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I declare this is my own work.

INTERNATIONAL A-LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY

Unit 4 Approaches and Application

Thursday 16 January 2025 07:00 GMT Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- a calculator, which you are expected to use where appropriate.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Fill in the boxes at the top of this page.
- Answer **all** questions.
- You must answer the questions in the spaces provided. Do not write outside the box around each page or on blank pages.
- All working must be shown.
- If you need extra space for your answer(s), use the lined pages at the end of this book. Write the question number against your answer(s).
- Do all rough work in this book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 90.

For Examiner's Use	
Question	Mark
A	
B	
C	
TOTAL	



Section A: Approaches in PsychologyAnswer **all** questions in the spaces provided.**0 1**

According to the cognitive approach what is meant by a schema?

[2 marks]

A schema is a mental structure (a 'package' of information) containing our knowledge and understanding of the world, based on our past experiences. Schemas are used to interpret new information using stored knowledge and past experience.

0 2

According to the cognitive approach what is meant by theoretical model?

[2 marks]

A theoretical model is a hypothetical, visual representation of internal mental processes that cannot be directly seen. For example, the multi-store model of memory shows in a flow diagram how unseen memory processes in the brain are connected.

0 3

Irene and Phoebe are identical twin sisters.

Irene says, "As we are identical, I can't understand why I have anxiety, and you don't."

Phoebe says, "I think the car crash you were in when you were 15 years old may have something to do with it."

Using your knowledge of genotype **and** phenotype, explain the conversation between Irene and Phoebe.**[3 marks]**

As identical (MZ) twins, Irene and Phoebe have the same genotype, so they share an identical genetic predisposition to anxiety. However, their phenotypes (genotype plus environment) differ, because Irene suffered early trauma in the car crash at 15 and Phoebe did not. This stressor triggered Irene's predisposition, explaining why she has anxiety and Phoebe does not.



0	4
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The biological approach suggests that genes influence behaviour.

Explain **one** strength of this suggestion.

[3 marks]

A strength is research support from twin studies. Gottesman (1991) found concordance for schizophrenia of about 48% in MZ twins, who share 100% of their genes, but only about 17% in DZ twins, who share 50%. As concordance rises with genetic similarity, genes must influence behaviour, so people 'at risk' can be identified and offered early help.

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0 5

Six-year-old Shira likes to play with toy farm animals while her brother, three-year-old Amit, plays close by with the toy cars. Amit sees his mother praise Shira for how well she tidies the toy farm animals once she has finished playing. Recently, Amit has been trying to tidy the toy cars too.

Describe and evaluate social learning theory. Refer to the behaviour of Shira and Amit in your answer.

[20 marks]

Social learning theory (Bandura) states that learning takes place in a social context, through observation and imitation of the behaviour of others (models). Unlike behaviourism, it suggests learning can occur without direct reinforcement, because we observe the consequences of other people's behaviour.

Vicarious reinforcement occurs when we see a model being rewarded for a behaviour, which makes us more likely to imitate it; seeing a model punished makes imitation less likely. Amit sees his mother praise Shira for tidying the farm animals, so the praise vicariously reinforces tidying for Amit, and he now tries to tidy the toy cars too.

Models are more likely to be imitated if they are similar to the observer (eg same sex or age), have high status, are powerful or warm, or are seen being rewarded. Identification occurs when the observer is influenced by a model because they want to be like them. Shira, as Amit's older sister, is a role model with higher status, and he identifies with her because he wants to be like her and receive the same praise.

Bandura proposed four mediational (cognitive) processes between observing and imitating behaviour. Attention: Amit must notice Shira tidying and being praised, which is likely as he plays close by.

Retention: he must store a memory of how she tidied the toys. Motor reproduction: he must be physically able to perform it; at three Amit has the motor ability to pick up small objects and put them away.



Motivation: he must expect a reward, so he is motivated by the praise Shira received.

Bandura also proposed reciprocal determinism: people are not just shaped by their environment but also influence it, so behaviour, personal factors and the environment interact. This allows some free will, for example Amit chooses to tidy because he wants praise from his mother.

Bandura et al (1961) studied this with the Bobo doll experiment.

Children aged 3 to 5 watched an adult model behave aggressively (hitting the doll with a mallet) or non-aggressively towards a Bobo doll.

After being mildly frustrated, children who had seen the aggressive model imitated many of the specific aggressive acts, whereas those who had seen the non-aggressive model showed little aggression. Boys imitated more physical aggression than girls. In a later study (Bandura, 1965) children who saw the model rewarded imitated more than those who saw the model punished, showing vicarious reinforcement.

A strength is the supporting evidence from Bandura's Bobo doll studies, which used the experimental method. The lab setting allowed the IV (model behaviour) to be manipulated and extraneous variables controlled, so cause and effect could be established, and the standardised procedure means it is replicable.

However, there are methodological issues. The lab situation lacked ecological validity, as hitting a doll is not the same as aggression towards a person, and children may have shown demand characteristics, thinking they were expected to hit the doll. The study is also criticised ethically because children were exposed to aggression and frustrated, which may have had long-term effects.

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Extra space A further strength is that social learning theory accepts the role of mediational (cognitive) processes in learning, which were neglected by behaviourists such as Skinner. This explains why imitation does not always happen immediately or at all, and why learning can occur without direct reinforcement, so it is a less reductionist explanation than operant conditioning.

The theory also has real-world application. It explains how aggression and other behaviours, such as tidying in Amit's case, are influenced by social context, for example the effects of violent media and role models on children. It can also account for cultural differences in behaviour, eg higher levels of co-operative behaviour in collectivist cultures, because children observe and imitate the behaviours modelled and rewarded in their culture.

On the other hand, social learning theory does not account for the impact of biological, hereditary or maturational factors on behaviour, even though research shows they matter. For example, testosterone has been linked to aggression, which may explain why boys in the Bobo doll study were more physically aggressive. Amit's tidying may also partly reflect his maturing motor skills.

Compared with the cognitive approach, it says little about how mediational processes actually work, so an interactionist explanation may be more complete.

Overall, social learning theory gives a convincing explanation of how Amit has learned to tidy by observing Shira being praised, and is supported by controlled research, but it underestimates biological influences on behaviour.



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0 7

Section B: Issues and Debates in PsychologyAnswer **all** questions in the spaces provided.Only **two** answers per question are allowed.

For each multiple-choice question completely fill in the circle alongside the appropriate answer.

CORRECT METHOD



WRONG METHODS



If you want to change your answer you must cross out your original answer as shown.



If you wish to return to an answer previously crossed out, ring the answer you now wish to select as shown.

**0 6**Which of the following **two** statements about behaviour are **true** of a reductionist approach to behaviour?Shade **two** boxes.**[2 marks]**

- | | | |
|----------|---|----------------------------------|
| A | Behaviour is a free choice. | ☐ |
| B | Behaviour is controlled. | ☐ |
| C | Behaviour should be explained as a whole. | ☐ |
| D | Behaviour should be explained as basic units. | ☒ |
| E | Behaviour should be explained at the highest level. | ☐ |
| F | Behaviour should be explained at the lowest level. | ☒ |



0 7

Hans says, "I was always going to be good at horse riding. My mother and grandmother won lots of riding competitions. And I was given my first horse at a very young age so I have had plenty of practice."

Using your knowledge of the interactionist approach, explain Hans' comments.

[4 marks]

Hans' view is interactionist, as he recognises that both nature (genes) and nurture (practice) shaped his behaviour. A natural ability for riding may have been inherited from his mother and grandmother, who both won competitions (nature), while having his first horse very young gave him plenty of practice to develop his skills (nurture). Genes modified by his mother's experience with horses may also have been passed on (epigenetics).

0 8

Briefly evaluate the interactionist approach.

[4 marks]

Research shows nature and nurture cannot be separated. MZ twin concordance for schizophrenia is never 100%, so the environment cannot be ignored, while Little Albert may have been biologically prepared to fear rats. The diathesis-stress (biopsychosocial) approach shows disorders develop from a genetic predisposition interacting with stressors. It is useful for treatment, as drugs combined with CBT is often most successful. However, the contribution of each factor is hard to measure.

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0 9

Shiyao is planning to conduct an experiment to investigate if there is a difference in the amount of time it takes to read a passage of text when it is written using either a green pen or a blue pen.

Using your knowledge of psychology and science, suggest **one** way Shiyao can make her research falsifiable and **one** way she can make it replicable.

[4 marks]

Falsifiable *Write a testable, operationalised hypothesis, eg 'There will be a difference in time taken (seconds) to read a passage written in green ink compared with blue ink', which can be shown to be false.*

Replicable *Standardise materials and procedure: use the same passage and paper in both conditions, and write down the procedure and instructions so it can be repeated exactly.*

1 0

Briefly explain **two** strengths of using the empirical method in psychology.

[4 marks]

It allows cause and effect to be established: the IV is isolated and manipulated while extraneous variables are controlled, so changes in the DV are objectively measured and caused by the IV.

Empirical findings are respected by the scientific community and the public, giving psychology credibility, and objective, replicable results make it possible to create general laws which apply to everyone and help to predict future behaviour.



1 1

Outline the free will and determinism debate.

[6 marks]

The debate concerns how far our behaviour is determined by forces beyond our control, versus how much choice we have over it.

Free will is the belief that behaviour is governed by our own choices and only minimally determined by other forces, as in the humanistic approach.

Determinism is the belief that all behaviour is caused by internal or external forces beyond our control. Hard determinism says we have no free will, so behaviour is predictable; soft determinism says most behaviour is caused but there is some room for conscious choice.

Biological determinism sees behaviour as caused by internal factors, eg genes from our parents or hormones; environmental determinism by external factors, eg reinforcement; psychic determinism by unconscious

Extra space *forces. Determinism underpins psychology as a science, allowing cause and effect to be established. The extent to which we control our behaviour is therefore central: free will says we have full control, hard determinism none, and soft determinism some.*

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1 2

Explain **one** strength and **one** limitation of taking a free will approach to explaining behaviour.

[6 marks]

Strength *Free will is essential to the justice system, as people can be held accountable for their choices. Believing we have choice also aids mental health, as we can choose to improve our lives, and it underpins holistic approaches such as the humanistic approach, allowing us to believe we can self-actualise and take responsibility for change.*

Limitation *Free will is incompatible with the scientific approach, which uses experiments to establish cause and effect. It is an abstract concept that cannot be tested or falsified, and as free choices may differ each time, it does not allow behaviour to be predicted or general laws to be made.*

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Section C: Applied Psychology: Work and the Individual

Answer **all** questions in the spaces provided.

1 3

What is meant by risky shift and by groupthink?

[2 marks]

Risky shift *When both the group and the individual support a riskier decision than individuals would make alone.*

Groupthink *When the desire for group cohesiveness results in an irrational or dysfunctional outcome.*

1 4

In an experiment on group processes, participants were asked to perform two tasks. Each task was performed both with an audience and without an audience.

The first task, a simple task, was sorting objects by colour.
The second task, a complex task, was sorting objects by shape.

The results are shown in **Table 1** below.

Table 1 Mean times taken (in seconds) to complete each task.

	Simple task (seconds)	Complex task (seconds)
Without an audience	28	32
With an audience	20	45

Using your knowledge of social facilitation, explain the findings of this experiment.

[3 marks]

An audience improves performance on simple tasks: participants sorted by colour 8 seconds quicker with an audience (20s v 28s). It impairs performance on complex tasks: sorting by shape was 13 seconds slower (45s v 32s), This is because the presence of an audience increases arousal, which strengthens the dominant (well-learned) response: correct for simple tasks but often incorrect for complex ones.



1	5
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Briefly evaluate social facilitation as an explanation for group processes.

[4 marks]

Triplett (1898) supports it: cyclists were slower racing against the clock than against other cyclists. This led to the theory being developed to distinguish passive audience effects from co-action effects. However, individual differences matter: Uziel (2007) found extraverts with high self-esteem improve in front of others, but those high in neuroticism with low self-esteem get worse. Age, experience and culture also affect performance, so it is incomplete.

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1 6

Bai works as a nurse in a busy hospital. The hospital is short of staff, so he has too many tasks to complete in his shifts. He also has to deal with upset families, for which he has had little training. These demands make Bai unhappy and lack motivation.

Bai receives positive feedback from patients and managers and feels he has the skills and knowledge to perform his job well. However, he has little control over his work schedule and lacks opportunities to participate in decision-making about hospital policies that affect him.

Using your knowledge of the job demands-resources (JD-R) model, explain what hospital managers could do to improve Bai's happiness and motivation at work.

[6 marks]

The JD-R model says strain and low motivation result from high job demands and low job resources; resources such as control, feedback and training buffer demands and increase motivation.

To reduce Bai's demands, managers could employ more nurses, lowering his workload per shift. They could reduce emotional demands with training in breaking bad news and dealing with upset families, plus debriefing sessions, making him more confident and less strained by these situations.

To increase resources, they could give Bai more decision latitude over his schedule and involve him in committee decisions on hospital policies, raising his autonomy and motivation. Peer support, such as team

Extra space *meetings, would be a further resource to help him cope with the high demands.*

They should continue regular positive feedback so he sees his progress and feels happier and more motivated about his personal growth and development. Lower demands balanced with higher resources should reduce his strain and increase his engagement.



1 7

Evaluate the job demands-resources (JD-R) model as an explanation for workplace stress.

[6 marks]

Nielsen et al (2011) found that in offshore oil workers, high risk perception (a demand) correlated with low job satisfaction, and positive views of safety culture (a resource) with high satisfaction, supporting the idea that both demands and resources affect wellbeing at work.

It is more realistic than the job demands-control model, as it includes more workplace variables. Adding resources such as training and feedback makes it flexible, so it applies to any setting and new environments, eg the digital age, and suggests interventions to reduce burnout.

However, it is hard to test in one study, as so many variables cannot be operationalised at once, and studies measure different demands and resources, so findings are hard to compare. Much research is correlational and relies on self-report questionnaires, so cause and effect cannot be

Extra space *established and social desirability bias may affect results.*

Individual differences, such as personality and coping style, are also given limited attention, so the model may not explain why some workers cope with high demands better than others.

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1 8

Outline and evaluate goal-setting theory as an explanation of job motivation and satisfaction.

[9 marks]

Goal-setting theory was developed by Locke, building on equity theory. It suggests that conscious goals guide and direct work behaviour and performance, and lead to consequences such as monetary reward or praise, which bring job satisfaction.

The components of goal-setting theory are goal difficulty (how challenging a goal is), goal specificity (its clarity and precision), goal acceptance (whether the person accepts the goal) and goal commitment (how personally interested they are in achieving it). Goals should be specific and challenging but not too challenging, or they become demotivating. There are different types of goal, eg mastery goals (developing competence) and performance goals (showing ability compared with others). Clear and accurate feedback about performance is required to maximise performance.

There is evidence to support goal setting. Latham and Baldes (1975) found that when long-haul truck drivers were set a specific, challenging goal for loading their trucks, performance improved considerably, showing goal specificity is effective.

Further research into practical implications, eg Locke and Latham (1990), found that goals should be specific, achievable and set collaboratively to be most effective. This led to the SMART technique (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound), which is used to improve performance and motivation in a variety of settings, eg rehabilitation (Bovend'Eerd et al). The theory can be applied to many settings and cultures, as setting achievable goals works in a similar way for everyone. However, goals that are too far above an employee's skills and



competencies can have a negative effect on their performance and their motivation to complete the goal. More complex and difficult goals may also lead to risky behaviour in an attempt to achieve them on time, which could lead to mistakes or ill health. The theory also focuses on individual goals and may not explain motivation in team work, where goals conflict.

A further strength is that the theory is scientific and testable: goal difficulty and specificity can be operationalised and manipulated in field experiments, giving objective measures of performance. However, much of this research measures performance rather than satisfaction, and the theory is somewhat reductionist, as it ignores other influences on motivation such as pay, working conditions and individual needs.

Overall, goal-setting theory is a well-supported and practical explanation of job motivation and satisfaction, provided goals are realistic and supported by feedback.

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