

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87672-8 - Perspectives on Human Development, Family, and Culture

Sevda Bekman and Ayhan Aksu-Koc

Excerpt

[More information](#)

I

Cultural and cross-cultural psychology:
selected perspectives

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87672-8 - Perspectives on Human Development, Family, and Culture

Sevda Bekman and Ayhan Aksu-Koc

Excerpt

[More information](#)

1 Indigenization and beyond: the process and extent of psychology's growth as an international science

John G. Adair

For psychology to become a truly international science requires the participation and inclusiveness of contributions arising from diverse societies and cultures around the world. Few psychologists have worked harder to promote this goal than Çiğdem Kağıtçıbaşı. From the platform afforded by her election to various prestigious international psychological and social science organizations, she has passionately and untiringly championed the cause of psychology internationally, especially in “majority world” (MW) countries.¹ It is fitting that she was the third of nineteen recipients and the only psychologist from a MW country ever to receive the APA Award for Distinguished Contributions to the International Advancement of Psychology.

Even though the award was undoubtedly due to her cross-cultural work and applied research with mothers and children in her native Turkey, she deserves to be applauded for her at times less visible work on behalf of psychologists from MW countries. In 1994 and 1996, Çiğdem was Coordinator of the program of Advanced Research and Training Seminars (ARTS), co-sponsored by three international associations (IUPsyS, IAAP, and IACCP) to provide the opportunity for specialized training and attendance at international congresses of psychologists from MW countries. Having succeeded Çiğdem as ARTS Coordinator for the next four international congresses, 1998, 2000, 2002, and 2004, I also followed her lead in vigorously advocating support for the program and for MW psychology as a member of the Executive Committee of the International Union of Psychological Science (IUPsyS). I came to accept and promote her terminology in my own research after we collaborated in editing a special issue (Adair and

¹ “Majority world” is a less pejorative term she prefers to use in place of “developing” countries. It better captures the concept that these countries are the greater number of countries in the world that in turn contain or represent the majority of the people in the world. Although crediting Robert Myers (1992) for the first use of the term, Çiğdem has promoted its use through her writings and conference presentations.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87672-8 - Perspectives on Human Development, Family, and Culture

Sevda Bekman and Ayhan Aksu-Koc

Excerpt

[More information](#)

4 John G. Adair

Kağıtçıbaşı 1995) on the development of psychology in developing countries.

In a sense the cause we have advocated became the subject of my research – to model and study the indigenization process and the development and spread of psychology internationally. In the research that I describe in this chapter, I employ a social studies of science methodology to document the growth and development of psychology around the world into an increasingly mature, geographically balanced, and truly international science of psychology. A better understanding of how these processes of discipline development work may promote its advance in both MW and psychologically advanced (PA) countries.² It is important for both PA and MW countries to make their research known and to contribute to the broader world of psychology.

Introduction

Psychology as a scientific discipline originated in Germany in the late 1870s, but was imported into the US where it was transformed in research paradigm, in the topics researched, and through significant philosophical and methodological modifications. The new discipline developed and flourished and over the years has been exported around the world. But because of its earlier start and greater numbers, the US achieved and has maintained an extraordinarily dominant role in the world of psychology (Berlyne 1968). In addition to numbers of research psychologists, the US is a large and rich country with considerable resources to put to the service of research. The American Psychological Association (APA) is widely regarded as the most influential organization of psychologists in the world. At times, the central role of the US in psychology has been so great that it has appeared as if the science was uniquely guided by the perspectives, theories, and publications from a single country. This is unusual and not healthy for a scientific discipline.

Indigenization

The new American version of psychology was imported and applied in a range of cultures without regard to how well it could be applied or would

² An appropriate substitute for the labels “First World,” “Developed World,” or “industrialized” countries for my own research purposes is to refer to these countries not by the state of their economy but by the state of their national discipline, as “psychologically advanced” countries.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87672-8 - Perspectives on Human Development, Family, and Culture

Sevda Bekman and Ayhan Aksu-Koc

Excerpt

[More information](#)

fit. Some key MW researchers soon questioned the discipline's ill fit and lack of relevance to their country: Rogelio Diaz-Guerrero (1975) saw different premises guiding the behavior of Mexicans; Durganand Sinha (1973, 1986) questioned the relevance of psychological research to Indian society; Virgilio Enriquez appeared at successive international congresses "painting" dramatic word-pictures of differences in the Filipino culture from mainstream psychology. Within their respective countries, these voices called for indigenous psychologies; such transformations of the imported discipline that, once realized, would each appear *as if* it was indigenous to the local culture. Church and Katigbak (2002) claim that the Philippines has the most developed indigenous psychology. Yet another indigenous psychology, of the Chinese people, has been developed in Taiwan (Gabrenya et al. 2006; Yang 1997), and should be recognized for its programmatic conceptualization, clear guidelines for researchers, and systematic development.

Indigenous research has become the major concern of many from MW countries, and is a staple research topic in IACCP congresses. Most MW writings on indigenous psychology have focused on the nature of and cumulative indigenous accomplishments within each national discipline, usually illustrated by "culturally unique" behaviors or processes that have been researched. The "process" of indigenization or transformation of the discipline is usually articulated *post hoc*, often simply described by the changes that have been realized.

Durganand Sinha's (1997) systematic cataloging of the types of indigenous accomplishments typifies this approach. Sinha conceived of four aspects or types of indigenization: (a) theoretical and conceptual, (b) methodological, (c) topical, and (d) institutional. His framework was used to guide a more recent assessment of Filipino indigenous psychology (Sikolohiyang Pilipino) through its accomplishments within each of these elements (Church and Katigbak 2002). Having thoroughly studied the literature, Church and Katigbak proposed a staged evolution of indigenization that researchers experience as they attempt to cope with the problem: (1) pre-encounter (uncritical acceptance of western psychology); (2) encounter (questioning of western psychology due to its ill fit, followed by initial searches for indigenous concepts); (3) immersion-emersion (active construction of an indigenous psychology and uncritical rejection of all things western); and (4) internalization (confident acceptance of newly-developed indigenous psychology as the valid approach, accompanied by a greater openness to blending in acceptable western elements). From this viewpoint the indigenization process is based on how researchers perceive, react to, and conceive the conceptual content of the discipline. Many cross-cultural psychologists are

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87672-8 - Perspectives on Human Development, Family, and Culture

Sevda Bekman and Ayhan Aksu-Koc

Excerpt

[More information](#)

6 John G. Adair

interested in newly identified indigenous concepts that may yield insights into the universality of the science.

My approach

I have conceived of and been studying the indigenization process from a somewhat different perspective (Adair 2006): how an imported psychology can be transformed to be an appropriate fit as the national discipline for all future research. Rather than focusing exclusively on the discipline in MW countries and on its culturally unique content as somewhat different from the discipline and research found in PA countries, I based my research and writing on the following assumptions: that the national discipline in all countries generally develops as it would in any science in any country; that all national disciplines of psychology, including those in the developed world (except for the US), share the need for indigenization (or adaptation) of the discipline to their cultural context; and that integral to the development and indigenization of the national discipline is the training, maturation, and productivity of individual researchers within each country.

Individual researcher development is much like human development – both follow pathways or trajectories toward the goal of increased maturity. Individual researchers begin their careers under close supervision. Their development is nurtured and guided by a research supervisor. As they master basic skills students are allowed to take their first steps toward independent research, which they demonstrate through work on their thesis or dissertation. On its successful completion, they move out of their home department toward total independence, where, in the first academic appointment, they have the opportunity to design and pursue their own research. These early ventures may be closely patterned after research found in psychological journals, with textbook designs that were practiced in graduate school. However, following publication of their first accomplishments and subsequent successes, they proceed to tackle progressively more challenging research with increasing confidence as they mature as investigators. They become less dependent on previously published research as a template and may even address unique behaviors within their culture. Proceeding along the developmental pathway driven by their motivation to succeed that has been integral to their research training, newly established investigators begin to make substantive research contributions recognized and emulated by colleagues within their country. A number of researchers in each country proceed along similar developmental pathways toward scientific maturity. Thus indigenization is not seen as something unique, but as

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87672-8 - Perspectives on Human Development, Family, and Culture

Sevda Bekman and Ayhan Aksu-Koc

Excerpt

[More information](#)

part of the normal developmental process; researchers applying the skills and insights they acquire as they mature to shape the discipline with increasingly more appropriate and sensitive concepts and methods. The pathway is well laid out and most progress naturally through to maturity given adequate resources and conditions.

Empirical evidence regarding indigenization

My social studies of science assessment of the indigenization of psychology in MW countries involved a process of measuring over time changed practices as individuals matured as researchers and coped with the fit of the discipline to their culture. In Adair et al. (1993), for example, we cataloged changes in sixty-five different dimensions within Indian research journals across fifteen years as a means of exploring the developmental pathway the indigenization process followed. For example, ratings of sensitivity to the local culture changed differentially and gradually across years in the introduction and discussion sections of research reports, in review articles, and in the translation and cultural adaptation of tests. The source, nature, and frequency of empirical research into Indian problems and behaviors changed over time, with the timing of these developments suggesting they may have resulted as much from the maturation of the discipline as from its indigenization. Insights derived from this methodology applied to research from India, Bangladesh, and Canada are reported in Adair (2006).

These ratings, together with surveys of Indian and Bangladeshi psychologists (Adair et al. 1995), led me to conceptualize a stepwise developmental trajectory of discipline development that parallels and is driven by individual researcher development within each country. These stages refer to the arrival, establishment, modification, and development of the discipline as an independent science. I call these four stages: importation, implantation, indigenization, and autochthonization. The discipline of psychology within a country typically begins with someone trained abroad who returns with the imported discipline, which then becomes implanted as an academic department within universities. As the imported discipline is transformed to make it culturally appropriate, i.e., indigenized, the discipline is also shaped into an independent, self-sustaining or autochthonous discipline. The developmental process of autochthonization is similar to what Sinha (1997) called institutional indigenization, but I regard it as more than simply making institutional structures suitable to the culture. For example, accumulation of a critical mass of established researchers within a country is required to promote the national development of an autochthonous national discipline.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87672-8 - Perspectives on Human Development, Family, and Culture

Sevda Bekman and Ayhan Aksu-Koc

Excerpt

[More information](#)

Internationalization

Attention within MW countries has been devoted to the importation of psychology, to its indigenization, or making the discipline appropriate and sensitive to the new culture, and to its autocthonization, i.e., the establishment of a national academic discipline. But the development of individual researchers and of the national discipline do not suddenly end with these accomplishments. Indeed, research and publishing accomplishments within the country motivate the individual researchers to advance their work and to publish at the next level, that is, in prestigious journals outside the country. Universities or granting agencies often use academic promotions or even monetary rewards as incentives to publish abroad.

These dynamics move the researcher and the discipline through three further stages of activity and development, a process I call internationalization. At the discipline level, these stages are as follows. (1) International presence and visibility: publications in journals of the global psychology community and presentations at international congresses make the researcher known and bring the discipline international visibility as a place where psychology has a presence. (2) International recognition and participation: initial presentations at international congresses and publications in journals within the global community bring recognition to the national discipline and to the researcher as a visible representative of his or her country. They also have the effect of opening and encouraging participation in international psychology as a new outlet for their research. International research activity will be driven by the support and collaboration of colleagues from other countries. For new and smaller national communities, international collaborative research will drive the discipline's participation in international research. (3) International research contributor: more frequent publications abroad lead to recognition as regular participants in the international scene and as contributors to a truly international discipline. This concludes the developmental path begun with the imported discipline and with new psychologists learning how to conduct psychological research. The seemingly marginal participant in the discipline over time becomes a substantive contributor to an increasing international knowledge base.

The developmental trajectory I have outlined inevitably leads to researcher and national discipline contributions to international psychology if the local resources and conditions for the science are adequate and appropriate. Among these influential local conditions that may determine whether or not international participation and contributions

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87672-8 - Perspectives on Human Development, Family, and Culture
Sevda Bekman and Ayhan Aksu-Koc

Excerpt

[More information](#)

will be realized are: (1) The *economy*, which can provide or deprive necessary resources for scientific research. (2) The *world view* of psychologists within the discipline, which will promote internationalization if it is global, and deter it if it is primarily regional or local. (3) A *research emphasis* on generalizable contributions or on local problem solutions, which may promote or inhibit contributions to the global literature. (4) An emphasis on or exclusive use of the local *language*, which may deter internationalization as opposed to a balanced usage of the native language accompanied by an emphasis on the language of science (English), which will encourage globalization. (5) *Personal* considerations, such as whether individual researchers are confident or hesitant to attempt to publish outside their home country.

Empirical evidence of internationalization

The remainder of this chapter will highlight some of the empirical evidence of the internationalization of psychology. One purpose of this review is to examine the extent to which the data match with the internationalization model. We will then examine, as space permits, the evidence of the movement toward a more truly international science, with a more appropriately balanced global contribution of publications from the USA, and PA and MW countries. Before concluding this chapter, we will look briefly at the progress of MW countries which have imported, indigenized, and developed the discipline, to see how successful they have been in promoting its internationalization.

International presence and visibility

My colleagues and I (Adair et al. 2002) initially addressed the question, “How international is psychology?” by using measures of the research and scholarship emanating from each country. Research is visible globally through two primary sources: publications and presentations at international congresses. For the latter, we created a database of all presentations at the International Congresses of Applied Psychology over the last two decades of the twentieth century (Adair et al. 2003). For the former, we assessed by country the published psychological literature indexed on PsycLIT, the electronic database of the world’s published psychological literature available to us at the time.

Our conceptual model assumes that international activity or visibility occurs only after the discipline has become established in the country; the more established the discipline, the greater should be its international activity and visibility. The reverse should also hold: the extent

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87672-8 - Perspectives on Human Development, Family, and Culture

Sevda Bekman and Ayhan Aksu-Koc

Excerpt

[More information](#)

10 John G. Adair

of international visibility should indicate the extent or significance of psychology's "presence" within each country and could thus be used to answer the above question. Following this logic, we combined the extent of PsycLIT entries over the previous three decades with whether there were presentations at any of the five IAAP congresses, to form an index of the presence of psychology in each country. This index indicated that psychology had a visible presence in forty-seven countries, a smaller presence in another twenty-two countries, but minimal or no presence in at least sixty-two other countries. Psychology's presence was predominantly in North America and Europe ($N = 25$) and in a few other English-speaking countries. Whereas this was a noteworthy accomplishment, it was not the worldwide presence that we had hoped our discipline would have achieved.

We took pride in our empirical approach having provided an objective answer to the question of how international was psychology and serving as an index of international visibility, but for further research into the internationalization of psychology we needed to identify or develop a more satisfactory data source. Having mastered PsycINFO, we recognized its limitations and problems. The database has the potential for unknown content biases in the specific journals and type of literature indexed and in the amount of the literature from allied disciplines versus psychology. There are formatting problems, such as the incompleteness and inaccuracy of a number of records, and the absence of any country affiliation for 2,000 to 3,000 entries in some years. In recent years, PsycINFO has been evolving and it was unclear how these changes were impacting our data collection. If we wished to continue to use research output as an appropriate measure, we would have to develop our own database of research publications with known attributes to place us in a better position than PsycINFO had afforded us to confidently interpret the data.

The new database and method

We developed a database of the affiliations of all authors and co-authors for each article published in twenty-five psychology journals, systematically selected with known parameters. The database included sixteen APA or premier journals, five international journals, and four journals that were less frequently cited and hence have low-impact ratings. The APA/premier journals were published in the US, frequently cited (high-impact), and selected from four different research specialties: experimental, social, developmental, and clinical/health (four journals from each specialty), to provide added insight into where publishing changes

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87672-8 - Perspectives on Human Development, Family, and Culture

Sevda Bekman and Ayhan Aksu-Koc

Excerpt

[More information](#)

were occurring. These journals have been the preferred publication outlets for US-based scholars, with authors from the rest of the world expressing the difficulty, if not impossibility, of someone from their country publishing in these journals. It was expected that an increase in authors from the rest of the world publishing in these journals would provide indisputable evidence of the movement of the discipline toward internationalization, i.e., toward a more geographically-balanced international psychology. To psychologists from countries in the rest of the world, it also would provide evidence of their ability to compete with US scholars where US standards for research publication were being rigorously applied.

In addition, publication trends were examined in five international journals (most sponsored by international associations) and in four “low-impact” (less frequently cited) journals. Both of these latter sets of journals are open to a range of research, and provide the opportunity for international publication from a broader set of countries. The affiliations of authors were tallied for all articles published in the first three years of each decade of the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s, and in the period 2003–2005 for a current assessment. Most attention will be on the data from the most current period, with the longitudinal data collection used to provide insights into any trends and the rate of change toward internationalization. But first we want to complete our look at the match of the data to our conceptual model.

International collaborations

The model suggested that, in countries where the discipline has become internationally visible, initial attempts to advance its development would be through international collaborations. International collaborations can be assessed through multiple-authored publications in which the authors for each article are from two or more different countries. The model predicts such collaborations should be more often initiated by and more frequent among countries in the rest of the world compared to those initiated by US psychologists. The data confirmed this prediction, with greater percentages of international collaborations first-authored by western European psychologists in all types of journal (APA 38.74, international 37.37, and low-impact 30.10 percent, respectively) compared to US authors (36.30, 25.79, and 23.30 percent, respectively). Although these percentage differences may be slight, their consistent trend across all journals away from the US domination of publication was impressive. Similarly, it is noteworthy that the percentage of first-authored international collaborations by MW psychologists (28.64 percent) in