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91876



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NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
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SUPERVISOR'S USE ONLY

Level 3 Psychology, 2019

91876 Analyse a significant issue in psychological practice

2.00 p.m. Wednesday 27 November 2019

Credits: Three

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Analyse a significant issue in psychological practice.	Analyse, in depth, a significant issue in psychological practice.	Comprehensively analyse a significant issue in psychological practice.

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

Write ONE essay in this booklet.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–12 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.

Merit

TOTAL

05

ASSESSOR'S USE ONLY

Statement Number: 1

I agree with the statement "Bias in psychological research negatively affects the validity of results" in relation to gender bias. Gender bias is a massive issue within psychological research, and it is when one gender is more favoured and biased than the other gender. This is commonly seen within research when males are more favourable than females.

A type of gender bias is alpha bias. Alpha bias is exaggerating the differences between the genders. Freud is very famous for his use of alpha bias. Freud based his research on a few female case studies, yet he stated that all girls were 'penis-envy' and secretly wished they were boys. His psychosexual development theory consisted of only a male sample, but he said females were abnormal because their feminine traits were different to the males' masculine traits. By saying these things, Freud changed the way women were treated as second-class Victorian society. This is also an example of androcentrism – seeing female behaviour as abnormal if it is different to male behaviour. Freud's research is not only androcentric and alpha biased, it also has no scientific evidence to prove his results. Meaning the alpha bias within his research negatively affected the validity of his results, as his results could not be considered scientific. Nowadays, we consider Freud's research as lacking validity not only because it has no scientific evidence but also because of the amount of alpha bias and androcentrism that has gone into his theories. Kohlberg is another example of alpha bias. In his moral development theory, he stated females were less likely to reach higher levels of moral development even though he only studied males. This is an example of alpha bias as he exaggerated the differences between the genders to discriminate against females. On the contrary, Gilligan found that females were not inferior to males but simply spoke in a different moral voice based on care and responsibility rather than social morals.

Current research into neuroscience differences between the genders can be considered as alpha biased. Brain scans are used to show electro-chemical activity, but the results are misinterpreted and exaggerated to show unscientific differences between the genders. Researchers within the study claim that all differences found in the study are due to biological reasons but Cordelia Fine says that gender differences may be exaggerated and social and cultural factors may be downplayed or ignored. Alpha bias within research negatively affects the validity of the results as we are unable to trust the results or receive accurate representation of both genders. To address these issues in the future, researchers should always include peer review that consists of both genders to reduce the biased interpretation of the results. We should also encourage more women to take up psychological research and make their own studies so we can get a more female perspective in research as well as reduce bias within researchers. Researchers should always ensure their methodology is unbiased and that the research question could be applied to anyone regardless of their gender.

Another type of gender bias is beta bias. Beta bias is minimising the differences between the genders. This is commonly seen when researchers use a male-only sample but generalise the results to the entire population. The study into the fight-or-flight response consisted of a male-only sample due to the hormonal differences between the genders. This means most research into this topic consisted of beta bias and that possible differences between the genders has been minimised. Other studies that consisted of beta bias include Asch's study of conformity and Bowlby's study of 44

thieves. These studies consisted of only male samples, yet the results were generalised to the entire population without any scientific evidence to prove females produce the same results. Generalising these results to the entire population does not produce valid results as bias samples cannot be reliable evidence for scientific research. Beta bias within psychological research negatively affects the validity of the results as there is no proof the other gender would behave in the same way as the first gender.

To address these issues in the future, researchers should always include mixed gender samples if they are intending to generalise the results to the entire population. Bias in psychological research negatively affects the validity of results because validity requires reliable, trustworthy and scientific evidence from unbiased methodology but current and historic research consisted of a lot of bias and therefore researchers did not see bias as a negative thing – as it was so common. Researchers should always remember how common yet negative bias was and strive to fix this in their own research. Other ways to reduce bias could be including mixed gender peer reviews to reduce biased interpretations as well as re-examining the facts about gender and replication of studies.

Researchers could also replicate studies done on males but on females to produce accurate and valid results. I agree with the statement “Bias in psychological research negatively affects the validity of results” but if we apply these solutions, we could reduce gender bias within psychological research.

Merit Exemplar 2019

Subject	Psychology		Standard	91876	Overall grade	5
Q	Grade	Annotation				
1	M5	<p>This candidate has provided a detailed explanation of gender bias in psychology and has addressed the statement <i>Bias in psychological research negatively affects the validity of results</i>. They have described, in some detail, supporting psychological studies and clearly linked these to gender bias, alpha bias, beta bias and androcentrism. The candidate has elaborated by explaining the societal and historical context of the research, to further demonstrate their understanding of gender bias. They have mentioned ways in which gender bias could be addressed. For Excellence, a comprehensive explanation is required. This could be achieved through explaining, in more detail, how supporting evidence links to gender bias, and further discussion of ways in which gender bias could be addressed.</p>				