perspective as assumptions made by Western culture are often applied internationally. For example, Asch and Milgram’s studies induce different results if replicated in different countries. Kilman and Mann repeated Milgram’s study in Australia and found that there were much lower obedience rates suggesting that culture impacts behaviour and reiterates that something falsifiable in one nation may not be applicable to another. This is may in turn may in turn reflect the locus of control research conducted in Western countries that corresponds and explains obedience.

Ethnocentrism refers to a particular form of culture bias the belief that one’s own group is central or even superior, and that other cultures are judged as abnormal and inferior. This often incentivises psychologists to impose their own ethos and philosophies on the world- referred to as an imposed etic. This is when a technique or theory developed in one culture is used to study the behaviour in another culture. For example, behaviours that do not conform to Western standards and culture are viewed as deficient. Ainsworth’s strange situation categorises an idealistic secure attachment and typically supposed ‘insecure’ behaviour that may be acceptable in other cultures are stigmatised which is culturally biased and an example of the etic approach.

An emic approach refers to the investigation of a culture from within the culture itself. This means that research of European society from a European perspective is emic, and African society by African researchers in Africa is also emic. An emic approach is more likely to have ecological validity as the findings are less likely to be distorted or caused by a mismatch between the cultures of the researchers and the culture being investigated.

Berry argued that one cannot judge a behaviour properly unless it is viewed in the context of the culture in which it originates, e.g. ‘hearing voices’ is seen as the norm in some cultures. He suggests psychology is often guilty of an imposed etic and that psychologists should be more mindful of the cultural relativism of their research and ensuring the things they discover may only make sense from the perspective the things they discover may only make sense from the perspective of the culture the discovery was made.

A problem with psychology and reference to ‘culture’ is that it often falls back on two distinctions, individualist and collectivist. Individualist cultures are those in the west that focus on personal freedom and independence while collectivist cultures of those in the east such as India or China, that place more emphasis on the needs of the group. However, this is being criticised as reductionist and overstates how the distinctions are made redundant when applied to increased global communication. Takano and Ohsawa found no evidence of thee distinctions between USA and Japan contrasting to others like Ainsworth or Asch who substantiated the differences in the cultures.

Another issue with conducting research on diverse cultures is that the variable being measured may be experienced inversely. For example, interpretation of behavioural and emotional expressions of aggression are quite different in culture. In China, an invasion or personal space is seen as typical whereas in the west it can be perceived as threatening. This is an issue when conduction cross-cultural research because the operationalisation if variables needs to be standardised in all the cultures studies or the validity may be impaired.

However, the assumption that psychology is predominately culturally relative is pure fallacy as there are specific universal human behaviour. Research into facial expressions and emotions such as happiness and disgust have been shown to be the same worldwide. Therefore, to acquire a broader comprehension of human actions we must study both universal behaviours as well variations behaviour between cultures.

**Discuss the Nature vs Nurture debate (16 Marks)**

The nature side of the debate suggests that like our physical characteristics, behaviour such as intelligence, abnormality etc. are also inherited and innate, and that these are influenced by biological factors such as our genetic predisposition. The nature debate is aligned closely with biological approaches such as neural, hormonal and evolutionary explanations. Hereditary co-efficient – ranging from 0 to 1 and indicates the extent to which genetic characteristics has a basis e.g. IQ is .5 across all countries.

The contrary side of the debate, nurture, concerns itself with the influence on the environment on our behaviour. It states that we are born ‘tabula rasa’ – with a blank slate, at birth which is then developed upon during life throughout learning, socialisation and experience. The nurture of the debate is strongly aligned with the behaviourist approach that dictates all learning is a product of reinforcement and association, along with learning via operant and classical conditioning.