AP Psychology – Social Psychology Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide

BY EXAMZIFY

Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

• Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
• Improve accuracy and speed,
• Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
• Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Don't worry about getting everything right, your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations, and take breaks to retain information better.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning.

7. Use Other Tools

Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly — adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

1. **Which type of love is primarily characterized by emotional closeness and friendship?**

   A. Infatuation

   B. Companionate Love

   C. Passionate Love

   D. Consummate Love

2. **Which of the following describes an understood rule for expected behavior in society?**

   A. Norm

   B. Social Facilitation

   C. Group Polarization

   D. Informational Social Influence

3. **What is the phenomenon called when people perform better on simple tasks in the presence of others?**

   A. Social Facilitation

   B. Groupthink

   C. Social Loafing

   D. Deindividuation

4. **In the context of social dilemmas, what does the term 'commons' refer to?**

   A. A shared resource that is limited

   B. A type of cooperative game

   C. The psychological concept of social norm

   D. A category of interpersonal relationships

5. **Which term refers to the mode of thinking where the desire for harmony in a group overrides realistic appraisal?**

   A. Groupthink

   B. Deindividuation

   C. Social Facilitation

   D. Culture

6. **What are shared goals called that can help override differences and require cooperation among conflicting groups?**

   A. Superordinate Goals

   B. Ethnocentricism

   C. Social Responsibility Norm

   D. Graduated and Reciprocated Initiatives

7. **Which theory suggests that prejudice provides an outlet for anger by placing blame?**

   A. Scapegoat Theory

   B. Just-World Phenomenon

   C. Ingroup Bias

   D. Sentiment Theory

8. **What do we call those perceived as different or apart from our ingroup?**

   A. Ingroup

   B. Stereotype

   C. Outgroup

   D. Prejudice

9. **Which theory posits that our social behavior is an exchange process aimed at maximizing benefits while minimizing costs?**

   A. Mere Exposure Effect

   B. Social Exchange Theory

   C. Frustration-Aggression Principle

   D. Companionate Love

10. **What occurs in group discussions leading to more extreme positions amongst group members?**

    A. Social Facilitation

    B. Group Polarization

    C. Deindividuation

    D. Norm

Answers

1. B
2. A
3. A
4. A
5. A
6. A
7. A
8. C
9. B
10. B

Explanations

1. Which type of love is primarily characterized by emotional closeness and friendship?

A. Infatuation

B. Companionate Love

C. Passionate Love

D. Consummate Love

Companionate love is characterized by emotional closeness, friendship, and a deep bond that often develops between individuals who share a strong connection. This type of love typically emphasizes mutual respect, trust, and understanding, allowing individuals to support each other emotionally. It often evolves in long-term relationships where physical attraction may wane but the sense of companionship and intimacy remains strong. This type of love plays a crucial role in maintaining long-lasting relationships, as it focuses on the interpersonal aspects that build a solid foundation for a partnership. Unlike passionate love, which is more about intense arousal and attraction, companionate love is rooted in the emotional commitment and companionship that partners provide each other. Thus, it is essential in fostering sustained relationships beyond the initial phases of infatuation or sexual chemistry.

2. Which of the following describes an understood rule for expected behavior in society?

A. Norm

B. Social Facilitation

C. Group Polarization

D. Informational Social Influence

The term that describes an understood rule for expected behavior in society is "norm." Norms are the unwritten rules that govern the behavior of individuals within a group or society. They dictate how people are expected to behave in various situations, influencing everything from social interactions to cultural practices. Norms help maintain order and create predictability in social environments, allowing individuals to understand what is acceptable and expected in given contexts. For instance, in many cultures, it is a norm to greet someone when you meet them, which facilitates social interaction and cohesion. Norms can vary greatly between different societies and may also change over time as cultural values evolve. This understanding of norms highlights their importance in shaping human behavior and interactions within social groups.

3. What is the phenomenon called when people perform better on simple tasks in the presence of others?

A. Social Facilitation

B. Groupthink

C. Social Loafing

D. Deindividuation

The phenomenon where individuals perform better on simple tasks when in the presence of others is known as social facilitation. This concept is grounded in the idea that the presence of an audience or other people can enhance an individual's performance, especially on tasks that are well-practiced or simple. The presence of others can lead to increased arousal, which may help an individual focus and accomplish tasks more effectively. Social facilitation contrasts with situations such as social loafing, where individuals exert less effort in group tasks, and groupthink, which refers to a phenomenon where a group prioritizes consensus over critical evaluation of alternatives, potentially leading to poor decision-making. Deindividuation involves a loss of self-awareness in group settings and can lead to behavior that individuals might not engage in alone. All these terms describe different aspects of social interactions, but they do not capture the effect of improved performance in the presence of others that social facilitation describes.

4. In the context of social dilemmas, what does the term 'commons' refer to?

A. A shared resource that is limited

B. A type of cooperative game

C. The psychological concept of social norm

D. A category of interpersonal relationships

The term 'commons' in the context of social dilemmas refers to a shared resource that is limited. This concept is crucial in understanding how individuals may behave in relation to collective goods. In a 'commons' scenario, each individual has access to a resource that is available to all, such as fisheries, water sources, or grazing land. However, because this resource is limited, overuse or exploitation by one individual can lead to depletion, ultimately harming the group as a whole. The dilemma arises as individuals face the temptation to maximize their own benefits, often at the expense of the group's sustainability. Therefore, the concept of commons highlights the challenge of balancing individual interests with the well-being of the community, illustrating the conflicts that can occur when individuals prioritize personal gain over collective responsibility. This makes the understanding of 'commons' foundational for discussions surrounding resource management and cooperative behavior in social psychology.

5. Which term refers to the mode of thinking where the desire for harmony in a group overrides realistic appraisal?

A. Groupthink

B. Deindividuation

C. Social Facilitation

D. Culture

The term that refers to the mode of thinking where the desire for harmony in a group supersedes realistic appraisal is groupthink. This phenomenon occurs when group members prioritize consensus and cohesion over independent critical thinking and realistic evaluation of alternative viewpoints. In situations characterized by groupthink, members may suppress dissenting opinions or fail to consider potential risks, leading to poor decision-making outcomes. Groupthink can often result from a strong desire to maintain the group's solidarity, where individuals may prioritize fitting in with the group over their own beliefs or concerns. This can create an illusion of unanimity, misguiding the group into thinking they have reached a sound consensus. Understanding groupthink is crucial for recognizing how decision-making can be adversely affected in group settings, particularly in high-stakes situations where diverse perspectives are vital for effective solutions.

6. What are shared goals called that can help override differences and require cooperation among conflicting groups?

A. Superordinate Goals

B. Ethnocentricism

C. Social Responsibility Norm

D. Graduated and Reciprocated Initiatives

Shared goals that can help override differences and require cooperation among conflicting groups are known as superordinate goals. These goals bring groups together by focusing their efforts on a common objective that is more important than their individual differences. The concept was prominently discussed in social psychology through the Robbers Cave Experiment, where two groups of boys with conflicting interests were able to resolve their hostilities by working together towards a shared goal, such as restoring water supply to their camp. Superordinate goals are effective because they shift the focus from competing interests and hostility towards collaboration and joint action. This fosters an environment where individuals or groups can see the benefits of working together, leading to reduced prejudice and improved relationships across conflicting parties. The other concepts mentioned do not encapsulate this idea of leveraging shared goals to promote cooperation among conflicting groups. Ethnocentrism refers to evaluating other cultures based on one's own cultural norms, which can exacerbate differences. The social responsibility norm describes the expectation that people help those dependent on them, but it does not emphasize shared goals. Graduated and reciprocated initiatives involve stepwise approaches to conflict resolution, but they do not specifically highlight the role of superordinate goals in bridging group divides.

7. Which theory suggests that prejudice provides an outlet for anger by placing blame?

A. Scapegoat Theory

B. Just-World Phenomenon

C. Ingroup Bias

D. Sentiment Theory

Scapegoat Theory posits that prejudice serves as a mechanism for individuals to channel their frustration and anger toward a specific group, thereby providing a convenient target for their frustrations. This theory is grounded in the idea that when people experience difficulties or hardships, they may seek to attribute their stressors to those they perceive as different or weaker. By blaming an outgroup, individuals can alleviate their own feelings of discomfort and maintain their self-esteem at the expense of others, who are unjustly scapegoated for larger societal challenges or personal misfortunes. This process can lead to increased hostility towards the targeted group and reinforces societal stereotypes and biases.   In contrast, the Just-World Phenomenon suggests that people have a tendency to believe that the world is fair and that individuals typically get what they deserve, which doesn't express the outlet of anger aspect. Ingroup Bias centers on the preference for one's own group over others but does not directly address the use of prejudice as a coping mechanism for anger. Sentiment Theory is not a widely recognized concept within social psychology and does not relate directly to the dynamics of anger and prejudice in the same way as Scapegoat Theory does.

8. What do we call those perceived as different or apart from our ingroup?

A. Ingroup

B. Stereotype

C. Outgroup

D. Prejudice

The term that refers to individuals or groups perceived as different or apart from one's own group (the ingroup) is "outgroup." Ingroup refers to the social group with which an individual identifies, often characterized by a sense of belonging and shared characteristics, values, or interests. In contrast, outgroup members are typically viewed as outsiders or others who do not share those same traits. This distinction plays a significant role in social psychology as it can lead to various interpersonal dynamics, including bias, discrimination, and stereotyping. Understanding the concept of outgroup helps illuminate social behaviors and attitudes in contexts such as intergroup conflict and cohesion. The dynamics between ingroup and outgroup can greatly influence social perception and interaction.

9. Which theory posits that our social behavior is an exchange process aimed at maximizing benefits while minimizing costs?

A. Mere Exposure Effect

B. Social Exchange Theory

C. Frustration-Aggression Principle

D. Companionate Love

Social Exchange Theory is centered on the idea that human relationships are a form of economic transaction. According to this theory, individuals evaluate their interactions and relationships based on the perceived costs and benefits. The fundamental premise is that people engage in social behavior with the goal of maximizing their rewards (such as emotional support, companionship, or resources) and minimizing their costs (such as time, effort, or emotional distress). This perspective suggests that individuals will strive for relationships and interactions that offer them the greatest net positive outcome. In practical terms, when individuals consider entering or maintaining a relationship, they weigh the positives, such as love, companionship, and support, against potential negatives, like conflict, time commitment, or personal sacrifice. This decision-making process aligns with the principles of rational choice theory, where choices are made based on perceived utility. The other options relate to different concepts in social psychology. For instance, the Mere Exposure Effect refers to the phenomenon where people tend to develop a preference for things merely because they are familiar with them. The Frustration-Aggression Principle is concerned with the idea that frustration can lead to aggressive behavior. Companionate Love focuses on deep, affectionate attachment between partners rather than a cost-benefit analysis of relationships. Thus, Social Exchange Theory is

10. What occurs in group discussions leading to more extreme positions amongst group members?

A. Social Facilitation

B. Group Polarization

C. Deindividuation

D. Norm

Group polarization occurs when individuals in a group discussion move toward a more extreme position than they initially held after sharing their views. This phenomenon can be attributed to several key processes. First, when people gather to discuss a topic, they tend to hear other members' opinions that reinforce their own beliefs. As a result, they become more confident in their views and may adopt more extreme stances. Additionally, the concept of persuasive arguments plays a critical role. During discussions, group members present arguments that support their views, which can collectively shift the group's perspective further in one direction. The dynamics of group identity can further enhance polarization, as members may feel pressure to align their opinions with the majority to maintain a sense of belonging. In summary, group polarization explains how group interactions can lead to more extreme beliefs and decisions, reflecting the influence of shared discussions and the reinforcement of individual viewpoints within the group context.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

https://appsychsocialpsych.examzify.com

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!