

AP Psychology - Social Psychology Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



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. 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.

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. 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

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- 1. What does the definition of social proof imply about human behavior?**
 - A. People rarely look to others for guidance**
 - B. In uncertain situations, individuals tend to follow the crowd**
 - C. Individuals are always self-sufficient in decision-making**
 - D. Groupthink prevents individual judgment**

- 2. What cognitive bias involves the overestimation of the number of people who share our beliefs?**
 - A. False Consensus Effect**
 - B. Confirmation Bias**
 - C. Groupthink**
 - D. Self-Serving Bias**

- 3. Which type of love encompasses passion, intimacy, and commitment according to Sternberg?**
 - A. Romantic Love**
 - B. Companionate Love**
 - C. Consummate Love**
 - D. Infatuation**

- 4. Why is empathy training important in reducing prejudice?**
 - A. It leads to increased judgments**
 - B. It helps individuals connect with others' experiences**
 - C. It encourages detachment from others' feelings**
 - D. It promotes prejudiced attitudes**

- 5. In social psychology, which term describes negative feelings towards a group or its members?**
 - A. Discrimination**
 - B. Prejudice**
 - C. Ingroup Bias**
 - D. Aggression**

- 6. Which of the following are three key components of attitude?**
- A. Affective, cognitive, and emotional components**
 - B. Affective, behavioral, and cognitive components**
 - C. Fundamental, perceptual, and emotional components**
 - D. Situational, behavioral, and evaluative components**
- 7. Who is known for explaining behaviors based on a person's internal characteristics or traits?**
- A. Leon Festinger**
 - B. Stanley Milgram**
 - C. Phillip Zimbardo**
 - D. Walter Mischel**
- 8. What does the concept of social proof entail?**
- A. The belief that one is correct if others are also doing it**
 - B. The tendency to seek evidence before making decisions**
 - C. The inclination to follow others in ambiguous situations for guidance**
 - D. The notion that individual choice is always more reliable**
- 9. What effect is demonstrated when groups make decisions that are riskier than the individuals would make alone?**
- A. Group Polarization**
 - B. Deindividuation**
 - C. Social Loafing**
 - D. Compliance**
- 10. Which term describes the balance between what individuals contribute to and receive from a relationship?**
- A. Companionate Love**
 - B. Equity**
 - C. Mere Exposure Effect**
 - D. Frustration-Aggression Principle**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What does the definition of social proof imply about human behavior?

- A. People rarely look to others for guidance**
- B. In uncertain situations, individuals tend to follow the crowd**
- C. Individuals are always self-sufficient in decision-making**
- D. Groupthink prevents individual judgment**

The definition of social proof highlights how individuals often look to the behavior of others, particularly in uncertain or ambiguous situations, to guide their own actions. This phenomenon can be observed in various scenarios, such as when people are unsure how to behave in a new environment or when making decisions that involve risk. The idea is that if many people are engaging in a specific behavior or holding a certain opinion, individuals may assume that this behavior or belief is the correct one. This tendency can be particularly pronounced in situations where the appropriate behavior is not clear, leading individuals to conform to the majority. Thus, social proof reflects an inherent aspect of human behavior where we seek assurance in the actions of others to navigate social situations effectively.

2. What cognitive bias involves the overestimation of the number of people who share our beliefs?

- A. False Consensus Effect**
- B. Confirmation Bias**
- C. Groupthink**
- D. Self-Serving Bias**

The cognitive bias that involves the overestimation of the number of people who share our beliefs is known as the False Consensus Effect. This phenomenon occurs because individuals often project their own opinions, values, and behaviors onto others, leading to the assumption that these are more widely held than they actually are. For instance, if someone strongly believes in a particular political stance, they might assume that most other people also hold that same belief, which can reinforce their confidence in their views and reduce exposure to opposing perspectives. This effect can have significant implications in social interactions and discussions, as it may create echo chambers where only similar viewpoints are acknowledged and discussed, thereby inhibiting open dialogue and critical thinking about contrasting ideas. In contrast, Confirmation Bias refers to the tendency to search for or interpret information in a way that confirms one's preexisting beliefs, rather than overestimating the consensus around them. Groupthink involves a group's tendency to strive for consensus at the expense of critical thinking and individual opinions, leading to flawed decision-making. Self-Serving Bias is the habit of attributing positive outcomes to oneself while blaming negative outcomes on external factors, which does not directly relate to the perception of others' beliefs.

3. Which type of love encompasses passion, intimacy, and commitment according to Sternberg?

- A. Romantic Love**
- B. Companionate Love**
- C. Consummate Love**
- D. Infatuation**

Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love identifies three fundamental components of love: passion, intimacy, and commitment. When these three components are combined, they form consummate love, which is considered the most complete form of love. Passion refers to the physical attraction and emotional arousal that partners feel toward each other. Intimacy involves feelings of closeness, connectedness, and bondedness that develop over time as partners share personal thoughts and experiences. Commitment is the decision to maintain a long-term relationship and the willingness to work through challenges together. Consummate love is characterized by the presence of all three of these elements, making it a well-rounded and fulfilling type of love. It represents the ideal relationship where partners not only experience romantic feelings but also establish a deep emotional connection and a commitment to each other's wellbeing. This is why the answer is considered accurate in the context of Sternberg's framework.

4. Why is empathy training important in reducing prejudice?

- A. It leads to increased judgments**
- B. It helps individuals connect with others' experiences**
- C. It encourages detachment from others' feelings**
- D. It promotes prejudiced attitudes**

Empathy training is important in reducing prejudice because it helps individuals connect with the experiences and emotions of others. By learning to understand and share the feelings of people from different backgrounds, individuals are more likely to recognize the common humanity that exists among diverse groups. This deeper connection can break down barriers and stereotypes, foster mutual respect, and enhance positive interactions. As individuals practice empathy, they often find that their preconceived notions and unfounded biases are challenged, leading to a reduction in prejudiced attitudes and behaviors. This emotional engagement is crucial in promoting inclusivity and understanding in society.

5. In social psychology, which term describes negative feelings towards a group or its members?

- A. Discrimination**
- B. Prejudice**
- C. Ingroup Bias**
- D. Aggression**

The term that describes negative feelings towards a group or its members is prejudice. Prejudice refers to an unjustified or incorrect attitude (usually negative) towards an individual based solely on their membership in a group. This can encompass a range of emotions, from disdain or fear to hostility. It is often based on stereotypes or generalized beliefs about the group rather than direct experience with individuals from that group. In contrast, discrimination refers to the behavior or actions that result in unfair treatment of individuals based on their group membership. While related, discrimination is an action stemming from prejudice. Ingroup bias refers to a tendency to favor one's own group over others, which can contribute to prejudicial feelings but does not directly define negative feelings towards an outgroup. Aggression refers to behaviors that are intended to cause harm or pain to others, which may or may not be influenced by prejudicial attitudes. Thus, the correct identification of prejudice specifically captures the essence of negative feelings toward a group or its members.

6. Which of the following are three key components of attitude?

- A. Affective, cognitive, and emotional components**
- B. Affective, behavioral, and cognitive components**
- C. Fundamental, perceptual, and emotional components**
- D. Situational, behavioral, and evaluative components**

The three key components of attitude are indeed the affective, behavioral, and cognitive components. The affective component refers to the emotional response or feelings that an individual has toward an object, person, or situation. The behavioral component involves the way the attitude influences a person's actions or behaviors. Lastly, the cognitive component pertains to the beliefs, thoughts, and ideas that an individual holds about an attitude object. This combination illustrates how attitudes are not just feelings but are also tied to our beliefs and can influence our behaviors, thereby creating a comprehensive understanding of how attitudes function in social psychology. Together, these three components help psychologists to analyze how attitudes form, change, and affect our interactions with the world.

7. Who is known for explaining behaviors based on a person's internal characteristics or traits?

- A. Leon Festinger**
- B. Stanley Milgram**
- C. Phillip Zimbardo**
- D. Walter Mischel**

The correct answer pertains to the concept of personality and how it influences behaviors. Leon Festinger is prominent for his work on cognitive dissonance, which examines how individuals strive for consistency between their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. While Festinger is known primarily for his theories on cognitive consistency, his research laid a significant foundation for understanding how internal characteristics, such as beliefs and attitudes, can shape one's actions. In contrast, the other figures mentioned are credited with different aspects of psychology. Stanley Milgram is best recognized for his obedience studies, which highlight the influence of situational factors on behavior rather than personality traits. Phillip Zimbardo is famous for the Stanford prison experiment, focusing on situational influences on behavior as well. Walter Mischel is noted for his critiques of traditional personality theories and emphasized that behavior is often contingent on situational contexts rather than enduring internal traits. Thus, Festinger's contributions can be related to an understanding of how internal characteristics or traits affect behavior, aligning him with the explanation of behaviors based on personal traits.

8. What does the concept of social proof entail?

- A. The belief that one is correct if others are also doing it**
- B. The tendency to seek evidence before making decisions**
- C. The inclination to follow others in ambiguous situations for guidance**
- D. The notion that individual choice is always more reliable**

The concept of social proof refers to the tendency to look to others for guidance in situations where the correct action or decision is uncertain. This phenomenon occurs especially in ambiguous situations where individuals are unsure about how to behave or what choice to make; they observe the behavior of their peers and conform to it, assuming that the group's actions reflect a correct or acceptable response. This behavior can be explained by the human tendency to seek validation from others, particularly in unfamiliar circumstances. For instance, if you are in a new city and see a crowd gathering at a certain restaurant, you might choose to join that crowd, assuming that the restaurant is a good choice based on the number of people present. People often feel reassured and are more confident in their decisions when they see others making the same choices. In contrast, the other choices highlight different social psychological concepts. While the belief that one's correctness is validated by the consensus of others is related, it does not fully capture the active component of seeking guidance in ambiguity. The notion of seeking evidence before making decisions leans towards critical thinking and rational decision-making rather than the social influence aspect of social proof. Lastly, the idea that individual choice is always more reliable contradicts the very notion of social proof, as it disregards

9. What effect is demonstrated when groups make decisions that are riskier than the individuals would make alone?

A. Group Polarization

B. Deindividuation

C. Social Loafing

D. Compliance

Group polarization occurs when a group discussion leads members to adopt more extreme positions than they initially held, often resulting in riskier decisions than any individual might choose on their own. This phenomenon can be attributed to several psychological factors. When individuals discuss their views with like-minded others, they tend to become more confident in their opinions and may push each other toward more extreme stances. The group dynamic can amplify feelings of camaraderie and validation, leading members to take greater risks collectively. In contrast, deindividuation refers to the loss of self-awareness in group situations, which may lead to uninhibited behavior but does not specifically account for the riskier decision-making process. Social loafing describes the tendency for individuals to exert less effort when working in a group compared to working alone, which is not directly related to risk-taking in decisions. Compliance involves yielding to social pressure or authority, which likewise does not focus on the group's decision-making tendencies regarding risk. Thus, the phenomenon of groups often opting for riskier choices than individuals would alone is best captured by the concept of group polarization.

10. Which term describes the balance between what individuals contribute to and receive from a relationship?

A. Companionate Love

B. Equity

C. Mere Exposure Effect

D. Frustration-Aggression Principle

The term that describes the balance between what individuals contribute to and receive from a relationship is known as equity. In social psychology, the concept of equity suggests that individuals in a relationship seek a fair distribution of benefits and contributions. This means that both partners should feel that they are receiving rewards proportional to what they are putting into the relationship, creating a sense of fairness and satisfaction. Equity theory posits that when people perceive an imbalance, where one partner feels they are giving more than they are receiving, dissatisfaction can result. This dissatisfaction may lead to conflict or even the dissolution of the relationship in extreme cases. Therefore, achieving a sense of equity is crucial for maintaining healthy and enduring relationships. The other terms listed do not capture this balance concept. Companionate love refers to a deep affection and commitment to a partner. The mere exposure effect describes how people tend to develop a preference for things merely because they are familiar with them. The frustration-aggression principle explains how frustration can lead to aggressive behavior, which is not directly related to the balance of give-and-take in relationships.

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!

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