

Social Psychology – BA Oral Final Exam Topics with Keywords

1. The science of social psychology (definition of social psychology, axioms, methods, major themes, research questions and theories, applications, historical trends and current themes in social psychology)

Keywords:

- fundamental axioms of social psychology, motivational and processing principles
- validity in social psychological research
- characteristics of the experimental method
- ethical issues in social psychological research
- major historical turning points and directions in the development of social psychology

2. Person perception – first impressions and systematic evaluation. The Self – self-concept, self-esteem, self-regulation.

Keywords:

- formation of first impressions
- mechanisms and biases of attribution
- understanding and evaluation of the self versus others. the “coherent self” concept /constructing the self-concept
- constructing self-esteem, ways of maintaining positive self-esteem
- goal pursuit: emotions, self-regulation, self-control
- defending the self: coping with failures

3. Perceiving groups – formation, functions, and change of stereotypes. Social identity – emotional, cognitive, and behavioral consequences of group membership.

Keywords:

- definition and functions of stereotypes
- formation of stereotypes via personal experience and social learning
- application and use of stereotypes
- changing stereotypes and reducing prejudice (suppression, compensation, counter-stereotypical exemplars) or trying to overcome prejudice and stereotype effects
- changing stereotypes through intergroup contact
- social identity: definition and emotional, cognitive, behavioral consequences of categorization
- consequences of belonging to negatively perceived groups

4. Attitudes: Definition, structure, function, measurement, and persuasion

Keywords:

- definition, components, and functions of attitudes
- origins of attitudes
- measurement of attitudes
- emotional and cognitive effects in superficial vs. systematic routes of persuasion
- defending attitudes: resisting persuasion

5. The relationship between attitudes and behavior

Keywords:

- changing attitudes with actions: Self-perception theory
- changing attitudes with actions: Cognitive dissonance theory
- changing actions with attitudes
- strong attitudes behind spontaneous (automatic) actions
- theory of planned behavior
- implementation intentions
- when habits have stronger effects on behavior/actions than attitudes

6. Norms and conformity: majority and minority influence. Norms and behavior – norm activation, universal norms, resistance to normative influence/~~resisting against norms~~

Keywords:

- conformity: majority influence; descriptive and injunctive norms
- functions of norms; private vs. public conformity
- group polarization, groupthink, false consensus effect/pluralistic ignorance
- minority influence
- norms as effective guides for social behavior
- universal human norms: reciprocity, commitment, obedience
- resistance, rejection, and rebellion against norms: reactance, systematic processing, collective action

7. Interaction and interdependence: group performance and leadership

Keywords:

- the concept of interdependence
- social facilitation
- group socialization, ostracism, group development
- group performance: form of task interdependence; coordination and motivation losses
- information technology and group performance
- group cohesion and group performance
- leadership: leadership theories, leadership styles, contingency theories of leadership
- the relationship between power and performance

8. Interpersonal attraction and the social psychology of close relationships

Keywords:

- distinguishing features of developing vs. close/intimate relationships
- factors influencing attraction (physical attractiveness, proximity, interaction, similarity)
- gender differences in factors influencing attraction and relationship satisfaction
- identity in close relationship and its consequences(after Aron et al., 1991)
- effects of relationships on mental health
- conflicts in close relationships and resources for constructive conflict resolution
- effects of break-ups and loneliness

9. Prosocial behavior – explanations and determinants of helping, increasing helping behavior. Cooperation – social dilemmas and determinants of cooperation

Keywords:

- definition and types of prosocial behavior
- empathy–altruism model and negative-state relief model
- basic human norms influencing helping
- factors influencing helping in emergency situations
- social dilemmas: public goods dilemma and resource depletion dilemma
- determinants of cooperation in social dilemmas
- strengthening prosocial behavior in society

10. Aggressive behavior – theories explaining aggression and possibilities for reducing aggression. Conflicts – causes and possibilities for conflict resolution and management

Keywords:

- explanations of aggression in evolutionary, instinct-based aggression, frustration–aggression, classical conditioning, and social learning frameworks
- intergroup conflict: conflict theories
- emotions, cognition, and behavior in conflicts
- reducing interpersonal and intergroup conflict and aggression