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BEYOND INDIGENIZATION: ASIAN PSYCHOLOGY'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD OF PSYCHOLOGY

John G. Adair

My recent research has focused on the “Internationalization of Psychological Research” (Adair, Coêlho, & Luna, 2002; Adair, 2004).¹ A substantial data collection across three decades has revealed that the proportion of articles authored by psychologists from ROW (rest of the world) countries compared to those authored by US psychologists is rapidly increasing, dramatically in this decade to the point where the majority of articles over the recent three years in one APA journal, for example, is now by authors from outside the U.S. There has been a similar shift in the percentage of journal articles reported in PsycINFO. Psychology is on course to becoming an international discipline in terms of who is publishing the research. Authors from around the world have mastered the westernized or mainstream psychology researched within the U.S. and are competitively contributing to this increasing knowledge base.

This article reports on data from Asian countries that have been excerpted from that larger study. In addition, I propose a conceptual model to account for these data from a series of developmental perspectives. My study comes from a social study of science approach empirically assessing the activities of psychologists and disciplines. The goal is to systematically consider changes in research and researchers over time to better understand larger changes occurring within the discipline. This project on the internationalization of psychology has only just begun, so the data at this stage are only frequency counts descriptive of authorship rates by country. In addition, the model I propose as a guide for this research raises an important question that has implications for indigenous psychologies: What is beyond indigenization?

The conceptual model I propose is developmental in nature, beginning with the developmental experiences of individual researchers. The individual researcher proceeds from supervised training to thesis work, followed by independent research accomplished on the first academic appointment, and ultimately to research accomplishments as a mature investigator. The stepwise accumulation of a critical mass of such researchers within a country shapes the national development of the discipline which cumulatively leads to the spread of psychology around the world and to its development as an internationally-based science. Each of these elements follows a developmental sequence to a specific goal; the attainment of these goals does not end the process but leads to a further series of stages toward yet another goal.

The discipline of psychology within a country typically begins with someone

¹ The research was supported by a grant to the author from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Psychology. I thank Kristin Stevens and Yumiko Sakamoto for their assistance in the collection and organization of these data.

trained abroad who returns with the imported discipline that becomes implanted as an academic department within universities. As the imported discipline is transformed to make it culturally appropriate, the process called indigenization, the discipline is also shaped into a self-sustaining autochthonous or independent discipline. Most majority-world countries focus on the processes of indigenization and autochthonization. But the developmental sequellae do not end here. What I propose is that once attained, researcher attention begins to turn externally toward further accomplishments directed toward the broader world of psychology — a process I call internationalization. I propose three further stages of international discipline activity and development: (1) International presence and visibility; (2) International recognition and participation; and (3) International research contribution.

INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE AND VISIBILITY

Research into these stages began several years ago when my colleagues and I (Adair, Coêlho & Luna, 2002) posed the question “How International is Psychology?”. To answer this question, we developed a database of presentations at five international congresses of applied psychology (Adair, Anguas-Plata, Ruthig, Luna & Derksen, 2003) and combined these by country with the number of entries in PsycLIT (that predated PsycINFO) over three decades into an index of the visibility and presence of psychology around the world. We surmised that this method and these databases, even with their inherent flaws would provide a superior answer to counts of numbers of psychologists trained within each country that had been the previous basis for assessing the extent of psychology around the world. Based on these measures of research productivity, we concluded that psychology had a significant presence in 48 countries², some presence in 22 other countries, and little or no presence in at least another 82 countries. Psychology’s presence was predominant in North America and Europe (N=25) and in a few other English-speaking countries. Although substantial, this was not the world-wide presence that we had hoped our discipline would have achieved.

Among the 70 countries where psychology has a presence, 13 were Asian countries: 7 with significant presence of the discipline and 6 with some presence. As indicated in Table 1, psychology is a reasonably developed discipline in Japan, Hong Kong, India, China, Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore and research from these countries and regions is internationally visible. Psychology is developed to a much lesser extent in the Philippines, and several other countries in South Asia (Pakistan and Bangladesh) and in South East Asia (Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia). There are a number of other countries in South Asia (Afghanistan, Burma, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lankan), Southeast Asia (Brunei, Cambodia, East Timor, Laos, North Korea, Vietnam) and in northern Asia (North Korea and Mongolia) where there may be psychologists, but the discipline has no visible international presence.

² Adair, Coêlho, and Luna (2002) reported only 47 countries where psychology had a significant presence. Iceland was inadvertently omitted from that count; the correct total should be 48 countries where psychology has a significant presence.

Table 1
International Presence of Psychology in Asian Countries³

Countries/Regions	PsycLIT entries	Congress participations
<i>With Significant International Presence</i>		
Japan	17217	643
India	8382	179
China	2594	68
Hong Kong	1925	65
Taiwan	909	18
Korea	688	28
Singapore	456	12
<i>With Some International Presence</i>		
Malaysia	234	11
Philippines	204	12
Pakistan	201	1
Thailand	145	3
Bangladesh	110	1
Indonesia	60	4

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION AND PARTICIPATION

According to the model, beyond international presence and visibility there is a further stage of discipline development: International recognition and participation. In this stage, researchers are selected to participate in international research collaborations, initially as co-authors on the research of psychologists from other countries; then, subsequently as first authors seeking the research assistance and collaboration of psychologists from other countries.

To identify this research, multiple-authored articles (research collaborations) were classified as either (a) internal collaborations from the same department or institution; (b) national collaborations of psychologists from different institutions within the same country; or (c) international collaborations of authors from 2 or more different countries. International research collaborations were identified in selected journals and then tallied for the number of articles with co-authors from each country and for the numbers of first-authored collaborations for each country.

For this research we sampled APA/premier journals published in the U.S. from four different research specialties (4 journals from each specialty) and five international journals for a total of 21 journals. The selected APA/premier journals have been the preferred publication outlets for U.S.-based scholars, with authors from the rest of the world expressing difficulty if not the impossibility of someone from their country publishing in these journals. ROW authors publishing in these journals should provide clear evidence of the movement of the discipline toward internationalization. Evidence of a similar publication trend in international journals was also assessed. The affiliations of authors were tallied for all articles published in the first three years of each decade of the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s.

The frequencies for Asian countries and as a percentage of the total number of international collaborations are presented in Table 2. These data indicate that total international collaborations and those by Asian psychologists increased similarly across decades for both APA and international journals, with dramatic increases in the recent

³ PsycLIT entries (1971-2000); ICAP presentations (1982-1998). Data from Adair, Coêlho & Luna (2002).

decade. Asian psychologists were included in 9.6% of all international collaborations. Most Asian co-authored collaborations were found to be by psychologists from Japan, Hong Kong, and, to a lesser extent, China. It was striking that 50% to 80% of these occurred in the recent time period (2000-2002). Asian psychologists as first authors (See Table 3) sought collaborations (co-authors) from a similar pattern of countries. Hong Kong stood out as the primary Asian first-authored collaborator. Collaborations were with co-authors from North America in APA journals but from more diverse countries in International journals. The only negative observation from these data was the relative absence of frequent Indian collaborations, especially in proportion relevant to the size of the country and its discipline.

Table 2
Frequencies and Percentages of Asian Co-Authors on Total International Collaborations

Countries/ Regions	APA/Premier			International			Total	Asia (%)	Total (%)
	1980s	1990s	2000s	1980s	1990s	2000s			
Japan	1	6	15	2	15	7	46	41.1	3.9
Hong Kong	-	2	3	-	4	6	15	13.4	1.3
China	-	3	3	-	-	15	21	18.8	1.8
Taiwan	1	3	-	-	4	3	11	9.8	0.9
Korea	-	1	4	-	-	2	7	6.3	0.6
India	-	2	-	-	2	3	7	6.3	0.6
Singapore	1	-	1	-	2	1	5	4.5	0.4
Total Asian	3	17	26	2	27	37	112		
Total	65	82	847	31	105	203	1172		9.6

Who did Asian psychologists collaborate with? Asian co-authors overwhelmingly were selected by North American (US or Canadian) first authors in both APA (82.7%) and International (65.3%) journals. European first-authors were much less common in collaborations with Asian co-authors in both APA (5.2%) and international (13.9%) journals. Similarly, when Asian psychologists were first authors, they selected as co-authors predominantly North American psychologists in both APA (67.6%) and International (35.7%) journals, but Asian co-authors were the next most common at 14.7% (APA) and 28.6% (international). European co-authors were less common in APA (11.8%) and international (17.9%) journals. First authors from Hong Kong were responsible for 92.3% of the Asian co-authors selected by Asian psychologists.

Table 3
Frequencies of First Authors from Asian Countries in International Collaborations

Countries/ Regions	APA/Premier			International			Total	%
	1980s	1990s	2000s	1980s	1990s	2000s		
Japan	1	-	5	-	2	1	9	0.8
Hong Kong	-	5	7	1	4	8	25	2.1
China	-	-	3	-	1	-	4	0.3
Taiwan	1	1	1	-	-	-	3	0.3
Korea	-	3	2	-	-	3	8	0.7
India	-	-	-	-	2	1	3	0.3
Singapore	-	1	1	-	-	1	3	0.3
Total	106	256	524	40	83	163	1172	4.7

CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD'S PSYCHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

The ultimate international achievement by any psychologist is an independent research publication in an APA/International journal that could be regarded as a contribution to the world's psychological literature. These contributions were measured by first-authored publications in APA/premier journals as reported in Table 3. Of all Asian countries/regions, Japan (24%) and Hong Kong (35.7%) stand out as the major Asian contributors, with substantial achievements in the recent decade. Psychologists from Asia published about equally often in experimental (n=18), developmental (n=24) and social (n=20) journals, but were virtually absent in clinical/health/abnormal journals (n=1, from Hong Kong). Asian contributions were predominantly from Japan (50%) in experimental journals and from Hong Kong (55%) in social psychology journals. Developmental articles were distributed across seven countries/regions, with most coming from Japan (37.5%), Hong Kong (25%) and Taiwan (12.5%). By contrast, only three countries/regions made contributions to social journals — Japan (30%) and Korea (15%) in addition to Hong Kong. What was striking about these data was that there was only one first-authored contribution from psychologists from India, and that was a developmental article published in the 1980s.

Publication of articles in the five selected international journals by Asian psychologists (n=110) were more frequent than in the 16 sampled APA/Premier journals (n=63). Moreover, psychologists from four additional countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand) published in international journals yet were not visible as authors in APA journals. Hong Kong (36.4%) and Japan (15.5%) continued to author the greatest percentages of Asian contributions. Looking at only the most recent time period (2000-2002), countries from South Asia were virtually absent, with only a single contribution from India. By contrast, the majority of the contributions from Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, and Singapore were from the most recent time period.

Compared to co-authored international collaborations (11.1%) and first-authored international collaborations (4.8%), first-authored research contributions (1.3%) by Asian psychologists were relatively infrequent (see Table 4). As predicted by the model, the numbers and percentages of Asian psychologists declined in a step-wise fashion from their numbers as co-authors and then as first-authors in international collaborations and finally as first-authored research contributors. This pattern supports the prediction of the conceptual model guiding the research.

Table 4
Frequencies of First Authored Articles by Psychologists from Asian Countries

Countries/ Regions	APA/Premier			International			Total	%
	1980s	1990s	2000s	1980s	1990s	2000s		
Japan	5	4	15	1	6	10	41	0.3
Hong Kong	-	5	16	4	15	21	61	0.5
China	-	-	4	2	7	3	16	0.1
Taiwan	1	1	2	2	4	2	12	0.1
Korea	-	4	3	-	-	5	12	0.1
India	1	-	-	5	10	1	17	0.1
Singapore	-	1	2	-	1	8	12	0.1
Total	3623	3529	3755	537	583	780	12807	1.3

CONCLUSION: INTERNATIONALIZATION OF ASIAN PSYCHOLOGY

Just as indigenization of the imported discipline was perceived to be a difficult task by psychologists at an early stage of the development of the discipline within each country, internationalization of the discipline is seen to be an equally difficult goal for accomplished researchers in majority-world countries. Many of the same obstacles to progress remain. Primary among these is the lack of resources: Opportunities to attend international congresses are rare. The lack of resources also discourages research advances, especially large scale research projects that could visibly impact the science and gain international recognition.

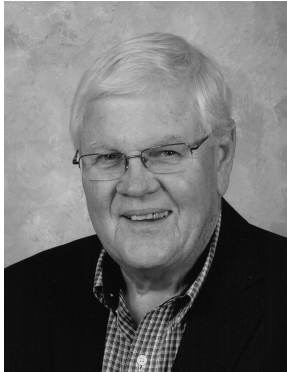
English as the language of international science poses many problems. The science and teaching in the country is typically conducted in the native language. To achieve international recognition, majority-world researchers must read and publish in English. Indigenous psychology movements, on the other hand, often mandate research must be conducted and written in the native language. Indigenous research translated into English does not always capture the nuance of culture that may be the essence of the indigenous contribution. Indigenous contributions are slow to be recognized and accepted by international psychology, thus denying majority-world researchers the international platform available to others.

Yet indigenization and internationalization need not be inherently incompatible. Solutions for advancing the discipline toward both must come from within the locally-based discipline. There is considerable strength within the indigenous psychologies tailored to the local culture. They share a common perspective on methodology and goals with psychologies from other majority-world countries. To differentiate the unique from the shared meaning and to promote the contribution they make to the discipline of psychology, an active program of cross-indigenous comparisons needs to be undertaken. An appropriate outlet for this research and writing would be an International Journal of Indigenous Psychologies. Although such a journal does not currently exist, for majority world psychologists this could be the ideal forum for continued growth and international contribution of the national discipline. What is beyond indigenization? Cross-indigenous comparisons beyond national borders provide scope and opportunity for continuing discipline development and international contribution.

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