



EXAMINER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2008

BEHAVIOURAL ASPECTS OF MARKETING

General Comments

As always, familiar themes populate the paper such as: Attitudes, Social Perception, Personality, Motivation, Groups, and Irish Social Change. Issue dealt with on this paper has been examined both before and frequently. Surprisingly not all candidates attempted the mandatory 5 questions which was the single most significant contributing factor to the substantial failure rate.

Question 1

Most candidates, thankfully knew the primary sense organs and even the stimuli associated with them, but few mentioned key variables in the process of sensation such as absolute thresholds, differential threshold, sensory adaption, sensory habituation and sensory links to perceptual selectivity, and preferred discussions of the perceptual process in general.

Question 2

Explain in detail the significant alterations in Irish society since the 1960's suffered from the usual barely informed and anecdotal descriptions of Irish society and consumption patterns. Reference to car purchases, immigration and SSIA's were frequent but what was too often lacking were informed insights into demographic patterns and socio-cultural shifts.

Question 3

This question required discussion of universal motivation theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Alderfer's ERG theory, etc. Generally very well answered with well over two thirds attempting this question easily passing and one third gaining higher grades.

Question 4

In simple terms, science is a collection of methods and approaches designed to establish with as much confidence as possible what is true about any subject. It relies heavily on rigorous cross-checking of work' (O'Grady, 2001). Discuss this statement in light of your understanding of the behavioural; sciences. The most unpopular question on the paper sought a discussion on the scientific methods that feed into the Behavioural Sciences. It also sought to draw candidates informed and even editorial position on the exact nature of behavioural science and its evolution.

Question 5

Wholly irrelevant explanations of the Idiographic approach tended to concentrate on Freud and the vast majority of these were concise and appropriate, noting the psychosexual stages of development, primary defence mechanisms, and the structure of the psyche. However explanations of the Nomothetic approach i.e. Cattell's proposals on the structure and

measurement of personality through the 16PF, went for the most part ignored, again leaving candidates floundering badly.

Question 6

Most candidates recognised that this question was directly on the assessment of group power and proceeded to discuss same referencing Milgram and Asch's experiment as proof, which was a very worthwhile approach to take. However those who concentrated on the stages of group formation and the primary categorisation of groups for their entire responses were definitively off course.

Question 7

The least popular, and the most misunderstood question on the paper. This was not directly a question on social class, socio-economic classes/status, social clubs/societies, explanations of which were evident in the overwhelming majority of answers. Descriptions of the mechanism of socialisation (imitation, conditioning, identification) and the groups/institutions of socialisation (peer group, school, family etc) were required as well as a definition of socialisation.

Question 8

Describe in detail the process of attitude change. This unpopular question on attitudes was passed by nearly three-quarters of those attempting it. This was not a question directly on the tri-component structure of attitudes, the functions served by attitudes or a question on Fishbein/Fishbein & Azjen models of attitudes. What was required was a coherent description of the four components of attitude change i.e. communicator variables, message variables; medium variables; and audience variables. Over half received higher grades.