



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Tuesday 21 May 2024 – Afternoon

AS Level Psychology

H167/02 Psychological themes through core studies

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes



No extra materials are needed.



Please write clearly in black ink. **Do not write in the barcodes.**

Centre number

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Candidate number

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First name(s) StemUp Model Solution

Last name _____

INSTRUCTIONS

- Use black ink.
- Write your answer to each question in the space provided. If you need extra space use the lined pages at the end of this booklet. The question numbers must be clearly shown.
- Answer **all** the questions.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is **75**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets [].
- Quality of extended response will be assessed in questions marked with an asterisk (*).
- This document has **16** pages.

ADVICE

- Read each question carefully before you start your answer.

Section A

Core studies

1

- (a) Identify **one** way that qualitative data was collected in Sperry's (1968) split brain study.

Qualitative data was collected by asking participants to say or write down what image they had seen when it was flashed to one visual field. [1]

- (b) Outline **one** weakness of collecting qualitative data in this study.

Qualitative data is time consuming to collect and analyse, so it would have taken Sperry a long time to record and interpret each split brain patient's spoken descriptions and drawings of what they had seen on the visual tasks and what they had felt on the tactile tasks. [2]

- (c) Outline **one** way in which Casey et al.'s (2011) study into neural correlates of delay of gratification can be said to lack ecological validity.

The tasks did not represent a real life situation. Participants lay inside an fMRI scanner pressing a button whenever a happy or fearful face appeared in the go/no-go task, which nobody has to do in everyday life, so the findings may not show how they really delay gratification. [2]

2

- (a) Explain how Loftus and Palmer's (1974) study into eyewitness testimony links to the key theme of memory.

Memory is a person's ability to store and accurately recall past events and information. Loftus and Palmer tested the accuracy of memory in two experiments where students watched film clips of car crashes and were then asked a leading question. In experiment 1 the verb was changed (smashed, collided, bumped, hit or contacted) and in experiment 2 participants were asked a week later if they had seen broken glass. They found leading questions distorted memory: 'smashed' produced higher speed estimates and more false reports of broken glass, showing past-event information alters what is recalled. [3]

- (b) Outline **two** controls used in Grant et al.'s (1998) study into context-dependent memory.

- 1 *Every participant studied exactly the same two-page, three-column article on psychoimmunology, so the material being learned was identical for everyone, whether they read it in the silent condition or in the noisy condition with background cafeteria noise played through headphones.*
- 2 *Every participant answered the same sixteen multiple-choice questions in the recognition test, and this test was always taken second, after the ten-item short-answer recall test, so the order of testing could not affect the results.*

[4]

3

- (a) Milgram's (1963) study of obedience is often considered to be a controlled observation.

Explain the term 'controlled observation' in the context of this study.

A controlled observation is where researchers watch and record behaviour in an artificial, standardised environment that they have set up and manipulated themselves. Milgram arranged his laboratory at Yale University in the same way for every participant: the teacher always sat at the same shock generator while the learner was strapped into a chair in the adjacent room out of sight, and the same four verbal prods were used. Through a one-way mirror Milgram observed and recorded how far each teacher obeyed the experimenter's orders to give increasingly strong shocks when the learner made a mistake. [3]

- (b) Outline **one** result from Bocchiaro et al.'s (2012) study into disobedience and whistle-blowing.

The most common behaviour was obedience: 76.5% of participants (114 out of 149) obeyed the experimenter and wrote the supportive statement to fellow students, whereas only 9.4% (14 participants) whistle-blew by posting the form to the ethics committee. [2]

4

- (a) Outline **one** difference in the sample used in Freud's (1909) study of Little Hans and Baron-Cohen et al.'s (1997) study into autism in adults.

There was a difference in sample size. Freud studied just one individual, Little Hans, a young boy from Vienna, whereas Baron-Cohen et al. studied 76 adults in total: 16 with autism or Asperger syndrome, 50 normal adults and 10 with Tourette syndrome.

[2]

- (b) The table below shows data collected in Baron-Cohen et al.'s (1997) study into autism in adults.

	Results of the Eyes Task (out of 25)	
	Mean score	Range of scores
Autism/Asperger Syndrome (AS)	16.3	13–23
Normal	20.3	16–25
Tourette Syndrome (TS)	20.4	16–25

- (i) Outline **one** difference in performance on the Eyes Task between the participants with autism/Asperger Syndrome (AS) and participants with Tourette Syndrome (TS).

The participants with autism/AS performed worse on the Eyes Task than the TS participants. The autism/AS group had a lower mean score of 16.3 out of 25 compared with a mean of 20.4 for the TS group, and their scores ranged from 13 to 23 whereas the TS scores ranged from 16 to 25.

[2]

- (ii) Outline **one** conclusion that can be drawn from the above findings.

Adults with autism/AS have an impaired theory of mind. They scored only 16.3 out of 25 on average on the Eyes Task, a valid test of theory of mind for adults, which is well below the means of 20.3 and 20.4 for the normal and TS groups, who therefore do not show this impairment.

[2]

- 5 Bandura et al. (1961) conducted a study into the transmission of aggression.

Outline **one** way the procedure increased the reliability of this study.

Bandura et al. used a standardised procedure in phase one. In the aggressive condition the model always behaved towards the Sft Bobo doll in exactly the same way, sitting on it, punching it on the nose, hitting it on the head with a mallet, tossing it in the air and kicking it round the room, while repeating the same phrases such as 'Sock him in the nose' and 'Pow'. Because every child in that condition saw an identical sequence of aggressive acts, the procedure was consistent and could be repeated by other researchers to check the results. [2]

Section B

Areas, perspectives and debates

6

- (a) Explain why Freud's (1909) study of Little Hans can be viewed from the psychodynamic perspective.

The psychodynamic perspective holds that behaviour is driven by the unconscious mind, a part of the mind of which the person has no direct awareness, and by unresolved conflicts from early childhood. Freud interpreted Little Hans' fear of horses as an unconscious fear of his father, because the black around the horse's mouth and the blinkers resembled his father's moustache and glasses. He explained this fear as the result of Hans being in the phallic stage and experiencing the Oedipus complex, unconsciously desiring his mother and fearing his father as a rival, which was also shown in the giraffe fantasy and the plumber fantasies.

[3]

- (b) Outline **one** strength of the psychodynamic perspective.

A strength of the psychodynamic perspective is that it has led to a useful treatment for mental disorders, psychoanalysis. By using techniques such as free association and dream analysis the therapist brings repressed, unconscious conflicts into the conscious mind so that they can be understood and resolved, which allows people to manage problems such as the phobias and anxiety that Hans experienced.

[2]

- (c) Outline **one** weakness of the psychodynamic perspective.

A weakness of the psychodynamic perspective is that its ideas are unfalsifiable and so unscientific. The unconscious mind, the Oedipus complex and repression cannot be directly observed, tested or measured, so their existence cannot be proved or disproved. Freud's interpretations of Hans' fantasies therefore rest on his own subjective judgement rather than objective evidence, making the findings questionable.

[2]

- (d) Explain how Sperry's (1968) split brain study can be considered to be located within the biological area of psychology. Support your answer with evidence from this study.

The biological area assumes that what is psychological is first biological, so behaviour and experience can be explained in terms of the brain, nervous system, genes and hormones. It follows that damage to or changes in the brain will have a significant effect on behaviour. Sperry's study sits within this area because he explained the unusual experiences of his eleven split brain patients in terms of their biology: their corpus callosum had been severed to control epilepsy, so the two hemispheres could no longer transfer information and worked independently, unlike in a normal brain. His evidence supports this. When an image was flashed to the left visual field it was registered only by the right hemisphere, and because the right hemisphere has no language centre the patient could not say what they had seen, yet they could point to the object with the left hand. Similarly, an object felt only in the left hand could not be named but could be picked out of a grab bag by touch with the same hand. These deficits were caused purely by the physical disconnection of the hemispheres, showing a biological explanation of behaviour. [5]

- (e) Outline why research in the biological area is often considered reductionist. Support your answer with evidence from an appropriate core study.

Reductionism means explaining complex behaviour by breaking it down into its simplest component parts, often focusing on a single factor rather than the interaction of many. Research in the biological area is reductionist because it isolates one biological factor, such as activity in a particular brain region, and ignores external influences like upbringing and social context. For example, Casey et al. reduced the complex ability to delay gratification down to the functioning of specific brain areas, finding that low delayers showed more activity in the ventral striatum and less in the inferior frontal gyrus than high delayers when they saw happy faces in the go/no-go task, ignoring any environmental factors. [3]

- (f)* Discuss the use of socially sensitive research in psychology. Support your answer with evidence from appropriate core studies.

Research is socially sensitive when it has wider implications, usually negative, either directly for the participants or for the group of people that the participants represent. Topics such as mental disorders, intelligence, obedience and self-control are sensitive because the findings can affect how whole groups are viewed and treated, so psychologists must consider the consequences of the research as well as how it is carried out.

One strength is that socially sensitive research gives a greater understanding of unusual behaviours and conditions. Baron-Cohen et al. studied adults with autism and Asperger syndrome to find out whether their theory of mind deficit persists into adulthood, and their Eyes Task showed the autism/AS group scored a mean of only 16.3 out of 25 compared with 20.3 for normal adults. Without studying a sensitive group we would know far less about autism.

A second strength is that it can lead to positive interventions and practical applications. Freud's study of Little Hans, a boy with a phobia of horses, led to the development of psychoanalysis, in which a person gains a conscious grasp of repressed wishes and can manage their fears. Milgram's finding that 65% of ordinary people gave the full 450 volts helps society understand and guard against destructive obedience.

A weakness is that the findings can be used to label groups negatively, leading to prejudice and discrimination. Baron-Cohen et al.'s conclusion that people with autism have an impaired theory of mind could be misapplied by employers who assume autistic people cannot understand others, and Casey et al.'s conclusion that low delayers at age four still have poorer self-control at 44 could lead to children being written off as lacking willpower.

A further weakness is the harm to participants and their group. Milgram's participants showed extreme distress, sweating, trembling and seizures, and could leave feeling they were capable of killing. Casey et al.'s low delayers might feel inadequate learning that their brains work differently. Overall, socially sensitive research is valuable because it tackles the issues that matter most, but psychologists must weigh the benefits against the risk of stigma and present findings carefully.

[10]

Section C

Practical applications

August in Spain – such fun!

8-year-old Zac had gone to Spain for a week's holiday with his parents and two teenage cousins, Alex and Charlie, whom he adored and always looked up to.

One morning the three children were watching a film inside the villa. The film was very exciting and the children were feeling very tense as the film approached its climax. Suddenly, Zac's mother came into the room and said, "There you are Zac. I've been looking everywhere for you. I need you to come and help unload the shopping from the car."

"I can't Mum. I'm watching a film with Alex and Charlie and it's just reached the best part."

"I need you to come now. Come on. I'm waiting." Zac and his mum stared at each other, neither willing to back down. Finally, Zac reluctantly stood up, turned away from his cousins and followed his mother out of the room.

Later the same day, the three children were walking along the edge of some cliffs, when they came across a gap that was about four metres wide. Alex and Charlie jumped across the gap with ease. Alex then turned to Zac and said, "Your turn. It's easy, you've just seen us do it. It's just like doing long jump in PE." Zac looked at his two older cousins. He would never have tried to jump the gap on his own, it was too dangerous. But he wasn't on his own, he was with his best friends, even if they were a lot taller, bigger and better at jumping than him. "It's a long way down if I fall isn't it?" Several seconds passed. Zac started to tremble with fear.

"Are you going to jump or are you too afraid?" teased Charlie. "Come on, don't be a baby." Zac couldn't bear being seen as unable to match up to his cousins. He looked across at Alex and Charlie, stepped back six paces, took a couple of deep breaths, and jumped.

He just managed to land safely on the other side of the gap.

7

- (a) Outline **two** defining principles or concepts of the social area and briefly explain how they relate to the article.

- 1 A key principle of the social area is that our behaviour, thoughts and emotions are strongly influenced by other people, such as family, friends and those seen as legitimate authority figures, so we may obey or conform even against our own wishes. In the article Zac does not want to leave the exciting film but, after a stand-off, reluctantly obeys his mother, who is a legitimate authority to him, and follows her out of the room to unload the shopping, showing obedience to authority.
- 2 A second principle is that the social situation, rather than a person's individual characteristics, can change behaviour, so people act uncharacteristically when others are present. Zac would never have jumped the four metre gap alone because it was too dangerous, but the actual presence of his older cousins, his role models, and Charlie's teasing that he was a baby made him jump, risking his life to avoid looking afraid in front of them.

[6]

- (b) Briefly outline how this article could be linked to the key theme of external influences on children's behaviour. Support your answer with evidence from the article.

The article links to the key theme of external influences on children's behaviour because it shows that role models, an external influence, can have a powerful effect on what a child does, and this effect can be negative as well as positive. Zac's two teenage cousins, Alex and Charlie, whom he adored and always looked up to, jumped the gap in the cliffs first and then urged him to copy them, saying 'you've just seen us do it'. Zac would never have attempted the dangerous jump on his own, but because he wanted to match up to his cousins and not be seen as a baby, he imitated their behaviour and jumped, putting his life at risk.

[3]

- (c) Using your knowledge of psychology, suggest **and** explain **two** ways in which older children could be encouraged to show prosocial behaviour towards younger children.

One way is to use positive reinforcement through a token economy, based on the behaviourist principle that behaviour which is rewarded is more likely to be repeated. Schools and families could set up a scheme in which older children earn a token or sticker every time they are seen helping, sharing with, comforting or including a younger child, for example helping a younger sibling with homework or letting them join a game. The tokens are secondary reinforcers that can be exchanged for primary or more valued rewards such as extra playtime, a certificate presented in assembly or a small prize. The target behaviours and rewards should be clearly explained, tokens given immediately and consistently, and the rewards gradually phased out so that the prosocial behaviour becomes a habit maintained by the natural reward of praise and friendship with the younger child.

A second way is to use observational learning and modelling, following Bandura et al.'s finding that children imitate the behaviour of models they observe, especially those who are liked and respected. Older children could be exposed to admired role models, such as popular older students, sports stars or characters in television programmes and online videos, demonstrating prosocial behaviour towards younger children, for instance an older student calmly comforting a lost younger pupil. If the model is seen to be rewarded with praise or admiration, the older children also experience vicarious reinforcement and are more likely to copy. A school could run a buddy or mentoring system in which the oldest pupils are trained and then publicly praised for looking after new pupils, so that younger children watch and later imitate this when they become the older ones.

[8]

(d)* Evaluate the suggestions you have made in 7(c) using your knowledge of psychology.

One issue with the token economy is the free will and determinism debate. The suggestion is deterministic because it assumes older children's behaviour is shaped by external rewards and that prosocial acts can be engineered by stickers and prizes. However, children have some free will and may choose to help a younger child only when adults are watching, or stop once the tokens are phased out, which questions how useful the strategy is in practice when prosocial behaviour must continue without reinforcement.

The token economy can also be seen as reductionist. It reduces a complex behaviour like kindness to a simple stimulus-response link and ignores cognitive factors such as empathy and understanding why helping matters. A more holistic approach that combines rewards with discussion of the younger child's feelings may be needed. On the other hand, the behaviourist approach is scientific because the number of tokens earned and prosocial acts shown can be objectively measured, so its effectiveness can be tested and the scheme improved.

The modelling suggestion raises the nature versus nurture debate. It assumes prosocial behaviour is learned through nurture by watching role models, which is supported by Bandura et al., whose children imitated the aggressive model. However, some children may be naturally more aggressive or more empathetic because of temperament, so modelling may work well for some older children and have little effect on others, limiting its reliability across different groups.

Modelling also has ethical and socially sensitive issues. Publicly praising some older pupils as good mentors risks labelling those who are not chosen as unkind, and the training of models costs time and money. Yet it is useful and valid because it uses real situations, like the buddy system, rather than artificial laboratory tasks, so it should transfer to everyday life.

Overall both suggestions are feasible but work best together, because rewards start the behaviour while role models make it part of the children's identity. [8]

END OF QUESTION PAPER

[illegible]

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