

Chapter

3

The psychodynamic approach

This chapter is about Sigmund Freud's theory and the ideas that make up the psychodynamic approach.

Study of interest Williams (1994) examined medical records to find young women who had been treated for sexual abuse when they were children. The question was: 'Would these women remember their experiences from 17 years previously?' Freud's theory suggests that repression would lead them to forget. Indeed, 38% had forgotten the experiences. This study shows motivated forgetting to prevent such memories becoming conscious. It is an example of the use of defence mechanisms. Defence mechanisms, repression and the role of the unconscious are explained in this chapter.

Everyday example In 2007, a girl fell 10 metres from a window, apparently after an argument over a 'love triangle'. She was in a coma but was set to make a full recovery. However, she has no memory of what happened. This seems to be an example of motivated forgetting and repression. She is protected from traumatic memories. Motivated forgetting and repression are concepts that are explained by the psychodynamic approach.

Summary of learning objectives

Definitions

You have to be able to define the terms:

- id, ego, superego
- oral, anal, phallic, latency and genital stages of development
- defence mechanisms and repression
- conscious, preconscious and unconscious
- Oedipus complex

Methodology includes:

- case studies, including strengths and weaknesses and Freud's special case studies
- analysis of qualitative data
- correlation designs, including strengths and weaknesses
- longitudinal and cross-sectional studies
- ethics and credibility of Freud's work
- sampling techniques

Content covers:

- Freud's five stages of psychosexual development and the Oedipus complex in the phallic stage (including how Freud explains gender development)
- Freud's three-part theory of personality (id, ego, superego)
- the conscious, preconscious, and unconscious
- defence mechanisms, including repression and one other mechanism
- Freud's idea about gender development compared with the explanations of the biological and learning approaches

Studies in detail

You have to be able to describe and evaluate in detail:

- Freud's study of Little Hans (1909)
- one other from Axline (1964/1990), Bachrach et al. (1991) and Cramer (1997)

Three of the studies are described and evaluated in this chapter, *one is summarised here and covered in detail on the CD-ROM.*

Key issues

You have to be able to describe one key issue of your (or your teacher's) choice and apply concepts and theories from the psychodynamic approach to explain it. Two of the key issues suggested in the specification are covered in this chapter, *two are summarised here and covered in detail on the CD-ROM.*

Practical

You have to:

- carry out one practical of your (or your teacher's) choice, which must be a correlation, using self-report data and rating scales
- use a scattergram and a Spearman's test to analyse the results



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- know how to write up the procedure, apparatus, sampling and results sections of a report
- be able to evaluate using strengths and weaknesses of correlations

One suggested practical is given in this chapter.

Study hint Make the above summary of learning objectives into a checklist, as suggested in Table 3.1. You could include more detail. For example, instead of correlations, list negative and positive correlations, and strengths and weaknesses of correlations.

Table 3.1 A checklist of what you need to know for the psychodynamic approach and for your progress

I need to know about	Done	More work	I need to know about	Done	More work
Case studies			Conscious, preconscious, unconscious		
Freud's case studies			Defence mechanism		
Qualitative data			Repression		
Correlations			Another defence mechanism		
Cross-sectional studies/designs			Little Hans study		
Longitudinal studies/designs			One other study		
Ethics and credibility of Freud			One key issue		
Sampling techniques			One practical: a correlation		
Id, ego and superego			Strengths and weaknesses of a correlation		
Oral, anal, phallic, latency, genital stages			Spearman's test		
Oedipus and Electra complexes			Scattergraphs		
Gender development					

Definitions

The following terms are defined in this chapter:

- id, ego and superego — the three parts of the personality according to Freud
- conscious, preconscious and unconscious — three parts of the mind according to Freud
- oral, anal, phallic, latency and genital stages — the stages of psychosexual development according to Freud
- Oedipus complex — occurs in the phallic stage
- defence mechanisms — repression and one other

An introduction to the psychodynamic approach

This chapter is about Freud's psychodynamic theory. The methodology also examines other issues, but the main focus is on Freud's psychosexual approach. Case studies are central to his approach and correlations are a good way of testing his theory. The studies in detail explore the theory in more depth, as does the key issue, which should help you to relate the theory to everyday concerns. The practical is a chance for you to test some aspect of Freud's theory for yourself.

The methodology used by Freud is not easily separated from his theory. The ideas of dream and symbol analysis are outlined in the methodology section, together with his other research methods of free association and slips of the tongue. Freud's therapy — psychoanalysis — is also mentioned. The content section covers the theory in some detail.

Study hint It is useful to study the approach as a whole rather than the methodology, content, studies in detail, key issue and practical as separate sections. Read the chapter as a whole, taking in some of the information but without taking notes or learning the terms. For this approach, the Little Hans study is the main study. It is mentioned in the methodology section, it features in the content section and is described and evaluated in the study-in-detail section. After reading the whole chapter, you can then start learning in earnest.

Background to the psychodynamic approach

Freud made some basic assumptions about human nature that have to be appreciated in order to understand his theory. Information about his life is included, with a suggestion that you research further to find out what sort of person he was. Freud used cocaine, which almost certainly did him physical harm. However, as his theory was developed over his lifetime, it is probably not true to say that what some call his 'rather fantastic ideas', were drug-induced.

A brief background of Freud

Freud was a medical doctor. He saw people in hospitals with severe mental health problems getting either very little treatment or no treatment at all. We would consider any treatment given to be barbaric — for example trying to shake the madness out of them or giving them cold baths.

He was an ambitious man who wanted to develop a theory applicable to all people. He had what he thought of as interesting dreams and could remember that as a child he had strong feelings for his mother, the relevance of which becomes clear once you study his ideas. His world was upper-middle class, mixing with people in Viennese

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'high' society. He married, had children and lived a comfortable existence. However, he was also Jewish at a time of persecution of Jews. He experienced hatred, his books were burned and he eventually left his home country of Austria.

He seems to have been a compassionate man, who believed in his own ideas. These changed throughout his life as he continued to develop his theory. His training as a medical doctor made him scientific in his approach and, although he has been criticised strongly for being unscientific, he did make an effort to be scientific in his studies. For example, Little Hans was a small boy whose development was relayed by the boy's father to Freud over quite a long time. When studying Little Hans, Freud says that he tried hard to consider only data that came directly from Little Hans and to discount interpretations by Little Hans's father. The story of Little Hans provided evidence for some of Freud's ideas and is detailed on page 196.



TopFoto

Sigmund Freud

Explore In developing his theory and treating patients with neuroses, Freud studied individuals in detail. This type of approach to developing a theory is called **idiographic**. When scientists look for general laws, it is called a **nomothetic** approach to developing a theory. Freud, though working in an idiographic way, claimed to have found a general theory for all mankind and claimed to be working in a nomothetic way. Exploring the issues of idiographic and nomothetic approaches is a useful way of evaluating Freud's work.

Explore The Freud museum website (www.freud.co.uk) has lots of information about Freud himself and some original letters. There are Freud museums in London and Vienna. The one in Vienna is in the house where he lived, which is itself of interest.

Key assumptions underlying Freud's theory

The first key assumption is the importance of the first 5 years. Freud thought that the first 5 years of life were the most important time for forming a personality. Unsolved problems that arose in those years would affect development.

The second key assumption is that development occurs through stages that all children pass through. According to Freud, in the first 5 years there are three important psychosexual stages. If all is well and the child resolves any issues that arise within those stages, then the child will develop a stable personality and be able to form good adult relationships. If, however, there are problems in one or more of those stages, then the adult will not have a stable personality and will have problems to resolve.

A third key assumption is the importance of the unconscious. For Freud, the unconscious part of the mind is the largest and the most powerful — and almost inaccessible.

A fourth key assumption is that everyone has an amount of energy that does not decrease or increase and that some of that energy is **libido**, which is sexual energy. This assumption is what leads to Freud's theory being called 'psychosexual'. It is a theory of the mind and a theory of instinctive energy and innate (inborn) drives. He thought that the basic drives of hunger, thirst and need for shelter were catered for in the Viennese society he moved in, so he focused on the sexual drive.

Examination-style question

Outline two assumptions of Freud's approach. In each case, give an example from the approach.

(6 marks)

Extension question

Discuss what is meant by a theory belonging to the psychodynamic approach. Include the expected features of the theory. In your answer, draw on examples from the approach to illustrate your argument(s).

(12 marks)

Methodology

For the psychodynamic approach you need to look at case studies in general, case studies as used in the approach, correlation design, cross-sectional and longitudinal studies and sampling techniques.

The case study research method

The case study is a research method that allows data to be gathered in both depth and detail. It is either a study of an individual or of a small group of individuals connected in some way, such as a group of children brought up together and deprived of parenting. Some case studies involve a particular programme, e.g. a government-funded programme of health promotion.

The individual, small group or programme becomes the focus of a case study. Within that study, different research methods are used. Since depth and detail are required, the researcher can use interviews, questionnaires, and observations, among other research methods, to gather as many data as possible. A central research tool is the case history, in which details of the case are described. The case history provides qualitative data. If appropriate, tests and experiments can be carried out.

It is important to note that a case study is a research method in itself. However, other research methods are used to gather the data. Data are not gathered *by* a case study but *within* or *for* a case study, which makes it different from other research methods. Case studies provide mainly qualitative data, but some research methods, for example tests and questionnaires, do gather quantitative data.

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One way of using the different research methods within a case study is to see them as ways of gathering data and then to use **triangulation** to work out themes and to generate the final results. A researcher will pool data about one person or event from different sources and then look for common themes. A piece of information from one source can thus reinforce data from another source.

Triangulation is the term for analysing data gathered by different means and developing themes.

A study using the method **The story**

in a case study is usually interesting because it is details of a life that is different from one's own. One such case study is that of Genie (Curtiss 1977), a child who had not been cared for and who was found at the age of 13. The study is explored in detail in the child psychology option in Unit 3.

Explore Use the internet or other sources

to research two different case studies. You could choose the study of Genie and the study of Clive Wearing, who suffered memory loss with grave consequences. These very different case studies show the variety of what is studied within this research method. You could, of course, find studies of your own that are of personal interest.

Case studies and science

Whether or not case studies are scientific is arguable — there are points for and against. One argument goes further and says not only are case studies not scientific, but that they should not be scientific.

It can be argued that case studies are not scientific because they tend to use qualitative data, which means that the aim is for an understanding of meaning. There is an argument that meaning is found within the data but is not a 'thing' that will be found repeatedly, because it depends on the person interpreting the data as well as on the time, place and culture (amongst other things) within which the data were gathered. If the results are relative to the time, place, culture and interpretation rather than being 'facts' then the data are not 'scientific' and they do not help to build an indisputable body of knowledge. However, their value is in the detail and richness, which is perhaps what real meaning is about.

Explore Social constructionism is the idea that, within a particular society, inventions and culture of that society are found. These inventions are not 'real' in the sense of existing and are only real to those within that culture and society. In another culture, a different reality might be found. This is what is meant in the argument that qualitative data are not 'scientific'.

There is a counter-argument that case studies are scientific. The researcher has to gather information systematically and make sure that evidence for any claim is available in, for example, the form of quotations or percentages. Any tools such as interview schedules or questionnaires must be well constructed and, where possible, show validity and reliability. To be valid, they must measure what they

claim to measure (for example, what someone thinks, not what they feel they ought to think). To be reliable they must, when repeated, produce the same results. Validity and reliability can be shown by finding the same results by different means. The more the data are valid and reliable, the more they can be said to apply to other similar situations. This means that they are then, to an extent, **generalisable** (although not being generalisable is often given as a weakness of case studies).

Generalisability means that results from one study can be said to apply to other similar situations.

Another way that case studies can be scientific is when researchers deliberately look for evidence that goes against their predictions. Researchers recombine data and try to build different categories to test the value of their results. If the results remain the same, then it is claimed that the study is reliable and valid. One way of confirming validity is to carry out shorter repeat interviews, for example, asking relevant participants whether the results from the main study are appropriate. If the interviewee thinks the conclusions are appropriate, this suggests that the study is valid.

Analysing qualitative data

Qualitative data are analysed by generating themes and categories. If more than one case is involved in a case study, there can sometimes be cross-case analysis. Triangulation can also be used.

Generating themes

Case studies contain a great deal of qualitative data and it is useful to look at how qualitative data are analysed. In order to develop categories and themes, data are sorted into arrays and tables and, possibly, flow charts. Frequencies of events can be calculated; repeating patterns can be identified. The quantitative data that are often gathered for a case study can reinforce the analysis of the qualitative data — for example, by using statistics and figures to reinforce the themes. Sometimes more than one researcher analyses the data. If the same themes are found, this increases the level of confidence in the data.

Cross-case analysis

If there is more than one case within a case study, for example when studying a programme with more than one contributor such as a preventive medicine programme run by more than one NHS department, then the cases can be divided up for analysis. The different types of data can be divided up across the cases for analysis, rather than case by case. So, for example, all the interview data from the different cases could be analysed by one person and the questionnaire data by another. Themes can be found more readily in this way.

Analysis of qualitative data and validity issues

In general, qualitative data are valid because they are in depth and detailed and tend to measure what they claim to measure. They are not collected in an artificial setting, so there is no lack of validity in this regard.

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However, it could be claimed that the presence of a researcher means that the situation is not natural, so the data are not valid. It could also be claimed that people will not divulge everything and if there are data missing, there is less validity.

However, in general:

- qualitative data are said to be valid
- the research methods for gathering such data are said to give valid data

Study hint You need to be able to describe, assess and apply the issues of validity, reliability, generalisability, subjectivity and objectivity relating to qualitative data. This means knowing what the issues are, being able to discuss such issues and being able to identify such issues when you need to in an examination. For example, if there is a study outlined in an examination on which you have to comment, you might need to evaluate the study by commenting on issues associated with the analysis of qualitative data.

Analysis of qualitative data and reliability issues

In general, qualitative data are not reliable. This is partly because they cannot be tested for reliability because gathering qualitative data tends not to be replicable. Qualitative data are gathered from an individual (or small group) and are in depth and rich. The focus is on that individual (or group) and it would be difficult to repeat the data gathering in precisely the same way and, therefore, difficult to obtain the same results again. Situations and people change, so data gathered a second time might be different. If a study is difficult to replicate, then its results are said to be unreliable.

To assess the issue of reliability and qualitative data, it could be said that sometimes similar case studies can be carried out or a particular case study can be replicated, so some qualitative data could be reliable. For example, case studies of brain-damaged patients have shown that damage to the hippocampus causes a problem with short-term memory, so the case of Clive Wearing has in a way been replicated. More than one of Freud's case studies showed that hysteria could cause physical problems, so it could be argued that these case studies have been tested for reliability.

Analysis of qualitative data and issues of generalisability

In the main, case studies are not generalisable. If the study is of a particular individual (or small group) and data are focused on that individual (or group) and are in depth and detailed, then the data are likely to be valid for that individual (or group). They might not, however, have relevance to other individuals or groups. This is particularly true of Freud's case studies because they focused on such things as an individual's dreams and early experiences. The early experiences of other people would not be the same.

To assess the issue of generalisability in case studies, it can be argued that people with similar experiences might produce similar data, and so to that extent case studies could be generalisable. For example, Freud claimed from his case studies that symbols in dreams had meaning and that they helped to uncover unconscious thoughts. The content of the dream and the symbols themselves might be different, but the idea of symbol and dream analysis was generalised.

Analysis of qualitative data and issues of subjectivity and objectivity

In general, case studies are said to involve subjectivity and to lack objectivity. Whatever research method is used, qualitative data are recorded as thoroughly as possible. However, data gathering could involve subjectivity because the methods might require a choice of data — for example, when observing or interviewing. There can also be subjectivity when analysing data. The difficulty is that large amounts of data must be summarised, perhaps by generating themes and categories. The researcher chooses the themes, albeit having to take them from the data and having to provide evidence. Since the researcher is active in summarising the data, objectivity might be compromised.

To assess the claim that case study data are analysed subjectively, it could be said that this is not the case because of the efforts to gather both valid and reliable data. There are arguments that case studies are scientific; these arguments hold that there is objectivity.

There is an argument that subjective analysis of case-study data is a good thing. Meaning from the data comes from the participant and the researcher because each study is in a particular context and data are socially constructed. Therefore, subjectivity becomes part of the data. Thus the argument is that scientific research methods are not appropriate for case studies.

Summary of issues when analysing qualitative data

Validity

In general, qualitative data are valid because:

- they are detailed, rich and in depth
- information comes from a person in a real situation and is about his or her own life

However, qualitative data:

- may be influenced by the researcher
- are a snapshot of a certain time and situation

Reliability

In general, qualitative data are not likely to be reliable because:

- case studies are not easily replicated to test for reliability
- if repeated by another person, a case study may not yield the same results (at a different time of life or with a different participant)

However:

- similar situations can be found
- data from different case studies can be compared and conclusions drawn

Generalisability

Data from case studies are not normally generalisable because they come from one individual (or small group) and are, therefore, specific rather than general. However, Freud generalised from his case studies because he thought that they provided evidence for his general theory.

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Subjectivity/objectivity

Case studies are usually subjective because, for example, they involve interpretation by a researcher to develop themes. However, many case-study researchers aim to use scientific method. They aim for objectivity by using triangulation, valid measures, several methods, cross-case analysis, finding evidence to support theories and by testing for reliability.

Freud thought that given his aims, his interpretation was appropriate. He thought that his conclusions were objective.

Evaluation of case studies as a research method

Strengths

- The detail of the information gathered. The researcher finds out as much as possible about the individual (or small group), often using a variety of methods. Therefore, a large amount of data is gathered for analysis. When Milgram carried out his laboratory experiment, he noted that many participants were distressed by their actions. However, he was not able to investigate further to find out why some were more distressed than others. The missing data could have been useful. A case study gives as complete a picture as possible and much more detail than a laboratory experiment does.
- Valid data are produced. The researcher includes the setting and environment of the individual as part of the data, and data are gathered in a natural setting. As far as possible, the findings are about 'real' situations. The setting is natural so there is ecological validity. There are no unnatural tasks (such as in an experiment) or restricted questions (as when data are gathered by questionnaire only). Therefore, there is validity with regard to what is measured. When saying that what is measured is valid, in that it is about 'reality', this is **construct validity**. Valid means measuring what it is claimed has been measured, and can be taken to mean relating to 'real life'.

Study hint Milgram is studied within the social approach. If you are not already familiar with it, look at his study now.

Weaknesses

- Only one person (or small group) is studied and the data are about that person. The in-depth study, which looks at the uniqueness of that individual, means that it is difficult to generalise the results to other people and situations. Case studies tend to lack generalisability because most are about a specific individual.
- Case studies cannot easily be shown to be reliable because it is not easy to repeat them. They are in-depth studies at one particular time with one individual. Those exact circumstances cannot be repeated. If a study is not reliable, or cannot be shown to be reliable, it is difficult to test whether it provides useful knowledge. The research method is, therefore, said to be unscientific.

Study hint It is usually claimed that case studies are unscientific because the findings cannot be generalised and are not replicable. However, the analysis of a case study uses triangulation and themes are generated objectively, and with evidence, so there are some ways in which a case study is scientific. It is useful to understand this argument. Review the material given here and draw up a table giving both sides of the argument, in preparation for your revision.

Table Strengths and weaknesses of case studies (other than Freud's)

3.2	Strengths	Weaknesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data are valid because they are in depth, detailed and focus on real experiences in a real situation • A valuable research methodology because a case study may be the only way to gather rich, detailed qualitative information in context and with meaning for those concerned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack generalisability because they are about one individual (or small group) only, so they are specific rather than general and data cannot be applied fairly to others • Hard to replicate, so cannot be tested for reliability, which means data may be subjective and cannot be used to build up a body of knowledge

The case study as used in the psychodynamic approach

Freud used case studies in order to investigate each individual case fully. Each of his cases analysed one individual. Little Hans was such a case study.

Freud used case studies slightly differently from the way outlined earlier; nevertheless, there are similarities. Freud gathered qualitative data, but he did not use questionnaires or tests to gather quantitative data. He used his own methods to access the data he required. He wanted to access the **unconscious** mind, which is not possible by standard means. According to Freud, the unconscious mind is hidden and inaccessible, so he could not ask direct questions about it. He had to 'trick' the people into revealing their unconscious thoughts and he found unusual and special ways to do this.

Study hint The study of Little Hans is covered in this chapter in the section on studies in detail. If you have not already studied it, do so now. It is better to read the methodology material with the content of the chapter in mind, so that it links in with your study of the course.

Freud's case studies were written up using data gathered by means of various research methods, but not those used in other types of case study. Freud used case studies both to build a body of knowledge and as a research method. At the same time, he used them to help cure his patients. Therefore, Freud's case studies are both research methods and therapy. The people in Freud's case studies are patients, clients or analysands (patients undergoing analysis), rather than participants, and they are referred to as such in this section.

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Research methods used by Freud in case studies

One research method that Freud used was **free association**. This is the idea of associating ideas, things and feelings by saying what is in one's mind without censoring one's thoughts. As one thing follows another, the analyst listens to find connections, which can reveal unconscious thoughts.

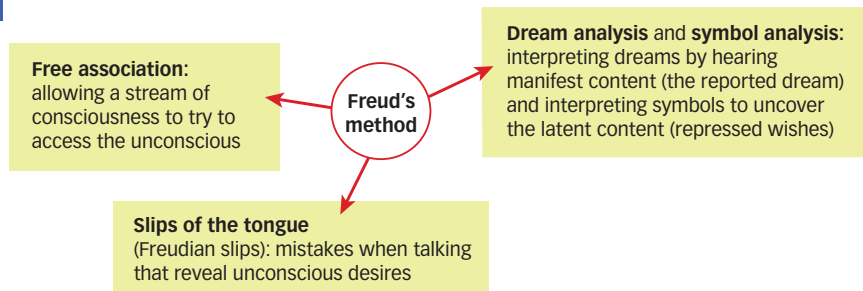
Another method that Freud used was **dream analysis**. Dream analysis involves listening to the content of the analysand's dreams and applying concepts from the psychodynamic approach to the dreams to explain them. The content that is described by the dreamer is the **manifest content**, and the underlying meaning is the **latent content**. These concepts are outlined elsewhere in this chapter, as is the process of dream analysis. **Symbol analysis** takes place when trying to uncover the unconscious through dream analysis as the manifest content is symbolic of the latent content. Symbol analysis can also be carried out not just on dreams, but on other content, for example literature.

Explore Symbol analysis in literature is worth investigating. You can find websites where such analysis is explained. For example, nursery rhymes are analysed because they have the 'bad' person, the 'good' person and the struggle between them. According to Freud, we all have the id (the 'I want' part of the personality), the superego (conscience) and the ego (reality trying to balance the id and the superego). The 'id' could be the bad person, the 'superego' could be the good person and the 'ego' is dealing with the struggle — though there is more to it than that. These parts of the personality are explained in detail later.

Another research method that Freud used was to look for **slips of the tongue**. These are when a person says one thing and means another — for example saying 'erection' when meaning 'rejection' or 'orgasm' when meaning 'organism'. These are often called Freudian slips. Repressed thoughts are revealed by the mistake or slip that is made. The examples here are clearly sexual, but other errors can include calling someone by someone else's name. Freud, however, was often looking for underlying sexual meaning.

Freud's therapy was psychoanalysis. This could also be called a research method because he built his case studies using psychoanalysis. His main purpose was to cure the patient, but alongside this he was gathering data to reinforce or amend his theories. Psychoanalysis involves gathering data by, for example, dream analysis, symbol analysis, free association and slips of the tongue, and then talking with the

Figure 3.1 *Methods used by Freud in his case studies*



analysands about the data in order to reveal their unconscious wishes and desires. Once understood, those desires would be released and the patient would be cured.

Comparing case studies as used by Freud with case studies used in other approaches

It is clear that the case study research method as used by Freud differs from the case study research method used in other approaches.

Differences include:

- the special research methods within Freud's case studies
- that he was both using a therapy and researching his theory

Similarities include:

- the focus on qualitative data
- the gathering of in-depth rich data from one person

Practice 3.1

Draw up a table with two columns and two rows. Use the two columns in the first row and allocate one for similarities between the two styles of case study and one for differences. For the two columns in the second row, give strengths and weaknesses of each style. Complete these rows of the table as fully as possible.

Suggested answer at the end of Chapter 3.

Study hint

In the exam, you are likely to be asked to compare theories, studies or methods. You cannot *learn* every answer you need for the examination, so you have to make sure that, as well as the knowledge, you have the necessary skills to compare, analyse, assess and explain your knowledge. It is useful to practise these skills, as you are asked to do here when comparing the two types of case study.

Evaluation of Freud's case study research methods

Strengths

- The data are qualitative and have depth and detail. The depth means that an individual's differences can be studied and focused upon. The data are valid because they come directly from the individual, so in that way they are 'real'. The strength, therefore, is that in-depth detailed and valid data are gathered that are difficult to gather in any other way.
- Freud's style of case study can be used as a therapy as well as a research method. It was intended as therapy, which makes it different from other research methods, which is a strength. The unconscious is not measurable in other ways, and this is a way of uncovering repressed memories and releasing them, so is therapeutic in itself.

Weaknesses

- There are failings of particular research methods within Freud's style of case study. For example, Freud himself recognised the weakness of free association. However hard patients tried to allow a stream of conscious thoughts 'out', they could not

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do so because their unconscious blocked them. Freud concluded that there would always be a block on such thoughts and that the unconscious was not easily accessed by free association.

- Probably more than with any other research method the therapist has to interpret the data. Symbols have to be analysed and each symbol is unique to the individual. Therefore, the therapist is interpreting the data from the individual, which is likely to be subjective. A scientific approach requires objectivity if the 'truth' is to be uncovered. However, this subjective interpretation might yield valid data, so although 'being subjective' is a weakness, there are also strengths.
- Freud's case studies were aimed at accessing the unconscious and the unconscious is not measurable in a scientific way. This means that any research method is going to be unscientific, which, if the aim of psychology is to build a firm body of knowledge, is a criticism.

Case studies in general are summarised in Table 3.3; Freud's case studies are summarised in Table 3.4.

Table 3.3 *Case studies in general*

Description	Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study of individual or small group ● In-depth rich data ● Mainly qualitative data ● Use many research methods such as questionnaires, case histories and observation ● Uses triangulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Generation of themes ● Use tables of categories ● Cross-case analysis ● Some quantitative data

Table 3.4 *Freud's case studies*

Description	Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study of individual ● In-depth, rich data ● Qualitative data ● Uses different techniques such as slips of the tongue, dream analysis and free association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Suggesting interpretation to analysand ● To help to reveal unconscious repressed thoughts, emotions and memories ● To make the unconscious conscious ● To release the energy to aid the symptoms ● To give evidence for Freud's ideas

Strengths and weaknesses of Freud's style of case study are summarised in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5 *Strengths and weaknesses of Freud's style of case study*

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Uses different methods to uncover unconscious wishes which are impossible to access by conventional means ● Acts both as a research method and a therapy and allows the analysand to be cured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Involves subjective interpretation by the analyst, so it is not scientific ● Cannot be replicated to test for reliability because it focuses on the unique unconscious desires of an individual and the analysis is carried out by one therapist

Ethical issues in case-study research

The British Psychological Society (BPS) and other professional bodies outline ethical guidelines that must be followed in research. Five main ethical principles are emphasised for your course, but there are others. Whatever the research method, the guidelines must be adhered to; case studies are no exception.

Study hint Ethical issues were outlined in Chapter 1. Review the issues there and be clear about the meaning of the participant giving informed consent, having the right to withdraw data, being debriefed fully, and not being deceived — and about the researcher being competent to carry out the study.

Not only was Freud's style of case study different, there are also ethical differences. The main reason is that Freud's case study is also a therapy, so ethical guidelines for practitioners must also be followed. Case studies gather in-depth data about one individual (or small group), so it might be possible to identify the individual. The detail will include more personal data than that from other research methods. This has ethical implications for confidentiality of data and the rights of the individual.

The BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct, 2006

The BPS published a new Code of Ethics and Conduct in March 2006. The code defines ethics as 'the science of morals or rules of behaviour'. Within the code, the main areas of concern include multiple relationships, competence, personal relationships, confidentiality, falsifying data or plagiarism, and bringing the profession into disrepute. It is clear that the BPS code of conduct addresses more than the five main issues focused on for this course.

The four main areas within the Code of Ethics and Conduct are respect, competence, responsibility and integrity. Other ethical principles, such as privacy, come under these four headings — for example, privacy is part of respect. Ethical issues are important for all research methods, but they are particularly important for case studies because they examine an individual's differences in ways that experiments and surveys do not. The BPS has also published Ethical Principles for Conducting Research with Human Participants and you will find details of the five ethical guidelines covered in your course there as well as others (www.bps.org.uk).

The five ethical issues focused on for AS psychology are deceit, consent, competence, debriefing and right to withdraw.

Explore Go to the BPS website (www.bps.org.uk) and look up the Code of Ethics and Conduct, March 2006. Make notes about issues of privacy and confidentiality, and explore the rest of the code.

According to the BPS website's summary of the Ethical Principles for Conducting Research with Human Participants:

In all circumstances, investigators must consider the ethical implications and psychological consequences for the participants in their research. The essential

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principle is that the investigation should be considered from the standpoint of all participants; foreseeable threats to their psychological well-being, health, values or dignity should be eliminated. Investigators should recognise that, in our multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society and where investigations involve individuals of different ages, gender and social background, the investigators may not have sufficient knowledge of the implications of any investigation for the participants. It should be borne in mind that the best judge of whether an investigation will cause offence may be members of the population from which the participants in the research are to be drawn.

Confidentiality of data and privacy

One of the BPS guidelines is that all data should be confidential and that participants should not be identifiable. There are occasions when confidentiality is waived, such as the case of Clive Wearing. His brain was damaged by a virus (which is rare) and he is now unable to lay down new memories. However, it is rare for real names to be used in case studies. For example, Genie is not a real name, and you may have read about the case studies of either HM or KF when studying memory. Both had damage to their hippocampus and both are only referred to by their initials to protect their privacy. Individuals have the right of privacy, unless they, or those close to them, choose otherwise.

To assess the ethical issue of privacy, which states that the rights of the individual with regard to confidentiality and privacy should be respected, it could be argued that the data might be valuable enough to warrant invasion of such privacy. The code, however, does not support this argument, other than some discussion of costs and benefits when deciding on a course of action and the ethical issues involved.

Ethics for practitioners

Other than competence, the ethical guidelines for practitioners are not part of your course. However, it is useful to know that there are strong guidelines for practitioners, including issues of competence, obligation, informed consent, personal conduct, access to health records, confidentiality, responsibility, safeguarding fitness to practice, teaching training and supervision, publications, private practice and relations with the public and media.

The issue of credibility with regard to Freud's theory

Credibility is an important issue in scientific research. As you investigate Freud's theory further, you will see why the question of credibility is raised. You may find aspects of Freud's theory incredible, such as the idea that a boy has sexual feelings for his mother (although it is not quite so straightforward as this). Freud's work was controversial in his lifetime

Credibility refers to how believable the findings of research are.

and remains controversial. He has been criticised for overemphasising sexual development. A later theorist, Erikson, followed Freud's ideas but developed them to focus on social development and on an individual's whole life span. His views are considered more credible because of this.

Masson (1984) criticised Freud on a number of issues. He says that Freud originally thought that what he was hearing from his patients was about child abuse, but he then dismissed this and came up with the **Oedipus complex** theory to explain his patients' stories. Freud thought that child abuse could not be so widespread, so the stories must be fantasies. Masson claims that the stories were about real child abuse and, therefore, Freud's theory is not credible.

The **Oedipus complex** is the idea that a boy has sexual feelings for his mother, but that he feels guilty because he hates his father for being a rival for his mother's affections.

Masson (1989) criticised Freud's work again and thought there were three flaws:

- First, Masson emphasised that the power of the analyst who was interpreting the patient's thoughts and dreams could lead the patient to accept the interpretation.
- Second, Masson claimed that Freud's theory shows gender bias because he focused mainly on boys in the phallic stage and claimed that boys identified with their father more thoroughly than girls identified with their mother, so girls are said to have a less strong moral code. If a theory emphasises one gender over another, it is called **alpha bias**. If a theory does not emphasise gender differences, this is **beta bias**. Freud's theory shows alpha bias. Alpha bias is often 'against' females and there is a feminist argument that Freud's theories are biased against women.
- Third, Masson claimed that Freud's theory overemphasised sexual matters, which was a sensitive issue for patients. It is claimed that, in psychoanalysis, feelings that the patient has for others can be transferred to the analyst. Those feelings can be feelings of love. This is, therefore, a sensitive issue that can lead to problems for the analyst.

A key issue described in this chapter is the problem that recovered memories may be false memories. This key issue examines the power of the analyst.

Power, gender bias and sensitivity are important issues and possible problems with psychoanalysis that bring its credibility into question.

Correlation designs

In Chapter 2, three participant (experimental) designs were outlined:

- matched pairs
- independent groups
- repeated measures

Another type of design, though not an experimental one, is **correlation design**. Correlation design involves comparing data from the same participants. Two measures

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are taken from one individual and recorded. Once the two scores are obtained from enough participants, the relationship between the scores is tested. Possible relationships are:

- scoring highly on both measures
- scoring highly on one of the measures and having a low score on the other

There are two types of correlation:

- A **positive correlation** is when one score rises as the other rises, e.g. as age increases so does the time it takes to react to a stimulus.
- A **negative correlation** is when one score rises as the other falls, e.g. as age rises, average driving speed falls.

The main points in a correlation are that the same person produces the two scores and that both measures have numerical data. In psychoanalytic theory, it has been claimed from studies that as length of time in analysis increases, benefits of the therapy rise — a positive correlation. It could also be claimed that as the level of worrying dreams rises, the ratings of a good early relationship with parents falls — a negative correlation. However, this is only speculative, rather than being derived from studies. It is just an idea for a negative correlation based on Freud's theories.

Important features of correlation design include:

- There is no independent or dependent variable. There are two variables of equal importance. For example, one variable might be length of time in analysis and the other might be the measured benefit of therapy.
- The hypothesis will not be about a difference between two conditions, it will be about a relationship between the two variables.
- The hypothesis could be directional because it could predict a positive or negative correlation. For example, a directional hypothesis for a correlation might be that 'there is a positive relationship between length of time in analysis and the benefit of therapy'. The direction is predicted — the hypothesis mentions a positive relationship rather than 'a relationship'.

Evaluation of correlation designs

Strengths

- Initial relationships can be discovered which might not have been realised previously. Whenever there are two scaled measures and the same people are producing both sets of data, a correlation test can be carried out. Therefore, this is a flexible design, which, if an unexpected relationship is indicated, can lead to new research. A study investigating the relationship between troubling dreams and the early relationship with parents would be new and a relationship might be uncovered. The relationship would be only partly unexpected because it is suggested to an extent by Freud's views.
- The same people are providing both sets of data, so the data will not be affected by individual differences. To be scientific, a research method must include controls to ensure that results are not affected by participant variables. Scores for a correlation are not affected in this way.

Weaknesses

- Correlation designs only indicate a relationship. To be scientific, a research method should be strong enough, with controls and no bias, to show a cause-and-effect relationship between the independent and dependent variables. A correlation cannot show a cause-and-effect relationship. For example, length of time in analysis and benefit of therapy could be connected, but it might not be the length of time that causes the benefit. It might be that the person staying in analysis for a long time has insight whereas a person who leaves does not have such insight. It could be that it is the ability to have insight that gives the greater benefits, not the length of time in analysis. A correlation shows a relationship but does not show that one of the variables depends on the other.
- The measures might not produce valid data. Time in analysis is a clear measure but the benefits of therapy are not easy to quantify. Some variables are more valid than others, but a correlation can use data from unnatural measures.

Table 3.6 Strengths and weaknesses of correlation design

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Good for finding relationships at the start of an investigation; also unexpected relationships; once two sets of data are collected from the same participants, a test can be carried out to see if there is a correlation between them ● There are no participant variables, so yield more secure data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Only suggests a relationship; this does not mean that the two variables are causally related; they may only show a relationship by chance or because of some other factor ● Data may not be valid because the measures may be artificial or unconnected

Analysing a correlation

Table 3.7 contains some artificial correlation data in order to show how such data can be analysed.

Table 3.7 Correlation data (artificial) to show the relationship between months in analysis and therapeutic benefit

Participant	Months in analysis	Improvement in health score (therapeutic benefit)	Months in analysis (ranked from low to high)	Therapeutic benefit (ranked from low to high)
1	65	35	10	9
2	34	41	4	10
3	20	15	1	1
4	24	22	2.5	3
5	24	26	2.5	5.5
6	58	28	8	7
7	52	18	7	2
8	46	26	6	5.5
9	38	23	5	4
10	63	30	9	8
Mode = 24 Median = 42 Mean = 42.4		Mode = 26 Median = 26 Mean = 26.4		

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Table 3.7 shows the ranking of time in analysis and therapeutic benefit measured by improvement in health score (out of 100). The ranks can be compared to show if there is a relationship between the two variables (months in analysis and improvement in health score).

If a participant's ranks are both low, middle or high, then there is a pattern:

- Participant 1 is ranked 10 for 1 months in analysis and 9 for improvement in health score. Both ranks are high.
- Participant 3 is ranked 1 for months in analysis and 1 for improvement in health score. Both the ranks are low.
- Participant 4 is ranked joint second for months in analysis and third lowest for health score — again, a close match.
- Seven of the ten participants have ranks that are either the same or within 1 of each other, which shows a strong relationship.
- Three participants (2, 5 and 7) have ranks that do not match, which shows that the correlation is not perfect.

Study hint By examining the data, patterns may emerge. You should familiarise yourself with drawing conclusions from the data in this way. A statistical test can be carried out, but it is useful to know beforehand what sort of result one might expect.

Using a scattergraph to display the results of a correlation

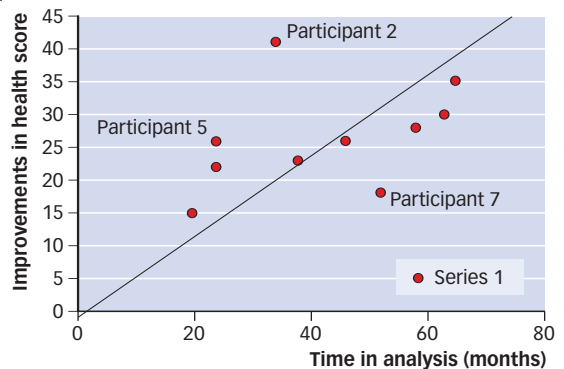
Correlation data are displayed graphically by using a **scattergraph**. The two scores from each participant generate a point on the graph, so in this example there are ten points. A line of best fit is drawn. If there is a relationship, the line of best fit is close to most of the points. A scattergraph of the data in Table 3.7 is shown in Figure 3.2.

Scattergraphs are used only for correlations.

The line of best fit, with five scores on each side, is in a positive direction. The three scores that do not fit well are clear.

Overall, this graph suggests that there is a positive correlation between time in analysis and improvement in health score.

Figure 3.2 Scattergraph to show the correlation between time in analysis and improvement in health score



When does a correlation indicate that a relationship exists?

An 'eyeball' test — looking at data sets to see how they compare — is useful, but is difficult to draw firm conclusions from. Table 3.7 shows that, for seven out of ten participants, there seems to be a relationship between time spent in analysis and health benefit. A statistical test (Spearman test) can be carried out to see if the relationship is real for the group as a whole.

First, it is important to know how to interpret the results of the test:

- If both scores rise, there is a positive correlation. A result of +1 means a perfect positive correlation. There is a perfect relationship between the two scores.
- A result of 0 means that there is no correlation. The two scores do not relate to each other.
- If one score rises and the other falls, there is a negative correlation. A result of -1 means a perfect negative correlation. There is a perfect relationship between the two scores.

For example, a test result of +0.70 or higher shows a positive relationship; a test result of -0.70 or lower shows a negative relationship. That is not to say that a result of a +0.45 does not show a relationship (see page 178).

Carrying out a Spearman test

Table 3.8 Data for a Spearman test, based on Table 3.7

Participant	Months in analysis	Improvement in health score (therapeutic benefit)	Months in analysis (ranked from low to high — Step 1)	Therapeutic benefit (ranked from low to high — Step 1)	Difference between ranks (Step 2)	Differences squared (Step 3)
1	65	35	10	9	+1	1
2	34	41	4	10	-6	36
3	20	15	1	1	0	0
4	24	22	2.5	3	-0.5	0.25
5	24	26	2.5	5.5	-3	9
6	58	28	8	7	+1	1
7	52	18	7	2	+5	25
8	46	26	6	5.5	+0.5	0.25
9	38	23	5	4	+1	1
10	63	30	9	8	+1	1
Mode = 24		Mode = 26		Total (Σ) = 74.5		
Median = 42		Median = 26		(Step 4)		

How to rank data

- Start with the lowest score. Give it a rank of 1.
- Allocate ranks as the scores rise.
- If there are two or more scores that are the same, allocate all those scores to the same rank by finding the middle rank. For example, if there are two scores of 20 that would be ranked 3 and 4, give them both the rank of 3.5. If there are three scores of 20 that would be ranked 3, 4 and 5, give them all a rank of 4.

How to calculate Spearman's coefficient of rank correlation

Refer to Table 3.8. The formula for the calculation of Spearman's coefficient of rank correlation (R_s) is:

$$R_s = 1 - \frac{6\sum d^2}{N^3 - N}$$

Step 1: Rank both sets of data.

Step 2: Work out the difference (d) between the ranks for each participant.

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Step 3: Square (multiply by itself) the difference found in Step 2 for each participant. This gets rid of the minus signs.

Step 4: Add up the squared differences (the numbers worked out in Step 3). For the data given in Table 3.8, the total is **74.5**.

Step 5: Find N , which is the number of scores. (Here, $N = 10$.)

Step 6: Multiply the sum of the squared differences (from Step 4) by 6. (Here, $74.5 \times 6 = 447$.)

Step 7: Square N and subtract 1. (Here, $10 \times 10 - 1 = 99$.)

Step 8: Multiply the answer found in Step 7 by N . (Here, $99 \times 10 = 990$.)

Step 9: Divide the answer to Step 6 by the answer to Step 8. (Here, $447/990 = 0.45$.)

Step 10: Subtract the answer to Step 9 from 1. (Here, $1 - 0.45 = +0.55$.) This is the result of the test. It is in Step 10 that a minus or plus sign is allocated. If the answer to Step 6 is larger than the answer to Step 8, the result of Step 10 will be negative and any correlation will be negative. If the answer to Step 6 is smaller than the answer to Step 8, the result of Step 10 will be positive and any correlation will be positive.

Step 11: Look up the result of the test in statistical tables to see if it is significant. (Statistical tables for the various statistical tests, including Spearman's, can be found in a statistics textbook or using the internet.)

For $N = 10$ and 0.05 level of significance, the result has to be greater than 0.56 for it to be significant.

The scores given here as an example seem to show a positive correlation from the eyeball test and from the scattergraph. However, the Spearman test shows that the result of +0.55 is not quite significant.

Cross-sectional and longitudinal types of study

Even with different research methods, if a study is looking at developmental trends, it can be carried out either cross-sectionally or longitudinally.

Cross-sectional studies

A cross-sectional study takes one moment in time and compares different groups at that time. Most experiments are cross-sectional because they are usually only used to test the participants once. For example, experiments to test memory are cross-sectional if they compare the memory of a list of words by a control group and an experimental group. However, if the study is about how memory changes with age, in other words if developmental trends are the focus of the study, then the choice of a cross-sectional or longitudinal design is important. One could choose a cross-sectional design and test, for example, 20-year-olds and 70-year-olds and compare the findings. The other way would be to choose a longitudinal design and wait 50 years for the participants to age. This would be rather impractical.

In the study by Bachrach et al. (1991) (on the CD-ROM), there were times when a longitudinal study was used — researchers went back to patients to see if therapeutic benefit had continued. Cramer (1997) (page 207) used data from a longitudinal

study when investigating a possible link between personality and the use of defence mechanisms. She used data already collected for an ongoing **longitudinal study** of developmental issues studying people from the age of 3 years onwards. They were 23 years old when Cramer (1997) used the data.

The psychodynamic approach is about development and uses **longitudinal studies**. The cognitive approach is about information processing, so cross-sectional studies are more likely to be used.

Strengths of cross-sectional studies

- They do not take as long to carry out as longitudinal studies, so they are cheaper and easier. The study is manageable and the results can be analysed more quickly. Cost, time and ease of use are all useful factors when research is being planned. For these reasons, cross-sectional studies are more practicable than longitudinal studies.
- It is easier to find participants because they take part for only a short time compared with longitudinal studies.
- Cross-sectional studies are more ethical than longitudinal studies, which may put pressure on participants.

Weaknesses of cross-sectional studies

- Because they take place at one time only, they do not gather such rich data as longitudinal studies. At some other time, the participants might have responded differently. If a matched pairs or independent groups design is used, the participants may be different. Therefore, the data are less focused on the individual and less detailed.
- They cannot find trends in data or find out what would happen at a later date if the study were repeated. Cross-sectional studies are scientific if there are good controls, but they are snapshots of a situation and there is no opportunity to follow up on the findings.

Study hint When giving strengths or weaknesses, be sure to make the point fully. If you just say that a strength of cross-sectional studies is that they are easier or cheaper, you will not score the marks. You have to explain why this is the case.

Table 3.9 Strengths and weaknesses of cross-sectional studies

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● They are reasonably cheap, quick and practical because there is no follow-up and participants are only tested once ● Participants are found more easily because there is no follow-up; this makes the studies more ethical because there is less pressure on participants than there is in longitudinal designs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There is not as much detail as in a longitudinal design with regard to individual differences ● They are snapshots that gather data at one moment in time; they cannot easily gather data about trends in development

Longitudinal studies

Longitudinal studies follow one particular group over a period of time. A test or observation is repeated at intervals over the length of the study, which usually lasts quite a long time. The aim is to compare the data gathered each time to see the effects of the passage of time. For example, to study language development it would be useful to follow a group of children from babyhood through to perhaps 5 years and check their language ability at milestones along the way.

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It is hard to say exactly how long a study has to be for it to be longitudinal. A study run over a few weeks is probably not longitudinal; a study run over a few months probably is. However, it depends on what is being studied.

Practice 3.2

Here are some suggested studies. Decide whether they should be cross-sectional or longitudinal.

Study 1 To examine the effect of upbringing on social class in adulthood.

Study 2 To see if participants will conform to a group even when an answer is obviously wrong.

Study 3 To examine the effect of smoking on health.

Study 4 To see if participants recall a story in less detail over time, checking the recall over the period of a year.

Answers are given at the end of Chapter 3.

Strengths of longitudinal studies

- Longitudinal studies follow the same participants over the time of the study, so participant variables are controlled. This means that when comparing the data, any differences or similarities can be taken to come from the measure itself. For example, if the language development of some children follows the same developmental pattern from birth to 3 years, then individual differences in the participants will not cause a problem in drawing conclusions.
- Detailed developmental trends can be found. In a longitudinal study the same people are tested over time and differences and similarities in the data can be taken to be due to developmental factors. For example, if language development of some children is followed from birth to 3 years, this is a better way to find out about language stages than a cross-sectional study because the patterns and trends in language development can be identified.

Weaknesses of longitudinal studies

- Some participants may drop out because they no longer want to continue, or for some other reason. This can affect the findings because there will be fewer

Table Strengths and weaknesses of longitudinal studies

3.10	Strengths	Weaknesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The same participants are followed, so there are no participant variables to be considered and conclusions can be stronger than in an independent groups design● They are probably the best way of studying developmental trends because they repeat the tests or tasks over time and comparisons can be drawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The participants may not want to continue or may move away; those remaining may share characteristics that mean the findings are biased● There are practical difficulties; they can be expensive, time consuming and the researchers may change

participants from which to gather results and draw conclusions. There could also be a bias because those that drop out may share characteristics, leaving those remaining sharing other characteristics, so the results may be affected.

- Longitudinal studies are time consuming and expensive, and the researchers may change during the study.

Sampling techniques

Sampling techniques are important for all research methods. They are described in detail in the Chapter 1. The sampling techniques you need to know are:

- **random sampling** — each person in the population has an equal chance of being chosen to be in the sample
- **stratified sampling** — ensuring representation from certain groups
- **volunteer** or self-selected sampling — people offer to take part
- **opportunity sampling** — taking whoever is available at the time

Study hint Use the information in Chapter 1 to make sure that you understand the strengths and weaknesses of sampling techniques.

Examination-style questions

- 1 Outline the features of a correlation design. (4 marks)
- 2 Evaluate both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies in terms of both strengths and weaknesses. (8 marks)
- 3 Explain two similarities and two differences between general case studies and Freud's style of case study. (8 marks)

Extension questions

- 1 Discuss the value in psychology of using case studies compared with using experiments. (12 marks)
- 2 Compare the use of cross-sectional and longitudinal designs by looking at their strengths and weaknesses. (12 marks)

Content

Freud's psychosexual theory

This section covers the five stages of psychosexual development, the three parts of the personality, the three parts of the mind, the Oedipus complex, defence mechanisms and how Freud explained gender development.