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Summary of the Debates

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Nature/nurture** | |
| **Nature**   * Behaviour caused by innate characteristics * Determinist - all behaviour is inherited   **Strengths**   * Objective methods used * Can show cause & effect   **Weaknesses**   * No control over own behaviour * Reductionist | **Nurture**   * Behaviour is **determined by the environment**   **Strengths**   * Allows for intervention programmes. * Wide range of research methods used   **Weaknesses**   * Reductionist * Harder to establish cause and effect |
| **Freewill/Determinism** | |
| **Determinism assumes that:**   * behaviour controlled by forces outside your control * Behaviour is predictable. * Behaviour is controllable.   **Strengths**   * Emphasis on cause and effect * Encourages interventions / therapies   **Weaknesses**   * Ignores free will over behaviour * Behaviour is too complex and variable * Doesn’t blame people for their behaviour | **Free will assumes that a person:**   * has control over their behaviour * is responsible for their own actions. * behaviour is not predictable.   **Strengths**   * Individual responsibility. * Emphasis on the individual. * Suggests behaviour is free   **Weaknesses**   * Unscientific - behaviour can’t be predicted or objectively measured * No clear definition of the term ‘free will’ |
| **Reductionism/Holism** | |
| **Reductionism**   * All psychological can be reduced to simple parts. * Claims behaviour is predictable as it is determined by one factor.   **Strengths**   * Allows detailed look at components that affect behaviour. * Explains certain types of behaviours * Scientific and open to testing.   **Weaknesses**   * Over simplifies complex behaviours. * Ignores other factors affecting behaviour. | **Holism**   * Looks at the whole picture/ individual * Useful when studying individuals   **Strengths**   * Looks at everything that may impact on behaviour. * Considers more than one cause.   **Weaknesses**   * Non- scientific. * Does not explain mental illness adequately. * Over complicates behaviours which may have a simple explanation |
| **Individual/Situational Explanation** | |
| **Situational =** Environment causes behaviour (e.g.; upbringing, poverty)  **Strengths**   * Suggests that behaviour is predictable so cause and effect can be found. * Behaviour can be changed by improving one’s environment.   **Weaknesses**   * Reductionist * Tends to rely on observations | **Individual =** Behaviour caused by a feature of the person (e.g. personality, genes)  **Strengths**   * Free will - gives people the responsibility to change themselves. * Holism: Takes into account individual differences   **Weaknesses**   * Difficulties generalising * Reductionist |
| **Usefulness of Research =** research is useful if it (D.R.U.G.V.)   * **develops** therapies, interventions, preventative action or treatments * provokes further **research** in the field * progresses **understanding** beyond previous findings * is **generalisable** to a wide population * is **valid** so that results are accurate | |
| **Ethical Considerations**  Consent**,** Debrief, Confidentiality, Deception, Right to withdraw, Protection from Harm | |
| **Conducting Socially Sensitive Research =** Socially sensitive research can S.C.A.R.  Subject to social norms Controversial Able to shape the law / policy Risking stereotyping and prejudice | |
| **Psychology as a science**  Falsifiable, Objective, Replicable, Quantitative data, Experiment | |
| **Ethnocentrism**   * **Severe ethnocentrism**: belief that one’s own group (ethnic, social, cultural) is the most important * **Softer ethnocentrism**: people from 1 certain culture find it difficult to think outside their own cultural experience * **Sampling** may lack generalisability * **Research design / conclusions** may makes sense to their own cultural group, but may have little meaning to other cultural groups.   **Studying ethnocentrism h**elps to understand and prevent discrimination | |

Nature / nurture

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| --- | --- |
| **Nature/nurture** | |
| **Nature**   * Behaviour caused by innate characteristics * Determinist - all behaviour is inherited   **Strengths**   * Objective methods used * Can show cause & effect   **Weaknesses**   * No control over own behaviour * Reductionist | **Nurture**   * Behaviour is **determined by the environment**   **Strengths**   * Allows for intervention programmes. * Wide range of research methods used   **Weaknesses**   * Reductionist * Harder to establish cause and effect |

Outline what is meant by the nature / nurture debate in psychology. Use examples of research to illustrate your answer. [6]

Writing structure

1. **Point** about the nature side of the debate
2. **Explanation** of this
3. **Example** of a study (Core or Key) which shows this
4. **Point** about the nurture side of the debate
5. **Explanation** of this
6. **Example** of a study (Core or Key) which shows this

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Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of claiming that behaviour is only due to nurture. Support your answer with reference to core studies. [8]

Writing structure

1. State a **strength** of taking the nurture view.
2. **Explain** thispoint
3. **Example** of a Core study which shows this
4. **Conclude** why this point matters / ishelpful
5. State a **weakness** of taking the nurture view.
6. **Explain** thispoint
7. **Example** of ANOTHER Core study which shows this
8. **Conclude** why this point matters / is a problem

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Which of the Areas and Perspectives are Interactionist?

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Explanation | Core / Key Study to illustrate |
| Social area |  |  |
| Cognitive area |  |  |
| Developmental area |  |  |
| Biological area | **Interactionist** as some researchers suggests that biology affects behaviour and behaviour affects biology, such as research into **brain plasticity**.  The **diathesis stress model** is used when looking at the Medical Model’s genetic explanation of behaviour. Genes **predispose** the behaviour and life events **precipitate** the behaviour. | **Core studies: Blakemore and Cooper, Maguire** show that behaviour and upbringing affect the brain’s structure and activity due to brain plasticity.  **Research: Caspi** shows that aggression will only occur when there is childhood abuse AND the variant MAOA gene. |
| Individual differences area |  |  |
| Behaviourist perspective |  |  |
| Psychodynamic perspective |  |  |

Comparing the Debates

1. **Free Will / Determinism**

Determinism can be linked to nature because both focus on establishing cause and effect, particularly when investigating genetics. Nurture also tends to be deterministic as behaviourist research believes that factors in the environment can be isolated and understood to be directly causing behaviour.

1. **Reductionism / Holism**

The nature view is reductionist because it focuses on establishing cause and effect, particularly when investigating genetics. Nurture also tends to be reductionist as it suggests that upbringing and the environment directly cause behaviour, and this ignores the impact of personality.

1. **Individual / Situational Explanations**

Individual explanations are usually interactionist, behaviour is innate and also developed through nurture. Situational explanations assume that the environment determines behaviour and therefore the nurture side of the nature/nurture debate is favoured.

1. **Usefulness**

The nature view is useful as it allows for nomothetic treatments to be designed. The nurture view is useful in generating treatments which can be used by parents & schools.

1. **Ethics**

Taking the nature view has the danger of causing psychological harm due to the implications research may have such as suggesting genetic causes of behaviour which a person can do nothing about. Taking the nurture view may cause psychological harm as it may blame mental health / crime on a poor upbringing

1. **Socially Sensitive Research**

A lot of socially sensitive research is about the genetic basis of behaviour and so is the nature side of debate.

1. **Psych as a Science**

The nature view links with Psychology as a science because it wants behaviour to be predictable and uses a scientific approach to explain human behaviour.

Discuss **one** similarity and **one** difference between the nature / nurture debate and the individual / situational differences debate. [8]

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Writing structure

1. Similarity : State a similarity **point of comparison**
2. **Explain** this point
3. **Link** this to the nature / nurture debate
4. **Link** this to the individual / situational debate
5. Differences : State a **point of comparison** which shows a difference
6. **Explain** this point
7. **Link** this to the nature / nurture debate
8. **Link** this to the individual / situational debate

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Free Will / Determinism

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| --- | --- |
| **Freewill/Determinism** | |
| **Determinism assumes that:**   * behaviour controlled by forces outside your control * Behaviour is predictable. * Behaviour is controllable.   **Strengths**   * Emphasis on cause and effect * Encourages interventions / therapies   **Weaknesses**   * Ignores free will over behaviour * Behaviour is too complex and variable * Doesn’t blame people for their behaviour | **Free will assumes that a person:**   * has control over their behaviour * is responsible for their own actions. * behaviour is not predictable.   **Strengths**   * Individual responsibility. * Emphasis on the individual. * Suggests behaviour is free   **Weaknesses**   * Unscientific - behaviour can’t be predicted or objectively measured * No clear definition of the term ‘free will’ |

Outline what is meant by the free will / determinism debate in psychology. Use examples of research to illustrate your answer. [6]

Writing structure

1. **Point** about the free will side of the debate
2. **Explanation** of this
3. **Example** of a study (Core or Key) which shows this
4. **Point** about the determinism side of the debate
5. **Explanation** of this
6. **Example** of a study (Core or Key) which shows this

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| **Strengths** | **Study Examples** |
| Having deterministic views helps the world to be more understandable and predictable(criterion validity) | **Criterion Validity - Core Study: Baron Cohen** – People with autism lack a ToM and will have difficulty in understanding the emotions from the eyes. Without any intervention to support them in acquiring this understanding, they will always have difficulties with ‘reading the eyes’ |
| Determinism is very scientific in this sense that it tries to highlight certain factors have an influence. This makes this debate more acceptable in society with its explanations and scientific basis. | **Key study – Gottesman’s** research allows people to have confidence in a genetic explanation of specific behaviours to help avoid these (such as schizophrenia and bipolar depression).  **Core study – Milgram’s** research identifies the situational factors that cause obedience (authority figures, agentic state, prestigious uni, etc.) and this is helpful to identify cause and effect, to allow people in society to feel confident in using this research to ensure behaviour that is desired. For example, to reduce crime through making the environment look like it belongs to someone of a higher status, to encourage obedience in school, by teachers wearing gowns, etc.  **Core study – Casey’s** research shows that low delayers will always struggle with delay of gratification, so if it is seen in young children, training can occur to help change this. |
| **Weaknesses:** | **Study Examples** |
| An extreme determinist would say that free will in an illusion – we think we have choice, but we do not. Therefore how could we punish others if it wasn’t their fault? | **Key study: Zimbardo** – the situation causes the behaviour, so prison should be for rehabilitation and not punishment.  **Key Study: Raine** would suggest that different levels of activity in the brain correlates with the violent behaviour (murder with the NGRI defence). Raine is insistent that people still have a choice in their crimes and they cannot distance themselves from their actions.  **Core study: Hancock** would suggest that whilst psychopaths use subordinating conjunctions (I did it because …) and make reference to the lower needs of Maslow’s hierarchy (food, drink, pleasure), they were found guilty of the homicides and are responsible for the actions they took. |
| Determinism can never fully explain behaviour because behaviour is far too complex and a deterministic view is often a reductionist one. | **Core study – Sperry’s** research is too simplistic in saying that the left hemisphere controls language and the right hemisphere controls recognition. Without studying the Ps before the commisurotomy, he cannot be so deterministic to say that the corpus callosum being severed caused the behaviour, as it could well have been individual differences in his small sample or prior brain damage due to the severe epilepsy of his Ps. |

Which of the Areas and Perspectives take the Deterministic view?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Explanation | Core / Key Study to illustrate |
| Social area |  |  |
| Cognitive area |  |  |
| Developmental area | Often the developmental area tends to assume that all children follow the same developmental pathway. This is deterministic and ignores individual differences and if applied in a rigid manner, may not be helpful for children. | **Core Study: Kohlberg** – a few boys’ responses were forced to fit his idea of a stage model – that no adults in Stage-4 had been through Stage-6, but all Stage-6 adults had gone through at least Stage-4. Without further longitudinal work, Kohlberg cannot prove that some of his Ps did not jump a stage. |
| Biological area |  |  |
| Individual differences area |  |  |
| Behaviourist perspective |  |  |
| Psychodynamic perspective |  |  |

Comparing the Debates

1. **Nature / nurture**

Determinism can be linked to nature because both focus on establishing cause and effect, particularly when investigating genetics. Nurture also tends to be deterministic as behaviourist research believes that factors in the environment can be isolated and understood to be directly causing behaviour.

1. **Individual / Situational Explanations**

Determinism is similar to situational explanations that focus on specific factors which cause behaviour, which are predictable. Individual explanations tend to favour explanations that include freewill and are less predictable.

1. **Reductionism / Holism**

Determinism and reductionism have similar assumptions about behaviour being predictable and using a scientific approach to explain human behaviour.

1. **Usefulness**

Determinism is very useful when trying to develop treatments; but biological treatments may lack effectiveness in the long-term as behaviours return. Freewill is useful for developing therapies whereas determinism helps the development of very measurable treatments

1. **Ethics**

Determinism has the danger of causing psychological harm due to the implications research may have such as genetic causes of behaviour or poor upbringing

1. **Socially Sensitive Research**

Deterministic explanations can lead to socially sensitive research as they suggest there is a clear cause for behaviour. This can lead to labelling and discrimination and may remove personal responsibility.

1. **Psych as a Science**

Determinism aims to be scientific however it can never lead to perfect predictions due to the complexity of human behaviour and the difficulty isolating variables completely. Determinism does utilise many scientific methods compared to freewill.

Discuss **one** similarity and **one** difference between the free will / determinism debate and the reductionism / holism debate. [8]

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Writing structure

1. Similarity : State a similarity **point of comparison**
2. **Explain** this point
3. **Link** this to the free will / determinism debate
4. **Link** this to the reductionism / holism debate
5. Differences : State a **point of comparison** which shows a difference
6. **Explain** this point
7. **Link** this to the free will / determinism debate
8. **Link** this to the reductionism / holism debate

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Reductionism / Holism

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| --- | --- |
| **Reductionism/Holism** | |
| **Reductionism**   * All psychological can be reduced to simple parts. * Claims behaviour is predictable as it is determined by one factor.   **Strengths**   * Allows detailed look at components that affect behaviour. * Explains certain types of behaviours * Scientific and open to testing.   **Weaknesses**   * Over simplifies complex behaviours. * Ignores other factors affecting behaviour. | **Holism**   * Looks at the whole picture/ individual * Useful when studying individuals   **Strengths**   * Looks at everything that may impact on behaviour. * Considers more than one cause.   **Weaknesses**   * Non- scientific. * Does not explain mental illness adequately. * Over complicates behaviours which may have a simple explanation |

Outline what is meant by the reductionism / holism debate in psychology. Use examples of research to illustrate your answer. [6]

Writing structure

1. **Point** about the reductionism side of the debate
2. **Explanation** of this
3. **Example** of a study (Core or Key) which shows this
4. **Point** about the holism side of the debate
5. **Explanation** of this
6. **Example** of a study (Core or Key) which shows this

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Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of the reductionist debate. Support your answer with reference to core studies. [8]

Writing structure

1. State a **strength** of being reductionist.
2. **Explain** thispoint
3. **Example** of a Core study which shows this
4. **Conclude** why this point matters / ishelpful
5. State a **weakness** of being reductionist.
6. **Explain** thispoint
7. **Example** of ANOTHER Core study which shows this
8. **Conclude** why this point matters / is a problem

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Which of the Areas and Perspectives are Reductionist?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Explanation | Core / Key Study to illustrate |
| Social area | Assumes that behaviour is due to social factors in the environment, so is a more holistic explanation. |  |
| Cognitive area | Reasonably reductionist as it assumes the human mind is like a machine and specific inputs cause specific responses that are highly predictable. |  |
| Developmental area | Reductionist as they assume behaviour is able to be reduced to a basic idea that people develop through stages and must achieve one stage to move on to the next. |  |
| Biological area | Physiological mechanisms cause behaviour such as genes, hormonal levels and brain activity. This area is highly reductionist in explaining behaviour. |  |
| Individual differences area | Much more holistic because it suggests that that all behaviour is unique and that behaviour is the result of an individual’s personal characteristics and interactions with the environment and others around them. |  |
| Behaviourist perspective | Environmental reductionism because it assumes behaviour is highly predictable as all behaviour is the result of learning that can be measured. |  |
| Psychodynamic perspective | Relatively reductionist as the cause of behaviour is the interaction (dynamism) of drives and forces within the personality (psyche) and behaviour comes from the unconscious personality. |  |

Comparing the Debates

1. **Free Will / Determinism**

Determinism and reductionism have similar assumptions about behaviour being predictable and using a scientific approach to explain human behaviour.

1. **Nature/nurture**

The nature view is reductionist because it focuses on establishing cause and effect, particularly when investigating genetics. Nurture also tends to be reductionist as it suggests that upbringing and the environment directly cause behaviour, and this ignores the impact of personality.

1. **Individual/ situational explanations**

Situational explanations are often hard to quantify when explaining how other people and the environment causes behaviour and so a more holistic approach is needed.

1. **Usefulness**

Taking Being reductionist is very useful when trying to develop treatments; but biological treatments may lack effectiveness in the long-term as behaviours return. Being holistic is useful for developing therapies that will work for individuals whereas reductionism helps the development of very measurable treatments

1. **Ethics**

Narrowing the cause of behaviour to single variables (reductionism) may cause psychologists to deceive Ps when they are researching or fail to get informed consent.

1. **Socially sensitive research**

Reductionist as often socially sensitive research focuses on a specific trait such as sex or race, as the cause of a behaviour.

1. **Psych as a Science**

Being scientific tends to make the research and explanations of behaviour reductionist.

To what extent are reductionist explanations of behaviour scientific? Illustrate your answer with examples of research. [7]

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Writing structure

1. Come to a **conclusion** (greater / lesser context)
2. Give a **reason** that reductionist explanations **ARE** scientific.
3. **Explain** this reason.
4. Give an **example** of a study which is both reductionist AND scientific to support your point.
5. Give a **reason** that reductionist explanations are **NOT** scientific.
6. **Explain** this reason.
7. Give an **example** of another study which is reductionist but **NOT** scientific to support your point.

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Individual / situational explanations

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| --- | --- |
| **Individual/Situational Explanation** | |
| **Situational =** Environment causes behaviour (e.g.; upbringing, poverty)  **Strengths**   * Suggests that behaviour is predictable so cause and effect can be found. * Behaviour can be changed by improving one’s environment.   **Weaknesses**   * Reductionist * Tends to rely on observations | **Individual =** Behaviour caused by a feature of the person (e.g. personality, genes)  **Strengths**   * Free will - gives people the responsibility to change themselves. * Holism: Takes into account individual differences   **Weaknesses**   * Difficulties generalising * Reductionist |

Outline what is meant by the Individual / Situational Explanations debate in psychology. Use examples of research to illustrate your answer. [6]

Writing structure

1. **Point** about the individual explanations side of the debate
2. **Explanation** of this
3. **Example** of a study (Core or Key) which shows this
4. **Point** about the situational explanations side of the debate
5. **Explanation** of this
6. **Example** of a study (Core or Key) which shows this

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To what extent is behaviour due to a person’s situation? [5]

Writing structure

1. Come to a **conclusion** (greater / lesser context)
2. Give a reason for why behaviour has a **SITUATIONAL** explanation.
3. Explain this reason.
4. Give a reason for why behaviour has an **INDIVIDUAL** explanation.
5. Explain this reason

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Which of the Areas and Perspectives Explain Behaviour as due to the Situation?

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|  | Explanation | Core / Key Study to illustrate |
| Social area | Situational Explanations  Helpful because changing the situation is often easier compared to changing biology or personality. This area encourages rehabilitation rather than punishment for negative behaviours | **Key Study: Zimbardo** – using prisons for rehabilitation is of greater value than using prisons as punishment. Gillis and Nafekh show that recidivism rates reduce with employment training in prison. |
| Cognitive area |  |  |
| Developmental area |  |  |
| Biological area |  |  |
| Individual differences area | Individual Explanations.  Investigating individual differences helps us to understand behaviour and how it can be predicted (Criterion validity). | **Core Study: Baron Cohen** – People with Autism lack a Theory of Mind and will have difficulty in understanding the emotions from the eyes. Without any intervention to support them in acquiring this understanding, they will always have difficulties with ‘reading the eyes’ |
| Behaviourist perspective |  |  |
| Psychodynamic perspective |  |  |

Comparing the Debates

1. **Free Will / Determinism**

Determinism is similar to situational explanations that focus on specific factors which cause behaviour, which are predictable. Individual explanations tend to favour explanations that include freewill and are less predictable.

1. **Nature / nurture**

Individual explanations often assume that behaviour is innate and that the nurture side of the debate is true. By using a situational explanation researchers assume that the environment determines behaviour and therefore the nurture side of the nature/nurture debate is favoured.

1. **Reductionism / Holism**

Situational explanations are often hard to quantify when explaining how other people and the environment causes behaviour and so a more holistic approach is needed.

1. **Usefulness**

By understanding individual factors that cause behaviour researchers can develop real life applications such as CBT that focuses on changing factors such as faulty cognitions.

1. **Ethics**

Situational explanations can be seen as removing individual responsibility whilst individual explanations risk labelling. Both have a level of psychological harm.

1. **Socially sensitive research**

The danger of attributing the cause of behaviour to individual factors is that it can lead to socially sensitive research as the implications of findings could suggest that a person’s race, age, gender or disability cause behaviours. This can cause social stigmas and discrimination.

1. **Psych as a Science**

Areas of psychology that use individual explanations of behaviour (e.g. the cognitive area), often use scientific methods that are highly controlled whereas situational explanations often find it harder to establish such high control.

Discuss **one** similarity and **one** difference between the nature / nurture debate and the individual / situational differences debate. [8]

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Writing structure

1. Similarity : State a similarity **point of comparison**
2. **Explain** this point
3. **Link** this to the nature / nurture debate
4. **Link** this to the individual / situational debate
5. Differences : State a **point of comparison** which shows a difference
6. **Explain** this point
7. **Link** this to the nature / nurture debate
8. **Link** this to the individual / situational debate

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Usefulness of research

Usefulness of Research = research is useful if it (D.R.U.G.V.)

* **develops** therapies, interventions, preventative action or treatments
* provokes further **research** in the field
* progresses **understanding** beyond previous findings
* is **generalisable** to a wide population
* is **valid** so that results are accurate

Outline what is meant by usefulness of psychological research. Use research to illustrate your answer. [3]

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Writing structure

1. Make a **POINT** about one of the features of usefulness
2. **Explain** this
3. **Example** of a study (Core or Key) which shows this

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Linking the Core and Key studies to the usefulness debate

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Research is useful** | **Study examples** |
| If it is valid | **Core study** – In **Chaney’s** research, the construct validity was high, so the results of the study which show that children’s behaviour can be influenced by operant conditioning, can be used to advise hospitals, schools, etc. |
| If it can be generalised to a wide range of people | **Core study – Bandura** used a large sample (nomothetic) so can be generalised to show that all children can learn through social learning (attention, retention, reproduction, motivation). |
| If it develops treatments, solutions to problems | **Core study – Grant’s** research was designed to give specific support for students in improving recall (short answer questions) and recognition (multiple choice questions) by ensuring that the study conditions match the exam conditions.  **Core study – Baron Cohen’s** study helped to design methods to teach / train people with Autism to have a theory of mind. |
| If it is cheap and cost effective | **Core Study: Simons and Chabris’** study was fairly cheap to adapt the films for each of the IVs, payment for the sample was minimal (chocolate bar) and cost effective in using the students as researchers.  **Core study – Loftus and Palmer’s** study was also fairly cheap, as the film did not need to be adapted, just the question verb. |
| If it can be easily replicated | **Core study – Baron Cohen’s** research is very easy to replicate as the procedure was standardised and the use of electronic equipment made data collection easy. The actual procedure has been replicated in the online version by Harvard and has had over a million participants. |
| **Research is not useful** | **Study examples** |
| If it is not valid | **Core study – Milgram’s** research lacked ecological validity because the task lacked mundane realism and the locations were not environments where obedience is usually required. This lacks internal and external validity. |
| If it has small restrictive samples | **Core study – Sperry’s** sample was so restrictive that it is not clear if the commisurotomy caused the behaviour or participant variables, such as having different brain activity after suffering epilepsy. However, the study was only using a small target population anyway, so the restrictive nature of the sample may not mean that the research is useless. |
| If it develops solutions that only apply to a small amount of people | **Core study – Freud’s** case study may only be useful for Little Hans, despite the ideas of making the unconscious conscious through methods like Rorschach inkblots, dream analysis and free analysis can be used in a wide range of settings and for many people. |
| If it is expensive and time consuming | **Core study: Hancock’s** analysis of the language of psychopaths took many months, a lot of effort on interviewing each of them, then typing up the recordings and running these through 2 computer programmes. |
| If it can’t be replicated | **Core study – Freud’s** case study can never be replicated due to the nature of Little Hans’ individual differences and Freud’s methods of data collection.  **Core study – Sperry’s** research is unlikely to occur again, as the commisurotomy operation is rarely done anymore. |

Which of the Areas and Perspectives is the most Useful?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Explanation | Core / Key Study to illustrate |
| Social area |  |  |
| Cognitive area |  |  |
| Developmental area |  |  |
| Biological area |  |  |
| Individual differences area |  |  |
| Behaviourist perspective |  |  |
| Psychodynamic perspective |  |  |

Comparing the Debates

1. **Free Will / Determinism**

Determinism is very useful when trying to develop treatments; but biological treatments may lack effectiveness in the long-term as behaviours return. Freewill is useful for developing therapies whereas determinism helps the development of very measurable treatments.

1. **Nature / nurture**

Taking the nature view is useful as it allows for nomothetic treatments to be designed. Taking the nurture view is useful in generating treatments which can be used by parents and schools.

1. **Reductionism / Holism**

Being reductionist is very useful when trying to develop treatments; but biological treatments may lack effectiveness in the long-term as behaviours return. Being holistic is useful for developing therapies that will work for individuals whereas reductionism helps the development of very measurable treatments

1. **Individual/ situational explanations**

By understanding individual factors that determine behaviour researchers can develop real life applications such as CBT therapy that focuses on changing factors such as faulty cognitions.

1. **Socially sensitive research**

Often socially sensitive research has useful applications but the validity of research can be questioned

1. **Ethics**

One way to assess whether a study is ethically acceptable is to do a cost (in terms of psychological harm) and benefit (potential usefulness of the research) analysis.

1. **Psych as a Science**

Being scientific gives provable evidence, which can be trusted and relied on. This makes it useful to offer new treatments which people are more likely to follow.

Discuss **one** similarity and **one** difference between the usefulness debate and the socially sensitive research debate. [8]

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Writing structure

1. Similarity : State a similarity **point of comparison**
2. **Explain** this point
3. **Link** this to the usefulness debate
4. **Link** this to the socially sensitive research debate
5. Differences : State a **point of comparison** which shows a difference
6. **Explain** this point
7. **Link** this to the usefulness debate
8. **Link** this to the socially sensitive research debate

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Ethics

Consent**,** Debrief, Confidentiality, Deception, Right to withdraw, Protection from Harm

Outline one ethical consideration psychologists may make. [2]

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Writing structure

1. Make a **POINT** about one of the ethical guidelines
2. **Explain** this

Which of the Core Studies are most ethical?

| **Study** | **Consent** | **Debrief** | **Confidentiality** | **Deception** | **Right to withdraw** | **Protection from Harm** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Milgram |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Bocchiaro |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Piliavin |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Levine |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Loftus & Palmer |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Grant |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Moray |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Simons & Chabris |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Bandura |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Chaney | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Kohlberg |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lee |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sperry |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Casey |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Blakemore & Cooper | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Maguire |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Freud |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Baron-Cohen |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Gould |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hancock |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Which of the Areas and Perspectives are most Ethical?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Explanation | Core / Key Study to illustrate |
| Social area | Ethical issues can arise due to deceiving participants in order to achieve valid results of environmental / social / situational influences. |  |
| Cognitive area | Participants are often deceived about the true nature of the study, so that real (valid) behaviour can be seen. | Moray did not inform the Ps until afterwards that the study was looking at their attention to their name being mentioned in the script of the 2nd experiment. |
| Developmental area |  |  |
| Biological area |  |  |
| Individual differences area |  |  |
| Behaviourist perspective |  |  |
| Psychodynamic perspective |  |  |

Comparing the Debates

1. **Free Will / Determinism**

Determinism has the danger of causing psychological harm due to the implications research may have such as genetic causes of behaviour or poor upbringing

1. **Nature / nurture**

Taking the nature view has the danger of causing psychological harm due to the implications research may have such as suggesting genetic causes of behaviour which a person can do nothing about. Taking the nurture view may cause psychological harm as it may blame mental health / crime on a poor upbringing

1. **Reductionism / Holism**

Narrowing the cause of behaviour to single variables (reductionism) may cause psychologists to deceive Ps when they are researching or fail to get informed consent.

1. **Individual / situational explanations**

Situational explanations can be seen as removing individual responsibility whilst individual explanations risk labelling. Both have a level of psychological harm.

1. **Usefulness**

One way to assess whether a study is ethically acceptable is to do a cost (in terms of psychological harm) and benefit (potential usefulness of the research) analysis.

1. **Socially sensitive research**

Often socially sensitive research causes psychological harm

1. **Psych as a Science**

The BPS guidelines encourage psychologists to have respect, competence, responsibility and integrity. This should encourage them to take a scientific approach to research.

Discuss **one** similarity and **one** difference between ethical considerations and the socially sensitive research debate. [8]

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Writing structure

1. Similarity : State a similarity **point of comparison**
2. **Explain** this point
3. **Link** this to ethical considerations
4. **Link** this to the socially sensitive research debate
5. Differences : State a **point of comparison** which shows a difference
6. **Explain** this point
7. **Link** this to the ethical considerations
8. **Link** this to the socially sensitive research debate

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Conducting socially sensitive research

Socially sensitive research can S.C.A.R.

Writing structure

1. Make a **POINT** about one of the features of socially sensitive research
2. **Explain** this
3. **Example** of a core study which shows this – best example is Gould’s analysis of Yerkes’ work
4. Make another **POINT** about one of the features of socially sensitive research
5. **Explain** this
6. **Example** of the **SAME** core study which shows this

* **Subject** to social norms
* **Controversial**
* **Able** to shape the law / policy
* **Risks** stereotyping and prejudice

Explain what is meant by socially sensitive research, using **one** core study to support your response. [6]

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**Problems with Socially Sensitive Research**

Some psychologists suggest that we should avoid research into sensitive topics, including race, gender and sexuality because

* Interest of the Ps taking part
* Indirect impact on the participant’s family and co-workers
* How the findings may be used by other people or institutions to form and/or shape public social policy
* Harm to people and marginalised groups (e.g. with disabilities, the elderly, poor) who are largely excluded from research

**Socially Sensitive Research should be done**

Some psychologists argue that ignoring socially sensitive areas is abandoning our ‘social responsibilities’ because

* Not all socially sensitive research is controversial (e.g. Sperry)
* Some is beneficial to society (e.g. Loftus)
* Psychologists should be free to carry out whatever research is important to them because if governments start passing laws to prohibit certain kinds of research, then there is a danger that research will be stopped for political rather than for ethical reasons.

Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of socially sensitive research. [6]

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Writing structure

1. State a **strength** of doing socially sensitive research
2. **Explain** thispoint
3. **Conclude** why this point matters / ishelpful
4. State a **weakness** of doing socially sensitive research
5. **Explain** thispoint
6. **Conclude** why this point matters / is a problem

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Which of the Areas and Perspectives conducts socially sensitive research?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Explanation | Core / Key Study to illustrate |
| Social area |  |  |
| Cognitive area |  |  |
| Developmental area | Interviewing participants about sensitive topic may induce painful emotions and memories and therefore cause harm. | **Core Study: Chaney’s** telephone interviews with the parents on the feelings of their children towards the Funhaler could make them feel embarrassed about their parenting skills, their child’s learning and effort with the medical device and both could lead to social and psychological harm for the parents. |
| Biological area |  |  |
| Individual differences area |  |  |
| Behaviourist perspective |  |  |
| Psychodynamic perspective |  |  |

Comparing the Debates

1. **Free Will / Determinism**

Deterministic explanations can lead to socially sensitive research as they suggest there is a clear cause for behaviour. This can lead to labelling and discrimination and may remove personal responsibility.

1. **Nature/nurture**

A lot of socially sensitive research is about the genetic basis of behaviour and so is the nature side of debate.

1. **Reductionism / Holism**

Reductionist as often socially sensitive research focuses on a specific trait such as sex or race, as the cause of a behaviour.

1. **Individual / situational explanations**

The danger of attributing the cause of behaviour to individual factors is that it can lead to socially sensitive research as the implications of findings could suggest that a person’s race, age, gender or disability cause behaviours. This can cause social stigmas and discrimination.

1. **Usefulness**

Often socially sensitive research has useful applications but the validity of research can be questioned

1. **Ethics**

Often socially sensitive research causes psychological harm

1. **Psych as a Science**

Research must try to be scientific if it is to be trusted and to reduce implications of socially sensitive research such as incorrect interpretations of data.

Discuss **one** similarity and **one** difference between the usefulness debate and the socially sensitive research debate. [8]

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Writing structure

1. Similarity : State a similarity **point of comparison**
2. **Explain** this point
3. **Link** this to the usefulness debate
4. **Link** this to the socially sensitive research debate
5. Differences : State a **point of comparison** which shows a difference
6. **Explain** this point
7. **Link** this to the usefulness debate
8. **Link** this to the socially sensitive research debate

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Psychology as a science

Features of a scientific approach

Writing structure

1. Make a **POINT** about one of the features of the scientific method
2. **Explain** this
3. **Example** of a core study which shows this
4. Make another **POINT** about one of the features of the scientific method
5. **Explain** this
6. **Example** of the **SAME** core study which shows this

* Falsifiable
* Objective
* Replicable
* Quantitative data
* Experiment

Explain what is meant by psychology as a science, using **one** core study to support your response. [6]

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**Psychology is a science**

* It is a **research-based** subject, very similar to other sciences such as biology and physics.
* It uses the scientific method in its investigations. Research is carried out through experimentation and uses many controls, which means cause and effect can be established.
* Like other sciences, psychology has theories. Theories generate hypotheses and these are tested empirically, so that the theories are tested and refined.

**Psychology is not a science**:

* Psychologists study humans – this cannot be investigated in the same way as the ideas researched in chemistry or physics.
* Demand characteristics: people are aware of being investigated and this can alter behaviour. This means there will always be extraneous variables which affect behaviour, lessening cause and effect.
* Much of psychology is about the mind. This is highly subjective because it is not actually observable. Psychologists only infer what is happening rather than what is actually happening.

To what extent is Psychology a science? [5]

Writing structure

1. Come to a **conclusion** (greater / lesser context)
2. Give a reason for why Psychology **IS** a science.
3. Explain this reason.
4. Give a reason for why Psychology **IS NOT** a science.
5. Explain this reason

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Which of the Areas and Perspectives is most Scientific?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Explanation | Core / Key Study to illustrate |
| Social area |  |  |
| Cognitive area |  |  |
| Developmental area |  |  |
| Biological area | Like other sciences, psychology has theories. Theories generate hypotheses and these are tested empirically. | **Core study: Blakemore and Cooper** – theory of brain plasticity was tested empirically with cats to see how the brain can develop and change over time. |
| Individual differences area |  |  |
| Behaviourist perspective |  |  |
| Psychodynamic perspective |  |  |

Comparing the Debates

1. **Free Will / Determinism**

Determinism aims to be scientific however it can never lead to perfect predictions due to the complexity of human behaviour and the difficulty isolating variables completely. Determinism does use many more scientific methods compared to freewill.

1. **Nature/nurture**

The nature view links with Psychology as a science because it wants behaviour to be predictable and uses a scientific approach to explain human behaviour.

1. **Reductionism / Holism**

Being scientific tends to make the research and explanations of behaviour reductionist.

1. **Individual / situational explanations**

Areas of psychology that use individual explanations of behaviour (e.g. the cognitive area), often use scientific methods that are highly controlled whereas situational explanations often find it harder to establish such high control.

1. **Usefulness**

Being scientific gives provable evidence, which can be trusted and relied upon. This makes it useful to offer new treatments.

1. **Ethics**

The BPS guidelines encourage psychologists to have respect, competence, responsibility and integrity. This should encourage them to take a scientific approach to research.

1. **Socially Sensitive Research**

Research must try to be scientific if it is to be trusted and to reduce implications of socially sensitive research such as incorrect interpretations of data.

To what extent are reductionist explanations of behaviour scientific? Illustrate your answer with examples of research. [7]

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Writing structure

1. Come to a **conclusion** (greater / lesser context)
2. Give a **reason** that reductionist explanations **ARE** scientific.
3. **Explain** this reason.
4. Give an **example** of a study which is both reductionist AND scientific to support your point.
5. Give a **reason** that reductionist explanations are **NOT** scientific.
6. **Explain** this reason.
7. Give an **example** of another study which is reductionist but **NOT** scientific to support your point.

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Ethnocentrism

**Severe ethnocentrism**: belief that one’s own group (ethnic, social, cultural) is the most important. E.g. legal system run by white males is more likely to give the death penalty to black people.

**Softer ethnocentrism**: idea that individuals who are brought up in a certain culture find it difficult to think outside their own cultural experience. This leads to people assuming that the way things happen in their own culture, is the same as the things that happen in all other cultures.

**Sampling may lack generalisability**

When researching psychologists might design research or draw conclusions in a way that makes sense to their on cultural group, but may have little meaning to other cultural groups. This means that psychologists should be very careful when generalising their findings to other culture groups.

**Analysis of data**

Ethnocentrism can also occur when a researcher is analysing or interpreting data. Because the researcher has been brought up in a certain culture, this cultural influence may play a role in the way data is interpreted, making the data invalid, and extremely not generalisable to the culture being studied. For example, Lee went to China to assess how children learn moral values. This culture is extremely different, and some behaviours maybe misinterpreted due to his Canadian culture.

Outline what is meant by ethnocentrism in psychological research. Use research to illustrate your answer. [3]

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Writing structure

1. Make a **POINT** about ethnocentrism
2. **Explain** this
3. **Example** of a study (Core or Key) which shows this

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Spotting ethnocentrism in psychological research

| **Study** | **Where was the researcher from?** | **Where was the research done?** | **Possible ethnocentrism?** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Milgram | USA | USA |  |
| Bocchiaro | Italy | Holland |  |
| Piliavin | USA |  |  |
| Levine | USA |  |  |
| Loftus & Palmer | USA |  |  |
| Grant | USA |  |  |
| Moray | UK |  |  |
| Simons & Chabris | UK |  |  |
| Bandura | USA |  |  |
| Chaney | Australia |  |  |
| Kohlberg | USA |  |  |
| Lee | Canada | Canada and China |  |
| Sperry | USA |  |  |
| Casey | USA |  |  |
| Blakemore & Cooper | UK |  |  |
| Maguire | UK | UK | Yes. Maguire aims to prove that brain plasticity is universal – it happens in all people, places and times. This is ethnocentric towards the results gained from a very specific sample from London, which may be unique, due to the physical layout of London itself. |
| Freud | Austria | Austria |  |
| Baron-Cohen | UK |  |  |
| Gould | USA |  |  |
| Hancock | Canada | Canada |  |

Which of the Areas and Perspectives are most ethnocentric?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Explanation | Core / Key Study to illustrate |
| Social area |  |  |
| Cognitive area |  |  |
| Developmental area |  |  |
| Biological area | Researchers must be aware of ethnocentrism when generalising and interpreting data in order to avoid biased and invalid findings. | **Core study: Maguire** aims to prove that brain plasticity occurs and is universal – it happens in all people, places and times. This is ethnocentric towards the results gained from a very specific sample from London, which may be unique, due to the physical layout of London itself. |
| Individual differences area |  |  |
| Behaviourist perspective |  |  |
| Psychodynamic perspective |  |  |

Comparing the Debates: Add in a Core study / Key study into each of the blank boxes.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Free Will / Determinism | Nature/nurture | Reductionism/ Holism | Individual/ situational explanations | Usefulness of research | Ethical considerations | Conducting socially sensitive research | Psychology as a science |
| Free Will / Determinism | Free Will / Determinism |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Nature/nurture | Determinism and nature views both focus on establishing cause and effect, particularly when investigating genetics. Nurture is also deterministic as behaviourist research believes that factors in the environment directly cause behaviour. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reductionism/ Holism | Determinism and reductionism have similar assumptions about behaviour being predictable and using a scientific approach to explain human behaviour. | The nature view is reductionist because it focuses on establishing cause and effect, particularly when investigating genetics. Nurture also tends to be reductionist as it suggests that upbringing and the environment directly cause behaviour, and this ignores the impact of personality. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Individual/ situational explanations | Determinism is similar to situational explanations that focus on specific factors which cause behaviour, which are predictable. Individual explanations tend to favour explanations that include freewill and are less predictable. | Individual explanations often assume that behaviour is innate and that the nurture side of the debate is true. Situational explanations researchers assume that the environment determines behaviour and therefore the nurture side of the nature/nurture debate is favoured. | Situational explanations are often hard to quantify when explaining how other people and the environment causes behaviour and so a more holistic approach is needed. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Usefulness of research | Determinism is very useful when trying to develop treatments. Freewill is useful for developing therapies whereas determinism helps the development of very measurable treatments. | Taking the nature view is useful as it allows for nomothetic treatments to be designed. Taking the nurture view is useful in generating treatments which can be used by parents and schools. | Being reductionist is very useful when trying to develop treatments;. Being holistic is useful for developing therapies that will work for individuals whereas reductionism helps the development of very measurable treatments | By understanding individual factors that determine behaviour researchers can develop real life applications such as CBT therapy that focuses on changing factors such as faulty cognitions. |  |  |  |  |
| Ethical considerations | Determinism has the danger of causing psychological harm due to the implications research may have such as genetic causes of behaviour or poor upbringing | The nature view may cause psychological harm as the research may suggest genetic causes of behaviour which a person can do nothing about. Taking the nurture view may cause psychological harm as it may blame mental health / crime on a poor upbringing | Narrowing the cause of behaviour to single variables (reductionism) may cause psychologists to deceive Ps when they are researching or fail to get informed consent. | Situational explanations can be seen as removing individual responsibility whilst individual explanations risk labelling. Both have a level of psychological harm. | One way to assess whether a study is ethically acceptable is to do a cost (in terms of psychological harm) and benefit (potential usefulness of the research) analysis. |  |  |  |
| Conducting socially sensitive research | Deterministic explanations can lead to socially sensitive research as they suggest there is a clear cause for behaviour. This can lead to labelling and discrimination and may remove personal responsibility. | A lot of socially sensitive research is about the genetic basis of behaviour and so is the nature side of debate. | Reductionist as often socially sensitive research focuses on a specific trait such as sex or race, as the cause of a behaviour. | The danger of saying the cause of behaviour is individual factors is that it can lead to socially sensitive research. The findings could suggest that race, age, gender or disability cause behaviours. This can cause social stigmas and discrimination. | Often socially sensitive research has useful applications but the validity of research can be questioned. | Often socially sensitive research causes psychological harm |  |  |
| Psychology as a science | Determinism aims to be scientific but it can never lead to perfect predictions due to the complexity of human behaviour and the difficulty isolating variables. Determinism uses more scientific methods compared to freewill. | The nature view links with Psychology as a science because it wants behaviour to be predictable and uses a scientific approach to explain human behaviour. | Being scientific tends to make the research and explanations of behaviour reductionist. | Areas of psychology that use individual explanations of behaviour (e.g. cognitive area) often use highly controlled scientific methods whereas situational explanations often find it harder to establish such high control. | Being scientific gives provable evidence, which can be trusted and relied upon. This makes it useful to offer new treatments. | The BPS guidelines encourage psychologists to have respect, competence, responsibility and integrity. This should encourage them to take a scientific approach to research. | Research must try to be scientific if it is to be trusted and to reduce implications of socially sensitive research such as incorrect interpretations of data. |  |