

Department of Psychology

Examination paper for PSY2014/PSYPRO4314 – Social Psychology 2

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Checked by:

Date

Signature

Instructions:

There are four questions in Part A. Answer **all four** (max 300 words per answer, approximately one handwritten page).

There are two questions in Part B. Answer **one** of them in an essay-like format.

Each part (Part A, Part B) has to be marked as "passed" (grade of E or better) for the exam to be passed.

Each part (Part A, Part B) counts 50% of your final mark.

Part A

Question 1.

Outline the major theoretical explanatory models for the origins of sex-differences in social behavior

Question 2.

Your friend is particularly thrifty and cautious spending money. You would like to see him/her being more generous, as this reflects negatively on you. Based on Cialdini and Griskevicius (2014) describe two principal ways one can influence his/her behavior.

Question 3.

What is the evidence for each position in the situation-person debate?

Question 4.

What is the function of jealousy? Describe in short two paradigms for studying reactions to infidelity and what factors may affect sex differences in jealousy responses

Part B

Question 1.

Describe briefly what cognitive biases are within the domain of social psychology, and how they may have evolved. Discuss how evolved cognitive biases may affect behaviour in two separate domains of social psychology.

Question 2.

The World Health Organization (WHO) states on their homepage that “Condoms, when used correctly and consistently, are highly effective in preventing HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). A large body of scientific evidence shows that male latex condoms have an 80% or greater protective effect against the sexual transmission of HIV and other STIs.” Perceiving condoms as a key component of comprehensive HIV prevention, the WHO promotes condom use.

Based on Ajzen’s Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB): (1) describe how various TPB components can be measured, and (2) suggest two different interventions to promote condom use and explain for each of the suggested interventions how and why it will work. Discuss the strengths and limitations of your suggestions.

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There are two questions in Part B. Answer **one** of them in an essay-like format.

Each part (Part A, Part B) has to be marked as “passed” (grade of E or better) for the exam to be passed.

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Part A

Question 1.

Outline the major theoretical explanatory models for the origins of sex-differences in social behavior

The two major explanatory models for explaining the origins of sex differences is the social role theory (SRT) on the one hand, and the evolutionary psychology (EP) model on the other. According to SRT, sex differences in psychological attributes (e.g. preferences for mates and occupation, aggression, dominance and jealousy, etc.) have their

origin from the historical societal position of women and men. Based on evolved physical differences between men and women, the two sexes are assigned to gender-stereotyped social roles. SRT claim that division of labor and patriarchal hierarchies is the engine of sex-differentiated behavior because they trigger social and psychological processes where women and men seek out partly different experiences to maximize their opportunities within the limited possibilities the society provides their sex. EP assumes the sexual selection over “deep time” has affected not only physical sex differences, but also psychological sex differences. Trivers’ parental investment theory is essential here for understanding how sex differences may have evolved. According to EP, sex differences do not have their origin in the allocation of men and women into sex typical social roles.

Relevant course material:

Archer, J. (1996). Sex differences in social behavior: Are the social role and evolutionary explanations compatible? *American Psychologist*, 51, 909-917.
Eagly, A. H., & Wood, W. (1999). The origins of sex differences in human behavior. *American Psychologist*, 54, 408-423.

Question 2.

Your friend is particularly thrifty and cautious spending money. You would like to see him/her being more generous, as this reflects negatively on you. Based on Cialdini and Griskevicius (2014) describe two principal ways one can influence his/her behavior.

Human behaviour is goal-directed, and the course material identifies six principles of influence (reciprocity, social validation, consistency, liking, authority, scarcity). Two of these needs to be identified and correctly outlined within the framework of the text above.

Relevant course material:

Cialdini, R.B. & Griskevicius, V. (2010). Social influence. In: Baumeister, Roy F., and Finkel, Eli J. *Advanced Social Psychology: The State of the Science*. Cary, NC, USA: Oxford University Press, USA, 2010. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 7 October 2014. 394-426

Question 3.

What is the evidence for each position in the situation-person debate?

The situation-person debate refers to the question of whether the person or the situation is more influential in determining a person’s behavior.

Fleeson (2004) describes the situation-person debate along the following questions:

- *What is the central cause of behavior: Person or Situation?*
- *Are multiple behaviors of one individual similar or variable?*
- *Is describing an individual’s way of acting useful or not useful?*
- *What is the appropriate focus of study, structure of differences between people or reactions to situations?*

Evidence that highlights cross-situational variability / within person variability: Fleeson (2004)

presents a figure (Fig. 2, based on Fleeson, 2001) on within-and between-person variability in behavior and affect: The typical person's behavior differs as much from occasion to occasion as does his or her emotion, and more than the amount people differ from each other on average. Evidence that highlights temporal stability and cross-situational stability (between person variability): Fleeson (2004) presents a figure (Fig. 3) that illustrates participants' average level of extraversion in two different weeks: How participants acted in one week was highly similar to how they acted in the other week.

Relevant course material:

Fleeson, W. (2004). Moving Personality Beyond the Person-Situation Debate: The Challenge and the Opportunity of Within-Person Variability. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 13(2), 83–87.

Question 4.

What is the function of jealousy? Describe in short two paradigms for studying reactions to infidelity and what factors may affect sex differences in jealousy responses

*Buss' (2013) definition of jealousy: "a complex emotional state activated when there is a threat to a values social relationship." The two main paradigms for measuring jealousy is forced choice and continuous measures. Most studies have found that the use of forced choice produce stronger sex differences (relative to women, men are more upset/jealous imagining their partner having sex rather than falling in love with someone else). Bendixen et al. (2015) look at both **methodological and relationship factors** and find large sex effects regardless of methodology/paradigm. Still, partnered participants generally find infidelity more upsetting, and this can only be identified with continuous measure.*

Relevant course material:

Buss, D.M. (2013). Sexual jealousy. *Psychological Topics* 22, 155-182.

Bendixen, M., Kennair, L.E.O., and Buss, D.M. (2015). Jealousy: Evidence of strong sex differences using both forced choice and continuous measure paradigms. *Personality and Individual Differences* 86, 212-216. doi: 10.1016/j.paid.2015.05.035.

Part B

Question 1.

Describe briefly what cognitive biases are within the domain of social psychology, and how they may have evolved. Discuss how evolved cognitive biases may affect behaviour in two separate domains of social psychology.

For CONTENT:

Students need to describe the process of natural selection, i.e., how biased beliefs rather than accurate beliefs based on perceptions of signals may have been selected for. Keywords are signal detection theory, type of errors in judgments (false positives and false negatives) and asymmetry of costs.

Human cognition is shown to be biased in a number of studies, and Galperin & Hselton's paper

provides an overview of the domains in which false positives, false negatives and their costs are studied. Error management theory (EMT) explains how natural selection engineers psychological adaptations for judgment under uncertainty. Natural selection follows the "eat dung and die" principle. Organisms that more often made judgemental mistakes (with fatal errors) paid the cost of premature death or leaving few if any offspring.

A belief can be adopted when it is in fact true (true positive), or can't be adopted and not be true (true negative). The two possible belief errors are false positives and false negatives. Asymmetry of costs: When the costs of one type of error is consistently higher than the other over deep (evolutionary) time, a psychological adaptation for a bias may evolve. Hazard detection systems (adaptations) are often biased toward false alarms (many small costs, but designed to avoid fatal mistakes). FAE, or dispositional inference (assuming negative, enduring traits) is one example within the social perception. Another is overperception of sexual intent (more typical of men) and underperception of commitment (more typical of women). EMT also shed light upon prejudice against out-group members and the challenges of cooperation/social exchange. A good discussion part would describe in more detail what may be moderating variables to the described biases how these moderators affect biases (weakening or strengthening effect). Discussion of recent challenges to EMT (McKay and colleagues) is definitely a plus.

Relevant course material:

Galperin, A., & Haselton, M. G. (2013). Error Management and the Evolution of Cognitive Bias. In J. P. Forgas, K. Fiedler, & C. Sedikides (Eds.), *Social Thinking and Interpersonal Behavior* (pp. 45-64). New York: Psychology Press.

Confer, J.C., Easton, J.A., Fleishman, D.S., Goetz, C.D., Lewis, D.M.G., Perilloux, C., et al. (2010). Evolutionary psychology: Controversies, questions, prospects, and limitations. *American Psychologist* 65, 110-126.

Question 2.

The World Health Organization (WHO) states on their homepage that "Condoms, when used correctly and consistently, are highly effective in preventing HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). A large body of scientific evidence shows that male latex condoms have an 80% or greater protective effect against the sexual transmission of HIV and other STIs." Perceiving condoms as a key component of comprehensive HIV prevention, the WHO promotes condom use.

Based on Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB): (1) describe how various TPB components can be measured, and (2) suggest two different interventions to promote condom use and explain for each of the suggested interventions how and why it will work. Discuss the strengths and limitations of your suggestions.

For CONTENT:

Students can select from any of the following options:

Students are expected to suggest interventions based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 2012), targeting attitudes, social norms, perceived behavioural control (as well as actual behavioural control), and intentions. For a discussion, Cialdini & Griskevicius' (2010) paper on social influence may be used for exemplifying specific techniques that target attitudes and social norms.

Students can discuss limitations to the interventions from the perspective of the Associative-Propositional Evaluation Model (APE, Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2007), suggesting interventions that target association activation/affective reactions, propositional reasoning/evaluative judgment and strategies to achieve consistency).

Students are expected present the TPB model and the model components. Students are expected to explain how the intervention should work in close connection to the theoretical approach chosen and to argue for the intervention based on the theoretical approach chosen.

Relevant course material:

Ajzen, I. (2012). The Theory of Planned Behavior, in: Lange, Paul, A.M. Van, and Kruglanski, Arie W.. Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology, Volume 1. London, GBR: SAGE, 2011. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 7 October 2014. pp.