

# Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior Mock Test

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## Passage I (Questions 1–6)

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A longitudinal study follows 1,200 adolescents from age 14 to age 22, measuring socioeconomic status (SES), perceived discrimination, depressive symptoms, and academic achievement each year. Structural equation models test whether perceived discrimination mediates the link between low SES and later depressive symptoms, and whether that pathway is moderated by the presence of a supportive adult mentor. Results indicate a significant indirect effect of low SES on depression through discrimination; the indirect effect is substantially weaker among adolescents who report a stable mentoring relationship.

A secondary analysis examines whether the same mentoring relationship also predicts higher educational attainment at age 22, controlling for earlier academic performance.

### Question 1

The finding that mentoring weakens the SES → discrimination → depression pathway is an example of:

- a) Mediation
- b) Moderation
- c) Spurious association
- d) Reverse causation

**Correct Answer: b) Moderation**

#### Explanation:

A variable that changes the strength of a relationship is a moderator.

### Question 2

Perceived discrimination functions in the primary model as a:

- a) Moderator
- b) Mediator
- c) Confounder only
- d) Dependent variable only

**Correct Answer: b) Mediator**

#### Explanation:

It transmits the effect of SES onto depressive symptoms.

### Question 3

The study design is best described as:

- a) Cross-sectional
- b) Experimental
- c) Longitudinal observational
- d) Case-control

**Correct Answer: c) Longitudinal observational**

#### Explanation:

Repeated measures over eight years without random assignment constitute a longitudinal observational design.

### Question 4

Controlling for earlier academic performance when predicting educational attainment helps to:

- a) Eliminate all genetic influences
- b) Reduce the possibility that prior achievement confounds the mentoring effect
- c) Prove that mentoring is the sole cause of attainment
- d) Convert the study into a randomized trial

**Correct Answer: b) Reduce the possibility that prior achievement confounds the mentoring effect**

#### Explanation:

Covariate adjustment for baseline achievement strengthens the inference that mentoring contributes unique variance.

### Question 5

Low SES is most accurately viewed in this study as a:

- a) Purely individual psychological trait
- b) Distal social determinant that shapes multiple proximal stressors
- c) Random measurement error
- d) Biological marker

**Correct Answer: b) Distal social determinant that shapes multiple proximal stressors**

#### Explanation:

SES operates as a broad structural factor that influences exposure to discrimination and other stressors.

### Question 6

The protective role of a mentor is most consistent with which theoretical construct?

- a) Social capital / social support buffer
- b) Cognitive dissonance
- c) Stereotype threat
- d) Fundamental attribution error

**Correct Answer: a) Social capital / social support buffer**

#### Explanation:

A supportive adult relationship supplies emotional and instrumental resources that buffer stress.

### Passage II (Questions 7–11)

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In a laboratory experiment, participants are randomly assigned to write either about a recent personal failure or about an ordinary daily routine. Afterward they complete a decision-making task that offers the chance to restore a sense of control (by choosing the order of subsequent tasks) or to affirm a core personal value. A third group simply completes a filler questionnaire. All participants then rate their current self-esteem and perform a frustrating puzzle. The failure-writing group that is allowed to restore control shows higher self-esteem and greater persistence on the puzzle than the failure-writing group that only completes the filler questionnaire.

### Question 7

The experimental manipulation of writing about failure is intended to induce:

- a) Cognitive dissonance
- b) A temporary threat to self or sense of control
- c) Long-term depression
- d) Group polarization

**Correct Answer: b) A temporary threat to self or sense of control**

#### Explanation:

Recalling failure is a standard method of experimentally lowering momentary self-regard or perceived control.

### Question 8

The finding that restoring control improves persistence is most consistent with:

- a) Learned helplessness theory (absence of control reduces motivation)
- b) Social identity theory
- c) Drive-reduction theory
- d) Classical conditioning

**Correct Answer: a) Learned helplessness theory (absence of control reduces motivation)**

#### Explanation:

Restoring an opportunity for control counteracts the motivational deficits associated with perceived helplessness.

### Question 9

Random assignment in this study serves to:

- a) Guarantee external validity
- b) Equate groups on average before the manipulation
- c) Eliminate the need for a control condition

- d) Measure mediating variables

**Correct Answer: b) Equate groups on average before the manipulation**

**Explanation:**

Random assignment balances both known and unknown confounds across conditions.

### Question 10

Self-esteem in this experiment is treated as a:

- a) Independent variable
- b) Dependent variable
- c) Moderator only
- d) Demographic covariate

**Correct Answer: b) Dependent variable**

**Explanation:**

It is measured after the manipulation and is an outcome of interest.

### Question 11

The design includes which of the following features?

- a) Only correlational comparisons
- b) A manipulated independent variable and random assignment
- c) No control group
- d) Exclusive reliance on archival data

**Correct Answer: b) A manipulated independent variable and random assignment**

**Explanation:**

These features define a true experiment.

## Independent Questions (Questions 12–15)

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### Question 12

According to Erikson, the primary psychosocial crisis of adolescence is:

- a) Trust vs. mistrust
- b) Autonomy vs. shame
- c) Identity vs. role confusion
- d) Integrity vs. despair

**Correct Answer: c) Identity vs. role confusion**

**Explanation:**

Erikson's fifth stage centers on the formation of a coherent identity.

### Question 13

The bystander effect is primarily explained by:

- a) Diffusion of responsibility and pluralistic ignorance
- b) Classical conditioning
- c) Genetic altruism
- d) Cognitive dissonance

**Correct Answer: a) Diffusion of responsibility and pluralistic ignorance**

**Explanation:**

Both processes reduce the likelihood that any single individual will intervene.

### Question 14

A schema is best defined as:

- a) A fixed action pattern
- b) A cognitive framework that organizes information about the world
- c) An unconscious drive
- d) A temporary emotional state

**Correct Answer: b) A cognitive framework that organizes information about the world**

**Explanation:**

Schemas are mental structures that guide perception, memory, and inference.

**Question 15**

In operant conditioning, a variable-ratio schedule is associated with:

- a) Rapid extinction
- b) High, steady response rates that are resistant to extinction
- c) Responses that occur only at fixed intervals
- d) No learning

**Correct Answer: b) High, steady response rates that are resistant to extinction**

**Explanation:**

Variable-ratio schedules (e.g., gambling) produce persistent responding.