechanisms, or evolutionary explanations, would earn credit if used as part of sustained and effective evaluation.

Issues relevant to this question include: gender and cultural differences; ethical aspects of studies of aggression; nature-nurture; free will and determinism etc.

Q1.

This tended to be very well answered, with many students referring to deindividuation, frustrationaggression and more general social psychological concepts, such as conformity and social learning. Many answers contained minimal application, merely noting the relevant comment from the table as being an example of whatever explanation was under discussion. Some really excellent answers presented whole paragraphs of integrated knowledge and application, teasing out aspects, for example, of deindividuation, and linking them to the scenario. Discussion points varied in terms of content and effectiveness, with the least effective being those that talked in a highly generic way about reductionism, determinism and nature nurture.

Q3.

Social learning theory (SLT) and deindividuation were the most popular social psychological theories of aggression. A common error, in contrast with question 6, was to provide little or no detail of the theory, so limiting access to AO1 marks. Deindividuation in particular still seems poorly understood by many candidates.

Evaluation was usually in the form of research evidence, with Bandura's Bobo dolls routinely used in support of SLT. Many answers provided detailed methodological evaluation of Bandura's studies, but failed to access the higher bands for AO2 / AO3 as the relevance to the question was not made explicit – how do these points affect the degree of support for SLT? Better answers tended to provide a broader range of evidence, for instance using studies of media influences on aggressive behaviour. There was often anecdotal reference to criminal cases such as James Bulger. As part of 'How Science Works' candidates should be aware that such observations are of little value in assessing explanations of aggression.

Answers focusing on deindividuation used Zimbardo's work extensively and often effectively. They still tended to become bogged down in methodological issues, but the quality of essays using deindividuation has steadily improved over the years. It was impressive that some candidates could point out that the Prison study can be interpreted in a variety of ways.