

TOPICS FOR STATE EXAM FOR BACHELOR DEGREE

**Institute of Applied Psychology
Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences
Comenius University**

Subject: SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

The examination requires the application of knowledge from the Social Psychology course and the ability to interrelate and integrate it with knowledge gained in other subjects of the Bachelor's degree.

1. Subject, methods and history of social psychology

The subject of social psychology. Methods. Significant events and periods in the history of social psychology. Crisis in social psychology. Contemporary social psychology. Social psychology in our region.

Example questions:

What research methods are used in social psychologists? Illustrate each method with examples of specific research.

2. The individual, society, and culture

The relationship between the individual and society. Types of social behavior. The Bystander Effect. Models and theories of motivation. Culture and cultural shock. Culture and science.

Example questions:

What is the reason why phenomena such as social facilitation or social loafing do not have general and universal nature?

3. Identity

Socialization and identity formation. Social identity. Identity in social constructionist approaches. Biological vs. social gender identity. Gender as a social construct. National identity.

Example questions:

How can Albert Bandura's theory be used to examine the effects of social media?

4. Interpersonal Perception

First impression in interpersonal contact. Self-fulfilling prophecy. Theories of attraction. Beautyism. Theories of love and separation.

Example questions:

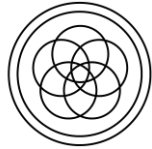
What risks can the first impression cause in the school environment?

5. Communication

The scheme and components of communication. Non-verbal communication. Communication of emotions. Verbal communication. Communication rituals at school. Communication in virtual environments.

Example questions:

Explain what misunderstandings can arise according to the communication theory.



6. Attitudes and Social Representations

The concept of attitude. The theory of reasoned behavior. Cognitive dissonance. The theory of social representations. Methods of investigating attitudes.

Example questions:

Is consistency of attitudes important for an individual? Explain your answer?

7. Social influence, conformity, and obedience

Social influence and leadership. Asch's research on conformity. The influence of the minority on the majority. Social norms. Muzafer Sherif: The psychology of social norms. Investigating obedience: Milgram's experiment, its interpretations and significance.

Example questions:

Explain the differences between the two main theories of leadership. Give examples of leaders of real life.

8. Groups and Group Dynamic

Distribution of groups. Sociometry, cohesion, and group dynamics. Integration into a group. Group dynamics: Sheriff's camp at The Robbers Cave. Role identification: The Stanford Prison Experiment. Critique of Zimbardo's experiment.

Example questions:

When does it make sense to investigate the sociometric properties of a group?

9. Scientific vs. social knowledge

The social construction of reality. The story of Kitty Genovese as an example of the construction of knowledge. Scientific legends. Knowledge and social psychology.

Example questions:

What does the thesis of the narrative nature of knowledge entail? How do you think it complicates life for authors of social psychology textbooks (and the students who work with those textbooks)?

Recommended reading:

Hogg, M., & Vaughan, G. (2021). *Social Psychology*. Pearson.

Stainton-Rogers, W. (2011). *Social Psychology: Experimental and Critical Approaches*. Open University Press.

Subject: GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY

The examination requires applying knowledge from General Psychology 1 and 2 and the ability to link and integrate this knowledge with the knowledge gained in other courses of the Bachelor's degree.

1. The subject of psychology

The historical basis of psychology. Modern psychological approaches. Psychological research.

Example question:

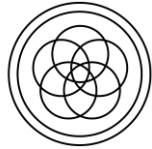
How would different psychological approaches address the question: "What are the determinants of an individual's sexual orientation?" What methods would be used in investigating this question? How do different psychological approaches define the subject and method of psychology?

2. Biological basis of psychology

Neurons. The structure of the brain. Autonomic nervous system. Endocrine system. Evolution, genes, and behavior.

Example question:

Why is the brain symmetrical (meaning that the left and right sides look alike)? We have a left and right motor cortex, a left and right hippocampus, a left and right cerebellum, and so on. In each case, the left



side is a mirror image of the right side (for example, the left eye is a mirror image of the right eye). Why is the brain symmetrical in this way?

3. Mental development

Heredity and environment. Abilities of the newborn. Cognitive development in childhood. Personality and social development. Adolescent development.

Example question:

Some theorists have claimed that there are sensitive periods for developing attachments between an infant and his/her caregiver. What would the implications of such sensitive periods be if they do exist?

4. Sensory processes

Characteristics of the sense organs. Vision. Audition. Other senses.

Example question:

In terms of evolution, explain why some animals have only cones in their eyes and why some animals, including humans, have both types of receptors.

5. Perception

What is the purpose of perception? Attention. Localization. Recognition. Abstraction. Perceptual constancies. Division of labour in the brain. The development of perception.

Example question:

What is selective attention? How does selective attention aid perception under everyday circumstances? What would be the consequences of driving a car in a city where no one had the ability to attend selectively? What kinds of accidents might occur more frequently than occur now? Would any kinds of accidents be apt to occur less frequently?

6. Consciousness

Aspects of consciousness. Sleep and dreams. Meditation. Hypnosis. Psychoactive drugs. PSI phenomena.

Example question:

Many amateur pianists memorize a piece for a recital by playing it over and over again until they can play it automatically, without paying attention to it. Unfortunately, they still often get stuck or forget parts of it during the actual recital. In contrast, some professional pianists deliberately memorize the music away from the piano, so that their 'mind, not just their fingers' knows the piece. What does this imply about automatic processes and the controlling function of consciousness?

7. Learning and conditioning

Perspectives on learning. Classical conditioning. Instrumental conditioning. Learning and cognition. Learning and the brain. Learning and motivation.

Example question:

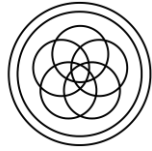
Behaviorists assert the ubiquity of learning and question whether any behavior is innate. Behaviorists claim that all behavior is learned. List the cognitive and biological factors that interfere with learning, and how they affect learning outcomes (specifically for classical conditioning and operant conditioning).

8. Memory

Sensory memory. Working memory. Long-term memory. Implicit memory. Constructive memory. Memory improvement.

Example question:

How might an increase in working memory size affect performance on a standardized comprehension test? Could you explain how working memory capacity will affect the comprehension processes that underlie performance?



9. Language and thought

Language and communication. Language development. Concepts and categorization: the building blocks of thought. Reasoning. Imaginal thought. Thinking in practice: problem solving.

Example question:

Apply knowledge of the units of language and language levels (phonemes, words, meaning, syntax, speaker's intent) to the learning of a foreign language. What is the hardest and easiest part of this process? Why?

10. Motivation

Drives and homeostasis. Incentive motivation and reward. Hunger, eating and eating disorders. Gender and sexuality.

Example question:

Homeostatic processes can produce both unconscious, automatic responses (e.g., shivering) and conscious, behavioral ones (e.g., getting under a blanket). Compare and contrast each form of motivation. Can you envision one form without the other?

11. Emotions

The components of emotions. Cognitive appraisal and emotions. Subjective experience and emotion. Thought and action tendencies and emotions. Bodily changes and emotions. Facial expression and emotion. Responses to emotion regulation. Emotions, gender, and culture. Aggression.

Example question:

Describe the six components of the emotion process. Do all six components need to be present in order to call a given experience an emotion? Why yes or why not? What might be the rationale for including responses to emotion as the sixth component?

12. Stress, health, and coping

Characteristics of stressful events. Psychological reactions to stress. Physiological reactions to stress. Psychological factors and stress responses. Coping skills. Managing stress.

Example question:

How can the environment in which a child is raised influence the development of coping strategies?

Recommended literature:

Nolen-Hoeksema, S., Fredrickson, B., Loftus, G. R., & Lutz, C. (2014). Atkinson & Hilgard's *Introduction to Psychology*. Cengage Learning.

Subject: ORGANISATIONAL AND WORK PSYCHOLOGY

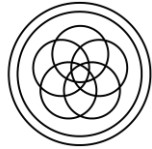
The exam requires the application of knowledge from the course Organisational and Work Psychology and ability to interconnect and integrate this knowledge with other knowledge gained in other subjects of the Bachelor study.

1. Psychology of work

The subject of work psychology (explanation using a specific example from the research or practise - areas of occupational psychology according to the British Psychological Society (BPS)). Definition towards related disciplines, e.g., social psychology, clinical psychology, sociology. Ethical principles of behaviour of occupational psychologists according to BPS when conducting research. Work trends and work psychology (changes in the world of work and their impact on work psychology).

Example question:

Explain the impact of remote work/telework on work psychology (i.e., how work psychologist can contribute to the organisation in this area).



2. Research methods of work psychology

Data collection methods (observation, archival sources, diaries, psychophysiological and psychophysical measurements, questionnaires and tests, interview, experiment). Examples of their use in research and organisational practice. Advantages and disadvantages of these methods.

Example question:

You work at AB as an occupational psychologist. The director of the company notices that the workers are not satisfied. Your task is to suggest ways to increase employee satisfaction. How would you proceed? Why?

3. Productive working behaviour

Definition of productive work behaviour. The most common forms of productive behavior -work performance and organizational citizenship behaviour/OCB. Campbell's model of work performance. Selected prerequisites for work performance (general mental ability, work experience, personality). OCB - definition, types of OCB according to Organ, assumptions of OCB (what leads workers to OCB).

Example question:

Explain the contribution of Campbell's model (its assumptions) of work performance. Specify on the example of the chosen work profession.

4. Behaviour harmful to the organisation

Definition of counterproductive work behaviour (CWB). The most common forms of CWB - insufficient work performance, absenteeism, turnover, accidents at work, theft.

Example question:

Based on research findings, explain what organizations can do about or how they can prevent absenteeism.

5. Work stress

The most common work stressors (internal factors associated with employment; roles in the organisation - role ambiguity and role conflict, role-related responsibilities; workload; interpersonal conflicts; perceived control; linking home and work; redundancies and job insecurity; emotional labour). Stress management (employee assistance programmes and stress management training; changing stressors in the workplace).

Example question:

When managing stress, should organizations focus more on employee assistance programs or on change/elimination of workplace stressors? Explain why.

6. Groups and teams

Characteristics/structure of groups (roles, norms, values, way of communication). Group weaknesses and their overcoming (social inactivity/social loafing effect and group thinking). Stages of development, group development (Tuckman model, Belbin typology of team roles). Difference between a group and a team.

Example question:

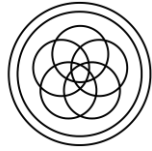
Explain the phenomenon of groupthink, as well as how it can be prevented.

7. Organisation culture

Definition. Three levels of organisational culture according to Schein. Subcultures according to Janson. Selected elements/characteristics of organisational culture (symbols and artefacts, rituals and common practise, stories, language, and communication).

Example question:

What would you look for as an occupational psychologist to quickly gain insight into the organizational culture of a particular company?



8. Motivation to work

Fundamentals of motivation, its relationship with performance. Basic theories of motivation and their application in the field of work (needs theories: Maslow, Alderfer, McClelland; cognitive theories: Adams/justice theory; Vroom / expectation theory; Locke et al./goal focus theory; Bandura / social cognitive theory; behavioural theories: Skinner et al./reinforcement theory; Ryan, Deci/theory of self-determination; work content-centric theories: Herzberg/two-factor theory, Hackman and Oldham/model of job characteristics). Restructuring of work/jobs (rotation, extension of work, enrichment of work, semi-autonomous working groups). New trends in employee motivation - empowerment and employee/work engagement.

Example question:

In high school, for good grades and attendance, students receive a voucher for a burger and fries. In your opinion, can this type of reinforcement help improve grades and attendance? What are the risks of this approach?

9. Working attitudes

Three aspects of job satisfaction as an attitude towards work. Prerequisites for job satisfaction (disposition, processing of social information, characteristics of work). Consequences of working satisfaction (relationship with other attitudes, with turnover, and with work performance). Measurement of work satisfaction (JDI, MSQ, JSS). Meyer and Allen's organisational commitment model: three components of commitment, the assumptions and consequences of the commitment. Work commitment scale / TCM employee commitment survey.

Example question:

Why should managers and organisations care about job satisfaction and commitment to organisation?

10. Leadership/leading and management

Fundamentals of leadership, the difference between a manager and a leader. Selected leadership theories (features theory, behavioral theory: Michigan studies and Ohio State University studies, managerial grid; Situational theory: Fiedler contingency theory, path-goal theory, Vroom–Yetton–Jag model, model of situational leadership, LMX model; charismatic, transformational, and transactional leadership). Influence - fundamentals, resources. Influence tactics used by leaders in organisations.

Example question:

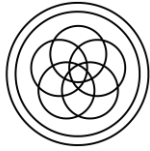
Explain the difference between leadership theories focused on leader characteristics/traits and behaviour-orientated theories.

11. Organisational change and development

Fundamentals of organisational development (OD), the reasons for its use/reasons for changes, and the contribution of Kurt Lewin. Theoretical background of OD: Lewin/Three-step model, Lewin/Model of action research, Lewin et al./Model of planned change, a critique of a planned approach to change. Emergence Theories of organizational change: Burke, Porras, and Robertson. T-groups, job redesign, MBO; at the level of groups: team building, Schein's consultation interventions; at the organizational level: feedback from research, change of organisational structure, strategic planning and "visioning"). Conditions for successful change (support of top management, consultant managing the change process, overcoming resistance to change, ownership of change).

Example question:

Explain how you would approach the problem of high workforce turnover in the company according to Lewin's model of action research.



FACULTY OF SOCIAL
AND ECONOMIC SCIENCES
Comenius University
Bratislava

Recommended literature:

- Amodt, M. (2013). *Industrial/Organizational Psychology: An Applied Approach*. Cengage.
- Armstrong, M. (2005). *A Handbook of Management and Leadership*. Kogan Page.
- Cantore, S., & Passmore, J. (2012). *Top Business Psychology Models*. Kogan Page.
- Drucker, P. F. (2007). *The Effective Executive*. Elsevier.
- Laloux, F. (2014). *Reinventing Organizations*. Nelson Parker.
- Stack, J. (2013). *The Great Game of Business*. Profile Books.