

AQA Psychology A-level

Option 2: Schizophrenia Flashcards

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Describe two positive symptoms of schizophrenia.



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Two of the following:

- Delusions, which are bizarre beliefs that seem real to the schizophrenic.
- Hallucinations which are unreal perceptions of the environment that are auditory, visual, olfactory or tactile.
- Disorganised Speech which can be ‘word salad’, where speech is incomprehensible or ‘derailment’, in which an individual slips between topics.
- Disorganised/ Catatonic Behaviour which is an inability or lack of motivation to initiate or complete tasks.



Describe two negative symptoms of schizophrenia.



Describe two negative symptoms of schizophrenia.

Two of the following:

- Speech Poverty (Alogia) is the lessening of speech fluency and productivity.
- Avolition is the reduction of interests and desires, as well as an inability to initiate and persist in goal-directed behaviour.
- Affective Flattening is a reduction in the range and intensity of emotional expression- including facial expression.
- Anhedonia is an inability to experience pleasure.



Define reliability.



Define reliability

This refers to the consistency of a measure, as in the same data should be produced by a measurement if it is taken on successive occasions.



Define validity.



Define validity.

This refers to the accuracy of a measurement- whether or not an observed effect is genuine.



In relation to biological explanations for schizophrenia, explain what is meant by neural correlates.



In relation to biological explanations for schizophrenia, explain what is meant by neural correlates.

These are changes in neuronal events and mechanisms that result in the characteristic symptoms of a disorder, which in the case of schizophrenia may be damaged connections between the hippocampus and the prefrontal cortex.



Outline the dopamine hypothesis as an explanation for schizophrenia.



Outline the dopamine hypothesis as an explanation for schizophrenia.

When the neurotransmitter dopamine is in excess in regions of the brain, positive symptoms of schizophrenia can be observed.



Define the double bind theory.



Define the double bind theory.

Refers to receiving contradictory information from a family member, such as being told they love them whilst sneering at them.



Define expressed emotions.



Define expressed emotions.

This refers to a family style in which there may be overinvolvement in a child's life, and a poor style of communication.



Explain how a high EE environment leads to schizophrenia.



Explain how a high EE environment leads to schizophrenia.

This suggests that receiving contradictory information (being told 'I love you' by a sneering person'), renders an individual unable to respond to future information, causing cognitive symptoms of schizophrenia.



How does the cognitive approach explain hallucinations?



How does the cognitive approach explain hallucinations?

Hallucinating individuals experience hypervigilance due to an excessive focus on auditory stimuli, such individuals find it hard to distinguish between imagery and sensory based perception. This is not corrected as schizophrenics do not reality test as non-schizophrenics do.



How does the cognitive approach explain delusions?



How does the cognitive approach explain delusions?

This explanation suggests that during the formation of delusions, patients have their interpretations of their experiences controlled by inadequate processing of information.



Why are atypical antipsychotics preferred to typical antipsychotics?



Why are atypical antipsychotics preferred to typical antipsychotics?

Atypical antipsychotics carry a lower risk of extrapyramidal side effects and are believed to unlike typical antipsychotics, have an impact of reducing negative symptoms as well as positive ones. These are also suitable for treatment resistant patients.



Why do atypical antipsychotics run the risk of fewer side effects?



Why do atypical antipsychotics run the risk of fewer side effects?

Atypical antipsychotics do not only block D2 receptors, but have a stronger affinity for serotonin receptors, and a lower affinity for D2 receptors, which is believed to reduce the risk of side effects.



How do antipsychotics work?



How do antipsychotics work?

Antipsychotics are dopamine antagonist which are substances that decrease the activity of dopamine, by blocking receptors so that dopamine cannot stimulate them.



Why are drug therapies preferred to other therapies?



Why are drug therapies preferred to other therapies?

- They are effective.
- They are cheap.
- They require less effort on the part of the patients, increasing the chances of them persisting in the treatment.



What is meant by 'Token Economy'?



What is meant by 'Token Economy'?

This is a form of therapy in which desirable behaviours are encouraged by the use of reinforcements. Rewards are given in exchange for tokens earned when desirable behaviours are performed



Why is Token Economy considered unethical?



Why is Token Economy considered unethical?

- For token economy to work, psychiatrists have to be in control over food and other things that act as primary reinforcers.
- In order for patients to have access to these things, they have to exchange tokens given to them by the psychiatrists.
- This contradicts the notion that all humans have the right to things like privacy and food without having to earn them.



Outline the Interactionist Approach to Schizophrenia.



Outline the Interactionist Approach to Schizophrenia.

This is a compromise explanation that suggests schizophrenia develops in individuals who have a genetic vulnerability (diathesis), following an activating event (stress).



Define symptom overlap.



Define symptom overlap.

This refers to the fact that some symptoms may not be unique to one disorder, but rather shared amongst many disorders. An example of this is social anhedonia, which is common between both schizophrenia and depression.



Define comorbidity.



Define comorbidity.

This refers to the extent to which two or more conditions occur simultaneously in a patient- like schizophrenia and depression.

