

ORGANISATIONAL WORK CONDITIONS ESSAY PACK

For CAIE A2 Psychology Paper 3

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1a) Describe what psychologists have discovered about:

- **the impact of physical work conditions on productivity and the Hawthorne effect, and**
- **the impact of the design of the work environment focusing on open plan offices, including a study. [6]**

Ans.

Physical work conditions such as temperature, noise and lighting can influence productivity by affecting comfort, health and concentration. Early research on this topic led to the Hawthorne effect.

t. However, Kompier argued that the Hawthorne effect is

The design of the work environment also affects productivity, particularly in open plan offices. Open plan offices are designed to increase

. Oldham and Brass investigated the effects of moving from a conventional office

1 b) Evaluate what psychologists have discovered about:

- the impact of physical work conditions on productivity and the Hawthorne effect, and
- the impact of the design of the work environment focusing on open plan offices, including a study

including a discussion about determinism versus free-will

Evaluation in your answer can include strengths, weaknesses and a discussion of issues and debates. [10]

Ans.

One relevant issue is determinism versus free-will. Research on physical work conditions and productivity support determinism. The Hawthorne studies implied that [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] . Kompier challenged this [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], as Oldham and Brass showed that [REDACTED]

Another issue is the use of experiments. The Hawthorne studies used quasi-experimental methods in real workplaces, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] . Kompier brought about the lack of scientific rigour and [REDACTED]

In contrast, Oldham and Brass used a longitudinal [REDACTED]

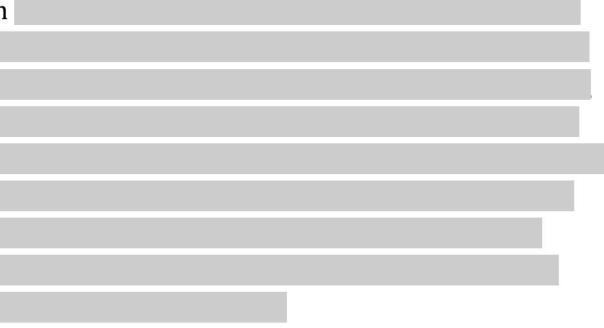
A final issue is the use of questionnaires. Research on open plan offices heavily depends on [REDACTED]

2 a) Describe what psychologists have discovered about:

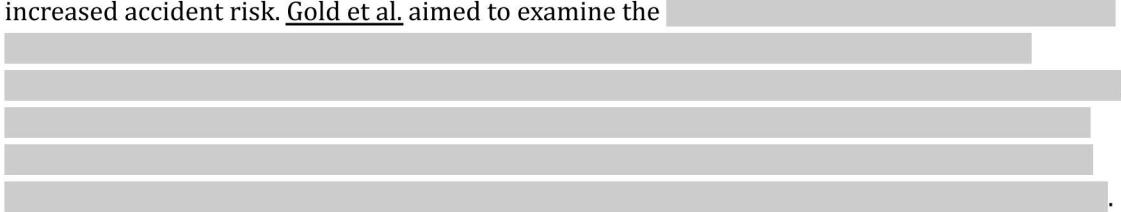
- **design of work: shiftwork, and**
- **effects of shiftwork on health and accidents, including a study. [6]**

Ans.

Shiftwork refers to work schedules that fall outside standard daytime hours. Rotational shiftwork involves workers moving between



Shiftwork is associated with disrupted circadian rhythms, reduced sleep quality, fatigue and increased accident risk. Gold et al. aimed to examine the



2 b) Evaluate what psychologists have discovered about:

- **design of work: shiftwork, and**
- **effects of shiftwork on health and accidents, including a study**

including a discussion about application to everyday life

Evaluation in your answer can include strengths, weaknesses and a discussion of issues and debates. [10]

Ans.

One relevant issue is application to everyday life. Research on shift design shows clear practical implications. Rapid rotational shift patterns, especially backward rotation, d [redacted]

Gold et al.'s findings that rotator nurses slept less [redacted]

Another relevant issue is determinism versus free-will. Much of the research supports a deterministic explanation, as [redacted]

[redacted]. Similarly, flexi-time assumes workers can self-regulate their schedules responsibly. This suggests that [redacted]

A final issue is the use of questionnaires. Gold et al. used self-report questionnaires to measure sleep, [redacted]

3 a) Describe what psychologists have discovered about:

- accidents at work focusing on human and system errors, and
- reducing accidents at work using a token economy, including a study. [6]

Ans.

Accidents at work can be explained using human and system errors in operator-machine systems. Human errors occur when [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

System errors come from poor design of machine controls and displays. Displays give information to operators [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

One method of reducing accidents is a token economy, based on [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Fox et al. aimed to investigate whether a token economy could [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

3 b) Evaluate what psychologists have discovered about:

- accidents at work focusing on human and system errors, and
- reducing accidents at work using a token economy, including a study

including a discussion about individual and situational explanations

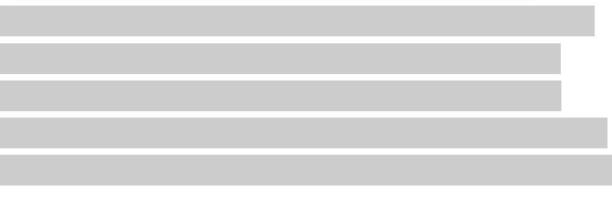
Evaluation in your answer can include strengths, weaknesses and a discussion of issues and debates. [10]

Ans.

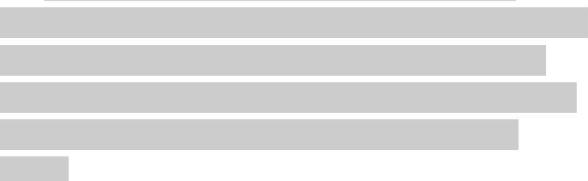
One relevant issue is individual and situational explanations. Human error approaches to workplace accidents focus on individual factors, such as mistakes in attention, memory or decision-making. Errors of omission, commission, sequencing and timing all



Another relevant issue is idiographic versus nomothetic approaches. Classifications of human errors and design principles for controls and



A final issue is the use of longitudinal studies. Research on token economies was improved by Fox et al.'s long-term design, as the programme



4 a) Describe the key study by Swat (1997) about monitoring of accidents and risk events.

[6]

Ans.

Swat investigated how accidents and risk events are monitored in organisations and highlighted limitations of using only reactive monitoring. Reactive monitoring focuses on [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

The aim of the study was to develop a useful method of recording [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED].

Results showed accident frequency averaged 2.8 per 100 employees, with the foundry highest. Accident severity averaged [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED].

It was concluded that monitoring should include [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

4 b) Evaluate the key study by Swat (1997) about monitoring of accidents and risk events including a discussion about individual and situational explanations

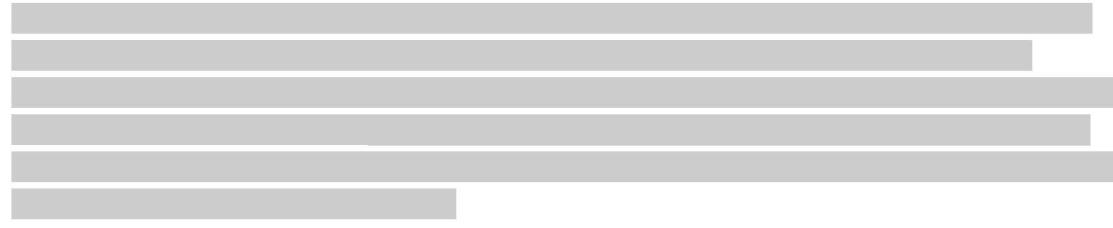
Evaluation in your answer can include strengths, weaknesses and a discussion of issues and debates. [10]

Ans.

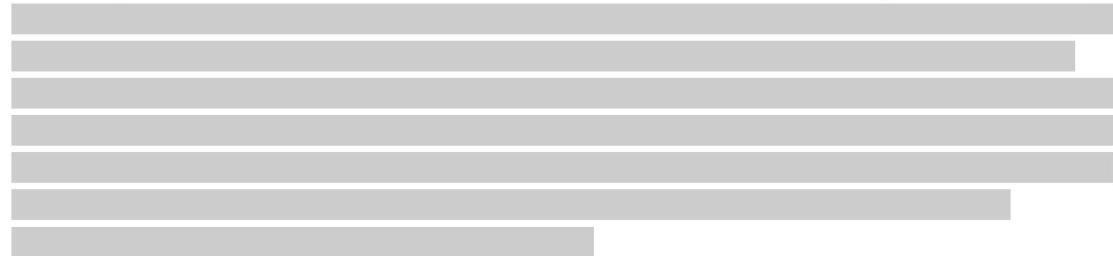
One relevant issue is individual and situational explanations. Swat's findings strongly support situational explanations of workplace accidents. Their analysis showed



Another relevant issue is idiographic versus nomothetic approaches. Swat used a largely nomothetic approach by classifying



A final issue is the use of longitudinal studies. Swat analysed accident data over several years and compared accidents in 1993 with incidents recorded in 1994. This helped identification



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