

AQA Psychology A-level

Topic 8: Issues and Debates in Psychology Flashcards

This work by [PMT Education](https://www.pmt.education) is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)



What are the different levels of explanation that can be used in psychology?



What are the different levels of explanation that can be used in psychology?

- Social-cultural context
- Psychological level
- Physiological level
- Neurochemical level



Define ethnocentrism.



Define ethnocentrism.

Ethnocentrism involves evaluating other cultures according to the customs and standards of your own culture, leading to a bias whereby you view your culture as superior.



Define reductionism.



Define reductionism.

The view that behaviour is better explained by breaking it down into simpler constituent parts.



Give a strength of holism.



Give a strength of holism.

Holism is able to explain certain aspects of social behaviour which reductionism could not. Examples of such are like 'conformity to social roles' in the Stanford Prison Study. Looking at the situation at a whole by watching the interactions between the prisoners and guards was important to understand behaviours such as deindividuation that took place. Holism is the approach taken to understand behaviours of more wider social contexts.



Give an example of socially sensitive research that has had ethical implications.



Give an example of socially sensitive research that has had ethical implications.

Goddard (1917) did research which found IQ to be fully genetic. This led to eugenic procedures in the 1920s whereby the feeble minded (people with a low IQ) were sterilised.



Compare approaches that are on opposite sides of the idiographic/nomothetic debate.



Compare approaches that are on opposite sides of the idiographic/nomothetic debate.

Idiographic	Nomothetic
Humanistic approach - focused on the subjective experiences of one's 'self' and each person's individual ability to strive to achieve self-actualisation.	Biological approach - involves many lab experiments and brainscan evidence on many people whereby generalisation of human functioning have been made.
Psychodynamic approach - Freud's use of cases studies emphasizes the importance of individual experience.	Behaviourist approach - many experiments have been done on many animals- rats, pigeons etc where generalisable laws of learning have been developed from.



What is meant by cultural relativism?



What is meant by cultural relativism?

The idea that norms, values and behaviours are culturally specific and may not be universal. The aforementioned should be evaluated in the context of the culture in which they occur.



What is the difference between the emic approach and etic approach?



What is the difference between the emic approach and etic approach?

Etic approach is when a researcher does an investigation in one culture but then tries to apply it to another, which is known as imposing etic. The emic approach is when the researcher conducts the study in the same culture which they are studying.



Describe universality.



Describe universality.

Refers to when conclusions can be applied to everyone regardless of which place, culture or time a person is in.



Define determinism.



Define determinism.

This is belief that behaviour is determined by external or internal forces acting upon an individual that is out of their control.



What is the difference between hard determinism
and soft determinism?



What is the difference between hard determinism and soft determinism?

Hard determinism states that we have completely no control over what directs our lives whereas soft determinism states that our behaviour is determined by external or internal forces but at the same time we do have some control.



List three types of determinism.



List three types of determinism.

- Biological - all behaviour is innate and determined by genes
- Environmental - all behaviour is determined by factors outside the individual, e.g. parental influence, the media, or previous experiences. Schools which adopt this approach include behaviourism and social learning theory.
- Psychic - behaviour is the result of childhood experiences and innate drives (id, ego and superego), as in Freud's model of psychological development.



Define free will.



Define free will.

This refers to the ability to act at one's own discretion, to choose to behave without being influenced by external forces.



Which approaches take the side of nurture in the nature-nurture debate?



Which approaches take the side of nurture in the nature-nurture debate?

- Behaviourist
- Humanistic
- Social Learning Theory
- Psychodynamic (stance is a compromise between nature and nurture)



Describe the difference between nativists
and empiricists.



Describe the difference between nativists and empiricists.

Nativists are people who believe that all human characteristics are a result of heredity (the genetic transmission of characteristics) whilst empiricists are people that believe that all human characteristics are a result of the environment and experience.



Outline one problem associated with beta bias in psychological research.



Outline one problem associated with beta bias in psychological research.

Beta bias is when differences between the genders are minimised. This can lead to researchers forming invalid theories. For example with the fight or flight theory, research was done on males and it was assumed that it also applies to females but actually Taylor et al (2000) found that women have more of a tend and befriend response.



Define androcentrism.



Define androcentrism.

This is when behaviour is judged to be normal when compared to a male standard. This leads to female behaviour being judged as either 'deficient' or 'abnormal'.



Describe a consequence of having gender bias in psychological research.



Describe a consequence of having gender bias in psychological research.

It can impact on females' lives. Research where gender bias is involved can easily present scientific justification for denying women opportunities in the workplace and in society.

