

A-Level Psychology

Social Psychology - Spec Cheat Sheet · Paper 1

Edexcel Psychology (9PS0)

Paper 1

32 spec points

Every specification point for **Social Psychology**, in spec order - tick each one off as you revise. Codes match the official Edexcel specification. Nothing here is optional.

1.1 Content

- 1.1.1** Theories of obedience, including agency theory and social impact theory.
- 1.1.2** Research into obedience, including Milgram's research and three of his variation studies - Rundown Office Block (Experiment 10), Telephonic instructions (Experiment 7) and Ordinary man gives orders (Experiment 13) - as they demonstrate situational factors that encourage dissent.
- 1.1.3** Factors affecting obedience and dissent/resistance to obedience, including individual differences (personality and gender), situation and culture.
- 1.1.4** Explanations and research into prejudice, including social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1979, 1986) and realistic conflict theory (Sherif, 1966).
- 1.1.5** Factors affecting prejudice (and discrimination), including individual differences (personality), situation and culture.
- 1.1.6** Individual differences in obedience/prejudice: obedience is affected by personality, and prejudice can have an explanation linked to personality.
- 1.1.7** Developmental psychology in obedience/prejudice: obedience can be affected by gender and culture (from environmental effects), and prejudice can be affected by culture (from environmental effects).

1.2 Methods

- 1.2.1** Designing and conducting questionnaires and interviews, considering researcher effects.
- 1.2.2** Unstructured, semi-structured and structured interviews, and open, closed (including ranked scale) questions.
- 1.2.3** Alternate hypotheses.
- 1.2.4** Sampling techniques: random, stratified, volunteer and opportunity.
- 1.2.5** Analysis of quantitative data: calculating measures of central tendency, frequency tables, graphical presentation using a bar chart, and measures of dispersion (range and standard deviation).
- 1.2.6** Analysis of qualitative data using thematic analysis.
- 1.2.7** The British Psychological Society (BPS) code of ethics and conduct (2009), including risk management when carrying out research in psychology.

1.3 Studies

- 1.3.1** Classic study: Sherif et al. (1954/1961) Intergroup conflict and cooperation - The Robbers Cave Experiment.
- 1.3.2** Contemporary study (one of three): Burger (2009) Replicating Milgram - Would people still obey today?
- 1.3.3** Contemporary study (one of three): Reicher and Haslam (2006) Rethinking the psychology of tyranny.
- 1.3.4** Contemporary study (one of three): Cohrs et al. (2012) Individual differences in ideological attitudes and prejudice - evidence from peer report data.

1.4 Key questions

- 1.4.1** One key question of relevance to today's society, discussed as a contemporary issue for society rather than as an academic argument.
- 1.4.2** Concepts, theories and/or research (as appropriate to the chosen key question) drawn from social psychology as used in this qualification.

1.5 Practical investigation

- 1.5.1** One practical research exercise to gather data relevant to topics covered in social psychology, adhering to ethical principles in both content and intention: design and conduct a questionnaire gathering qualitative and quantitative data to look for a difference; consider questionnaire construction, sampling decisions and ethical issues; collect and present quantitative analysis using measures of central tendency, measures of dispersion (range and standard deviation as appropriate), bar graph and frequency table; collect and present qualitative analysis using thematic analysis; consider strengths, weaknesses and possible improvements of the questionnaire; and write up the procedure, results and discussion sections of a report.

1.6 Issues and debates

- 1.6** Ethics - for example when researching obedience and prejudice, and the implications of findings in both areas.
- 1.6** Practical issues in the design and implementation of research - for example designing questionnaires and interviews, and social desirability.
- 1.6** Reductionism - for example the risk of reductionism when drawing conclusions from social data.
- 1.6** Comparisons between ways of explaining behaviour using different themes - for example the two theories of prejudice: social identity and realistic conflict.
- 1.6** Psychology as a science - for example social desirability in questionnaires and issues of validity in questionnaires.
- 1.6** Culture and gender - for example whether prejudice and obedience are influenced by cultural factors or by gender.
- 1.6** Nature-nurture - for example the role of personality in obedience compared with the role of the situation.
- 1.6** How psychological understanding has developed over time - for example using Burger's replication of Milgram compared with Milgram's work, or Tajfel's ideas alongside a contemporary study.
- 1.6** Issues of social control - for example reducing prejudice, or how people obey someone in authority/uniform.
- 1.6** The use of psychological knowledge in society - for example reducing conflict in society.
- 1.6** Issues related to socially-sensitive research - for example racism or cultural differences in social psychology.