MCTR00195_0000[1]**Cultural Biases**

One type of cultural bias in psychology is the idea of emic and etic biases/constructs. An emic construct is a factor specific to a given culture, and will discover the truth about a particular culture rather than trying to understand it from the view of the researcher. An etic construct is shown when researchers attempt to apply aspects of one culture, usually their own to the understanding of another. For example, psychological studies into intelligence; many psychologists have discussed and devised what concepts constitute intelligence, such as problem solving and memory skills. These have been assumed to be consistent across all cultures and so assumed to be an etic construct. However, the meaning of intelligence actually differs between cultures (emic construct), yet findings from IQ tests might be taken as suggesting that some cultural groups are less ‘intelligent’ than others.

If researchers try to impose their own culture’s ideas when studying other cultures, it is known as an imposed etic. This might be the case if researchers use a technique that has been developed within Western culture as a way of assessing the behaviour of individuals in another non-western culture. Intelligence tests (IQ tests) are an example of an imposed etic, as they are developed in Western countries, and measure intelligent skills valued in that culture, if taken to another culture, such as a less literate culture, individuals may appear less intelligent on these tests, however this may not be an accurate reflection of cultural differences but a result of the bias in the research.

Another type of cultural bias is ethnocentrism. This results from using one’s own cultural group as a basis for judgements about other cultural groups. We tend to view the beliefs, customs and behaviours of our own group as ‘normal’ and even superior, whereas others are viewed as ‘strange’ or deviant. An example of this would be Ainsworth and Bells ‘Strange Situation’, which was based on American child rearing practices, and failed to account for the cultural differences in these practices. The theory makes generalisations about all infant behaviour based on one cultural group (American), and views the type B (securely attached infants) as superior to type A (anxious avoidant) and type C (anxious resistant). The ‘strange situation’ is a theory rooted in the researchers own culture (America).

Task: *Break this information down into 3 key bullet points:*