

- 6 Assess the ethical issues in psychological research using humans and animals. (20)
- Bugs / Informed consent - right to withdraw
- deception - Psychological / Physical harm 8 A01
12 A03

There are many ethical issues found in psychology, however, it can be argued that benefits tend to outweigh the costs.

Milgram's 1965 study can be criticised for having multiple ethical issues. Milgram wanted to find out the lengths people would go to when obeying an order from an authority figure that causes harm to someone else. He used a sample of 40 men aged 20-51 and ~~for~~ all recruited from a volunteer sampling method where he advertised his experiment on a news ad. ~~Milgram One of~~ However, Milgram deceived participants as he lied to them about the aim of the study. This however, was crucial in order to reduce demand characteristics of ~~particip~~ such as participants trying to guess the aim of the study. Therefore, you could argue that deception was needed in order to obtain accurate findings in order ~~for~~ to ~~test~~ prove his theory correct.

Milgram (1965) introduced participants to two confederates of the study. Drives were then rigged so that the participant was always the teacher and the confederate the learner. Milgram told participants



to give the learner an electric Shock every time they made a mistake on the word recall task. Shocks went up by ~~45~~ 15v each time and the Maximum voltage was 450v. Participants However, an ethical issue ~~the~~ experienced by participants here is psychological harm. Participants believed that they were causing direct harm to someone thus causing high levels of moral strain. This anxiety experienced by participants could have caused them to then also experience physical harm such as fainting. However, participants gave informed consent as well as were given the right to withdraw from the study. This however, can be criticised as participants were prodded by the experimenter to continue everytime they wanted to stop.

Sherif et al (1964) can also be criticised for having ethical issues. He used a sample of 22 boys aged 11 who were white middle class and protestant. His Robber's cave experiment wanted to see if competition over resources would lead to prejudice and he ~~it~~ tested this by ~~com~~ creating negative interdependence tasks between the two groups. Sherif's study can ~~be~~ also be criticised for deception as participants had no knowledge they were being studied. This also meant that ~~know~~ ^{no} informed consent was given ~~meaning the~~ by the boys so

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Sherif's findings are completely unethical. Furthermore, physical harm was caused when researchers raided one of the groups cabins in order to provoke the boys thus making his study highly unethical. However, ~~you~~ ~~so~~ boys were given the right to withdraw with two boys leaving due to homesickness. Furthermore, you could argue that Sherif's findings are important in society as not only do they show how prejudice can occur, but he also found that superordinate goals can be used in order to reduce prejudice in society making his findings hugely beneficial.

Watson and Rayner's study on Baby Albert can also be seen to be highly unethical. Watson and Rayner wanted to see if they could condition an 11 year month boy into being afraid of white objects. They struck a bell behind his head making him cry everytime he held a white object. Eventually, they were able to condition him into fearing a white rabbit. Watson and Rayner's study, can be criticised for psychological harm. Baby Albert's conditioning was never reversed meaning his phobia may cause his day to day life to be affected. However, Baby Albert was kept anonymous due to them changing his name making their study ethical to an extent. Furthermore, the conditioning of little Baby Albert ~~att~~ is hugely beneficial as it allows us to know how phobias are



caused as well as ~~any treat~~ to come up with treatments for them.

Psychology can also be hugely criticised for the unethical treatment of animals. Pavlov, ~~also want~~ came up with the theory of classical conditioning and used ~~a set~~ dogs in order to test it. He used a sample of 37 dogs which he bred from young and locked them in a soundproof chamber in a lab. ~~He~~ Pavlov managed to condition the dogs to salivate every time they heard the sound of a bell. However, physical harm was caused where the dogs were starved in order to get them to salivate as well as keeping them locked up in a lab their whole life. The study can also be criticised for its ungeneralisability where animals are different to humans so Pavlov's study could not guarantee it would work on humans so his study and mistreatment of dogs could have been in vain. However, his study was in fact able to prove classical conditioning does exist meaning that the benefits of this knowledge thoroughly outweigh the costs.

Skinner's box, is one final ^{animal} ~~experim~~ study used in psychology which can be criticised for its ethical mistreatment of animals. Skinner wanted to test his theory of operant conditioning which states that ~~we learn~~ we can learn ~~of~~ by using reinforcers and punishment. Skinner

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used a lever in order to produce reinforcers of food pellets every time the rats pulled it. However, physical harm was caused to the rats where they were also given electric shocks everytime they pulled the lever the wrong way. The rats were also locked in cages for long periods of time in order for Skinner to test his theory making it extremely unethical. However, Skinner was able to prove that humans can learn through the use of reinforcers and punishments allowing psychologists to understand human behaviour even more than before.

To conclude, while many ethical issues exist in Psychology, studies have been hugely beneficial to society allowing us to understand ~~behaviours~~ human behaviours in a huge depth. Without these studies and experiments, psychologists would ~~still~~ be unable to ~~prove~~ understand our behaviours thus showing that the benefits significantly outweigh the costs.

(Total for Question 6 = 20 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION C = 32 MARKS
TOTAL FOR PAPER = 80 MARKS

