



## Relationships

Belfast APT 2012

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Why is this fish important ?

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and how about this Tiger?



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## Questions on PSYA3

Questions are marked out of **24 marks** - **8 A01** (Description ) and **16 A02** (Evaluation and analysis)

- Essay questions can be divided into 2 or 3 sections.
- Sections of a question CAN be drawn from different parts of the Specification
- You need to do roughly twice as much evaluation as description
- So : keep description short and snappy (the 5 bullet point theory)

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## Evaluation ....

- Is mainly of theories or explanations
- Evidence for and evidence against.....
- Evaluation of research studies CAN gain credit but only if you make the **implications for the theory explicit**
- Different approaches can be used to evaluate each other
- In order to achieve reasonable or effective A02 marks , you must include reference to **approaches, issues and debates**

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## Formation , maintenance and breakdown of relationships

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### Filter model (Kerckhoff and Davis 1962)

Formation of relationship takes place through 3 filters :

1. Social demographic : the social filter - who we get to meet. We meet people who live near, go to school / college / work with us. They usually come from a similar social background and class. This group makes up the 'field of availables'
2. Similarity : the individual filter - relationship is more likely to develop / progress if we share interests, attitudes and hobbies - 'field of desirables'
3. Complementary needs : the dyadic filter - for a relationship to carry on , the ability to meet each others emotional needs / want similar things becomes important

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### Evidence...

- Kerckhoff and Davis (1962) : student couples completed questionnaires about their attitudes/ personality over a 7 month period . Up to about 18 mths, similar attitudes were important in staying together . After 18mths meeting each others emotional needs became most important
- Sprecher (1998) : couples in long term relationships have more similar social backgrounds than couples who split up
- The social demographic filter has become less important for several reasons : CMC allows us to meet and get to know people from different places/ backgrounds so the field of 'availables' is much wider.
- Filter model ignores attachment style and early experience

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### Reward/ need satisfaction theory

- Relationships are formed with people who meet our social needs and provide rewards
- Common social needs include : self esteem ( to feel good about ourselves), dependency ( be looked after) dominance, sexual needs ( Argyle )
- Foa and Foa (1974) : 6 kinds of relationship rewards including practical (money, presents and help ) and emotional rewards ( status , and feeling loved )
- Relationships also provide rewards in the form of shared activities and time spent together.

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### Evidence and evaluation

- This theory has close links to the behavioural approach with its emphasis on rewards and reinforcements.
- Reward/ need theory is supported by evidence . Long term, happy relationships meet many of the needs of the two people involved. In contrast, unhappy relationships involve unmet needs (Smith and Mackie 2002)
- The idea of rewards underpins other important theories ( e.g. social exchange theory and equity theory )
- This is a westernized theory. In many parts of the world where arranged marriages are common, rewards may be less important

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### Maintenance and breakdown

#### Key questions

- How do people run their relationships ?
- What factors influence them to stay or leave when things get sticky ?
- Two economic theories – exchange and equity. Both assume that we run relationships like bank accounts.
- Both can be applied to maintenance & breakdown **but they must be shaped**

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### Social Exchange theory ( Homans 1961)

- Relationships involve **rewards and costs**
- We seek relationships which provide maximum rewards and minimum costs ( the **minimax principle** )
- We **compare** our current relationship with those in the past and our general expectation of rewards ( CL)
- We also compare our current relationship with possible alternatives ( CI Alt )
- If we expect more rewards elsewhere we may leave !

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## Evidence

- As a relationships develop rewards increase but so do costs ( Argyle )
- Many people stay in unrewarding relationships because of investments.
- Rhatigan and Axholm ( 2006) studied women in a refuge and found that they stayed because of investments which had been put in and could not be got back out such as time, emotional investment
- SET views people as basically selfish. Equity theory argues that we prefer fairness not selfishness
- This is a westernized theory. Many arranged marriages cannot be ended at will

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## Equity theory ( Walster 1978)

- Agrees that people weight up reward and costs BUT argues that we expect our relationship to be fair
- People want to get back roughly as much as they put in
- A feeling of inequity ( unfairness) makes the 'loser' feel dissatisfied
- They will try to restore equity by putting in less or getting their partner to put in more
- If this isn't successful, the relationship will break down

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## Evidence for equity theory

- Van Yperen and Buunk 1990 studied 368 married and cohabiting couples and measured two variables :
- Feelings of equity in the relationship
  - Feelings of satisfaction with the relationship one year later
  - Higher equity at time 1 led to more satisfaction 1 year later
  - Correlation was .44 ( highly significant ) for women and .20 for men
- De Maris ( 2007) studied 1500 American couples and found that inequity was the most important factor in predicting who would split up
- Equity is also very important in lesbian couples

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## Commentary

- Both economic theories take a cognitive – social approach to relationships, focusing on what people think, believe, tell themselves
- They view people as rational, autonomous, able to weigh up rewards, costs, needs and make choices to stay or go

But relationships are often 'determined' by

- Family/ friends/ well wishers and cultural norms (non western cultures )
- Early experiences and childhood attachments
- Predispositions arising from evolution

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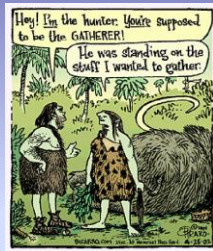
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## HUMAN REPRODUCTIVE BEHAVIOUR

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## Evolutionary approach

- The relationship between sexual selection and human reproductive behaviour
  - Sex differences in parental investment
- Key questions
- How were relationships organised in the hunter gatherer past ?
  - (How ) do these pre-dispositions effect relationships today ?




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## Human reproductive behaviour and natural / sexual selection

- Reproductive behaviours were 'shaped' in the hunter gatherer era (10,000 – 40,000 years ago)
- Behaviours exist today because they brought **reproductive advantages** to our ancestors.
- Those who produced more surviving offspring had greater **reproductive success**
- The behaviours and bodily features which led to reproductive success were passed on to their children who inherited the feature/ behaviour
- This is the process of sexual selection

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## 2 types of Sexual selection

- Intra-sexual - members of one sex **compete for mates** from the other. e. g : large, aggressive males would beat rivals in fights, get to mate with more females and would leave behind more offspring
- Inter sexual - members of one sex **choose partners from the other** e.g. females prefer to mate with males with resources.

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The curious example of the stickleback

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### Trivers' parental investment theory

The basis of human reproductive behaviour is **parental investment**. Parental investment consists of mating effort and rearing effort

- Males produce millions of sperm and are fertile puberty to death
- Female generally produce one ovum per month and are only fertile for about 30yrs . Pregnancy/ childbirth are time consuming and dangerous.
- This produces different amounts of investment and different routes to **reproductive success** for males and females

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### Routes to reproductive success

**Male investment : small**

**Female investment : huge**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mate with as many fertile women as possible</li> <li>• Choose young females - youth and fertility go together.</li> <li>• Behave promiscuously - any opportunity for mating increases reproductive success</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the survival of few precious offspring</li> <li>• Be choosy : select a mate who will stay around / input resources to offspring</li> <li>• Promiscuity may lead to pregnancy with no support to raise offspring who may not survive</li> </ul> |
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How does this show today ?




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### Evidence.....

Buss and Schmidt ( 1993) 'How many sexual partners would you like over the next 2 yrs/ 10 yrs/ lifetime ?

- Over a lifetime women = 4/5, men = 18
- Buss ( 1989) Studies of personal column adverts and cross cultural studies support the claim that men and women seek different qualities in partners

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### But .....

- This explanation overlooks the role of free will – many males do not behave promiscuously – and females do !
- Buss and Schmit's Sexual Strategies Theory argues that people use different strategies when pursuing a short term mate ( one night stand) and long term partner
- There are alternative, cultural explanations of these findings. Promiscuity in young men is seen as laddish-ness but in young women it is frowned on

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### EFFECTS OF EARLY EXPERIENCE AND CULTURE ON RELATIONSHIPS

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### Key questions.....

*The influence of childhood on adult relationships*  
*The influence of culture on relationships*

- (How far ) does early experience, upbringing and culture influence later relationships ?
- Is there a link between childhood attachment type ( CAT) and adult relationships (AAT)?

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### Bowlby's attachment theory

- Differences in relationship 'styles' originated in early childhood attachments with carers.
- First relationships provide an 'internal working model' of how relationships operate.
- They also provide us with a characteristic attachment style ( Ainsworth )
- There are three attachment styles : secure, insecure ambivalent and insecure avoidant.
- Attachment styles continue to adulthood and effect adult relationships (**the continuity hypothesis**)

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### Evidence for continuity...

**Hazan and Shaver (1987)** Measured responses to a 'Love Quiz' in the local paper and found a relationship between CAT and AAT .

- Secure babies often went on to become secure adults who found it easy to love and trust
- Avoidant babies became adults who doubted if love existed and feared involvement and commitment
- Ambivalent babies became jealous or possessive adults who were intense and worried about being abandoned

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### Evidence against continuity

- Attachment style can change in adulthood in both directions:
- When major life events occur -such as parental death or divorce- attachment patterns can change from secure to insecure Zimmerman (2000)
- When disrupted early childhood is followed by later, strong relationships, an insecure attachment style can develop into **earned security** (Rutter, Quinton and Hill 1999)

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### Relationships in different cultures

#### Individualistic cultures

##### *Falling in love*

Relationships are voluntary chosen on the basis of love and attraction. They are private arrangements between 2 people

People can choose to live together

Relationships can be ended if couples are unhappy

#### Collectivist cultures.

##### *Learning to love*

Marriages are arranged by relatives or well wishers. They are alliances between families.

Partners are chosen for wealth, profession and social status of family.

Relationships are viewed as permanent and divorce can be difficult / impossible.

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### Gupta and Singh (1982)

Compared liking and loving in 100 professional Indian couples, matched for education and all living in Jaipur:

- 50 had married for love and 50 had arranged marriages.
- Liking and loving started at high levels in love marriages but declined rapidly over the first 10 years of the marriage.
- Arranged couples started with lower levels of liking and love but these increased as the marriage progressed.
- After ten years of marriages, the arranged couples liked and loved their partners MORE than the chosen couples.

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## But, it's more complex than this

**Qureshi (1991)** : 3 types of arranged marriage :

1. Planned / traditional: Parents choose partners with little/ no discussion with child ( forced marriage )
2. Delegation: child explains what kind of partner they would like and parent / well wishers look for children from 'appropriate' families
3. Joint venture: parents and children are active in the search for a partner .

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## Social change

Westernization and globalisation are altering traditional relationship patterns and expectations .....

**Xiaohe and Whyte (1990)** found that Chinese women who had chosen their partners were of happier than those in arranged marriages.

**Zaida and Shuraydi (2002)** studied 20 2nd generation Pakistani, Muslim women brought up in Canada. Most disliked the idea of arranged marriages preferring to choose their own partner.

Both studies show how western cultural views are internalised – (acculturation.) Families are often resistant to westernised leading to a clash of cultures

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## New cultural arrangements emerging..

**Ghuman (1994)** studied British and Canadian Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims . Sikh and Hindu families were more likely to use delegation or joint venture methods of arranging marriages, whereas Muslim families preferred traditional arranged marriages.

**Goodwin and Adatia (1997)** studied 70 Indian Hindu couples living in Leicester. Less than 10% had fully arranged marriages. 90% had large element of choice over their partner

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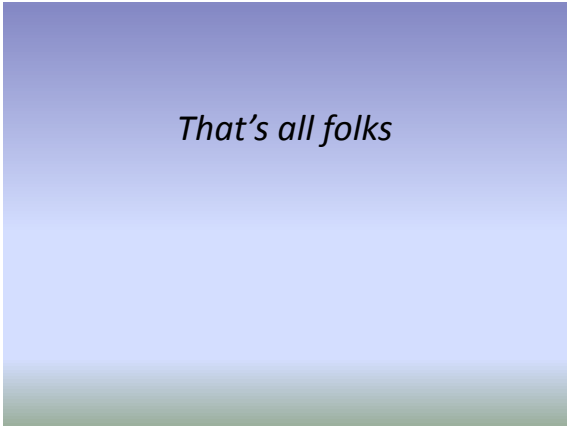
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