8.2 Applying Issues and Debates to Conformity and Obedience Research: Test Pack

AQA 7182 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

At least six answers must be written in full sentences. Total time suggested 15 minutes. The final 16-mark question must be answered in full sentences and structured paragraphs.

1 State one ethical concern and its relevance to participant welfare in Zimbardo's simulated prison study.

(Total for Question 1 is 2 marks)

2 In Asch-type conformity research participants were deceived about the purpose of the line-judgement task. Analyse one ethical implication of that deception in terms of social sensitivity and potential public reaction to the research.

(Total for Question 2 is 3 marks)

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3 Identify two ways that researchers can reduce social sensitivity when publishing findings about conformity and obedience, giving a brief reason for each in the research publication context.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

4 Priya works in a team where everyone overestimates customer demand. She privately believes the figure is lower but reports the higher estimate aloud to fit in. Using the free will versus determinism debate, explain one deterministic explanation and one free will explanation for Priya's behaviour in this conformity context.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 8.2 Applying Issues and Debates to Conformity and Obedience Research: Test Pack

Question 1

identifies a relevant ethical concern, e.g. psychological harm or insufficient protection of participants in the simulated prison context	**B1**
briefly links it to welfare, e.g. participants experienced severe stress so they were not adequately protected	**B1**

Answer: Psychological harm: several prisoners experienced severe stress in the simulated prison and were not adequately protected from harm.

Question 2

identifies the deception used in Asch-type studies in the conformity context	**M1**
explains an implication for social sensitivity, e.g. the research could be criticised for manipulating trust or for portraying people as gullible	**M1**
analyses likely public reaction or policy consequence, e.g. negative public reaction might reduce willingness to participate in future research or influence guidelines on informed consent	**A1**

Answer: Deception about the true purpose of the line-judgement task means participants were misled; this raises social sensitivity because it can portray people as gullible and may provoke public criticism, reducing trust in psychologists and making ethical guidelines on informed consent stricter.

Question 3

identifies first way, e.g. careful anonymisation of participant details	**M1**
explains reason, e.g. protects individuals and reduces risk of stigma or identification	**A1**
identifies second way, e.g. emphasising limitations and cautious language when generalising to whole groups or cultures	**M1**
explains reason, e.g. prevents overgeneralisation that could stigmatise populations or be misused in public discourse	**A1**

Answer: Anonymise participant details to prevent identification and stigma, and use cautious language emphasising limitations when generalising findings to whole groups, to avoid reinforcing stereotypes or misuse of the research.

Question 4

deterministic explanation: situational determinism example, e.g. social pressure from the unanimous group leads Priya to conform irrespective of her private view	**M1**
explains why this is deterministic, e.g. behaviour seen as caused by external social forces not her choice	**A1**
free will explanation: Priya chooses to present the higher figure to avoid conflict or to gain approval, exercising agency	**M1**
explains implication, e.g. this preserves individual responsibility and suggests interventions could target decision making	**A1**

Answer: Deterministic: situational determinism - the unanimous social pressure in the team causes Priya to conform, implying external forces drive her behaviour. Free will: Priya actively chooses to give the higher estimate to avoid conflict or be accepted, so her agency and responsibility explain her action.

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