

Examiners' Report
June 2012

GCE Psychology 6PS03 01

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Introduction

Candidates' performance is generally good and answers seem to be more contextualised in the topic area. There are still some candidates who fail to contextualise their answer, but this is becoming more infrequent. There is also a noticeable move away from pre-prepared answers, although not completely eliminated, it is pleasing to see candidates tackle the question asked rather than resort to prepared answers that do not necessarily fit the question well. Questions are often more contextualised in a scenario or person within the topic to encourage engagement and assess understanding rather than rote learning. This emphasis on focus, pertinence and relevancy has been commented on in previous examiners' report, and it is pleasing to see even further progress being made.

Essay questions often require two or three elements to be covered in an answer. Candidates can seem to struggle sometimes with balancing out these elements despite emphasis in the question. Essay questions are natural discriminators, but it would be nicer to discriminate on answer quality rather than success in meeting all the injunctions of a question. It is advisable for candidates to break down the content and injunctions of the essay question in order to cover all of the required elements of the question – this was evident in some responses where key elements of the question were highlighted by candidates and essay plans offered.

Although there was impressive evaluation of theory and research, there was still evidence of throwing in key terms, such as reliability, without demonstrating understanding of the key term. This should be avoided and candidates should be encouraged to explain their answer fully. There is a noticeable trend in sport psychology for evaluation to be weaker. This issue is addressed and tips offered in the appropriate section of the report.

In terms of housekeeping, centres should be reminded that, as with any written examination, candidates whose handwriting is illegible or becomes illegible throughout the exam should be offered an amanuensis or other means of completing the exam. Although the very best effort is made to interpret written work when the odd word cannot be read. Centres should implement strategies to deal with this issue at the source. It should also be noted that there is often significant white space available under many answer lines for candidates to continue writing if they wish, there is therefore no need to include supplementary sheets of paper with a sentence or two of handwriting.

The aim of the following report is to give teachers and candidates insight into individual questions from this examination and useful tips that could improve performance. Although not directly commented on in this main report, it should be noted that the overwhelming majority of candidates were able to correctly identify the appropriate example of physical dependency for C1a and the example of intrinsic motivation for D1a multiple choice questions.

Question 1 (a)

The majority of candidates were able to offer a suitable definition and/or example of anti-social behaviour. Typical answers defined anti-social behaviour as one that causes harm or distress to others or a behaviour that is not illegal but violates social norms and causes upset. Examples ranged from binge drinking in a public place to excessive noise. Although care should be taken to use examples that are clearly not already defined as illegal (murder and assault were not accepted) or behaviours that are clearly not anti-social and would not cause another individual distress, unless clearly explained to have caused distress. Some candidates referred to the violation of social norms, which could not be accepted unless explained in terms of its impact on society or others.

Anti-social behaviour is behaviour that may not be illegal but is unacceptable to society, for example, getting drunk and being very rowdy, noisey can upset neighbours and is therefore anti-social.



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Examiner Comments

This answer gained both available marks for a definition being 'not illegal' and a further mark for the example which was related to upsetting others.

Anti-social behaviour is an act (or many acts) that goes against the social norm and damages society. An example of this could be smashing windows in an abandoned house (vandalism).



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer got one mark for reference to damaging to society as goes against social norms. However the example used would be illegal criminal damage.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates should select examples of anti-social behaviour that are not illegal but that would be considered upsetting to others, which was the reason for the Anti-social Behaviour Order being created.

Question 1 (b) (i)

The majority of answers referred to the laboratory experiment as one method used in criminological psychology, although candidates should be reminded to avoid a list format of features and describe the research method in the context of how it is used in criminological psychology. Examples of research studies were used to contextualise the answer in the topic of criminological psychology, but often gained no additional credit as the outline of the study simply repeated research method description already supplied. Candidates using examples should do so effectively by providing more than a name or simplistic outline of a conclusion for this sort of question. A similar performance was achieved by candidates describing the field experiment; however candidates describing questionnaires and interviews tended to offer AS level answers.

Question 1 (b) (ii)

The majority of candidates were able to achieve two marks, one for a strength and one for a weakness (both in a basic outline). Stronger responses explained each strength/weakness conveying understanding through elaboration required at this level.

Candidates are still making the jump from control over variables to reliability of findings without explaining that control can allow retest/duplication of procedure which if consistently achieves the same findings can ensure reliability of results.

Laboratory experiments, to Elizabeth Loftus carried out a series of laboratory experiments to research eye witness testimony. Laboratory experiments have an independent variable (IV) something you can manipulate and a dependent variable (DV) which is the result of the manipulation. ~~They~~ ^{They} are very controlled so are therefore reliable and easy to replicate. They are within artificial environments and therefore are not ecologically valid as ~~the results~~ ^{the results} ~~as this cannot~~ ^{as this cannot} ~~may not~~ occur within the field. For example in Loftus and Palmer (1974) the IV would be ^{of} the five verbs ^{used} smashed, hit, collided etc. and the DV would be the result of each answer. They are in artificial environments.

Laboratory experiments have set procedures, so are therefore easy to replicate which makes it a reliable research method. As they are set up within an artificial environment, this may not be applied to real life situations which means it is not a valid exp research method.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The initial opening statement referring to Loftus did not gain credit as it did not explicitly describe the research method. There was then a description of the IV and DV which gained a mark for this element of the description. The following outline of Loftus and Palmer's IV and DV did not add to the initial feature description, so no further marks were awarded for (b)(i) (although it should be noted that in the absence of the middle IV/DV description, this latter description would have got the mark instead).

The strength of having set procedures so they can be replicated gets a basic mark but needs further elaboration to achieve a good and detailed answer mark (replication does not ensure reliability without some element of achieving consistent results). The weakness is also basic in its outline of artificial and not being real life. So two marks overall were awarded for this part of the answer.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates should be encouraged to explain their answer thoroughly to achieve more than a basic level answer. This distinguishes an AS answer from an A2 answer.

A research method from criminal psychology is the laboratory experiment. It involves setting up an artificial task in an artificial setting to study, for example eye witness testimony. The independent variable, often in eye witness testimony, something which affects witness recall, such as leading questions, is manipulated to see the affect on the DV. The Dependent Variable is likely to be the quality of witness recall from the eyewitness. A lab experiment in criminological psychology collects quantifiable data, for example the mean estimate of speed which cars were travelling in an accident like hofts.

A strength of a lab experiment is its ability to be replicated. A lab experiment uses a standardised set of instructions for every participant, for example each participant or witness viewing the same film clips in the study and answering the same questions. This means it can be repeated over again to achieve similar results.

However, a lab experiment is ecologically invalid. It uses an artificial task and setting for the participants which is unnatural to them. This can lead to demand characteristics which also affect the validity of the research findings.



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Examiner Comments

Both parts of this answer gained full marks. Here the description was contextualised and evaluation went beyond basic outline to offer a little more explanation.

Question 2 (a)

This question targeted very specific knowledge concerning characteristics of a role model that could influence behaviour. An explanation of how such characteristics could influence criminal behaviour was required. Strong responses clearly defined a characteristic as an example and explained the process of identification as it relates to criminal behaviour. Weaker answers tended to outline Social Learning Theory (attention, retention, reproduction, motivation) or refer to vicarious reinforcement, which is not a characteristic of a role model. Candidates should be encouraged to frame their answer in terms of the question asked and avoid offering a pre-prepared answer that simply does not fit the question.

Explain how the characteristics of a role model could influence criminal/anti-social behaviour in someone.

^{have done study}
Bandura (1961) found that ~~if someone is the same~~
~~gender~~ ^{as a role} model is likely to be of the same sex and/or higher social status. if someone looks up to this person they pay attention to them, if they ^{see their role model} carry out criminal/anti-social behaviour and they will see them get a form of reward they ~~or~~ will retain this memory and the reward may act as motivation ~~for~~ to influence ~~the~~ someone to eventually repeat this behaviour observed by the role model.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This answer clearly outlined the type of characteristics involved and then described the process of identification (looks up to them). Here it achieved two marks of the three marks available. However, there was no real attempt to link the type of characteristic to anti-social/criminal behaviour and rewards are ignored in marking as not related to the characteristics of a role model.

Question 2 (b)

Typically candidates described the Self-fulfilling Prophecy and Personality Theory (Eysenck) as explanations of anti-social behaviour. Descriptions of self-fulfilling prophecy tended to be done at length and often used appropriate key terms (labelling, internalisation) well. Common issues tended to be using tautological statements such as the prophecy is fulfilled or assuming that a label of criminal comes from thin air. Stronger answers expressed the idea of internalisation of a label, other people responding differently to their behaviour and a label originating from a stereotype or previous behaviour of the individual or associated friends/family. The use of research studies was common but candidates should be reminded to use examples from criminological psychology or acknowledge that they are not directly linked to criminal behaviour but could be used to explain the process similarly (Rosenthal and Jacobson, Madon).

Some candidates struggled to describe personality theory as an explanation of criminal behaviour as they did not link the personality dimension to criminal/anti-social behaviour (e.g. extraverts are outgoing). However, some sophisticated answers linked each dimension to criminality and explained the role of the Reticular Activating System and Autonomic Nervous System in extraversion/neuroticism as explicitly linked to understanding sensation seeking and criminal activity and impulsivity/instability. Responses describing psychoticism invariably achieved the mark by linking this dimension to lack of remorse/guilt. Candidates should be reminded that personality theory describes behaviour as a result of nature and nurture (not just in ones genes) and therefore affects the ability to condition behaviour.

A minority of answers referred to Social Identity Theory, which did gain credit as an alternative theory. However, a few candidates did use Social Learning Theory, which did not gain credit.

The selffulfilling prophecy states that we fulfil the ^{of a label,} role we that can stem from a stereotype. ^{what we expect, the way we treat individuals} E.g, if a group of teenagers all walk around in tracksuits and are quite noisy they may be stereotyped 'chavs', as this is a negative label that can relate to ^{criminal /} antisocial behaviours. ^{wears a} Someone who ~~may be~~ tracksuit may hear this and to fulfil the role carry out criminal / antisocial behaviours.

Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) carried out a study within a school to see whether labelling children may improve their results. To support this theory the results was that children who was labelled, results were significantly better than others.

(Total for Question A2 = 8 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This response got two marks overall. One mark was credited for the idea of labelling through stereotyping and a further mark for the idea that people would be treated differently. The answer did not acknowledge Rosenthal and Jacobson as a study that was not directly concerning anti-social behaviour, so no credit here.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Candidates should be encouraged to use relevant examples of self-fulfilling prophecy as examples to pass out a theory description. They should be encouraged to use studies wisely as they are more appropriate as supporting evidence, so the description of the study should really add to the description of the theory as an example.

Question 3

There was a good attempt by the majority of candidates to offer appropriate psychological research studies in this area and relate it to Priya's dilemma. Many candidates offset Loftus and Palmer with Yuille and Cutshall to good effect. Candidates did struggle to offer the evaluation required by the question, but those who did evaluate offered appropriate methodological and ethical evaluation of the studies described, with stronger answers relating the methodological critique to Priya's dilemma. Typically responses included some studies by Loftus and Palmer/Zanni, Yuille and Cutshall, Maass and K

öhnen, Pickel, Valentine and Yarmey. In this case depth of detail was offset against quantity of studies offered in an answer. Additional research, such as Bartlett, multi-store model, cue dependency, trace decay, repression, flashbulb memory, levels of processing and the cognitive interview were also considered and included in marking. Strong answers consistently linked commentary (description and evaluation) back to Priya and her consideration of whether or not to accept eyewitness testimony.

Eye witness Testimony is used by experienced Police Officers such as Priya and also courts and the Jury. It is often questioned as to how reliable it actually is in terms of witness recall. There are many reasons ~~to back up~~ and evidence to show why EWT isn't always reliable in terms of convicting.

Can be questioned not real incident

Loftus and Palmer carried out a study into the effectiveness of EWT on a set up lab experiment of a car crash. It was therefore in a controlled environment and could be seen as not reflecting the case of a real car crash. The study consisted of asking participants a series of questions and then all participants the same sentence, only with the verb changed in each one. These verbs were ~~smashed and~~ Smashed, contacted, Bumped, Hit and contacted. These sentences were asked after participants watched a video scenario of a car crash. They were then asked how fast they thought the car was going. Their answers ~~depended on~~ how fast they thought the car was going depended on the verb used in the ^{question} sentence, which ^{was} known as leading questions. The fastest speed was given to the verb 'Smashed' and the lowest speed to the word 'contacted'. This showed that EWT isn't reliable in the courts always and leading questions can cause mistakes in recall. ^{They find memory was fallible and easily reconstructed}

Weapon focus is also another problem found, and is where instead of focusing on the actual criminal, the witness focuses on the weapon.

experiment which is not a natural setting for witnesses to watch an incident, so there lacks the real emotional strain of watching an incident unfold in real life. The experiment may also have suffered from demand characteristics because an artificial setting (the isolated lab room) was used to test witnesses on what they saw and hence might be able to guess the aim.

A field study which addresses the issues raised from lab research into eye witness testimony is Yulle and Cutshall (1986). Yulle and Cutshall used a real life shooting incident in Vancouver as the foundations of their study. They reinterviewed 13 witnesses to the shooting, 4 to 5 months after the initial police interviews using the same procedures as the police to allow comparison.

* The transcribed each interview and turned the qualitative data into quantitative data using a scoring system. They found that 1065.5 pieces of accurate detail were gathered from research interviews compared to 649.5 from police interviews, suggesting that eye witness recall improves over time. They also found that leading questions, in a field environment had no impact on the recall accuracy in the eye witnesses. Therefore, suggesting that leading questions ^{has} had little or

In conclusion, EWT isn't always reliable as there are many factors that can affect it, however it is still used in the courts today by the Jury and Priya ~~sketched~~ could take comfort in that.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This answer was typical of the majority of responses seen. With a good description of eyewitness testimony research and evaluation that was relevant. This response did link to Priya's dilemma but not in any insightful way. This answer was not appropriate for Level 4, but fit Level 3 as done well. Overall, balancing description and weaker evaluation, the response earned 7 marks.



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Examiner Tip

When a question requires engagement with the scenario it is worth referring back to the question at several points throughout the essay to maintain focus.

Much research has been conducted into the effectiveness of eyewitness testimony which Priya can use to decide if she should rely on witnesses for evidence including Loftus and Palmer (1974). Loftus and Palmer conducted a lab experiment into the effectiveness of eye witnesses in their estimates of speeds. They showed each participant 7 films from 5-30 seconds long. Participants were asked a series of questions, one of which was a leading question. Depending on the condition which the participant was in, this question was asked slightly differently: How fast were the cars travelling when they 'smashed', 'bumped', 'collided', 'contacted' or 'hit'. They found that 'smashed' gave the highest estimate for speed at 40.8 mph whereas 'contacted' gave the slowest at 31.8 mph. This study does show the impact which leading questions has on eye witnesses, which for Priya could show that eye witness testimony is unreliable as recollection of the incident can change depending on the phrasing of questions. However, Priya should consider that this study uses a laboratory

experiment which is not a natural setting for witnesses to watch an incident, so there lacks the real emotional strain of watching an incident unfold in real life. The experiment may also have suffered from demand characteristics because an artificial setting (the isolated lab room) was used to test witnesses on what they saw and hence might be able to guess the aim.

A field study which addresses the issues raised from lab research into eye witness testimony is Yuille and Cutshall (1986). Yuille and Cutshall used a real life shocking incident in Vancouver as the foundations of their study. They reinterviewed 13 witnesses to the shooting, 4 to 5 months after the initial police interviews using the same procedures as the police to allow comparison.

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Therefore, suggesting that leading questions ^{has} had little or

*They used two leading questions in the interviews: did you see the or a broken headlamp? and The second was 'did you see a yellow or the yellow quarter panel?'

No effect on recall in natural settings; information which may be valuable to Priya. However, due to the nature of field studies they are not always replicable, specifically for this study as the case of the shooting was very unique and so it is possible also that generalising from about eye witnesses in a field study like Yulle and Cutshall, to the population at large may not be a true generalisation.* Although, because it is a real life, natural incident it does produce the emotional strain which is faced in direct involvement in such incidents, which is not gained from a lab experiment.

Therefore it is possible that Priya can use eye witness testimony as evidence, but the source should be considered, as a field study can give a more natural example.

*This also makes it hard to replicate because unique, real life cases are not controlled like a lab experiment meaning extraneous variables could be affecting the dependent variable.

(Total for Question A3 = 12 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This was an example of a very good essay response. This answer had good depth of detail (remembering that breadth is balanced with depth). There were plenty of very good evaluation points concerning the research cited and the candidate refers to Priya's dilemma at opportune moments. This was a Level 4 answer that achieved 11 marks.

Question B01 (a)

As a question which required knowledge of a very detailed case study with plenty of potential material to draw from, including Genie's experiences at various hospitals, care homes, testing, progress made/not made, etc, it was disappointing to see answers with vague detail and a lack of depth. Typical responses gained one mark for detailing who fostered her at various points and possibly a further mark for the development of various language/attachment developments. It was uncommon to see any further detail for the third mark. A number of candidates included details of what happened to Genie before she was found, which did not gain credit, and took up a third of the answer space.

(10)

She was found in 1970 and was taken to a hospital. She was very malnourished, could hardly talk, couldn't chew food & expressed emotions inwardly (bit & scratched herself). The doctors & psychologists tested & observed her, whilst trying to reverse the severe privation. By 1971 she could dress & wash herself, but still couldn't chew properly. By 1973 she had a concept of numbers - gave a girl an extra balloon when asked for 3, and she used the past tense when describing a past event. By 1974 she had a better grasp of maths - Curtiss asked her how many crackers there were (4) and then added one (5) & took away two (3). However her use of language was incomplete, although she had improved greatly. After the research money ran out, Genie went back to living with her mother & finally went to a special foster home.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This was a better précis of what happened to Genie after she was found than was typical of the majority of responses offered. Here the answer was specific and had depth of detail to access all three available marks.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

It may be useful to generate a timeline for this case study, adding appropriate and detailed descriptions of what happened to Genie at various points in the case study and what tests she had done and how she progressed/regressed specifically in terms of her language/cognitive development and emotional development.

(5)

After Genie was discovered she was used in a case study to see if language could be obtained after the critical period. She went on to be helped and was put in a hospital where she was observed and tested to try and improve her language skill. It was found that Genie had understanding and could communicate using signs and hand gestures.



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Examiner Comments

This answer was more typical of what was seen. This answer was awarded one mark for some idea that Genie was put into hospital, was observed and improved. For the amount of detail available on this particular case study, it was disappointing to see such a small snapshot of what happened to her.

Question B01 (b)

The majority of candidates were able to offer Genie as an example of reversibility/irreversibility of privation and give some support for this regarding her language/attachment/social/intellectual development. Furthermore candidates tended to offer Koluchova, Tizard, Freud and Dann as additional research. Some answers explored differences between the cases of privation to offer further explanation with reference to age of discovery, attachment to each other, quality of care given post privation or possibility of mental retardation. Weaker answers detailed Genie and Koluchova as case studies at length without referring the answer back to reversibility in any way.

(b) Using the case study of Genie **and** the findings of **at least one** other psychological study, explain whether the effects of privation are reversible.

(4)

Genie's results suggest the results of privation are not reversible. However the study of Koluchova of the Czechoslovakian twins discovered who faced privation from their step mother after their mother's death found different results. As the twins had excellent after care, they were adopted by sisters



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer was awarded three marks overall. The initial sentence was not enough as it was not qualified with any description (and it in this case could be argued both ways). The Koluchova description and reversibility comment gains the first mark, the second mark was achieved for the twins being younger as a possible comparison for difference and the third mark for Genie possibly being retarded.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

It was encouraging to see a good level of explanation and comparisons between studies, such as in this answer, showed a better understanding of the reversibility of privation issue than a list of studies for and against reversibility. This candidate understood the conditions in which the reversibility of privation may be explained.

Question B02 (a)

Typical descriptions of cross-cultural research accurately defined it as 'Ben doing research in different countries in order to compare the findings'. Further credit was achieved for greater depth in terms of specific methodological features or purpose of such research (to examine universality of behaviour/nature v nurture debate). Some candidates used examples of cross cultural research, such as Ainsworth to elaborate and this achieved credit if done well and linked to the cross cultural research method.

(2)
A cross-cultural method would involve a meta-analysis of many studies which have taken place across the world for example. This is then put all together to see any uniformity of behaviours. One ~~other~~ example is Izardoren & Kraonenberg who did a cross cultural meta-analysis of the shange situation.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This was a slightly confused response, however the answer achieved a mark for some understanding that universality (or in this case, uniformity) of behaviours can be observed. Note that it was not enough to say that studies are done in different countries as rather tautological as a statement (ie cross cultural).



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

The following statement might help memory when explaining cross cultural research as AO1: **Same** procedure, **different** country, **compare** them to check **universality** and **nature** or **nurture**.

Question B02 (b)

There was a tendency for some candidates to restate the answer for part a. It was necessary to explain the benefits of cross cultural research so they needed to explain how investigating universality/nature v nurture was relevant as a benefit. Strong comments included a reduction of ethnocentrism, increased generalisability and the assessment of the suitability of different methodologies in various cultures. A number of answers simply evaluated Ainsworth's study. Answers that explained a benefit was to judge parenting styles and tell parents how best to raise their children was not seen as an appropriate benefit of cross cultural research (unless linked to a specific example such as day care practises). There were too many answers not contextualised in child psychology.

Cross cultural research mean that explanations can be made as to why there are differences in different cultures. For example, Japan has more insecure resistant children than expected and we can learn that it's because of the different ~~learning~~ child-rearing styles in different cultures. Japanese ~~po mothers~~ and children are used to being separated from ~~that~~ their mothers.



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Examiner Comments

This was a typical one mark response for a specific example of 'knowledge' derived from different cultures to examine differences between them.

By carrying out cross-cultural research, questions can be answered about whether child behavior has a genetic ~~and~~ ^{or} environmental basis. This is useful to child psychologists as if the same behavior is found such as the age at which children acquire language ~~then~~ ^{then} this can be said to be a universal law of behavior. Cross-cultural research, therefore, is useful in gathering a scientific body of knowledge about specific aspects of children's behavior or development.



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Examiner Comments

This answer gained two marks for understanding that a benefit of cross cultural research was to understand whether a behaviour was biological or environmental and a useful example of what this might tell us in terms of universality of a behaviour.



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Examiner Tip

Cross cultural research goes beyond just understanding nature, nurture. It also enables greater generalisability as an offshot and can be used to understand whether research tools are effective in one culture but may not be in another (the strange situation on Japanese children, for example). It also reduces the ethnocentric bias inherent in much psychological research today.

Question B02 (c)

Typically answers referred to the high dropout rate experienced when conducting longitudinal research, and encouragingly some candidates went further to explain this as producing a small/biased sample on which validation/generalisability would be problematic. Simple statements of cost and time were credited if explained in terms of why they were costly/time consuming. Some strong answers explored cause and effect in terms of variables being out of the control of the researcher and correlational conclusions drawn. A few strong answers referred to the nature of the researcher-participant relationship causing methodological problems due to increased contact, cohort effects and social attitudes of the time. Some included generic weaknesses of research with children, which if also pertinent to longitudinal research, were credited. There was an over use of terminology that was not well expressed and showed a lack of understanding. Similar to previous examinations series, candidates were again not contextualising their answer in the topic of child psychology.

~~Ben~~ Ben may have had people drop out of the study as they lose interest or their circumstance change. This may leave him with a bias sample as only certain types of children/people may stay on, reducing the validity of results. It is ^{difficult} ~~difficult~~ to establish cause and effect for the child's behaviour as the time gap other factors may influence the behaviour. As longitudinal studies often take place in the child's natural environment such as at school it is difficult to control extraneous variable making it difficult to repeat the study so reducing its reliability. ~~longitudinal~~ Ben may have found that doing a longitudinal study is quite costly and time consuming.



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Examiner Comments

This answer gained all available marks for a fairly decent attempt at understanding a range of issues associated with longitudinal research.

Costly and time consuming as a comment was unexplained so did not achieve a mark; however, it is worth highlighting this point as many candidates made the same mistake.



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Examiner Tip

Encourage candidates to explain their point fully. What is the point they are making? e.g. 'Lots of people drop out', why? 'We can be left with only a small number of people', why is this a problem? 'Because the sample may be too small or biased from which to generalise the findings'. Using interrogative questioning in class can yield better more fully explained answers.

Question B03

This essay required three elements of knowledge; the characteristics of one disorder, explanations of one disorder and how the explanations can help a parent understand a child's behaviour (relating explanations back to symptoms). Often candidates struggled to provide all three elements, often missing out how it might help parents understand and less commonly missing out the characteristics of the disorder.

Autism was by far and away the most popular disorder explained, a handful wrote about ADHD, and were equal in performance. The majority of answers were able to describe two explanations, but with varying levels of success.

The disappointment with the Theory of Mind responses was with extensive descriptions of the 'Sally-Ann' test and no linking information to contextualise it to the explanation. Extreme Male Brain Theory either successfully linked empathisers and systemisers to a lack of testosterone in the womb and subsequent impact on the brain of autistic children, or simply differentiated between the male and female brain with no reference to autism. Too many candidates believe that every child with autism is a prodigious savant, and many worryingly believe that parents who possess the knowledge of explanations can, in some way, cure their child of autism.

There was also some confusion in many responses over whether autistic children's brains were lateralised to the left or to the right and only a handful of candidates stated and understood the implications of a smaller corpus callosum/amygdala/other neurological features.

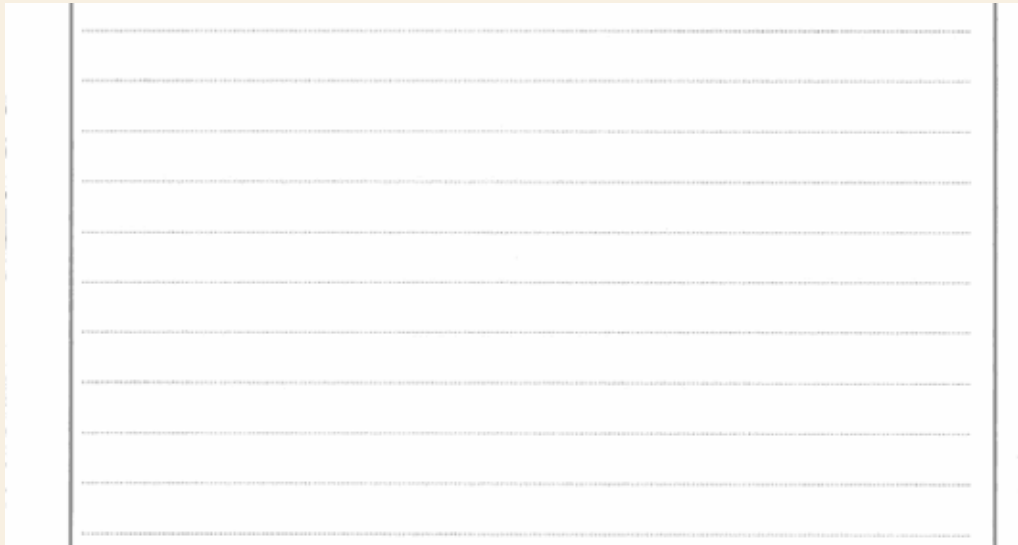
child's disorder as it would explain how they ~~are~~ unable to ~~communicate~~ 'normal' communication abilities ~~as~~ as they are unable to perceive others' intentions and them.

The Sally Anne task experiment by Baron-Cohen et al, would also help explain to the parents how their child would lack this theory of mind. As in the experiment by Baron-Cohen et al he found that typically developing children and children with dan syndrome were able to answer the belief compared to only a minority of ~~other~~ autistic children ~~as~~ as they lacked the theory of mind. Baron-Cohen ~~also~~ et al in another experiment also showed how autistic children had 'mind-blindness' through the inability of communicating using eye direction. which again would help explain this disorder to the parents through this lack of communication skill that typically developing children have.

The other doctor may have explained the disorder as an 'extreme male brain' instead, which is also suggested by Baron-Cohen. The doctor would have said that the autistic brain is an extreme form of the male brain as female and males are typically stronger at different tasks. where autistic children are suggested to be at male orientated tasks then males and worse at female orientated tasks. The reason for these differences is also suggested by Baron-Cohen through the presence of testosterone in the womb. This would help the

is not able to understand how others feel and so do not have the ability, or feel the need, to respond to the emotions of others as they do not understand the feelings that have led to that emotion.

The second doctor may have explained the disorder to the parents of the child using Baron-Cohen's extreme male brain theory. The theory suggests that sex differences should be understood with regard to systemising and empathising abilities. Systemising is defined as the drive towards understanding and analysing systems where there is an input and an output based on specific rules. The theory states that this drive is stronger in males and even stronger in autistic individuals where women have a stronger drive towards empathising. This is the ability to put oneself into other people's shoes and to understand and interpret how other people are feeling. The theory, therefore, states that autism is an extreme male brain theory due to the strong drive towards systems and the weaker ability in empathising. This theory may help to explain the child's isolated focus on specific tasks such as a focus on one topic or high ability in mathematics where there are precise facts and rules to follow. The lack of empathising ability may also explain the child's inability to socially engage with others as they are unable to interpret other people's feelings and have a stronger ability in understanding systems such as computers.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This answer gained 6 marks overall. The characteristics of autism were quite basic and limited to communication so credited as a Level two element for this answer. The explanations were quite good but the links to parental understanding were tenuous. This almost meets the Level three requirements but the links to parental understanding and characteristics place it firmly at the top of Level 2.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Candidates should be encouraged to break down essay questions into their elements and ensure that each element is tackled to their best ability.

Autism is a developmental disorder that typically affects 1 in 1000 ~~pop~~ people and is more common in boys than girls, ~~but~~ usually being diagnosed between 18 months and 4 years as development differs. It is typically characterised through the lack of communication as they have a less able language development. From this they also have a lack of socialisation as they may have irregular responses to stimuli and incapable emotional responses, such as laughing instead of crying. They also have a different imagination ~~to~~ compared to typically developing children, as they often show ritualistic and repetitive behaviour and resistance to change.

A doctor may have explained the disorder through the theory of mind explanation suggested by Simon Baron-Cohen, which suggests that autistic children lack the ability to 'mind read' other intentions as they lack ~~the~~ a theory of mind. This would help the parents understand their

child's disorder as it would explain how they ~~are~~ unable to ~~communicate~~ 'normal' communication abilities ~~and~~ as a result are unable to perceive other's intentions and them.

The Sally Anne task experiment by Baron-Cohen et al, would also help explain to the parents how their child would lack this theory of mind. As in the experiment by Baron-Cohen et al he found that typically developing children and children with down syndrome were able to answer the belief compared to only a minority of ~~other~~ autistic children ~~as~~ they lacked the theory of mind. Baron-Cohen ~~et al~~ in another experiment also showed how autistic children had 'mind-blindness' through the inability of communicating using eye direction, which again would help explain this disorder to the parents through this lack of communication skill that typically developing children have.

The other doctor may have explained the disorder as an 'extreme male brain' instead, which is also suggested by Baron-Cohen. The doctor would have said that the autistic brain is an extreme form of the male brain as female and males are typically stronger at different tasks, where autistic children are suggested to be at male oriented tasks then males and worse at female oriented tasks. The reason for these differences is also suggested by Baron-Cohen through the presence of testosterone in the womb. This would help the

parents to understand the disorder as it shows how autistic children are specifically stronger at certain tasks and in contrast specifically weaker at females and they would understand that these may due to testosterone exposure that happened in the womb. In particular as Knickmeyer and Cohen suggested, autistic children would be even ~~weaker~~ ^{weaker} than males at tasks that females were better at, such as language skills, which explains these differences. Fuller also showed how ~~males were better~~ autistic children were better at disembedding and spatial orientation task than ~~for~~ typical developing children. Above this research ~~also~~ by Baron Cohen et al also shows how females are typically better empathisers and males systemisers. In contrast to this ~~it is suggested~~ autistic children are even better systemisers than males and even worse systemisers than females. ~~This~~ ^{all this research} would help in this explanation ^{inwardly of the disorder} would help the parents understand the disorder better of their child as it would help them understand the differences in characteristics. Such as stronger at mental calculation and spatial tasks as well as being better at systemising, but at the same time being worse language development.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer met all of the requirements of the question and did very well (balanced with time constraints of the paper and some minor errors). The answer covered a range of characteristics of autism, both theories explained (although an error in extreme male brain theory and a little too focused on males and females). With some issues this reached a Level 4 marking band and achieved a mark of 10.

Question C01 (b)

Despite many candidates swerving off the track from mode of action to describing the behavioural/cognitive/emotional effects of drugs, some candidates accurately described the effect of heroin at the synapse well. There were some common mistakes, often candidates referring to a flooding of endorphin rather than a mimicking of endorphin, but on the whole many candidates grasped the idea of GABA inhibition resulting in increased dopamine. Some candidates referred to the location of this activity in the nucleus accumbens, which was encouraging and added to the description offered in previous examinations.

(2)

Heroin is a drug that mimics the endorphins in the body. It gets into the bloodstream in a matter of seconds and takes affect instantly.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer got 1 mark for the comment about heroin mimicking endorphins. It has been included in this report as it is accurate whereas many other responses referred to heroin increasing endorphins or flooding endorphins.

Heroin is an opiate which replaces attaches to opiate receptors in the brain leading to a massive release of endorphins which are are responsible for pleasure. Thus increasing the dopamine present in the brain. Heroin stops the reuptake of neurotransmitters in the synaptic gap meaning dopamine messages stay active for longer and the individual gains pleasure from taking the drug. This action happens in the nucleus accumbens.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer got both available marks and, typical of many of the stronger answers, would have achieved more marks had they been available.

Question C01 (c)

Many candidates grasped the idea that they were to describe two different research methods using human participants to study the effects of drugs, which was apparent in the majority of responses who structured answers accordingly. Overwhelmingly candidates chose to describe laboratory experiments, PET scans and, less so, interviews. Some candidates simply described the research method without reference to drug research in any way, but often there was a brief enough reference to contextualise the answer. Candidates should be encouraged to contextualise the whole answer. It was disappointing to see repetition between the two methods described being questionnaires and interviews with often verbatim answers referring to structured, unstructured, semi-structured, closed and open questioning, in both sections.

First research method

The first research method that could be used to research drugs would be PET scanning. ~~The~~ ^{stands} for Positron electron transmitter, PET scanning can show how drugs can affect the functioning of the brain whether it be in relation to the quantity of drugs or type of drugs or the length of time the drugs have been taken.

Second research method

The second research method would be interviewing. In ~~the~~ ^{the same} way ~~that~~ ^{as} Blittler et al (2002), a researcher could interview a number of participants to see how ~~the drug affects~~ they felt the drug was affecting them. This would involve asking them a set of standardised questions.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer achieved one mark for each research method described. The use of PET scans to uncover functioning of the brain and effect of drugs was credited, but further elaboration was needed in terms of the effect on functioning or procedure of the method/use of cognitive tests etc. Structured interview was given credit for using set questions and example, but there was limited elaboration for further credit.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Remember, examples of studies can only gain credit themselves if they offer information over and above the description provided. Really examples are evaluation based as evidence, so candidates wishing to use them as examples in a question such as this one should really offer more detail than the offered description.

First research method

One research method would be a lab experiment in which the participant would be given an amount of the drug and their vital signs monitored by medical instruments. This could show a difference in heart rate and other physical effects could be observed by the psychologist. As it is a lab experiment, the strict controls would enable the isolation of the drug administered as the cause of any effects. This drug could be altered as the independent variable, the effects being the dependent variable in the lab experiment.

Second research method

A psychologist could also use a case study as a research method. A participant would be observed over a long period of time, via interviews and/or questionnaires. This could provide the psychologist with important information about psychological effects of taking drugs and be able to analyse the qualitative data to compare it with other case studies. The case study might also be more effective in learning of the social factors which surround drug dependency.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This answer got 5 marks overall. The first research method of a laboratory experiment got the three available marks; giving a drug amount and vital signs measured; a further mark for cause and effect with control and the final mark for detail on the IV and DV. The second research method of the case study gave a description of using many methods to uncover psychological effects, and the second mark was given for being able to understand social factors of dependency. The point on qualitative data was not enough for another mark.

Question C01 (d)

There were far too many responses describing human ethical issues. Animal research has its own ethical guidelines, so comments on consent, right to withdraw and debriefing were simply not relevant to research using animals. Many candidates used a simplistic 'it is more ethical to use animals over humans in adverse conditions' which gained basic credit. Often answers outlined the pro-species argument, in some cases in quite a sophisticated manner. The stronger answers described the issues associated with animal guidelines of species, number, isolation, caging and adverse conditions. There were a few disappointing answers commenting on cosmetic research rather than any psychological research at all.

(3)

As animals do not have a voice of their own, it is impossible to know whether they are feeling uncomfortable or if they are in pain throughout an experiment. Animals are often deceived and they do not have the right to withdrawal, meaning they are not being protected. Furthermore, animals cannot consent to an experiment, they are chosen to take part by human experimenters and they cannot object to this decision.

(Total for Question C1 = 12 marks)

Carpeting
Deception
Consent
Debriefing
Withdrawal
Protection



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

It was all too common to see this kind of response, referring to human ethical guidelines rather than animal ethical guidelines. This answer gained no marks

Animals can be controlled in every way by the researcher. Therefore, researchers need to measure as little pain and discomfort as possible comes to the animals, this means that when using invasive and harmful techniques, for example, injecting heroin into rats or ablation studies to see the effects of drugs on the brain, anaesthetic ~~need~~ needs to be used in order to make the animals feel as comfortable as possible. Furthermore, the smallest number of animals as possible is to be used. For example, if researchers want to test animals for the effects of alcohol and need to use 10 rats, they shouldn't use a hundred rats just for the sake of it. (Total for Question C1 = 12 marks)



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Examiner Comments

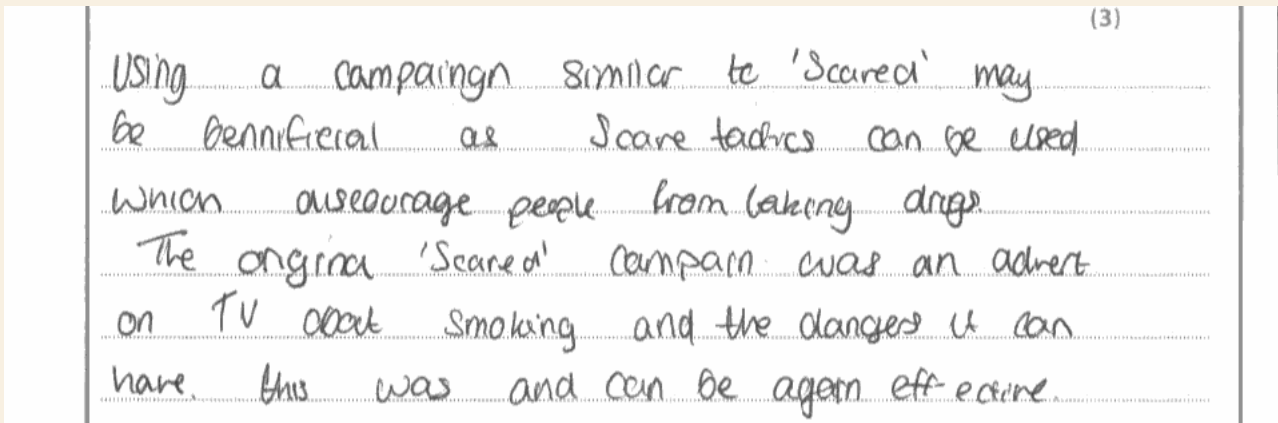
This response gained all 3 available marks for referring to some animal guidelines and minimising pain.

Question C02 (a)

Candidates were able to identify and describe an appropriate health campaign, but a minority of candidates were able to translate this knowledge into one that could be used by the local health authority. A handful of candidates simply described a campaign and gained no marks, whilst many described a campaign and made brief reference to how a local authority could adopt the same principles at the end of the prose. The strongest answers selected specific strategies used by an existing campaign and described how a local authority may use this to discourage recreational drug use (scare tactics, role model).

There were some very strong answers making good use of

self efficacy, cognitive dissonance, in-group, levels of processing, Hovland-Yale model of persuasion (source, medium, message (medium scare, two-sided), audience), and social learning theory, with excellent understanding demonstrated.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

Using an identifiable health campaign - Scared - this answer got 1 mark for describing the use of scare tactics.

Question C02 (b)

The most common creditable answers included the ethics of drug replacement, issues with black market resale and withdrawal effects of methadone. Those opting to discuss the cost of replacement drug treatments often struggled to express their point clearly and with enough depth for credit. Many candidates achieved all three available marks by making three succinct points.

A one weakness may be that addicts may not be reliable and therefore not take recommended dose of drugs for treatment, or take them at all.
Another weakness is that addicts may still take illegal drugs at some time, as treatment drugs will affect biology, not drug addict behaviour.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This answer got one mark for a brief outline of addict motivation. There was a hint at biological/psychological causes, but this was not well expressed for credit.

It could be argued that drugs being used as treatment for addiction only help with the maintenance of the addiction and do not solve the problem as it only means that, with drugs such as heroin, the user then becomes addicted to methadone.

~~But~~ Drugs taken as treatment for other drugs could be harmful if taken with other drugs. If they are mixed then it could be a potentially lethal cocktail of drugs.

The drugs given to help treat addiction may end up ~~on the black market~~ being sold on the black market which defeats the object of the drug treatment programme. (Total for Question C2 = 6 marks)



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This answer gained all the marks available. The first mark was given for becoming addicted to methadone, so does not solve the issue of addiction (although it has to be said that 'not solving the problem' is a little cursory as a comment because methadone does cure many issues surrounding heroin addiction).

The second mark was achieved with the commentary on the dangers of a cocktail of drugs, which was true of methadone. The final mark was for reference to trade on the black market.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

It should be noted that candidates should refer to a specific drug treatment, such as methadone, as some comments about longer withdrawal are specific to a particular drug treatment and not typical of all drug treatments.

Question C03

There was a mixed response to this essay question. The question required just one learning theory, however many candidates offered all three of classical and operant conditioning and social learning theory. Superfluous theories were ignored and the best described and evaluated chosen for marking, but the resulting effect was that candidates often failed to gain the level of depth of commentary when offering three rather than one theory, resulting in a modal score of 6 marks for the cohort.

Those appropriately citing one theory tended to use social learning theory or operant conditioning. There were some impressive descriptions of these theories, accurately citing vicarious and self-reinforcement, friendship groups and media in addition to the straightforward process of reinforcement and modelling. The majority of answers included brief to detailed comparison with the biological approach, some choosing to evaluate using the biological approach exclusively, all of which was credited as AO2. Straightforward evaluation tended to be weaker, but did include the influence of culture and the fact that it can explain onset as well as maintenance, unlike the biological approach which only explains maintenance of addiction. Encouragingly, answers using operant conditioning often did refer to the biological approach being consistent with operant conditioning in terms of the reward pathway, thus acknowledging the complementary nature of these theories.

The learning explanation of substance misuse states that ~~addiction~~ addiction is a behavior rather than a disease. The learning explanation is based on principles of operant conditioning, specifically positive and negative reinforcement.

It states that the frequency of drug taking drug increases because of the positive reinforcement the drug has on the individual. For example, when a user takes heroin, the heroin gives the user feelings of euphoria as satisfaction, which the user positively reinforces use for taking heroin.

Positive reinforcement can also explain the continual use of a drug. This is because as the user takes the drug, the user becomes more concerned with continuing to take the drug because the reinforcement is significant but the consequences are in the long term. For example, heroin provides a rush to the brain, which causes feelings of pleasure.

Negative reinforcement can explain maintenance of a drug. This is because the user avoids the discomfort associated with withdrawal of the drug by taking the drug, it is taking away the discomfort associated with withdrawal of the drug which in turn leads to withdrawal symptoms.

To evaluate the learning explanation of substance misuse, a similarity between the learning and biological explanations of substance misuse is that they are both reactions to

The learning explanation ignores the biological factors and says it is simply due to positive and negative reinforcement, whereas the biological explanation ignores the factors such as environmental and says it is all due to physical dependence on the drug.

A strength of the learning explanation of substance misuse is that it can explain why an individual takes to drugs in the first place, using the social learning theory.

This is because social learning theory states we learn through observation and imitation, so an individual will learn and start to use drugs by observing a role model using drugs and being positively reinforced and imitating their behaviour. For example, a US individual will watch peers using drugs and imitate by also using drugs.

However a weakness of the learning explanation is that it cannot explain the physical dependence as use has on a drug. This is because it cannot explain how neurotransmitters in the brain affect the brain and cause use to have a physical dependence on it. The biological explanation can ~~explain~~. However on the other hand, the learning approach can explain psychological dependence whereas biological explanation can't.

Another strength of the learning explanation is the presence of ~~the~~ psychological dependence shown by ~~the~~ psychological cravings for the drug. Also supported by Skinner box and the monkey trials.

A large rectangular area with a black border and horizontal dashed lines, intended for writing an answer.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This was a good answer that had description focused on one learning theory and was done very well. However, the general evaluation was not appropriate or well explained. The comment about social learning theory was not relevant to operant conditioning description and the reference to Skinner boxes and monkey trials was not explained. So effectively there was no evaluation creditworthy. Comparison was done well, and made this essay Level 3. The overall mark awarded was 8.

Question D01 (b)

The level of detail here was variable and seemed not to reflect the ability of candidates. Marked according to levels, the majority of answers correctly identified an appropriate research method and reached Level 1 description (2 marks overall). Although answers were rather inventive in terms of how the research method could be used, they invariably did not progress into any detail or depth for Level 2 credit. Typically candidates identified a questionnaire or experiment and outlined that questionnaires would be given or a field experiment could be conducted to test the nervousness and performance. Answers were often repetitive and tautological.

Yusef may ~~be~~ devise a questionnaire that his team mates could fill out which would measure the arousal levels of his team to help prove his team's nervousness is affecting their performance. Its important ~~to~~ he does not make them complete the questionnaire directly before the competition as it may take their mind off the task and have a negative effect on their performance as it has disrupted their preparations. He would collect their results and make assumptions based on the numerical, ~~the~~ quantitative data they have provided and then ~~make~~ draw conclusions from them. It would be advised he used a good sample of both male and female athletes so he can generalise the results to the certain genders. He would give his results / findings back to the team perhaps as a kind of debrief and make it clear to them that their nervousness / anxiety / arousal levels are affecting their performance in a positive / negative way depending on his results. Questionnaire would use a 1-7 scale to ~~judge~~ judge how ~~the~~ ^{aroused} ~~arousing~~ ~~they~~ nervous they become prior to an event. He may then use test-retest strategy or 'split half' to gain reliability.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This response clearly identified the use of a questionnaire as a research method, and then proceeded to link this to the scenario with clarity. There was a clear issue of timeliness mentioned as a control to prevent disruption of performance, although there was no link here to the Olympics as an intended measure of disruption of performance. There were some procedural notes on quantifying data, although this is more analysis than procedure. There was a good reference to sample, scales used and test-retest. This answer could be replicated, but full understanding of the procedure was not clear enough for the top level.

Question D01 (c)

The majority of answers achieved 2 marks for a description of closed ended questions and numerical data with additional commentary of lack of interpretation needed. Some were a little evaluative for this question. There were some nice clear answers regarding analysis of quantitative data using tables, graphs and statistics.

Quantitative data refers to data which can be transferred into a numerical form. This data is easy to analyse as it can be analysed put into a bar graph or a pie chart. Quantitative data is often drawn, perhaps in questionnaires from asking closed questions so that answers are of one word and easy to compare to other answers. This data is often received in large quantities.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This response gained two marks overall. A mark was achieved by mentioning numerical data and closed questions and a second mark for graphs and large quantities. A little more elaboration would have earned this response full marks.

(3)

Quantitative data is ~~any~~ data which can be measured such as numbers, for example the height that a person can jump. This data can then be plotted in a graph or correlations drawn from it.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This gained one mark for commentary on numbers and graphs. This was a typical response from many candidates and needed more detail to achieve more marks.

Question D01 (d)

The majority of candidates achieved 1 mark through reference to objectivity and provided a comparison to this effect with qualitative data. Some answers were limited to 1 mark as there was no contextualisation of the answer in terms of sports psychology or did not elaborate enough for a second mark nor add any further comparison.

When analysing in sport psychology, the facts are extremely important and so by using qualitative data, the figures can be ~~be~~ put into graphical form easily, ensuring that results and statistics are clear.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Although this answer clearly began to link the answer in context with sport psychology it was apparent that there was no reference to the question of why quantitative data might be better to use than qualitative data.

Question D02 (a)

The majority of candidates were able to define nAch as a desire to win but only a few progressed to distinguish between high and low nAch or variability in task or challenge. Some candidates simply provided a commentary on rewards with no reference to nAch.

The need for achievement is the drive that a sports person has, regardless of whether or not they may fail, to try their best not matter how challenging a task may be. They are not afraid of failure. (2)



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer was fairly typical of the type of response seen whereby the answer defines need to win but offered little more in terms of a definition.

Question D02 (b)

Stronger answers went beyond simply outlining rewards that could be used and referred specifically to high and low nAch and how the coach could differentiate by giving achievable goals of challenging targets. Some went on to describe how the coach could use strategies for nPow, nAffill and fear. The majority of candidates, however, achieved 1 mark with some reference to goal setting and nAch that was not developed for further credit.

A one weakness may be that addicts may not be reliable and therefore not take recommended dose of drugs for treatment, or take them at all.
Another weakness is that addicts may still take illegal drugs at some time, as treatment drugs will affect biology, not drug addict behaviour.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer was far too vague and general to achieve any credit. Answers should make reference to individual/team nAch and then offer strategies to help. This answer was too generic.

The coach can tell the team that if they practice lots and train hard then they will win their next game or tournament. If the team has a high need for achievement then they will really want to win their next game/tournament and will be motivated to train lots and therefore their performance will increase. (2)



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer at least had some reference to the level of nAch in a team. There was some notion of the team having high nAch and therefore the coach could use encouragement. It was a basic answer that did not elaborate for more than one mark.

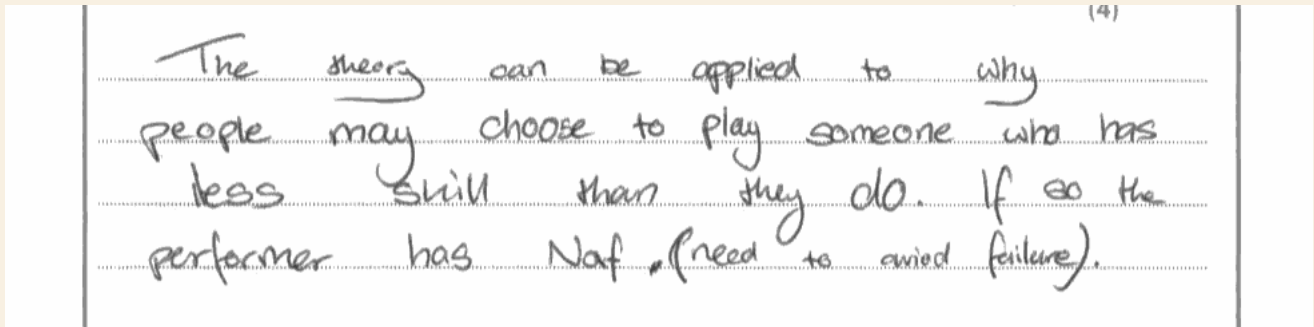


ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

With this question candidates could have drawn upon their knowledge of the whole of achievement motivation theory and how the coach might implement strategies, such as for individuals with high/low nAch, nAffill, nPow.

Question D02c

A disappointing number of responses simply described achievement motivation theory or used simplistic face validity comments, such as 'lots of good sports people must have it because they are successful'. Some answers gained 1 mark for how it could be used by coaches (which was rather simplistic given the previous questions) and a few offered a research study. Candidates should be encouraged to evaluate theory more readily in this topic as there is a significant history of weakness in theory evaluation.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Although a short response, this sort of answer was embedded in most responses as a rather vague face validity answer and did not meet the evaluative criteria required by the question.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

A simple mnemonic can be used to prepare candidates for theory evaluation questions, such as:

CAARSS

Contradictory research
Alternative theory
Application/usefulness of theory
Research method issues
Supporting research
Specific evaluation..

(4)

Gill found that elite level athletes had very high achievement levels and ~~also~~ high intrinsic motivation. Another strength is that Van Rossum compared elite and amateur athletes and found elite had higher achievement motivation. However a weakness of this theory is that concepts such as intrinsic motivation and fear of failure are not scientifically measurable.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

With reference to actual supporting research and issues with operational concepts this was a more focused answer.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates should be encouraged to write a little more detail about the supporting research where possible. Of course this should not dominate the response but simply encourage the examiner to believe that the research study was actually understood by the candidate. Something specific about the study, such as 'Gill & Deeter used the sports orientation questionnaire on high school candidates and found that...'.

Question D03

The majority of answers found no difficulty in referring to James and Jasper's variable performance and participation in sports. Many answers used reinforcement or socialisation as the theory described and did so well. There were a number of socialisation descriptions that referred appropriately to family, secondary socialisers and culture (including gender based schema/stereotyping of sports). Some responses failed to progress beyond Level 2 marking because the evaluation of the theory was either not included or was insufficient. Those who did offer evaluation tended to use research and reference top talent/ability as a weakness of the theory described. Candidates should be encouraged to evaluate theory more thoroughly to gain success in this type of essay.

I have ~~stutied~~ studied reinforcement to explain individual differences in sport. Reinforcement can either be positive or negative. Positive reinforcement is when a performer, in this case Jasper perhaps, is rewarded for performing the desired behaviour. For example Jasper could score in his PE lesson at school and his teacher would praise him with words of encouragement. James, however, may never have recieved positive reinforcement but negative reinforcement. This is where the performer performs a desired behaviour to avoid the negative response. So James could try at sports but not succeed and recieve negative comments from his teacher. If this continues James may not continue to play in sport, as he is affraid of the teachers negative feedback.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This was a very basic description of reinforcement theory. The answer referred to the distinction between James and Jasper getting praise or not. There was no elaboration and no evaluation. This was a basic Level 1 answer.

Reinforcement teaches us that when someone is reinforced, albeit with praise or a trophy, they usually repeat the same behaviour that produced the reinforcer.

- Applying to James, he might never have been reinforced for a sporting behaviour, whereas Jasper has.

At first, a reasonable try will be used as a reinforcer, something easy to achieve, but over time, the try will get harder and harder. This could explain ~~Why Jasper~~ Reinforcers come in the form of extrinsic motivators:

Trophies, prize money, praise and is often used by coaches.

Extrinsic motivators come from outside yourself and it has been shown that extrinsic motivators will produce and retain ~~the~~ a behaviour.

There are some reinforcers that are harder, like a promise that continued hard work and high level of performance will see you have a spot in the first team.

However, James has never liked sport and so would never have enjoyed doing it, putting minimal effort in, and therefore wouldn't have been reinforced. He may have never been skillful at it and so would not be reinforced.

Reinforcement has been said by athletes to give them great success (Olympians) and that is a ~~proof~~^{strength} of reinforcement as there is proof by Olympic athletes

However, it doesn't account for the aspect of skill. Someone could try and try but never win, therefore not being reinforced, showing Reinforcement's weakness. Achievement motivation theory gives support for the theory as it says by increasing someone's need for achievement, they will improve performance. Their need for achievement, is to be reinforced with a win, trophy or praise, (reinforced) which in turn further increases their *motivation*.

Many studies have been done on reinforcement, showing that it does indeed increase in performance.

Another weakness is that not every performance will end in a triumph and therefore won't be reinforced, but those performers still strive on and could win the next time. Reinforcement is an incomplete explanation for individual differences in sporting performance and participation.

Someone may not be talented or enjoy sport, so they won't wish to take part in therefore not explaining why they didn't take part. It doesn't include other factors into participation and performance like social factors.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer provided somewhat more depth on reinforcement and various types of reinforcer for description. There were three evaluative comments made that were quite well expressed. As both injunctions of the question had been done well enough, this answer was awarded a Level 3. Neither description of evaluation was done very well for a Level 4.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Again, a useful mnemonic such as CAARSS could have given a candidate more ideas with which to evaluate here. The evaluation in this response was 'specific' yet there was scope for alternative theories of participation and performance, issues with researching reinforcement as a motivational tool, supporting research, opposing research and application as it could be used by coaches.

With any revision aid such as this it is important that candidates 'use' the tool and select what is appropriate for the question asked.

Paper Summary

Overall, candidates showed a marked improvement in contextualising their answers into the applications of psychology, but there is still room for improvement here whereby candidates simply should not expect credit unless answers go beyond 'In sports psychology a questionnaire can be used' followed by generic description. Candidates should aim to contextualise the entire answer and this will be looked for in future examinations.

It should also be reinforced that essay questions may require two or more elements that must be observed and tackled to access the higher marking levels. There are many essay questions that can be accessed from previous examinations for candidates to practise and that can be adapted across topics.

Questions can draw on all aspects of the specification and, as shown in many of the questions in this current paper, can be very specific, drawing on precise understanding. Therefore candidates should be aware that description and evaluation should focus on key elements, key terms and specific methodological and ethical issues.

The level of progression demonstrated in candidates' knowledge is testament to the increased understanding that can only be achieved through good teaching and familiarity with this specification.

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