Candidate Style Answers January 2010

GCE Psychology

OCR Advanced GCE in Psychology H568

Unit G544: Approaches and Research Methods in Psychology

Contents

OCR
RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT

Section A

QUESTION	CANDIDATE'S RESPONSE	MARK BAND	EXAMINER COMMENTS
1d	There will be no significant difference between the number of car registration plates remembered from a slideshow of 20 photos of different car registration plates depending on whether you are a police officer or not.	Top	Appropriate null hypothesis following from the research question and both the IV and DV are fully operationalised.
1c	There will be no significant difference in the number of details of clothing out of 5 recalled by either males or females.	Middle	DV not fully operationalised

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2d	I would create a slideshow of 20 images of cars that I had photographed in the street with the registration plates visible in the photo, on a computer. I would make sure the plates were clear. I would then phone up a local police station and ask if I could conduct psychological research that required 10 police officers. If I gained informed consent through this self-selected sample from 10 officers, I would then phone up my school and ask if 10 teachers would be able to participate in my research also. After gaining consent from 10 teachers, I would contact each participant in my school at lunchtime (12 am) on the following day when they arrive, I will thank them for coming and tell them their details will be kept confidential. I will give them all the same instructions by asking them to write down with a pen and paper what the registration plate number is that they see on-screen in my slideshow 5 minutes after watching the slideshow in the correct order. I will give them 5 minutes to view the slideshow, with each image on the slideshow changing every 20 seconds and not being repeated. I will split them into two conditions before showing them the slideshow, with condition 1 being ''police officers'' and condition 2 being ''non-police officers''. This will be my IV and their score of how many registration plates they can remember in the correct order is my DV. After they view the slideshow and write down on paper what they believe to be the correct registration plates in order, I will put their answers into order	Replicability and appropriateness **Top band** Design and feasibility **Top band**	Although top band, more explicit details of the sampling technique would give a better answer. This is replicable with details of timing, conditions, and methods of testing. The scoring method is well detailed This investigation has explicit information on the level of data collected, is an appropriate design and is conducted ethically.

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	ranging from the most correct to the most incorrect. I will also debrief the participants and thank them for their time.		
2c	To collect my participants, I would use an opportunity sample which I collect 10 available at break time (10.30am) at my school. I would choose equal number of gender, so 5 girls and 5 men. My participants are all around 16 to 17 yrs old. I will give them an inform consent which I tell exactly what my aim and how the procedures is taking place. I will them that it is totally confidential that the experiment will not be publish what so ever and also, I will ensure them that the experiment it is not testing their IQ if they can't remember nothing on everything.	Replicability and appropriateness **Middle band**	Not completely replicable although the procedure is fairly detailed and the sample and conditions of the test are described. However, it is not clear how the DV is being scored and hence what data is collected

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	The experiment will take place in a study room at lunch time. I will inform my participants that it will take no longer than 15 minutes. All participants will have a pen and a paper. The paper will contain 10 different clothing (so a dress, jogging cloth, party dress) with color, I will then to try to look at all 10 different clothing. After they looked for 5 minute, I will tell them to try to write down everything they can remember about the clothing, which mean what kind of clothes was it,the color of it, what kind of design there was…etc. After all my participants finish to write down everything they can remember, I will thank them for everything. I will then see how many thing they can remember of the clothing, and add up to 10. A high score will mean that they remember pretty much everything and I low score will mean that part can't remember nothing much. I will test it with a man- Witney-U test, I will divide my particpants to gender, so the woman will be in a different room and the man another room. But both condition do the exactly same test.	Design and feasibility **Middle band**	The design is appropriate and conducted ethically but investigation not completely pragmatic.
3c	I believe a matched pairs design would have been useful in this design as it would be more apparent what the effect of their sex was on their ability to recall clothing. I would match them on age, IQ, class and race	**Middle band**	Advantage explained in the context of this practical but not clearly

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3c	Repeated measures design means that individual differences are minimised. The same participants are used for each condition. This way difference in the educational level such as AS students and A2 Level Students are minimised. This is also true for course differences from example Art students may do better than GCSE students because they use pictures and draw more often.	**No marks**	You cannot use repeated measures when the independent variable is male/female. A more appropriate design would be matched pairs
4d	As my self-selected sample contained police officers and non-police officers, this allowed me to investigate whether these two groups of people were either better or worse than each other at remembering registration plates. As I took photographs of real cars and ensured that the plates were visible before including them in my slideshow, I controlled the extraneous variable of the images not being clear enough to see the number plate. Also as I used a lab experiment this allowed me to see a cause-effect relationship of whether being a police officer or not enable the sample to remember more registration plates, thus measuring what I was supposed to be measuring. Furthermore as the participants were all conducted in a standardised manner, this controlled the extraneous variable of either condition being given more or less time to memorise the number plates.	**Top band**	Good understanding of concept of validity. A good range of points made in relation to the validity of measuring the dependent variable.

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4c	The validity of the investigation is relatively high as it measures what it intended to – difference in recollection of clothing details between men and women. This is shown by the use of a slideshow of 20 items of clothing that the participants are then tested on. However, in terms of ecological validity, this test is lacking as the design is not reflective of real life as participants do not usually get asked to recall details of clothes on a slideshow therefore the results cannot be generalised. This could be improved by testing participants after watching a real life fashion show.	**Middle band**	Main point made was about ecological validity which was credited but not in top band.
5d	I could have used random sampling by looking up through the local council the names of all police officers in the local area and choosing 10 names at random (by picking out 10 names from a hat) as this would eliminate the possible participant involved in asking for 10 officers in a station who would like to take part. Also it may provide a wider range in ethnicity if they were randomly selected due to the high level of chance that anyone could be selected. Also I could have looked at the local census and chosen 10 people at random rather than going to my own school as the latter method may have involved researcher bias as I chose teachers from my own school.	**Top band**	Sampling method clearly described in context and detailed explanation of how it would be representative
5c	In order to select a representative sample, the researcher would need	**Middle band**	Not clear how the sample would be

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	to select both men and women from varied age groups eg. 16-80s from different locations e.g. cities and small towns, from different occupations e.g. students and bus drivers etc. This would make a more representative sample that could be generalised to the whole of the public and their abilities to recall clothing descriptions.		selected but a good discussion of what makes it representative and in context
6d	I considered the ethical issue of confidentiality by informing my sample that their details would be kept confidential before they started to view the slideshow to decrease their feelings of possible discomfort towards sensitive information being revealed about them, such as their poor memory. This would make them more comfortable to take part in my research. I also took the ethical issue of debriefing into consideration by debriefing them at the end of my study and thanking them for their time. This would have cleared up any concerns or worries they may have experienced after leaving my study.	**Top band**	Understanding of more than one ethical issue is evident and one of these is discussed in the context of their investigation
6d	Ethical issues that need to be considered are issues such as confidentiality, participants need to be informed of their confidentiality and that the results of their memory test will not be linked to them otherwise participant may be reluctant to take part due to fear of embarrassment over a poor test result.	**Middle band**	Only one ethical issue referred to

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7c	Possible future research could be looking at the difference between young people and old people's ability to recall descriptions of clothing as this may well provide a valuable insight into the deterioration of memory as one gets older. Similarly, the results from older women can be compared with older men to see if there is in fact a difference between deterioration of men and women's memories. (I could correlate these results with original results)	**Top band**	Appropriate research suggested with justification
7e	One idea for possible future research related to my practical project would be to investigate whether people who are hungry become moody or angry as opposed to people who have eaten being happy and talkative	**Middle band**	Research suggestion not justified

Section B

QUESTION	CANDIDATE'S RESPONSE	MARK BAND	EXAMINER COMMENTS
8a	The cognitive approach looks at our mental cognitions, such as thinking, memory, perception and language. It believes that our mind works like a computer, in a sense that is inputs, stores and retrieves data when in a certain situation. Cognitive studies usually use scientific lab experiment to gather data and an issue linking to this is the concern of low ecological validity. The cognitive approach can be seen as 'dispositional' as it believes that our behaviour is caused by factors we are unaware of such as our thinking patterns. As such it is quite reductionist as it does not consider our social group or DNA as an explanation of our behaviour and only our cognitions.	**Top band**	Good understanding of the main features of the cognitive approach
8b	Baron Cohen's study on autism uses the cognitive approach. He wanted to investigate whether the core cognitive deficit in autistic people was a lack of a ''Theory of Mind'', which is the ability to infer emotions in others. He used a specialised ''Eyes Tasks'' which contained 25 black and white photos of eyes each portraying a different emotion, and the participant had to infer the emotion that was shown through the eyes and choose the correct answer- there	**Top middle band**	Accurate, detailed description of two studies that use the cognitive approach. Quality of communication is good. The link to the cognitive approach is not explicit enough for top band

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	was a target and foil answer. Baron Cohen found that the antistic group, which contained 16 people who all had autism or asperges syndrome, could only infer the correct emotions on 16.3/25 times on average. This was only 1.3 more than if they guessed the answers, this showing that they lacked a theory of mind. Yochelson and Samenow's cognitive study looked at whether there were errors and biases in the thinking patterns of criminals who had pleaded guilty with reasons of insanity. They used therepeatic techniques to interview the participants over several years. They identified 52 thinking erros, for example '' Constant anger'' and ''Ownership attitudes'', and found that the criminal were making over 40 of these errors. They explained that these erros could have led them to commit crimes.		

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8c	A strength of the cognitive approach in its ability to explain behaviour can be seen in the practical applications that research within this approach provides. For example, loftus and palmer's research on leading questions identified a link between leading questions and distorted memories/ answers. This is useful as this information can be used by the government to put policies in place that stops witnesses of crime being asked leading questions as it is possible that such questions could lead to false evidence and possible mistakes in imprisonment. On the other hand a weakness of the cognitive approach is that the studies within it are often low in ecological validity. This can be seen as a problem in loftus and palmers study as the experiment was conducted in an artificial lab environment after participants had watched a video of car crashes. This kind of situation is therefore not true to real life situations and as a result of this it is difficult to generalise the findings to everyday life. Another strength of the cognitive approach is that it looks into 'invisible behaviours' that are none the less important like language, memory, perception etc. This is something that the behaviourist perspective fails to do and is the cognitive approach succeeds in doing in. An example of this can be seen in Savage - Rambaugh's study of language acquisition in non humans. Such behaviour is one	**Top middle band**	Two strengths and two weaknesses clearly explained and the quality of argument arising from the points is well developed. Two pieces of research -Loftus and Palmer and Savage Rumbaugh- used well but do not demonstrate breadth or depth of knowledge required for top band.

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	that would be classed as invisible but Savage- Ruambaugh discovered that Kanzi and Malika (Bonobos) successfully leant a number of language combinations using the lexigram. Thus making the approach successful in exploring hidden behaviours. On the other hand a final weakness of this approach is that its methods are often deterministic, and therefore ignore other factors that could contribute to results. This can be seem in loftus and palmer's study as they suggested that the use of leading questions determined the answer given. However taking such a deterministic view could lead to other important factors being missed like some participants individual characteristics like a previous knowledge of the effects of leading questions.		
8d	A similarity of the cognitive approach and the behaviourist is that they both have practical applications for the research within them. This can be seen on Bandura, Ross and Ross behaviourist study on aggression in children where his results could be used to successfully inform educational practitioners and the government about the levels of violence should witness and as a result could inform film certifications. Similarly, loftus and palmers findings as previously discussed could	**Top band**	Two points of comparison- one similarity and one difference are made between the two approaches which are clearly explained and supported by examples from two different sources. Given the time constraints for an 8 mark question this candidate has given sufficient

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	successfully inform the government of the negative effects of leading questions and as a result could inform legalisation to prevent such leading questions e.g in court A difference on the other hand is that the behaviourist approach only studies directly observable behaviour whilst the cognitive approach studies 'invisible behaviours' as well. This can be seen in Bandura's study on the effects of aggression in children as they were only interested in observing the children's physical behaviour after watching an aggressive or non aggressive model and did not consider the children's thought processes or feelings. On the other hand the cognitive approach looks at invisible behaviours such as language acquisition, combining a mixture of observation of behaviour and consideration of thought processes as demonstrated in Savage-Rumbaugh's study in the language acquisition of non humans where they both observed the chimps behaviour and considered their individual characteristics.		depth and breadth of answer for a top band mark.
8e	There is a debate that 'psychology is a science' which suggests that if research has an independent and dependent variable there is a	**Low mid band**	Examples are used to support the points but this is done very briefly. A

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	search for cause-effect relationships. If the research has a hypothesis and the theories are testable or able to be proved or disproved then that will be a science. Cognitive psychology may be considered scientific psychology because many studies such as the Baron Cohen study on autism and Loftus and Palmer on eyewitness testimony, the experiments have an IV and DV and they are testing hypotheses. Therefore, the theories on which the research is based can be tested and so this cognitive research can be seen as a science.		number of points are raised but the quality of argument is inconsistent
9a	Ecological validity is whether what you are doing is true to everyday life. If an experiment is in high in mundane realism then it is something that you can experience everyday that is not out of the ordinary. For example being asked to remember 10 objects is low in ecological validity because it is not a general task you do every day.	**Top band**	Examples are not necessary in this question but the candidate has used an example which shows understanding of the issue.
9b	Piliavin's study on bystander apathy is very high in ecological validity. His experiment is taken part in the field. it was a New York City subway journey which hundreds of people used every day. He had many different conditions of people. E.g. drunk, cane victim. Participants did not know about the study and the victims actions could of happened in everyday life making it high in ecological	**Top middle band**	Appropriate evidence is clearly described but lacks detail. However, the ecological validity of the research is strongly highlighted

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	validity. Rosehan's study on psychiatric hospitals is also ecologically valid. He had participants act as pseudopatients to gain entry into different hospitals. The staff and hospitals were unaware of the experiment and of course it wasn't in a lab, so another field experiment which is a general setting that could happen every day. There are no demand characteristics because staff were unaware so behaviour is completely natural.		